The Architecture of Maranao Tribe: Adopting the Indigenous into the contemporary

Gizelle Grace Ambasan
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Prof. Rowena Santos Delgado
University of the Philippines in Mindanao
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Maranao...

- Maranao are the graceful "people of the lake", living on the northern edge of Lake Lanao. They are Mindanao's last group to be converted to Islam.
Maranao Art

- *Okir* or *okkil* refers to the range of folk motifs, usually of plants and geometric forms, that are prominent in Maranao art work.
Maranao Art..

- Okir Art is also seen in the torogan houses, in the panolong - a carved beam that protrudes in the front of the house and is adorned with okir motif.
Arts and Crafts...

Photos taken by Jojie Alcantara
the MARANAO house

- The Maranao arrange their houses in a line pattern along a river, road or lake shore.

- Like many ordinary houses in the south, the old Marano house is simply one big partitionless room.

- Bed spaces are created by using several carved sheets

- The woven split rattan *Sapiyay*, or the mosquito screen, used as dividers or headboards

- Bundles of rice stalks are placed under woven mats to serve as beds

- A long pillow stuffed with dried *la’ing*, or banana leaves, is placed at the head and a long mat at the foot of the bed.

Photo by Jojie Alcantara
The Maranaos have three types of house: lawig the small houses, mala-a-walai the large houses and the torogan.

- Raised on pilings from .31 to 2.21 meters above the ground
- Roof, walls, flooring, doors, and windows are made of bamboo material lashed together with rattan.

- Usually has 9 to 12 posts, depending on the size of the house
- The main room (without partitions) measures about 7.86 to 18.9 meters
Roofing

Roof Detail of Maranao House

Steep and shaped like carabao’s horns

- **THICK COGON GRASS** are used and lash this to a split bamboo frame with rattan
- but if there are enough **BAMBOO**, this is used for roofing instead:
- Some use **WOOD SHINGLES** for the roof. However, this is not the traditional practice.
  And most of the houses have no ceiling.
WINDOWS

- **Front**: to watch neighbors pass by
- **Right side**: to check the carabao inside its corral below the house, esp. at night

  Sliding windows: “push the covers to the side to open”

PORCH

- Placed in **front** and **fenced** to prevent children from falling off

Kitchen

  Built a **half meter lower** and is at the **BACK**
On entering a Maranao house, a new world unfolds. The interior is one cavernous hall going down the entire length of the house, from doorway to rear kitchen. To left and right of the center aisle are living areas for the different but related families who inhabit the house. Rows of chests are used as dividers and along the wall are utility shelves. Each family is allotted an area where the members eat, work and sleep. Cloth partitions are unfurled to separate one family from another at night. The kitchen at the rear is common to all. Children are therefore brought up within a close-knit family larger than that composed of his parents and siblings.
- Some use *kapok* but others use the cottony *flowers of masaw* seeds for their *pillows* and *mattresses*.

- If there is a baby, his cradle is hung up from the roof beam on a piece of rope attached to a reel spring.

- In times past, MARANO revised a bamboo spring that functioned like a coiled spring to which the four corners of the malong were tied with pieces of strong rope hanging from the frame.

- There are shelves along the wall.

- Small, low, round brass tables are used as tables. Brass strands and brass tray cuspidors are well arranged in the room.

- In the kitchen, the stone stoves, pots and pans, water containers, the plaited bamboo *tapaan* on which fish or meat is smoked.

- Under the house are farming and fishing equipment, the plow and harrow, the mortar and pestle, and a big vessel for storing rice.
Aspects of Meaning...

- Maranao's principal okir designs are the sarimanok, the naga and the pako rabong. These designs are not made just for ornamentation, it has a meaning and history.

- The sarimanok is the stylized design of a bird holding a fish in its beak or standing on a base in the shape of fish. While its meaning derives from epics and myths, it also alludes to Lake Lanao with its fertile waters.

In the aspect of human Context Maranao is rich in ornamentation at the same time meaning. They also have a need to create symbols like the sarimanok to represent their social and community life.

http://www.ph.net/htdocs/education/sarimano.htm
Signs and Symbols

- The naga has the form of an elaborate mythical serpent with a vigorous S-curve and numerous curvilinear motifs to suggest its scales. The pako rabong is a stylized growing fern with a broad base gracefully tapering upwards. The sarimanok and naga are found in the panolong, the extended floor beam of the torogan or the large Sultan’s house, and its interior beams and posts.
TOROGAN

- Ancestral house of the upper-class MARANAHO,
- reminder of the bygone days when carving is an art exclusive to sultans and young daughters were jewels to be hidden in towers and secret rooms.
- 1980: the torogan of Datu Pimbarat at Amito, Marantao, Marawi City was still standing, badly needing of repair, and looking not even a skeleton of its former glory.
The roof of Torogan was originally made of cogon grass but during the American regime the son of Datu Pimbarat changed it to G.I. sheets.
Maranao Inspired...

Concete Maranao House

Maranao Inspired House:
http://mindanao.blog.co.uk/2007/04/02/torogan_a_traditional_maranao_house

Maranao Inspired Resturant
Pearl Farm Resort
Photo by Jojie Alcantara.
Maranao Inspired..

- Situated in Samal Island, the Pearl Farm Resort features an architecture that is predominantly influenced by the Maranao/Samal tribal ethnic characteristic. It has become one of the country’s foremost tourism landmarks for its depiction of regional traits in a modern four star resort. It was recently featured as one of the venues for the 1994 Miss & Interior Design.
- Universe Pageant. The interiors of the different houses focus on the Yakan, Tausug, Maranao and Badjao culture and craft.
- Neovernacular is seen in the adaptations of elements, it borrows traditional forms primarily for stylistic reasons.
- Pearl Farm Resort is designed in such a way that it relates to its environment. The resort is seen as a part of the island, there is a resemblance.
between them. Contextualism is being observed. The architect gave justice to the original creative design by using it properly. He created a mood and identity. The sad thing about the adaptation of these design is that, the meaning of it is gone. Maranao uses these design elements not for ornamentation but for interpretation of their beliefs and tradition. Since we have differences in culture, beliefs, and tradition; it is impossible to have a common interpretations. And for the Maranao it is somewhat inappropriate if other people use their distinct designs without giving importance of its meaning.
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