

# Monsters

## or Bearers of Life-Giving Powers?

Trans-Religious Migrations of  
an Ancient Western Asian Symbolism



Sara Kuehn

# Monsters

as Bearers of Life-Giving Powers?



# Monsters

## as Bearers of Life-Giving Powers?

Trans-Religious Migrations of  
an Ancient Western Asian Symbolism

Sara Kuehn

*with a foreword by*  
Lokesh Chandra



INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE  
FOR THE ARTS, New Delhi



---

Publishers of Indian Traditions

**Cataloging in Publication Data — DK**

[Courtesy: D.K. Agencies (P) Ltd. <docinfo@dkagencies.com>]

**Sharma, Arvind, author.**

— Hinduism and its own terms / Arvind Sharma.  
— pages cm

— ISBN 13:

— 1. Hinduism. 2. Hinduism — Dictionaries. I. Title.

DDC 294.5 23

**ISBN 13: 978-81-926114-1-9**

*First published in India in 2016*

© Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, except brief quotations, in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior written permission of the copyright holder, indicated above, and the publishers.

*Published by:*

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts  
Central Vista, Janpath, New Delhi - 110 001

*Phone:* (011) 2338 1303; *Fax:* 2338 8280

*E-mail:* kalakosa\_ed@yahoo.co.in

*Website:* www.ignca.nic.in

and

D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd.

*Regd. Office:* Vedaśrī, F-395, Sudarshan Park  
(Metro Station: Ramesh Nagar)

New Delhi - 110 015

*Phones:* (011) 2545 3975; 2546 6019 *E-mail:* indology@  
dkprintworld.com

*Website:* www.dkprintworld.com

*Printed by:* D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd., New Delhi

*Das Schaudern ist der Menschheit bestes Teil;  
Wie auch die Welt ihm das Gefühl verteure,  
Ergriffen, fühlt er tief das Ungeheure.*

Awe is the best of man: howe'er the world's  
Misprizing of the feeling would prevent us,  
Deeply we feel, once gripped, the weird portentous.

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*,  
Second Part, Act I: “Finstere Galerie” (vv. 6272-6274)



## Foreword

THE beauty of the outer and of the inner world which is more perfect and greater creates a contrast of two aspects: the outer and the inner. The light of inner vision is contrasted with what is seen by the bodily eye. Al-Ghazālī says: “There is a great difference between him who loves the painted picture on the wall on account of the beauty of its outer form and him who loves a Prophet on account of the beauty of his inner form”. In the Jonah cycle the inner world is sought in a non-human symbol of the womb of the monstrous fish, an incorporeal centre of ecstatic experience. Dr Sara Kuehn rightly says that belly is not used in an anatomical sense, but as “womb”, which denotes an esoteric inner world expressed in zoomorphic terms. She discusses the Jonah cycle in the context of the comparative study of world religions, unavoidably conveying multivalency. The Book of Jonah deals with penitent pagans and their salvation from the wrath of Israel’s God, and the theological lessons of the prophet Jonah. The swallowing up and regurgitation of Jonah by a fish dramatize the inner transformation and spiritual rebirth of this prophet.

The fish symbolism is very ancient and its spread is universal. There were sacred fish in the temples of Apollo and Aphrodite at Myra and Hierapolis. The fish of Chalus is regarded as divine in Xenophon. The Syrians looked on fish as holy. In Egypt a pair of fishes symbolized the life-giving River Nile. The state emblem of Uttar Pradesh is a pair of fishes as one of the eight auspicious symbols, as well as the main rivers, Gaṅgā and Yamunā. In Christian art, paired fishes represent Christ “the fisher of men”. The fish served at a Sabbath meal may itself be rooted in Jewish messianic



expectations and later Jewish tradition — eating of the two great Biblical monsters Leviathan and Behemoth — connected with the inauguration of the messianic age. God is depicted as the host of a banquet, slaughters the two monstrous fish, cooks them and serves them to the pious remnant at the eschatological banquet. The Book of Jonah makes a natural parallel telling the story of another great marine monster. For both Jews and Christians the tale of Jonah had eschatological significance and some early Christian writers may have been aware of the Jewish prophecy that the Biblical marine monsters may be eaten at the blessed banquet. Their consumption may have the force of prefiguring the Christian feast following the resurrection.

