

Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in cities of India

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Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Table of Contents

Abstract

Organization of Chapters

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Shop signs: an introduction

1.2 Story of signs and shop signs from Pre history to the Digital Age

1.2.1 Signs and shop signs in the Asian Pacific Rim countries

1.2.2 Signs and shop signs in the European countries

1.2.3 Signs and shop signs in the Western Pacific Rim countries

1.3 Summary of the historical journey of signs and shop signs

1.3.1 Meaning of shop signs

1.3.2 Redefining shop signs

1.4 Scope and Aims of Research

1.4.1 Scope

1.4.2 Aims

1.5 Research questions and their relevance

1.5.1 Research questions

1.5.2 Relevance of the questions asked

1.6 Summary

Chapter 2: Setting the ground

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Aims and objectives

2.2.1 Information retrieval

2.2.2 Base for final research design

2.3 Pilot research project 1

Semiotic analysis of shop signs of Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai, India

2.3.1 Aims and objectives

2.3.2 Question formulated

2.3.3 Data collection

2.3.3.1 Street marketplace selection criteria

2.3.3.2 Data collection methods

2.3.4 Observations

2.3.5 Data classification and Analysis

2.3.6 Conclusions

2.3.7 Learning and future directions

2.4 Pilot research project 2

Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of shop signs, Bengaluru, India

2.4.1 Aims and objectives

2.4.2 Questions formulated

2.4.3 Methods

2.4.4 Data collection and experiment design

2.4.5 Observations and analysis

2.4.6 Conclusions

2.3.7 Learning and future directions

2.5 Summary

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Aims and objectives

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Documentation through photography

3.3.2 Documentation through videography

3.3.3 Stratified sampling method for data reduction

3.3.4 Selection criteria of cities, marketplaces and time periods

3.4 Color study

3.4.1 Significance of color as the visual attribute

3.4.2 Role of color in the visual design of shop signs

3.4.3 Color dimensions and characteristics

3.5 Describing the method

3.5.1 Meaning of Bricolage

3.5.2 Salient features of Bricolage

3.5.3 Bricolage as a research approach

3.6 Identifying and defining quadrants

3.6.1 Identifying quadrants

3.6.2 Defining quadrants

3.6.3 Redefining Patterns

3.6.4 Redefining Trends

3.6.5 Redefining Tendencies

3.6.6 Redefining Conventions

3.7 Visual framework of color analysis in shop signs

3.7.1 Theoretical basis of application of the Bricolage methodology

3.7.2 Formulation of the framework

3.7.2.1 Rationale of quadrants along functional domains

3.7.2.2 Summarized view of the framework

3.8 Summary

Chapter 4: Visual analysis of color

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Color analysis of shop signs

4.2.1 Jaipur

4.2.1.1 Patterns

4.2.1.2 Trends

4.2.1.3 Tendencies

4.2.1.4 Conventions

4.2.2 Hyderabad

4.2.2.1 Patterns

4.2.2.2 Trends

4.2.2.3 Tendencies

4.2.2.4 Conventions

4.2.3 Mumbai

4.2.3.1 Patterns

4.2.3.2 Trends

4.2.3.3 Tendencies

4.2.3.4 Conventions

4.2.4 Bangalore

4.2.4.2 Trends

4.2.4.3 Tendencies

4.2.4.4 Conventions

4.2.5 Chennai

4.2.5.1 Patterns

4.2.5.2 Trends

4.2.5.3 Tendencies

4.2.5.4 Conventions

4.3 End note

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary of research

5.1.1 Pilot project I: Semiotic analysis of shop signs in Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai (India)

5.1.2 Pilot project II: Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of Bengaluru shop signs (India)

5.1.3 Future directions from the pilot research projects

5.1.4 Data collection and sampling

5.2 Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in India

5.2.1 Proposed nomenclature for analysis of color and layers of information

5.2.2 Identifying and redefining quadrants

5.2.3 Formulation of the visual framework of color analysis

5.2.4 Application of the visual framework for color analysis

5.3 Inferences and insights of color analysis

5.3.1 Patterns

5.3.2 Trends

5.3.3 Tendencies

5.3.4 Conventions

5.4 Solutions to the Research questions

5.5 Contributions

5.5.1 Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs

5.5.2 Visual mode of diachronic analysis of colors in shop signs

5.5.3 Inductive theoretical process to redefine quadrants

5.5.4 Rich qualitative associations in the visual analysis of colors

5.5.5 Relevance of the framework for signboard designers

5.6 Limitations of the study

5.6 Suggestions for Future work

Appendices

Appendix I: Designed 2D road map of Abdul Rehman street, South Mumbai

Appendix II: Mapping of shop signs under decade-wise time slots, Abdul Rehman street, South Mumbai

Appendix III: Semantic, syntactic and pragmatic analysis of shop signs, Abdul Rehman street, South Mumbai

Appendix IV: Photographs of classification labels and structures made by participants for ninety shop signs of Bengaluru city

Appendix V: Outcomes of Hierarchical cluster analysis of 90 shop signs of Bengaluru conducted through SPSS software

Appendix VI: Poster design of the presented paper: “Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of Bengaluru shop signs (India)” in ICoRD 2013, IIT Chennai. Authors: Nanki Nath and Ravi Poovaiah

Appendix VII: Interviews with sign painters

Appendix VIII: Color dimensions and characteristics

Appendix IX: Visual display charts of the main text and background sign panels

Appendix X: Visualization graph of hue transitions in the main text

Appendix XI: Visualization graph of hue transitions in the background sign panels

Appendix XII: Visualization graph of type style transitions in the main text

Publications

References

Bibliography

Acknowledgement

Abstract

Keywords: Shop signs, Color, Visual framework, Bricolage, Semiotic analysis

Shop signs are the quintessential urban markers of business and trade in a city. They unravel the fascinating dimensions of the visual culture of a city. There has been a paucity of published literature on analytical frameworks designed to study attribute(s) in a shop sign. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the design and formulation of such a flexible visual framework. This framework aims to work as an analytical tool to describe the visual communication, integration of the elements and the emerging relationships in the attribute of color as part of the visual design of shop signs in India.

In order to build a foundation for the visual analysis of shop signs, a background study was initiated with a journey of signs and shop signs from Prehistory to the Digital age. This historical journey has helped us in developing an overview of shop signs in context of our research. We initiated this research by conducting two pilot research projects. First project documented through photography shop signs from pre-independence till present times from the historically rich Abdul Rehman street market of South Mumbai, India. A semiotic analysis of these signs gave insights about semantics, syntactics, pragmatics and their design transitions. The second pilot research project involved open card sorting of a group of Bengaluru city shop signs by designers and non-designers. The results indicated color being the main visual attribute in the design of shop signs in context of India from viewers' perspective. The data collection for the main research involved documentation of a large number of shop signs through photography, belonging to a range of marketplaces in 12 cities of India. During data collection, information about the shop signs such as their design, changes and business objectives was gathered from the shop owners. The documented data of 3500 shop signs was reduced by the method of stratified sampling that gave us a group of 450 shop signs from five cities in India. We could identify that in a shop sign, information operates at three levels, namely main text or shop names, secondary text or tag lines and background sign panels. These layers constitute the morphology of a shop sign. As material objects of a visual culture, shop signs carry business identities with the aid of visual attributes. Of these, color has been observed as the primary attribute that imbues an art of persuasion in visual communication. This

research could identify dimensions and characteristics in color based on an existing color analysis method. The researcher could identify four factors, renamed quadrants – patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions as part of a visualized framework. The identified quadrants were integrated by the methodology of Bricolage in the design of this framework. Finally, a visual analysis of color was conducted for the selected five city shop signs with the aid of the formulated framework. This analysis of color has revealed spatial relationships and contextual meanings in the three layers of information in shop signs.

Organization of chapters

The thesis is organized into five chapters including the introduction and conclusion.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter commences with an introduction to the subject area of shop signs that is followed by a preclusive note on the journey of signs and shop signs from Prehistory to the Digital age in a group of countries from the Asian Pacific Rim, Europe and the Western Pacific Rim. This journey becomes a springboard to the next overview of the shop signs in context of our research focus where we have collected various existing meanings, etymologies and definitions of shop signs. This has been particularly instrumental in re-defining shop signs in context of their visual design in India. This has helped to outline the scope of the study, research aims and objectives from the visual design framework perspective. The research questions begin with the main idea of developing a visual analytical framework for shop signs and end with the question of affinities and differences in colors and their applications in the shop sign designs across cities and time periods.

Chapter 2: Setting the ground

By ‘Setting the Ground’ we mean formulation of preliminary research approach to investigate a new subject area such as visual design of a shop sign. There is a paucity of published literature, practice-based methods and visual design frameworks for studying shop signs. This chapter presents two self-devised pilot research projects to investigate the application of existing methods for planning the methodology and final research design.

The first project documents shop signs through photography along with their changes across a timeline in a historically, culturally rich and well-known market of Abdul Rehman street in a metro city of Mumbai in India. The second pilot project aimed to gather mental classification of elements and functions of shop signs from other metro city of Bengaluru in India. In these projects, we could capture the essence of shop signs for the designers and non-designers, their preferences of visual design attributes along with the diachronic transitions across a selected time range. This chapter reveals the primary, secondary variables, associated values and the analytical methods to be applied for further study that also helps in building up the structure of a framework in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology chapter is the spine of this research work that brings forth step-by-step research plan that outlines the qualitative data collection methods, sampling of the documented data and selection of variables. It also elaborates on the visual analytical method applied with the details of the object of study, variables, their meanings, redefinitions and mode of analysis. We present the definitions and meanings of the four dimensions of color and their respective characteristics to be analyzed later in the thesis. After this we have outlined the stages of the visual analytical framework development of color analysis in shop signs by applying the research approach of methodological Bricolage. This method has been used to integrate the four identified factors that we have termed as *Quadrants*. Each of the four quadrants of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions have been redefined by inductively selecting keywords from the existing definitions, meanings and etymologies. The quadrants form the four corners of the final design of the visual framework of color analysis.

Chapter 4: Visual analysis of color

The research design plan established in the methodology chapter is put forth in practice in this chapter. The observations from the visual display of 450 shop signs from five cities of India has helped the researcher to formulate a morphological structure of three layers of information in a shop sign. The visual analysis of color in these signs operates in the three layers of information, namely shop names, tag lines

been detailed out for each of the shop sign in this research. This is followed by construction of a sequential log of color dimensions, their respective characteristics and connections with specific quadrants to be analyzed henceforth.

This chapter presents all the steps of analysis of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions in order for the selected sample of 90 shop signs per city. The analysis of four dimensions of color and their respective characteristics brings forth insights about the semantics, syntactics and the pragmatics based functions of color as a sign in itself.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This chapter starts by presenting the summary of the entire research work done. It presents the aims, objectives and inferences of the two pilot research projects that were carried out to plan the final research design. This is followed by explaining the design of the visual framework of color analysis across cities, marketplaces and time periods as part of this thesis. Next, the inter-city inferences and insights of the color analysis have been presented in this chapter. Further, we present the solutions to all the three research questions that were first proposed in the introductory chapter by the researcher. Next, we elaborate on the contributions that this research has accomplished. Design of such a visual framework is a first step that envisions to provide flexibility and freedom to design researchers for imagination with whatever knowledge tools they have at hand. Keeping in mind the advantages and limitations of using a visual framework of analysis approach to understand an attribute of a shop sign, the researcher optimistically foresees a promising scope of large-scale design research. Therefore, the concluding note culminates these suggestions for future research work in the larger domain of sign design.

Chapter 1

Introduction

“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”

— Lao Tzu (*Chinese taoist Philosopher*)

This chapter is presented in seven sections. The first section gives an introduction to our subject area of shop signs. Section 1.2 brings forth a preclusive note on the story of signs and shop signs from Prehistory to the Digital age. This initiates a historical journey of signs and shop signs that starts from Asian Pacific Rim countries to the European land and finally, covers the Western Pacific Rim countries. Section 1.3 summarizes the entire journey of signs and shop signs, followed by their redefinitions in context of cities of India, selected time periods and related influences as part of the research focus in this thesis. Sections 1.4 and 1.5 include the scope, aims and research questions with their relevance respectively. Finally, section 1.6 is a summary view of this chapter.

1.1 Shop signs: an introduction

Signs are everywhere around us. They occur in myriad forms as ideas, concepts, gestures and objects. They are tangible or intangible and verbal or visual depending on their nature and functions. In old times, a housewife generally bought what she needed at stalls that were regularly set up at small scale on local streets and were ultimately dismantled for newer ones

to follow. Gradually, stalls got replaced by permanent shops in clusters connected to the living space above or behind as part of small buildings. Shops make a significant contribution to the distinguishing character of any street market as well as the outdoor commercial business face at large. They also represent an important link with the social and cultural history of a place, family business, architecture, so on and so forth.

Shops have signboards as the foremost medium of communication with the public. Shop signs are the first interface of message dissemination and image building of business to invite customers and potential clientele. They may be considered as quintessential urban markers of business and trade in a city. They allow us to unravel the fascinating dimensions of the visual culture of cities that represent diverse expressions, functions and integrations into visual relationships. The structure and order in shop signs is the result of visual design and elements that are used to craft names, tag lines and other content displayed on the panels. Therefore, shop signs include much more than what is seen at first glance. They involve the science of elements, their arrangements, meanings, functions as well as identity creation based on social, cultural, commercial, political and historical factors.

In any consumer oriented mobile society, signs are prime facilitators to promote and firmly establish different business kinds within a marketplace. Shop signs are generally treated as mere structural components of shop exteriors that imbibe a modest signature of the shop owner in order to make his or her identity known to the public. However, this is a basic level understanding of a sign for a shop. A shop sign as an object in the context of this research imbibes two very distinct contributions as part of a cityscape. They are as follows:

- 1) A shop sign is a distinct element of a street culture that fascinates with respect to history, culture and social identity of a marketplace, city and its people. In context of India, there are hardly any textual records that describe this role of shop signs.
- 2) Shop signs can also be considered as genuine urban markers of the various trades and crafts in a city (Feng Yi, 2012). As artifacts¹, they also constitute the material culture prevalent in marketplaces of different cities in India.

¹ Often, *artifact* is used in a more restricted sense to refer to simple, hand-made objects that represent a particular culture (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011)

1.2 Journey of signs and shop signs from prehistory to digital age

O'Connell and Airey in their book, *The Complete Encyclopedia of Signs and Symbols* (February 2012:1), have explained that “Neither signs nor symbols have intrinsic meanings. Both signs and symbols have become a part of human, social and cultural identity changing and evolving as we do. They are vehicles for information and meaning, operating on many different levels – the universal and particular, intellectual and emotional, spatial and temporal, spiritual and material. Signs and symbols have played a crucial role in furthering our scientific understanding of the world and have helped us to develop increasingly complex technologies, advancing from the invention of primitive tools to computers and spacecraft.”

There are signs in general that existed much before the coming of written records and the beginning of civilization. These times belong to the prehistory i.e. before the development of human culture (Oxford Dictionary, 2015). In those times, signs existed as symbols over the forms of visual communication mediums such as tablets, seals, caves, rocks, sculptures etc. We could collect different symbolic and other forms of signs during prehistoric times belonging to a few countries in the historical journey of signs and shop signs ahead. Much later periods of human history and civilization witnessed a conscious shift from the traditional industry to a knowledge-based economy that inculcates information-digitization. It includes signs in the form of tangible boards or panels displaying texts that speak of people who run business, shops and firms. They are not only reflections of shop owners' tastes and personality but also form the ethnic makeup of a neighborhood, a street market, its character as well as the social and business activities that were carried out in old shop fronts or shop houses (Liebs, 1985). Gradually in the digital age, commercially oriented signs started giving continuity to public spaces as well as built streetscapes. For instance, landmarks and signposts represent individuality that is not dependent on the property over which they stand or the building façade that carries them at times. Furthermore, in this information-digitization age of uniform franchise signs and generic plastic box signs, the old forms of fronts, houses, guild signs etc. tend to attract by their individuality. They envisage a clever detail, a daring use of color and motion or a reference to particular people, shops or events (Philips, 1988 and Liebs, 1985). In this journey, we have included those historical records of signs and shop signs for each country that have been part of published literature. The individual time periods of signs and shop signs are not identical for each of the countries covered. The following journey does not present a continuous or chronological view of emergence of signs and shop signs in every country. The following section brings forth an emergence of signs and shop

signs in India, rest of the Asian Pacific Rim² countries followed by European countries and finally the Western Pacific Rim countries in North and South America.

1.2.1 Signs and shop signs in the Asian Pacific Rim countries

Most of the Asian Pacific Rim countries envisage a high density of signs and shop signs as part of a larger visual culture. “This high density of sign community is the visual phenomenon that shows multiple combinations of a building and its sign on a street.” (Joo, 2009). We start our journey with the South Asian land of India. The visual design of signs in India is the research focus of this thesis that has been taken forward to develop a visual analytical framework in chapter 3.

1) India

Signs in India since antiquity go back to the earliest forms of significations in the Indus valley civilization, 2600-1900 BCE. The rich Indian symbols and forms of beliefs and rituals have gradually developed to the fundamental pre-Vedic folk myths and legends influencing the daily fabric of life in past as well as the present (Damodaran, 1967). It includes Paleolithic art and the ancient tribal megaliths found in abundance in most of the states of India starting from Kashmir to Kerala and from Mizoram to Gujarat. The earliest forms of writing and transformation moved to picture art and sublime symbolism to more concrete, analogous codes or signs of communication in forms of alphabets representing different scripts. Since early 19th century till present times in India, age-old technologies co-exist with the high-tech world, bullock carts sharing the roads with fords and shanties are as much part of the cityscape as are the numerous skyscrapers. Among all, especially the streetscape in India has evolved through myriad styles that carry examples of regional variations from both conventional and prevalent contemporary times (Mathur, 2005). As a result, a very distinct visual language of signboards has emerged giving streetscapes in India a unique identity. Shop signboards in context of styles and representations have till date remained an unexplored area for design researchers in India. There are no published textual records that describe the changing visual design of shop signs. Fortunately, there is a growing trend to seek out traditional sign painters and a renaissance in the trade. In the context of India, actually both traditional and modern shop signs seem to function more as visual communication exemplars

² Many Pacific Rim countries have rapidly modernized their economies in recent years, earning nicknames such as the Four Asian Tigers (Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan) and the Tiger Cubs (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand). Refer: INVESTOPEDIA

of the attractive range of rich crafts and other ephemeral forms of visual culture pervading different marketplaces as a collective unit display of material culture in India. Illustrated are specimens of hand-painted craftsmanship of two sign-painters who paint boards, hoardings and truck graphics in old Delhi from a project that is dedicated to preserve the typographic practice of street painters in India (Fig. 1.1).

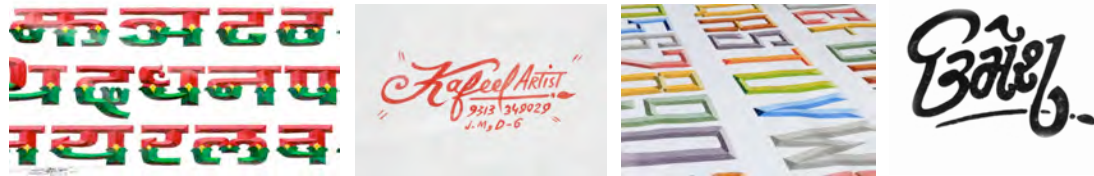


Fig. 1.1: Images from the *HandpaintedType.com* (2011) by Hanif Kureshi and team, New Delhi

Most of the signs and shop signs that we discuss below are the by-products of ingrained skills and craftsmanship of informally trained makers or painters. Their transience portrays a vibrant and interesting visual story of the image, its making and progress through forty centuries. It also brings to light its conversion to written forms and now to the combined unit forms of text and image identification on boards hung over the shop fronts or shop exteriors. The following narrative is about the different time periods that represent different shades of traditions, cultures, movements, genres and styles in signs and signboards of India:

a) **Vedic times: The Harappan civilization, 2600 BCE to 1400 BCE**

The earliest forms of signs were seals³ that first appeared in 2600 BCE in the Indus valley civilization⁴. The Harappan and Mohenjodaro seals are useful in reconstructing the economy, art and religion of India from 2600 BCE to 1400 BCE. Inter-regional trade in this time period was carried on in the now known states of Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Maharashtra, South India, parts of Western Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Foreign trade was mainly with Mesopotamia and Bahrain (Avari, 2007). There is evidence of sea and river transport by ships and boats in several seals and terracotta models that act as significant signs of business facilitation in those days (Wolpert, 2006). The use of what seems to be a relatively standardized form of the core Indus script became common being employed on seals as well as on a wide range of other artifacts including tablets, tools, ornaments and various types of pottery (Keyoner and Meadow, 2007, p 5.). Therefore, the written inscribed script as a sign provides a uniqueness

³ *Seal* is a device with a cut or raised emblem, symbol or word used especially to certify a signature or authenticate a document (Merriam Webster dictionary, 2015).

⁴ This *Harappan Civilization* was first identified in 1921 at Harappa in the Punjab region and later, in 1922 at Mohenjodaro, near the Indus River in the Sindh region, now both in Pakistan (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015).

and lot of relevance to the Indus valley civilization. The study of similarities and differences in these written signs have been found in different sites along with a range of use on different objects (Yadav, 2013). These signs and symbols were carved, incised, chiseled, painted, molded and embossed on a variety of preserved materials including terracotta, ceramic, stoneware, glazed faience, sandstone, copper alloys, silver and gold (Parpola et. al., Helsinki 2010).

The seals depicted images of gods, animals and inscriptions (Fig. 1.2). A plenitude of such mysterious seals as well as the impressions made by them carried the enigmatic script that has been undeciphered till date. Visually, the script presented a sequence of *non-repetitive symbols*⁵. More than a hundred attempts have been made to assign meanings to various signs and sign combinations relating to proto-Dravidian language (Parpola, 2009, 1994; Mahadevan, 1998) on one hand and to Sanskrit (Rao, 1982) on the other (Fig. 1.2a). According to archaeologists, these seals were used by the merchants to convey the messages of trade in the form of inscriptions (Keyoner, 2000-2001). The illustrated seal from India depicts that *Universal Guruh* – the *Jagad-Guruh* and *Satguruh*, the Supreme *Paramahamsah*, the *Yogi* or Supreme Master encapsulating wisdom and knowledge, sits on a foundation surrounded by nature and animals around Him (Fig. 1.2b). The last image presents the popular seal of the *Unicorn*⁶ (Fig. 1.2c).



Fig. 1.2: a. Undeciphered Indus script, b. Indus seal representing Shiva / Sat guru , Source: www.metmuseum.org. c. Bison/Unicorn seal © Harappa Archaeological Research Project

The other notable signs of trade during the Indus valley civilization were the beads, ivory objects and other finery. As the excavated artifacts of prehistoric cultures of Harappa, the beads acted as signs that signified specific trade networks and the organization of production as well as changing patterns of interaction (Kenoyer, 2000, 2001). The ancient Harappans

⁵ The most common types of Indus inscriptions include the script's letterforms in duplications of the same sign or symbolic form upto four; or occasionally more number of times in a row (Farmer, Sproat and Witzel, 2004).

⁶ The most popular Indus seal (excavated between 1927-31) at Mohenjodaro (presently modern Pakistan) during initial excavation stages. Refer: <http://www.harappa.com/seal/seal1.html>

went to great efforts to obtain exotic colored stones for making beads of different shapes and sizes (Fig. 1.3).



Fig. 1.3: a. Beads necklace of Harappan women, b. kinds of beads in Harappa, c. typical faience button seal

The Archaeological Survey of India excavated in Dholavira, Gujarat what could be the oldest signboard in the world that carries an inscription in ten signs of the undeciphered Harappan script (Fig. 1.4a). This signboard of the Indus valley civilization, dates back from 3000 BCE to 1500 BCE. It is believed that the stone signboard was hung on a wooden plank in front of a gate and according to the excavators, it could be the oldest signboard known. The excavations began under Dr. Bisht's stewardship in 1990 (Times of India, 1994). Engraved on a wooden board, the script is comprised of letterforms that are around 37 cm. in height and 25-27 cm. in width (Fig. 1.4a and b).



Fig. 1.4: a. Signboard excavated from Dholavira district of Gujarat in 2004, b. excavated Dholavira site's interior information design

b) Epic times: Hindu kingdoms on the Ganges, 1400 BCE to 1000 BCE

In an essay entitled 'On Egypt' from the Ancient Book of the Hindus (Asiatic Researchers Vol. III, 1792), British Lt. Colonel Wilford gave abundant evidence proving that ancient Indians colonized and settled in Egypt (Swami, 2013). In this Epic age, a sharing of culture, geography, writing, mythological names, symbols and signs between India and Egypt established a strong relation between the two countries. No shops and material signboards existed then but the established trade and commerce between the two countries led to import and export of articles and artifacts. The cultural sharing of names in merchandize became

popular signs to closely associate the two countries during those times. For instance, in written scripts of Boghz Koi of 14th century contained names for deities like Mitra, Varun and Indra (Fig. 1.5a). There were imports of Indian iron and steel, the Indian cotton cloth or the broad cloth called *Monache* (Fig. 1.5b). Along with this many Gods and their symbolic depictions in Egypt had affinities with those in India (Fig. 1.6a to 1.6c). They are symbolic signs of the close associations between India and west Asia even before 14th century (Swami, 2013).



Fig. 1.5: a. Existing specimen of written inscriptions in Boghz Koi (14th century). *Source: history4upsc*,
b. Cotton cloth made in Gujarat, India and found in Fustat (Cairo, Egypt) - ca. 800 AD



Fig. 1.6: a. Shiva – Enili (left), b. Vishnu – Enki (middle), c. Dagon – Vishnu (right) affinities in symbolism of Indian-Egyptian Gods. *Source: sanantanbharat*

c) Rationalistic times: Hindu expansion over all India, 1000 BCE to 320 BCE

The signs of the rationalistic times depict the famous painted grey ware as a sign (Fig. 1.7a) of a new culture that is believed to correspond to the Kuru and Panchala kingdoms, 1000 BCE to 600 BCE (Krishna, 2003 and Samuel, 2010). In those times, the colonists found the ancient seaport of Duvaraka and it is supposed that merchants from here sailed to South India to civilize the kingdom of Pandyas (Dutt, 1904). In the east, the lands of Anga or East Behar, Vanga or Bengal, Kalinga or Orissa also caught the effect of Hindu civilization and related signs on artifacts (Fig. 1.7a and 1.7b) along with depictions of demi Gods in paintings of deep religious value (Fig. 1.7c).

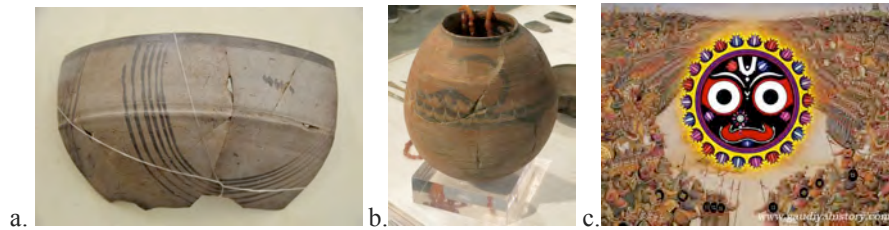


Fig. 1.7: a. Painted Grey Ware - Sonkh (Uttar Pradesh), b. Pot depicting horned figure at National Museum, New Delhi, c. painted Mukundadeva symbolic form of the Kalinga's Chalukya dynasty in modern Orissa

d) **Buddhist times: ascendancy of Magadha, signs from 320 BCE to 400 CE**

The signs include the earliest inscriptions that appeared on rocks, pillars, caves and stone tablets. The average length of an Indus text consists of 5 signs and the longest text in a single line has only 14 signs (Mahadevan, 1977). The inscribed letterforms as signs tend to signify celebrations of events in those times, recoded donations (public or private) or a range of exploits of a conqueror (Fig. 1.8a). The script generally seen on these inscriptions is Brahmi – written conventionally from left to right direction. For instance, the Kharoshti letterforms or written signs on the Rummendei pillar among Ashoka's edicts⁷ in those times signify the visit of King Piyadasi to the place and his respect and adoration for Sakyamuni Buddha, in whose honor he got the pillar built (Fig. 1.8b and c).

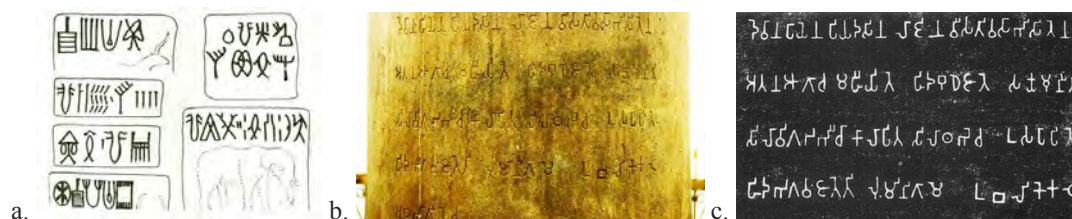


Fig. 1.8: a. Harappan seal inscriptions, b and c. Asoka Pillar at Lumbini at Nepal, the birthplace of the Buddha (Photographed by: Charlie Phillips, <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/91761078>)

e) **Pre-industrialization times: 15th century to early 19th century**

Signs in these times were at the backdrop of a lot of conquests in northern and southern parts of India with Mughals spreading their empire gradually. The reigns of Jahangir (1605-27) and Shahjahan (1628-58) are noted for political stability, brisk economic activities, excellence in paintings and aesthetics and majestic significance of the developed architecture (Dutt, 1904). In this context, the signs belonging to all these areas connote the embedded Indo-Iranian identity with the use of characteristic metaphors. For instance, inscriptions on

⁷ Since the 17th century, 150 Ashokan edicts have been found carved into the face of rocks, cave walls and the pillars. Source: *Pillars of Asoka*: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-asia/buddhist-art1/a/the-pillars-of-ashoka>

major architectural monuments like Shahjahan's Taj Mahal or the events and kings captured symbolically in the Indian court paintings (Fig. 1.9). They might have influenced the signboards appearing in those times, but such a record of signboards from those times is unavailable.



Fig. 1.9: a. Arabic inscription on Taj Mahal, b. A folio from the Hamzanama (The Yorck Project, 2002). c. Shahjahan on globe, mid-17 century. Courtesy: Hashim, Smithsonian University

f) **Modern times: 20th century and onwards**

India plays an eponymous role as a transit stop and home to thousands of trading generations. This aids in constant development of market streets and urban sprawl in a magnanimous way. Within the realm of consumerism and commercialization, the archetypal nation of major service industries and shops display a forthright personality when it comes to advertising the wares, products or services. Subtle in expressions, but invariably candid, identities of various kinds of shop business in marketplaces reflect the vibrant nature of signboards and their visual designs. As a means of adapting their artistic skills to a modern, urban context so as to continue to earn a livelihood in the arts, the artists had in the initial decades of the twentieth century taken over to painting backdrops and sets for local theatrical troupes and designing for the burgeoning digital signboard printing industry (Regier, 2012), Fig. 1.10 The following are some known era wise trends that were crystallized in the eclectic display elements and their designs on signboards of shops:

i) *Posters featuring the gods and goddesses of India, painted by a prolific generation of poster artists between the 1930s and 1950s* including Kartick Das, S. Murugakani, S. M. Pandit, Yogendra Rastogi, and T. S. Subbiah among others, also influenced the works of signboard painters (Smith Poster Archive, Syracuse University, www.maxwell.syr.edu/southasiacenter/SmithArc.htm). These artists cum painters experimented with Type and Color in the said religious mythological poster and even

Bollywood movie posters. Shop signs were hand-painted at the time and other modern techniques made firm foot only post 1950s (Fig. 1.10).



Fig. 1.10: a and b: Indian shop workers in the main bazaar in Jaipur, Rajasthan in colonial architectural era.
Source: *Cultures and Their Countries: India*, c: Kisan Kanya movie posters (1937)

ii) In the period from 1950s-70s, a self-reliant regime gained momentum in our independent India that witnessed a major development in the fields of science as well as commerce (Kaey, 2011). A new breed of signboard painters and makers came to the centre-stage with a strong identity of craftsmanship. The illustrated examples show varied techniques of color and printing employed to produce signboards for shops (Fig. 1.11).



Fig. 1.11: Shop sign colors in display names on boards in different production techniques

iii) Most signage designs, banners, and billboards are made to look similar in present times. The rich, visual and symbolic culture is moribund. The monotonous imagery is part of the globalized package that has brought in technologies and design practices without a complete understanding of their uses and cultural implications.

The modern look of shop signs and the digital age effect has led to monotonous flow of a template in terms of choice of colors, typography and other compositional design elements. On the conceptual side, with a multi-ethnic and plural grammar of the signs as well as Indian streetscapes, somewhere traces of the old hand-painted signage are left, though the identities are fading away to quite an extent (Mathur, 2005).

In this thesis, chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of such signboards for small, medium and large scale business shops that would unravel the underlying influences as well as the design context within the social influences based on India's culture, history, architecture, politics, cinema etc.

2) Nepal

Nepal in its present form emerged in 18th century when the small hill kingdom of Gorkha brought much of Himalayan foothills and an adjoining strip of North Indian plains under its control (Whelpton, 2005). A key theme running across the Nepalese history is the country's status as a cultural contact zone that represents Nepal's great ethnic and linguistic variety (Whelpton, 2005). *Parbatiyas* or *people of the mountains* culture dominates the Nepalese state. They were the original speakers of what is now the Nepalese language. Speakers of this language are mostly from central and northern India as well as Pakistan and Bangladesh. Nepali is quite similar to Hindi and the literary texts of both languages share certain technical terms from the classical language of India, i.e. Sanskrit (Fig. 1.12a).



Fig. 1.12: Nepalese hands over literary Hindu text (National Geographic: by Maggie Steber), b. The Monkey Buddhist temple in Kathmandu, Nepal

In context of signs and symbolic meanings, Nepal enjoys a great heritage and culture. The Nepalese culture represents a fusion of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Mongolian influences. This has been the result of a long history of migration, conquest and trade. Auspicious signs, including the ancient Hindu *swastika* and Shiva's trident are used to decorate buses, trucks and walls. The multiple ethnic groups in Nepal have their own identity and cultural heritage. Indian culture has deeply influenced Kathmandu and this capital city imbibes a meeting point of the Hindu and Buddhist ethos (Fig. 1.12b) in their culture, art and aesthetics (NTB, 2009). This city has been well-known for the Newars who make up the indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu valley and are best known for their artistic creativity and skilled craftsmanship

Following text illustrates signboards for shops created by the ancient technique of hand-paint as well as others of the modern times reproduced digitally or in available modern fabrication materials.

a) Age of Renaissance: inscriptions and symbolic forms, 17th century and 18th century

These periods in the culture of Nepal have been significant as iconic times of the Malla period, ruled by King Pratap Malla. For instance, we illustrate the stone inscription on the Kathmandu Durbar square in 1654 CE (Lienhard, 1992). It signifies King Pratap's reign in Nepali lipi⁸ that contains letterforms belonging to 15 languages (Fig. 1.13).



Fig. 1.13: Stone inscription on the Kathmandu Durbar square in 1654 CE in Nepalese script.

In this period, Newari culture and architecture reached a pinnacle in Nepal. That's why this was the age of renaissance that stood for skilled craftsmanship, learning and trade. Illustrated are few signs like masks and other symbolic forms on temples representing Newari traditional craftsmanship of those times (Fig. 1.14). We illustrate known architectural buildings of those times, such as the Durbar Square in Kathmandu that represents the symbolic form of *pagoda*⁹ and other decorative window patterns and styles made by the Newar craftsmen who established the legacy of traditional architecture (Fig. 1.15a and b).



Fig. 1.14: a. Swayambhunath or Monkey temple, 17th century, b. Guyeshwari (Gujeshwari) temple by King Pratap, 17th century, *Photograph by: goutamitra*, c. Himalayan mercantile Newari mask, *Source: virtualtourist*

⁸ Nepalese script or Nepal Akha of the 10th century had later variants. Illustrated stone inscription from 17th century is one such variant (Lienhard, 1992)

⁹ Pagoda architecture having the symbolic form became prominent part of Buddhist traditional practice of enshrining sacred relics as part of the distinctive style of the Newari architecture (Stratton, 2002).



Fig. 1.15: a. Durbar square, Kathmandu; b. and c. Kumari Ghar, House of Nepal. *Source:*
<http://www.nepalsutra.com/>

b) Post-industrialization times: Hand-painted signs, 19th and 20th century onwards

Similar to the classical hand-painted look of Indian signboards and lithographic billboards, the shop signs uncover the vernacular feel in terms of type, colors, composition and the use of old materials for panel designs (Fig. 1.16a) In the shop sign for Hotel Cosmos in the Pokhara city of Nepal, one can almost hear the clang of restaurant ricocheting off the right-hand margin. According to Fellici (2010), “all aspects of its design considered -- it’s a work of great eccentricity and a shot across the bow in the war against slickness” (Fig. 1.16b and c). A shared influence from China, Malaysia and Korea can be viewed in the Nepalese cities such as Kathmandu that celebrates multi-colors in the store-front designs. Sometimes, products themselves or the local iconographic pictures in dense column patterns form the outside shape and structure as a syntactic device to create a unique look of shop fronts (Fig. 1.17).



Fig. 1.16: a. Pan-Indian identity reflected in hand-painted signs in Kathmandu, b. sign from Pohara city, Nepal



Fig. 1.17: Pan-Indian identity reflected in the colorful, hand-painted shop fronts in Kathmandu, Nepal

Modern materials, textures and three-dimensional shapes of letterforms form part of the modern day syntactic tools to create shop fronts and boards in Nepal (Fig. 1.18).



