

THE NAGA DESIGN IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART

One prominent design in Southeast Asian Art, particularly at a period generally recognized by scholars as the period of Indianization, is the *naga* (serpent or serpentine) design. Its history in Southeast Asian art is long and interesting, considering its relation not only to art but also to literature, both secular and religious.

The term *naga* is believed to be Sanskrit in origin. According to the lexicons, it refers to the *naga* or serpent-demon (the race of Kadru or Su-rasa inhabiting the waters or the city of Bhoga-vati under the earth; they are supposed to have a human face with serpent-like lower extremities). In the various Indian languages – either belonging to the Dravidian or Indo-European families – the term refers to the reptile, particularly the cobra. During the period of Indianization of Southeast Asia, more specifically in the peninsular and insular areas, the word came to designate other serpentine forms as well – for example, the dragon. In Javanese *naga* means “large serpent, dragon” and in Bahasa Indonesia, “dragon, (mythological) serpent.” In Malay it also means “dragon, mythical serpent” and in Maranao and Cebuano, also “dragon.”

In the myths and symbolism of Indian art, *nagas* are described as

genii superior to man. They inhabit subaquatic paradises, dwelling at the bottoms of rivers, lakes, and seas, in resplendent palaces studded with gems and pearls. They are keepers of the life-energy that is stored in the earthly waters of springs, wells, and ponds. They are the guardians, also, of

the riches of the deep sea – corals, shells, and pearls. They are supposed to carry a precious jewel in their heads. Serpent princesses, celebrated for their cleverness and charm, figure among the ancestresses of many a South Indian dynasty: a nagini or naga in the family tree gives one a background. (Zimmer 1962:63).

While Heinrich Zimmer (*ibid.*:74) argues that the *naga* design as well as its mytho-symbolic backgrounds in Indian art had their origins/parallels in Mesopotamian Sumeria, the present paper is concerned more with its development in the Southeast Asian region. Historically, the spread of the term, in all its manifestations and meanings, began with the influx of Indian culture in the region. The earliest reference to the *naga* in Southeast Asia is found in

the first information about Funan which comes from the account written by Chinese ambassadors who visited it in the middle of the 3rd century and report the local legend of the foundation of the kingdom, a legend Indian in origin, and one which recurs in Champa and in Cambodian Angkor. A Brahmin led by a dream, landed on these shores, where he met and married the daughter of a native ruler, often represented as a king-naga, that is to say a fabulous snake. The latter, to provide a dowry for his daughter, drank up the water covering the land, so that his children could then cultivate the soil. (Groslier 1962:55).

It appears from the citation above that the *naga* legend is indigenous to Funan (Cambodia), which more or less is confirmed in a Cham (South Vietnam) inscription of A.D. 658. (Finot 1911:32). There is one view that seems to strengthen the indigenous nature of the *naga*-legend to Southeast Asia – that is, it is “austro-asiatic” in origin, though it later spread widely in China and Aryan India (Przyluski 1925:265-284), which in the course of time was re-exported to Southeast Asia now in Indian habiliments. (Cf. Francisco 1971:109-110). With all these, however, the very intensive process of Indianization of the region rendered the legend more Indian in character than its

supposed indigenous nature given its true origins. It is, moreover, interesting to note that in most of the languages of Southeast Asia that had been relatively saturated with Sanskritisms, *naga* is considered to be Sanskrit in origin with the same meaning and basic symbolism as the Sanskrit and its development in the Buddhist canons, art and literature.

It is, therefore, no longer a debatable question that the development of the *naga* — both in meaning and symbolism — in Southeast Asia is very much associated with the spread of Indian culture — language, literature and art — in the region.

In both the secular and religious literatures, the *naga* figures very prominently. In the secular literature, it is not merely an object suggesting wisdom and agility of movement, but also cunning and awe-inspiring countenance. This is particularly so with the figure of the cobra, with its hood symbolic of its widely encompassing nature. Indeed, it is the cobra with which the *naga* in Sanskrit and in Buddhist literatures is always identified. This brings us to the religious and sacred literature, where the *naga* becomes almost a dominant figure, and which literature has been transformed into living art in Southeast Asia. References to the *naga*, particularly in the Jatakas, stories of the various births of the Buddha, are generally widespread. The *naga* is one of the most prominent animals in which the Buddha in his previous births was born. This may be due to the great wisdom attributed to this animal. Vision, wisdom and grace in movement are some of the most important and widely recognized attributes of the *naga*. All these are translated into the iconographic art of Southeast Asia, where the Hindu as well as Buddhist concepts of art have made the most important influence.

