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Chinese ornaments on the Siti Inggil Keraton Kasepuhan building from a Religious Moderation perspective

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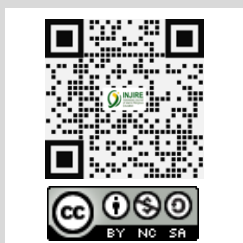
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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the Chinese ornaments in the Siti Inggil building of the Kasepuhan Palace and the values of religious moderation. This study uses a qualitative method. Meanwhile, the approaches used are historical, anthropological, and semiotic approaches. The Chinese ornaments attached to the Siti Inggil building of the Kasepuhan palace in Cirebon align with the values of religious moderation that are growing and developing in Indonesia. Some of the ornaments on the Siti Inggil building come from cultures outside of Islam, showing the Sultan's moderate attitude and containing the values of religious moderation. First, Siti Inggil implies tolerance and accommodation towards Islamic, Hindu, and Chinese cultures within it. This means there is a willingness to understand and be ready to live with people of different religions and cultures. Second is ceramics, which implies the socio-cultural capital of religious moderation. This is because dialogue between culture and Islam has become necessary and requires good dialectics to occur to balance (tawazun) in social life in interaction with social culture.

Keywords:

Chinese Ornaments; Siti Inggil Building; Religious Moderation.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ornamen Cina di bangunan Siti Inggil Keraton Kasepuhan tentang nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Sedangkan pendekatan yang digunakan adalah pendekatan historis, antropologi, dan semiotik. Ornamen Tionghoa yang melekat pada bangunan Siti Inggil keraton Kasepuhan di Cirebon sejalan dengan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama yang tumbuh dan berkembang di Indonesia. Beberapa ornamen pada bangunan Siti Inggil berasal dari budaya luar Islam, menunjukkan sikap Sultan yang moderat dan mengandung nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Pertama, Siti Inggil; menyiratkan prinsip toleransi dan akomodasi terhadap budaya Islam, Hindu, dan Cina di dalamnya. Ini berarti bahwa ada kemauan untuk memahami dan siap untuk hidup berdampingan dengan orang-orang dari berbagai agama dan budaya yang berbeda. Kedua, keramik; yang menyiratkan modal sosial-budaya moderasi beragama di dalamnya. Hal ini dikarenakan dialog antara budaya dan Islam telah menjadi keniscayaan yang memerlukan dialektika yang baik agar terjadi keseimbangan (tawazun) dalam kehidupan beragama dalam interaksi dengan sosial budaya.

Kata Kunci:

Ornamen Cina; Gedung Siti Inggil; Moderasi Beragama.

Introduction

Harmonization between Cirebon and China has been around for a long time. This argument is stated explicitly in the *Purnaka Tjaruban Nagari* text, that before the Cirebon Sultanate was founded, ethnic Chinese in Cirebon had existed for a long time. The relationship between ethnic Chinese and the Cirebon Palace occurred in 1415 AD. Ethnic Chinese have lived in the Cirebon area. This was proven by the arrival of Cheng Ho and his army of 23,000, accompanied by 63 boats, which landed at the port of Cirebon for seven days. In a short time, Cheng Ho's soldiers married many Cirebon residents. Therefore, it can be understood that there was close harmony between Cirebon and China before the founding of the Cirebon Kingdom. (Yunus, 2019)(Gazali & Saefuloh, 2019)

Familiarity was increasingly established in the second stage, the end of the 15th century, marked by the arrival of Chinese princesses. The relationship between ethnic Chinese and the palace existed during the time of Syarif Hidayatullah (1479-1568), and the relationship between the two was very close through the marriage of Ong Tien's daughter, as the daughter of the Emperor of the Ming Dynasty, to Sunan Gunung Djati. It is said that this princess fell in love with Sunan Gunung Jati at first sight. However, the emperor did not allow it. Nevertheless, the princess persisted in her desire to get permission from the emperor. The princess brought valuable items from the Chinese Palace, such as glasses, plates, pots, and other ceramic objects. She traveled to Cirebon using the Chinese imperial ship under the escort of Commander Lie Guan Cang and Captain Lie Guan Hian. Sunan Gunung Djati and Ong Tien's daughter married upon arrival in Cirebon. The princess and her bodyguard converted to Islam and then changed their names to Ratu Mas Rara Sumanding. This explanation is in line with some opinions which state that the expansion of the Cirebon Palace through porcelain wall decorations from China began with the arrival of the Chinese princess. Objects in jars from the Ming Dynasty brought to Cirebon are still well preserved today (Mukhooyaroh et al., 2021).

