



# Plaosan Temple Ornaments As Iconography Metaphorical Hindu-Buddhist Ideology

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## Abstract

Plaosan Temple is a building structure filled with beautiful ornaments and decorations, reliefs, and statues. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the metaphorical aspect of symbolism in the Plaosan temple reliefs, which represent Hindu and Buddhist ideologies. It also aims to understand the iconographic meaning of this structure as a temple building that unites differences for a peaceful purpose. This is a qualitative descriptive and interpretative research with the “minus one” technique used to determine the effect of removing an element of the temple. The hermeneutic-metaphorical interpretive description was used to visualize the ornaments’ symbols and determine the philosophical meaning between the ideological domain of Hindu symbolism and Buddhism. The results showed that the manifestation of love from the Plaosan temple is indicated in its temple’s relief elements and decorated ornaments.

**Keywords:** Plaosan temple, metaphor, ornament, iconography, symbol

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation that respects history and its origins. One product of its historical heritage is the Javanese architecture consisting of the Hindu-Buddhist and the Javanese Traditional Eras. According to preliminary research by Pertiwi et al. (2020), traditional Javanese architectural works are still designed with ornaments. The Buddhist Borobudur and the Hindu Prambanan temples are two buildings that represent the political, religious, and cultural attributes of the Javanese culture (Kieven, 2017). Borobudur Temple was included on the World Heritage list in 1991 (Hasanah et al., 2020). The sculptures and reliefs in Indonesian temples depicted in various forms represent Hindu stories

and mythology (Sugihartono & Dharsono, 2020). One of the ways to explore and understand the history of this nation is by visiting its historical sites. For instance, the peoples’ lives and customs can be seen in the temples’ reliefs (Yunmar & Harjoko, 2014). A work of art exists in a contextual relationship with the space and time it was created. Hidayanto (2014) stated that the birth of art is motivated by various problems and events in society. In this regard, Javanese temples are edifices that show elements of local genius and the cosmopolitan web of cultural exchange between India and Asia (Perdana & Ridwan, 2021). Therefore, the temple known as Plaosan is an artifact in the form of objects influenced by two different ideological backgrounds. There are numerous temple artifacts in In-

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Indonesia, mostly located in Java. Some parts of these temples consist of ornaments, reliefs, heavenly figures, and statues that have a specific purpose and symbols of meaning. Various geometric ornaments, tendrils, and animals can be seen in the temples in Central Java and Yogyakarta (Syafii, 2019). These temples are structured in a specific method, thereby leading to their unique shapes. The underlying religious ideology complemented the establishment of these temples. Some symbolic forms include its composition, roof, statues, and reliefs (Sarjanawati, 2010).

Plaosan is a very interesting temple in building aesthetics, full of decorative motifs that combine Hindu and Buddhist elements. This temple complex is located in Plaosan Hamlet, Bugisan Village, Prambanan District. It consists of two groups of temples, namely *Plaosan Lor* and *Plaosan Kidul*. Mahayana Buddhism was built around the IX century AD by Rakai Pikatan and his wife named Pramodawardani, from the Sanjaya and Syailendra Dynasties (Istari, 2015). It is located in the north and east of Prambanan and Sewu temples. Its structure in the middle is as central as temple buildings in general. Plaosan is not bigger than Prambanan and is a cultural heritage site that is significantly maintained. Hindu-Buddhist temple is a religious site and a local asset consisting of a different cultural artifact of Hinduism's early existence, which spread to Indonesia from its home country in India. The reliefs are similar to those in India, indicating naturalist realists in the Prambanan and Borobudur temples. The Early Classic period often depicts Indian Heroic Stories such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata and the Buddha's journey on temple reliefs (Winaya & Munandar, 2021). Similarly, the temple artifacts in Plaosan are a transformation of cultural forms from Hinduism and Buddhism. This process occurred due to the mutual influence and mixing of elements of artistic styles from two cultures. The form of transformation in art does not only happen in literature but through performance in sculpture or fine art (Purwan-

ti, 2020).

The decoration of the Plaosan temple has a unique shape compared to the Prambanan. The metaphor of the decoration can be classified into many types of flora and fauna. Besides, the statue is the main element in the relief that stretches north and south. Plaosan Temple, located in the village of Budisan, Prambanan District, Klaten, Central Java, is known as *Lor* and *Kidul*. It is often considered a twin temple due to its identical shape between the north and south. The physical condition of the twin buildings and the existence of myths from Hinduism and Buddhism ideological backgrounds unite differences for a soothing peace goal. Furthermore, the shape and structure of the building are decorated as a manifestation of the creator's love. The process of creating the artwork is usually associated with two ornamental functions, namely, a pure and a symbolic decorative variety (Istari, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to study the decoration and ornamental function of the Plaosan Temple as a manifestation of the love of the northern and southern domains. The meaning hidden behind the decoration can be determined by considering the close relationship between the results of art and religious values and observing the painted objects (Haryono, 2008). According to Haryono and Istari, the symbolism in ornaments, both reliefs, and sculptures, can be traced to ancient history.