The Naga Design in Art

Insofar as the materials that have been examined are concerned, there has not been any indication as to the use of the motif in painting. Available paintings from the Ellora and Ajanta Caves, from which the most extensive Buddhist paintings — both sacred and profane — may be seen, exhibit no evidence of the utilization of the *naga* motif. Not surprisingly, there is no evidence of painting using the motif in Southeast Asia, although in the *wayang* the *naga* is represented, considering the

associations of the animal with the characters that are depicted in this shadow plays.

The *naga* motif, however, is prominently represented in the sculpture of India, even from as early as the Harapa/Mohenjodaro period of Indian pre-history. It is seen throughout the various periods of Indian art. Perhaps the most important use of the design is seen in the representations of the *naga* as protector of the Buddha at the time of his enlightenment. In a similar manner, the *naga* is also associated with Jainism, in which Parsvanatha, the Jina, "the Victor," the *tirthankara*, "the one who has made the crossing through the torrent of rebirth," is announced. The announcement is indicated by the snake shield that surrounds the head like a halo. It should not, however, be mistaken for the *naga*-king, Mucalinda, who protected the Buddha when Mara's storm was unleashed against the Buddha upon his enlightenment.

In the Hindu mythology, the *naga*-motif reaches its acme in the now famous Ganga relief in Mamallapuram, in the Madras State. The Ganga is seen to be

descending through the central vertical cleft . . . , which is seen peopled with water divinities. A giant *naga*-king surges from the depth, followed by his queen, both steeped in pious delight and grateful wonder as the world-enlivening miracle comes to pass. Their heads are framed by gigantic cobra hoods and their bodies terminate in great coils. They are followed by a third *naga*, in the form of a snake with expanded hood. And meanwhile, from every side, animals, demons, men, and gods flock to behold the miracle, to plunge into the celestial stream, and to worship the water . . . (Zimmer 1960:89).

A dramatic representation of the motif is the celebrated ceiling slab in the Haccappya Temple (Aihole, India) depicting Visnu in *naga*-like form (VI Century A.D.); and Visnu on the serpent in the Corridor of Cave III (Badami India) of c. 578 A.D. (Zimmer 1960: Plates 122 and 127).

All these spectacular representations of the *naga*-motif both in

India and Southeast Asia are associated with the religious culture of the peoples of these two regions. It is not surprising therefore that Southeast Asia is one place in Asia where the motif, as influenced by the Indian concepts of art and religion, has its greatest efflorescence.

In both the architectural and sculptural arts of Burma, the *naga*-motif becomes almost a desideratum in the preparation of designs. In Old Burma, on the terraces of a temple in Prome, the *nagas* are very prominent among all the masses of people and animals that flocked to the Buddha to celebrate the occasion of this enlightenment. This is also seen on the ground-plinth of Nanda in the same temple. (Luce 1969:241) On the Nagayon Corridor Paintings, the *nagas* are also depicted as *Marabul yan Nag*, "riding *nagas*." (Ibid. :315).

Nagas are again extensively depicted in the Abeyadana Temple as among those visitors to the enlightened Buddha. (Ibid.:333)

In a beautiful scene in the Myinkaba Kubayauk-Gyi of Rajakumar (c. 1113 A.D.) depicting the building of a temple by King Duthagamani in which he wanted to have relics of the Buddha, the king of the Naga world is shown being requested to give these relics, which all the *nagas* are ordered to guard (Ibid.: 381).

In the tri-dimensional representation of the *nagas*, the Andagu stone sculptures are most famous, where the *naga* hooded figures stand out. This is particularly so with the representation of the Mucalinda Naga, who protected the Buddha from the rain during the sixth week after the Enlightenment (Ibid.:152-153).

The representation of the *naga*, again as it is associated with Buddhism is classified in Thailand into various stylistic forms, like Mon, Khmer, Sawankhalok, Tai, and Sukhotai. (Le May 1938) Under this formal classification a few paradigms of each shall be cited in view of the limitations of space devoted to this paper.