Fig. 1.18: Modern restaurant shop front in Kathmandu, Nepal

3) Thailand

Thailand occupies the western half of the Indo-chinese peninsula and the northern two-thirds of the Malay Peninsula in south east Asia. Buddhism is the dominant religion in Thailand although a variety of tribal religions continue to be practiced. The main language is Thai although Lao, Chinese, Malay and English are also spoken by significant numbers of people (Wyatt, 1984). The term *Thai identity* was coined in the late 1950s. In the 1980s a revival of regional and local identities began in the northern and north eastern regions where there was a resurgence of local foods, celebrations and styles of traditional dress (Komin, 1990 and Philips, 1992). In the context of visual arts and culture, there has been an appreciation of beauty in the architectural style of their temple buildings, humble old-fashioned houses and the rich arts developed for the royal courts (Williams, 2010). The popular traditional Thai paintings of *wats* are painted in ceremonial halls and represent the use of perspective, shading and shadows since the 19th century (Christine, 2014).

a) Age of commerce: Signs in early beginnings, 14th to late 17th century

The southern Thai Ayutthaya period of the 14th to 18th centuries brought an influx of new architectural ideas from Sri Lanka. For instance, the most beautifully preserved of Thailand's medieval monuments are a part of the Ayutthaya historical park, north of Bangkok. Of special interest are the *stupas* with characteristic Thai *lotus bud* domes and temple towers showing the influence of medieval Khmer design and honeycombed south Indian *shikhara* towers (Fig. 1.19).



Fig. 1.19: a. Ayutthaya National Park with central 'lotus bud' dome symbolic of Buddhism Riya Gopura, b. the shikahara tower of Virupaksha temple, Karnataka, South India. Source: *wordpress*

No visual examples of signboards in particular could be traced from this era. However, we could retrieve signs of Indus-like scripts found by the archaeologists during excavations conducted by the Thai Fine Arts at Phu Khao Thong in Thailand in 2007 (Fig 1.20a). The discovery of a Tamil-Brahmi pottery inscription of about the second century CE at the same site (*The Hindu*, July 16, 2006) resembles the Indus-like inscriptional forms on the South Indian pottery from Thailand, 2010 (Fig. 1.20b).

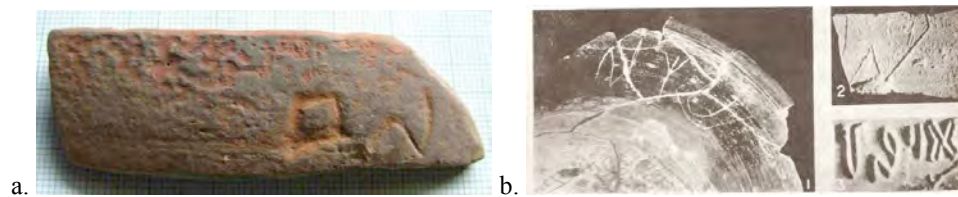


Fig. 1.20: a. Pottery Inscription from Thailand with Indus-like symbols, b. Megalithic symbol at Sanur in Tamil Nadu and signs. Photo: Special Arrangement

b) Age of Buddhism and Kingship: signs in the 18th century

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Buddhism and kingship in Ayuthhaya had strong association with the growth of trade along with an independent aristocracy. There appeared an intricate and dense ornamentation of the visual display facades in the temples and other divine monuments.

From design perspective, there is a special existence of a symbolic form placed on the top-centre of the panel. Themes specific to Thai communities adorn these forms of display signs. The first example shows a street sign from Krabi Town. The sign with a sword wielding elephant is the city symbol (Fig. 1.21a). In other examples from the city of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, the signs include miniature forms of temples on the top-centre of the panels (Fig. 1.21b and c).



Fig. 1.21: a. Maharaj Soi street marketplace, Krabi Town, Thailand (Clark, 2011, January 26), b. and c. Signs from the city of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai

c) Post-industrialization times: signs in the 19th century

With the coming of Bangkok in the 19th century along with the development in the areas of science, commerce and politics, the identity of signs reflected a taste of contemporariness as well as a celebration of craftsmanship in the making of big display letterforms. There seems to be a gentle communication of the brand that depicts experimentation with the material and vernacular typography (Nui, 2013, November 9). Signage during these times was usually made of wood and steel that created distinction in typeface and color display (Fig. 1.22).



Fig. 1.22: Signage designs of a range of business from Thailand (Nui, 2013)

4) Malaysia

Also known as Penninsular Malaysia, this country imbibes ethnicities, religions and the traditional Malay styles and their legacy. In ancient Malaysia, the Malay culture, power structure of state dignitaries and the princes showed influences of Hindu and Buddhist religions. Malaysia has now an ethnic and cultural mix of Malays¹⁰, Chinese and Indians among the locals (Ledesma et. al., 2013). The entry of later Islamic art into the Malaysian visual culture made floral designs and related patterns very popular in those times. Chinese provided additional capital for the industry that combined with the British to shape Malaya

¹⁰ Those people who habitually speak the Malay language and conform to the Malay custom, as expressed in Article 160(2) in the constitution of Malaysia (Swee-Hock and Kesavapany, 2013).

into a thriving and prosperous entity (Miller, 1965). Post the 1950s when Malaysia became an independent nation, local contemporary artists tried to develop their own art and began to avoid the controlling influence of western art that existed during the ancient colonial times. For instance, among the visual artifacts on display in this country have been the Malay manuscripts and writings together with Malay cultural material such as *keris*, a traditionally crafted Malay weapon (Ayob, 1999). The first forms of inscriptions appeared in Sanskrit language around 5th century (Peter, et. al, 1996).

a) Early Development times: signs from 7th to 14th century

In Malaysia, kingdoms, cultures and architectural developments occurred in these times. Historians, since a long time have believed that trade on the Strait of Malacca helped to create economic and cultural links among China, India and the Middle East (Library of Congress – Federal Research Division Country Profile: Malaysia, September 2006). In this period, the most significant city positioned in the north east of Peninsular Malaysia, Kelantan is believed to have imbibed a colonial framing style in the signboards of those times. There was a high percentage of Kelantanese muslims because of whom Islam was culturally influential. The example illustrated is a sign displaying a Mausoleum's name in Jawi¹¹ calligraphic letterforms (Fig. 1.23).



Fig. 1.23: Jawi script written with Islamic calligraphy on the signboard of a royal mausoleum in Kelantan (a state in Malaysia). The signboard reads "Makam Diraja Langgar". *Source: en.academic.ru*

b) Malay vernacular style times: signs from 14th century to 18th century

By the late 14th century, Malacca had become an important commercial power and cultural influence in Malaysia. In this context, we have illustrated signs belonging to the typical Malay vernacular identity. These examples show shop houses in the Malay old style oriental

¹¹ "The script of the national language shall be the Rumi script, provided that this shall not prohibit the use of the Jawi script of the national language (National Language Act 1967. agc.gov.my. 2006).

design that gave character to the Penang heritage city of Malaysia (Fig. 1.24a) along with the later adaptation of this design in the contemporary context in this heritage city (Fig. 1.24b).

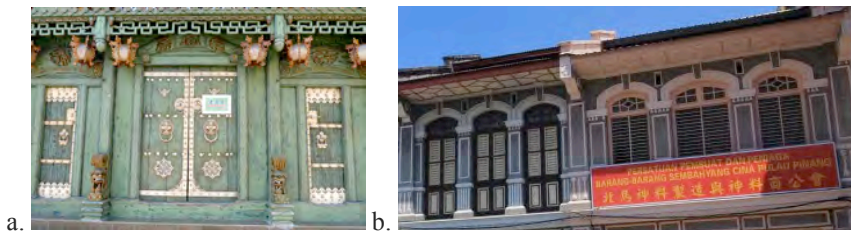


Fig. 1.24: a. Malay vernacular old style in shop houses of Penang heritage city of Malaysia b. Later period adaptation of shop house design. Photo by Adrian Loader

A case study: ancient shop house styles from affluent Georgetown, Malaysia

An interesting record of ancient shop house designs appears in a culturally rich and the present commercially affluent trade centre of Georgetown in Malaysia. Dr. Jenkins in the article on different heritage styles of shop houses (Arts-Ed and Chat, 2010-2013) brings forth all distinctive architectural and decorative features that are representative of different period styles in Georgetown's history (Fig. 1.25).



Fig. 1.25: Heritage shop house styles, George Town, Malaysia. Courtesy: <https://penangshophouse.blogspot.in/>

c) Chinese baroque style times: signs from early 19th to late 20th century

Since the early 19th century, Dashilan commercial street celebrates the legacy of public houses that have been a reminiscent of legendary Ming dynasty. There was originally a dense distribute of more than 60 shops, many of which have been honored brands with a resounding name since a long time. After alterations in the Dashilan, there has been a built in imitation of the early Republican era style in the street identification signs (1.26a) and other shop house designs (1.26b and c) that reveal a deep sense of the Beijing city. Kuala Lumpur was the first place in Malaysia to have built high-rise buildings during the early 20th century. Illustrated are few examples from the city of Kuala Lumpur signs that follow early 19th to late 20th century prevalent Chinese baroque style (Fig. 1.27).



Fig. 1.26: a. Dashilan street sign, b. Zhangyuan Tea House sign in Dashilan commercial street, c. Rui Fu Xiang shop house design in the Dashilan commercial street, Malaysia



Fig. 1.27: Kuala Lumpur shop sign designs in Chinese baroque style, Malaysia

5) Singapore

Singapore presents a high development free market economy with its history starting around 1819 when Sir Raffles thought to establish a British trading factory in Malacca that would compliment the colonial settlements in Penang to safeguard trade route to China. For this, Singapore became a fantastic location and was a potential natural harbor to facilitate the trade route (Liu, 2001). After a few years, a network of roads and street plan was designed with a linear distribution of commercial buildings and linked shop houses of uniform widths and facades of three storey. Singapore has a strong symbolic representation in form of a lion, famous by the name of Merlion with a fish body resting on a crest of waves. The lion head

symbolizes the legend of the rediscovery of *singapura*, as recorded in the *Malay Annals*¹² (Fig. 1.28). A bridge between the east and the west for centuries, Singapore being a microcosm of south east Asia, continues to embrace tradition and modernity even today.

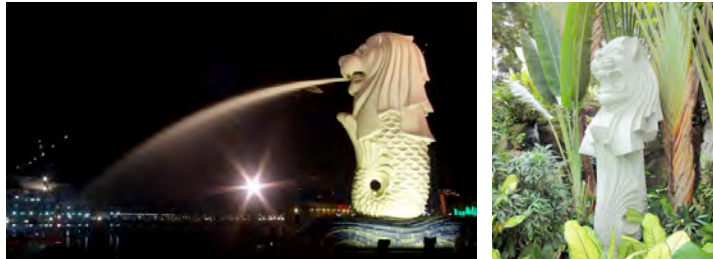


Fig. 1.28: The Merlion of Singapore. Designer: Fraser Brunner. Source: Travellerfolio.com, YourSingapore.com (STB)

Unique is the word that best captures Singapore. The dynamism in colors and richness in sign designs are a harmonious blend of the culture, arts and architecture of the island country. However, Singapore Tourism Board (STB) changed the slogan from *Unique Singapore* to *Your Singapore* in 2010 in order to enhance the feeling of belongingness with this dynamic city (Fig. 1.29). The collection of signs and signage designs presented in this section does not follow a strict chronology but depicts milestone styles at different points of time.



Fig. 1.29: Uniquely Singapore in 2009 to YourSingapore.com (by STB around 2010)

a) Pre-industrialization times: shop houses and store fronts in 19th century

Shop houses can be traced back to the time of Singapore's founder Sir Stamford Raffles in 1822. They feature beautiful timber fascia boards and fretwork influenced by Malay building design. The face is often decorated with plaster and tiles (Dasza, 2012). The typical wooden shutters as part of window doors are a typical signifier seen in the shop houses of Confederate Estate Road, re-named Joo Chiat¹³ road in 1917 (Fig.1.30a). Restored versions

¹² This translated book chronicles the history of Malay sultanate, her relationship with neighboring kingdoms including China, Singapore etc. (Longman et. el, 1821). Source: National Library Board, Singapore, 2006

¹³ Joo Chiat road has pre-war Peranakan shop houses. Traditional furniture shops, authentic eateries and nightclubs are part of the street. Source: http://www.metropolasia.com/East_Singapore_and_Changi

of same old styles and shutter designs are part of old shop houses in Old Katong¹⁴ (Fig. 1.30b). Singapore's shop houses included combined elements of the Baroque and Victorian architectural styles in the windows, columns, shop houses and fronts of early 19th century (Kohl, 1978), Fig.1.30 and 1.31.



Fig. 1.30: a. Old Singapore shop house in Joo Chiat road, b. old shop house façade at Old Katong

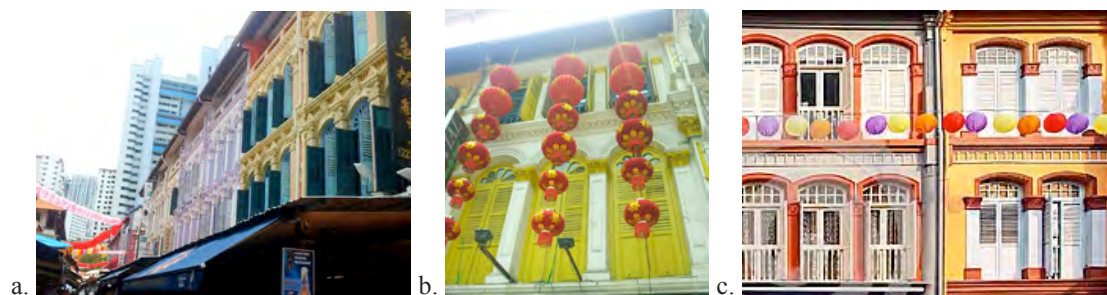


Fig. 1.31: a. Colorful store fronts in Chinatown's iconic hanging red lanterns, b and c. Typical colored and plaster make of the store front façade design

b) Neo-classical and Art deco styles times: building signs in early 20th century

These ancient traditional forms of insignia and information signs appear in conservation areas of major buildings and monuments of architectural or historical significance. Sign panels on these buildings have lettering in plaster or masonry relief as part of the main façade design.

The illustrated example is a classic sign in Art Deco style building of 1933, by the Namazie family as the Neo-Classical 'Capitol building' (Fig. 1.32a). There are also those building signs that are painted on timber boards or metal panels as illustrated in the sign panel of Hotel Scarlet, Singapore (Fig. 1.32b).

¹⁴ Singapore's *Peranakan* community used to flourish in the old days and Katong Village is now housing some restaurants and cafés. Source: http://www.metropolasia.com/East_Singapore_and_Changi



Fig. 1.32: a. Capitol building sign, b. Scarlet hotel sign, Singapore. Source: <http://www.yoursingapore.com/>

Traditional signs in Singapore are generally not self-illuminating. For individual business signs, they often take the form of carved timber panels with gold-painted Chinese or Latin characters depending on the business shop (Fig. 1.33a and b). The owners have to retain existing traditional signs that have acquired architectural and historical significance. For example, masonry relief signs on the outer face of columns, beams, friezes and pediments are part of the cultural history of the building and cannot be removed (Fig. 1.33c).



Fig. 1.33: a and b. Gold-painted Chinese or Latin carved timber signs over doorways, c. *ba sen baku* the hanging sign, Arab street, Singapore. Source: <http://sixthseal.com/2008/04/ba-sen-baku-teh/>

c) Post-industrialization times: modern shop houses and signs, 20th and 21st century

Singapore presents a mixture of old British historical buildings and modern forms of architecture. This island country boasts off a Manhattan skyscraper skyline and modern office buildings that make the ornate 20th and 21st centuries shop houses special.

Surrounded by large housing estates, these shop houses look fragile and admirable bringing back the bygone era of colorful decorative elements amidst the glass and steel dominated signage (Dasza, 2012). Nowadays, most of these shop houses have been modernized with display advertisements (Fig. 1.34a). Alongside, there also exists Clarke Quay riverfront that includes shop fronts and modern building facades has from 19th century (Fig. 1.34b). The newly designed sign poles have better lightings, more stylish seats and organized information panels (Fig.1.35a and b).



Fig. 1.34: a. Modern front signs in Little India and Sim Lim Square, b. Clarke quay panorama singapore night 2014. *Source: <http://www.singapore-guide.com/>*



Fig. 1.35: a. Orchard road sign, b. Arab street sign. *Source: <http://sbr.com.sg/>, <http://www.cjournal.info>*

The 21st century big brand signage designs are in lit-up, quality plexi glass, high quality wood and acrylic in the new street marketplaces of the modern Singapore. An experimental lattice design in the sign panel appears for the Gardens by the Bay, well known fairyland kind of garden for tourists and local folks for recreation in Bay South (Fig. 1.36a). Likewise, other modern signs belong to recent architectural lettering in form of crafted modern letterforms that are representative of modern make and contemporary style of type and color in designs (Fig. 1.36b and c). Some contemporary signs are made of cut out metal characters that are mounted against the façades. Illustrated are the examples of two contemporary signage designs for big retail business (Fig. 1.37a and b).

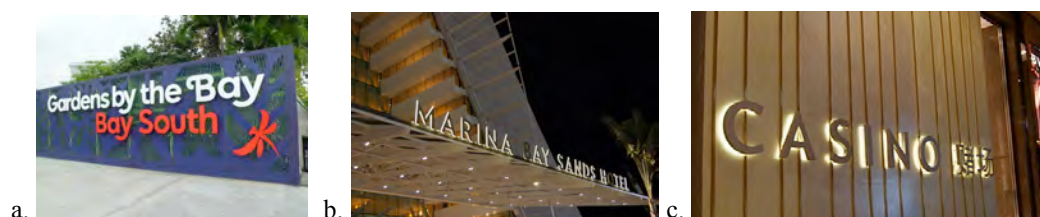


Fig. 1.36: a. Gardens by the Bay, Bay South, b and c. Marina Bay Sand hotel signage. *Photographs by Jacklee, 2010, commons.wikimedia.org.*

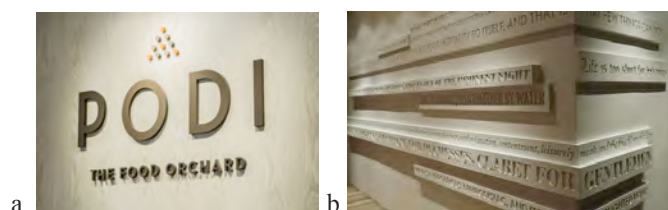


Fig. 1.37: a. New PODI, food restaurant (Design: Bravo Company), b. Artisans Cellar, Singapore

6) Indonesia

Indonesia, an archipelago with around 17,000 islands contains a multi-ethnic cultural, political ambience and hundreds of languages and dialects (Elson, 2008). The word *Indonesia* was first discovered around 1850 as *Indu-nesians* by George Samuel Windsor and James Logan¹⁵, English travelers and social observers. Culture is correspondingly varied and over 350 languages are spoken throughout the archipelago (Ricklefs, 2008). Sanskrit terms entered many of the languages of Indonesia. The Dutch consolidated their hold over two centuries, eventually uniting the archipelago in around 1900. Since those times, the people residing in Indonesia range from rural hunter-gatherers to the modern urban elite (BBC News, 2015). Java, Bali and large parts of Sumatra have rich soil and plantations. They have also been known for architectural, cultural and linguistic diversity (Drakeley, 2005). Indonesian art forms inculcate early animistic beliefs, ancestor worship, Buddhist influenced motifs brought by the Indian traders, Chinese symbols and beliefs. Traditional houses that are built in a single style exist in rural areas and some styles are seen in government buildings, banks, markets and homes (Buchori, 1994). In 1923, the *malay language*¹⁶ was adopted as the national language at a congress of Indonesian nationalists. Not on the basis of a strict chronology again, the journey of signs and shop signs ahead depict cues from the Indonesian arts, handicrafts, modes, visual trends of display in medium and large-scale business of shops and architectural styles.

a) Pre-historic times: letterform signs in Sanskrit in 5th and 4th BCE

These time periods saw great states rise with magnificent architecture. Hinduism, Buddhism, writing systems, notions of divine kingship and legal systems from India were adopted to the local scenes of Indonesia. The oldest evidence of writing in Indonesia is a series of Sanskrit inscriptions that date back to around 5th century (UK essays, 2010). These were found on the seven stone sacrificial posts in the Kalimantan district, Borneo (Fig. 1.38a). They were written in the early Pallava script. Around the same time, in North Jakarta city of Indonesia, Tugu inscriptions belonging to the Tugu village were found. This inscription was written in Pallava script arranged in the form of Sanskrit shlokas consisting of five lines that run around

¹⁵ J.R. Logan, "The ethnology of the Indian archipelago: embracing inquiries into the continental relations of the Indo-Pacific islanders, JLAEA 4 (1850: 254).

¹⁶ Malay language or Bahasa Melayu is the official language of Malaysia and was chosen as the national language of the Indonesian Republic in the 20th century (Thompson, 2014). Source: aboutworldlanguages.com

the surface of the stone (Fig. 1.38b). Just like other inscriptions from the Tarumanagara kingdom, they do not mention the date of the edict¹⁷(Christie, 1998).

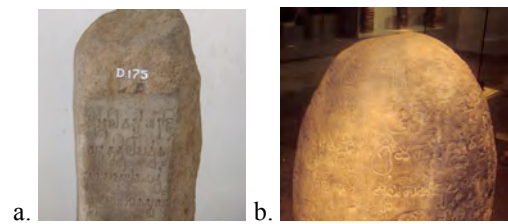


Fig. 1.38: a. Inscription on stone pillars National Museum of Indonesia, Jakarta, b. Tugu inscription, National Museum of Indonesia (2007, July 16)

b) Significant influence of Indonesian art: signs in 17th and 18th century

Foreign influence on Indonesian art forms happened over centuries of exposure to other cultures through trade¹⁸. For instance, in the ethnic city of Bali, it has been a tradition to develop the rich artistic traditional skills like the making of handicrafts with the use of everyday items of natural woods, fibers and bamboo. Motifs were drawn using natural elements that stood for mythological concepts and beliefs. Some motifs were favored and restricted to the royal families especially in their batik designs (Fig. 1.39a). These symbols depicted simple, natural objects that were important to the lives of the Javanese people.

Traditional colors of navy blue, cream, brown and black used in batik have given way to a myriad color range that utilizes modern imported dyes. Illustrated is one such design motif signifying the Hindu Javanese culture (Diposkan oleh Ryrydster di, Arts and Culture: February 2010). Masks from other ethnic groups were used widely in the past to communicate with ancestors for blessings, harvests and protection from evil spirits (Fig. 1.39b and c). The inspirational forms of these masks also appear in other mediums of display such as the signboards of entrance facades of major palaces and galleries (Fig. 1.39c).



Fig. 1.39: Traditional motifs and colors used in the Yogyakarta design. *Courtesy: asiawelcome.com*

¹⁷ The date of the inscriptions was estimated and analyzed according to paleographic study which concluded that the inscriptions originated from the mid 5th century.

¹⁸ Immigrants from China, India, the Arab world and later Europe traveled to Indonesia to search for unique spices. They brought with them rich artistic traditions and adopted Indonesia's local lifestyles (Ricfels, 2008).

7) Cambodia

Cambodia, with the famous temples of Angkor¹⁹ is known for the dominance of Buddhism. What is now Cambodia was an ancient civilization starting as early as 4200 BCE (Corfield, 2009). The available records as part of published literature of shop signs from Cambodia celebrate the beauty of the hand-painted text, forms and colors in commercial context of business and promotional design (Montague, 2013). A good number of colorful shop signs that signify everyday goods and services have been painted on sheets of metal by the artists in tiny makeshift studios (Duzaryan, 2012; ULCA Newsroom). From the capital city of Phnom Penh, we have illustrated few examples in our journey of signs and shop signs as follows:

a) Classical times: signboards from 1930s till 1950s

1920s-30s artists were mostly employed from Phnom Penh to paint large size murals. A generation later in the 1950s, the cinema came to Cambodia and moving pictures became very popular. The temple artists found a new demand of their skills for painting promotional banner signs for the cinema. These banners were vivid, colorful and depicted common scenes of popular culture of those times (Fig. 1.40 and 1.41). Even though this art form was not uncommon in other Asian urban centers, in Cambodia the hand-painted signs appeared everywhere from cities to the small towns. Those that remained until today are archives of a uniquely Cambodian way of life.



Fig. 1.40: Shop signs of 1950s with cinemascopic charm, Battambang and Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Fig. 1.41: a. TV shop sign, Roka Kandel, b. electronics shop sign, Kratie. *Photo courtesy: Gordon Congdon*

¹⁹ Symbol of *Angkor Vat* has dominated Cambodian consciousness since 12th century when it as constructed. It appears on all Cambodian flags after the nation became independent in the 1950s (Cornfield, 2009).

b) Cambodian nationalism times: signs belonging to the dark 1970s

The sign makers who survived the turbulent war times of Khmer rouge as part of the wave of nationalism in Cambodia city, revived the designs of cinema billboards, advertisements and consumer goods. Their styles explored the themes of fun and diversity ranging from naïve to sophisticated reflections of Cambodian society (Khiri Travel, 2014, June 16). During this time, business shops of medicinal products and promotional local beauty items became popular (Montague, 2014). Illustrated are some of the painted signs of the said business shops (Fig. 1.42). Other examples illustrated further are the signs that belong to different business as well as places (Fig. 1.43). They share a common visual language of composition, elements, colors and balance in type and the graphic identities (Robert, 2014).



Fig. 1.42: Collection of Joel G. Montague. Book source: *Cambodian Shop Signs: Free Market Signage in a Post Market society*



Fig. 1.43: a. Sugarcane juicing station at Khmer region, b. beauty saloon sign by Sam Roberts (2014, Jan 28)

c) Cinema and romance: Cambodian female actors signs in 1980s

The cinematic and romantic ambience caught major upsurge and vogue especially in the 1980s with movies like *The Killing Fields* (1984). Tourists visiting Cambodian land started giving more importance to hospitality, lifestyle and glamour quotient that was offered by cinema here (Cornfield, 2009). In the context, we illustrate here a collection of Steve Tierney's photographic regimes to capture the beauties or the Cambodian glamour women (Fig. 1.44). The depictions of women on these signs vary considerably, although they are often portrayed with lighter skin than most Cambodians have (Roberts, 2013).



Fig. 1.44: Cambodian female actors painted on commercial business signs in Khmer region, Cambodia
Photographs by Sam Roberts (2014, Jan 28).

d) Fashion savvy times: Phnom Penh look in the hand painted signs from 1990s till date

Many exhibits of new forms of the 1990s and early 21st century evergreen hand-painted shop signs of Cambodia have been a trend to revive and preserve an art from any time in future by the vinyl technology and production. In this context, *The Phnom Penh Look* takes a focused look at the world of beauty signs through the lens of the photographer Jim Tulloch (Fig. 1.45).

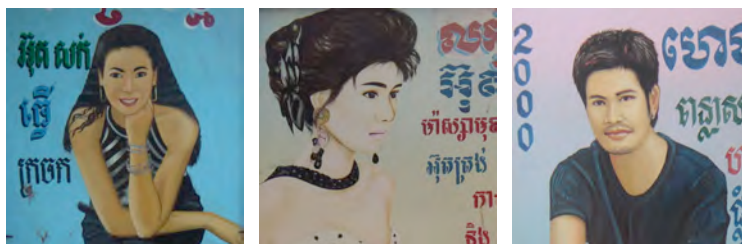


Fig. 1.45: Signs from the collection. Book source: *The Phnom Penh Look: At the Turn of the Millennium*.
Photographs by Jim Tulloch (2012, December 9). Courtesy: Java Arts

8) Hong Kong

Hong Kong is also known as a *fragrant harbor* in Chinese. It also refers to the Hong Kong island, ceded by the Qing dynasty to Great Britain around 1842. This country has been China's most critical link with the rest of the world since the times of the Silk route trade and the Mongols. By the middle 19th century, indigenous Chinese architecture was prevalent in the rural houses and fronts.

The typical Chinese shop house was borrowed from the British colony of Hong Kong that was influenced by the designs in old colonial cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in India. The periods from 1960s till 1980s were significant in Hong Kong with respect to export of goods throughout the world. In the context of trade and street culture in Hong Kong, the Chinese shops on the streetscapes have been named in words after British royalty and colonial administrators (Caroll, 2007).

a) Early times: ancient hanging signs in the late 17th century

In Hong Kong Cantonese, a bat holding a coin is known as *fuk syu diu gam cin* [蝠鼠吊金錢] or bat hanging with a gold coin. Both the bat and the coin have special meanings in Chinese culture²⁰. The illustrated old pawnshop sign is the one supporting the wall of Chun Yuen Pawn Shop (Fig. 1.46a). Though the material has changed from wood to neon wires to fabricate pawnshop signs in Hong Kong. The shape of the sign and letter sizes as part of the visual identity of modern pawnshop signs have been the same since old times (Fig. 1.46b).



Fig. 1.46: a. The old Chun Yuen pawnshop sign, b. Tai Fat Pawn shop sign. Pictures courtesy: The Sign and Billboard blog

b) Penang style times: ancient heritage shop houses in the 18th century

A popular visual trait of the Chinese architectural style can be seen in the typical heritage shop houses in early Hong Kong. The shops had upstairs living quarters and a verandah style at base. This style was imported from neighboring British colony of Singapore that in turn was influenced by the older colonial cities of India such as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in India (Caroll, 2007). These styles are in specific genres that have been covered in detail in the stylistic Penang genres in the Chinese shop signs or houses later in this section (Fig. 1.47).



Fig. 1.47: Visual Guide to Penang Heritage shop-houses. Courtesy: <http://penangshophouse.blogspot.in/>

²⁰ In Chinese culture, the upside-down bat symbolizes fortune and prosperity. An upside-down bat is a particularly auspicious omen. Courtesy: <http://signbillboardblog.blogspot.in/2012>

c) Pre and post-industrialization times: street signs in 19th and 20th century

The British colonial influence in the selection of street names in Hong Kong island could be seen to less extent in Kowloon city (Yanne and Heller, 2009). The Urban Council in Hong Kong in 1950s passed a law on naming streets in the city. According to this, English language flavor in typical words would signify streets in European style residential areas. The narrative behind the meaning of the street identification signs along with Chinese brings forth a bi-historic identity of the places communicated. For instance, in the European style street area the name *Arrange Flowers Street*, 擺花街 is named after the neighborhood's colonial past life. For instance, we illustrate the *Beacon Hill Road sign* that is surrounded by streets with names like Warwick, Alnwick and Eastbourne. Another illustrated example represents the *Cat street market* in Hong Kong. The name of this market is devised to signify its notoriousness for dealers of stolen goods who were known as *cats* in *Cantonese* while the thieves who sold the stolen items were called rats (Fig. 1.48).



Fig. 1.48: a. Beacon Hill Road sign picture by Christopher DeWolf, 2010, b. Quite strip of a Curios shop or Cat street market view. Source: <http://travel.cnn.com/hong-kong/>

d) Futuristic times: Street signs in the 21st century

Sign making, writing and installations are a mass-produced commercial activity in this 21st century. These new modern signs are bright LED forms promoting big companies such as luxury watches, jewellery and makeup stores. The glare of Hong Kong's lights has become so notorious that green group *Friends of the Earth* in Hong Kong held tours to show people the areas polluted by such signage (Ko, 2012; Cpak Studio, 2014). In the newly built streetscapes, we can see a shift from the traditional neon signs to the LEDs. Since the 1990s, these LEDs have transformed the urban nightscape with its pixel-like collages of tiny white and colored bulbs that represents technological shifts that have muted the neon signs once well known glory.

Neon's appeal lies in the way it is caught between the past and the future representing a society that is technologically advanced yet seedy and debauched (DeWolf, 2014). According to the web based M+ Museum Exhibition of modern collections of neon signs in Hong Kong, "Dazzling neon signage has been a common sight in Hong Kong's streets since the mid-20th century becoming a key visual identifier of the city in the popular imagination. However, as technology marches on and the skilled craftsmen who created this lighting technique, become handmade neon signs have gradually been replaced with brighter and economical LED lights."

Although such modern lighting solutions are far less labor intensive to produce, these methods lack the intrinsic creative flair that is present within handmade neon signs created by local masters of the craft. Therefore, in pursuit of cheap and convenient contemporary mood, a once familiar and soulful element of Hong Kong's visual identity is now dwindling and in need of preservation and research." (urban DNA, 2014). A mood of endearment is symbolically represented by *Hong Kong's eclectic and vibrant neon signs*²¹. They line Hong Kong's major thoroughfares and neighborhoods making the city come to life especially after dark. Chinese signage tradition has been inherited and appropriated into the vocabulary of contemporary neon signs in Hong Kong on a large scale that reflects the city's changing urban and architectural fabric (Tam, 2014). A recent web archive of neon signs is a popular exhibit called MOBILE M+: NEONSIGNS.HK²² that captures all erstwhile and nearly vanishing neon sign designs (Fig. 1.49 and 1.50).



Fig. 1.49: a. Chinese billboards of the 20 and 21st century, b. Peak Café sign, Soho, Hong Kong, c. Tsui Wah restaurant sign, Jaffe Road, Causeway Bay, Source: weltrekordreise.ch, travel.cnn.com

²¹ While neon signs offered the skills producing them are being supplanted by LED and other, newer technologies. Chen, A. (n.d.).

²² An interactive online exhibition celebrating Hong Kong's neon signs presented by M+, Hong Kong's museum for visual culture, "Mobile M+: NEONSIGNS.HK". Refer: <http://www.neonsigns.hk/?lang=en>

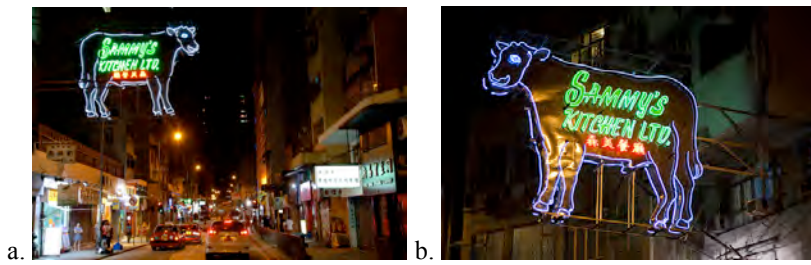


Fig. 1.50: a. The neon sign for Sammy's Kitchen steakhouse in Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong recently acquired by the M+. [photo: urban DNA, b. URBANPHOTO. Source: *urbanphoto*]

9) China

Around 221 BCE marked the rise of federalism that ruled China for over 2500 years. In this period, successive emperors and dynasties united a group of independent states that created China's classical civilization: the Han, the Tang, the Song, the Yuan, the Ming and the Qing among them. Literature and history from this period are recognizably Chinese and the civilization that emerged saw development in art, literature, statecraft, medicine and technology (Mitter, 2008). Amongst the beliefs and practices, Buddhism, Taoism (native), Islam and Christianity are practiced. China today generally refers to the People's Republic of China, the state that was established in 1949. Red stands for China and represents the spirit of enthusiasm and victory. The five stars in flag signify the unity of people under the leadership of Chinese Communist Party in China and adorned in its national flag and other logos of national identity.

Merchants in the traditional Chinese society mostly hold in awe the God of Wealth and founders of their business. The reverence for their shrines, statues and spirit tablets is in time extended to the shop signs. In the eye of the merchants, shop signs are symbols of treasure coming into the house and fortune rolling in. There are various taboos in the use of shop signs. For example, the shop signs are not *hung up* but *invited* because the character *gua* (*hang up*) is believed to be unlucky. Similarly the falling of shop signs on the ground is also considered unlucky because even the God of Wealth might be offended by it. Therefore, in case of Chinese shop signs folkways and social conventions behind the traditional handicrafts affect their identity and material representations.

The journey of shop signs in China that follows represents the changing characteristics of signs as part of the dynasties and civilizations that prominently established themselves in China mainland. In this description of Chinese shop signs 招牌, two categories of signboards emerge. One is a signboard on which the name of the shop is given and the other is a trade sign giving the *line of business*. The signboard is usually in the shape of an oblong wooden board and the trade sign often gives the items to be sold or services by means of images. The aim of this

section is to put forth the importance of shop signboards and trade signs as part of Chinese commercial business as follows:

a) Song dynasty (960-1279), Ming Qing dynasties (1368-1800): culture of trade signs

During the Song dynasty (960-1279), signs were used mainly in restaurants, teahouses and later in drugstores, draperies, pawnshops, medicated plaster shops and hotels. The illustrated pawnshop sign is a standing black pillar above which is a coated golden dragon shaped carved crown. Under the dragonhead is a string of coin models with a sewn square red silk pendant implying that the wealth of the capital flowed like water from a dragon's mouth (Fig. 1.51a). A piece of cloth hanging in front of the door showing trade signs developed as a trend to signify these range of business in those times (Fig. 1.51b).

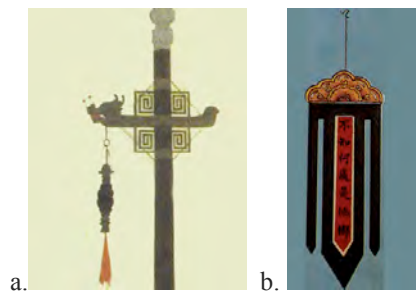


Fig. 1.51: a, b: Trade signs of pawnshops in China during Song Dynasty (960-1279).

As a visual evidence, the masterpiece Riverside Scene at the Qingming Festival displays a prosperous and noisy scene of the streets in the capital with rows of stores including shop signs (Fig. 1.52a). When it came to the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1800), shop signs became numerous in variety with development of commerce. These shop signs belong to four categories: image sign, written sign, material object sign and symbol sign²³. Fig. 1.52 illustrates a painting of Riverside scene, a material object sign on Pilgrim flask of 18th century and Ming coinage from 14 to 17th century.