This research's main objective is to identify the metaphorical ornamentation of the acculturation from the reflection of Hindu-Buddhist culture that peacefully represents each ideology in a temple. Plaosan reflects a peaceful and tolerating society that offers mutual love for prosperity.

This research aims to formulate the Plaosan temple decoration motifs that reflect the unification of the goal of love for Hinduism-Buddhism, which is loaded with religious values and peace. This temple's reliefs show the metaphor of decoration, which means an ideological philosophy uniting love in various cultures. It is associated with the basic principles

in the symbol of Garuda Pancasila, namely *Bhineka Tunggal Ika or Tan Hana Dharma Mangarwa*, in the philosophy of the Indonesian state with the same attributes. Therefore, this research aims to identify the following: 1) the reliefs of the Plaosan temple and the decoration forms of its ornaments, 2) the love of Hindu-Buddhist fusion reflected by these attributes, and 3) the metaphorical ornaments in the temple decorations and reliefs representing the dominant Hindu and Buddhist ideologies.

Numerous research has been conducted on the temple, one form of intellectual property inheritance of the archipelago's ancestors. The research entitled *Comprehensive Study of the Philosophical Meaning of Javanese Architecture* by Paramadhyaksa et al. (2013) focused on the realization of the temple as a whole and in parts. It was conducted using a multidisciplinary hermeneutic method based on an appreciation of Hinduistic and Buddhist teachings of fundamental values. The result showed that the Javanese worship temples contain several symbolic conceptions. These include Mount Meru, the head of Lord Brahma, and a meeting of humans and God. However, this research explored and identified the decoration of *Plaosan Lor* and *Plaosan Kidul* temples. The Hindu and Buddhist temples in central Java were examined from the architectural perspective, focusing on the metaphorical decoration to reflect the love of the creators of different ideologies.

The process of cultural acculturation rooted in Hindu-Buddhist classics inspires traditional Javanese and Islamic religious buildings in the mosque. Classical Islamic buildings and houses seem to follow Javanese and Hindu-Buddhist principles in their facilities, elements, and spatial arrangement. The research conducted by Noor Cholis Idham (2021) is based on acculturation and transformation in adopting traditional Javanese installations that explore past values. It was conducted based on the process of cultural acculturation put together in building work at the Plaosan temple. This research focused on using

the acculturation process to read temples' symbolic markers and iconographic values from both Hindu-Buddhist cultures. The decoration in the Plaosan temple is based on the best strategy to represent the temple as a manifestation of love for the unification of different cultures between Hindus and Buddhists.

Research by Dewi Fajar Indriyani, titled "The potential for temple tourism and the direction of its development in Klaten," aims to (1) analyze tourism temples in Klaten Regency and (2) determine the development direction of temple tourism objects (Indriyani et al., 2018). This research was conducted using two approaches: scoring techniques to achieve the objectives and SWOT analysis of five temples. The results showed that (a) Sewu, Lumbung, and Bubrah Temples have high internal potential, (b) Sewu, Lumbung, Bubrah, Bubrah, Plaosan Lor, and Plaosan Kidul Temples have high external potential, (c) Sewu, Lumbung, Bubrah, and Plaosan Lor Temples have combined high potential, and (d) Merak Temple has a low potential. Directions for the development of temple tourism objects in the Klaten Regency are based on the existing SWOT analysis, namely (a) improving temple tourism objects and creating supporting attractions, and (b) completing supporting facilities (Indriyani et al., 2018). This research is more relevant to the aspect of tourism to increase visits that impact the economic sector. Indriyani's research is in line with Hasanah's on tourist visits. Hasanah et al. (2020) reported that climate influences visit the Borobudur temple. Similarly, the present research on the Plaosan temple was carried out to identify and interpret the decorative ornaments as a fused Hindu-Buddhist temple. This temple is a tourist asset of Javanese historical aspects and cultural artifacts with metaphorical values.