*Matsya-yugma* (pair of fishes) originated as a symbol of the flow of sacred rivers. In *yoga*, they represent the lunar and solar channels in meditation to carry the alternating rhythms of breath (*prāṇāyāma*). The fish and *yoga*: what a surprising linkage.

*Matsyāvātāra* (Fish Incarnation) of Viṣṇu is the first *avatāra* of the Age of Truth (Satya-yuga). The fish saved the seventh Manu Satyavrata from the deluge. Viṣṇu had informed Manu of the approaching deluge and directed him to build a ship, and to embark on it when the deluge came. The fish of a prodigious size swam to Manu who fastened the ship to it and emerged safe when the waters subsided. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* relates that the fish sought in the ocean the demon Hayagrīva who had stolen the Vedas from the sleeping Brahmā. He gave the Vedas to Manu and taught him the principles of the knowledge which should guide the human race during the present cycle of the four aeons (*yugma*), the doctrine of the Self (*adhyātma* or metaphysics), of Immensity. The Fish Incarnation is first mentioned in the Vedic text *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and repeated in the epic *Mahābhārata* 3.190.2-56. *Matsya Purāṇa* is so called because it was communicated by Viṣṇu in the form of a fish (*matsya*) to the seventh Manu.

In *Mahābhārata* the fish is represented as an incarnation of Brahmā the Immense Being. The Vedas and the Eternal Dharma

spring from Brahmā. He is the first Seer, the source of all knowledge. King Matsya or Virāṭa of *Mahābhārata* was found by fishermen, along with his sister Matsyā or Satyavatī in the body of the nymph Adrikā, metamorphosed into a fish.

The fish pair is one of the eight auspicious emblems (*aṣṭamaṅgala*). In Buddhism, these golden fishes symbolize happiness as they have full freedom in water.

In China, the fish represents conjugal fidelity and a fish-pair is given as a wedding present. The Chinese word *yu* means both “fish” and “great wealth”.

The spiritual ambience of India was connected with rivers in their perennial flow and alive with fishes. The texts prescribe that places of natural charm be chosen for meditation, like a beach, a forest, or a hermitage. *Mahāvairocanasūtra* specifies the spots to be selected for *yoga*, e.g. site of pure and pleasing water, lotus ponds, waterfalls, etc. Water and wisdom, the transcendent word and creativity were symbolized as the Goddess Sarasvatī, the flowing (*saras*) dimension of human thought and visualization of the Divine. The fish represented the waters, the waters were the flow of creativity and its interior of belly the substantive ground of resplendent vision. In the mysterious and dangerous darkness of the belly of the giant fish lay the joy (*ānanda*) of mystic experience. In the long journey of India’s time we can see the evolution of the inner life in the external forms of human and animal sentience. The righteous and inequitable, the good and evil, the true and false coexist and coact. Opposites are also complimentary, and so is the bipolarity of the present life and its destruction in the dragon-like monster devouring or disgorging a prophet detailed in this fascinating monograph by Dr Kuehn.

Situated primarily at the interface of religious studies and art history, these various trans-religious migrations reveal a many-layered thought world shared by Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, or Buddhists. Ideas have always been shared across space

and time undergoing morphological and ideational changes in the perspectives of the borrowing culture or spirituality.

Crossing numerous disciplinary boundaries, Dr Kuehn covers an immense spatial and chronological terrain and finds parallels to the Jonah cycle in the Hindu Purāṇas and Buddhist Tāranātha, and the sixteenth-century Sanskrit text *Amṛtakuṇḍa* names the prophet Jonah. The great Matsyendra (flourished CE 980) was the first human *guru* to whom the esoteric doctrines of the Nātha sect were communicated after he was swallowed by a giant fish. Once Śiva was explaining to Pārvatī the deeper mysteries of the doctrine as they sat by the sea. Trapped in the belly of the fish, Matsyendra overheard the discourse and became enlightened. He is also called Mīnanātha (Fish-Lord). He was attached to the court of a descendant of Indrabhūti who is the reputed author of *Jñānasiddhi*.