To illustrate the Mon type, there is the Buddha seated crosslegged in the attitude of *samadhi* or "meditation" under the hoods of the Naga king, with a small stupa crown model on either side. (Ibid.: Fig. 32). According to Le May (Ibid.:32), "This is the only instance so far known in Dvaravati period of the Buddha sitting under the Naga king." A very problematic image is that the Buddha of the Hinayana School seated on the king of the Nagas. The form and execution of the Naga king obviously points to a Khmer origin, but the statue itself, which is

detachable from its seat, has no Khmer feature about it. It is made of gilded black-bronze. Forming the halo is the seven-headed serpent. (*Ibid.*: 47-48, Fig. 45)

In spite of his doubt over the identity of the gilded black-bronze Buddha, Le May seemed inclined to identify it to be Khmer in origin. Referring to the period of Suryavarman I's reign, he wrote:

. . . altogether it is rather puzzling but it looks as if by the 10th century the Malay Peninsula had been subjected to a considerable amount of Khmer influence, even if still vassal to Crivijaya. And this hypothesis is much strengthened by the image of the Buddha on the Khmer form of the Naga king, with its Khmer inscription. (*Ibid.*: 54, Fig. 45)

The Khmer temple of P'ra Prang Sam Yot at Lopburi is full of sandstone images of the Buddha seated on the Naga king. (*Ibid.*: Fig. 75 and 76) Another bronze Buddha seated in the attitude of Samadhi or meditation under the shade of the Naga king is found in Le May's collection (Fig. 86). The features of one statue are typically Khmer as are also the crown on the head.

To illustrate the Sawankhalok style, there is at the temple of MahaTat, a small shrine containing a beautiful image of the Buddha seated on the Naga king. (Le May: fig. 100) In the words of Le May, "the features of the image are Siamese or Tai, but, considering the fondness of the Khmer for this particular type, one wonders whether the same process has not been at work as at Lopburi and a perfectly genuine Khmer figure transformed into a Siamese Sawankhalok one." (*Ibid.* 1938:81)

The temple of P'rajedi Chet Teo (The Seven Rows of Stupas) shows a "beautiful Tai Buddha image seated on the Naga King after the Khmer fashion, . . . The folds of the Naga king have been damaged, . . . but the image and magnificent hood are intact and it is certain that in this case a Khmer image has been subsequently transformed into a Tai one." (*Ibid.*: 123) Unmistakably, the image with the Naga king belongs to the Suk'otai School of the early 14th century A.D.

The whole of Southeast Asia is indeed an area where the efflorescence of Indian — both Buddhist and Hindu — art reached its acme. But it appears that Indo-China (once comprising Cambodia, Laos and

the two Vietnams) takes the honor of having been the region where this efflorescence is at its zenith. This could only be equalled by the flowering of this art in Central Java, where the Barabudur sits in majesty over all the great monuments around the vicinity (see below).

In Cambodia, the architecture of the Preahko, the first shrine erected in 879 A.D. by Indravarman to the memory of Jayavarman II, shows "the lintels adopt and refine the innovations of the Kulen style. The central arch is always covered by a branch of foliage, and it often ends in a *naga's* head." Groslier 1962: 98, Fig. 15) One of the towers of the temple hold the king's own statue:

. . . two successive stone enclosures and two moats protected this highly sacred spot. Causeways crossing the inner moat, running east and west in line with the main gates, gave access to the temple. They are lined with huge sandstone *nagas*. They are as yet very clumsy, crawling on the ground and seeming with some difficulty to lift up their heavy hoods, but they adumbrate that wonderful creation of Khmer architecture, the *naga* balustrade. Originally, they were pursued by colossal free-standing *garudas*, illustrating the classical Indian theme of the battle between *garudas* and *nagas*. (Ibid.:99)

The representation of the *naga*, generally in association with *garudas* in Khmer (Cambodian) art proved to be fruitful, for they dared to represent movement in space." (Ibid.:101) This is particularly so as they (the artists) no longer used props or artifices to put up the *nagas* as they are being chased by *garudas* free-standing and in the tri-dimensional composition.