The role of ethnic Chinese is quite significant in government. For example, the harbormaster in Cirebon is taken from a Chinese citizen. The Harbor Master's job is to control activities at the port and liaise between the Sultan of Cirebon and traders who want to enter the Cirebon area. Ethnic Chinese are also good at making coins or coins. The Sultans of Cirebon gave them great confidence in this matter. After the death of Reksanegara and Suradinata as officials responsible for making coins, the ethnic Chinese were finally ordered by the Sultan of Cirebon to make Cirebon coins. During its development, the Cirebon currency used Chinese letters as the Cirebon currency was acceptable in trade at that time. Chinese Picis, at that time, had an essential role in business in Java so that they could control most of the use of money. (Ramli, 2019; Suprpto, 2019)

The Cirebon Sultanate has several palaces, and this research focuses on the Kasepuhan Palace. The reason is that the Kasepuhan Palace is the oldest. Kasepuhan Palace was the first palace founded in Cirebon. Kasepuhan Palace is directly related to the early history of Cirebon. Kasepuhan Palace was formerly Padepokan Pakungwati, which has unique and different characteristics from other palaces in the archipelago. The reason is that the Kasepuhan Cirebon Palace combines religious and cultural elements in its construction concept. This palace combines several cultural elements: Islam, Hinduism, Europe, and Chinese. (Sutrisno, 2019). The Chinese features found in the front building, Siti Inggil, are interesting to explore from the perspective of Religious Moderation values.

With the arrival of Chinese people in Cirebon, they mingled with the surrounding community. The assimilation of Chinese people led to acculturation and assimilation in society. They brought traditions, ways of life, and prevailing norms with them. They stand firm and have a fanatical attitude towards the beliefs of their ancestors. Chinese Muslims carry out religious rituals and still adhere to their traditional traditions. This proves that they still respect their ancestors and maintain harmony between families despite their different beliefs. Chinese cultural activities can be seen in lion dances, Chinese New Year, and Cheng Beng celebrations, or Chinese Muslims commemorating Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr celebrations. (Atabik, 2016)

The ornaments of the Kasepuhan palace are thick with foreign culture, especially Chinese culture, showing that this Sultanate is accommodating to culture and develops an attitude of tolerance towards diversity and religion (Meisar Ashari, 2013). A tolerant and accommodating attitude towards culture indicates a Religious Moderation (Saifuddin, 2019). Religious moderation is a spiritual attitude that wants to mediate between two extreme poles, namely groups that are very textual and very liberal. So, Religious Moderation tries to be in the middle, neither textual nor liberal. (Arafah, 2020) (Mohamad Fahri, 2019)

The concept of religious moderation does not belong to one religion but exists in the traditions of all religions and even in world civilization. All spiritual teachings uphold a fair and balanced attitude in all life aspects, including practicing their faith. There is no religious teaching that teaches excessive behavior. Religious Moderation is an attitude that mediates between liberal and extreme religious attitudes. Those with liberal views tend to be loose in religion. Meanwhile, people with extreme views tend to understand religious texts significantly and strictly. They cite classical texts and works as a basis and framework for thinking but understand them textually and not contextually (Hanafi & M. Saefi, 2022)

The description above shows that cultural contact between Chinese and native people existed long before the Dutch came to the archipelago. Therefore, of course, it is natural that there is intensive contact in the spread of Islamic teachings. Intensive cultural contact results in acculturation between the two cultures in physical forms, such as building architecture, shipping technology, agriculture, and trade. As for the non-physical, for example, in language and behavioral patterns between the two nations. In this research, peaceful cultural acculturation has occurred, giving birth to attitudes of tolerance and respect. Indeed, it cannot be denied that there have also been fluctuations in relations between indigenous and ethnic Chinese. Conflict arose due to the presence of the Dutch. As a result of the *divide et imperia* policy carried out by the Dutch, the image of ethnic Chinese in the eyes of the native population became negative. Harmful stereotypes that have developed over time are aimed at them. This condition was made worse by the discriminatory policies of the New Order and the actions of several Chinese people who committed fantastic amounts of corruption, which was detrimental to the country.

On the other hand, Cirebon is a very cosmopolitan city. It has been a trade center in the past, so it is only possible if there are traces of Chinese ethnicity in Cirebon culture, especially in the Cirebon Sultanate. There is some evidence in this direction. First, we can still see foreign cultural ornaments, especially Chinese ornaments, decorating artifacts in the Cirebon Sultanate. Foreign cultural ornaments, especially Chinese ornaments that decorate artifacts in the Cirebon Sultanate, are closely related to the religious beliefs adhered to by the Cirebon Sultanate. Therefore, this research is urgent. This research aims to analyze the Chinese ornaments in the Kasepuhan Palace and the values of religious moderation.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative method. This research uses primary and secondary data from the field and literature. Meanwhile, the approach used is historical and anthropological. The researcher also used a semiotic approach to analyze the symbolic and philosophical meaning of the Chinese ornaments on the Siti Inggil building. A hermeneutic approach, Islamic theology, and an anthropological approach were used to understand the issue of religious moderation and its relevance to the Chinese ornaments on the Siti Inggil building.

Data collection regarding Chinese ornaments on the Siti Inggil building was done by recording and documenting, direct observation techniques, and interview techniques with informants based on guidelines prepared in advance. The author came to the Kasepuhan palace several times to make observations. The author also interviewed Cirebon cultural figures, Kasepuhan palace guides, and Cirebon psychologists to obtain additional data. The data that has been collected is then processed by data reduction using the inclusion and exclusion process. The next step is the *coding process* so the data can be traced easily and quickly. The notes that have been

coded are then edited by sorting, classifying, synthesizing, and making an overview. After that, the author interprets the data. The analysis method uses a qualitative descriptive analysis framework.