Research on iconography in the relief of the Panataran temple examined the iconography in the Blitar city of East Java province (Afrizal, 2017). The result showed that the iconography in the Panataran

temple relief, which started from the side of the terrace, has a real meaning that can be drawn from the relief. This also explored the meaning of the Penataran temple relief story that contains the Panji story starting from the description of pre-iconography, iconographic analysis, and iconological interpretation (Afrizal, 2017). In the pre-iconographic stage, determined by analyzing the embodiment of temple visual relief, the relationship between forms and events was used to make expressional quality. This research analyzed the visual objects found in East Java reliefs associated with the lean and balanced shape of temples. Furthermore, it also seeks to present the value of the expression, which aims to liven up the atmosphere. The research of metaphors in the relief of the Plaosan temple does not arrive at the reading of the iconology in the reliefs but on visual lessons with characteristics representing the shape of objects.

A tripartite arrangement, which divides the appearance of the temple into three parts, namely the body, head, and feet, was used to examine the temple's architecture (Perdana, 2022). Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan (2021) examined the concept of a "vāstu order" using historical architectural research methods to analyze temple samples. The finding showed that the temple's architecture can be visually divided into seven parts belonging to the vāstu order. These include *upapītha*, *adhsthāna*, *pada*, *prastara*, *gala*, *ikhara*, and *stūpi*. They indicate that by testing the validity of the vāstu order in the temple, a new architectural order that is more comprehensive is obtained. Javanese temples' relevance is almost the same as that of artifacts in Southeast Asia. Research on temple reliefs conducted by Metusala et al. (2020) containing flora in the Lalitawaswara reliefs at Borobudur shows at least 63 types of plants used as ornaments. At that time, the ancient Javanese people already had a high awareness of plant diversity as a philosophy of human life. Therefore, these ornaments become an important part of the temple, such as the *Sulur* motif. Widhian-

ningrum et al.'s research (2019) on Borobudur reliefs in the Karmavhibhanga traces the ancient Javanese's economic, social, and spiritual activities. The findings based on Buddhist philosophy showed that social accounting is an economic control and mediator of conflict between humans, their needs, and the environment. Frisky et al. (2021) researched ways to determine the depth of the Borobudur Temple using the RRD (Registered Relief Depth) system. This process predicts the depth of artifacts with similar relief characteristics in the RGB data. These findings are useful for researching artifacts about material color or chemical reactions from temples to understand Indonesian cultural heritage.

The metaphorical iconographic analysis of the temple reliefs' visual elements is important in determining the true identity of the Plaosan temple through the concept of the "minus one" method. The Buddhist temple becomes irrelevant when an essential element is removed.

### Theoretical Basis

The theoretical foundation as a basis for comprehensive research and analysis of the object is the Plaosan temple in Klaten, Central Java. The formal objects or theoretical basis developed include the definition of temples, ornaments, reliefs, and their forming metaphors.

### Temple and Building Structure

The existence of temples in Indonesia, especially those in Central Java and the Yogyakarta Special Region, is in the form of a tomb to honor ancestral spirits combined with the religious ideology of Hinduism and Buddhism. However, its existence is different from those in India, a temple for worship. An embodiment is where the gods or ancestors dwell. According to Soekmono (2005), in the book titled "Temple of Function and Understanding," temples are tomb buildings. In connection with the existence of the Plaosan temple as a myth of romance from these two major ideologies, it is a grave and place of worship. However, the value of local wisdom

respects the differences in the fabric of love to be interpreted and acts as a role model for the community.

Its structure is a general form of the temple in Central Java. According to Soekmono (2005), the temple's structure consists of three parts, namely, feet, body, and roof. It comprises Hindu-Buddhist elements, but the decoration makes it more beautiful with aesthetic value and symbolic philosophy manifested from the personal daily values of the religion. Siaga (2002) stated that the temple building in the form of art, sculpture, and decoration is religious community life. All temples are closely related to the history, art, culture, and philosophy of the Indonesian people in the past.

### Temple Ornament

Ornament is a flora and fauna decoration used to identity a symbolic reflection of Hindu or Buddhist ideology. Ornament comes from *Ornare* (Latin), which means decorating (Halim, 2017) temples and shrines have been known as a means of worshipping the gods and goddesses or one's ancestors, especially in the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Observers often regard the ornaments of these temples as mere visual art objects, as eye candy that may beautify their outward appearance. However, when examined more closely, these ornaments carry a certain meaning in each of the temples. The aim of this research study is to explore the deeper significance of these ornaments and their location. This research can be classified as qualitative, using the descriptive-analytical method. Employing the Purposive Sampling method regarding ornamentation, eleven temples have been selected that meet the research requirements. Both Hinduism and Buddhism have been known to make a division into three worlds, namely the lower, middle and upper spheres. This division has also shaped the elements of temples into their respective head, body and legs/feet. Further categorization yields six motifs, all of which can be found in temples in various shapes, consisting of