Fig. 1.52: a. Signs on both sides of street in painting Riverside Scene at Qing-ming Festival, China, b. Material object sign on pilgrim flask of 18th century, c. Ming coinage from 14-17 century.

²³ The symbol sign was originally a token of the shop, something like the present-day logo, which was accepted by the public in the passage of years and became the sign of the shop.

b) Straits eclectic style: signboards from 18th to mid-20th century

When Chinese merchants came to the Straits Settlement of Malacca, they brought with them the Straits Eclectic styles. Besides, the British architecture was also altered to cope with the tropical climate and combined with the influence of Malay, European, Portuguese and Dutch. It has created a unique style in urban architecture such as shop houses and terrace houses. A diversity of original and traditional shop fronts in China add an interest as well as authenticity to a streetscape. This also helps in retaining the practiced proportions, materials and colors used in the traditional designs of shop fronts, without resorting to any kind of pastiche. A 1926 book in English language titled *China in Sign and Symbol* presents the shop signs of Beijing. The first collection of shop signs in Republican Beijing is of 101 colored plates with captions in Chinese and English (Yan du shang bang tu, 1931). This book served as a guide for the Japanese representative of the Tenri School for Foreign Languages (Tenri gaigo gakkō) to collect shop signs in Beijing at the end of 1939. All other books on shop signs published in English are albums of hand-painted shop signs in China²⁴.

Between 1933-46 as part of her Beijing sojourn, German photographer Hedda Hammer Morrison²⁵ (1908-1991) documented through photography the colorful street life of the Chinese land that included a glimpse of the streets, hawkers, vendors, street activities and the ubiquitous signboards on shop fronts mainly and few early times billboards and notices (Fig. 1.53 and 1.54). This China sojourn of Morrison's sets the reality of shop signs as they were in the context of the streetscapes of Beijing and not as isolated entities depicting only the material culture, sign craft and visual representations of text and images. Altogether, she documented 63 signboards as part of the surrounding texts of streetscapes, activities, buildings etc. Her records may simply have been guided by her own taste in artifacts in order to capture the details of Chinese craftsmanship that run through her whole photographically documented project. With a total of about 130 photographs, shop signs stand out in her collection since they were not conventional views of Beijing such as temples and imperial palaces (Yi, 2013). Morrison photographed a wide variety of street traders, including knife grinders, makers of reed toys, rose-hip vendors, barbers, dealers in secondhand goods, fruit sellers, fortune-tellers

²⁴ Chao Wei-Chung, *Shop Signs of Peking* (s.l.: s.n., 1900s); Samuel Constant, *Trade and Shop Signs* (Beiping: Beiyang Press, 1930); H.F. Chiang, *A Collection of Shop Signs of China* (Beiping: Bible Treasury, 1948).

²⁵ From 1933 to 1946, Hedda first managed a German owned commercial photographic studio. Later, she continued to work as a freelance photographer taking thousands of shots that now afford a fascinating record of pre-revolutionary lifestyles, streetscapes, craftspeople at work, street vendors, religious and folk customs, or architectural structures that in many cases have changed or have been destroyed.

and entertainers as cultural texts around the shop signs. Therefore, shop signs as urban markers of Beijing streets bring forth inter-textual underpinnings of street culture unknown to the general people. For Beijing more than 200 shop signs were also pictured in *Lao Beijing dianpu de zhaohuang*, a book based on a late Qing publication although the original source is not known. The comparison between various sources yields a range of about 200–250 different types of shop signs (Qi Rushan, *Beijing sanbai liushi hang*, 1989).



Fig. 1.53: a. Billboards, Beijing's shop fronts in vicinity to daily street activities in 1930s-40s, b. Sign scrolls as display signs for shops in Beijing's urban street sprawl in 1930s-40s

To retrieve the original flavor of shop signs, one needs to turn to the books published before 1949. They have archived shop signs in a manner that add to their prominence in an urban landscape. They may also be regarded as artistic items detached from any context. Indirectly, they allude to older forms of communication such as other kinds of signs, symbols and structures in the artist's expressive language (Fig. 1.54).



Fig. 1.54: Visual History of Bloor Street, Derek Flack; City of Toronto Archives, Fonds

Shop signs were displayed in very prominent ways as part of Beijing records. They were hung on long sticks that pointed towards the middle of the street suspended in the air well above the head of the passers-by. People walking in the middle of the street could not spot all the shops from a distance. Some shop signs used a mixture of visual representation and Chinese characters. They selected the words that expressed most closely their line of business. These shop signs were like posters or flags that waved with the wind in the streets of Beijing. Shop signs were in different ways. For instance, they were hung directly under the eaves of the

roof or long poles. Over long poles, at times they were stuck out. These poles were made of wood or bamboo. The other kind was a metal hook that was bent once or twice upwards in order to hang higher than the eaves of the roof. The head of the stick was carved artistically to look like a plum blossom or a symbolic figure like a dragon (Fig. 1.55a to e).

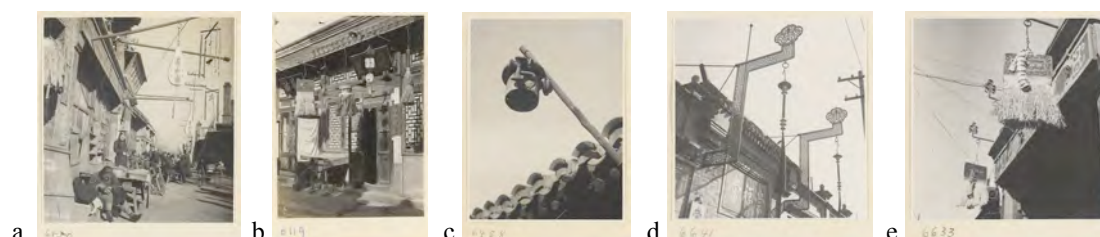


Fig.1.55: a. Shop signs on long sticks, b. Signs hung on eaves of roof, c. on long poles stuck out in Beijing streets, d. shop signs on metal hooks, e. artistically carved hooks

c) Aesthetics of modern China: shop signs in 20th century and onwards

The art of the layout and decorations in the designs of shop signs are essentially symmetrical. Therefore, signs are usually placed on either side of the shop to give a perceptually effective balance. In coloring, red, yellow, blue, black and white are most popular, in particular red that symbolically represents auspiciousness and jubilation (Fig. 1.56). In decorative patterns, coin, dragon, cloud, the character *fu* (blessings) aspects of wealth are represented. The cross bar on which shop sign is hanging is often made into the shape of a dragon or a bat to symbolize soaring like a holy dragon or good luck descending upon the house.



Fig. 1.56: Lung Moon Bakery (1980) and other 1980s-90s shop signs in Chian Town

10) Japan

Japan, *Nippon Koku* literally means the *Land of the Rising Sun* (Dolan and Worden, eds. Washington, DC: Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, 1994). Although Japan's culture developed late in Asian terms and was influenced by China and later the West, its history, art and literature are special among world civilizations. Confronted by the West inopportunely during the economically troubled late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Japan emerged gradually as a modern, industrial power, exhibiting some democratic institutions by the end of World War I. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, phenomenal social upheaval, accompanied by political, military, and economic success led to an overabundance of nationalist pride and modernization (Dolan and Worden, 1994). It is a

curious mix of shop fronts, ancient trade signs hanging outside shops and modern vertical and symmetrical signage, similar to those in China. In a country of contrasts, Japanese shop signs seem steeped in time-honored tradition yet home to a thriving hi-tech industry in its urban metropolises. They celebrate natural beauty from the pristine quality of the earlier display scripts used on the shop fronts to later overcharging color and big letterforms competing for space, visible face and distinction. A visual mood of the geisha tradition complements the dazzling shop fronts, neon-lit skyscrapers and minimalist eateries. In this journey, we would present the ancient fronts, trade signs and the modern signage designs from the prominent cities of Tokyo and Kyoto.

a) Color coded times: early shop fronts in Japan from 1900s

To a stranger entering a Japanese city for the first time and traveling via a *jinricksha*²⁶, the streetscapes with celled-up fronts look quaint and pantomime like. All buildings, their facades, the shop fronts and houses have essentially blue colored roofs. The fronts have hanging signs tapering down from blue tops and most of the smiling local people would be wearing blue dress (Lyedekker et. al, 1985). Dark blue tapestry of flags are placed both sides of the streetscapes. On the signs, white Japanese and Chinese letterforms swim in the backgrounds of blue boards hunched on or flying atop the medieval architectural style²⁷ roofs (Fig. 1.57). One sees the same shop front pattern on the blue costumes of most shop owners with white letterings in the said languages (Lyedekker et. al, 1985).



Fig. 1.57: Blue roofs and sign backgrounds with white lettering, Tokyo and Kyoto city streets

Comparing these with Chinese shop fronts, we find the essential elements of beauty in design, fitness for the purpose which the object is intended to fulfill. Good workmanship and constructive soundness give a value to a common article and some touch of ornament by skillful hands together creating a true work of art (Dolen and Worden, 1994), Fig. 1.58.

²⁶ *Jinricksha* or *Rickshaw* has been a particular mode of transport prevalent throughout South-East Asia since long in addition to East Asian Japan. In Singapore/Malaysia/Vietnam, you get the man peddling the rickshaw.

²⁷ Medieval Japanese architecture employed a formal minimalism, clarity of structural expression, sensitivity to the character of materials and repetition of elements (Tong, 2008, LOST MAGAZINE).



Fig. 1.58: Trade hanging and suspended wall business signs in Yanaka trade centre at the outskirts of Tokyo. Retrieved from: <https://visualbanquet.wordpress.com/category/japan/>

b) New Digital age times: modern signage designs in 21st century

The neon signs and various lit-up crafted beauties are signs of modern, local brands and big propaganda outlets do not follow a strict symmetry of color distribution. These epileptic neon signs have been inescapable in almost every corner of the Tokyo metropolis as *vertical or horizontal text* (Rose, 2011). They show the extremes of this complex society from the neon mayhem of Shinjuku, Akihabara or Shibuya to the ancient Zen ritual of calligraphy (Fig. 1.59 and 1.60).



Fig. 1.59: a. Business hanging signs, Gion district, b. backlit kanji character, Jishu Shrine, Kyoto, c. large size group of neon signs, Osaka, d. Large neon sign in Tokyo: Jumbo Pachinko



Fig. 1.60: Vertical and horizontal text in Japanese trade and outdoor store signs, Kyoto and Tokyo

Summary of signs and shop signs in the Asian Pacific Rim countries

The majestic nations of Asia are representative of varied forms and styles of signs and shop signs that have evolved under rich influence of ancient abstract forms, iconography, art,

entertainment, social events, techno-savvy themes or at times, a devotional reliance on the styles of architectural facades etc. Among the journey described in the south Asian countries of India and Nepal, signs in India have huge influence of various civilizations that pioneered since prehistory. With limited published literature of Nepal signs, we could collect signboard designs for shops based on production techniques of hand-paint and digital art. Moving ahead, among the south eastern nations of Malaysia and Singapore signs have influence of city architectural façade design styles in Malay land and color or form related popular styles like Art Deco in case of Singapore. Written forms and art related significations exist in case of Indonesia. Among the eastern Asian group, China and Hong Kong narrate a historical compendium of shop fronts and houses, their related visual and material representational styles at the backdrop of distinct streetscapes.

1.2.2 Signs and shop signs in the European countries

A subtly applied concept of on-premise advertising gradually emerged in Europe with definite records of it over stone and on bricks as early as 3000 BCE. Some time later a continuum of conventional forms of signage started historically for the first time on massive tall columns in Rome. They guided travellers about the distance information as well as directions to be followed to reach the required destinations in a space. The earliest medium to advertise messages and business information came later via a town crier in built streetscapes of a city. As trade developed, the producer had a fixed location and called attention to the merits of his goods by hanging them outside the shop. During the middle ages, street signs became more advanced and many intersections in European countries had signs pointing the way to cities and towns, sometimes including distances on sign panels. All this is weaved into a chronological order as part of history that starts from symbolic signs to specific sign kinds and styles appearing in prominence at different points of time in different countries of Europe. Many of these expressions and styles are rooted in the archaeology rather than a devotional reliance on place specific or prominently architecture-specific influences that may be the cause for the emerging designs of signs and later shop signs. Rome and Greece show the initial symbolic forms or tokens of meaning hung outside business shops followed by other insignia and commercial signage in France, Spain, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Hungary and UK. We also see few traces of signs and shop signs in Ireland, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Turkey and Cyprus. The following journey brings forth various sign identifications as symbolic forms and other commercial shop signs with examples at characteristic junctures in the narrative of shop

signs journey in European land as follows:

a) Pre-historic cave art: signs as precursors of writing

Long before the appearance of the written forms of expressions, a language of figurative and non-figurative images were used in the pictorial sign communication. It remained a privileged mode of discourse among the hunter-gatherers belonging to the earliest *Upper Paleolithic era*²⁸. A sign in those times became a line, dot, bar, rectangle or a geometric shape with a symbolic value (Jean, 1989). This era mainly started in the heart of European countries like France and Spain with creation of some objects. As speculated by Pre-historians, many such cave art acted as abstract visual signs with large representations of animals as collective or independent clustered units. For instance, we can see the best of examples in France, such as *Lascaux*²⁹ cave paintings; and Spain, such as Altamira Paleolithic art forms painted and engraved in caves (Fig. 1.61 and 1.62). The abstract ideas in these symbolic forms of animals and human hands might be representative of religious or mythic concepts of the social clans or rites in those times. Caves could have been an abode for these groups of people to connect with the nature and spirits of these animals for transformation of their spirits. For instance, another cave painting of *Chauvet cave*³⁰ in Southern France depicts animal forms as iconic signs (Fig. 1.63). Incredible use of colors and materials to execute the larger than life forms of art were adopted by artists³¹ of those times. Analysis of some of these has revealed that artists used recipes to prepare them combining the raw color with talc or feldspar to increase their bulk and adding animal and plant oils to bind the materials (Clottes, 2003).



Fig. 1.61: Left wall of the Hall of the Bulls in the cave at Lascaux, France, ca. 16,000-14,000 BCE.

Source: *spinkdesignblog, klimtlover*

²⁸ Around 40,000 years ago, this era was characterized by the emergence of regional stone-tool industries, tool types and the emergence of distinctive regional artistic traditions (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015).

²⁹ Lascaux is famous for the composition and expression that is representative of the symbolic linkage of the hunting activity of those times (O'Connell and Airey, 2007).

³⁰ Chauvet Cave in France is filled with paintings, engravings and drawings of cave lions, mammoths, rhinos, bison, cave bears and horses. It contains the earliest known evidence of Upper Paleolithic life (Herzog, 2011).

³¹ "...reds in the form of iron ore, blacks in the form of charcoal or manganese, yellows from iron oxide and whites from chalk or even burned bone or shell. Clay ochre too provided some basic colors" (Clottes, 2003).



Fig. 1.62: Wall paintings and engravings of Bison and Deer (2.20 m. long) and hand symbol at Altamira caves in Spain by Magdalanian people from 16,000 BCE till 9,000 BCE. *Source: ancient-wisdom*



Fig. 1.63: Chauvet cave paintings from 16,000-9,000 BCE. *Source: donsmaps*

Pre-historian Jean Abélanet coined the term *wordless signs*³². These signs specifically emerged as decoratively painted and engraved elements on bones, stones and rocks found in south of France and the Scandinavian country, Sweden. For instance, a great variety of these occur in a cave in Pyrenees in France, Mas d' Azil in 1889 (Fig. 1.64a and b). These stones are flat, oval in shape, decorated on both sides in red or brown ochre with series of around twenty dots or lines (Jean, 1989). Illustrated is another example of a perforated Bison from La Madeleine, a rock shelter located in the Vézère valley in Dordogne, France (Fig. 1.64c).

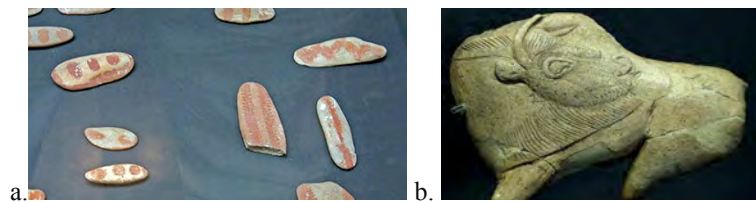


Fig. 1.64: a. Painted stones in a Mas d' Azil (1889), b. Bison from La Madeleine, France. Photograph by: Don Hitchcock 2014, Musée d'art et d'archéologie du Périgord, Périgueux.

These wordless drawn messages as signs are the vestiges of some religious themes tied to rocks, mountains and super abundant water in isolated valleys in France and Spain. Speculations by few scholars hold the belief that these figures had an economic function. These speculations are constructed ideas about all the figurative, non-figurative, anthropomorphic and geometric forms that existed in variety (Guthrie, 2005). These forms of

³² Specific meanings could not be assigned to any one or another of the marks decorated over the stones and tools of the Paleolithic period art (Jean, 1989).

expressions remain enigmatic till date (Jean, 1989). Most of these drawings on walls and paintings in the alpine valleys may not be true signs but are generally known as *pictorial forms*³³. Illustrated are two examples: one is a rock engraving of a masculine figure at Tanum in Sweden dating to 1400 BCE. Interpretations of this figure have been suggested by historians, that it may be a hunter's dream to a fertility totem (Fig. 1.65a). The second image also depicts the carvings speculated to be made in places where animal hunting was an activity in places close to the original settlements and farms (Fig. 1.65b).



Fig. 1.65: a. Masculine figure rock engraving at Tanum, Sweden (1400 B.C.). *Book Source: Signs, Symbols and Ciphers by George Jean (1989)*, b. Rock painted grazing animal carvings at Tanum, Sweden. *Source: Library Museum Archive at John Gray Centre*

b) Sans signboard times in Rome and Greece, 11th till 15th centuries

The earliest trend of communicating the shop's business was done with the aid of objects, items, products displayed or suspended at shop fronts. That was a period of *sans signboard* shop fronts. In those times, the customer knew the row to go to and for what and where to glance in each shop. Of being a *habitué*, he would know the face of the particular shopkeeper. Therefore, signboards would be of no use (Larwood and Hotten, 1908). As a rule, no picture or description affixed to the shop announced the trade of the owner. The goods alone exposed for sale were thought sufficient to attract attention in ancient Rome. Occasionally, there were inscriptions denoting the trade with the emblem that indicated it. The early testimonies of *sans signboard* times can only be deciphered from ancient Roman signs. Of these, some were painted signs with panels made of stone or terracotta. The sign of a dairy was represented by a *goat*, a shoemaker shop by an angel holding a shoe and a wine-seller shop by an evergreen wine bush³⁴ (Fig. 1.66).

³³ A pictorial form implies one that always carries some symbolic reference to a thing or an idea (Jean, 1989).

³⁴ The Bush certainly must be counted amongst the most ancient and popular of signs. Traces of its use are not only found among Roman and other old-world remains, but during the Middle Ages we have evidence of its display. Indications of it are to be seen in the Bayeux tapestry too (Larwood and Hotten, 1908).

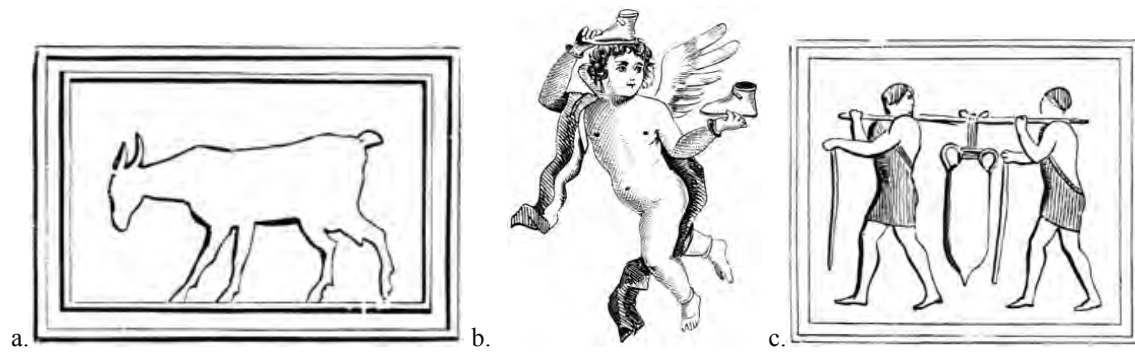


Fig. 1.66: a. Sign for dairy, b. sign of shoemaker, c. sign of wine-merchant, Pompeii, Rome, 70 CE.

Greek signs in those times seemed to be very meagre and indefinite in occurrence as well as appearance. Aristophanes, Lucian and other writers made frequent allusions that seem to prove that signboards were in use in Greece during the medieval times. But what their signs were, whether carved, painted or the natural objects is unknown. Signs in Rome used imagery more than text since many people were illiterate during those times. For instance, there were signs to identify taverns and workshops generally fabricated in raw materials such as wood, stone or metallic pottery. For instance, the symbolic Bush as their tavern sign gave rise to the famous proverb *Good Wine needs no Bush* (Fig. 1.67).



Fig. 1.67: The famous 'Bush' Tavern signs on Roman streets

c) Writing systems: signs of picture-word combinations, 16th century

A message delivered in a linear fashion combining picture-word written signs emerged around 16th century in France, Spain and Germany. Aztec developed 'Codex Boturini', that dates to the time of the Spanish conquest of Mexico in 16th century. In this, small icons are drawn in a linear fashion as ideographic pictures, the visual example being only a rudiment of a phonetic example (Jean, 1989). The brownish footprints in the image aid reading from bottom to top as well (Fig. 1.68).



Fig. 1.68: Maya Madrix codex of picture-words. *Book: Signs, Symbols and Ciphers, George Jean (1989).*

d) Town life of Medieval Europe: signs from mid-16th till 20th century

Though medieval retailing studies cover business side of marketplaces, recently Masscahele (2002) and Postles (2004) demonstrated that these spaces continued to be important centers of exchange in early modern England. From the mid-18th to the early 20th century, shop fronts evolved in the medieval towns of United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Rome, Germany, Poland and Hungary. To explain the medieval ambience in these towns, they had rich merchant families at the time residing in big palatial homes. However, houses of poor craftsmen were built close to each other at the top of their street signs. Marketplaces were the heart of these towns with categories of craftsmen shops appearing on both sides of the streetscapes. For instance, the furniture makers would be housed on one street, while the goldsmith shops on other street (Zaide, 1965:168). Outside a London shop, there was a decorative object or panel hung over the front's face. Typically such shops would have large, arched, unglazed windows. The windows could be protected at night by a pair of horizontal shutters, the upper one of which could be hooked up to provide shelter while the lower one folded down to form a counter. By the late 17th century, England and Wales had about 40,000 shopkeepers according to the estimate of statistician Gregory King. This could be seen in all major street marketplaces in London (Fig. 1.69). Sir Ambrose Heal (1947, p. 49-50) has mentioned and described the existence of large scenic advertisements hung over the places of eighteenth century chimney sweepers in the metropolis.



Fig. 1.69: Shops on sides of Cheapside street, London. *Postcard printed by Thomas Bowles, 1750*

Guild Signs

The ancient guild³⁶ signs were crafted by specialized blacksmiths. Traditionally in the past, shop emblems were made in wrought iron and often gilded in a medieval tradition that valued visual literacy when few could read or write but everyone could easily recognize emblematic signs. The wrought iron images of trade guild merchants included signs of locksmiths, bakers, pharmacists, brewers, wine merchants and tailors (Fig. 1.70).



Fig. 1.70: a. Silhouetted Brewery guild sign, Germany, b. Zum Mohren restaurant in Salzburg, c. and d. Tailor shop sign of 19th century representing tailor tools

We illustrate some other guild signs from London, Hungary, Germany and Spain. The Golden Lion denoted places where strong drink could be obtained (Fig. 1.79a). In the illustrated series, we have shown few more tavern insignia from the same time periods that showcase Blacksmith in Hungary, a violinmaker's ancient tavern from Berlin, Germany, an artisanal food shop sign from Trujillo marketplace in Spain, a restaurant sign from Poland and lastly, a famous Writer's Museum sign from Edinburgh, Scotland (Fig. 1.71a to f) along with later examples from 19th and 20th century (Fig. 1.72).



Fig. 1.71: Early Medieval Tavern signs from London, Hungary, Germany, Spain. *Source: Flickr*



Fig. 1.72: Locksmith signs from, a. France, b and c. Hungary, *Sources: als masterlocksmiths.co.uk*

³⁶ There are commonly known two types: crafts guild and artisan guilds. The third one is frith guild and the fourth one is known as religious guild. In ancient times these associations or guilds were formed by artists on the basis of trade.

Another famous example from Europe in the 17th century signifies a pawnbroker with *three golden balls*. The traditional symbol of pawnbrokers is the three gold spheres with an arch connecting them (Fig. 1.73). This stems from St. Nicholas, often referred to as the patron saint of pawnbrokers. He is said to have left three bags of gold so the daughters of a poor man could afford to marry. Likewise, a Bible depicted business sign of a bookseller (Fig. 1.74).

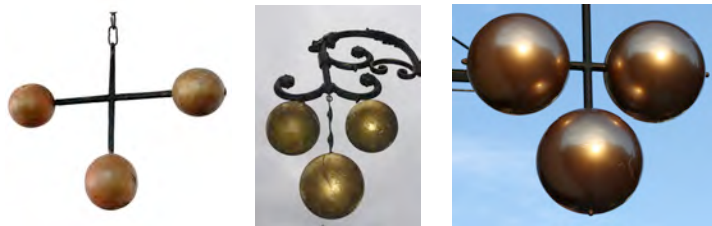


Fig. 1.73: Three golden Orbs or Balls as the universal trademark of pawnbrokers in 17th century

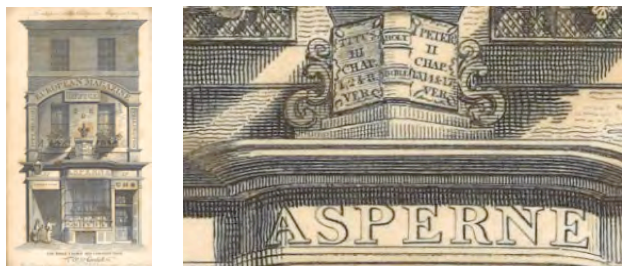


Fig. 1.74: Bible depicted a bookseller in medieval Europe, 17th century. *Source: blogs.princeton.edu*

Newspaper advertising was not the only promotional display trend left in the late 17th and 18th centuries in the United Kingdom. For instance, the illustrated images represent trade cards of a frame-maker, linen-draper and a cutler (Fig. 1.75). These collections from Bishopsgate Institute's archives are a fascinating glimpse into graphic design's distant past with certain tricks echoing down the ages (Alderson, 2012). It provided a connection between the shopkeeper, tradesman or merchant and the consumer (Berg, 2004).



Fig. 1.75: 18th Century Trader's Card via Spitalfields Life and courtesy The Bishopsgate Institute.
Source: <http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/>

From the mid 18th century to the early 20th century, shop fronts evolved through styles broadly categorized as Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian. In spite of changing details, the same basic principles of design and proportion were maintained. The tendency of multinationals to impose standardized corporate images on their shops regardless of the character of the building (Wicklow Town Forum, 2010). We illustrate surviving examples from Ireland belonging to 19th and 20th centuries. In Ireland, especially, shop fronts are often based on classical architectural features that were adapted to practical needs of shops and subject to fashion vogues as well (Fig. 1.76).



Fig. 1.76: Medieval shop fronts from Wicklow town centre, Ireland. *Source: Inventory, and guidance for the repair and renewal of Town Centre shop fronts (2010)*

Symbolism in European countries

Symbols remained important for many years because many people could not read. Certain symbols became popular sign-object trends of use as visual representations in social places. For instance, *The Cross* symbol helped establish places to meet. Likewise, pagans used symbols like the sun wheel and moon to cater to their practice of decorative symbolism as part of jewellery and magic. Symbolically, the kolovrat [spinning wheel] represents the Sun and is a symbol of the *god Svarog*. It represents strength, dignity, sun and fire. It is a symbol of secular as well as spiritual power. *Kolo* means wheel, and its *vrat* [spokes] are turning. The kolovrat represents the endless cycle of birth and deaths. These symbols again form a significant part of the rituals performed by pagans for representation of related elements and

ideas such as the harmonious relationships of natural elements in Triskele and Triquetra (Fig. 1.77a and d).

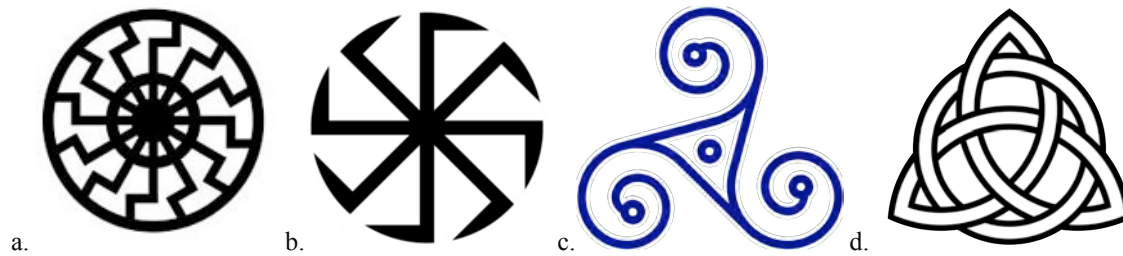


Fig. 1.77: a. Sun Wheel or the Sun Cross of pre-Christian times in Europe, b. Kolovrat, pagan symbol of the sun, c. Triskele celtic symbol, b. Triquetra celtic, Europe. *Source: wikimedia*

Signs as Labels

During the 16th and 17th centuries, label or identification signs came into existence. With rapid commercialization and development of handicrafts in the 16th and 17th centuries, the practice of printing labels emerged as a work of art and a structural device to signify prominent houses and buildings of those times. For instance, modern nations made the portraits of their celebrities that served as signs for public houses (Fig. 1.78a). This label art performed the function of three-dimensional pictographic forms displayed on shop fronts and badges. Later, they became active visual identifications of service industry and administrative sectors (Fig. 1.78b and c).



Fig. 1.78: a. Queen Elizabeth (Banks Collection, 1790), b. Griffin and Chair (Bank's Bills, 1790), c. Running Footman (Charles Street, Berkley Square, circa 1790)

Hanging Fascia boards

In late 18th century, Fascia boards were in vogue in context of the uprising *Victorian status* in London. It became more acceptable and impressive to signify via a personalized fascia board rather than impersonal hanging objects. This was the period when for the first time, a shop

sign's face had a three-dimensional board or panel form as the visible material object with discreet rectangular dimensions. For instance, a characteristic signboard of those times still hangs outside the head public office of Old Parr³⁷ in Islington (Fig. 1.79).



Fig. 1.79: Hanging trade sign of Old Parr's outside his Head Public Office in Islington, London

e) Shop signs in the Digital age, late 20th century and onwards

In modern times, we can see that streets have variety of identification and directional signage together to address varied navigation and information design requirements that exist in built-spaces used by people since 20th century till date. Modern commercial signage is very different from its 18th century counterparts. It is fragmented, less slick and fanciful, oriented towards propagating particular services (Fig. 1.80 and 1.81) and less oriented towards dissemination of brand names and corporate identities (Briggs, 1994).



Fig. 1.80: Different shapes other than the rectangular boards for modern fascias, France.



Fig. 1.81: Different shapes in more ultra modern materials and mixed materials, UK and Germany

³⁷ John Taylor published a lively account of his life in a pamphlet entitled "The Old, Old, Very Old Man". Refer: <https://pepyssmallchange.wordpress.com/tag/17th-century-token/>

Summary of signs and shop signs in European countries

The historical records of signs from pre-historic times in Europe to digital age is mutually homogenous than collectively exhaustive and country-specific separate journeys of signs and shop signs in the Asian land. Influences in these countries too have been from the prehistoric cave art and other abstract and symbolic pictorial forms present on rocks, art and sculpture, writing etc. But, more prominently, we see a dominance of the symbolism having a parallel union with material craft such as the signs as guilds, labels, solid hanging fascia etc. We can summarize them as popular forms of signification. For instance, France and Spain present popular signs in the caves, Rome and Greece envisage popularity of signs in context of religious themes explored by artists and sculptors. The other signs in London have been synonymous with the typical Victorian mood often associated with their unique guild signs, trade signs and early shop fronts.

1.2.3 Signs and shop signs in the Western Pacific Rim countries

History tells us that the first foot of trade coming the North American land was way back in the 17th century, a period marked by the victorious Dutch known to be the Dutch Golden age. During this time in all the provinces, public affairs were dominated with the interests of the wealthy merchants with the Dutch Republic becoming the trading centre of the world. Around 1648, when Spain formally recognized United Provinces, Amsterdam became the shopping centre of a far-flung trading empire. They expanded their positions to cover North America and India as well. There were around 200 plus shop signs in the main street where visitors could buy mahogany and sugar from Brazil and the Caribbean and beaver and otter from North America (Rosener and Theibolt, 2015). In Philadelphia, around 1760s the signs have been remarkable for the skill with which they were designed and executed. In the context, a very popular form called portraiture or portrait painting was practiced by artists of those times. Bygone painted signs made by the then famous artist, Mr. Pratt have been briefly described in an old book by William Dunlap's called *History of the American Theatre* (1832). The journey began in the Americas with an aim to advertise an army of words in the newsprint with the first advertising space sold in 1864. In 1867, Lord & Taylor Department store became the first to use double-column newspaper advertising (Shemaker and Wajda, 2000). Other drivers of Western culture in the past include Latin, Celtic, Germanic and Hellenic ethnic and linguistic groups. In the later years of the 19th century especially, the self-identity of Western culture is getting blurred since it can be seen in almost every country

in the world (Zimmerman, Live Science Contributor, 2015). Rugged and almost no expressions, cowboy boots, the wild west have been major traits in the Americas that compliment their quick mobile culture and lifestyle.

Generally, a business dies off soon in case of the Western Pacific Rim countries. As Linda Lombardi rightly shares the sad American scene of why a good number of business fade away. In this context, the lifespan of a business sign and the meaning attached with it in USA lasts just 15 years, whereas in a country like Japan a large number of business still hang (Lombardi, 2014 December). A respect for old tradition and longevity is devotionally followed in Japan than in the midst of use and *throw-away culture*³⁸ ingrained in the business approach of the Americans. In this context, the promotional advertising display designs on signboards have suffered with time. By 1950s, consumerism came to limelight and reached popularity in the 70s and 80s with a sophisticated advertising agency involving propaganda signs and pop art celebrating the theme (Fig. 1.82).



Fig. 1.82: 'Campbell soup cans' life size paintings by Andy Warhol representing America's mass culture in the era of consumerism. Book Source: *Andy Warhol: Pop Art Painter* (2006)

It persuaded people in a mass effective way to shop those products or brands that were planned by the companies for an optimal time period only. A few designers, practitioners, writers and scholars have written books that archive hand-painted shop signs as part of the large world of signs and symbols from different parts of the world (Liston, E., 2013; Montague, J., 2013; Lavine and Macon, 2012; Senn, 2015). In the book *Sign Painters*, Lavine and Macon present

the first anecdotal history of the craft, features stories and photographs of more than two dozen sign painters working in cities throughout the United States (Fig. 1.83).

³⁸ 'Use and Throw' is a fairly recent concept, brought about by a revolution in the advertising and manufacturing industries (Vince, 2012: Smart Planet, Future story, BBC). Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/2012>



Fig. 1.83: Images from the book *Sign Painters* (2013) by Faythe Levine and Sam Macon

There have been presence of records of Vintage shop fronts in these times along with some old book store fronts from North American countries of Canada, United States, and Mexico archived in the medium of *country postcards*³⁹ (Chrucky, 2009, January 17: FORGOTTEN CHICAGO). We start with evolving conception and their make in the North American countries giving examples from at least one city per country from the group of Canada, United States of America (USA) and Mexico. The South American historical journey of signs illustrates examples from the countries of Columbia, Brazil and Chile. Following are the visual examples with different visual representations and business shops belonging to cities and ghost towns in each country as follows:

A) Journey of shop signs in North America

1) Canada

Being the second largest country in the world after Russia, Canada derives its name from *Kanata*, meaning village or settlement. In large numbers around sixty percent of the population there have descended from English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish nationals. It mainly exports timber, timber products, energy and foodstuffs and imports manufactured goods (Garrington, 2005). The Arts and Crafts Movement in early 20th century for promotional and productive practice of the artistic skills and design led to social transformation and reconstruction of the Canadian society (Pearse, 2006). According to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada 2012, there has been a separate body of the independent and prospering visual artists, craftsmen and artisans in Canada in this 21st century. We present here only a historical glimpse of fronts and shop signs from Montreal and Toronto cities covering 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

³⁹ Postcards are purely commercial; a form of mobile advertising which often present idealized depictions of places (Chrucky, 2009, January 17: FORGOTTEN CHICAGO).

a) Shop fronts and signs, 18th century times

In the English Colonial period (1759-1867), the commissioned painters and craftsmen in various Canada were involved in the commercial art side of painting large advertisements, shop signs, stage scenery and fresco homes of rich merchants (Harper, 1977). Old Montreal shows European character with its cobblestone streets and quaint cafes in 17th to 18th century architecture. In this atmosphere, the shop front signs, trade signs etc. made by the then artists, retranslated the Colonial theme. Illustrated are examples of such shop sign fronts from Rue St-Paul is Montreal's oldest street. It runs parallel to the port. This area is full of art galleries, shops and restaurants. A lot of iconic object representation in signs adds to the materiality of the product or branded consumer experience based culture (Fig. 1.84). In the cities of Quebec and Toronto fronts of shop houses are oriental and colorful (Fig. 1.85).