Results

Azyumardi Azra emphasized that *Wasathiyah Islam*, or moderate Islam, is old traditions, good in a way, religious or cultural. *Wasathiyah Islam* has already been introduced by previous scholars, counting since its presence in the archipelago. *Wasathiyah Islam* meets with diverse cultures and ethnicities, emphasizing a “middle” attitude and producing Indonesian Muslims who are *wasathiyah*, accommodating, and *inclusive*. For example, Javanese culture, namely *Tepo Seliro*, *Guyub* prioritises cultural togetherness, not “win-win,” and no selfishness. *Wasathiyah Islam*, or moderate Islam developing in Indonesia, has several characteristics: *Tawasuth*, *Tawazun*, and *Muwathonah*.

The book on religious moderation published by the Ministry of Religion explains four indicators of moderate attitudes toward religion: national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodating towards culture or customs. Thus, according to this book, reasonable people can be friendly in accepting traditions and culture, especially local culture, if they do not conflict with the main principles of their religion.

One of the buildings in front of the Palace is *Siti Inggil* Wall. On the Siti Inggil wall is a gate heading to Bentar Temple and Chinese and Dutch ceramics. Decoration This is placed in front of Palace Kasepuhan so you can see everyone. The Bentar Temple gate, which Hinduism influences, indicates that although The Sultanate of Cirebon is Islamic, it still honors ancestors at a time welcoming element of Hindu culture. Thus, the Hindus saw the Bentar Temple Gate, and the Chinese community felt representativeness when witnessing the Chinese ornament. The ornaments attached to the parts in front of the Siti Inggil building show the spirit of moderation. There has been since the presence of Islam in the archipelago.

Siti Inggil: principles of tolerance and accommodation towards Islamic, Hindu, and Chinese culture

When entering the Kasepuhan Palace area (built in 1430 AD), you can see a gate made of multi-story red bricks. The front part of the palace is called Siti Inggil or high ground, whose position faces directly towards the field where the palace troops gathered at that time after passing through Siti Inggil, which is in the form of a gate and a long fence. At the front of Siti Inggil are also tables and benches made of stone. This object came from Gujarat and was a gift from the British Governor General, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, in 1811 AD. The Siti Inggil building combines Islam, Hinduism, and China. The Siti Inggil Gapura has a Hindu influence because if you look closely, the shape of the building is the same as the Candi Bentar Gapura (Mukhooyaroh et al., 2021).

Siti Inggil is surrounded by red brick walls with ceramic plates attached, and the entrance is Candi Bentar. Judging from the shapes and ornaments that decorate the building, Siti Inggil adopts Hindu culture in the form of the Bentar Temple and Chinese culture in ceramic plate attachments. The structure is a pile of red bricks attached.

One of the front buildings of the Kasepuhan Palace is the Siti Inggil wall. On the Siti Inggil's borders is the Candi Bentar Gate, a Chinese and Dutch ceramics display. These ornaments are placed at the front of the Kasepuhan Palace so everyone can see them.

Bentar Temple, as in Siti Inggil (Kasepuhan Palace), which adopts a culture from Hinduism, is often found in several places in Indonesia with different meanings. In his research, Yusuf said that Candi Bentar, in the Balinese concept, is a symbol of a gaping mouth. This symbol of a gaping mouth makes Bentar Temple the entrance. Yusuf gave the example of Candi Bentar in the Pniel Blimbingsari Christian church complex in Bali. The Bentar Temple in this church has a cross ornament as a symbol of Christianity.

Meanwhile, Zarifa, in her research on *the Sendang Duwur Mosque and Tomb: The Manifestation of Acculturation*, said that there are 4 Bentar Temples in the Sendang Duwur mosque and tomb

complex. Moment Temple, known in the Indonesian-Hindu era, is found in the former Majapahit Palace complex (Gapura et al.). Ancient buildings (temples) with reliefs like this are located in the reserves of Jawi Temple, Jago Temple, and Tigawangi Temple. Zarifa even said that the oldest Bentar Temple is at Pura Prasada Bali.

The combination of Islamic and Hindu cultures becomes a complementary unity, which is realized in the form of buildings in the context of the Kasepuhan Palace, one of which is Siti Inggil. As is Fitri's research regarding Gapura Bentar, Gapura Paduraksa, mosque, and tomb in Sendang Duwur, Lamongan, East Java. In her study, Fitri said that in the Paduraksa building, some ornaments and motifs have symbolic meanings about Islam, for example, the kalpataru tree motif decoration, which in Hindu belief calls *the tree of life*. In contrast, in Islam, it is called *the syajarah al-kebuld* tree, which is in *Sidrah al-kebuld. Vomit*. This tree means that it is a tree that can grant all wishes. (Mukhoyyaroh et al., 2021)

In the context of the Kasepuhan Palace, the Dragon is found on the walls of Siti Inggil as the primary and front building, which philosophically means that the Cirebon Sultanate is an independent sultanate, not a subordinate kingdom of Pajajaran like when it was still under the leadership of Cakrabuana (Mukhoyyaroh, 2021). Since Syarif Hidayatullah led Cirebon, it has separated itself from Pajajaran and become a fully sovereign country (Atja, 1986). The dragon on the walls of Siti Inggil also means a prayer to a transcendent Power to always guard and protect the residents of the palace, especially the sultan's family and the people of Cirebon in general, from all kinds of dangers, epidemics, enemies, and other harm. The implicit meaning is that a king or leader must be able to protect and protect his citizens from all kinds of dangers, whether from enemies, hunger, disease, stupidity, or harm. A leader must provide his people with security, peace, and prosperity. (Sugiman, 2020)

The Siti Inggil wall also contains a picture of *a phoenix*. The phoenix symbolizes the sun and warmth surrounding the South because this creature symbolizes the South. According to Tatt, the phoenix has several values and meanings. Namely, a sign of the birth of a 'great person'; the *phoenix* will only stop at something valuable, bring prosperity, peace, and comfort, and can also fight evil.