several types of ornament that embellish the three elements mentioned above. Each of the motifs carries a variety of meanings. In this research study, the relationship between the meanings and their exact location (placement). The oldest motif is a geometric shape, which utilizes geometric elements, such as curved and straight lines, circles, triangles, quadrilaterals, meander shapes, swastikas, etc. (Halim, 2017) temples and shrines have been known as a means of worshipping the gods and goddesses or one's ancestors, especially in the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Observers often regard the ornaments of these temples as mere visual art objects, as eye candy that may beautify their outward appearance. However, when examined more closely, these ornaments carry a certain meaning in each of the temples. The aim of this research study is to explore the deeper significance of these ornaments and their location. This research can be classified as qualitative, using the descriptive-analytical method. Employing the Purposive Sampling method regarding ornamentation, eleven temples have been selected that meet the research requirements. Both Hinduism and Buddhism have been known to make a division into three worlds, namely the lower, middle and upper spheres. This division has also shaped the elements of temples into their respective head, body and legs/feet. Further categorization yields six motifs, all of which can be found in temples in various shapes, consisting of several types of ornament that embellish the three elements mentioned above. Each of the motifs carries a variety of meanings. In this research study, the relationship between the meanings and their exact location (placement). There are vine motifs on the temple ornament in Plaosan, similar to those of Hindus and Buddhists in Central Java. These include the *Sankha* reliefs, whose tendrils protrude out in a circle. The form of ornamental motifs in the winged shells (*Sangkha*) with stylized vines are found on the outer sides. Other types of decoration found at the temple's foot are paper motifs in rhombus, jasmine, rec-

tangular, and oval shapes. Therefore, the geometrical, plant, and mixed decoration reflect Hindu and Buddhist acculturation, with decorative styles not limited to the foot but rather on the body and roof.

### Temple Relief

Temple relief is a form of a story or life depiction contained in the Hindu or Buddhist scriptures carved into the statues therein. When viewed from the relief side, it shows a story about the Hindu religious books, such as the Prambanan temple, which tells the story of the Ramayanaread in the clockwise or *pradaksina path direction*. However, the Plaosan temple's relief does not reflect the story of a Hindu or Buddhist but is based on non-story and symbolism, which is highlighted by certain movements. Istari (2015) stated that temples in Central and East Java generally have a narrative. This is visualized in the fauna decoration with widely written inscriptions and non-story relief decoration types, such as plants, geometrics, and their combinations in the Plaosan temple.

### Metaphors in Temple Decoration and Relief

A metaphor is a reading of visual text on the relief of the temple and its trappings. It is carried out by everyone in their daily life and is commonly used in figurative language text where the meaning is similar. However, the existence of a metaphorical perspective was developed for reading texts of two and three-dimensional visual works. The metaphorical function is a known concept in architectural studies. Ancient architects have applied it as a medium of grammar to indicate symbols and signs, especially for mental and spiritual constructions (Allahmoradi, 2018). Similarly, in the architectural aspect of the Plaosan temple, the structure is represented by the character and cultural ideology code of the two religions.

Metaphor is essentially the transference of meaning from one symbol (the topic) to another 1 (the vehicle) (Morey, 2011). George Lakoff and Mark Johnson,

in their book *Metaphors We Live*, defined it as an unconscious shape associated with the way human beings think and act. For example, the conceptual metaphor that is commonly used is "Argument Is War." This metaphor forms a language with an argument as a battle that must be won. The metaphorical area maintains the cognitive topology of the source domain in a manner consistent with the innate structure of the target domain (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 2008). Therefore, from the results of preliminary studies, the body and legs of the Plaosan temple are a metaphorical reflection of the daily beauty of the surrounding community. When the temple building is removed, its ornamentation might not show the unusual function of the relics of Hindu-Buddhist artifacts in Central Java, especially Plaosan. Similarly, this temple is not just carved out; rather, there is a meaning behind the figure that is embraced on the stone wall, both in terms of movement and expression.

### Temple Iconography

The iconography of the temple can be seen in the building's structure, stupa, and reliefs. Panofsky (1972) divided the reading of symbolism into three layers: pre-iconography, iconography, and iconology. Therefore, to determine the elements that make up the Plaosan temple, analysis involves the three meanings of symbolism. The Pre-iconographic analysis is related to how the history of the Plaosan temple was realized. Iconography means the strategy used to realize the temple through its forms and elements. Meanwhile, iconology means the intrinsic meaning of the symbolic value of the Plaosan temple icon, which consists of the building's shape and the meaning of the reliefs on the temple, starting from the ornaments, structures, and the statue. Therefore, through Panosky's perspective and visual metaphors, the symbolic meaning to the Plaosan temple, which represents Hinduism and Buddhism's ideology, was determined.

## METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative and interpretative research with the metaphorical method used to analyze the variety of decorations. The material object is the Plaosan temple located in the Bugisan village, Klaten, Central Java. This temple is a site or artifact of relics, consisting of ornaments used for decoration, reliefs of statues, and building structures containing elements from Hinduism and Buddhism. Geometric Ornamental Forms, Ornamental Plant, flora, fauna, and a combination of both decorations carved on the baths' walls are based on the fact that the temple is a sacred shrine (Istari, 2015). This is different from the Prambanan temple, a relic of the Hindu kingdom. The Plaosan temple was selected because it is different from those around Kalasan due to its unique characteristics of the myths and folklore about different religious backgrounds. The temple's architecture consists of two levels with six chambers, three each on the upper and lower floors (Istari, 2015).

### Data Source

Data were sourced from the reliefs and motifs of the Plaosan temple in the village of Bugis, Klaten. Additionally, data were also collected from literature in the form of journal articles, online, and e-books that previously reviewed the topic issued by the Balai Antiquities.

### Data Collection Technique

Data were collected by observing the field for photographic documentation of the temple structures and ornaments. This was followed by a literature review conducted on the research results and other scientific articles.

### Data analysis

The process of symbolic interaction that continuously produces relevant data is to find motives from the metaphor of Plaosan temple decoration reflecting on Hindu and Buddhist ornaments.

Metaphor analysis is the steps used

to determine the temple construction to the visual elements in the decoration, relief, and sculpture. This process was used to determine the domain position of Plaosan Lor and Plaosan Kidul temples. The process was carried out in the following stages; 1) identifying data from the *Plaosan Lor* temple decoration, 2) and *Plaosan Kidul* temple relief, 3) verifying it, 4) Identifying the data and formulating the decoration, and 5). It identifies the symbolic meaning of the temple ornament. (a). When the ornament represents, an ideology is omitted. (b) Recognize differences in ornaments that indicate each domain of Hindu-Buddhist whether the unity ideology content is represented in the temple building.

Metaphors can be identified and classified into four general domains of experience, namely Movement, Nature, Artificial, and Human activity. Examples identified in the research are coded into images, concepts, doubles, etc. The analysis was carried out to explore how this metaphorical scheme relates to the four previously defined domains of experience (Casakin, 2019). However, this research evaluates the temple and its constituent ornaments using the "minus one" method. It also determined what will happen to assume one of the domains is removed. For instance, will there still be a connection between the two ideological target domains as a target source between Hindus and Buddhists?

This process was obtained from Handriyotopo's minus-one theory applied in film and audiovisual to obtain a closed visual representation frame. This is intended to determine the difference in message content in each domain represented in commercial films (Handriyotopo, 2019). Handriyotopo's method was used in the visual sign reading system on the structure, temple ornaments, and reliefs of the Plaosan temple.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Plaosan Temple is not as big as Prambanan or Borobudur temples. However, many people have enjoyed visiting

the Bagus village to view this structural edifice in terms of beauty. Plaosan temple artifacts can be traced from the prehistoric track record of the Indonesian people, who were initially familiar with iconography or images etched on stone walls in the form of certain symbols or pictograms before introducing writing. An embodiment of a temple other than a tomb is where the ancestors dwell. According to Raffles's statement quoted by Soekmono in the book "Temple of Function and Understanding," the statement about "cupola" is an indication that the temples are tomb buildings (Soekmono, 2005). Although temples in Java are also places of worship, it only functions as an artifact that needs to be preserved.

The Plaosan temple's structure differs from that of the Hindu in Prambanan and consists of three complexes. The first is a fence that bounds the Parent Temple with a connecting door. It comprises three rows of *perwara* Temples around the two Parent ones totaling 174 in the middle complex. In addition to these buildings in the north, there is a *batur pendapa* surrounded by two rows of small buildings in the form of stupas (Istari, 2015).

### Plaosan Temple Structure

Plaosan Temple acts as an artifact that concerns the differences in the ideology of Hinduism and Buddhism between Rakai Pikatan and Pramodhawardani, a Buddhist. It is a reflection of a husband's love, which is similar to what occurred in the Taj Mahal building located in India.

The Plaosan temple building structure is an architectural representation of past historical events in Indonesia. The temple was built with andesite stone from Mount Merapi-Yogyakarta. Its structure rises and gets smaller, showing the peak of the reflection of the residing ancestral spirits. Furthermore, it is a sacred building where ancestral spirits reside with a stupa on its roof. This building is a metaphor for arranging forms, reliefs, and ornaments. Johnson

(2003) stated that the building is important due to its effectiveness in imagination and creativity which can be increased through metaphorical thinking. According to Ayiran (2012), this process helps turn it into its current shape. Plason Lor's roof or crown is shaped like a Buddhist stupa, as shown in Figure 1. The reliefs at the main temple represent the figures of Pramodhawardani and Rakai Pikatan.