Fig. 1.84: Rue St. Paul street view and signs. *Source: Corbis, CB2 Stores official website*



Fig. 1.85: a. Quebec shop house and fronts, b. Toronto vintage style trade signs, *Source: Corbis, CB2 Stores official website*

b) Shop fronts and signs, 19th and early 20th century times

A lot of immigration to various cities like Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Quebec happened in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Canada was still a British colony desiring to gain independence and economic stature. We see emergence of other business shops and signs at the backdrop of factory life and increased working class. First example from 1899

shop sign, Emile Berliner⁴⁰ opened the *Berliner Gram-o-phone Company* of Canada in Montreal. It was the first such record pressing plant in North America (Fig. 1.86a). The second example shows 20 year old owner of the shop, named Bert Weeks standing in front of his first shoe shop (Fig. 1.86b).



Fig. 1.86: a. Berliner Gram-o-phone Company, Aqueduct Street building of Northern Electric, b. Bert Weeks at 20, in front of his first shop, 1937, Greene Ave. Montreal, Source: <http://www.quebec-elan.org/histories/oneView/5>

In the city of Toronto, the first example is from the commercial area of Queen with a rich history (Toronto Neighborhood Walks Project, 2012). The retail scene is also thriving with pedestrian traffic going with all kinds of interesting shops, galleries, cafes, restaurants, bars and entertainment like the Opera House.

The old style vintage big three dimensional letterforms of the name are display over the building façade (Fig. 1.87a). Twinkle Toes store did not last long and was soon replaced by another occupant who interestingly attempted to recreate the appearance of an old-fashioned shop (Fig. 1.87b).

Another example from same street is sign of a shop that possesses a storefront that has survived for over a hundred years (1.87c). It beautifully encapsulates original cast iron frames around the windows and leaded panes of glass above them (Monthly Archives: April 2013, Historic Toronto). The Hudson's Bay Company (Fig. 1.88) is the oldest corporation in North America and was the largest department store operator in Canada till mid-1980s (Monod, 1986).

⁴⁰ In 1887, Emile Berliner working in Washington D.C. was the first inventor to start recording on flat disks or records (Bellis, n.d.) Retrieved from <http://inventors.about.com/od/gstartinventions/a/gramophone.htm>.



Fig. 1.87: a. Opera House, Queen Boardview, b. Twinkle Toes (re-fabricated), Queen's street West, c. Special shop front of 100 years age, Queen's street West, Toronto



Fig. 1.88: a. Hudson's Bay Company sign (Courtesy: Nathan Denette / THE CANADIAN PRESS, 2009), b. Emblem of company Photo Courtesy: Pro Pelle Cutem, The Hudson's Bay Company Motto

From design point of view, kinds of shops, their fronts and signs from the 19th and 20th centuries in these American cities are well known for storefront awnings over side-walks and entrances of the shops (Fig. 1.89). These are familiar and compelling images of early urban and residential life in America. For two centuries, awnings⁴¹ not only played an important functional role, they also helped define the visual character of the streetscapes (Randl, April 2005).

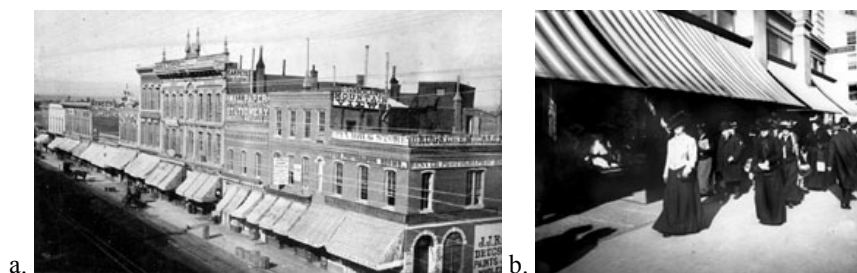


Fig. 1.89: a. Photo of Larimer Street, Denver, Colorado with awnings falling down the entrance of shops, © 1870, Denver Public Library, Wester History Collection, x-22058, b. Photo: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographic Division, LC-D4-62072.

⁴¹ “During the 19th century, awnings were common in business districts. They were supported by wood or cast iron braces and draped over storefronts.” White, Anthony G. (1986). Awnings, *Canopies and Marquees: A Selected Bibliography*, Vance Bibliographies, Architecture Series: Bibliography #A.

c) Shop fronts and signage, 20th century and onwards

Until Toronto's ascendancy in the middle of the 20th Century, Montreal was Canada's largest city and economic center (Ross, 2010). However, from an urban planning and architectural standpoint, Montreal is the European like city in North America and nowhere is this more apparent than in Old Montreal (Fig. 1.90a and b). Priape is a men's underwear and clothing store in Montreal with a huge store front and makes up the basic backbone of the Gayborhood. As the local people share, you are in Boystown when you see the Priape store front, it is that symbolic and powerful to transparently communicate the character of the street (Fig. 1.90c).



Fig. 1.90: a. and b. Montreal is a city of neighborhoods: streets and houses surrounding Square Sainte-Louis. Courtesy: Big Ross' Blog (November 2010), c. Priape store in Gayborhood, Montreal

2) United States of America (USA)

Nearly every region of the world has influenced American culture because it is a country of immigrants, notably the English who colonized the country beginning in the early 1600s. USA's culture has also been shaped by that of Native Americans, Latin Americans, Africans and Asians. The term Western culture often refers broadly to the cultures of the United States and Europe (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015). In America especially, there was a time in the 1980s when storefronts, murals, banners, barn signs, billboards and even street signs were all hand-lettered with brush and paint. But, like many skilled trades, the sign industry has been overrun by the techno-fueled promise of quicker and cheaper. The resulting proliferation of computer-designed, die-cut vinyl lettering and inkjet printers has ushered a creeping sameness into America's visual landscape. This country is also a major source of big branded advertisements, breakthrough posters and sign systems designed by Paul Rand along with the ubiquitous neon signage appearing in the mid 20th century (Heller, 2015). The times of late 19th and early 20th centuries have been popular as the *Revival Period* (1880-1940) in the United States of America as an eclectic movement in the American architecture that also influenced the grammar of visual design of storefronts and signs. The following historical

notes on signs and signage of shops from the United States of America includes the core examples from the cities of Chicago, New York and Las Vegas from post industrialization times till the present 21st century based on published archives of shop fronts and other kinds of signage of commercial business identifications.

a) *Chicago*

"It is hopeless for the occasional visitor to try to keep up with Chicago. She outgrows his prophecies faster than he can make them." - Mark Twain (1883). Chicago was only 46 years old when Mark Twain wrote those words, but it had already grown more than 100-fold from a small trading post at the mouth of the Chicago River into one of the nation's largest cities. In the context of being the early trading post, we present small business storefronts that celebrate the ancient vintage identity of the city.

i) *Pogrzebowy* is the Polish term for a funeral director, and a *balsamator* is an embalmer. This makes sense, as this small storefront was once directly across the street from Holy Trinity, one of Chicago's oldest Polish Catholic Churches (Fig. 1.91a). The second shop was located in the Lafayette Building on the corner of Randolph and LaSalle which was demolished in the early 1920s to make way for the Hotel Bismarck and Metropolitan Buildings (Fig. 1.91b).

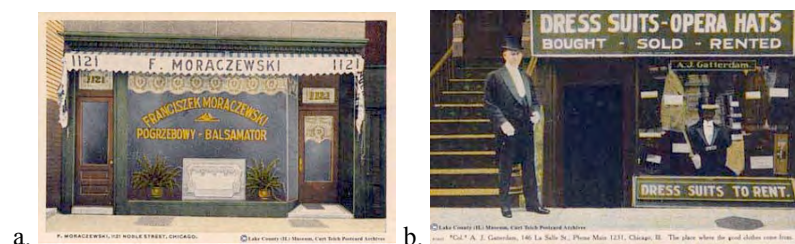


Fig. 1.91: Old store fronts, Lake County Museum, Curt Teich Postcard Archives.

ii) *Alberti Jewellers* was founded in 1874 and remained in the same location for around 90 years. Prior to WWII, Alberti sponsored a number of amateur sports teams, most notably a women's bowling team (Fig. 1.92a). Alberti's was given a facelift with this Michaelson and Rongstad-designed Art Moderne façade (Fig. 1.92b). In the design, unnecessary detail is trimmed away and cleanliness is emphasized. Another illustrated sign is of a Polish travel agency (Fig. 1.92c).



Fig. 1.92: a. Edward Alberti Edmonds, Lake County Museum, Curt Teich Postcard Archive, b. Alberti new sign, American Terra Cotta Company, Photographs from University of Minnesota, 1937c. sign in Chicago, c.1970.

iii) *Mid-1900s examples of fronts for big business*: Illustrated are the 1940s examples of the bygone Logan square and Walter's Men's storefronts. The ultra modern Logan Bowl, built in 1940 was out of business by 1965 and was demolished less than five years later to make way for the Spaulding auxiliary exit for the Logan Square subway station, which opened in 1970 (Fig. 1.93a) The taxpayer blocks of which Walter's Men's Shop was a part, was replaced with a Modernist bank in 1967 (Fig. 1.93b).



Fig. 1.93: a. Logan Bowl building sign, b. Walter Men's shop front design. *Lake County Museum, Curt Teich Postcard Archive*

Likewise, Illinois had a popular Index Store Fixture Co (Fig. 1.94a). The Big Display letterforms were a trend in vogue then with advertising gradually moving towards bigger and fancier firm foot in the 1950s (1.94b).



Fig. 1.94: a. Big Grocery and eatables INDEX STORE (1940) main sign front, b. Backyard detail of promotional big size reverse lettering. *Pictures: Melissa Jones, Pinterest*

iv) *Chicago's 21st century shop front designs*: Chicago now has become a global city, a thriving center of international trade and commerce and a place where people of every nationality come to pursue the American dream (Chicago History, 2015). In the context are illustrated two examples of the new face fronts and the sans-classic demeanor (Fig. 1.95).



Fig. 1.95: a. John Lewis store front, b. famous CB2 brand store sign, *Source: Corbis, CB2 Stores*

b) New York

A unique aspect of store fronts and business shops in New York has been that, even in these 21st century times, shop owners have retained the old signage to an extent that has helped in giving the old businesses a phantom presence on city streets. After World War I, the sign industry renewed its growth with the availability of neon to serve a now defined appreciation of the commercial value of signage. World War II had its effect on the sign industry. On June 30, 1942, the manufacture of metal signs was entirely prohibited. This affected the availability of a key sign component such as copper. Some large companies took in various types of government business related to the war effort such as aircraft parts, communications equipment and metal housings (Claus and Claus, Palo Alto: Signage Research International, 1975). Sign maintenance again provided continuing business for some. However, the industry generally went into a period of decline and large numbers of experienced sign men left the industry. Following sign examples have been illustrated from post-industrialization times of 1900s in New York to the age of plastic signs in late 20th century.

i) 1900s post-industrialization times of New York signs

Shops in these times began extending their signs farther over the street to attract customers. In the early 1900's the use of electric signs in the United States, particularly New York, continued to expand as retail merchants recognized the economic advantage of on premise signs as compared with newspaper and other forms of advertising (Rinaldi, 2013; Commonwealth Edison Co., circa 1905). Neon first appeared in signs in the 1920s and reached its height of popularity in the 1940s. The first documented neon commercial sign in the United States was at a Packard Motor Car dealership in Los Angeles in 1923. For

instance, this feature gets reflected in prominence in the old Manhattan store signs that visually scream in multiple hues (Fig. 1.96).



Fig. 1.96: a. Veniero's Pasticceria sign, 1999 year old, on East 11th Street, New York, b. Neon signs of Times Square 1954, photo by Andreas Feinginger (Courtesy Life)

Artists experimented with neon as a conscious art form and several notable architects further helped in its revival (Liebs, 1985; Venturri et. al., MIT Press, 1977). The general post World War II trend reflects suburban development and roadside culture (Rinaldi, 2013). We have illustrated examples of two eye catching signs a drug store and a food store (Fig. 1.97 and 1.98).

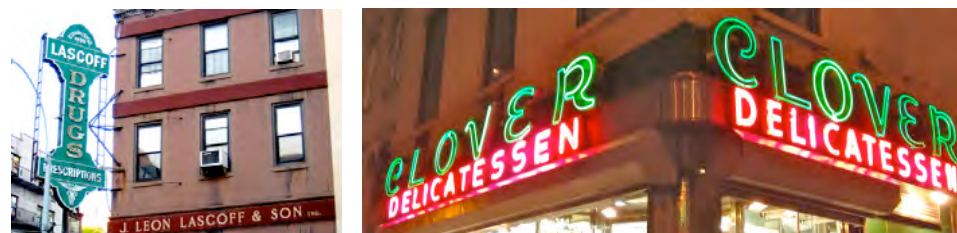


Fig. 1.97: a. Lascoff's drugstore on 82nd and Lexington, NY in 1960s, b. 1940s – Clover Delicatessen on Second Avenue at 34th Street, NY (Courtesy: Ephemeral New York, 2014)



Fig. 1.98: a. 1980 Midori Liquor shop neon sign in TIMES SQUARE, NY, b. Howard Johnson's Times Square New York City, NY 1985. Source: NYC, 1981

In the 1950s, it was home to many beatniks, and then became a hotbed for hippies, artists, musicians and alternative types in the 1960s and it's where New York's Punk music scene originated (Fig. 1.99).

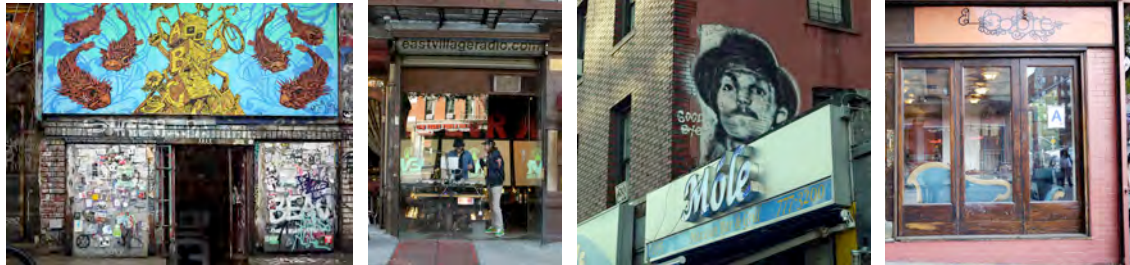


Fig. 1.99: East Village and NoLita street art on shop fronts and recent modern front signage. *Courtesy: The City Lane (2011)*

ii) *The Age of Plastics post World War II*

Most important of these materials in its impact on the sign industry was the advent of colored translucent plastics (Claus and Claus, Palo Alto: Signage Research International, 1975). Plastic signs were relatively easier to manufacture than the neon and porcelain enamel metal which required specialized and costly skills, particularly around the bend in glass tubes (Fig. 1.100).



Fig. 1.100: East Village and NoLita street art on shop fronts. *Courtesy: The City Lane (2011)*

c) *Las Vegas*

The historic record of old sign identifications in the neon technology as well as the new plastic signs in context of modern 21st century times, for the city of Vegas is the same as for the New York city shop signs. Vegas has been well known for its night life and casino culture that gets reflected in the neon signs. Illustrated are few examples below from Old Las Vegas collections, a photo history of casino culture, architecture and advertising art from 1905-1975 (Fig. 1.101 and 1.102).



Fig. 1.101: Graphic Restoration and Enhancement by Camden Communications, 1912. *Courtesy: InOldLasVegas Collection.*



Fig. 1.102: *Graphic Restoration & Enhancement by Camden Communications* by Gary B. Edstrom. Photo by Edward N. Edstrom (1954)

3) Mexico

Mexico began as the home of an ancient empire and grew into a massive, modern metropolis. History says that after winning the battle for control of the area in 1521, Spaniards destroyed Tenochtitlan and built Mexico City on top of its ruins using canals and roads from the Aztec city as the basis for new streets and eventually draining the lake. (Shoichet, CNN 2014). Modern Mexico City is still the cultural, economic and industrial center for the nation. Actually, shops and shopping in Mexico follow much more European than American traditions. The smaller trades removed from metropolitan influences present an entertaining spectacle. The overview of fronts and shop signs cover records as old as 18th century followed by 19th and 20th century to the present day shop signboards.

a) Mexican shop signs: colonial 18th century

Mexico envisages the architectural style popularly called the Colonial Mexican architecture that is reminiscent in two locally popular magic towns. Two examples of shop front signs from 1800s represent the classic theme of the Mexico style architecture and the classical painting with a balanced composition and precision in the quality (Fig. 1.103).



Fig. 1.103: a. Dulcería de Celaya (opened in 1874), b. Cantina Hussong's (1882), Photograph by: Azcona.

b) Post-industrial shop signs: 19th century and 20th century

The 19th and the 20th centuries Mexico is also well known for Popular Revolution in which Mexican American communities in the Columbia River Basin began to grow dramatically beginning in the early 1940s (Kirkwood, 2009). Illustrated are the store fronts of shops belonging to those time period (Fig. 1.104).



Fig. 1.104: a. Casa Del Agua (The Local Water), b. Door to the Santa Kilim antique shop on Canyon Road in Santa Fe, New Mexico

The vitality of Mexican American communities can also be seen in the explosion of numerous businesses such as fast food eateries, restaurants, bakeries, tortilla factories and small grocery stores with their front signs dotting the region's landscape (Fig 1.105).



Fig. 1.105: a. La Cita Restaurant, Tucumcari, b. El Camino Motor Hotel, c. Grants Cafe, New Mexico.

B) Journey of shop signs in South America

South America came into being during the pre-Columbian period and including colonization by the Spanish and Portuguese beginning in the 15th century. It underwent a social and cultural change during the struggle for independence in early 20th century via nation building projects, European immigration wave, increased trade and the colonization of hinterlands (Howe, 2003). In South America, with respect to identities and designs of shop fronts, store and shop signs, we have briefly archived these signs from available sources for the cities of Columbia, Brazil and Chile. Following are the visual examples with different visual representations and business shops belonging to these cities.

1) Columbia

Columbia is referred to as the *Athens of Missouri* because of its classic beauty, architecture and the columns at Mizzou (Kienzle, 2014). For nearly a century before the creation of Columbia by the General Assembly in 1786, the site was important to the overall development of the state. Strangely, Columbia had no paved streets until 1908 when 17 blocks of Main Street were surfaced. There were 115 publicly maintained street crossings at intersections to keep pedestrians from having to wade through a sea of mud between wooden sidewalks (City of Columbia: A Brief History of Columbia, 2015).

a) Shop fronts and signs: pre-classical 18th century

The new town of Columbia emerged in 1821 and subsequently arrived the *Reconstruction Era* of the 1870s (Moneyhon, 1980). One of Columbia's key businesses in its early history was shuttling passengers and cargo across the river but the town later grew into an industrial hub for lumber, coal and assorted goods. We illustrate the vintage colonial British Columbia signs here (Fig. 1.106).



Fig. 1.106: a. Store on a street in Metro Vancouver, b. Aristocratic Café, one of the Vancouver's busiest section, Sources: vancouver.sun.com

By the mid 1800s, Columbia had become a busy transportation hub with its ferry, bridge, canal, railroad and wharves. It was a major trans shipment point for lumber, coal, grain and pig iron. Important industries of the time included warehousing, tobacco processing and iron production. In the context, we are illustrating two very interesting shops of bicycles. Their signs follow simple, legible classic typography against the wooden make of the store-front that connotes the flavor of antiquity and heritage associated with the champion's cycles (Fig. 1.107).



Fig. 1.107: a. Danesford Cycles, 1897, b. The West Green Cycle Corporation (1897 Columbia Racing Tandem). *Source: The Online Bicycle Museum*

b) Shop signs: Inventive and developmental 19th and 20th century

By 1900, the town's population had grown to over 12,000 with a fifty percent increase from 1880 to 1900. The start of the 20th century brought economic challenge to Columbia as local industries declined. In the context one can showcase one hanging label of the period (Fig. 1.108).



Fig. 1.108: Stash Quilt shop, Vancouver, Columbia. *Source: Pinterest*

To carry forward the experimental and inventive theme of the time period, in one of its popular streets i.e. the Washington Street was paved with wooden blocks. The blocks were replaced with asphalt paving in 1925. Few examples we illustrate here from this street between 1950s-1970s (Fig. 1.109).



Fig. 1.109: Stash Quilt shop, Vancouver, Columbia. Source: Pinterest

Novelty in terms of experimental play with forms and display typography in neon signs is visible in some music shop, restaurant and lifestyle related products business signs in the street markets of Vancouver in Columbia (Fig. 1.110).



Fig. 1.110: Café, Restaurant, record shops and theatre signs from VANCOUVER, British Columbia

2) Brazil

Officially Brazil was discovered around 1500s when Portuguese diplomat Pedro Álvares Cabral and his partners on a trip to India, landed in Porto Seguro, between Salvador and Rio de Janeiro. Those times monopolized the lucrative trade of *pau-brasil*, the *red wood valued for making dye* that gave the colony its name. There's evidence that the Indians and Portuguese initially worked together to harvest trees. At the end of the 17th century, veins of emeralds, diamonds and gold were found in Minas Gerais. Bandeirantes and other fortune hunters rushed in from all over along with carpenters, stonemasons, sculptors, and painters from Europe to build cities in the Brazilian land (The New York Times, 2006). Commercial and cultural imports from Europe and North America have often competed with, and influenced the Brazilians own cultural output. The critics have argued that the nation's cultural identity has suffering as a result. Despite numerous social and economic challenges, Brazilians continue to be exuberant and creative in their celebrations and art forms (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015). The country's meteoric rise occurred under the stewardship

of Luiz Inacio da Silva, who served as president from 2002 to 2011 (The New York Times, 2015). It houses the iconic Rio de Janeiro, famous for Soccer mania and leading Soccer players.

a) Shop signs: 1800s to middle 1900s period

Up until the late 1800's, sugar had been Brazil's main crop and income generator in terms of exports. However, as the 20th century drew closer, coffee (Fig. 1.111) soon overtook sugar as the main export crop transforming Brazil's economic status to one of booming success. As regards shop houses and fronts, urban architecture in Brazil owes much to the legacy of Portuguese colonialism (Fig. 1.112). Cities such as Ouro Prêto and Rio de Janeiro grew in importance long before industrialization and influenced patterns of urban style of display (Brazil: Countries and their Cultures, 2015). Outdoor signs made between 1890 and 1950 were constructed of a base of heavy rolled iron which was die cut into desired shapes of the porcelain enamel signs, a trend in Brazil (Fig. 1.113).



Fig. 1.111: Vintage coffee shop signs of 1800s from shops in Rio De Janeiro's markets. *Source: Pinterest*

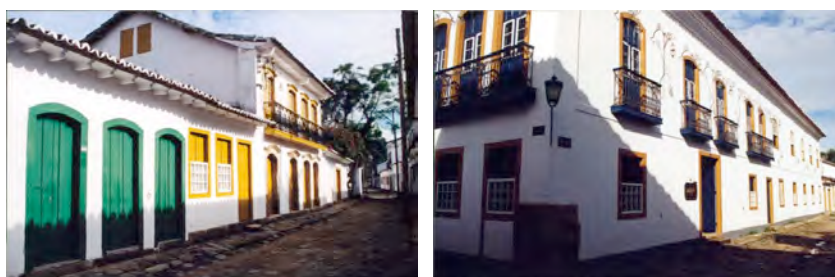


Fig. 1.112: Colored shop house fronts of colonial identity in Paraty, Brazil. *Source: Pinterest*



Fig. 1.113: Porcelain Enamel signs for products and places in vogue (1890-1950). *Source: alibaba, 2015*

b) Era of political development: signs in late 1900s

The decades of 1950s and 1960s, on the aesthetic and cultural front, brought ideas, innovations and belief systems with them as an influence from European designs and concepts. This helped in shaping the local societies significantly. The respective influences have meant that the modern-day Brazilian culture is unique and very complex. Some shop signs are illustrated that represent *Globally Big* dressed in large spaces called departmental stores. As a contrast to coffee and tea vintage signs in Brazil of antiquity, the modern signs use the entire building, façade and the elements of its design structure to arrive at pan modern identity. In the context of the colorful and smart identity of Brazilian graphics. Two such modern store signs of 2000s time periods are illustrated (Fig. 1.114).



Fig. 1.114: a. Mega Book departmental store, b. Magazine shop sign, c. Big café house sign, d. Teas showroom sign in Rio De Janerio. *Source: Flickr*

3) Chile

Chile represents cultures of Latin American neighbors such as Argentina and Bolivia. However, Spanish colonization, European migration and indigenous cultures have mixed together resulting in a culture, a language and a way of life that is uniquely Chilean (Fig. 1.132a). Despite the unusual geography of Chile, its culture remains surprisingly uniform from north to south. One also gets to see a unique grammar of the graffiti and graffiti art in Chile. The Murales in memory of the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer are world famous.

a) Shop signs: 1800s time periods

Since the vintage colonial era, there has been a trend in Chile to name streets, roads, buildings, monuments, towns, cities and regions after their forefathers. In the first illustrated sign, the name O'Higgins, one of the leaders of Chile's independence movement, appears all over the country. This is one of the main roads in the centre of Santiago (Fig. 1.115a). The second example is Santiago Chile, another monument of a Chilean hero. We do not have a sign here but its architectural built form and one of the statue of the esteemed Santiago Chile himself housed around the built landscape (Fig. 1.115b).



Fig. 1.115: a. Street name sign on name of O'Higgins, b. the famous 'Santiago Chile' building, the name of the iconic Chilean hero. Retrieved, <http://www.fredbellomy.com/latinamerica/backhome.htm>

The most visible sign of progress happened in Chile and Peru in 1830s when a transportation revolution happened in both nations to expand the overseas trade. This marked a modest beginning of the Chilean industrialization era in those times (Collier and Satter, 2004). In this context, we illustrate a colonial trade related shop front and a signboard (Fig. 1.116).



Fig. 1.116: a. Al Chile Surf shop. Source: <http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk>, b. Mannequin shop with a charming, old-fashioned sign. Source: *The Silent "I"* (2009). [Blogpost].

b) Artistic and zealous times: signs in 1900s and 2000s

On the front of the socio-aesthetic reformulations in Chile, the art representation showed a clear transgression of the existing genres. This occurred mainly through the works that provided various systems of sign production texts, graphics and gestures. These systems exceeded technical and formal specifications mixing cinema and literature, art and sociology, aesthetics and politics in an inter-disciplinary way (Richard, 2004). In the context, certain art-based forms portraying a range of sign subjects have been illustrated below (Fig. 1.117).



Fig. 1.117: a. Art-based insignia forms as AIR-FRANCE symbolic poster, b. Casper's identity, c. sign of a street art book (right). Source: *mutatebritain* [Blog post]

The theme in 20th century celebrates the majestic shop neons touching the skyline above the captivating Chilean streets. The second neon sign was recently declared National Monument by president Sebastián Piñera in May 2010 (Fig. 1.118a and b).

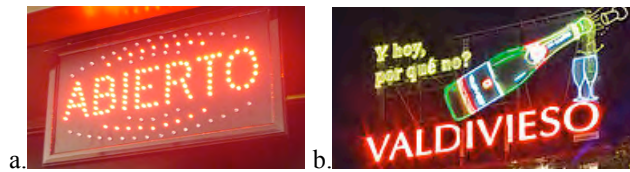


Fig. 1.118: a. 1900 coffee shop, b. Valdivieso neon sign. Source: <http://www.wikilovesmonuments.org/>

Summary of signs and shop signs in the Western Pacific Rim countries

The western sign and shop signs journey took us through the emergence of a range of visual styles of communication. In early 1700s and 1800s, a European influence on the design elements of store fronts and shop houses is seen in Canada and USA from the North American group of country shop signs. This influence is also there in Columbian and Brazilian storefronts of the colonial 1800s time periods belonging to the South American group of country shop signs. Overall in the later modern periods, a prominent paradigm of mass production, advertising and a planned obsolescence exists. Therefore, shop signs and their visual design in such an atmosphere have aimed to achieve the best of market superiority in a hyper mobile society of the western countries. The inclination to achieve market aims to fulfill commercial gains has been symbolic of the age of political and economic development in the 1900s shop sign identities in Brazil and Mexico. For Columbia and Chile, there has been an experimental wave in the use of colors, art oriented approach of displaying big size vibrant text and graphics in hand-painted display. The dynamic neon glow signs were in vogue at the backdrop of economically challenging times to uplift and establish local industries.

1.3 Summary: The historical journey of signs and shop signs

The historical journey of signs and shop signs in Asia to Europe to Western lands presents multiple forms of surviving or erstwhile historical signs along with commercial face of signs in the digital age of present times. They together are like archeological layers that reveal different periods of human civilizations, their transformations, changing modes of human occupancy and use of spaces through modern versions of signage and wayfinding design. Signs for shops were some of the first art produced in Britain's North American colonies. In the times when many people couldn't read, shopkeepers and traders used pictures and symbols to identify their business. There are many ways in which Asia and West reflect similar and dissimilar features. In the section above, we traversed through the course of evolution from traditional to modern information display and designs on shop fronts

belonging to the Asian, European and the Western parts of the globe. When buildings have a change in ownership, the signs undergo a structural and functional change. For instance, this is particularly present in the signboards and signage of 1920s-30s that included a classical color palette and celebration of the Art Deco and the unique modern lettering. Neon signs were prevalent in the 1940s and 1950s in the Asian Pacific Rim countries of Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan and the Western countries of United states and Brazil. These signs reflect a causal occurrence of gas tube technological upsurge that is rooted in the changed architectural fascia and façade trends. In the context of our research, the very existence of shop signs for their business kinds is the most significant testimony of their relevance for all. However, that doesn't holistically describe a shop sign or its design. Above described journey of shop signs around the world has brought forth the picture and performance of shop signs as part of environmental design as well as the socio-historic and cultural status in seemingly distinct cultures and ethnic milieus belonging to different street marketplaces. Functionally, shop signs have been prominent parts of the landscape, communicating through form and message in different places around the world. This has been seen in the store front signs, their historical styles, architectural identities and building facades in China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand in the Asian Pacific Rim; and London, Poland, Hungary etc. in the European group of countries. Although their relationship to the place has changed along with urban forms, the distribution of different kinds of signs on city streets has always been a complex phenomenon (Pecquet, 2001). Trends of display and business have been constantly changing. The old forms of signs have been put to reuse in order to harmoniously convey the purpose of modern business from the prehistoric past to the present digital age. Geographically, shop signs seem to be closely intertwined within the history of a city's urban development and other social events. The activity of buying and selling of goods has been a tradition since long time with the first beginnings in Asian countries followed by the European and Western countries. The need to install a visible signboard or structuring a distinct shop front came along with the need to advertise and persuade customers for trade and business.

Over the years now in these modern days, a signboard is seen as a very unimportant object. It was not always so. Historical analogies are often misleading unless we constantly bear in mind the great difference in details even when the resemblance in the outline seems most striking (Dutt, 1904). Similar is also the case with the journey of signs to more commercial display designs of trades and business shops, starting from the pre-history till the modern digital age of signage. The social and economic factors, development of cultures, the

written inscriptions on buildings and coinage form a common motif that influences the evolution and development of signs and shop signs. The narrative starts with the evolution of signs as seals, symbols or similar emblematic forms in earliest 2600 BC onwards in India. In India, the evolution of signs along with the themes is characteristic of certain centuries that influenced the emergence of different forms of communicating ideas and messages through signs. The different time periods imbibe parallel cultural, local and functional themes. The evolution traced in other Asian as well as European countries brings forth the demographic core of these native countries or their place-specific identities. This comes across as a definite contrast to the traced evolutions in India, wherein the nature of the visual identities and styles emerge from the unique arts and crafts employed in the making of signs. However, in the western shop sign designs, their evolution shows prominence of the parameters that make different components of a sign's design and its material representation rather than on the basis of any place specific associations. In these countries, we see that the visual syntax, hierarchy and material identity underwent a range of changes resulting in a clear classification of shop signs and fronts. The following sections now move towards understanding the meanings of shop signs and visual relationships in context of our research.

1.3.1 Meanings of shop signs

The following series have helped us arrive at the meaning of shop signs as follows:

Etymology of Signs

- a) In early 13th century, the word *sign* came to be known as “gesture or **motion** of a hand”, especially one meant **to communicate something**. *Sign* originated from Old French *signe* or *sign mark*. In Latin, it originated from *signum* or **identifying mark, token, indication, symbol; proof; military standard, ensign; a signal, an omen; sign in the heavens, constellation**. In Latin, it originated from *signare* that means ‘to set a mark upon, mark out, **designate**; mark with a stamp; **distinguish**, adorn’ (Etymonline, 2014).
- b) Much later in mid-14th century, the word *sign* also got associated with a **token** that means ‘a **mark** or a **device** with special importance’.
- c) Another sense of meaning emerged around mid-15th century that considered *sign* as a ‘characteristic device **attached to the front of an inn, shop** etc. to distinguish it from others (Etymonline, 2014). Much later in 1610s, the word *signpost* got introduced that represented ‘sign on a post, usually indicating an inn or a shop’

(Etymonline, 2014).

- d) According to a British Dictionary definition, the word *signboard* has been defined as ‘a board carrying a sign or notice, especially one used to advertise a product, event, etc.’ Signboards emerged somewhere between 1625-35 (Etymonline, 2014).

Dictionary meanings and Etymologies of *Shops*

- a) A Shop has been defined by people, resources and books in manifold ways. The origin of the word shop is from *shopee* that has its roots in Old English word *Sceopa* booth. In its earliest description, a shop was associated with retail (Etymonline, 2014).
- b) It is a mercantile establishment for the sale of goods and services (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014).
- c) It has also been described as a small store within a large department selling specific or selective goods. This definition pertains to the modern face of shops and shopping avenues available. It is associated with a greater scale of shopping centre including shops or malls including various kinds of shops, stores, showrooms and retail outlets.
- d) Likewise, in context of its functions and new roles with respect to buying activity, a shop has been defined as a store or work area, where goods and services are provided for buyers or customers. It has also been seen as a *store, specialty department, atelier (or studio), a home workshop, commercial establishment*. For instance, a printing shop depending on a certain ‘scale’ associated with ‘shop’. The meaning to *visit shops* was first attested in 1764. Towards late 19th century, the shop got associated with the commercial aims pertaining to advertise business / trade. *Shop around* came to be used for the first time in 1922 (Etymonline, 2014).
- e) In addition, there are associations with different products sold by shops. For instance, a book shop is locally known as a bookseller, specifically when this particular book shop has one station, same market or in a hostel in a campus area since years. Similarly, we have medical stores, general stores, grocery stores etc. presenting a shop by its product.

1.3.2 Redefining Shop signs

Taking reference from existing definitions, etymologies and meanings of shop signs, we come to a brief description of what shapes up a *shop sign* in general to how we may redefine it in context of India. We may consider following re-definition of a sign as *shop sign* for our

research. It distinguishes or designates via a token, symbol or and indication about a product/brand or a service. As mercantile establishments in modern context, the form of a shop is a mall or showroom or a retail outlet. The products or brands in these shops aim at persuasive advertising in order to promote different kinds of business. Sometimes the signs denote, whereas other times they connote certain cultural or historic or lingual associative meanings. These meanings are given form by different means of 2D and 3D visual representations and materials. Meanings of signs as concepts exist in the form of relationships to one another. Therefore, in the shop signs considered in this research we could also observe a binding relationship of color and forms between text information and other graphics that form the visual display on panels. Text is generally in the foreground and other forms of panel and shapes in less or more contrasting colors exist in the background. In context of India, signs communicate certain shop business through a board or a front. On the basis of all these points, we have re-defined a shop sign with respect to color identification as major part of its visual design as follows:

Shop signs are the fixed design boards on shop fronts that display information about the shop through the use of text and graphics. The design elements of text and graphics are bound together with the aid of visual relationships between colors used as main visual attribute. These visual relationships help identify shops, persuade viewers and distinguish the visual identities of different shops relatively placed to each other in a marketplace.

1.4 Scope and Aims of Research

1.4.1 Scope

As a springboard to the previously discussed issues on the shop signboards, our scope at the onset of the study includes many variations in terms of identity, language, image, communication purpose and other features that formulate the visual language of these shop signs. However, we concentrate our work on the core visual elements and the factors of their linking, such as connections, associations, similitude's, dissimilitude's etc. on the face of a shop signboard. Within the domain defined, the study limits itself to visual relationships across signs as part of a diachronic investigation.

1.4.2 Aims

1) The foremost aim of the doctoral research was to define a shop sign and visual

relationships (context: shop signs, India) for answering the research questions about the visual design of shop signs in India. From this, we could evolve a *qualitative visual framework* of color analysis and insights amidst selected city shop signs in India.

- 2) The function of the framework is to exhaustively capture the diachronic view of visual relationships (perceptual) and the modes of how visual elements for these relationships across time periods and cities work.
- 3) We have also created a compendium of design case studies that have highlighted the form and content based attributes and values of the signage (design) in India. This has aided in gathering crucial body of knowledge about the perspectives of designers, trained artists (sign painters) as well as novices. The aim behind this has been to crystallize the significant approaches in written record in the wake of many styles and concepts becoming erstwhile due to the new digital face of signs and attack of commercialization especially in the case of trade and business shops.

1.5 Research questions and their relevance

This research aims to explore and develop a visual framework that acts as an analytical tool to visually analyze color in the display design of shop signs in India. In this regard, the doctoral thesis proceeds to answer the following questions:

- 1) What sort of visual framework is needed for the analysis of color in shop signs?
- 2) How do we use this framework to visually analyze color, its characteristics and modes of communication on shop signs in India?
- 3) What are the emerging transitions, affinities and differences in colors and their applications in design of shop signs in India across cities and time periods?