Dr Kuehn points out: “In the Qur’an 68.48 the prophet is mentioned as ‘Companion of the Fish’ (*ṣāhib al ḥut*)”. She says further that the “great fish” is said to have come from India on account of the prophet. A question follows: did the fish cycle originate or evolve in India? As detailed survey of this cycle in Sanskrit, Pāli and Prākṛt texts can be revealing. Consciousness is born out of the primordial womb of the unconscious.

This monograph of Dr Kuehn transports us to the fountainhead of the soul where the spiritual meaning lies behind the objective visible. The inner world takes the place of the outer world. She renews the grand spirit of Coomaraswamy to visualize the universal manifestation of a religious concept in its unponderable outreach over several traditions. We have to walk back to a transreligious and transnational fountainhead to find the mother tongue of spirituality. It is to listen to a voice that comes from beyond the sensual, away from ever-encroaching monocentrism.

*And so we see that every being  
Has first to be essentially itself,  
Before it can become all other things*

*Within the cycle of its changing forms.  
Therefore that Mind, wherever it exists,  
Has a twofold function to fulfil:  
That of maker and destroyer.  
It must gather strength to spend it  
In a work of self-undoing.  
For, both as vehicle and obstacle,  
At once uniting and dividing,  
It lies athwart the road from self to Self.*

**Lokesh Chandra**



## Preface and Acknowledgements

This study tries to establish the various iconographic forms and the historical context of an ambiguous imagery that combines stages of the process of ingestion and regurgitation which is sometimes manifested in the visual pairing of monstrous heads around a central motif. It does so by endeavouring to reconstruct some of the connotations most likely to be found in the medieval Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim mind when confronted with this symbolic pattern and its mythological subtexts. The diverse forms of this particular theme and its structures of interaction are anchored in “mythical” dimensions of “meaning” comprising elements of great narratives that lend themselves to the need for a universal expression of a particular human condition which evinces itself more as a process than as a product.

Reflecting an interval or intermediary and transitory junction between two states or two modalities of existence and thus alluding to meanings which elude exact formulation, it attempts to reveal an experience, which includes manifestations of the uncanny. From the founder of cultural anthropology, the English anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917), in the nineteenth century to the Dutch historian and philosopher of religion Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890–1950) in the twentieth century, the uncanny was regarded a distinguishing feature of the sacred and was conterminous with it. The New High German word *ungeheuer* approximately refers to the uncanny, the numinous. The German scholar of comparative religion, Rudolph Otto (1869–1937), brilliantly elaborated the idea of the *numinous* in religious experience, which he categorized as

*mysterium tremendum et fascinans*.<sup>1</sup> *Ungeheuer* may also be translated with the English word *monster* deriving from the Latin *monstrum*, which in turn derives from the root *monstrare* (to show) and *monere* (to warn). Pointing at a potentially shocking and powerful transformation, the imagery involves a symbolic engagement with something that is manifestly not comprehended and profoundly ambiguous.

Any attempt to unravel this symbolic content is necessarily both speculative and incomplete and I offer some solutions herein with a sense of trepidation. Yet, even though a certain amount of mystery necessarily remains, I hope that it has been possible to reconstruct some aspects of the conditions and mental processes which underlie the creative employment of this enigmatic iconography.

The text has had a long gestation period and, as some readers will recognize, parts of it have been published previously. It is essentially an attempt to answer certain questions which have intrigued me while I was working on my dissertation, part two of which was published as *The Dragon in Medieval East Christian and Islamic Art*, 2011.