The last image is a picture of a fish. In Chinese tradition, fish means darkness. This animal is usually served at Chinese New Year events. The meaning is that everything that is not good and a life entirely of night or bad luck in the past must be removed and replaced with something good and full of uncertainty. Fish are also a symbol of 'exaggeration' (luxury). So, the ceramic fish ornaments attached to the walls of Siti Inggil can also be interpreted as a prayer and hope that the people of Cirebon will always be in a state of sufficiency in their material and spiritual aspects. (Agus Iswanto, 2021)

Meanwhile, in Mandarin, fish is pronounced the same as luck. Fish is one of my favorite animals. Everyone who sees fish is happy and at peace. That is why, in real life, we often see people escaping their 'anxiety' by fishing. The implicit meaning of the fish image is that the ethnic Chinese who came to Cirebon brought a message of peace and wanted to live in harmony with the local population, not hostility or war. This aligns with the mission that Chengho brought when he visited Cirebon. Even though the troops he brought numbered approximately 27,000 at that time, more than the population of Amparan Jati, Cheng Ho did not carry out conquest or colonization. Cheng Ho only carried a friendly mission. That is why whatever region or country he stops in, he is well-received by the local community. That is what differentiates the arrival of Cheng Ho and the West. Likewise, there was even a marriage when Ong Tien came with his troops to Cirebon carrying a peace mission.

Overall, in the interior of Siti Inggil, there are five buildings without walls and with shingle roofs. The front row from west to east includes the *Mande Malang Semarang*, *Mande Semar Tinandu*, *Mande Pandawa Lima*, *Mande Pelinggihan (Bringing) buildings*, and *Mande Karesmen*.

a. *Mande Malang Semarang*



Figure 1. *Mande Malang Semarang*
Source: Mukhooyaroh Documentation, 2021

Mande Malang Semarang is the main building in the middle of *Siti Inggil*. The function of this building is precisely as a seat for the Sultan of Cirebon and his family, especially in various activities such as training ceremonies and holding court in Sangkalabuana Square, precisely to the north of the Cirebon Palace. *Mande Malang Semarang* is supported by six main pillars, symbolizing the pillars of faith. Counting the total number of posts, there are twenty, representing God's twenty characteristics.

The symbolism of the pillars of faith in Islam in the six main posts of *Mande Malang Semarang* leads to the issue of trust. Meanwhile, there is a discussion regarding faith in Islam, one of which is the six pillars of faith.

The Cirebon people are a community that inherited the noble values of the Islamic religious figure in Java, Syarif Hidayatullah (1448-1568), better known as Sunan Gunung Jati. The Islamic civilization spread by Sunan Gunung Jati contributed to the formation of a worldview that emphasized *theocentric aspects* of revolving around God, rather than the concept of Western civilization, which emphasized *anthropocentric elements* coming from the local wisdom heritage of Sunan Gunung Jati, which continues to be preserved among the people of Cirebon to this day.

Through the *Mande Malang Semarang building*, Susuhunan Jati emphasizes that the Cirebon Sultanate was built on faith or monotheism. Specifically, the twenty supporting pillars of the *Mande Malang Semarang building* symbolize the obligatory nature of Allah. Thus, the symbol of the pillars shows how the Cirebon Sultanate is entire of signs of monotheism.

b. *Mande Semar Tinandu*



Figure 2. *Mande Semar Tinandu*
Source: Mukhooyaroh Documentation, 2021

Mande Semar Tinandu building, as in the picture above, is usually used or functions as a seat for the sultanate's advisors, the head of the palace, and the head of the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque. This building, located northwest of Siti Inggil, is supported by two pillars that symbolize the two sentences of the creed. Not only limited to symbols, but every year, the palace carries out a religious tradition known as the talisman *to*—commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which in the Javanese tradition in Yogyakarta is called *sekatén*. The talisman (*kang siji kang kudu dirumat*)—in this context is the shahada.

Meanwhile, in Islam, the shahada can be interpreted as a statement of promise of allegiance. The shahada comes from the word *shahada*—, *yasybadu*—*shahadatan*, or *Sudan*, which means attending, witnessing, knowing, giving testimony, swearing, confessing, and bringing. Because the shahada can also mean an oath, it must be fulfilled. It cannot be forgotten because one of the requirements for someone to be considered a Muslim is to read two sentences of the shahada, namely a statement or confession that Allah is God and Muhammad is Allah's messenger.