Relevance of the questions asked

This section aims to bring forth the basis and rationale pertaining to each of the three research questions asked in this thesis. A research frontier generally begins with a set of assumptions, conjectures, inductive arguments or deductive statements around a selected object of research

inquiry. Likewise, the design researcher selected an object of study i.e. shop sign with a set of assumptions, inductive world-view and a ground set to test visual analytical methods in form of pilot research projects (chapter 2). After gathering the insights from the pilot research projects, there emerged a three-fold construct in front of the researcher: 1) shop signs as part of marketplaces, cities and a timeline, 2) visual display design of shop signs and 3) structural make-up of this visual display design. In this context, we outline the relevance of each of the research questions formulated:

- From the three constructs acquired, this was very clear that in order to know the details of visual designs, one would have to know the elemental distribution, sequence and its functioning. The design attribute of color bears a visually conspicuous presence in the form and content of shop signs. Therefore, the detailed investigation of color as a visual design attribute in a shop sign required grounding within a system of parts and their functions, perhaps in form of a framework envisioned to provide a structural form in order to unravel the three-fold construct in the selected focused context of India. Therefore, the first question substantiates the requirement of a visual framework emerged as follows:

1) What sort of visual framework is needed for analysis of color in shop signs?

- Visually, on the sign panels colors display certain features or characteristics like hues, their combinations and other visual relationships. They aid in understanding the working structure within the color attribute that contributes to recognition, visibility, distinction and visual communication of the content through display design in the foreground and background layers of the shop signs. Henceforth, we have asked the next question on color and its characteristics in context of visual design of shop signs in India as follows:

2) How do we use this framework to visually analyze color, its characteristics and modes of communication on shop signs in India?

- The historical journey of shop signs at different points of time in a range of countries around the globe indicated the significance of an evolution of our object of study along a timeline for India. In other nations of Asian land, for instance China, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan, the researcher could observe direct as well as indirect evolutions in the form and content of signs in commercial context. There are many overlaps along with distinctions among visual styles of form and color display in the shop signs of these countries. Likewise, the multi-ethnic, plural and vibrant land of India presents a vast range

of styles, meanings, context and their historic, business based or visual design based themes, genres and meanings rooted in the display design attribute of color. Therefore, with this objective to investigate the form-content visual relationships in color and its temporal progression in context of the changing visual design of shop signs in India further prompted a need to study and accumulate all the design based changes in color display on shop signs across time. This led the researcher to ask the following final question:

3) What are the emerging transitions, affinities and differences in colors and their applications in design of shop signs in India across cities and time periods?

1.6 Summary

This chapter introduces shop signs as an object of a qualitative research inquiry and further collects their identity, function and purpose to display varied business as part of a historical journey of their design that includes visual representation styles and respective semiotics. They vary in length and breadth from the Asian Pacific Rim nations to the countries in Europe and finally to the Western Pacific Rim countries. This section talks about various styles and designs in shop houses, store signs, shop fronts as symbolic forms, fascia signs, hanging signs, panel boards etc. and also reflects upon the material transitions in these shop signs. It has been a deliberate aim of the researcher that this chapter posits a compendium of all the essentials attached to a shop sign so as to understand it as an object as well as a subject of inquiry within the visual design domain of signs. The descriptions also reflect social and cultural influences of different countries of Asia, Europe and the West in their shop signs. Likewise, changes in the visual communication role of shops signs can be seen, pertaining to the strategies applied to persuade viewers by using interesting modes of text-graphics-color interplay. The diachronic record of changes in shop sign designs along with the contrast of visual cultures around the globe asserts the significance and the additional scope of studying shop signs from the visual design point of view in the present thesis.

Chapter 2

Setting the Ground

What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.

- Werner Heisenberg

This chapter is presented in five sections. It starts with section 2.1 that presents an introductory note on setting the ground with two pilot research projects conducted to arrive at the two identified meanings of shop signs. Section 2.2 outlines the aims and objectives of the two projects. It also briefly presents the basis of research design applied in the two projects. Section 2.3 describes the pilot research project 1 titled ‘Semiotic analysis of shop signs of Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai, India’. Section 2.4 describes the pilot research project 2 titled ‘Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of shop signs, Bengaluru, India’. Finally, section 2.5 presents the summary view of the present chapter.

2.1 Introduction

By ‘Setting the Ground’ we mean formulation of preliminary research approach to investigate a new subject area of *shop sign design*⁴². This subject has a paucity of published

⁴² There is no literal definition to explain shop sign design. Historically, a related term *shop fronts* has been elaborated in textbooks (Larwood and Hotten, 1903). In the modern trend of retail design, the term *storefront* is used. The sign plays an important role in the business trade. Refer: <http://www.bjhjh.com/2013/04/>

theoretical and methodological research studies. Therefore, we utilized some other methods and approaches that would give ideas to start a research frontier. In the current loom of the undertaken subject area, we initially performed two pilot research projects in order to formulate the main aims, scope and research perspective. This chapter presents the step-by-step use of some methods as part of these pilot research inquiries done to study shop signs in the context of India. Generally, two meanings get associated with signs. The foremost meaning comes across by the signifier-signified dual functionality that tells us what a sign stands for. The second meaning is how the sign is seen that involves the viewers of signs as the main contributors. In order to understand these meanings of signs, two pilot research projects were conducted by the researcher. In the first project, the mode of interpretation was applied to study the historical identities and values of the designs of shop signs. In the second project, a detailed description was applied to arrive at an outcome via an experimental design study for one city shop signs data. The following points explain the two pilot research projects as follows:

1) Diachronic study of shop signs and their visual semiotic analysis

The first pilot research project of shop signs in Abdul Rehman street from South Mumbai involves *thick description*⁴³. Therefore, it takes an interpretive approach that includes a combination of qualitative data collection and analytical methods of interpretations. These interpretations are extensively qualitative with decade-wise periodic descriptions of holistic trends in the expressions, visual syntax and the material basis of these shop signs.

2) Descriptive study applying a user-centered survey method for insights that helped in developing classification of shop signs in a city

The second pilot research project of shop signs from Bengaluru city involves a *descriptive approach*⁴⁴ that explains in detail the phenomenon of classification of shop signs by people. There has been hardly any published research study in the area of user-perception of classifying shop signs that the researcher has come across till date. This descriptive *survey method approach*⁴⁵ utilizes an innovative mix of both the qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and generation of new insights respectively.

⁴³ Clifford Geertz explained them as the descriptions of social life from observations and interpretations. Refer: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-thickdescription.html>

⁴⁴ simply put, a descriptive approach describes a situation or phenomena. It doesn't predict the cause and affect.

⁴⁵ a user-centered, survey method approach involves a group of methods to perform a quantitative analysis.

2.2 Aims and objectives

2.2.1 Information retrieval

Any information system requires effective retrieval. This is also very significant from communication design point of view. This retrieval exists in different parts of shop signs in our research. Its description and interpretation helps secure information about each sign and a collective group of signs in a marketplace. Therefore, a group of shop signs were analyzed for information retrieval through following aims and objectives laid out in the two pilot research projects.

1) **Identifying important visual parameters to gauge shop sign designs:** The pilot research projects would provide insights into the parameters that regulate the existence of different elements of visual design on shop signs. Every element has a two-fold function to perform: one that conveys literal meaning and the other that indicates a more embedded meaning that connotes a visual design principle, concept, historical trend, socio-cultural feature etc. An initial concept diagram was designed by the researcher to map all the important variables to study shop signs in a city of India in the two formulated pilot projects to be conducted (Fig. 2.1).

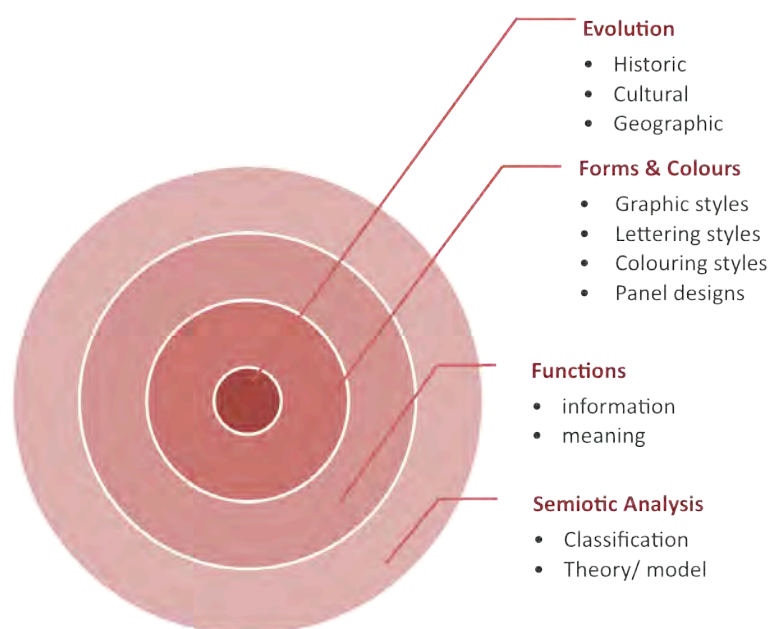


Fig. 2.1: Concept diagram representing the variables related to the shop signs belonging to a city in India

2) **Identifying shop sign preferences and classifications of signs by viewers:** It was realized that in order to know the relative effectiveness of shop signs of a particular built-

space in context of visual communication, it is important to collect the aims and objectives of the owners of shops as well as the viewers of these shop signs in two pilot research projects. The former project would pertain to a historical, social as well as cultural evolution of the object i.e. shop sign and its visual design details as part of a marketplace. The *meaning making process*⁴⁶ involved is an interpretive one. This would throw light on changing visual styles, preferences and influencing socio-economic business factors regulating signs across time periods. The second pilot project would be an investigation to formulate a typology based on user-centered preferences and classifications of attributes in the design of shop signs.

2.2.2 Basis for final research design

The research plan in two different kinds of pilot research projects would help filter the quantitative and qualitative attributes that would be essential for the final research design later. In this regard, the projects described in this chapter aimed to acquire following know-how:

1) *What are the important empirical inputs for making an effective cross-relational study?*

The small sampling exercise in relation to the two projects would help decide the sampling for the main research later. This would make the empirical foundation of the main study more representative in terms of suitable sample sizes, variables, measurement scales and the relations between the variables.

2) *How to classify shop signs in order to know emerging values that construct each attribute?*

Both the projects will help in classifying shop signs. The first project will classify the semiotic aspects of signs with respect to time. The second project will classify shop signs according to viewers' perceptions. The second one would give us additional attributes since it involves new levels of category making, a mental classification process by the viewers of shop signs. This will probably give us new groups of unknown attributes and their respective values.

⁴⁶ As an academic discipline, semiotics has its own methods and object. Globally speaking, many methods exist having distinct basis in their respective historical backgrounds. Therefore, the perspective varies and is the most characteristic and unifying for semiotics (Bal, 1994). This is the process of *meaning making*.

2.3 Pilot research project 1

Semiotic analysis of shop signs in Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai, India

2.3.1 Aims and objectives:

- 1) Collection of shop signboards that represent a wide range of time periods of their origin, design inception and making.
- 2) Conducting a semiotic analysis of these signboards.
- 3) Semi-structured qualitative interviews with shop owners to understand their perceptions of shop signboards that communicate varied business identities.
- 4) Collating all the insights in order to collect the transitions in the syntax, semantics and the pragmatics across time periods.
- 5) The concluding note shall include the emerging meaning of shop signs in context of the visual design and the historical identity of the streetscape of Abdul Rehman marketplace in the city of Mumbai.

2.3.2 Question formulated

What are the meanings of shop signs in a street like Abdul Rehman street (a case study) that has a strong historical significance among city street bazaars?

2.3.3 Data collection

2.3.3.1 Street marketplace selection criteria

- 1) *Abdul Rehman street of Mumbai is a historically and culturally rich marketplace*

Origin of the name Abdul Rehman as a street marketplace has been traced by Mr. R. P.

Karkaria⁴⁷. At first he was inclined to think that the street is named after a famous saint or

⁴⁷ A famous archaeologist and historian, Karkaria traced the origin of the etymology and meaning of Abdul Rehman as the name of a prominent marketplace of South Mumbai (Sheppard, 1917). Refer: http://archive.org/stream/bombayplacenames00sheprich/bombayplacenames00sheprich_djvu.txt

pir, Abdul Rehman whose shrine on the Cathedral rock near Kalyan is known to many in Bombay. Later, Mr. Karkaria discovered that the eponymous worthy was neither saint nor a pir but a Konkani Mahomedan, owner of most of the land in this locality 150 years ago. This street has several sections known to Indians by different names: Batlivala street, Machhi Bazaar or fish market, Bangri bazaar or market for bangles, and Rangari Mohola, street of dyers (Sheppard, 1917). Abdul Rehman street is located in the heart of Mumbai old city. This area is popularly known by the name of *Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus* in South Mumbai. The street consists of old buildings as early as the 19th century to the later ones till date. Therefore, in the context of the visual language and architectural styles, it presents a marketplace of rich identities.

2) *Cultural identity and significance of the marketplace*

Abdul Rehman street is at the heart of Kalbadevi that used to be an old neighborhood area named after the Hindu goddess. The co-existence of different communities together makes it a good heterogeneous marketplace to study. Abdul Rehman street, Bhuleshwar road and Princess street in Kalbadevi are major centers of families⁴⁸.

3) *Business context of the marketplace*

The street bazaar is known as *Wholesalers Mecca*⁴⁹ that provides an exhaustive range of wholesale products and services. Hence, in terms of business context that is an important part of shop signs, the marketplace presented a relevant selection amidst other historical marketplaces present in the old city plan of South Mumbai.

4) *Demographic context of the marketplace*

Abdul Rehman street is sandwiched between Kalbadevi, Zaveri bazaar of Bhuleshwar and Makhdoom Ali bazaar. It lies perpendicular to the Lokmanya Tilak road connecting the metro station to other major markets. For instance, Masjid Bunder, Crawford market, Zaveri bazaar, Bhindi bazaar, Dana bund, Chinch bund, Masjid bund road, Mandavi and Vagdadi appear on its one side. The other side of Lokmanya Tilak road, directly opposite to the Abdul Rehman street is the famous Crawford market. The main focal point to go to all these important marketplaces is via Lokmanya Tilak road that includes the

⁴⁸ Many Parsi families resided in this region due to close vicinity of the Parsi temple.

⁴⁹ Popularly known as a wholesalers mecca in South Mumbai, the street envisages a great variety of wholesale products, local culture, flavors and colors (Nath, 2012).

entry point of Abdul Rehman street (Fig. 2.2).

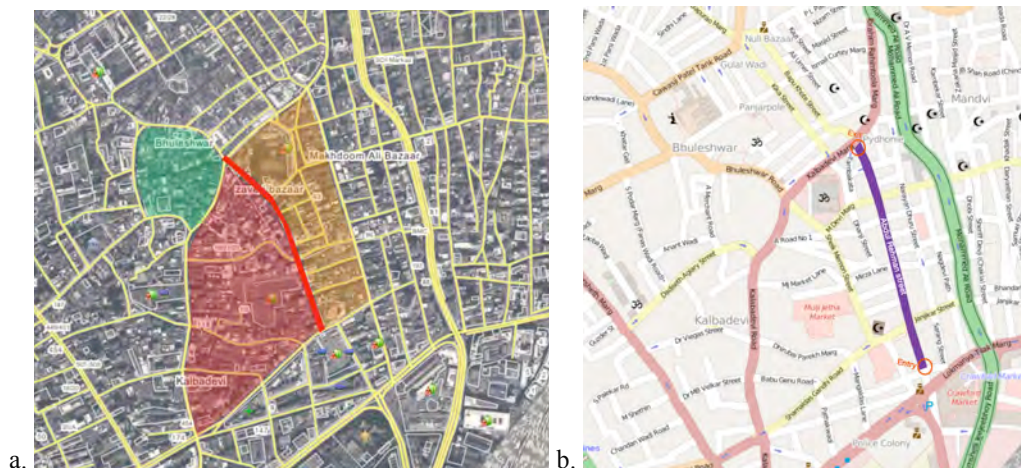


Fig. 2.2: a. The red line represents AR street marketplace, green area is Bhuleshwar marketplace area, red and orange areas indicate Zaveri bazaar and Makhdoom Ali bazaar respectively, b. Entry and exit points of Abdul Rehman street, near Kalbadevi, South Mumbai

2.3.3.2 Data collection methods

The modes used for collecting data and gathering relevant information were essentially qualitative in nature. The medium of photography was the most effective and manageable in terms of on-the-spot digital records of the shop signs. Interactions with the shop owners provided more meaning to the identity of these shop signs in terms of their business, design and social visibility in the context of the street marketplace they belong to.

1) Preparations for field visits

- a) High resolution photographs in large format of shop signboards were captured by using a digital SLR camera of Nikon D-90.
- b) Cards with labels were created (Labels: *History* – year of installation of signboards, *Design* – the makers of signboards plus their choice and design execution, *Changes or Renovations*, *Maintenance* and *Meanings* of shop signs for owners).

2) Documentation through photography:

Documentation through photography is an instant and effective tool in case of exterior built spaces like ours where landscapes, buildings and signs are the main objects of study. The underlying purpose is to conjure up the experience of knowing and recording the shop signs in our project with respect to the context i.e. their existence as a group in Abdul Rehman street. In most exterior field studies, first the space of the selected location is captured in its entirety. This is especially helpful to gather the background elements that

may have direct or indirect influence on the main objects of study they accompany (Fig. 2.3). This was done with the objective to understand the structure and form of the street and how shop signs have been positioned on both sides of the street accompanied by other kinds of signs, buildings with old architectural style of colonial British Raj times in India along with the hawkers, vendors and the bustling traffic scene.



Fig. 2.3: Small group of initial pictures of the streetscape, the architecture of the buildings and style of erecting the shop signs over the facades from Abdul Rehman Street, South Mumbai.

The first walkthrough within the built-space of Abdul Rehman street involved spontaneous and random captures of space, buildings, signs, shop signs, other signs, street stalls, streetscapes etc. In this initial gamut of photographs of different kinds of signs, we gathered 120 shop signs, 20 directional signs and 6 to 7 views of the streetscape. The repetitions were discarded later to select 54 shop signs covering a wide range belonging to different time periods of their installation.

In context of semiotics, these shop signs are the *text* that have been interpreted through semiotic analysis in order to gather their meanings as signs within the street marketplace of Abdul Rehman. The edited photographs for semiotic analysis are tightly cropped visuals of just the upright sign faces of the shop signs. The original photographs include these signs at angles depending upon the position of the photographer in front of the shop sign. It captured the whole sign along with some details of the surrounding façade, extra boards in case of shop signs with more than one display signboards. Final composition of photos include the edited complete signboard photos with angles made upright and the perspective of signboards corrected by removing the keystone effect in photoshop with minimal other elements (Fig. 2.4a and b).



Fig. 2.4: a. Original one, b. Edited photograph of a shop sign in Abdul Rehman Street, South Mumbai

3) *A walkthrough map of Abdul Rehman street, South Mumbai, India*

All the photographs of shop signboards documented were arranged as part of a two dimensional designed map by the researcher. The route in the map encompasses the complete street of 2.5 kilometers with the existing sequence of shop signs on both sides of the street (Appendix I).

4) *Semi-structured interviews*

Qualitative mode of inquiry with a semi-structured questionnaire was used to gather shop owners perspectives about the meaning of their shop signs. The format was open and informal in order to break communication barriers with the shop owners. Interviews of 54 shop owners for their respective shop signs were recorded. The semi-structured questionnaire as prepared by the researcher is as follows:

- How old is the shop signboard?
- What materials are used and techniques employed to craft the shop sign?
- When and what all kinds of design changes or renovations have happened for these shop signboards?
- What are the meanings that you associate with yours and other shop signs? Why are they significant for a shop in your view?
- Please do share with us any print material or photograph of the shop sign or any kind of visual record that you might have secured in the past.

2.3.4 Observations

1) *Field visits*

List of observations as part of the field visits are as follows-

- a) The street marketplace has a prominence of wholesale business shops.
- b) A range of local products and other services co-exist.
- c) Street imbibes mixture of different types of signs (identification, directional and instructional signs etc.).
- d) Elements of shop signs – colors, shop names in big and bold look, various typographic letter styles and kinds of framing of shop signs are visible.
- e) Variations in placement and positioning of shop signboards.
- f) Many shop signs use illustrations, iconography, three-dimensional sculpted forms and variety in shapes and sizes of visual display.

g) Other detailed observations were gathered regarding shop names, color combinations and visual techniques used to render text and images over these signs.

2) *Qualitative discussions with shop owners*

Owners' comments were summarized under following categories of purpose behind shop signs. The comments were a combination of these categories selected by each of the 54 shop owners. They are arranged in terms of frequency, maximum to minimum categories of different comments:

- a) Identification through names – 41 shops
- b) Generation of goodwill – 35 shops
- c) Advertisement of shop business – 28 shops
- d) Product information – 21 shops
- e) Distinction – 16 shops
- f) Mark of ownership – 13 shops
- g) Publicity – 12 shops
- h) Identification alone or in combination of shop names + logos + products – 12 shops
 - Strong impression of identity – 8 shops
 - Attractive information display – 4 shops

3) *Analytical view from observations*

- a) How identification signs communicate?
- b) Listing design elements that represent these signs when a designer first views them.
- c) Post-viewing, a meaning of each and every shop sign emerges.
- d) Do meanings emerge only via the material aspects of the craft of creating these shop signboards? Or, do most meanings emerge due to the presence of conventions?
- e) To what extent exists the participation of makers, painters or designers of these shop signs?
- f) Who are the makers of these signs? Are they of various profiles depending on different small and big business size shop signs?

2.3.5 Data classification and Analysis

The labels of *year of origin, design or making, maintenance, materials and cost factors, changes in design* and shop owners' perspectives on *meanings of shop signs* were made and put to use. Then, the time periods from 1930s till 2010 were divided into decade-wise group of signs coming under following eight time slots of: 1931-40, 1941-50, 1951-60, 1971-80, 1981-90, 1991-2000 and 2001-2010 (Appendix II).

Step-by-step analysis of the classified data in the eight time slots has been as follows:

- 1) *Semantic analysis* – The meanings and expressions that exist for the documented 54 shop signs have been analyzed by signifier identification, listing truth conditions per signifier and emerging meanings of each signifier.
- 2) *Syntactic analysis* – In this, visual syntax is followed by information hierarchy established by the sequence and order of signifiers, Identification of affinities in the syntax and deduction of design elements that are similar for various groups of shop signboards.
- 3) *Pragmatic analysis* – Fabrication techniques, maintenance and changes in the material representations of signs.

The above mentioned semantic, syntactic and pragmatic analysis details have been described and illustrated in Appendix III.

2.3.6 Conclusions

After collecting all the affinities and distinctions from overall syntactic and pragmatic inferences, answers to the question asked could be gathered as follows:

- 1) Shop names are major semantic operators of representation of shop signs.
- 2) Both syntactic and pragmatic inferences show almost equal significance in terms of selection and combination of signifiers for representation and meaning for viewers.
- 3) Securing shop business identity with name display that imbibes the true meaning and purpose of shop signs from the perspective of shop owners in Abdul Rehman street.

2.3.7 Learning and future directions

1) *Applying the semiotic process and analysis steps for a good sample of shop signs*

The same analytical method can be applied to a larger number of shop signs that belong to more number of street marketplaces in different cities of India.

2) *Identifying visual attributes in addition to meaning making process of a shop sign*

This pilot project of historically and visually rich marketplace of Abdul Rehman street encompasses the meaning making processes of shop signs belonging to the said marketplace only. In order to know the visual language and grammar of the design of a shop sign through its elements, their sequence, relational expressions and the material context etc., the scope could be extended from the *meaning making* to the *visual attribute(s) analysis* of the shop signs in India.

3) *Tapping changes within the shop sign as a synchronic object*

An additional in-depth observational study to assimilate all unit elements – the classes, sub-classes and sub-sub-classes from the researcher's perspective would give a firm design-based rationale to understand the basic structure of the shop signs with all attributes, elements and their values.

2.4 Pilot research project 2

Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of shop signs, Bengaluru, India

2.4.1 Aims and objectives

Case study 1 of Abdul Rehman street helped us to decode the meanings of shop signs with the aid of semiotic analysis. The analysis helped in gaining insights about meaning generation in shop signs from the design researcher's as well as shop owners' perspectives. The viewer perceptions were not part of the first pilot project. Therefore, for the second pilot project, the researcher planned an experiment with shop signs as picture cards to gather the viewer perceptions. Segmentation into categories helps in retrieving information. It develops a system for an object or phenomena (Nielsen, 2004). Therefore, a classification of shop signs would provide an informed view about the system of elements that form the identity of a shop sign. There is a paucity of published research in the favor of the above statement.

Therefore, this pilot project made an attempt to substantiate the benefits of arriving at new classification labels via open card sorting.

The objectives of this project were as follows:

- 1) To formulate new nomenclature or terminology applied by people to name various sign attributes to understand significant parts of a shop sign's visual design language.
- 2) Identification of the most significant parameters that could be best used to arrive at a preliminary classification of shop signs.
- 3) This collection of parameters includes the ones given preference against the ones that would be left out.

2.4.2 Questions formulated

Following questions were asked at the onset of this pilot research project:

- 1) *How people classify shop signboards mentally?*
- 2) *What clues they use to attach qualities or concepts with a shop sign?*
- 3) *How the classification structures are constructed by designers as well as non-designers?*
What are the affinities and distinctions in the applied approaches by both kinds of participants?

2.4.3 Methods

In this second pilot research project, a mixed method approach of quantitative and qualitative techniques together was applied to answer the above mentioned questions. Such an approach helps dissect large data information under empirical and interpretive modes of inquiry according to the mixed nature of some data sets, such as a group of shop signs of a city in this project. The following methods of open card sorting and hierarchical cluster analysis were used by the researcher for qualitative insights and quantitative results respectively.

1) Open card sorting

Open card sorting is defined as “[a methodology] in which subjects can determine their own groups by first sorting the cards and then labeling the resulting piles” (Deaton, 2002, p.4).

Mostly used for designing new labels for web designs, this method helps assimilate the

mental thought process of viewers of the website through their chosen groups and classification structures. It helps collate new insights into what are the approaches applied by the viewers to group content in order to perform common tasks. The card sorting as part of this pilot project has been represented in the circled labels that were assigned by the participants to different classes of shop signs they created (Fig. 2.5).



Fig. 2.5: Classification labels as part of a structure made by card sorting by a non-designer participant

2) *Hierarchical cluster analysis through SPSS software*

This method generates a system of clusters, collecting small clusters of very similar items to large clusters having only dissimilar items. This method helps create a sequential and logical order of segmentation that helps collect co-related clusters. It tells you the distance between two and more clusters and which clusters are important ones to consider.

2.4.4 Data collection and experiment design

The researcher documented through photography around 500 plus shop signs from various street marketplaces of the metro city of Bengaluru, India. Handling 500 plus picture card signs would have been cumbersome from the point of view of participants for card sorting exercise. Anywhere between 30 to 100 cards should give statistically powerful results in a card sorting experiment (Nielsen, 2004). After elimination of repetitive and damaged shop signs, we could acquire a gamut of 90 shop signs from three marketplaces of Bengaluru. These 90 shop sign photographs were developed into picture cards, each of size 15 cm. X 7.5 cm. (Fig. 2.6).



Fig. 2.6: The original print of shop sign photo in correct perspective arranged in the card of 15 X 7.5 cm.

A group of 90 picture cards of shop signs were the visual stimulus for the experiment. In order to sort picture cards and make classification structures a big space was required. A space having four tables of regular height was selected for the open card sorting. This space is part of the current Shenoy Innovation Studio, IDC, IIT Bombay (Appendix IV). The lighting conditions were kept ambient. The experiment was conducted in the duration between 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. catering to the different timings suitable to different participants.

The next step was to decide on the number of participants for the card sorting experiment. In this regard, there has been a study to gain knowledge about what sample size should be the most appropriate for card sorting technique? The following were the results of that study:

“A general conclusion that can be drawn on the basis of this research is that it may not be cost effective to spend resources to gather information from more than 20-30 participants in a card-sorting study.” (Tullis and Wood, 2004).

“As always, we must exercise appropriate caution in generalizing results from one study. Results will obviously differ as a function of the homogeneity of the participants in a sample and such things as the instructions given to the participants for the card-sorting task.” (Tullis and Wood, 2004).

Testing more number of users for a card sorting study has diminishing results. Considering the above basis of sample size, we selected a total number of 30 participants (age groups: 20-65 yrs.) for this experiment. For that we developed an order of mixing equal number of designers and non-designers as participants, 15 for each kind in order to preserve the homogeneity in the number of two kinds of respondent profiles. In the designer gamut, design faculty, technical staff, one master student and research scholars from IDC, IIT Bombay participated. In the non-designer gamut, two B.Tech. students, M.Tech. students and research scholars from other departments of IIT Bombay participated. The following paragraph presents the instruction imparted to the participants before each card sorting exercise:

The aim of this experiment is to know how you classify a group of 90 shop signs as picture cards here. Look at the group of cards and sort them into separate groups. The groups can be divided or related, depending on your choice. All the groups that you make together would be a classification structure of 90 signs that you sort. Think Aloud and label each of the group you construct. You have full freedom to choose your own criteria of sorting. Come up with as many groups as you observe and develop one or more classification structures. You can put one particular card into as many groups as you like and include as many cards as part of a group. When you have finished sorting cards and labeling the groups, we would like you to tell us the approach that you followed to sort these cards.

After each card sorting completion, the participant was asked to give answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which signs are good or bad from the point of view of visual communication?
- 2) What are your reasons for choosing good or bad signs?

2.4.5 Observations and analysis

1) Open card sorting

Designers made comments pertaining to the design context such as likeability of fonts or lettering styles, visual representation and the information flow. Non-designers looked into purpose, words and the visual mood depicted in the picture cards. Following views are summarized versions of six kinds of opinions given by designers as well as non-designers (Table 2.1). The sequence shows a decrease in the occurrence of a comment under these generic labels.

Comments: Good signs	Designer	Non-designer
Likeable (text + pictures, colors used)	10	14
Names, wording selected for names	8	12
Visual representations, styles and symbols	6	6
Likeable fonts	6	5
Straightforward signs	5	4
Innovative look and novel treatment given to fonts	3	2

Table 2.1: Designer versus non-designer views about effective or good signs

2) Hierarchical cluster analysis

The labels emerging from 30 card sorted classification structures by participants were fed as data for getting hierarchical clusters through SPSS software. The aim was to gather the frequencies of the most preferred to the least preferred labels made by them earlier in card sorting. This record is represented by the *dendrogram* that was the first outcome of the hierarchical cluster analysis conducted via the SPSS software. This helped in analyzing data in the form of clusters. Next, the cluster analysis gave the co-relations that existed between variables. It revealed the close associations between some cases in this project that is illustrated in form of a proximity matrix. Next in series was the agglomeration table that helped us to find relevant clusters to study as the third outcome of the hierarchical cluster analysis. Lastly, the vertical icicle represented separate cases that combined into clusters per iteration of the analysis at the scale of 0 to 100 clusters formed.

These outcomes of the cluster analysis starting from the dendrogram of cluster formations till the vertical icicle have been illustrated as part of Appendix V.

2.4.6 Conclusions

This study gave us a hierarchical and linear classification system to know various parts of a shop sign. The emerging classification table has provided us with important categories that should be studied with respect to other ones in clusters based on the dendrogram and vertical icicle plots. The relations between groups of categories have been understood on the basis of each of the participant approach, the kind of classification structure constructed by them and their comments in selecting specific shop signs as good and bad signs in terms of *visual communication* (Table 2.1). According to the dendrogram and related coefficient values in the agglomeration table, the closest primary attributes in decreasing significance are: Color (CO), Material Representation (RP), Text and Type (TT), Language (LA), Fonts (FS) and lastly Shop Functions (SF). The final outcome proposed is a conceptual mapping that involves sequential log of elements, parameters, values and the context (Table 2.2).

Elements (Primary attributes)	Parameters (Functional basis)	Values (Selected units)	Context
CO	Color contrast, Perception	Color Foreground-Background; Warm-cool	Design
RP	Material culture	High-low quality	Design

TT	--	Painted-handcrafted	Design and content
FS	Font kind; Readability	Regular-stylized, Readable-non-readable	Design
LA	Multilingual identity	Bilingual-multilingual	Content
SF	Business strategy	General-Specific products	Content

Table 2.2: Classification table of ninety shop signs in the city of Bengaluru, India

The elements in the illustrated table above are related to those parameters that theoretically regulate them. Maximum number of comments regarding good signs and why they function as good signs by the respondents have been mostly for colors, their distribution in the layout, visual mood, relative contrast, picture-text relation and visual styles that are part of the parameters of *Color Contrast and Perception* and *Material Culture*. The color dynamics and material pragmatics of shop sign are significant parameters that should be applied in the design of a shop sign. The comments are almost equal for both CO and RP from both designers as well as non-designers. This is further supported by their close similarity cluster values in the dendrogram (Appendix 5).

2.4.7 Learning and future directions

The learning and respective future directions attained from this project are as follows:

- 1) *Groups*: Any classification groups things together. With groups we get a sense of characteristics that play an important role in re-defining of these shop signs. This sense emerges from uniformly distributed and well-defined groups. As a simple example, say a principle of *visual emphasis* may govern in the form of a particular order between text and images on signboards, like text-image, text-image-text-image, image-text-image-text or image-text groups.
- 2) *Organization*: This is required to make sense of the vast variety of elements in shop signs. This has been achieved with two different kinds of classification structures made by designers and non-designers in this pilot project. Similarly, for the later main research, we would have to decide upon the number of shop signs per marketplace per city and organize this sample within the primary variables of time period slots and the visual attribute with defined values to study.

- 3) *Shared characteristics*: The Greek philosopher Aristotle began classifying plants according to their shared characteristics. Groups of plant varieties helped biologists in the field to know the details as well as the heritage associated with specific varieties. Similarly, application of the science of classification in our case would aid in getting the details and the subjective basis of the shop signs. This is especially important during the stage of reconstructing the classification table into a framework with defined visual elements and their relationships for later research.
- 4) *Hierarchy*: The relative importance of one group over the other would help us in understanding the thought process of segmenting visual elements by designers versus non-designers. This hierarchy will have further relevance in assigning values to the marketplaces within the city during the main research of shop signs. Also, the selection of values for the cities themselves needs clarity and focus.
- 5) *Color as the primary attribute in the visual design of a shop sign*: With the classification of color into parameters and values, the researcher could foresee its significant role as a sign in itself that imbibes a unique semiotic meaning, especially in context of India. Therefore, *color* later has been selected as the attribute of analysis in the main research in terms of the visual syntax, semantics and pragmatics that together create the semiotics of colors in a variety of shop signs documented from selected cities in India across marketplaces and time periods.

2.5 Summary

Pilot research project 1

Interpretive meaning making of shop signs in a diachronic way of analysis has been applied in this project by the design researcher. Many visual and lingual insights emerged with shop names as the major semantic operators that regulate the order and visual representations along with the expressions in shop signs that stand for hidden meanings. A collection of views shared by the shop owners helped in validating the results of the decade-wise diachronic analysis of the selected group of shop signs of Abdul Rehman street in this project.

Pilot research project 2

A mixed method approach of applying a qualitative and quantitative method of data collection and analysis respectively in this project involves viewers' perspectives along with the analytical observations made by the researcher from the emerging classification table. The qualitative method of open card sorting done by the participants generated many qualitative labels of the elements of shop signs. The quantitative method of hierarchical cluster analysis has helped in generating significant clusters of the most preferred to the least preferred attributes selected by both designer and non-designer participants, making this project a unique study in itself.

The foremost attribute of the resulting classification table from pilot research project 2 is color that acts as a *sign in itself* in the context of the visual design of a shop sign.

Chapter 3

Methodology

There are some enterprises in which a careful disorderliness is the true method.

- Herman Melville

This chapter is presented in eight sections. Section 3.1 gives an introduction to the research plan for the formulation of a visual framework. Section 3.2 outlines the aims and objectives of the entire methodology formulated in this chapter. Section 3.3 presents all the steps of data collection of shop signs and their sample selection. It also outlines the criteria to select the variables of cities, marketplaces and time periods in this research work. Section 3.4 is a showcase of the detailed study of color in the context of its significance as a visual attribute, its role in the visual design of a shop sign and its identified dimensions and characteristics for the final analysis in chapter 4. Section 3.5 describes the meaning, salient features and the role of Bricolage as the main research approach applied to formulate a visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in this thesis. Section 3.6 brings forth the quadrants, what they are with respect to the visualized framework and redefining each of them. Section 3.7 explains the theoretical basis of applying the methodology of Bricolage to formulate the final framework. It also includes step-by-step formulation and description of the structure of the visual framework to analyze color in shop signs.

3.1 Introduction

Taking leads from the two pilot research projects described in chapter 2 of this thesis, the present chapter brings forth a formulated research plan. It includes the diachronic arrangement of shop signs, the selection of visual attribute of color in the documented data of shop signs and finally their semiotic analysis with the aid of a formulated visual framework. The data in this research is a documentation of a large number of shop signs belonging to a broad timeline. These shop signs have been photo-documented by the researcher from different marketplaces and their respective cities in India. The visualization of this data has been a challenging task. Post the data collection, the need of the hour was to develop a suitable method to formulate a visual framework to analyze the selected attribute of color in our data of shop signs.

The following sections elaborate the step-by-step process starting from the aims and objectives, data collection, selection of variables, a suitable methodological research approach and finally the formulation of a visual framework of color analysis of shop signs.

3.2 Aims and objectives

- 1) To decide the basis and appropriate parametric approach of acquiring as well as organizing a good number of shop signs from a selected number of cities for final analysis.
- 2) To select a sampling method in order to acquire a representative group of shop signs from the large data collected by the researcher.
- 3) To identify the variables of cities, marketplaces and time periods.
- 4) To identify the component parts in the visual attribute of color that can be taken forward for the final analysis of shop signs.
- 5) To select a suitable existing method for the formulation of a visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in our research.