In February 2014, at the kind invitation of Prof. Dr Mansura Haidar and the Indira Gandhi National Centre of the Arts (IGNCA), I presented a lecture extracted from the text of this manuscript. My warmest thanks are due to Prof. Dr Haidar, not only for reading the manuscript, but even more for her generous and patient encouragement, without which this project would have been neither undertaken nor completed. My best thanks are also due to IGNCA.

Among the many debts of gratitude I am especially grateful to the Orient Institute Beirut (OIB), where part of the research was completed, in particular to its director, Prof. Dr Stefan Leder. I owe

---

<sup>1</sup> See R. Otto, 1917, *Das Heilige: über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen*.

special thanks to Dr Thomas Scheffler, of OIB, who read earlier versions of this text and made many helpful suggestions. Finally, the responsibility for the hypotheses and mistakes in this text must rest with me. I am grateful to all those who have contributed to the making of this volume. To these and to all who have followed the progress of this manuscript with interest and concern, I express my sincere thanks.

*Vienna, April 2016*

**Sara Kuehn**





# Contents

*Foreword - Lokesh Chandra*

*Preface and Acknowledgements*

*List of Illustrations*

**Monsters as Bearers of Life-Giving Powers**

*Appendix*

*Illustrations*

*Bibliography*

*Index*



## List of Illustrations

- fig. 1:* **A human figure in the jaws of a large dragon**  
Carved relief. Georgian church of Beris Sakdari, southern entrance. Near the village of Eredvi, Georgia, Patara Liakhvi Gorge. Mid-tenth century. After Baltrušaitis 1929: pl. LXXI, fig. 118.
- fig. 2:* **A human figure in the jaws of a large dragon**  
Carved relief. Georgian Tao-Klarjeti monastery church of Haho (Georgian Khakhuli), south porch, south door, east side. North-eastern Turkey, modern Bağlar Başı. Tenth to eleventh centuries. After Winfield 1968: 63, fig. 6.
- fig. 3:* **Jonah in the jaws of the sea monster**  
Wall-hanging. Wool on linen, bouclé (loop-stitched) technique, h. 119 cm; w. 21 cm. Egypt, perhaps Antinoe or Akhmim, third to fifth centuries. Paris, Musée du Louvre, purchased 1968, E 26820. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 4:* **Jonah in the jaws of the sea monster**  
High relief fragment. Discovered in Bawit, located north of Asyut in Upper Egypt. Probably once part of the small basilica, south of the monastery of Saint Apollo (Deir Abu Abullu), founded between 385 and 390. Church, l. 15 m; w. 11.50 m. Sixth to eighth centuries. Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 5:* **Jonah in the jaws of the sea monster**  
Architectural scale model of a tympanum above the entrance of the church, south of the late fourth-century monastery of Saint Apollo (Deir Abu Abullu) Bawit, located north of Asyut in Upper Egypt. Sixth to eighth centuries. Hypothetical reconstruction of the church by Jean-Claude Golvin. Architectural scale model by Denis Delpallilo. Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 6:* **Jonah devoured by the sea monster**  
Fragment of a sarcophagus, h. 90 cm; w. 71 cm. Discovered in Sarigüzel, near the Fenari Isa Mosque. Fourth to fifth centuries. Istanbul, Istanbul Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 4517 T. After *From Byzantium to Istanbul* 2010: 211, fig. 137.