**Figure 1.** The roof of the temple or the crown of the temple is shaped like the Buddhist stupa. Source: doc. Handriyotopo, 2019

Similarly, research on metaphors in temple building structures also pays more attention to the context. Kloppmann-Lambert (2018) researched to determine the architectural building of the Plaosan temple. The research aimed to determine the strategies used to determine the temple's position when the two major religions were present amid their supporting communities.

This temple consists of reliefs and statues that surround its structure. There are two main temples that show the relief statue of a woman and man on the northern and southern sides. Plaosan temple is surrounded by 72 moats, 286 *perwara* temples, and stupas (Sahruni, 2021).

The building seen at the initial entry point is a form of *perwara* temple that reveals the structure of a Hindu and a reflection of a Buddhist temple.



**Figure 2.** *Kala* is found in all *Perwara* temples in Plaosan. Source: doc.Handriyotopo 2019

*Perwara* is a courtyard surrounding the Plaosan temple with a *Kala-Makara* above its entrance, which reflects the shape of Hindu buildings like in Prambanan. The Makara is an ornament at the temple entrance whose outward form is a combination of a dragon, crocodile, and giant fish with bulging and creepy eyes. These features make it scary to visitors who come to the sacred building with bad intentions (Kempers, 1959). Therefore, the *Kala-Makara* is a temple ornament in the form of a creepy *Kala* head consisting of various tendrils. Figure 4 shows the combination of the *Perwara* temple in the shape of a square and its pointed roof consisting of *Kala-Makara* on both sides, thereby forming a *Sewu* temple. Plaosan temples are often reflections of the shape of Buddhists, as shown in Figure 3. The symbolism of the *Kala* is found in the *perwara* temple in Plaosan, as illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 3.** The Perwara Buddhist Stupa numbered 126 in the Plaosan temple. Source: doc. Handriyotopo, 2019

The circumference is surrounded by *perwara* temples of Buddhist stupa characterized by cupola in Borobudur and more than 126 *sewu* characterized by various Hindu temples. The *Sewu* temple, located approximately 800 meters from Prambanan temple, is the second-largest Buddhist temple after Borobudur. It was established in the 8th century by Rakai Panangkaran from the ancient Mataram kingdom. Rakai Panangkaran had a son named Rakai Piktan from the Sanjaya dynasty with a Hindu background, who married Pramodhawardani, a Buddhist from the Syailendra dynasty. The Prambanan and Sewu temples' location indicates the established harmony of Hindu-Buddhist.



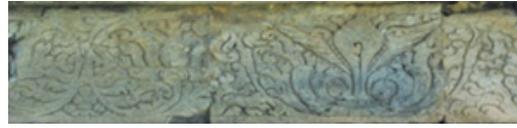
**Figure 4.** Perwara in Sewu temple, the crown is in the form of a stupa.

The ancillary ornament and shape in the Plaosan temple have a metaphorical value, meaning mutual protection between Hinduism and Buddhism. When the *perwara* stupa temple is removed, the Hindu *perwara* temple will appear and vice versa. However, when both are present as *perwara* temples, the metaphorical value raised is a sense of protection that Hinduism can co-exist in harmony with the Buddha or vice versa. Temple stupa or crown that rises to the top as a reflection was built as a place of worship by the Hindus or Buddhists.

### Temple Ornament

The ornament that adorns the Plaosan temple consists of relief structure, decoration, and sculpture. This is in addition to the motifs on the walls of the flora and fauna elements and reliefs. Each temple has distinctive ornaments that decorate it, similar to the bathing complex in Klaten or Prambanan. The Hindu temple ornament identity in Prambanan is known as the tree of life or Kalpataru, which describes life in the upper, middle, and water world. Simi-

larly, in the Buddhist temple in the *Sewu* temple, there are relief lamps that symbolize and reflect high sacredness.



**Figure 5.** Vines and vines with winged shells on the reliefs of Plaosan temple.

Source: T.M. Rita Istari, 2015

The tendrils motif is the main aesthetic aspect of the temple in this area. Similarly, in Plan temple consists of tendril and winged clam motifs. The tendrils, especially the *Sangkha* are the same as the motifs in the Prambanan temple. It is the result of Padma leaf station (red lotus), a distilled leaf shape that is curly in shape with its tip turning in the opposite direction. This spout motif comes from the sea snail's left and right sides as a soft-shelled animal. It characterizes ornaments in Hindu temples but is not found in the Plaosan temple as it is in Prambanan. The first appearance in the form of *Sangkha* motif is an attribute of the God Vishnu. In addition to the vines, there are geometric motifs on the temple walls and the foot, which collaborate with a floral motif in the middle. Geometric or rhombus motifs are also found in Prambanan temple as a hallmark of Hindu. In the middle of the rhombus motif, there is a jasmine flower.