3.3 Data collection

We had two ways to collect data for this research. First was the documentation of shop sign photographs available in books, magazines and web resources. There are possible discrepancies that are inherent in the shop sign photographs available on the web or other print publications. There was no way of knowing that these signs exist for real as part of the street markets from there pictures displayed in the web and printed records. Therefore, the researcher decided to go in for a second approach to collect data first hand by making field visits to different marketplaces and cities. This approach seemed to be more effective in order to acquire the shop signs as they exist in reality as part of streetscapes. As part of the field visits, the researcher could gather information from the shop owners about the visual aspects and the business image of their shops. The following sections present the data collection methods used in this research.

3.3.1 Documentation through photography

Photography as a visual research technique has been used in the fields of anthropology, sociology, history and design (Collier and Collier 1986; Edwards 1992; Prosser 1998). We documented shop signs through photography in their isolated form as well as in groups as part of marketplaces in different cities of India. The on field captures could document data of around 3500 shop signs from twelve cities of India. This approach was applied by the researcher in order to inculcate meaning, value and richness associated with the visual design of shop signs. Not only she could capture each of the shop signs or their groups as part of streetscapes but also the information about their year of installation, business kind, scale and the marketplace profile from the shop owners. This was instrumental in acquiring multiple perspectives about shop signs as urban markers of the cities they belong to. Therefore, the data imbibes richness with respect to the identity of shop sign as an object of material culture as well as a medium of visual display design within the paradigm of time periods, marketplaces and cities in India.

3.3.2 Documentation through videography

Video documentation of select interviews with the makers of these shop signs is part of the data collection. They helped us to capture the background around the making of a shop sign. We share a few photographs of the artists painting at the time of interviews (Fig. 3.1). The videos provide data collection to gather the makers perspectives, process and rationale

followed by them in the making of shop signs (ref of the videos as part of DVD along with this thesis – follow the ref style). This collection of videos reveal shop signs as powerful social mediums of display with a physical interface that communicates new kinds of visual identities as compared to other objects of urban visual culture in streetscapes. A sample record from the interviews may be referred in Appendix VII.

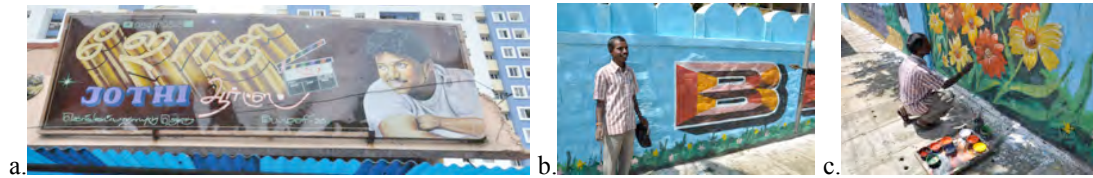


Fig. 3.1: a. Interviews at Jonji Painters, Chennai, b. and c. Mr. Shivkumar, Murugan Arts painters, Bengaluru

3.3.3 Stratified sampling method for data reduction

The data collection included around 3500 shop signs from twelve cities of India: Agra, Ajmer, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Fatehpur Sikri, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kishangarh, Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram. This large number had to be reduced in order to get a representative sample of shop signs for analysis. The researcher could observe damaged shop signs or ones with incomplete information with respect to their year of installation, design basis, material identity and business scale as gathered from the shop owners and the makers of the signs. After elimination, around 2700 shop signs were filtered from twelve cities. Sampling this large data required a mathematical rationale. We selected stratified sampling method after taking into account other existing methods such as simple, systematic, oversampling and cluster sampling. Finally, stratified sampling method was applied to eliminate and distribute the acquired number of shop signs into systematic subgroup divisions or strata.

A *stratified sample* is an outcome of that sampling technique in which the researcher divides an entire target population into different subgroups or strata and then randomly selects the final subjects proportionally from the different strata. Stratification groups members of a population into relatively homogenous strata before sampling. This practice helps improve the representation of a sample by reducing the degree of sample error (Babbie, 1992). This type of sampling method is applied when the researcher wants to highlight specific subgroups within the population. For instance, to obtain a stratified sample of university students, the researcher would first organize the population by college class and

then select appropriate numbers of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. This ensures that the researcher has adequate amounts of subjects from each class in the final sample.

Similarly, strata in our study were formulated by first reducing twelve cities to five cities. The next step was to organize the population of shop signs to a number achieved per city. When per city sample number was acquired, further numbers in strata of shop signs in different marketplaces within each city could be calculated. A random elimination of shop sign photographs on the basis of visual condition helped in attaining a reduced and manageable sample of shop signs per marketplace. Henceforth, we got marketplaces as distinct sub-groups. They together defined the larger sub-group of shop signs per city. Three marketplaces per city were chosen on the basis of business scales. Generally, for quantitative and qualitative research analysis, a sample size of 100 is preferred (Nielson, 2004). Finally a good number of 30 shop signs per marketplace in each of the cities was achieved that led to a good number of 90 shop signs per city for final analysis (Fig. 3.2).

All the steps of sampling entire data of shop signs in our research have been described and illustrated as follows:

1) *Total Population (N):*

N = 3500 shop signs in six marketplaces of each of 12 cities

2) *Population (n) after elimination of damaged shop signs or one with incomplete information:*

n= 2700 shop signs in six marketplaces of each of 12 cities

3) *Reduction of 12 cities to 5 cities with a good number of around 300 shop signs per city with 50 shop signs per marketplace (mp)*

4) *Reduction of six marketplaces to three marketplaces:* Shop business scale was the parameter that included different kinds of business status of markets. In each city, we could identify at least three marketplaces (mp) representing different business scales – small, small-medium and large, with each marketplace including 50 shop signs. Therefore, the six marketplaces were reduced to three marketplaces per city in the selected five cities in our data.

5) *Reduction of number of shop signs from 50 to 30 per marketplace:* In order to reduce per city sample size of shop signs close to 100, we revisited the 50 shop signs and selected a representative sample size of 30 shop signs per marketplace according to its business scale as explained in section 3.3.4. This led to a total of 90 shop signs sample size for each of the five cities in our data (Fig. 3.2).

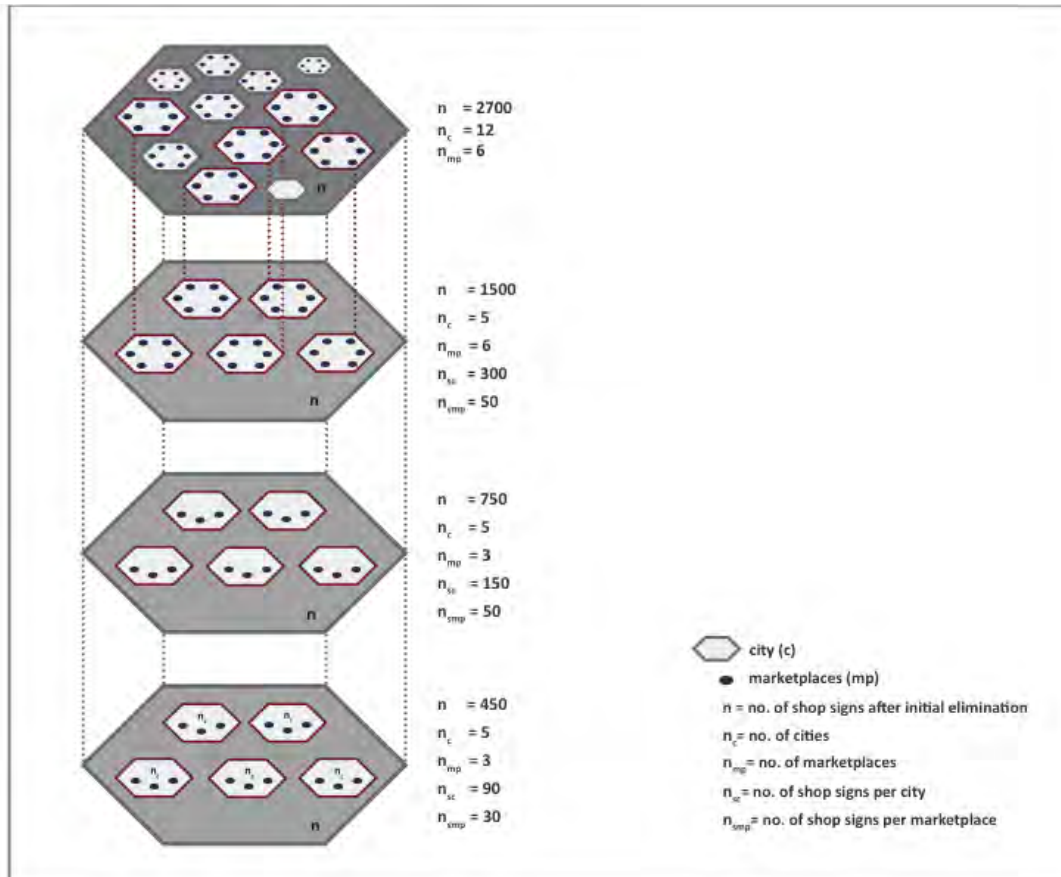


Fig. 3.2: Stratified sampling to acquire representative shop signs and their numbers

The foremost variable in our research is the object of study i.e. shop sign itself. The other variables in our research are cities, marketplaces and time periods. The selection criteria for these variables are outlined in the following section.

3.3.3 Selection criteria of cities, marketplaces and time slots

1) Cities

The initial data collection from 12 cities had an uneven number of shop signs. Some cities had more than 300 shop signs, while some others had less than 100. Therefore, we selected those cities that presented good scope in terms of a range of signboards belonging

to a broad timeline along with total number of shop signs that could be considered for both a qualitative analysis and a quantitative visualization. On this basis, the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai were selected.

2) Marketplaces

Shop kinds can be gauged by the nature of trade i.e. wholesale, retail / manufacturing or the assets and revenues parameters. Out of these, the most common way is to classify on the basis of the nature of business that has direct co-relation with the scales of business. For instance, small-scale business sometimes has a sub-classification of cottage industries and micro enterprises. SMES (small to medium enterprises) lump the small and medium business together in order to emphasize the difference from the large business that are generally multinationals or key players in the industry. We selected three marketplaces per city with three different scales of business as follows:

a) Small scale business marketplace

This kind of marketplace mainly consists small business shops wherein the ownerships, partnerships and proprietorships are planned on a small scale. For instance, *general merchant, tea shops, juice stalls, tailors and small medical shops* (Fig. 3.3).



Fig. 3.3: Small-scale business shops from the city of Ajmer, Rajasthan, India

b) Small and medium scale business marketplace

This kind of marketplace has a mixture of small and medium business shops wherein the ownerships, partnerships and proprietorships are planned on a medium business scale. For instance, variety shops such as bakeries, local items, stationery stores, grocery stores, local beauty parlors, book stall, service shops such as hardware stores, watch repair shops etc. (Fig. 3.4).

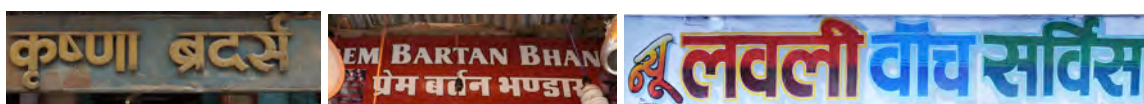


Fig. 3.4: Small and medium-scale business shops from the city of Ajmer, Rajasthan, India

c) *Large scale business marketplace*

This kind of marketplace mainly consists of large business shops wherein the ownerships, partnerships and proprietorships are planned on large scale. For instance, large outlets like Nike, Pantaloons, @home etc. and large Showrooms like Gili, Manyavar, Baggit, Saboo Collections etc. (Fig. 3.5).



Fig. 3.5: Large-scale business shops from the city of Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

3) *Time slots*

The data of shop signs collected per marketplace in each of the five cities in this research includes shop signs as old as pre-independence to the post-independence and the modern times. A slot-wise continuous ordering of six timeslots that represent significant time periods of pre and post-independence in India were finalized as: 1930-44, 1945-59, 1960-74, 1975-89, 1990-2004 and 2005 onwards. The year of the making and installations of shop signs in our data belong to each of these time slots. Each slot including 14 years give a good scope to tap some marked historical, social and scientific developments in India as follows:

- a) The time period slot in British Colonial India falls between 1930-44. During this time period, marked revolutions such as Salt Satyagraha, Khadi and Civil Disobedience movements initiated by Mahatma Gandhi to propagate notions of self-reliance, hardwork, sacrifice etc. Other political agitations and social regimes and other events occurred nationally as well as internationally (Keay, 2011).
- b) The next time slot covering majority of years in the post-independent times in India falls between 1945-59. This period was well known for Nehru's efforts to establish a marked development in the public sectors, with the advent a lot of premier educational universities and institutes like the IITs in India. Nehru aimed for stabilization of independent India with forming of our Indian constitution in 1950, with the following years well known for building of dams to address large-scale preservation efforts (Keay, 2011). In addition, this period includes many scientific inventions, technological advancements in printing and display design, social developments. This time slot is also marked by the Golden Age of

Indian film industry⁵⁰, well known to experiment and explore popular themes of sacrifice, realism with respect to changing Indian society, families and other socially evolving concepts.

- c) The third time slot from 1960-74 marks the era of socio-political unrest in India, popular by the name of period of consolidation⁵¹ at the backdrop of wars. On the other side, was also a period of invention of new schools in the arts, aesthetics and fashion worlds. Popularly known as the decade of innocence⁵², a new sense of individualism began to emerge in various fields. For instance, there were remakes in Indian cinema and the decade went beyond the disco and safari suits (Majumdar, 2001).
- d) The next time periods between 1975-89 in India have been well known for the coming of Commercial advertising, photo realism techniques and color broadcasting introduced for the first time in television. The socio-political atmosphere of aggression, harsh decisions and unfortunate marginalized movements depicted the popular theme on Indian land. This period is also known for the secessionistic⁵³ movements.
- e) The next periods in the slot of 1990-2004 are well known for major economic growth of the nation that saw an upsurge in new policy reforms (Panagaria, 2003). The refreshing 1990s with the emerging Open economy⁵⁴, especially post the violent and self-inflicted 1980s that led to a tattered financial status of India. 2005 onwards is representative of the ultra modern lifestyle, tastes, fast technology and futuristic ideas to take India ahead.

3.4 Color study

3.4.1 Significance of color as the visual attribute

The attribute of color has been selected on the basis of the results obtained from pilot research project 2 explained in the preceeding chapter of this thesis. Color envisages not only an optical quality but also a unique semiotic meaning in the context of India. With an

⁵⁰ The 1950s Golden Age of Indian cinema provided a strong impetus to the industry, with themes changing to social issues relevant at the time (Rasmussen, 2010).

⁵¹ The Republic of India: THE NEHRU ERA, 1947-64 (Alchinn, 2015, *Encyclopedia Britannica*)

⁵² The 90s saw liberalization and the 70s by comparison are an innocent time in India. We look back to see a decade marked by a scarcity of everything except imagination (Bandare, May 29, 2012, Hindustan Times)

⁵³ *Secessionistic movements*, the separatist movements led by mainly Sikhs in the 80s (Chopra, 2008, pp.192).

⁵⁴ *Open economy* was introduced during Manmohan Singh's reign as the finance minister in the central government of India in 1990s.

inherent semantics, syntactics and pragmatics, colors in different shop signs become signs in themselves. Moreover, colors are important in both identifying objects i.e. in locating them in space and in re-identifying them. This is typically essential to an object's appearance that any account of visual perception must contain some account of colors (Maund, 2012). Much of our perception of physical things involves our identifying objects by their appearance and colors. We could observe and identify two main visual attributes for the key elements in the shop signs as follows:

- 1) Based on the Greek definition of color⁵⁵, it always accompanies the form i.e. color as a visual attribute accompanies the type or the form of the letters that together construct the shop name as well as the tag line (Fig. 3.6a).
- 2) Likewise for the sign panel, color as a visual attribute accompanies the material board or the panel form of the shop sign. Color provides the identity to this form acting as the background in a shop sign (Fig. 3.6b).

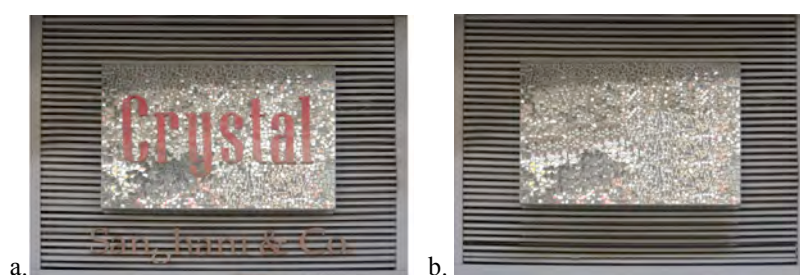


Fig. 3.6: a. Orange main text, golden secondary in a shop sign, b. Grey and silver white crystal backgrounds in Abdul Rehman street, South Mumbai

Color is *non-verbal communication*⁵⁶ and may be perceived as an aspect of form or surroundings⁵⁷. The subliminal messages we get from color shape our thoughts. As humans, our very survival is hung on the identification of color. We stop our cars for red lights and go on green. We look at the color of plants and animals to determine whether or not they are safe for us to eat or touch. The bottom line is that color is a very important part of our daily lives. It's important for us as designers to use color appropriately and understand the meaning behind the colors we choose. It has been the phenomenal work of the French chemist Michael Chevreul who has experimented with the effects of placing different colors alongside one

⁵⁵ "Colors are important in both identifying objects and in re-identifying them." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2012 Edition)*, Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/>

⁵⁶ Nonverbal communication is expressed through nonlinguistic cues. Of these, cues provided via artifactual communication and appearance or sent via color are included. Retrieved from <http://www.sagepub.com/>

⁵⁷ Colors permeate environment, are attributes of objects and communicate without words (Holtzschue, 2012).

another. He examined the optical effect which is now used in color printing and television. Joen Wolfrom says in his book, *The Magic Effects of Color* that,

"Through Chevreul's research and our own experiences, we know that colors are not static. Colors are similar to people--their personalities change and they can be influenced by close associations."

In addition to various meanings and identities of colors, scholars and practitioners have delved into studies revealing effects of colors in spaces. In the discipline of art, color is more than just an element of aesthetics or visual emphasis. For instance, the popular work of art by Michelangelo on the Sistine Chapel has been restored in colors that enlivens and highlights the role of color as an instrumental tool to create spatial effects (Riley, 1995). However, in context of associations, colors communicate at the most subconscious level. Research has shown that some color responses are not only powerful but also near universal. People are indoctrinated that red means *stop* and green means *go* to the point that a flash of red has one stepping on the brake. There are cultural meanings of colors that vary from place to place. For instance, in Europe and North America, white is associated with youth, marriage and beginnings while in Japan and India, white is the funeral color (Avital, 2008). Traditional and religious symbolism play major roles in culturally conditioned color preference (Fehrman & Fehrman, 2004). Consistent color use in communication acts as a tool to link information at the visual level applied by designers in their design. In other words, color prioritizes information whether meant to be or not (Bessler, Besler and Battenberg, 2014). Among the elements of visual design, graphics and text are inseparable from the attribute of color. When applied skillfully and intentionally, color is a valuable communication tool for graphic designers (Rider, 2009).

3.4.2 Role of color in the visual design of shop signs

Colors imbibe an art of persuasion⁵⁸ as part of the visual display design on signboards. This art of persuasion that colors communicate with a visual mood and modes of display helps attract customers or the first time visitors to the shops. This identity creation depends upon the visual identity and grammar of color(s) used in shop signboards. A consumer reacts to the

⁵⁸ The art and science behind how color is used to convey messages and how these messages are interpreted is called color semiotics. This is such a powerful and complex tool that eight international universities have formed the group CREATE (Color Research for European Advanced Technology Employment) to cultivate knowledge about printed color. Refer: <http://www.colormatters.com/>

color of an object within 90 seconds of viewing it⁵⁹. Laurie Pressman, vice president of the Pantone Color Institute has expressed that,

"Color is the single most powerful communication tool influencing 50 to 85 percent of ideas and product purchase decisions. With consumers looking at color more holistically, it has become the catalyst of cross-design thinking and the connector across all areas of design"

Color is a subtle but pervasively influential element in graphic design. It permeates graphic representations in packaging, advertising and branding. Slight variations in color can advance or devastate design effectiveness and have massive economic implications for companies and products. Whether audiences are conscious or unconscious of color's impact, its involving potential makes it a worthy asset for any visual communicator (Rider, 2009). In the context of business and marketing, color is an essential tool that makes the brands, products or services break ice in distinction with customers or repels them away from a potential purchase decision. It has been estimated in color research that around 60 percent of the acceptance or rejection of a product might be related to colors used (Walker, 1993). It has also been found by researchers that color visuals increase the willingness to read eighty percent and can positively affect motivation and participation to the same degree (Green, 1989). Therefore, colors can be considered as meaningful facilitators that create an effective visual design of promotional medium(s) such as commercial outdoor signboards as part of streetscapes in a city.

3.4.3 Color dimensions and characteristics

Designers and practitioners have discovered color analysis methods prominently for fashion designers and make-up artists. Among these existing methods, we have considered the *four seasons and their twelve color types* introduced by Carole Jackson in her book *Color me Beautiful* (1987). Following the same method, we could observe four dimensions of colors for the visual analysis of 450 shop signs in our research. The foremost *description* dimension describes color hue, value, saturation, temperature and kinds. In past, the well-known color researcher Johannes Itten saw reactions to color as aesthetic, emotional or symbolic. *Colors and their combinations* can be particularly evocative when they conjure an atmosphere or a period of history (Itten, 1970). Such *color relationships* are formed by using two or more *color combinations*, their *hierarchy*, *contrast*, *effects* and the mixing qualities in the form of

⁵⁹ Jill Morton, color psychologist and branding expert at www.colormatters.com

color schemes. The fabrication, make and production of colors as part of materials is the dimension that explains their pragmatics. In this dimension, an extra thirteenth characteristic namely color functionality is also considered for final analysis in our research. Symbolism of colors reveals the identity dimension i.e. the culturally known or arbitrarily implied meanings of colors (Table 3.1).

Color dimensions	Color characteristics
1) Color description	Color hue Color value Color saturation Color temperature Color kinds
2) Color relationships	Color combinations Color hierarchy Color contrast Color effects Color schemes
3) Color pragmatics	Color production Color functionality
4) Color symbolism	Color identity

Table 3.1: Four dimensions and thirteen color characteristics

The meanings of the four color dimensions and their respective characteristics appearing on shop signs in our research have been described in Appendix VIII.

3.5 Describing the method

This section explains the meanings, salient features and the role of bricolage as a research approach that have helped us in integrating all the four quadrants selected for visual analysis of our data of shop signs in a framework, illustrated and described in the sections 3.6 and 3.7.

3.5.1 Meaning of Bricolage

The term *Bricolage making do* that combines elements, components or concepts into new and original outcomes⁶⁰. This method of combining elements has its roots in the academic studies belonging to social research. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), bricolage in methodological context reveals insights into the rigor and complexity in social research.

The etymological foundation of bricolage comes from a traditional French expression that denotes crafts people who creatively use left over materials from other projects to

⁶⁰ The philosophy of *making-do* is opposite to the scientific methods of research. A bricoleur's approach of *making do* suggests indeterminate future possibilities in order to create unpredictable outcomes (Yee and Bremner, 2011).

construct new artifacts (Rogers, 2012). French anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Levi Strauss defines this method in the context of anthropology as a spontaneous creative act that uses whatever is available to reach at a desired outcome. He analyzed that the engineer who employs this method bears the scientific mind against the bricoleur who bears a savage mind to combine and create new outcomes⁶¹. These two minds adopt two different modes of knowledge acquisition, namely concrete and abstract respectively.

“The term bricoleur is used by Lévi-Strauss to define a kind of handyman who invents in the face of specific circumstances, using whatever means and materials are available” (Schneider, 2001:167)

This method triggers multiple viewpoints, reconfigures and transforms them together to form a new narrative. According to Rahn (2002),

“Society has become a hip-hop culture in the Bricolage of cultures, multiple viewpoints, and proliferation of information, continually being recycled and reconfigured into new forms” (Rahn, 2002:155)

The one who employs the bricolage method is a *bricoleur*. Therefore, in the context of current doctoral research, the researcher as a bricoleur can be described as a creative fiddler (Floch, 2001:5) who has constructed methods by utilizing all the tools at hand rather than accepting and using pre-existing methodologies (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005a). The newly developed paradigm of integrating four different quadrants later in this research re-appropriates their relative roles in their own context. Therefore, we have redefined each of the four quadrants (section 3.6) in the context of visual design of the object of our study i.e. shop sign.

3.5.2 Salient features of Bricolage

1) *Prescribed affordance in integrating elements*

The subject of design has the quality to create prescribed affordances⁶² for the designed products. For Kincheloe (2004a, p.5), "there is no final, trans historical, non-ideological meaning that bricoleurs strive to achieve". To elaborate further, the ability to select appropriate components and integrate them demands a sound clarity in the context of their ontological as well as epistemological frameworks. Therefore, it becomes a pertinent

⁶¹ The two minds and modes of knowledge acquisition have been explained in detail in the book *The Savage Mind* by Claude Levi Strauss (1966).

⁶² For Gibson (1986) the term *affordance* meant meaning the interactive possibilities of a particular. Retrieved from <http://ecologylab.cs.tamu.edu/courses/physicalInterfaces/hostedMaterials/gibsonAffordances.pdf>

requisite of a bricoleur or the researcher in the context of visual and qualitative research studies such as ours, that they grasp the different theoretical, philosophical and methodological aspects (Yee and Bremner, 2011). This would help them to situate their observations and analytical commentaries in a better way in order to facilitate the multi-perspective approach. Ontologically bricoleurs examine how socio-historical dynamics influence and shape an object of inquiry. For Kincheloe (2005b),

“an object of inquiry is ontologically complex in that it cannot be described as an encapsulated entity. In this more open view of the object of inquiry, it is always a part of many contexts and processes. It is culturally inscribed and historically situated” (p. 333)

For instance, this ontological approach has been applied in our research, wherein the design researcher in the role of a bricoleur has collected all the established epistemologies, definitions, design research perspectives and understandings of the four quadrants. Within each established set of definitions, certain keywords have been inductively extracted and connected to create the structure and nature of each of the redefined quadrants (section 3.6).

2) *Flexibility and openness*

A visual analysis that involves the role of a meaning-making bricoleur does not approach knowledge-production activities with concrete plans, methods, tools or checklists of criterion. Rather, in an open process such as the bricolage there occurs flexibility, fluidity and an open-ended scope (Rogers, 2012). According to Levi-Strauss (1966), mythical meaning making bricoleurs combine their imagination with whatever knowledge tools they have at hand in their repertoire (e.g. ritual, observation and social practices) and with whatever artifacts that are available in their given context (i.e. discourses, institutions and dominant knowledge) to meet diverse knowledge production tasks. Levi-Strauss explains the meaning making bricoleur as,

“Adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks but unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project” (1966:17).

In each quadrant we could utilize different knowledge tools of inquiry at hand at the time of visual analysis in our research. For instance, in order to explain occurrence of tendencies in

the display of the visual attribute of color, we could identify social as well as aesthetic underpinnings as different causes that have given rise to a parallel effect in the form of a tendency of color behavior in the shop signs (chapter 4).

3) *Pragmatic and self reflexive in nature*

Bricolage as a research method is self reflexive to the extent that it generously appreciates the complexity of the analysis involved. In the context of our visual analysis, reflexivity of the four quadrant framework (section 3.7) established by the methodological bricolage presents an example of how an inquiry into shop sign as an object of a visual research study can be seen from multiple vantage points. The varied vantage points bring in varied point of views rooted in design, history, technology, production, culture, practice as well as social realities. Therefore, the method of bricolage is highly pragmatic in nature.

4) *Indeterminacy leading to innovative theories, methods, concepts etc.*

The adoption of the bricolage method and the questions it raises highlights the value of indeterminacy as a key condition to design research. This factor seems paradigmatically opposite to a fundamental tenet of scientific research that aims to focus on repeatability and predictive power (Yee and Bremner, 2011). The method of bricolage as part of design research doesn't set any norms or stipulated ways of how objects must be seen or further investigated. Dunne and Rabby are well known to employ an alternative approach of using design research as "a space for designers to reflect upon ideas, theories, logics and implications of design in and through design practice" (Maze and Redstorm, 2007; Seago and Dunne, 1999 and McKay and Marshall, 2007). In these contemporary times, design research is getting more and more inclined to resolve issues or answer questions of social, economic, technological, historical and cultural scenarios. This indeterminacy⁶³ can be seen in the detailed analysis of the behavior of color as a visual attribute in shop signs with different quadrants in the thesis (sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.5 ahead).

5) *Multiplicity*

Kellner (1999) describes that the multi-methodological approaches not only provide unique possibilities for knowledge construction but also create opportunities for informed political action.

⁶³ Indeterminacy or *not-knowing* is important as both the beginning and end point because of the nature of design, which is to project possible future scenarios (Yee and Bremner, 2011).

“The more perspectives one can bring to their analysis and critique, the better grasp of the phenomena one will have and the better one will be at developing alternative readings and oppositional practices” (Kellner, 1999: p. xii).

For Kincheloe (2005b), the criticalization⁶⁴ of inquiry includes an adoption of such research pursuits that appreciate the complexity of the living world that include inquiry processes that do not study objects as detached things-in-themselves but rather as connected objects-in-the-world. Likewise, in the conducted visual analysis for this research, shop signs emerge as objects-in-the-world since the visual attributes that create the design of shop signs construct new knowledge with respect to each quadrant grounded within the framework (section 3.7.2.1). The mode of oppositional practice in analyzing each of the quadrants in relation to one another as part of the framework employs the multi-methodological salient feature of the bricolage method.

3.5.3 Bricolage as a research approach

The design of a shop sign can be seen in terms of a visual form. This visual form envisages expression(s) that are explicit and meaning(s) that are implicit in the shop sign identity. This has helped us in integrating the explicit structural and visual syntax based patterns and trends with the implicit expressions and meaning based tendencies and conventions by applying the the Bricolage method as a research approach.

“All visual forms are socially embedded and many visual forms that sociologists and anthropologists deal with are multiply embedded” (Banks, 2001:79).

“Visual research depends upon and redistributes social power” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:192). They favor the belief that without social contexts, visual research will become less meaningful and thus cannot be translated into a new cultural meaning. We agree with this role of Bricolage and have applied it as a research approach in our selection of trends, tendencies and conventions and the respective analytical observations and insights of each of these three. This has helped to create new meanings of a visual culture of shop signs as material objects linked to the social cum design research inquiries in the analysis chapter of this thesis.

⁶⁴ In his *criticalization*, Kincheloe (2005b) moves Denzin and Lincoln’s (1999) articulation of *bricolage onto the next level* (p. 323), by adopting and extending the five categories of bricoleurs.

3.6 Identifying and defining quadrants

3.6.1 Identifying quadrants

The visual display of 450 shop signs in five cities was first put on the display space of the present Shenoy Innovation studio at IDC, IIT Bombay by the researcher (Appendix IX). Then in the role of a bricoleur, she identified four independent factors in the visual design of the shop signs. When she observed each of the 450 signboard photographs identifying varied shop business, the first observation was of the component parts (signifiers/elements) and their arrangements in the foreground texts and the background panels. This represented the visual syntactics as part of each and every shop sign in her documented data. This syntax of elements and arrangements refers to *patterns* as the first factor identified by her in the visual design of a shop sign. Following this, the visual elements have expressions/ styles, the semantics in context of semiotics. These expressions were identified to be changing across six time slots for each signboard in the display. Therefore, these changing visual expressions and styles identified by her became the second factor of *trends*.

Moving further, she observed the well-known standards of color display in the foreground texts and the background panels of 450 shop signs display. These implicit symbolic meanings of color are the third identified factor, generally known by the term *conventions*. The fourth identified factor of *tendencies* came across her next step to study the history, culture, architecture and social underpinnings that influence each of the five city visual culture and color display. In the context of semiotics, both conventions and tendencies reveal meanings as symbolic norms and abstract impelling forces that reflect the *pragmatics* of the shop signs in this research.

3.6.2 Defining quadrants

These identified factors as the four corners of the visualized framework of color analysis have been called *quadrants* in this research. The four factors identified by the researcher of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions have been integrated by using the methodology of Bricolage (section 3.7.1). Before the analysis chapter, it is pertinent to present the definitions, meanings and kinds of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions. To redefine each quadrant, we have followed an inductive rationale i.e. we have selected the keywords that explain the meaning of each of the four quadrants via established definitions, etymologies and findings by researchers and practitioners in the field of design.

3.6.3 Redefining Patterns

Pattern came into origin in early 14th century and meant an outline, plan or a model. Early 15th century explained pattern as a "model of behavior, exemplar" coming from the Old French word *patron* and directly from Medieval Latin *patronus* (Etymonline, 2014). Around 1586, pattern was used to make or design something so that it is similar to something else of the same type (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014). This use established a pattern as a form of decoration. The source for early intricate patterns already existed in late antiquity among the Greeks, Romans and Sasanians in Iran⁶⁵. Patterns have also been explored much later in the software development design as inspired by architectural patterns introduced by Christopher Alexander (Alexander et al. 1977). He studied ways to improve the process of designing buildings and urban areas through patterns.

- 1) 'The **regular** and **repeated way** in which something happens or is done'. (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014).
- 2) A **regular arrangement** of lines, shapes, **colors** etc. **as a design** on material, carpets etc. (Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary, 2014).
- 3) Patterns are a **set of movements** that are **repeated regularly**. For instance, *these birds have different flight patterns* (Macmillan Dictionary, 2014).
- 4) A **principle of art**⁶⁶ and probably the universe itself, pattern *means the repetition of an element or elements in a work* (Macmillan Dictionary, 2014).
- 5) Christopher, A. (1977) asserts that **each pattern is a relationship** between a **certain context**, a certain system of forces which **occur repeatedly** in that context and a certain **spatial configuration** which allows these forces to resolve on their own. In his book "A Timeless Way of Building", the term pattern has been defined as follows:

"Each pattern is a three part rule which expresses **a relation** between a certain context, problem and a solution."
- 6) "A pattern is the abstraction from a **concrete** form which **keeps recurring** in specific **non-arbitrary** contexts." (Riehle and Züllighoven, 1996).

⁶⁵ "While geometric ornamentation may have reached a pinnacle in the Islamic world, the sources for both the shapes and the intricate patterns already existed in late antiquity among the Greeks, Romans, and Sasanians in Iran." (Department of Islamic Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001).

⁶⁶ Among the principles of design, repetition and rhythm structure a pattern. Retrieved February 2014, *Design Elements and Principles*, refer <http://www.edb.utexas.edu/minliu/multimedia/PDFfolder/DESIGN~1.PDF>

7) “When something is **repeated** or set out in a **special order**, it creates a pattern. **Patterns can be made with shapes, colors, objects and numbers.** Making patterns and spotting them is fun.” (Brocket, January 2012).

The highlighted words in the above definitions show that a pattern is comprised of elements of an object or attribute or a phenomena. These elements are similar. They are arranged in either a planned or a random fashion as a design. Therefore, similar elements and their spatial arrangements construct a pattern. Bringing this concept within the periphery of visual design of shop signs, we could observe arrangements as well as relationships in the similar elements. Therefore, we redefine the patterns in the context of our research as follows:

***Patterns** are composed of similar elements of a visual attribute and similar arrangements or visual relationships between those elements that guide the concrete form or the formal syntax in the visual design of a shop sign.*

Kinds of patterns

According to Christopher Alexander in his book, ‘The Pattern Language’,

“Each pattern is connected to certain larger pattern which comes above it in language and to certain smaller pattern that comes below it in language. Hence, the pattern helps to complete the larger patterns that are above it, and is itself completed by those smaller patterns that are below it.”

In a nutshell, every small pattern is part of a larger pattern. In his book, *Regions and Towns* he includes all other smaller patterns in the chain mentioned below.

Regions and Towns (the largest pattern) > Neighborhoods (second large pattern) > clusters of buildings (smaller pattern) > buildings (smaller pattern) > rooms and alcoves (very smaller pattern) > details of construction (smallest pattern).

Following the same philosophy as Alexander’s for patterns in our research, we could also identify large and small units in the current visual analysis. Cities, marketplaces and visual attributes are larger units in the visual syntax of shop signs whereas foreground, background elements and characteristics of an attribute are smaller units. The smaller units are part of one or more larger units of study. Likewise, we can see large and small patterns of color characteristics in our shop signs data of five cities.

Small and large patterns

Small patterns are the color characteristics themselves. All these small patterns together within a dimension of large pattern complete the pattern system of a visual attribute analysis in the current research. For instance, the smaller patterns of color value are part of the large pattern of color description dimension (Table 3.2).

b) Color value patterns	Pattern examples	Business size
i) High value in yellow names		Medium size old and big size modern stores
ii) Medium value in green names		Small size old stores and a medium size modern store
iii) Low value in blue names		Small size old shops and one medium size modern store

Table 3.2: Color value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

Significance of patterns

Patterns are significant from the perspective of knowledge that allows a designer to be more productive. The resulting designs that apply the newly discovered patterns in the design field have more *flexibility* and *reusable value*.

1) More flexibility:

Patterns on shop signs not only help us to identify the elements of color but also bring forth the syntax, links and the selective approaches applied to display color description and relationship dimensions that complete the visual color communication of shop identities. The various syntax styles and approaches are important with respect to the syntactic configuration of signs. We could also find out the similarities and dissimilarities in the visual syntax of color in different cities in our research. This flexibility helps us to decode the structure of a shop signboard as an object from the synchronic⁶⁷ point of view.

2) Reusable value:

Flexibility in patterns in shop signs increases their reusable value. Patterns simplify information overload with better retrieval system. Patterns also aid in the visual coding of various elements that outline the morphology⁶⁸ of a shop sign.