Thus, after someone takes the shahada, it is legal for him to practice Islamic law. Every person who wants to convert to Islam must fulfill the five pillars of the creed, as mentioned. Meanwhile, those of Muslim descent do not need to take the Shahada pledge like a *mu'allaf*, even though they have never pledged the Shahada all their life. They are already *mu'allaf*. In this context, the shahada is like a spirit for the body, and it is life for all elements of Islam. Because of the importance of the shahada in Islamic beliefs, Said Hawwa said that the good deeds a person does are meaningless without the shahada (Said Hawwa, 2004). The creed that is recited is the creed of monotheism, *la illaha illa Allah*, and the philosophy of Rasul *Muhammadu Rasulullah*. These two sentences are called two sentences of the shahada (*Syhadah*) and cannot be separated.

In the context of Cirebon society, especially in the Kasepuhan Palace, to ensure that these two sentences of the shahada are maintained in the Muslim community, there is a tradition known as the *talisman*. The traditional procession or *long ceremony of amulets* reflects the birth process of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It is the culminating event of a series of activities for the Prophet Muhammad's birthday at the Kasepuhan Palace, Cirebon. “*Panjang*” means a series of various heirloom objects, and “*amulet*” represents *siji kang kang kudu dirumat* (one thing that is respected is the creed “*la illaha illa Allah*”). If these two words are combined, they mean a series of preparations to welcome the birth of a prophet who firmly proclaims the creed to the world's people. Generally, each ceremony combines several ceremonial elements such as sacrifice, prayer, serving a meal together, procession, meditation, etc. The order was determined as a result of the creations of their predecessors, which have become a tradition in Cirebon society. (Yadi Ruyadi, 2010)

Because *the length of amulets* has become a tradition from generation to generation, throughout life, in the view of the people of Cirebon, every Muslim must protect and care for his *amulet*, namely the shahada. This means that a Muslim's faith must be maintained and not let go. Suppose you pay attention to the rituals in the long talisman tradition. In that case, they are almost like other ceremonies, all confirming the homogeneity of the original Javanese model. So, at that time, the king appeared to be performing *miyos dalem* (the king's appearance before his people). The king's ability to achieve unity was used to listen to the legitimacy of the palace. At the same time, a king conveys his blessings for the welfare of his people (Ismawati, 2000). Simultaneously, the *long traditional amulet ceremony* in Cirebon was held in four places which are the legacy of Syarif Hidayatullah, namely at the Kasepuhan Palace, Kanoman Palace, Kacirebonan Palace, and the tomb complex of Syarif Hidayatullah, the founder of the Cirebon Sultanate or better known as Sunan Gunung Djati.

Thus, the two supporting pillars of the Mande Semar Tinandu building are a symbol of two sentences of the shahada, whose philosophical meaning is that the Cirebon Sultanate,

since its inception, was a sultanate that was based on God and adhered to the Islamic creed. Because this sultanate is based on Islamic teachings, everything related to state life is automatically based on Islamic teachings. Then, theologically, the two supporting pillars of Mande Semar Tinandu emphasize the oneness of Allah, and the meaning of Allah's unity is explained through the nature of obligation for Allah.

c. *Mande Pandawa Lima*



Figure 3. *Mande Pandawa Lima*
Source: Mukhooyaroh Documentation, 2021

Mande Pandawa Lima is a building that functioned as a seat for the commanders and personal bodyguards of the Sultan of Cirebon. This building is located right to the left of the main building and is supported by five pillars, which symbolize the pillars of Islam. A person's faith will be seen from the practice of the Islamic pillars. A person's religion or belief is in the heart. The strength or weakness of a person's faith will be seen from how well he can practice the pillars of Islam.

The pillars of Islam are the pillars of a noble religion. As Imam al-Qurthubi said, the five pillars (pillars of Islam) are the foundations of the Islamic faith and its rules, which the Islamic faith is built on and with which Islam is upheld. Meanwhile, Imam an-Nawawi also commented on this hadith by saying that it is a significant point in knowing Islam, and the Islamic religion relies on this hadith, which collects its pillars. Apart from these two scholars, Ash-Shiddieqy said that al-Bukhari included this hadith in the book of *al-Iman* to emphasize that Islam is the name for work and that Islam and faith sometimes have the same meaning.

The Mande Pandawa Lima building, which is equipped with five supporting pillars, apart from symbolizing the pillars of Islam, also contains a philosophical meaning and urgency which can be traced from the explanation of each post in the pillars of Islam, namely the creed, prayer, zakat, fasting, and hajj.

d. *Mande Pelinggihan (Accompaniment)*



Figure 4. *Mande Pelinggihan (Accompaniment)*
Source: Mukhooyaroh Documentation, 2021

When the sultanate court conducted trials, Mande Pelinggihan (Accompanist) was used as a seat for companions or sultanate officials, including judges and prosecutors. This building is supported by eight pillars, four in the middle and four at each corner. Apart from being used as seats for sultanate officials, the eight supporting pillars have symbolic and philosophical significance.

The Mande Pelinggihan building is strengthened by four supporting pillars in the middle, —symbolizing the four essential elements in nature: earth, water, air, and fire. Soil is the leading and critical element of the ecosystem.

Apart from the components of soil and water, air is also an essential element on which the entire contents of the universe depend. Air provides benefits for the life of all nature. Air is formed from several gases, namely Helium (He), Nitrogen (N), Oxygen (O₂), and Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). All living things need oxygen to breathe. Oxygen gas is also required to burn food in the bodies of living creatures. This combustion produces energy, which energy is necessary to carry out all human activities. Besides O₂, CO₂ also plays a role in the human respiratory process. The average human need for oxygen per hour is 53 liters.