This research starts with the history of the Prambanan temple complex in Klaten, Central Java. It comprises a large Hindu and Buddhist temple complex with ideological influences that grow and develop simultaneously. The Prambanan and Sewu temples are relics of the Hindu and Buddhist dynasties. Aspects of elements that make up the structure and its ornaments affect the existence of the Plaosan temple.

Therefore, the characteristics of the temple can be seen from the ornamental elements in Tables 1 and 2.



**Figure 6.** Geometry motifs combined with floral and vine motifs. Source: doc. Handriyotopo, 2019

Based on Table 1, the ornaments representing Hindu-Buddhist temples, not all elements are found in the Plaosan temple, but the most prominent is the winged *Sankha* motif as shown in Figure 5. The *Shankha* ornament is the main attribute used to determine the philosophical values of Buddhism. Hinduism has philosophical values on fertility and happiness.

However, in the representation of Hindu temple ornaments, the prominent ornament is the Hayat or *Kalpataru* tree in the Prambanan temple, reflecting life in the world and the hereafter. In connection with fertility values, it is indicated by the presence of a lotus motif that protrudes from the latrine on the right and left. The main one is called the *puṇnakalasa* motif, as shown in the ornament on *Sewu* temple in the *Prambanan* complex.

The Buddhist temple cannot be seen from the structure of the building and its crown. According to Hariyadi (2020), the

*Sankha* ornament, winged *Saṅkha* decorations in Javanese temples are generally combined with decorative motifs of tendrils and loops. The winged *Saṅkha* accompanied by this motif can be observed in Sambisari, Ijo, Barong, Prambanan Apit, *Perwara*, Prambanan, and Plaosan Temples. *Saṅkha*, in Buddhist belief, is a symbol of safety and well-being. Its application in Buddhist teachings to temples in Java can be observed in Plaosan and Mendut (Hariyadi, 2020). One form of a symbol that correlates with this fertility is the depiction of the winged *śaṅkha*, which is intended mythologically for the temple building and to support fertility (Hariyadi, 2020). Therefore, it can be concluded that the depiction of the winged *Saṅkha* in Hindu and Buddhist temples in Java is intended to present the water element for the temple and the environment to create fertility that can bring prosperity to the people (Hariyadi, 2020).

**The Metaphorical Role of The Iconography Behind The Philosophical Meaning of The Temple**

Metaphors arise when viewers, users, critics, architects, and designers try to comment on the shape and appearance of a building (Kloppmann-Lambert, 2018). This research analyzes the Plaosan temple to determine the meaning of the temple elements. It aims to examine the role of the metaphor in the formation of

**Table 1.** Ornaments of the Prambanan temple as a representation of a Hindu temple;

Types of temple ornaments/reliefs	Description of shapes
Relief of the Tree of Life/ <i>Kalpataru</i> (a combination of flora and fauna)	It consists of Brahma, Shiva, and Wahana temples. The ornament of the living tree / <i>kalpataru</i> symbolizes the presence of water, air, and land, as a form of nirvana.
Plant ornaments/flora tendrils	
Sunflower	It is located on the wall of the vertical foot of the temple
Trumpet Flowers	It is on the side of the circular temple roof.
Lotus Flower Tendrils in sideburns ( <i>Purnakalasa</i> )	It is a lotus sticking out of the latrine and is located in the <i>Lorojonggrang</i> temple. As a symbol of fertility and happiness.
Winged <i>Sankha</i> ornament	The <i>sankha</i> has wings found on the side of the <i>Apit</i> temple.
Geometric Ornaments	It is found at the temple's foot and the <i>Lankan</i> fence.

**Table 2.** Ornaments of Plaosan Temple in Prambanan represent Buddhist-Hindu temples.

Types of temple ornaments/reliefs	Description of shapes
Plant ornaments/flora tendrils	The motif of this vine and ribbon curtain surrounds the outer side of the upper part of the temple base.
Winged <i>Sankha</i> ornament	The motif of this vine and ribbon curtain surrounds the outer side of the upper part of the temple base. The shape of the <i>sankha</i> has tendrils and wings. Furthermore, it is located at the base of the main temple, which is combined with decorative tendrils.
Geometric Ornaments	This is a decoration surrounding the outer side of the main temple body and the ancillary. It is also found at the outer edge of the main and <i>Perwara</i> temples.