The most important representation of the *naga* in free standing style in Cambodian art finds its greatest manifestation in the art of Angkor Thom, where symbolism and *naga* art blended to create a significant realism for the beholder, particularly if he were a devotee of the gods therein represented. Two great scholars of Southeast Asian art, Bernard Philippe Groslier and Heinrich Zimmer, wax eloquent in their description of this art. Too, both descriptions are manifestations of the highest appreciation of the art as well as its symbolism. But for the

purpose of this brief paper, I would like to use that of Groslier in view of its simple, yet precise, description:

Jayavarman VII's most original contribution to Khmer art was this attempt to give symbols material form on a colossal scale. Of course, long before his time Khmer temple symbolized the universe centred round Mount Meru by its outline, ornament and lay-out, and did it with some grandeur. Jayavarman VII went beyond this rather subtle symbolism, which was little esoteric for the ordinary man who, in any case, had not direct access to sanctuaries reserved for the king and his priests. Henceforward, the great religious themes were outlined against the sky for all to see. There was no time for refinement; the gods had to be conciliated before swift arrival of death, a foretaste of the which had been provided by the Cham. The Khmer temple before his time had been a material expression of religious beliefs but obviously, its builders had been equally concerned with beauty of form. Now, however, there was no time to waste over such niceties. If stone was still used, it was because the labour and the immensity of the effort made a better prayer. The architect was only called in to give shape to the brute mass of a prayer in stone. This art was above all a sacred drama enacted before permanent scenery in the theatre of the world, for gods who were turning away from Cambodia and whose attention had to be regained.

The avenues of giants are the most significant examples of this tendency. The themes of the Churning of the Ocean, an allegory of the Creation of the world, had always haunted Khmer art. Jayavarman VII gave it incomparably grand expression. For instance, fifty-four giants on each side of the avenues at Angkor clasp an immense naga (serpent) which stretches majestically from head to tail along the whole length of the avenue. These giants turn their backs to the city, but the pilgrim sees in them to the left the heavenly gods, and to the right the gods of the underworld. Taking the whole city together, with its central temple symbolizing

the sacred mountain and its four gates symmetrically placed . . . at the cardinal points of the compass, this Churning of the Ocean covers some two and half miles of ground. Thus the heavenly gods at the southern gate hold the tip of a naga symbolically twined round the Bayon-mountain and picked up again by the gods of the underworld at the northern gate. Tugging alternately they make the mountain churn ambrosia from the ocean which is represented by the moats. Considering that the Khmer king, a god on earth, brings wealth and life by the waters of the canals, could any symbol have been better chosen? The inscriptions state the matter quite explicitly: "The City (Angkor Thom) enriched with a palace of precious stones was espoused by this king (Jayavarman VII) in order to procreate the happiness of the Universe." The image had additional meaning for the Khmer in that the *Naga* also stood for the rainbow, and so for the bridge to heaven. And, by passing along these avenues, did one not reach the Bayon, image of the celestial palace of the gods? The beauty of the composition is worthy of the grandeur of the conception: the rhythm of the bodies straining backwards, the vast bulk of the serpent (naga) rearing towards the sky, and the impressive eyes of the giants which seem to pierce the pilgrims' heart. (Ibid.: 177-180; Zimmer 1960: 209-212)

A century after the Angkor Thom was built by Jayavarman VII, the Angkor Wat Temple was built by Suryavarman II in early 12th century in equal grandeur. This time the same story of the churning of the ocean, based on the Puranic story, was executed in his reliefs. The scene occupies the whole of the eastern gallery of the Temple. The serpent Vasuka represented the rope for turning the Mount Mandara which symbolized the churning rod. (see Zimmer 1960; 228-230, Plate 548-551) What is most interesting in these reliefs is that the serpent is so executed as to give the details of its scales and their design.

In terms of Indian art in Malaya, the materials that had been examined did not yield any that show the use of the *naga* motif. However, Indonesian art, evincing definitely Indian influence, gives us a few

pieces with the *naga* design. There is the *naga*-king and its queen from Ungaran, south of Semarang. This image is now in the Djakarta Museum. The statue itself does not seem to be very impressive, but its ornament on the head is charming. (Bernet Kempers 1959: 34, pl. 30) Another use of the motif is in Chandi Mendut which depicts this scene in Buddhist story:

At one time Avalokitesvara, moved by compassion for this wretched world, shed a tear which changed into a lake, full of lotuses. On one of them arose a goddess. She is represented in the central panel of the south side. The stalk of the lotus is supported by two Nagas. These large reliefs of Mendut are among the greatest compositions of Hindu-Javanese art. (*Ibid.*: 39, pl. 53)

In another temple, the Chandi Sari, a *naga*-king is depicted on its north entrance. This *naga*-king is identified by serpents represented on its crown, indicating — “an inhabitant of a fairyland in the nether world.” (*Ibid.*: 54, pl. 119)

Representation of the *naga* in a medium apart from the usual stone is found in Indonesia. This is done in gold-leaf from Tjlaket (Malang). The figure is now in the Djakarta Museum. It is among 48 other goldleaf figures found in 1928 in a bronze pot buried in the Tjlaket village (Malang). (*Ibid.*: 65, pl. 180) *Nagas* in gold-leaf are also found in Borneo in the now famous Limbang (Harrison, 1949: 1969, 1970) and Sambas golden hoards (Harrison and O'Connor. 1967; 1969).