Meanwhile, oxygen produced by the photosynthesis of leaves (plants) to make the required 53 liters of oxygen must be made by a minimum of 3000 leaves or around four plants, each of which has a minimum of 750 leaves. However, the current fact is that humans need to become more active about planting trees. All the courtyards are concreted, and as a result, apart from there being no water absorption, the need for oxygen is also not met, so the air quality is getting worse, and what is even more worrying is that many forests have been completely cleared. (Sofiyawati, 2017)

Thus, there is a message behind the four supporting pillars in the middle of the Mande Pelinggihan building which we want to convey to humans as religious creatures: humans must be grateful for the blessings of air that Allah has given, and work together to maintain the balance of nature and not damage it. This is related to the main task of humans as caliphs, namely caring for, prospering, and utilizing nature for the common good. Illegal logging, throwing waste into rivers, and burning forests will only destroy the soul and make the existing balance unbalanced.

Maintaining the balance of nature is a human's duty because humans are an integral part of the universe. That is why humans have an equal and equal position with nature and all creatures in this nature. This fact must evoke solidarity and unity with nature and other living animals. As caliphs, humans also have a moral responsibility towards the universe for its existence and preservation.

e. *Mande Karesmen*



Figure 5. Mande Karesmen
Source: Mukhoyyaroh Documentation, 2021

The Mande Karesmen building has the same supporting pillars as Mande Pelinggihan; its only function is to store artistic equipment such as gamelan musical instruments. In the Sultanate of Cirebon, the tradition of *playing the gamelan sekaten* (gong sekati) is carried out twice a year, especially on commemorations or religious events such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Gamelan was also usually performed in the square, witnessed by the sultan and his family. Even though the architecture of the Mande Karesmen building, as in the picture, looks like a Hindu building, this building is entirely of Islamic values.

This research explains that cultural acculturation at the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon occurred for two reasons. *First*, its strategic location makes Cirebon a trade center, a meeting place for various tribes, cultures, and religions between nations. *Second*, the open attitude of the Sultan of Cirebon was the most important factor that resulted in the inclusion of various cultural influences on buildings and society, especially on the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace building. Cultural acculturation in the Kasepuhan Palace building comes from China, Hinduism, Buddhism, Javanese, European, Islamic, and Arabic. Chinese culture can be found in the Dalem Agung Pakungwati Building, the Siti Inggil Building, including the Mande Malang Semarang Building, Mande Semar Tinandu, Mande Pandawa Lima, Mande Pelinggihan (Companion), and Mande Karesmen, as well as Kucung Kutagara Wadatan, Pintu Buk Bacem.

Various archaeological evidence was found in the Kasepuhan Palace, and various cultures colored it. The philosophical meaning is that even though Cirebon is an Islamic Sultanate, it is very open to the dynamics of society and includes various cultures and other people's religions. This sultanate wants to stand on cultural diversity and respect other people's beliefs.

Islamic studies in the context of moderate Indonesian Islam are also closely related to moderation. Hilmy said the concept of moderation has several characteristics, including Spreading Islam without using violence but preferring peaceful means; Adopting a moderate way of life in all aspects, including science and technology, democracy, human rights (HAM), and the like; His way of thinking is rational; Understanding Islam is very contextual, not textual; and, using *ijtihad* if no explicit justification is found from the Koran and hadith. Some of these characteristics can be expanded with other traits, such as tolerance, harmony, and cooperation between religious groups. (Hilmy, 2013)

The origins of the Indonesian nation, including Cirebon or the Sultanate of Cirebon, is a long story about an inclusive community. A country that is open to accepting all "good" influences from everywhere without abandoning what already belongs to it may take and respond to all external forces that creep in. There is no resistance when outside influences come with the spirit of spreading brotherhood without coercion or war. Such an attitude creates a bond of unity among the diverse population of this archipelago, including the Cirebon Sultanate.

Tolerance that requires an attitude of willingness to live side by side with parties who do not share your religion is called inter-religious tolerance. A perspective of understanding and mutual understanding is required. Of course, in this context, it does not mean agreeing with and confirming the teachings of other religions. The emphasis in this attitude is not to force others to change beliefs. (Dali, 2017; Muslih, 2010)

An attitude of tolerance towards inter-religious communities based on the verse "*La ikraba fi al-Din*" (there is no compulsion in religion) can be part of caring for non-Muslim citizens to obtain non-discriminatory treatment, which is caused by differences in beliefs and religions, which is believed. The reality of life in Indonesia is that we live with all kinds of differences and diversity, so we cannot impose one belief on another. (Arafah, 2020; Yunus & Salim, 2019)

Based on the explanation above, the application of tolerance (Masamune) can be ideological or sociological. The image of ideological tolerance can be applied between

Muslims and religious communities. Regarding da'wah, ideological tolerance always prioritizes respect for other schools of thought. Although the most developed is the Syafi'i school of thought, other schools are still respected for their practices. The tolerance verse "*La ikraba fi al-Dn*" (no compulsion in religion) is always preached to maintain religious harmony. This tolerance can be seen in the harmonious lives of Cirebon people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Ceramics: social-cultural capital of Religious Moderation

There are many Chinese ceramics, as well as Dutch ceramics, on the walls of Siti Inggil. The Siti Inggil Gapura has Hindu influence because if you look closely, the shape of the building is the same as the Candi Bentar Gapura.