- fig. 7: *Matsya avatāra*: Viṣṇu Vāsudeva takes the form of a giant fish**  
Black stone, carved relief, h. 111.8 cm. Vajrayoginī, Munshiganj. c. ninth century. Dhaka, Dhaka National Museum, inv. no. 01-01-033-1968-00070. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 8: *Matsya avatāra*: Matsya carries on his back a shrine which he has saved from the waters**  
Sandstone, carved relief. Central India. c. ninth century. London, British Museum, inv. no. OA 1872.7-1.50. Photograph courtesy: British Museum, London.
- fig. 9: *Jonah devoured by the sea monster***  
Folio from Bal'ami's *Tarjumat-i tārikh-i Ṭabarī*. Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper, h. 42.2 cm; w. 28.7 cm. Probably Iraq, attributed to the Jazira, possibly Mosul, c. 1300. Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, Purchase F1957.16.107r. Photograph courtesy: Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC.
- fig. 10: *Jonah emerging from the sea monster's mouth***  
Eight-pointed star tile, stone relief carving. Part of an all-over interlocking stone panel, frontispiece of the altar (*kat'oghike*), great church, monastic complex Makaravank'. Armenia, Tavush province, Mahkanaberd region. 1224. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 11: *Jonah emerging from the sea monster's mouth***  
Folio from Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb's *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* (Compendium of Chronicles) (detail). Ink and opaque watercolour on paper, h. 20.5 cm; w. 10.5 cm. Iran, Tabriz, 714/1314-15. Formerly in the collection of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, now in the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, London, MSS 727, K35, f. 299r. After Blair 1995: 86, fig. 52.
- fig. 12: *Jonah emerged from the sea monster's mouth (and detail)***  
Folio probably from a *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* (Compendium of Chronicles). Ink, opaque watercolour, gold, and silver on paper, h. 33.7 cm; w. 49.5 cm. Iran, c. 1400. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 33.113. Armenag Bey Sakisian, Paris, until 1933; Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1933. Photograph courtesy: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- fig. 13: *The planet jawzahar***  
Detail from the Bobrinski bucket, possibly Herat, Afghanistan. Muḥarram 559/December 1163. By Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid and Mas'ūd ibn Aḥmad. Copper alloy, inlay in silver, copper and niello. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. JR-2268 (detail). Photograph courtesy: State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

- fig. 14a-c:* **Dragons flanking a human head**  
Church of Saints Paul and Peter (Surb Poghos Petros). Armenia, Siunik' province, Tat'ev monastic complex. Constructed by the order of Prince Ashot' of Siunik' between 895 and 906. Photographs: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 15:* **Dragons flanking a mask-like human head**  
First page of the Gospel according to Luke, written and illustrated for Bishop Ter Karapet. Cilician Armenia, monastery of Paughoskan. 1193. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, MS 538, f. 154 (detail). After Der Nersessian and Agemian 1993: fig. 8.
- fig. 16:* **Dragons flanking a mask-like human head**  
Caravanserai Susuz Han, composition surmounting the two niches that flank the main portal. Turkey, central Anatolia, south of Bucak. Mid-thirteenth century, c. 644/1246. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 17:* **Dragons flanking a central medallion** (and detail)  
Wooden door (central vertical section replaced in the style of the original); detail. First half of the thirteenth century. Northern Mesopotamia (Jazīra), Tigris region. Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, inv. no. I.1989.43. Photograph courtesy: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin.
- fig. 18:* **Dragons issuing benedictory inscriptions** (and detail)  
Arched faceted handle of the so-called Bobrinski bucket. Possibly Herat, Afghanistan. Muḥarram 559/December 1163. Made by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid and Mas'ūd ibn Aḥmad. Copper alloy, inlay in silver, copper and niello. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. JR-2268 (detail). Photograph courtesy: State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.
- fig. 19:* **Dragons issuing vegetal scrolls** (and detail)  
Arched faceted handle of the so-called Fould bucket. Possibly Anatolia. Late twelfth or early thirteenth century. Made by Muḥammad ibn Nāṣir ibn Muḥammad al-Harawī. Copper alloy, gilding, inlay in silver, copper and niello. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. IR-1668 (detail). Photograph courtesy: State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.
- fig. 20:* **Dragons flanking a palmette**  
First page of the Gospel according to Matthew. Armenia. Twelfth century. Jerusalem, Library of the Armenian Patriarchate MS 1796, f. 6 (detail). After Der Nersessian and Agemian 1993: fig. 56.