a Hindu-Buddhist temple with the presence of *perwara* ornaments, flora, fauna, and crown motifs on its roof. This is conducted by examining the motifs as well as the stupa, which shows the relationship of ownership of the same ideology. According to Ayiran (2012), it is natural to apply visual metaphors in architecture, similar to analyzing the Plaosan temple. It has a unique shape compared to other temple forms, such as a triple structure, with a crown of various shapes and sizes to become a Buddhist temple. Metaphor is not just a matter of language, it is also associated with thought and action. They involve all the natural dimensions of the human sensory experience, such as color, shape, texture, and sound (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 2003). Similarly, the architecture of the Plaosan temple consists of a metaphorical formation used to analyze the temple and its visual elements. The "minus one" appropriation method is used to determine the visual metaphors that show the relationship between Hindu and Buddhist ideologies (Handriyotopo et al., 2019). When the *perwara* temple stupa is removed or not presented in the Plaosan structure, it will not appear as a temple. However, suppose the *perwara* temples of Kala are removed or not presented as complex. In that case, it becomes a reflection of the Buddhist temple because only the *perwara* stupa temple decorates the Plaosan twin complex. The Plaosan temple, which Hindu-Buddhist characterizes, is more dominant in the stupa aspect of the *Perwara* compared to the Kala *perwara*. Hindu de-

corations are more prominent regarding ornaments related to temple reliefs, with *Sangkha* motif as the oldest. The relief ornaments of the Plaosan temple consist of prominent Hindu decoration, namely the *sankha* tendril motif. This means that the Plaosan temple is a metaphor for Buddhist because the aspect of the *Perwara* temple (figure 3) is the most dominant.

Panofsky's perspective on pre iconography, iconography, and iconology, was used to determine the overall structure of the temple. Panosky (1972) stated that objects and events represented with lines, colors, and volumes could be identified. Therefore, the pre-iconographic reading appears visually as the role of metaphors that make up Plaosan temple. It comprises a Hindu-Buddhist representation, namely the presence of *perwara* temple ornaments, flora and fauna motifs, geometry, and crowns on the roof.

The iconographic analysis deals with images, stories, and allegory instead of motive presuppose, with objects and events acquired through practical experience (Panosky, 1972). Judging from the results of the intrinsic analysis on the iconographic (conceptual) aspect, Hindu temples characterized by ornamental design with tendrils coming out of the *Sangkha* symbolizing God's trumpet Vishnu as seen in *Perwara* temple number 58. The characteristics of Buddhist temples can be seen in the 126 *perwara* stupas, which are the most dominant ancillary architectural forms.

Iconological interpretation requires something more than introducing a parti-

cular theme or concept, which is a world of “symbolic” values (Panosky, 1972). The interpretation of the ideological meanings contained in the Plaosan temple represents Rakai Pikatan’s love for Pramodhawardani. Therefore, the architecture of the Plaosan temple is a metaphor for the reflection of their love despite being distinguished by different religious ideologies. Rakai Pikatan’s love for Pramodhawardani is presented in a metaphorical relief that combines temple ornaments and decorations between Buddhist and Hindu ideology in the Sankha vine motif as an embodiment of the value of fertility. This can be seen in the metaphorical visual representation of the Hindu temple at Prambanan (table 1) and Plaosan temples (table 2). The Sanka (figure 5) motif found at the foot of the main temple is combined with decorative tendrils.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the decorative motifs in the form of building structures, stupas, and reliefs at Plaosan temples reflect the combination of Buddhist and Hindu visual architectural iconography elements. One of the major differences between these temples is the crown shape. For instance, it is a Buddhist temple where the structure is crowned with a stupa similar to the Prambanan but slimmer. Similarly, the Plaosan, a Buddhist temple, also has some elements of Hindu in its structure. It is called a Buddhist temple because the *perwara* stupa is more dominant than the Perwara Kala. Therefore, through the “minus one” method, the *perwara* stupa is removed from the temple complex, making it appear dominant; hence it can be called a Hindu temple.

The combination of the Hindu-Buddhist elements related to the establishment of the temple is a form of acculturation between Rakai Pikatan and Pramodhawardani from each religion’s Hindu and Buddhist dynasties. Therefore, the *perwara* and *perwara* stupas are visual and architectural metaphors of the temple complex, compa-

red to the ornaments or decorations that characterize the temple. The *perwara* and Kala *perwara* stupas are the most dominant icons in the Plaosan temple complex. Based on Panosky’s Iconological Interpretation of the intrinsic analysis of the iconographic (conceptual) aspect, the Kala in Perwara temple number 58 characterizes Hindu. The ornament consists of designs with tendrils coming out of the Sangkha, symbolizing the trumpet of Lord Vishnu.

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