Figure 6. Siti Inggil

Source: Mukhoyyaroh Documentation, 2021

Siti Inggil, as pictured above, is surrounded by red brick walls with ceramic plates attached, and the entrance is Candi Bentar. Judging from the shapes and ornaments that decorate the building, Siti Inggil —adopts Hindu culture in the form of the Bentar Temple and Chinese culture in ceramic plate attachments. The structure is a pile of red bricks attached.

The Siti Inggil building not only has Hindu influence but also Chinese culture. Chinese culture is rich in meaning and symbols, especially animal-related ones. Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism also influence Chinese culture as the majority religions of Chinese society. The book *Tripitaka*, as written by Mulyono and Diana, explains that the Buddha valued the lives of living creatures, including animals. Therefore, Chinese society uses animals as symbolic components and often associates animal characteristics with the values of human life. Animals are closely related to the energy values humans want to achieve health, longevity, strength, prosperity, and protection from all dangers. Likewise, the pictures that decorate the ceramics on the walls of Siti Inggil are rich in symbolism associated with Chinese culture. The images attached to the ceramics are dragons (*lung*), phoenixes (*feng huang*), and fish.

In the context of the Kasepuhan Palace, dragons are found on the walls of Siti Inggil as the primary and front building, which philosophically means that the Cirebon Sultanate is an independent sultanate, not a subordinate kingdom of Pajajaran like when it was still under the leadership of Cakrabuana. Since Syarif Hidayatullah led Cirebon, it has separated itself from Pajajaran and become a fully sovereign country (Atja, 1986). The dragon on the walls of Siti Inggil also means a prayer to a transcendent Power to always guard and protect the residents of the palace, especially the sultan's family and the people of Cirebon in general, from all kinds of dangers, epidemics, enemies, and other harm. The implicit meaning is that a king or leader must be able to protect and protect his citizens from all kinds of dangers, whether from enemies, hunger, disease, stupidity, or harm. A leader must provide his people with a sense of security, peace, and prosperity.

Apart from the image of a dragon on the walls of Siti Inggil, there is also an image of a *phoenix*, an essential symbol in the traditions of Chinese society. This creature is described as a beautiful bird combining several colors. This creature is thought to bring good fortune and symbolizes the female emperor, peace, and prosperity. In Chinese wedding ceremonies, the image of a *phoenix* is always juxtaposed with a dragon. The *phoenix* represents the bride, while the dragon represents the groom (Ong et al., 1993). The *phoenix image* affixed to the walls of Siti Inggil means prayer and hope that peace, tranquility, and prosperity will always color the lives of the people of Cirebon. The people of Cirebon are kept away from all conflicts, disputes, and wars. When the country is peaceful, development in all fields will run well, and the economy will proliferate, ultimately leading the people of Cirebon to a prosperous state.

In Chinese tradition, fish is served at Chinese New Year events. In Chinese practice, fish means something bad, wrong, or dark, which must be replaced with something good (Ni et al., 2006). More than that, according to Jeremy Huang, the fish symbol on the walls of Siti Inggil is interpreted as a hope that a person's material and spiritual life will always be filled with goodness, especially for the people of Cirebon itself. (Jeremy Huang, 2006).

Apart from fauna ornaments, the ceramics attached to Siti Inggil also contain flora ornaments such as flowers. Plants are considered symbols that have natural strength and are resistant to various changes in weather or climate. Plants/flowers that are often used as ornaments, one of which is the lotus. For the Chinese people, especially Buddhists, the lotus has a special place in their hearts. In Buddhism, the lotus is believed to be the Buddha's seat, symbolizing majesty. In Chinese culture, Lotus symbolizes purity and perfection and always grows clean and attractive, even in mud or swamps (Polniwati Salim, 2016). About Islam, Opan sees that every Muslim, wherever he is, must be able to maintain the nature of his monotheism, lest it fade and be contaminated by the environment, which makes him further away from the Most Holy Essence. In other words, if you want to be friends with anyone and anywhere, Godly values must always be held firmly. Humans must be able to adapt to the environment wherever they are and be as helpful as possible to others (Open Safari, 2020).

Various cultures from outside that color are embedded in the architecture of the Kasepuhan Palace, indicating that cultural acculturation has occurred within the Cirebon Sultanate. This research view is in line with Keesing's theory that acculturation is a social process that arises when a group of people with certain cultures encounter certain foreign cultural elements so that the foreign culture is gradually accepted and processed into their own culture without causing their cultural identity. -each missing (FM Keesing, 1953).