⁶⁷ *Synchronic* – simply refers to *description* of an object with all its elements etc. in present state (with no consideration of past conditions or later transitions). Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>

⁶⁸ With its origin in 19th century, Morphology since then has dealt with the form, structure of components in a living organism in biology and bio-sciences predominantly. Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>

3.6.4 Redefining trends

The origin of the term trend dates back to 16th century with its roots in Old English that means to *revolve, rotate*. The first usage of the term *trend* was in circa 1777. The verb sense of the term trend meant *to turn in a specified direction* that later gave rise to the figurative use (Etymonline, 2014). Trends generally rule the fashion, technology and business worlds. The scope of trends is almost ubiquitous in order to capture the mainstream pulse of any subject, social conditions or science etc. We have considered most generic definitions of trends here. Trend is simply a style in vogue. The popular nature of trends brings them inside the world of popular and material culture. Signboards of shops are mediums of popular visual culture and commercial expressions that have been defined in the context of design (section 1.3.2). The above argument can be traced in a very precise scrutiny of the very meaning and concept of trends in the following established definitions:

- 1) Trend is **something that is currently popular** or **fashionable**. (Merriam Online Dictionary, 2014). Therefore, a trend can be indicated as a **style** or **vogue** at a **particular time** or in a **certain direction**.
- 2) The **general movement over time** of a **statistically detectable change**; *also*: a statistical curve reflecting such a change (Merriam Online Dictionary, 2014).
- 3) Trend is a **general direction** in which a **situation is changing** or **developing** (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2014).
- 4) Trend means a **gradual change** or development **that produces a particular result**. For instance, *we have seen a trend towards more violent films this year* (Macmillan Dictionary, 2014).

From above definitions and highlighted words it could be inferred that trends are constantly **evolving popular** themes or styles that are **time-dependent** and **move in a general direction**. They are **neither static nor causal**. Time movement makes new trends and diminishes the old ones. This inductive dissection of words has helped us to redefine trends in the context of shop signs in our research.

***Trends** are the simultaneous movement or change of one or more characteristics (variables) of a visual attribute of design of a shop sign in a certain direction along time as the constant*

variable. Here, the objective or goal may not be clear for any single factor. But, the direction has some link with respect to visual, social, economic or even historical popular themes belonging to a specific time period.

Kinds of trends

There are two kinds of trends that we have identified in the visual analysis of both the foreground and background elements on the signboards as follows:

1) Transitory trends

The movement of or a change in a single color characteristic that undergoes a transition from 1930-44 time period till 2005 onwards is called a *Transitory trend*. For instance, in very old shop signs, only two hues have been used in the main text. With time, both two and three hues came into picture (Fig. 3.7) whereas for modern time periods there is a sudden drop in the two hue trend and an equivalent upsurge in the single hue trend.



Fig. 3.7: Chronological view of color hue trend in shop signs of Moti Doongri road, Jaipur

2) Period specific trends

The trends belonging to different color characteristics that are specific to a certain time period are called *Period specific trends*. For instance, we have outlined in the temporal scale below the specific trends seen in colors of shop names across marketplaces in the city of Jaipur belonging to specific time periods (Fig. 3.8).

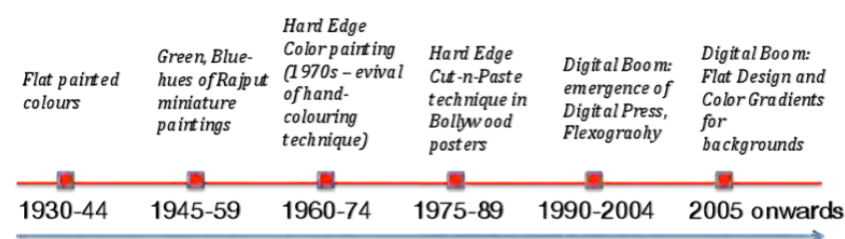


Fig. 3.8: Period specific trends in the main text of shop signs in Jaipur city

Significance of trends

Trends as mentioned above tap the simultaneous movement of inventions, practices or technological advancements over a range of specific time-periods. This is crucial in order to know the breakthrough developments in context of color use and application. These simultaneous trends are valuable visual and material culture markers of colors in the shop signs.

Time-bound, these trends help us in information retrieval about color on shop signs belonging to a certain era. This helps in gathering diachronic evolution of many things simultaneously. For instance, the following period-specific hue trend in shop name displays across marketplaces in Jaipur in 1945-59 presents the use of green and blue-green hues prominently. This period is well known as the golden era in Bollywood and the related poster designs in early '50s. A lot of new color techniques were discovered and applied to enhance the picture quality of movies celebrating the themes of realism and romance (Fig. 3.9).



Fig. 3.9: Period specific trend in 1945-59 across marketplaces in Jaipur city

3.6.5 Redefining Tendencies

The first known use of the term tendency was in 1628 from Medieval Latin, *tendentia* "inclination, leaning" from Latin *tendens*, present participle of *tendere* "to stretch, extend, aim" (Etymonline, 2014). Major studies regarding tendencies fall in the areas of biosciences, education and architecture (Mahdavinejad and Moradchelleh, 2011). Tendency is a kind of behavior that is causal unlike trend. In this sense, a tendency is a more ingrained trend that may or may not be popular. Because of the causal nature of tendencies, they tend to behave like conventions. In order to support this meaning of a tendency, we present the following

step-by-step inductive formulation of our definition from the perspective of the known English meaning, research and practice based viewpoints:

- 1) Tendency means ‘an **inclination towards a particular characteristic** or type of behavior’ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014).
- 2) ‘If somebody/something has a particular **tendency**, they are likely to **behave** or **act** in a **particular way to display artistic tendencies**’. For instance, *this material has a tendency to shrink when washed*. (Oxford Advanced Learner’s dictionary, 2014).
- 3) Tendency also means “an **attitude, habit**, or situation that is **starting to develop in a particular way**” (Macmillan Dictionary, 2014).
- 4) A related term called constructal as coined by Adrian Bejan explains natural tendency of rivers, trees, branches and similar such **flow** systems (Luo and Fan, 2009) that generates and **evolves structures** that increase flow (Bejan, 1997 and Reis, 2006).

From the above established definitions and the notions of tendencies, we can infer that tendencies are those innate and pre-disposed qualities, inclinations, behaviors and habits that help evolve systems and structures. They have a causal origin that evolves and develops a particular quality or characteristic. Therefore, we redefine the term tendencies for our research as follows:

***Tendencies** are causal behavioral inclinations or prevalence toward a specific line or direction that may or may not vary in the designs of shop signs. They are those innate qualities in a visual attribute that develop because of impelling social, aesthetic or historical forces.*

Kinds of tendencies

In our study, there are some inter-related systems such as marketplaces and their respective cities. We could observe two kinds of tendencies in these systems as follows:

1) General tendencies

These tendencies are the most common inclinations of the color display in the design of shop signs. By the word general here we mean that such tendencies are not governed by local influences. For instance, *old shop signs have predominantly hand-painted colors in the main*

text. This tendency appears across all marketplaces in shop names of five cities. We illustrate this example from the city of Jaipur (Fig. 3.10).



Fig. 3.10: Hand-painted big size shop names in the signs across all marketplaces in Jaipur

2) Distinct tendencies

These tendencies are locally promulgated inclinations of the visual attributes in the key design elements in the shop signs. Such tendencies are the more indigenous inclinations that reveal a city identity as a local, social or cultural by-product. A local tendency may also indicate city-specific inclinations. For instance, the traditional city of Jaipur sustains a color tendency of using characteristic *Jaipur pink wash* in the background elements of display in the shop signs (Fig. 3.11).



Fig. 3.11: The pink wash background sign panels in two marketplaces of Jaipur

Significance of tendencies

- 1) Tendencies preserve a city's heritage value that has deep roots in either the history, architecture and cultural identity of a city. This value can be considered as one of the important urban heritage marker in the specific city's visual and material culture.
- 2) They explain the inclusive causes of occurrence unlike trends that just project temporal popular themes. They are also different from conventions that announce the standard

norms of display in the shop signs since a long time. The probable reasons for tendencies bring forth the meaningful speculations that help us to understand the depth of visual attributes and their respective display functions of different key elements in the shop signs.

3.6.6 Redefining Conventions

The first known use of the term convention was around 15th century. The origin of convention (noun) is from the Middle French *convention* and directly from Latin *conventionem* (Etymonline, 2014). Conventions or stipulated rules or norms are everywhere for almost all fields of science, arts, design, social sciences, literature, philosophy, architecture, theatrics etc. There are few notions in relation to conventions used in design. The established definitions for conventions are mostly generic in nature. Therefore, we have redefined conventions for shop signs by collecting all the existing established terminology and meanings as follows:

- 1) Convention has been defined as, ‘a **custom** or a **way of** acting or **doing things** that is **widely accepted** and followed’ (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014). Convention also means, ‘a **general agreement** about basic principles or procedures’ (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2014). E.g. a principle or procedure accepted as **true or correct by convention**.
- 2) Convention is ‘the way in which something is done that **most people in a society expect** and consider to be polite or **the right way** to do it’ (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2014). For instance, certain social conventions of *greeting guests at home with folded hands* and *saying namaste* is an age-old social convention in India.
- 3) Don Norman’s viewpoint describes conventions in design domain as,
“A convention is a **cultural constraint**, one that has evolved over time. Conventions are **not arbitrary**: they **evolve**, they require a community of practice. They are slow to be adopted, and **once adopted, slow to go away**. So although the word implies voluntary choice, the reality is that they are real constraints upon our behavior. Use them with respect.” (Norman, 1999 issue of interactions, pp 38-43).
- 4) Conventionality: A term often used in conjunction with the term **arbitrary** to refer to the **relationship between the signifier and the signified**. In the case of a **symbolic system** such as verbal language this **relationship** is purely conventional - **dependent on social and cultural conventions** rather than in any sense **natural**. The conventional nature of **codes** means that **they have to be learnt**, not necessarily in a formal way. Thus some

semioticians speak of learning to read photographs, television or film (Saussure, 1983, 67; Saussure, 1974, 67).

From all the above definitions and meanings, conventions are widely accepted or established ways of doing things the right way. They present arbitrary relationships in the context of semiotics. However, interface designers consider them as cultural constraints that are not arbitrary. Conventions of visual attributes in the key design elements are familiar or locally known stipulated standards of visual communication. They have been socially accepted and now firmly adopted customs that the Indian public at large follows with respect. In the line of this decoding process, we redefine conventions in the context of our research as follows:

***Conventions** are sets of accepted norms, standards and criteria established since ages. In context of shop signs in our study, most of these conventions are either the color codes applied in context of their business meanings or the historical narratives specific to a particular city or India at large.*

Kinds of conventions

1) Conventions in the historical context

These conventions are established norms of different colors with respect to specific historical narratives in a city or modes of display in particular colors that imbibe some symbolic⁶⁹ meaning in context of India. For instance, we could observe the use of red or orange colored Om or Swastika symbols visually displayed on shop signs. This color and form meaningful relation is an age-old convention practiced in India at the launch of new business or after the purchase of a new product (Fig. 3.12).



Fig. 3.12: Historical practice of displaying religious marks on sign facades in context of India

Certain specific colors in India were born because of an interesting local story or event of history in a city. Because of this reason, such colors of India have mesmerized visitors to the cities with marketplaces including a colorful visual culture. For instance, the *rani pink* hue of

⁶⁹ Color symbolism means that, 'There is a great diversity exists in the use of colors and their associations between cultures' (Whitfield and Wiltshire, 1990).

mystical Rajasthan or the saturated hues of southern India have their distinct stories that subtly guide their use in shop signs of the specific parent city (Fig. 3.13 and 3.14). Perhaps a trip down the historical narratives becomes important in order to understand the underlying pulse that may have a lasting influence leading to specific color application in shop signs.



Fig. 3.13: a. Sisodia Rani Ka Bagh Palace and Gardens decked up in *rani pink*, b. Rani pink candor as a symbol in Jaipur's branded shop



Fig. 3.14: a. Onam Rangoli representative of southern saturated color palette. Middle and Right: the same saturated palette is a ubiquitous symbol of the visual color culture of South India in Chennai shop

2) Conventions in the business context

These conventions are related to the meanings of different colors with respect to nature of business and trade that the shop signs signify. The nature of business includes the products or services provided by the shops. The meanings of specific colors are established due to a close association of an old or a modern shop with their respective business identities. For instance, everyday old service shop signs of Moti Doongri road marketplace in Jaipur city have blue shop names (Fig. 3.15). Blue is a very general color choice for old business shops that conveys grounded candor, well established trust and security associated with the shop's business or service.



Fig. 3.15: Blue color convention in all small size service shop names in Moti Doongri road, Jaipur

Significance of conventions

1) Conventions make cultural and historical contexts unique. Symbolic meanings of these conventions bring clarity and structure in the display of attributes of the key design elements.

Therefore, a systematic language of codes develop for each culture, city and its historical praxis.

2) Conventions are kind of affordances⁷⁰ mainly in the context of interfaces as part of interaction design domain. Applying this as an analogy to the interface of a 3D signboard of a shop they are implicit symbolic instructions that configure the visual attributes with the cultural or historically established codes. This encodes the information about the design of a shop sign. Therefore, conventions in shop signs are non-arbitrary affordances that encode levels of information content in the visual design of a shop sign.

3.7 Visual framework of color analysis in shop signs

After describing the step-by-step research plan, the current section explains the complete formulation of the visual framework of color analysis by integrating all the four quadrants (section 3.6) along vertically and horizontally distributed functional planes (Fig. 3.16). We follow the research approach of bricolage i.e. combining all the four quadrants together in the interlinked framework. The first part of this section explains the theoretical basis to apply ontological, epistemological and methodological modes of bricolage in order to filter the appropriate quadrants and their integration along planes within the framework respectively. In order to understand the functioning of each quadrant, we first need to understand the rationale applied to position them along these vertical and horizontal planes. Why some quadrants fall in respective functional planes within the framework? This knowledge would reveal the ground that each quadrant follows for the visual attribute of color in the design of shop signs, as described in the second part of this section.

3.7.1 Theoretical basis of application of the Bricolage methodology

In our framework of components based on bricolage methodology, each quadrant in our research takes into consideration the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions and modes as follows:

1) Ontological mode:

The ontological assumptions relate to the knowledge of the way things are, the nature of reality, real existence or real action (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). This mode has been applied

⁷⁰ In his book the Psychology of Everyday Things (POET), Norman (1988) suggested that good designs provide implicit visual instructions that constrain how an object should be used.

in the collection of ‘the way each quadrant, namely patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions are in reality’ or the real action by collecting all known terminologies.

2) *Epistemological mode:*

The epistemological assumptions relate to ‘how things really are’ and ‘how things really work’ in an assumed reality (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:108). This mode has been applied in the case of each quadrant by inductively putting all the definitions together under scrutiny. In this scrutiny, we have redefined quadrants, constructed their classifications as well as understood their significance with respect to shop signs. This has resulted in the knowledge construction of ‘how quadrants really work’ in the context of our objective.

3) *Methodological mode:*

After setting the essential ontological and epistemological base of each of the quadrants, a methodological assumption of illustrating them together in a framework is required. This assumption is the most crucial of all the modes as it acts as an assessment tool to know the real world of how things work for the visual design of shop signs.

3.7.2 Formulation of the framework

Application of Bricolage methodology as described above has enabled us to formulate the visual framework of color analysis of a shop signboard (Fig. 3.16).

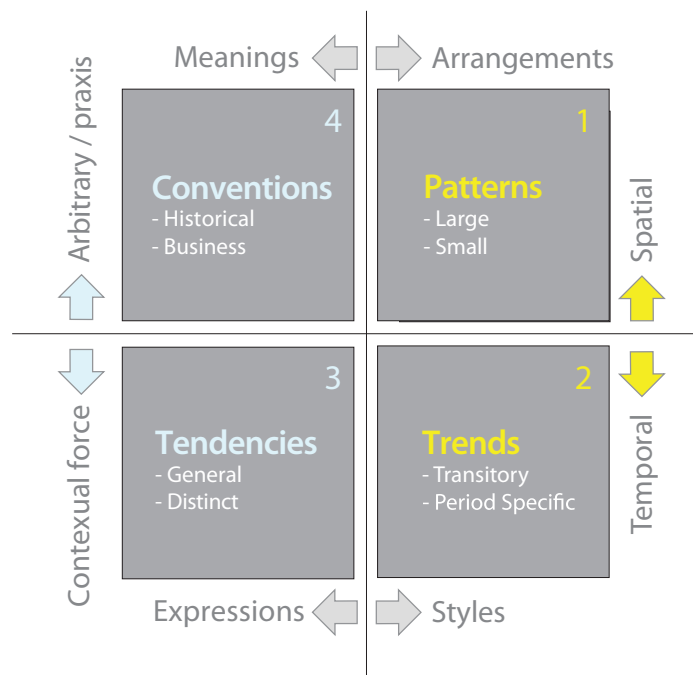


Fig. 3.16: Visual framework of color analysis in shop signs of India

The sections following this describe the rationale of placement of the quadrants and a summary view of the framework.

3.7.2.1 Rationale of quadrants along functional domains

There are reasons to place each quadrant at respective positions and along the vertical and horizontal domains of functions. These domains or the grounds make the foundation of each of the quadrants during the visual analysis of an attribute. Two domains together make the essence of one quadrant. For instance, patterns and their analysis represent the domains of *arrangements* and their *spatial configurations* and positions with respect to each other (Fig. 3.29). We have discussed the rationale behind all the domains, their relation for each quadrant and how they regulate within each quadrant as follows:

Quadrant I: Patterns

Patterns are composed of similar elements of a visual attribute and similar arrangements or visual relationships between those elements that guide the concrete form or the formal syntax in the visual design of a shop sign. From this formulated definition in our study, patterns are made up of *elements* and these elements get linked through *arrangements or relationships*. Therefore, the nature of patterns is as follows:

1. Patterns are **elemental** or basic units of color composition.
2. Patterns are not contextual.
3. Patterns are relational due to **variety of arrangements in spatial compositions**.

*Therefore, the domains of patterns are **Spatial – Arrangements** placed in vertical and horizontal axis respectively (Fig. 3.16).*

Quadrant II: Trends

Trends are the simultaneous movement or change of one or more characteristics (variables) of a visual attribute of design of a shop sign in a certain direction against time as the constant variable. Here, the objective or goal may not be clear for any single factor. But, the direction has some link with respect to visual, social, economic or even historic popular themes belonging to a specific time period.

From this formulated definition for our study, trends are change or transition of one or more characteristics of color as a visual attribute across time periods. The changes happen in a

characteristic or style based on a popular theme for each time period slot. Trends are time-dependent but reasons may or may not be known. Therefore, the nature of trends is as follows:

- 1) Trends are **visual styles** of color that undergo **simultaneous movement**.
- 2) Trends are essentially **temporal** because of this movement across time.
- 3) Trends are hence, not relational or spatial. **Styles** occur freely not based on arrangements or any pre-ordained structure of elements put together.

*Therefore, the domains of trends are **Temporal – Style based** placed in vertical and horizontal axis respectively (Fig. 3.16).*

Quadrant III: Tendencies

***Tendencies** are causal behavioral inclinations or prevalence toward a specific line or direction that may or may not vary in the designs of shop signs. They are those innate qualities in a visual attribute that develop because of impelling social, aesthetic or historical forces.*

From the above formulated definition for our study, tendencies are behavioral inclinations or unknown habits or those expressions of one or more characteristics of color as a visual attribute that are independent of time periods. They are ingrained in a specific line or direction and are symptomatic in nature similar or different for cities. Therefore, the nature of tendencies is as follows:

- 1) Tendencies are **behavioral inclinations** of color in a **certain direction**.
- 2) Tendencies are **expressions** that are not temporal. They are **independently occurring prevalences**. So they are not temporal.
- 3) Tendencies are **prevalences** and hence, not relational or spatial. **Expressions** imbibe meanings and are **not dependent on** formal visual **arrangements**. Rather, they are **grounded within a contextual force**.

*Therefore, the domains of tendencies are **Contextual forces – Expressions** placed in vertical and horizontal axis respectively (Fig. 3.16).*

Quadrant IV: Conventions

***Conventions** are sets of accepted norms, standards and criteria established since ages. In context of shop signs in our study, most of these conventions are either the color codes applied in context of their business meanings or the historical narratives specific to a particular city or India at large.*

From the above formulated definition for our study, conventions are rules of one or more characteristics of color as a visual attribute that have been socially accepted and established and have been followed for attribute display on shop signs. They are not spatial or relational entities and also not time-bound, but have been established over a long period of time in a subjective sense. Therefore, the nature of conventions is as follows:

- 1) Conventions are **established standards or norms** of color **over a long period of time or applied since ages**.
- 2) Conventions are not spatial or relational or temporal. They are **practice based symbolic meanings** that are learnt as part of a cultural practice or deep rooted historic values.
- 3) Conventions are **abstract**.

*Therefore, the domains of conventions are **Abstract or Praxis based – Meanings** placed in vertical and horizontal axis respectively (Fig. 3.16).*

3.7.2.2 Summarized view of the framework

- 1) The visual analysis of color has four quadrants for rigorous inquiry as have been illustrated in the framework. These quadrants have different functions to perform in order to describe the visual attribute of color in shop signs in five selected cities of India. In the descriptions of domains for each quadrant, we have mentioned two axis along which all the domains have been distributed as follows:
 - a) The Vertical Axis includes the *spatial or temporal domains* at the right describing patterns and trends respectively. The left hand side placed *contextual force – Arbitrary domain* includes tendencies and conventions respectively.
 - Temporality of trends has a spatial function in terms of historic development of material objects and their visual designs such as those of shop signs (Fig. 3.16). This associates Patterns and Trends to each other through the function of spatiality.
 - Contextual forces that drive tendencies are also intrinsic to the arbitrary nature of conventions. While conventions are standardized practices with a firm traditional praxis since a long time, tendencies are those expressions that are deep-rooted cultural inclinations without conscious knowledge (Fig. 3.16).
 - b) The Horizontal Axis includes *arrangements domains* positioned on the top and bottom peripheries of the framework. This domain is part of patterns and conventions, that are otherwise very distinct quadrants without a shared quality. The second occurrence is at the bottom having *expressions or styles domains* that are part of tendencies or trends (Fig. 3.16).

2) Each quadrant has two types as mentioned in each square. These classifications per quadrant are independent of the domains that describe the basis of every quadrant. Thus, all quadrants together in the integrated unit illustrated are internally homogenous⁷¹ as component parts of the visual analytical framework.

3.8 Summary

The present methodology chapter brings forth the formulated research plan to analyze color in the selected data of shop signs in this thesis. This plan outlines the qualitative data collection modes, sampling of the documented data for reduction, selection of variables and acquiring a representative population within each variable to design a visualization of 450 shop signs from five selected cities in India across a timeline. Data collection involved field visits to cities in India within the researcher's best possible reach practically. For this, she could document 3500 shop signs from 12 cities in India through photography. The visits included written records made by the researcher during interactions with the shop owners. Along with this, she could also gather views of few signboard painters and artists as well. The entire compilation of 3500 shop signs archived from 12 cities was re-organized by eliminating damaged, repetitive shop signs in terms of visual representation and time periods. Then the method of stratified sampling was used to reduce this large data and get the most representative sample of shop signs, marketplaces and cities.

The attribute of color was reviewed in context of the science of colors, its principles in design and available methods of analysis. The definitions and meanings of the four dimensions of color and their respective characteristics were studied. There is one more characteristic of functionality that we could observe for the visual attribute of color in addition to rest of the twelve characteristics.

The researcher could observe four distinct factors in each of the 450 shop signs. Each shop sign displayed elements and their similar arrangements, identified as a factor called patterns. Popular visual styles changing with time were the second identified factor of trends. The conceptual impelling forces driven by the city specific underpinnings of architecture, aesthetics, history, local narratives, lifestyle etc. were called tendencies. Finally, the established codes of color display in the context of India were conventions.

⁷¹ When all the objects are grouped together under one category regardless of the common connection/likeability amidst them as a group, then this approach of classification is *Internally Homogenous* (Nath and Poovaiah, 2013).

The next step was to understand each of the four factors and take into account the existing definitions, meanings and functions formulated by designers and researchers. This step was instrumental in knowing the epistemological and ontological position, standing and credibility of the four factors to be associated with color and the rationale behind their inclusion in the framework of visual analysis. The design of a shop sign could be fully understood from the four factors that make the four corners of the quadrants in the structure of the formulated visual framework.

Following the identification and redefinitions of quadrants, the methodological research approach of Bricolage has been described and how it integrates the four quadrants of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions into a visual framework. This method views each and every shop sign in our data as a visual form made of information layers that display color via the quadrants across marketplaces, cities and time periods. This integration of quadrants through Bricolage finally gave the researcher a concrete form of the visualized framework of color analysis of shop signs.

Chapter 4

Visual analysis of color

*The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things,
but their inward significance.*

– Aristotle

This chapter presents the step-by-step process of analysis of the visual attribute of color in shop signs. Section 4.1 introduces the basic morphology of a shop sign that includes three layers of information identified by the researcher. Section 4.2 presents a table of a sequential log of color dimensions, their characteristics and the respective quadrants. The sub-sections from 4.2.1 to 4.2.5 present the color analysis of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions of shop signs in the selected cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai in our research. Finally, section 4.3 gives a summary of the present chapter.

4.1 Introduction

The research design plan established in the methodology chapter has been put forth in practice in this chapter. Firstly, the 450 shop sign photographs from five cities were arranged

in A3 sheets. A group of 30 shop sign photographs per marketplace per city were distributed along six time slots in each of the 15 A3 sheets (Appendix IX-A).

The researcher then observed these A3 sheets for information content as part of each of the 450 shop signs. In her observations, she could identify that this content operates along three layers of information, namely the main text or shop name, the secondary text or tag line and the background sign panel. These layers were extracted from each of the 450 shop sign photographs for final color analysis. One example of the three layers of information in a shop sign has been illustrated below (Fig. 4.1).



Fig. 4.1: Layers of information identified and extracted in a shop sign

Each of the three layers of information has a different message to communicate about a shop and its business. In this context, each layer of information would not be equally noticed and perceived by the viewers. This is so because the viewers may be interested in a specific piece of information content that a shop sign displays. The layers of main text and secondary text are in the foreground design of a shop signface. The third layer is the background sign panel itself. A group of 30 background sign panel photographs per marketplace per city were distributed along six time slots in each of the 15 A3 sheets (Appendix IX-B).

4.2 Color analysis of shop signs

Color is a powerful visual attribute in a shop sign. Choice of color in each layer of information sets the mood of a signboard. Designers and practitioners involved with color science have devised color analysis methods for fashion designers and make-up artists to

discover clothing and make-up personas of their clients. From the existing analytical methods of color, we have considered the *four seasons and their twelve color types* method devised by Carole Jackson in her book *Color me Beautiful* (1987). Based on this method, we could identify *four color dimensions* and *thirteen color characteristics* for the analysis our research (section 3.4). Table 4.1 gives the four dimensions and their respective characteristics that occur in the analysis of the quadrants of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions.

Color Dimensions	Color characteristics	Quadrants
1) Color description	Color hue Color value Color saturation Color temperature Color kinds	Patterns, Trends
2) Color relationships	Color combinations Color hierarchy Color contrast Color effects Color schemes	Patterns, Trends
3) Color pragmatics	Color production Color functionality	Tendencies, Conventions
4) Color symbolism	Color identity	Conventions, Tendencies

Table 4.1 Sequential log of color analysis

As discussed in chapter 3, we have considered the four quadrants of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions for the final analysis of color (section 3.6). The quadrants have been integrated together to formulate a visual framework (section 3.7). The formulated visual framework including patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions has been used to analyze color in each of the three layers of information in each of the 450 shop signs in the selected five cities, starting from the city of Jaipur and ending with the city of Chennai (sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.5).

4.2.1 Jaipur

Popularly known as *The Pink City of India*, Jaipur is the *capital / rajdhaniya nagara* of the state of Rajasthan. This city is impregnable on the northern and eastern sides with the king's palace in the center of the city. It envisages unique characteristics in the form of golden pinnacles, beautiful bazaars, crossroads, balconies and stone screens. An interesting historical narrative brings forth the unique beauty of Jaipur in pink. It was around 16th century when Maharaja Ram Singh first decided to paint the entire city white, but the glare was too strong

to view design, clarity and distinction between places in the city. Therefore, he tried other colors like green, yellow, pink and so on. Finally, pink was adopted for the whole city. Geru or terracotta pink that imitates the color of this region's sandstone has been used on the facades of all shops, gates and the city walls. This pink wash meaningfully reflects the royal identity of Jaipur. The structure of this planned city⁷² reflects the choices of the Rajputs and the royal families. There is a unified collection of shop signs that express a prominently traditional identity of this city. The heritage buildings and the materials used influence the use of color and other visual attributes on these signs.

The complete color analysis of all the three information layers – main text, secondary text and background sign panels in the three selected marketplaces of Moti Doongri road, Khatipura road and Ajmer road in Jaipur has led to insights about the kind of patterns used, the popular trends that change across time periods, the tendencies and conventions of color display in the shop signs.

4.2.1.1 Patterns

Patterns are composed of similar elements of a visual attribute and similar arrangements or visual relationships between those elements that guide the concrete form or the formal syntax in the visual design of a shop sign.

The following pattern analysis includes the elements and their arrangements in the main text, secondary text and background sign panels of shop signs in the city of Jaipur.

A) Main text color patterns

We see many small patterns within the large ones of color description and relationship. In the main text, the patterns across the marketplaces of Moti Doongri, Khatipura and Ajmer road shop signs are arranged from left to right in all the illustrated examples in sections 1) and 2) in the following text. Later section 3) culminates all the visual relationships seen in the main text patterns.

1) Color description patterns

Patterns appear for all the color description characteristics in the main text in tables 4.2 to 4.6 as follows:

⁷² Jaipur city has wide and regular streets...separated by broad street. The urban quarters are further divided by networks of gridded streets. Refer: http://www.studio-basel.com/assets/files/files/04_atlas_web.pdf

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White hue		Modern, hi-end, big showrooms
ii) Blue hue		Medium size medical shops

Table 4.2: Hue patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in yellow		Medium size old and big size modern stores
ii) Medium value in green		Small size old stores and a medium size modern store
iii) Low value in blue		Small size old shops and one medium size modern store

Table 4.3: Color value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow		Big size modern stores
ii) Medium saturation in blue		Medium size old stores

Table 4.4: Color Saturation patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red and yellow		Medium size old and big size modern stores and showroom
ii) Cool: blues		Medium size old and modern service shops
iii) Warm and cool: red and blue		Small size old shops
iv) Cool and warm: blue, green and red		Small size old shops
v) Neutral: grey		Medium and big size modern shops and a showroom

Table 4.5: Color Temperature patterns in the main text, Jaipur

e) Kind patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and blue		Small size old service shops and a big size hotel
ii) Secondary: orange and green		Small and medium size old and modern

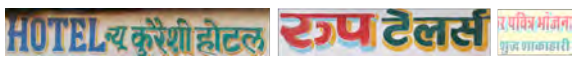
		shops
iii) Primary and secondary: red and green, blue and green		Medium size old service shops and a medium size modern dhaaba

Table 4.6: Color Kind patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

2) Color relationship patterns

Patterns appear for all the color relationship characteristics in the main text in tables 4.7 to 4.11 as follows:

a) Combination patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Red and white		Large size modern service shops and a showroom
ii) Red and blue		Small size old local shops and a medium size modern dhaaba

Table 4.7: Color Combination patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: Red to Blue		Small size old local service shops
ii) Primary to secondary: Red to Green		Small size, old cafes and a parlor

Table 4.8: Color Hierarchy patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast of white names against dark backgrounds		Big size modern fashion brand showrooms
ii) High contrast of black names against light backgrounds		Medium size old shops and a big size modern restaurant

Table 4.9: Color Contrast patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

d) Effect patterns	Examples	Business size
Color attraction: i) <i>Highlight effect</i> in the monochromatic drop shadow effect in red-orange-yellow and grey-white	 <i>Highlight color effect</i>	Small size old local shops and a medium size modern store
ii) <i>Inner emboss relief effect</i> in dark grey	 <i>Inner emboss color effect</i>	Medium and big size modern local shops

ii) Flicker effect ⁷³ in complimentary color combinations		Medium size old local shops, big size modern showroom
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Table 4.10: Color Effect patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Complimentary: red, yellow and blue		Small size old local shops
ii) Split complimentary: yellow-sky blue and light green-yellow		Small size old local service shops
iii) Monochromatic: black, green and red appear in shop names		Small size old local shops

Table 4.11: Color Scheme patterns in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

3) **Summary: main text color patterns**

Technically, the main text is the foremost layer of information that identifies a shop. This text is a prominent foreground element. It has color description and relationship patterns that present a variety in the color syntax in terms of order and arrangements. For a few pattern examples, we could identify visual relationships between a color description characteristic and a color relationship characteristic. Following visual relationships emerge with different objectives of display in similar as well as distinct business size shop signs:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- *For hue patterns, white and blue for the main text is based on the color choice for the background sign panels*

The purpose might be to give visual impact to the main text against the background sign panels. The objective of visual impact⁷⁴ is an established practice in outdoor advertising. Therefore, the color choice to serve this purpose visually makes the content stand out along with the form of the main text (Fig. 4.2).

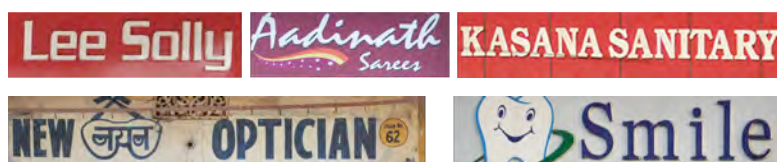


Fig. 4.2: White and blue Hue patterns in similar business size shop signs, Jaipur

⁷³ Putting blocks of saturated complementary colors next to one another causes eyestrain. Because the cones in your eyes cannot see both colors at the same time, your focus shifts back and forth rapidly without being able to settle on either color. For more details refer, <http://www.fast-consulting.com/color/cp_toc.htm>

⁷⁴ Visual impact is the objective that raises the significance of the brand name display on signboards (Marya Morris, AICP, *Context-Sensitive Signage Design*, chapter 4, 'The Economic context of Signs').

- *For color value, saturation, temperature and kinds characteristics, patterns for the main text occur in mixed grades.*

For instance, in the color temperature pattern, old and small size business shops in all marketplaces have mixed grades of warm and cool temperature in specifically red and blue combination in the shop names (Fig. 4.3). In this example, there also emerges a visual relationship between color hue, temperature and one combination pattern. This relationship unifies color description characteristic of temperature with color relationship characteristics of combination and hierarchy.



Fig. 4.3 Color temperature-hue-combination-hierarchy relationship in similar business size shop signs, Jaipur

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

- *For color value, saturation, temperature and kinds, the patterns appear in single grade*

For instance, color saturation pattern for distinct business size shops appears in single grade of bright saturation in red and green hues. Here, there is an additional visual relationship of hues and saturation (Fig. 4.4).



Fig. 4.4: Color hue-saturation-temperature relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Jaipur

B) Secondary text color patterns

Following secondary text patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Moti Doongri, Khatipura and Ajmer road shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples with the respective secondary texts enclosed within yellow frames:

1) Color description patterns

Patterns appear for all the color description characteristics in the secondary text in tables 4.12 to 4.16 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Big size local modern brand showrooms and stores
ii) Black		Small size old local shops

Table 4.12: Hue patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in yellow		Medium size local modern shops
ii) Medium value in green, blue and red		Small size old local stores

Table 4.13: Color Value patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow		Medium size local modern shops
ii) Bright saturation in red		Medium size local shops
iii) Dull saturation in blue		Small size old local shops and a store

Table 4.14: Color Saturation patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red and yellow		Medium size old shops and a large size modern service store
ii) Cool: blue and green		Small size old shops and medium size modern store

Table 4.15: Color Temperature patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and blue		Small size old shops and a medium size modern store
ii) Primary and secondary: red and green		Small size old shop and a big size modern clinic

Table 4.16: Color Kinds patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

2) Color relationship patterns

Patterns appear for all the color relationship characteristics except color effects and schemes in the secondary text in tables 4.17 to 4.19 as follows:

a) Combination patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Red and black		Old and small size shops along with a modern medium size store.
ii) Red and white outlines		Old and small size shops along with a modern medium size store.

Table 4.17: Color Combination patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to black		Small size old local items shops and a medium-size store.
ii) Primary to secondary		Small size old local café and a modern big size clinic.

Table 4.18: Color Hierarchy patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
High contrast:		
i) White taglines on dark backgrounds (grey, black and green)		i) Big size modern showrooms and stores
ii) Black taglines on light backgrounds (pink, yellow and white)		ii) Old local hardware and technology based old local stores.
iii) Cold-warm contrast is seen for blue / green and red		Small old shops and a medium size modern restaurant

Table 4.19: Color Contrast patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Jaipur

3) Summary: secondary text color patterns

Technically, the secondary text is present to reconfirm the business identity already established in the shop name from time to time. It is not that significant layer of information in the foreground design of a shop sign, as is the main text. For secondary text, we could see visual relationships for similar and distinct business size shops as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- *Hues only appear in single grade of white or black for similar business size shops*

Unlike main text, the purpose behind the hue choice in the secondary text is to display product information. Therefore, they also appear in white as there is no need to have a separate color distinction relative to the main text in the shop signs. The relationship characteristic of color contrast has a visual relationship with color hue description characteristic (Fig. 4.5).