Perhaps, a repeat presentation of the *naga*-motif, as seen in the churning of the ocean in the Angkor Thom and the Angkor Wat, is also made in the Chandi Panataran, a complex of temples in East Java. The representation is somewhat different. In the complex is the *naga*-temple, so-called because of the enormous snakes encircling the body of the structure. Supporting snakes are nine figures in royal attire, provided with nimbuses and carrying a priest's bell in their hands. According to the popular belief around the area, the *naga*-temple was used for keeping the possessions of the god, such as copperplate inscriptions, sacred objects, etc.

Nagas are also found on other buildings at Panataran, such as the lower part of the terraces in the first courtyard and the body of the main temple. Apart from having other symbolic meanings, snake figures, as a matter of fact, distinguish various monuments as replicas of Mount Meru, a connection perhaps of this little temple to the Mountain of the God. The *naga*-Temple was the place where the king, being an incarnation of God re-established his unity with the latter in meditation. (Ibid.: 91, pl. 272).

The *naga* as motif or design in art in the Philippines is found only among the Filipino Muslims. Although it might have been found among other Philippine groups, the survivals of this design can only be seen among the Maranaos, the Maguindanaos and the Tausog. The paradigms that shall be cited in this paper shall be from the Maranao, with whom the present writer is familiar.

In view of the injunctions against representations of objects in art by Islamic canons, the *naga*-design among the Maranaos has become a highly stylized motif which cannot be easily recognized by the non-Maranao. As an individual design, the *naga* is recognizable as the "S" sign, either stylized or non-stylized. As a single individual motif, it is generally used in the *panolong* ("the carved floor beam that protrudes in front of a house" of the *torogan*; the ancestral home of the highest titleholder of the major descent line with a community). *Panolong* means primarily "the prow of a boat," and therefore, the design is also in boats.

There are two known motifs that are developed from the simple individual *naga*: the rope design (in Maranao, the *obid-obid* or *tialitali*) and the more well-known design, the *magoyoda*, where the serpentine figure dominates and in repetitive arrangement elaborated with other leaf motifs. (Baradas 1968: Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 14-22).

The design is also found giving some artistic motif for the *kutiapi* (a two stringed-musical instrument), the *pangolayan sa tiatag* ("rice cake shifter handle), the *koda o satoran* (the knight pieces of a Maranao chess set), and many other art pieces where the motif may be accommodated. (Ibid.)

The following discussion on the *naga*-design as it is manifested in other ornamental motifs is purely speculative. However, there is a possibility that the *naga* forms may have had influenced also the formation

of these designs in Southeast Asia. These designs are known as *kirtti-mukha* and/or *kala-makara* designs in the mainland and insular Southeast Asia. In the Philippines, the motif may have its manifestations in the now famous *sarimanok* art.

Kirtti-mukha and *kala-makara* are Sanskrit terms meaning, respectively, "glorious face" and "monster-headed mythological aquatic animal." Both show significant resemblances with the *naga* designs. In India, the *kirtti-mukha* is generally associated with sculptural figures of Siva, upon whose throne the motif is mounted, "a manifestation of the terrible aspect of the power of god — which simultaneously is the power of the lotus — it is a warning of danger to the impious and a guarantee of protection to the devotee." (Zimmer 1960:179) This design is transformed in Southeast Asia as the *kala-makara*, generally ornamental designs in various parts of the architecture of edifices — temples, stupas, *mantapas*.

A few examples of the *Kala-makara* may be cited from the mainland. In Burma, there are buildings with gables and doors, windows and niches, that are usually crowned with simulated large-boards in the form of multifoil arches. The turn-up ends contain the heads of crocodile-dragons (*makaras*), realistic or stylized; the two halves of the arch are their bodies, fringed with spiky horns. (Griswold 1964:36). In the architecture of pre-Angkor Indo-China, particularly in Sambor, buildings are all carved with an arcature in imitation of the wooden lintels spanning Indian porticos or *torana*, from which offerings of garlands of flowers or leaves are suspended. On this arcature are bent downwards, and swallowed by those marine monsters familiar in India, the *makaras*. (Groslier 1962: 73, fig. 10). Throughout the architectural history of mainland Southeast Asia, the *makaras* or *kalamakaras* apparently dominate the ornamental patterns of buildings.

