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# Overseas

We encounter another aspect of this tragedy in the Mudejar workmen who were indentured for service in the Spanish overseas colonies. These Spanish Muslim artisans, generally without their womenfolk, were transported to Mexico or New Spain, Colombia or New Granada, and Bolivia or Upper Peru, to decorate the new public buildings in those overseas colonies.

Thus Mudejar decoration is found on public buildings in those and other countries and can be easily recognized by the generally geometric and floral ornament found on floor and wall tiles (each of which requires a different industrial process) and that bears no images or *tamathil* which are so repugnant to Muslims, as we found with the Hornacheros. We likewise find geminated or twinned windows as in Washington Irving's Lindaraja; vaulted cloisters as with the Universidad de San Carlos in Antigua, Guatemala.

Few women came with these exiles, so these workmen married local girls and quickly blended into the general population, and much sooner than the Catholic *conquistadores* who could bring their womenfolk from Spain. However the Mudejars trained grandsons who carried on their crafts in many centres in Latin America, and whose wares are still found in marketplaces today like Taxco, Puebla, Antigua and Bogota.

Manuel Toussaint of Mexico has written *El arte mudejar en America* to document this work (published by Porraa Hermanos in Mexico City, 1946). The black-and-white photography of this volume needs to be redone in colour, with a more thorough survey of this heritage in every country of Latin America.

The lovely Mudejar cloister in the Colonial Museum in Antigua Guatemala was built as the Universidad de San Carlos in the mid 18th Century, when they knew they should keep the building low because of the danger of earthquake from nearby volcanoes. It resembles a Mogul mosque from India or Pakistan.

This style can be revived for use in the new mosques and schools that Muslims will need in North and South America where Islam is now spreading, largely because of the ongoing Palestinian diaspora acid holocaust which ironically is fostering this contemporary revival of our Islamic heritage.

The dry rot in political institutions in America was introduced through this immoral policy and the

autocratic governments and church which were brought to the Spanish overseas colonies. Fanatic kings and .priests led Christian Spain to its downfall, even as late as the 1930s and the Civil War.

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