- fig. 21: Dragons flanking a vegetal composition topped by a double-headed eagle**  
Relief carving on the façade of the Çifte Minare *madrasa*. Turkey, Erzurum. Second half of the thirteenth century (before 640/1242-43). Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 22: Stylized dragons flanking a cross and issuing small crosses**  
*Vishap*-type *khatchk'ar*. Armenia, Ararat province, Makravank'. Probably twelfth or thirteenth century. No. 12 *khatchk'ar*. Photograph courtesy: Jean-Michel Thierry.
- fig. 23: Dragons flanking the base of a cross (and detail)**  
Marginal ornament in a copy of the Gospel according to Mark. Edessa, modern Urfa. 1171. Transcribed and illuminated by the priest Hohannes, son of the priest Manuk. Yerevan, Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, MS 313, f. 81. Photograph courtesy: Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, Yerevan.
- fig. 24: Dragons flanking a vegetal composition bearing the heads of the Four Evangelists topped by a cross (and detail)**  
Marginal ornament in a copy of the Gospel according to Luke, monastery of Gladzor. Armenia, Vayots Dzor province. 1323. Painting by T'oros Taronatsi. Yerevan, Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, MS 6289, f. 141r. Photograph courtesy: Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, Yerevan.
- fig. 25: A pair of stylized *regardant* quadruped dragons with crossed bodies at the base of a cross (and detail)**  
Relief carving above the southern outer door, monastery of Mār Behnām/Deir al-Khidr, Iraq, southeast of Mosul. Thirteenth century. Photograph courtesy: Yasser Tabbaa.
- fig. 26: Dragons flanking a bovine head**  
Relief carving on a round tower of the northern city wall. Present-day eastern Turkey, Ani. Tenth to twelfth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 27: Dragons flanking a lion head**  
Marginal ornament in the Mush Homiliary, monastery of Avagvank'. Present-day eastern Turkey, Erznga(n). 1200-02. Yerevan, Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, MS 7729, f. 492. Photograph courtesy: Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, Yerevan.
- fig. 28: Dragons flanking a lion head in the form of a pomegranate**  
Marginal ornament in the Mush Homiliary, monastery of Avagvank'. Present-day eastern Turkey, Erznga(n). 1200-02. Yerevan, Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, MS 7729, f. 98. Photograph courtesy: Matenadaran Manuscript Museum, Yerevan.

- fig. 29: A knocker in the form of paired dragons framing a lion-headed knob**  
 Drawing of the doors of the Diyārbakr Palace, the model for the doors of the Ulu Cami at Cizre. Turkey, southeastern Anatolia, Cizre. Illustration in a copy of Ismā'īl ibn al-Razzāz al-Jazarī, *Kitāb fi ma'rifat al-hiyāl al-handasiyya*. Early thirteenth century. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, MS Ahmet III, A.3472, f. 165v. Photograph courtesy: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul.
- fig. 30: Dragons flanking a human head topped by winged figures, probably angels**  
 Caravanserai Susuz Han, composition surmounting the two niches that flank the main portal. Turkey, central Anatolia, south of Bucak. Mid-thirteenth century, c. 644/1246. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 31: Qutb Shah's Mosque**  
 Bangladesh, Kishoreganj district, Astogram. Late sixteenth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 32: Main portal of the Qutb Shah's Mosque (and detail)**  
 Rectangular terracotta frame. Bangladesh, Kishoreganj district, Astogram. Late sixteenth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- figs. 33a, b: Composition with fruit-bearing date palm trees, above kalāsas from which vines grow and makara heads emitting a scrolling vine at every bend**  
 Qutb Shah's Mosque, rectangular terracotta frame of the main portal (detail). Bangladesh, Kishoreganj district, Astogram. Late sixteenth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- figs. 34a, b: Makara heads emitting a scrolling vine at every bend**  
 Qutb Shah's Mosque, rectangular terracotta frame of the main portal (detail). Bangladesh, Kishoreganj district, Astogram. Late sixteenth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.
- fig. 35: Apex with confronted makara heads issuing scrolls that entwine to form a loop terminating in lotus buds (and detail)**  
 Qutb Shah's Mosque, rectangular terracotta frame of the main portal (detail). Bangladesh, Kishoreganj district, Astogram. Late sixteenth century. Photograph: Sara Kuehn.