From insular Southeast Asia, Indonesia, the Barabudur may be taken to illustrate the *Kala-makara*. The four sides of the Barabudur gateways are framed by *kala-makara* ornaments through which the visitor gradually proceeds to the highest of the square terraces. The head of the monster above the entrance seems to devour the visitor who dies and is reborn in a symbolic manner not unlike the moon which is swallowed and given back by a monster of the same type. The gates demonstrate in this way the initiation of the pilgrim into a new

stage by introducing him to a new gallery through the *kala-makara* ornament. (Bernet Kempers 1959:48, Pl. 90)

In the Philippines, the *sarimanok* has often been equated with the *naga*-motif. This may be due to the relatively very close resemblance between the two designs. It is interesting to note that the *sarimanok* approved by the Heraldry Commission of the Philippines certainly does not have the resemblance of the *sarimanok* as known to the Maranaos or the Maguindanaos and the Tausogs. It is indeed a highly stylized *naga*-motif. Of course, perhaps one of the main reasons for the identification of one with the other or vice versa is that oftentimes the stylization of the *sarimanok* beak, comb and tail resembles very closely the *naga* form, either in the simple "S" or stylized design (cf. Saber-Orellana 1963)

To the Maranao, the *sarimanok*, as mythological bird, symbolizes wealth, power and prestige. The primary colors used in painting the object reveals the Maranao's volcanic temper; the elaborate *naga*-like lines exhibit his tendency to ostentatious display, and the abstract lines bring him closer to his God. As a national art object, it is valued both for its aesthetic qualities and its cultural significance.

In a review of Galo Ocampo's "Three Periods of Philippine Art," I have the occasion to give some extensive comments on the color-plate he included with his paper. It is captioned "Sari-Manok - A Lanao Design." I wrote in part -

This decorative design has characteristics which manifest similarity with or perhaps are reminiscent of the *Kala-makara* ornament in temple architecture of Ancient Java (W.F. Stutterheim, "The Meaning of the Kala-Makara Ornament," in *Indian Art and Letters*, iii, p. 27, et. seq.; also "A Note on Kirtti Mukha," in *Rupam*, i, January, 1920, p. 11; and J. Ph. Vogel, "The relation between the Art of India and Java," *India Society*, London, 1925, p. 60-2). Perhaps the design is an abstract representation of the ornament, as it had tended to become in the Javanese art. Dr. Stutterheim wrote of this ornament: "It should not be forgotten that the Kala-mara was no longer a symbol but had become an ornamental motif which, so long as there was no other motif to take its place,

retained a permanent place in architecture owing to the fact that it was eminently suited to surround niches and gateways." (Ibid., p. 37-8) Only a further research on the history and evolution of this Lanao decorative design will show us the real purpose of the ornament. It may not be hazardous to postulate that we might even be able to connect it with the Kala-mara (*kirtti mukha*) motifs of India, via the Javanese designs and that the purpose of such design before it became abstracted from the objective representations of the mythical animals, may have followed the same lines of development as the Javanese. (Francisco 1960:197)

Over the past years, the *sarimanok* has somehow been understood in the context of its own cultural milieu rather than its impressionistic manifestations. The role that the present Muslim Filipinos are now playing have brought them into the fore of studies thereby bringing out the best of their culture, one of which is the *sarimanok*, stylized in *naga*-like designs and lines forming the basic factor of understanding the Maranao.

Concluding Remarks

The appearance of the *naga* in both the literature and art makes it a very popular animal indeed in the whole of Southeast Asia. In spite of the overlapping, in terms of execution of design of the various artistic schools in mainland Southeast Asia, the *naga*-form is maintained to a point, regardless of style.

In the religious art, the representation of the *naga* is itself a monumental achievement because of its symbolism. It reaches its zenith in its representation as protecting the Buddha from the storm created by the evil Mara and its lending itself to become the rope used in the churning of the ocean for the ambrosia of life.

Its development as an artistic design in Southeast Asia may prove to be profound if the suggestion about its relation with the *kala-makara/kirtti-mukha* and the *sari-manok* motifs is established.

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