The existence of Chinese ceramic stickers installed on the front wall of the palace means that Chinese ceramics are a culture from the outside, not a local culture. Because this culture came from outside, the ceramic plaster was placed on the front wall of the Cirebon Sultanate and placed outside. Meanwhile, the presence of Chinese ceramics in the interior of the Kasepuhan Palace shows the existence of ethnic Chinese who later became the wife of the Sultan of Gunung Jati, the daughter of Ong Tien. Therefore, it is not surprising that until now, the influence of Chinese culture is outside and inside the palace. This means that Chinese culture has become an essential and integral part of the Cirebon Sultanate, namely with the marriage between Sunan Gunung Jati and Puteri Ong Tien. As Opan said, the highest level of acculturation is through marriage. Gillin also agrees with this. According to him, intermarriage is the most favorable condition for the acculturation process (Gillin & Gillin, 1948). If the sultan had not had a Chinese wife, it is possible that Chinese culture would not have colored the Kasepuhan Palace. Opan further said that goods or products from China at that time, especially ceramics, were known to be very good in terms of motifs and quality. Everyone - from sultans to the people - liked the motifs or ornaments on the ceramics or silk that Ong Tien brought. Later in its development, these ornaments came to color and influenced the cultures that developed in Cirebon. This opinion is also reinforced by PR A Arief Natadiningrat's statement that Chinese culture has begun to have a significant influence on Cirebon culture since the arrival of Ong Tien's daughter.

Thus, the available archaeological evidence reveals that the diffusion of Chinese-style ceramics to the Cirebon area, especially the Kasepuhan Palace, seems to be related to the penetration of Islam because Chinese-style ceramics were found in the Kasepuhan Palace, which was an Islamic sultanate. Ceramics can be seen in the palace buildings, Astana Gunung Jati, Gunung Jati Mosque, and Sunyaragi Cave. In addition, social symbols have a similar role, as these imports are found in high concentrations in the graves of elites involved in maritime trade. These exotic goods also functioned as symbols and embodiments of trading power.

As explained above, various archaeological evidence shows that multiple cultures influenced the Kasepuhan Palace. The philosophical meaning is that even though Cirebon is an Islamic Sultanate, it is very open to the dynamics of society and includes various cultures and other people's religions. This sultanate wants to stand on cultural diversity and respect other people's beliefs. For example, one of the buildings at the front of the Kasepuhan Palace is the Siti Inggil wall. On the Siti Inggil's walls is the Candi Bentar Gate, a Chinese and Dutch ceramics display. These ornaments are placed at the front of the Kasepuhan Palace so everyone can see them.

Islam as a religious teaching always dialogues and adapts to the local culture where Islam exists. There will be a process of mutual influence between religion and local culture, even though sometimes culture is more dominant in human life. From this dialogue, a new culture emerged that was mutually agreed upon. Any religion, including Islam, cannot separate itself from the reality around it and where it is located. Islam was not born in a cultural vacuum. Between Islam and reality, a dialogue that takes place dynamically is required. That is why the archipelago people accepted Islam with open arms at that time, even though they already had established beliefs and convictions. Islam does not displace local culture but instead embraces it. Since the beginning, Islam has been integrated with Indonesianism through the teachings taught by the saints. Islam appears to be creative in dialogue with local communities and accepts community traditions while also modifying them into a new culture that can be taken by local communities and is still within the *framework* of Islam. Therefore, the arrival of Islam in Indonesia greatly supported intellectualism, which was not visible during the time of Hinduism and Buddhism. The reconciliation of Islam with societal traditions is believed to be a process of acceptance carried out naturally and peacefully without conquest. This dialogue between Islam and practice is carried out in a spirit of negotiation. Negotiation is a process of interpreting something present and interpreting itself to look for something new that is known in culture as something alive. Negotiations function to harmonize foreign culture with local wisdom. Through negotiation, not everything from outside is accepted but modified and adapted to the recipient's traditions—the Islamic negotiation process occurs when dialogue with local culture appears in the scheme of influencing and being influenced. Islam influences the culture of local communities and vice versa. Islam is influenced by community traditions framed in the spirit of reconciliation. This reciprocal process produces a harmonious nuance in the Islamic style of the archipelago. Islam and *local wisdom are placed in equal positions* for active dialogue so that one of them is not in a subordinate position. The creative exchange that occurs between the two does not mean "sacrificing" Islam and placing cultural Islam as a type of Islam that is "low" and incompatible with "pure" Islam.

Conclusion

Buildings in the palace Kasepuhan Cirebon, which contains several Chinese ornaments, align with the values of moderation religions that have grown and developed in Indonesia. Several Chinese decorations attached to the Siti Inggil building include the importance of religious moderation. First, Siti Inggil implies tolerance and accommodation towards Islamic, Hindu, and Chinese cultures. This means there is a willingness to understand and be ready to live with people of different religions and cultures. The diversity of creation, skin color, language, nation, life system, and human thought is the will of Allah SWT. Second is ceramics, which implies that social and cultural capital contains the values of religious moderation. This means that Islam, as a spiritual teaching, is often open with an attitude willing to engage in dialectics with various cultures

anywhere. Reality and Islam have become a necessity that requires continuity in a suitable dialectical manner to balance (*tawazun*) in religious life in interacting with social culture.

In *tawazun*, the principle implemented balances teachings related to Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*) and social relations (*habl min al-nas*). A relationship with Allah SWT is a relationship that is oriented towards a personal approach to the Creator through worship, fasting, praying, reading the Koran, and so on. Meanwhile, social relations tend towards efforts to implement social ethics: helping each other, working together, and respecting others based on affection and mutual respect. Study This writer focuses on the ornaments of Chinese buildings in *Siti Inggil*. Of course, much is needed to study the culture in Cirebon, which should have been considered in the study. For researchers Next, the writer recommends several things to be used as the study's focus. *First*, Cirebon culture is influenced outside, besides the Chinese influence.

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