Fig. 4.5: White/black hue-contrast-single grades relationship in similar business size shop signs, Jaipur

- *Saturation in single grade too appears in similar business size shop signs.* For instance, medium value single grade exists for hues red, green or blue in case of small size old shops. The hues of green and blue also bear a dull saturation, while red has a bright saturation (Fig. 4.6).



Fig. 4.6: Medium value-single grade in similar small business size old shop signs, Jaipur

- *Bright saturation in single grade exists for hues red/yellow that are both primary color kinds in only big size modern stores.* There is a single grade relationship of saturation in hues that are only primary color kinds occurring in similar size business shop signs (Fig. 4.7).



Fig. 4.7: Bright saturation- red/yellow kinds relationship in similar small business size shop signs, Jaipur

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

- *Color value, temperature and kinds have patterns that appear in single as well as mixed grades.* Few visual examples of color patterns appearing in single and mixed grades in color description characteristics of kinds and temperature are as follows:

Primary and secondary combination mixed grade in red and green appears for an old small size hotel and a big size modern clinic (Fig. 4.8).



Fig. 4.8: Color kind-temperature-mixed grades in red-green combination relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Jaipur

Red and black combination (mixed grade) appears in two old and small size shops along with a modern medium size store. Red to black has a hierarchy from primary color to black for the same secondary texts. Thus, combination-hierarchy visual relationship in mixed grade appears for this pattern in distinct business size shops (Fig. 4.9).



Fig. 4.9: Color combination-hierarchy-mixed grades relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Jaipur

C) Background sign panel color patterns

Among all color relationship patterns, there are no color effect patterns for the background sign panels. The emphasis and harmony through hues and their arrangements are in the foreground main text in case of Jaipur city. Therefore, other relationship characteristics in background sign panels take a lead in order to distinguish its display from that of foreground main text.

1) Color description patterns

Patterns appear for all the color description characteristics in background sign panels in tables 4.20 to 4.24 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples			Business size
i) White and whitish-grey				Seen in a premium hotel, an old children garment store and a medium size art products store.
				
iii) Deep shades of red color				Big size hi-end modern fashion brand stores
				

Table 4.20: Hue patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Value patterns	Examples			Business size
i) High value in light yellow				Old small size service shops
				

Table 4.21: Color Value pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

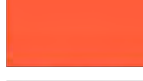
c) Saturation patterns	Examples			Business size
i) Bright saturation in reds, green				Medium size modern stores
				
ii) Medium bright saturation in primary colors (red, blue) and a tertiary combination of blue-green and yellow-green				Seen in modern big size stores and a old size store.
				

Table 4.22: Color Saturation patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

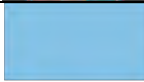
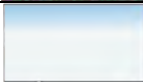
d) Temperature patterns	Examples			Business size
i) Warm: red and white-orange-yellow-green				Small size old general shop and a medium and big size modern store and showroom respectively
				
ii) Cool: blues and green				Seen in medium size modern stores
				

Table 4.23: Color Temperature patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

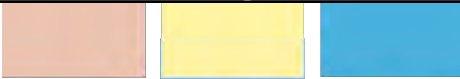
e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red, yellow and blue	 	Small and medium size old service shops
ii) Secondary: green and red	 	Seen in modern service shops mostly along with a local medium size modern café, medium size modern store and medium size old medical store.

Table 4.24: Color Kinds patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

2) Color relationship patterns

Patterns appear for all the color relationship characteristics in the background sign panels in tables 4.25 to 4.29 as follows:

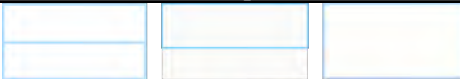
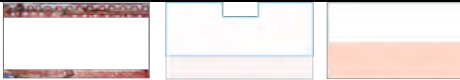
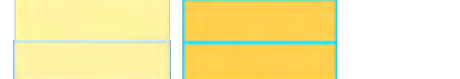
a) Combination patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White boards with light and pale blue borders	 	Small size old service shops
ii) Pink and white	 	Medium size old local shops
iii) Yellow boards with blue borders	 	Small as well as medium size shop and stores respectively

Table 4.25: Color Combination patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

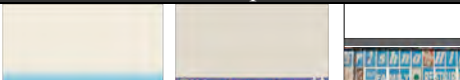
b) Hierarchy pattern	Example	Business size
i) Primary to primary hierarchy is seen from yellowish (warm grey undertone) to shades of blue and orange – red – yellow white graphic combinations.	 	Big business size modern stores and a restaurant.

Table 4.26: Color Hierarchy pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

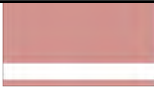
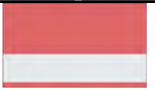
c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast is seen in red-white combinations and white-black combination	     	Seen in an old ware store, modern new brand showroom and a hotel.
ii) Cold-warm contrast pattern is in blue-orange, yellow-green and pink-dark green colors	     	Seen in a medium-size service shop and two modern big stores.

Table 4.27: Color Contrast patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

d) Effect pattern	Example	Business size
i) Color harmony balances cool and warm colors together. This effect is seen in blue-orange, orange-yellow-green and chrome yellow-sky blue cool-warm color combinations	     	Pattern exists for an old general small size shop and modern big size shops.

Table 4.28: Color Effect pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Split-complimentary color schemes for yellow green-blue green, yellow-green and yellow-orange with blue color combinations	     	Seen in an old medium size store, modern big size showroom and a big modern family restaurant
ii) Adjacent or analogous scheme is seen for red-yellow, yellow-yellow orange combinations	     	Exists for an old/service local shop and modern big size store and a dhaaba.

Table 4.29: Color Scheme patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Jaipur

3) **Summary: background sign panel color patterns**

Technically, the background sign panels have new syntax patterns that are more evident in case of color relationship characteristics than description ones. There is a strong influence of shapes and borders that add newness in the visual representation of the elements and their arrangements.

Visual Relationships in similar business size shop signs

- *Among color description characteristics, color hue patterns are in single grade. However,*

color value, saturation and temperature patterns appear in single and mixed grades. In case of relationship characteristics, patterns appear only for color hierarchy and combination in single and mixed grades respectively. A few visual examples of these relationships in the patterns are as follows:

- *Warm grey (single grade of hue) background pattern exists for all modern big showrooms (Fig. 4.10). The same sign panel tints and shade of grey have neutral temperature too.*



Fig. 4.10: Color hue-temperature-single grade relationship in similar business size shop signs, Jaipur

- *High value in yellow hues appear in the background sign panels of old, small size service shops only. Here, the visual relationship is between high value in yellow hue that has a warm temperature and is also a primary color kind (Fig. 4.11).*



Fig. 4.11: Color hue-value-temperature-kind-single grade relationship in similar business size shop signs, Jaipur

Visual relationships in distinct size business shop signs

- *Among description characteristics, color value and saturation are in single grade whereas patterns of color temperature and kinds have mixed grades. The purpose here is to use color combinations and contrasts as tools to create desired emphasis and distinction of different layers of information. One such relationship in the said patterns are as follows:*

Warm and cool temperatures (mixed grades) appear in big size stores and a medium

size old shop in yellow-blue and pink-dark green (Fig. 4.12).



Fig. 4.12: Color temperature-mixed grade in distinct business size shops signs, Jaipur

4.2.1.2 Trends

***Trends** are the simultaneous movement or change of one or more characteristics (variables) of a visual attribute of design of a shop sign in a certain direction along time as the constant variable. Here, the objective or goal may not be clear for any single factor. But, the direction has some link with respect to visual, social, economic or even historical popular themes belonging to a specific time period.*

The current color trend analysis is a description of popular themes and the related visual styles that guide the color choice, display styles, effects and theme based occurrences over a long time periods or as certain period specific trends. The overall summaries of trends explain the core socio-aesthetic and other popular themes that have influenced the display of color attribute in all the three layers of information of main text, secondary text and the background sign panels of the shop signs.

A) Main text color trends

We see both transitory and period-specific trends in the main text of shop signs as follows –

1) Transitory color trends in the main text

No definite and continuous change occurs in other descriptive characteristics of value, saturation, temperature and color kinds except hue as follows:

a) Hue transitory trend

In very old shop signs, only two hues have been used in the main text. With time, both two and three hues came into picture (Fig. 4.13) whereas for modern time periods there is a sudden drop in the two hue trend and an equivalent upsurge in the single hue trend in the recent time periods from 1990s onwards till 2005 onwards.



Fig. 4.13: Color hues frequency transitory trend in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

2) Period specific color trends in the main text

Each time period can be characterized by popular themes of visual culture such as the influence of bollywood poster designs, the socio-political ambience and arts-n-aesthetic developments in India. These themes influence the period specific color trends that have been observed in color relationships such as combinations, schemes and effects. Among color description characteristics, period specific trend appears for only hues. No period specific trend is seen in the time periods from 1930-44. Each of the following sections describe the popular themes of a specific time period and their influence on the color trends in the shop signs as illustrated in the visual examples.

a) 1945-59, popular themes and color trends

In the period of late 1940s, films were made in various Indian languages, influenced by the themes of 1920s Regionalism⁷⁵ and the late 30s to 40s Social Realism⁷⁶. Post the Great Depression of 30s and the aftermath of radical leftist politics artists moved forward to adopt Surrealism⁷⁷. At the backdrop of this popular movement, a characteristic non-representational color palette of blues and greens were used to depict the world of dream and fantasy. Post-independence, India witnessed the merger of the Indian and colonial cities. Parallel to this, color became a prominent popular feature until the late 1950s. A lot of vivid blues and blue-greens were the popular choice among the painters to display film titles, the backgrounds of the film posters and the names of shops (Fig. 4.14). This period is also well-known for

⁷⁵ Regionalism is the theory or practice of regional rather than central systems of administration or economic, cultural, or political affiliation. Refer: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/regionalism>

⁷⁶ Social Realism was practiced in American Art in those times. ‘...realism arises with respect to a large number of subject matters, including ethics, aesthetics etc. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/realism/>

⁷⁷ Surrealism- the 20th-century avant-garde movement in art and literature to release the creative potential of the unconscious mind. Refer: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/surrealism?q=surrealism>

dreamy, eclectic and royalty pinned images of kings and palaces using the same hues of greens and blue-greens in Persian-style influenced by the Rajput miniature paintings⁷⁸ of the time (Fig. 4.14).

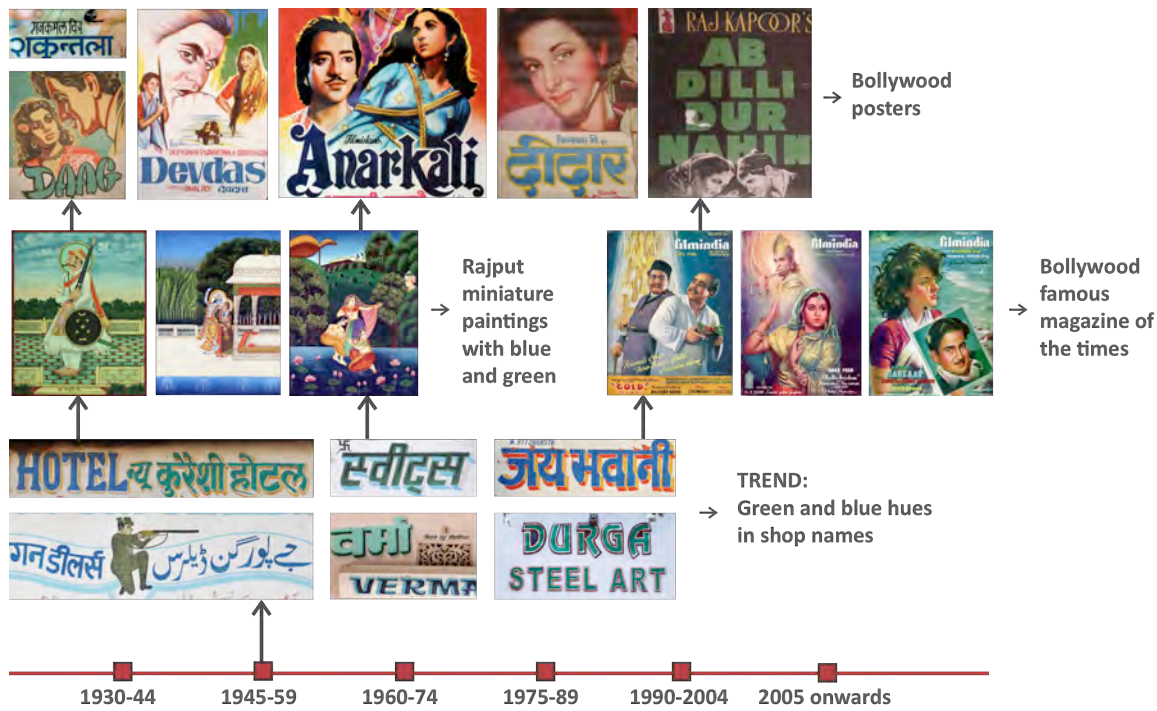


Fig. 4.14: Period specific color trend (1945-59) of hues in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

This historical period provided a strong impetus to the film industry with themes of relevant social issues along with some fun-n-frolic based subjects popular in bollywood. The themes also depict the popular discontent in the poster designs too. New title look with warm color combinations echoed this aspect in the fun-based stories of mid 60s and early 70s.

This period also addressed the upper middle class with the luxurious pomp and show in the movies for the first time. Therefore, the aggressive hues of orange, red, yellow etc. in different visual representation styles could be seen in film titles as well as the shop names of this period (Fig. 4.15)

⁷⁸ Rajput style paintings afforded the artist an opportunity to improvise a color scheme to match the mood of the image portrayed through the environment, approximating its fluctuations by raising or lowering the tenor of color. Refer: <http://www.exoticindiaart.com/article/rajput/>

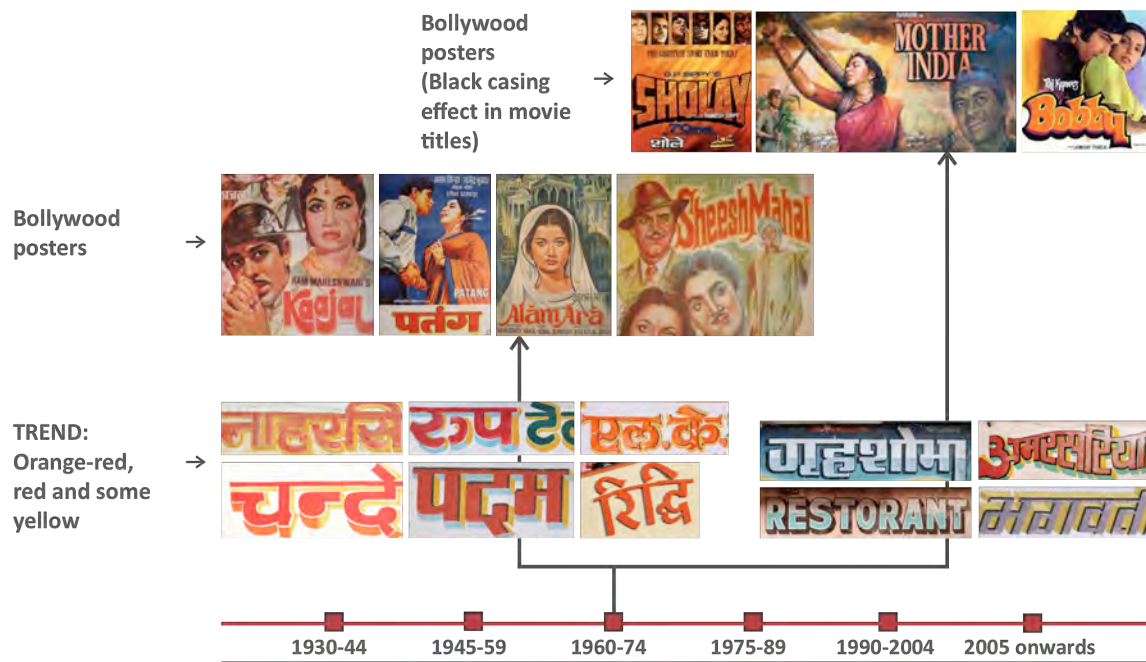


Fig. 4.15: Period specific color trends (1960-74) of hues and effects in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

c) 1975-89, popular themes and color trends

Post swinging sixties⁷⁹ came the period of masala films being the quintessential bollywood entertainer in the 1970s. Late 70s and early 80s movies portrayed overt political unrest with deliberate introduction of the underdog characters, when the angry young man⁸⁰ took to task smugglers and land sharks and brought justice to the under privileged. Commercial advertising and color broadcasting were introduced in television. This period is also known for the secessionistic⁸¹ movements. Hence, an atmosphere of aggression, harsh decisions and unfortunate marginalized movements depicted the popular theme of the socio-political canvas of India. Therefore, we see use of warm hues like orange and yellow. Also, photo-realism⁸² technique was applied in poster designs. Hence, the colors, strokes and new techniques in paint addressed the realities of those tumultuous times in India. With the emergence of pop art, a lot of fantastic yellows with a strong graphic vitality provided by the hardedge black under casing to the movie titles as well as shop names present the local identities and sentiments prevailing in the popular social themes of this time period (Fig. 4.16).

⁷⁹ 1960s era is popularly known as the *swinging sixties* including the hippy movement that started in the Haight-Asbury district of San Francisco in 1950's. Refer: <http://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/Bygones-Days-swinging-60s-Vibrons-national-TV/story-20504932-detail/story.html>

⁸⁰ The image was the typecast associated with actor Amitabh Bacchhan during late 1970s and early 80s. Refer, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/1945451.stm>

⁸¹ They were the separatist movements led by mainly Sikhs in the 80s (Chopra, 2008, pp.192).

⁸² By the end of the 1960s, a number of young artists made large-scale realist paintings, using photo-realism technique. Refer: <http://www.deutsche-guggenheim.de/e/ausstellungen-picturingamerica01.php>

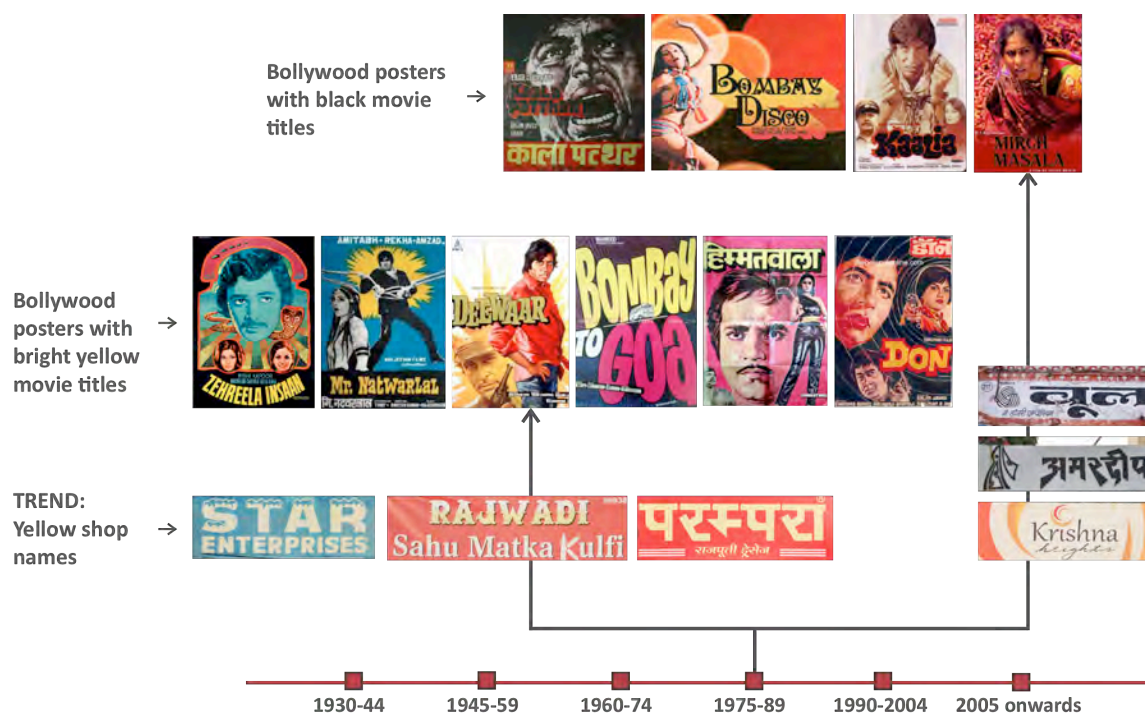


Fig. 4.16: Period specific color trends (1975-89) of hues and art movements in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

d) 1990-2004, popular themes and color trends

1990s India is well known for mixed themes in the cinema. International appeal⁸³ became the zing word of the times. India's Information Technology industry established itself with the services sector especially telecommunications becoming the dynamic torchbearer of the Indian economy. India has a unique quality of a staggering fortitude and prodigious strength to bounce back after any crisis.

This is true of the refreshing 1990s with the emerging Open economy⁸⁴, especially post the violent and self-inflicted 1980s that led to a tattered financial status of India. Therefore, we see a lot of white used in shop names depicting the fresh, stabilized and progressive economy. There are a few depictions of main text in red and yellow bright hues reminding of the passionate drive of present day youth of India (Fig. 4.17).

⁸³ 'India is now perceived as a superpower, it was not just through trade and politics but also through its ability to share its culture with the world through food, music, technology and Bollywood.' Refer: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR010/blarel.pdf>

⁸⁴ *Open economy* was introduced during Manmohan Singh's reign as the finance minister in the Narasimha Rao's central government of India in 1990s. Refer: <http://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/8/738/impact-of-globalization1.asp>

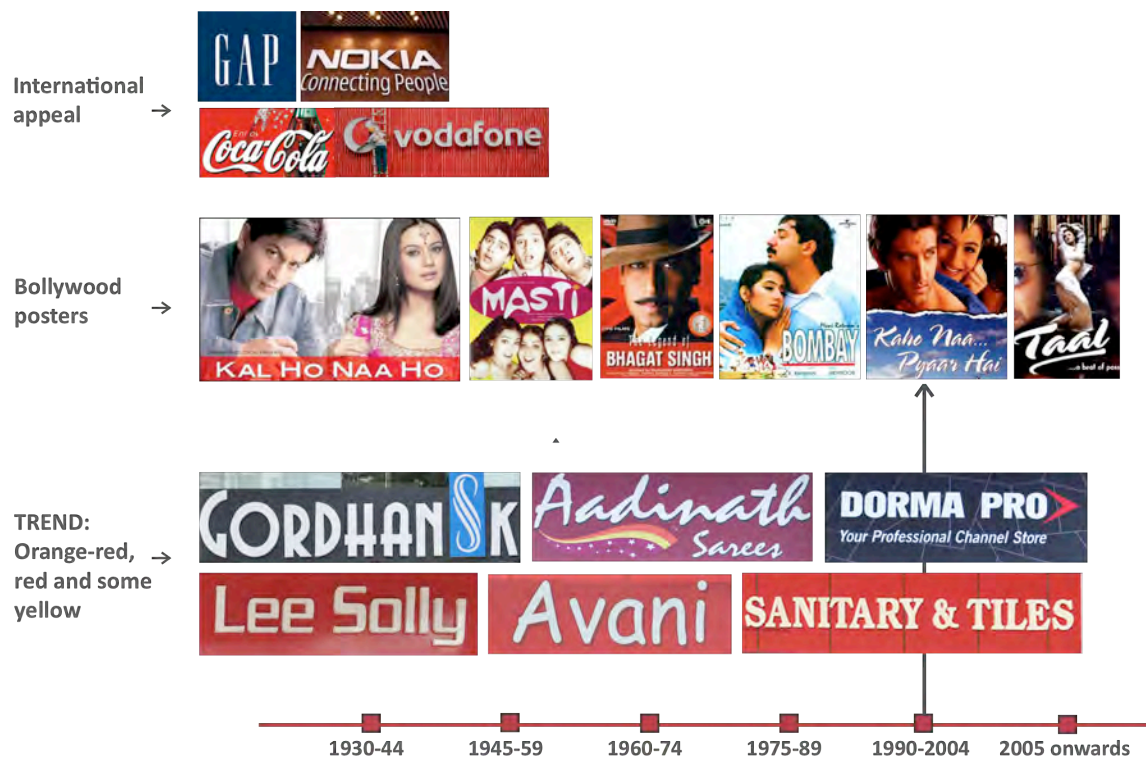


Fig. 4.17: Period specific color trends (1990-2004) of hues and materials in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

e) 2005 onwards, popular themes and color trends

2005 onwards time periods in India are well known for the globalization⁸⁵ of bollywood poster designs as well as the popular social lifestyles and tastes of the public. This new global popular theme of current time period is a hybrid cultural product⁸⁶ that fuses modern qualities with the erstwhile beliefs and narratives of India.

For instance, shop names in red color with white outlines for main text follow the color combination style as seen in brand logos and magazine mastheads of this time period. With the use of overlapping styles shared across different mediums, we see a lot of experimentation in the visual display color choices and techniques. For instance, the gradient effect⁸⁷ color technique has been used in reformed label art as well as the shop names in the signs of this period (Fig. 4.18).

⁸⁵ From the socio-psychological perspectives, globalization means ‘an attitude of mind of living prudently and harmoniously in an interdependent world with finite natural resources contradicted by infinite sources of exploitation of nature, violence etc...’ (Ahmad, July 2013).

⁸⁶ ‘...corporatization has led to the advent of a new kind of cinema that fuses the language of hollywood with slang and emotions of India (*Global Bollywood*, Kavoori and Punathambekar, 2008).

⁸⁷ A gradient can contain more than two colors, all fading smoothly from one to another, in three-dimensional and metallic effects. Refer: <http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/glossary/g/gradient.htm>

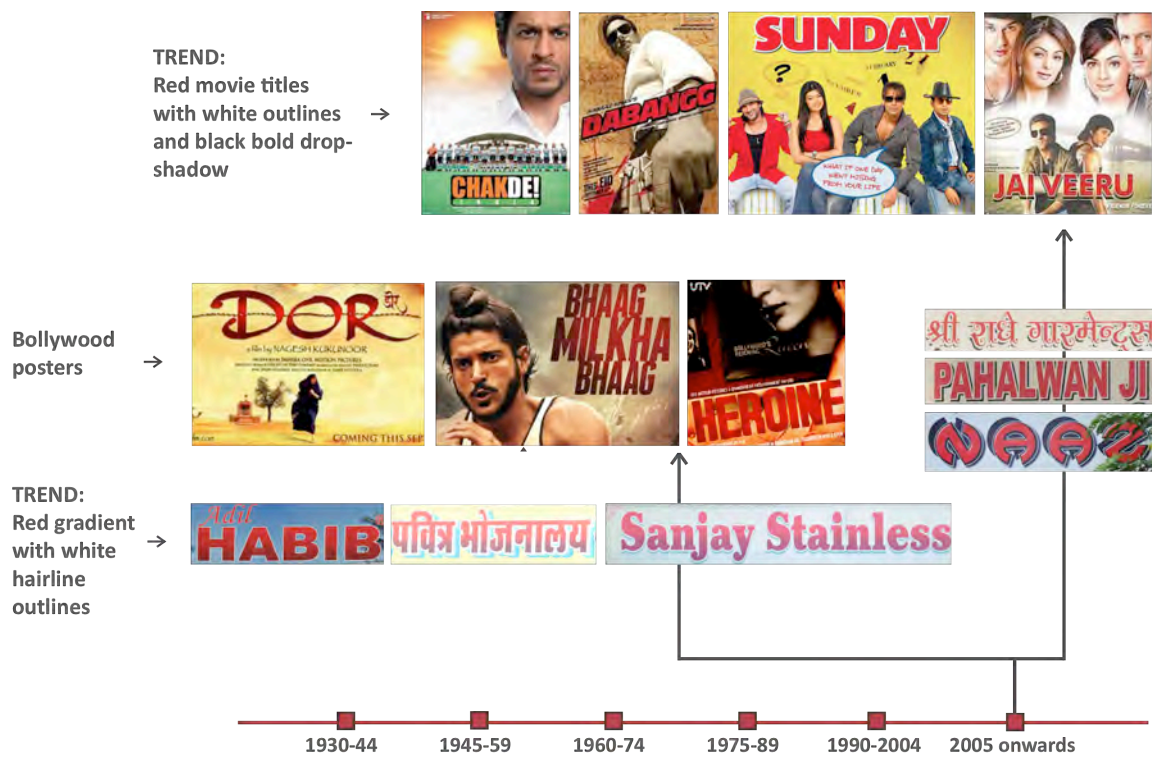


Fig. 4.18: Period specific color trends (2005 onwards) of combinations and effects in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

3) Summary: main text color trends

Transitory color trends

The transitory trend of hue reflects the decrease in use of two-three hues to only single hues in present times that meaningfully reminds of the new digitized face of name identities in minimalistic form and color palette (Fig. 4.13).

Period specific color trends

Period specific color trends across marketplaces have been influenced mainly by popular bollywood movie poster designs that depict the thematic film titles. The display styles emerged at the backdrop of certain socio-political conditions, arts-n-aesthetics developments in India in specific time periods. The diachronic popular theme descriptions have shaped the visual color styles applied in the shop names in the respective specific periods. This thematic kaleidoscope brings forth different meanings of the term popular in context of the visual culture of colors on signboards. The themes reflect the pulse of different time periods. For instance, the trends of old shop signs celebrate the color trends that signify the igniting ideas and philosophies of older time periods namely preindependence (Fig. 4.14). On the other

hand, the newer shop signs glorify the developments, discoveries and progressions as well as tensions of later modern times in India (Fig. 4.15 to 4.18).

B) Secondary text color trends

Both transitory as well as period specific color trends are absent for secondary texts. This is primarily because of the fact that tag lines/secondary texts are mostly purpose-based, confirmatory texts that are not as significant as the main texts/shop names.

C) Background sign panel color trends

Color constitutes an ambience in a space and reveals or conceals figures or objects when surrounded by different backgrounds (Sena Öksüz, May 2004). Likewise, the background colors of the shop signs analyzed conceal or reveal moods, forms and messages embedded in those backgrounds. The background sign panel like the foreground main text shows both transitory and period specific trends. Some of the trends project the use of materials and styles across mediums of outdoor as well as print display designs. In case of both transitory and period specific trends there are some affinities of color use and depictions on the background panels that have been followed in the foreground main text as well. The detailed descriptions of the trends in background sign panels are as follows:

1) Transitory color trends in background sign panels

The change in the hue trend across time periods in each visual representation appears for all the marketplaces in Jaipur. For instance, the visual depicts the hue trend in Moti Doongri road. But, this trend is present in similar fashion and frequency in the rest two marketplaces as well (Fig. 4.19).

a) Color hue transitory trend

In very old shop signs, both single and two hues have been used. In the middle time periods with the introduction of new products we see an increased range of colors as well. Therefore, two and even three hues have been used. For the recent shop signs in the extreme right we can see a random mix of all single, two and three hue trends (Fig. 4.19).

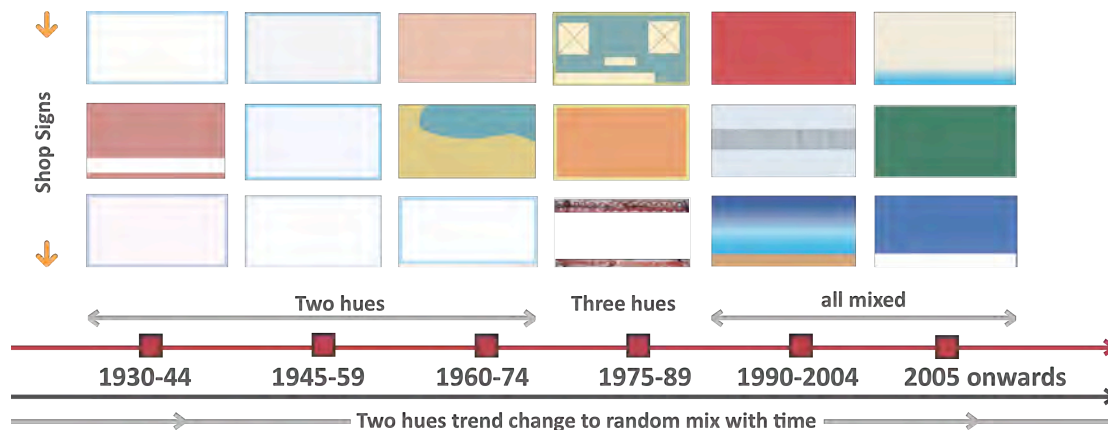


Fig. 4.19: Color hues frequency transitory trend in the background sign panels, Jaipur

2) Period specific color trends in the background sign panels

None exist for the background sign panels across marketplaces in Jaipur.

3) Summary: background sign panel color trends

Technically, the background sign panel carries the foreground main text and secondary text. As the base material of the sign panel changes, the texture and color choice gets largely affected. Therefore, only the trend of number of hues in background colors has transitions that involve gradual changes with time (Fig. 4.19).

4.2.1.3 Tendencies

***Tendencies** are causal behavioral inclinations or prevalence toward a specific line or direction that may or may not vary in the designs of shop signs. They are those innate qualities in a visual attribute that develop because of impelling social, aesthetic or historical forces.*

Tendencies are those unknown embedded qualities about colors that integrate certain socio-cultural city or country specific impelling forces. Their nature and occurrences are not rooted in certain time periods but they are those impelling forces that have aesthetic, architectural or historical context in shop signs. The following sections analyze the color tendencies observed in the foreground and background design elements in the shop signs of the city of Jaipur:

A) Main text color tendencies

We see both general and distinct tendencies in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

These tendencies are part of the color pragmatics. They are general impelling forces that explain the cause of certain forms of visual representation of the main text in old as well as new shop signs. All general color tendencies and their underlying reasons have been discussed in the following sections:

a) Old shop signs have prominently hand-painted colors in the main text

Most of the old shop signs at the backdrop of colonial and post independence times in India have been visually depicted in hand-painted techniques. The hand-painted main text in big size overpowers the area of the shop signs. This practice seems to be an ingrained quality of the hand done paintings and other designs of the times. These were the times when no new materials and technologies developed in India except the hand-painted skills of the artists. The simple tool of a paint-n-brush met the functional needs of those times. It was an expression of fundamental human agency⁸⁸ that manifested the spirit to make objects with one's own hands. This expression was mass popularized in the movements of Khadi⁸⁹ and Swadeshi by Gandhi (Fig. 4.20). The aesthetic expression of this wave is embedded in the impelling tendency of hand-painted expressions on the signboards of those times.



Fig. 4.20: a. Hand-painted erstwhile painting, b. shop signboard in hand-painted technique, India

This hand-painted expression⁹⁰ preserved the erstwhile social and urban fabric of India. The legacy developed as a byproduct of the major art movements like Expressionism (1905-1925), De Stijl (1917-1931), Art Deco (1925-1940), Abstract Expressionism (1946-56), Kinetic and Pop art (1954-1970). This visual tendency portrays a direct as well as subtle

⁸⁸ The process of shaping into objects, meeting functional needs and of fulfilling simultaneous longings for beauty and creativity involves an expression of fundamental human agency (Botnick and Raja, 2011)

⁸⁹ In 1920s, the khaadi (home spun), cloth mills and manufacturers induced Indians to buy locally made cloth rather than imported ones. Refer: http://www.tasveergharindia.net/cmsdesk/essay/116/index_5.html

⁹⁰ Color as a means of expression has been part of human history since handprints were first painted on cave walls. (Varichon, 2006)

influence of these movements in form of a hand-painted mimesis⁹¹ in the main text of the old shop signs (Fig. 4.21).



Fig. 4.21: Hand-painted color production general tendency in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

b) Modern shop signs have prominently digitally reproduced colors in the main text

The changed face of shop signs came into being at the backdrop of various printing, scientific and technological inventions in modern India. Many new techniques like offset printing, new additive color printing, dot matrix and thermal printing originated in the 1980s. These new printing inventions facilitated user friendly printers in terms of both cost and technology. With the introduction of color television and later digital press in the 1990s there was an upsurge in the digital production in order to facilitate mass production, a business competitive edge and the preferences of consumers in India. Due to a change in the consumer preferences, a different approach to display colors of name identities, their visual treatments and aesthetic functions could be seen. The digital signage dressed in a minimal and universal color palette of the present day, practices a self-service retail⁹² concept. Within this concept, communication is largely addressed to the consumerist⁹³ section. This digitally produced color tendency represents the pervasive expression and meaning behind the modern day shop name identifications (Fig. 4.22 and 4.23).

⁹¹ Mimesis means “imitation”, an artist, by skillfully selecting and presenting his material may purposefully seek to “imitate” the action of life. Refer: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/383233/mimesis>

⁹² Self-service can allow services to be delivered at low costs and in large volumes with higher perceived quality (The Economist, Sept 18th-24th 2004). Refer: <http://www.economist.com/node/3171466>

⁹³ In India, the growth of a middle class estimate to represent 30% of the population. Still, it is likely that no more than 100 million or so of this middle-class represents a ‘consumerist’ segment (Sheth and Malhotra, 2011).



Fig. 4.22: Consumerism in the world of digital signage and modern day shopping



Fig. 4.23: Digital color production general tendency in the main text of modern shop signs, Jaipur

2) Distinct color tendencies

The following color tendencies are common in two marketplaces of Khatipura road and Ajmer road in Jaipur.

a) Sweet shop names are displayed in saffron or the burnt orange color

In India, saffron is most commonly used ingredient in sweets. Saffron ingredient has a burnt orange hue when cooked for long duration. For instance, saffron is the main ingredient in sweets like motichoor laddoos, imarti, a thickened sweetened jalebi, gaajar halwaa and saffron topped white phirni. Some other north Indian sweets are generally in warm hues of deep orange-yellow in sweet rice dishes and as the slight burnt medium intensity orange of north Indian jalebis (Fig. 4.24). The saffron color and the mixed saffron shades and tints used in the shops, substantiate a context rooted in the Indian culinary context (Fig. 4.24 to 4.25).

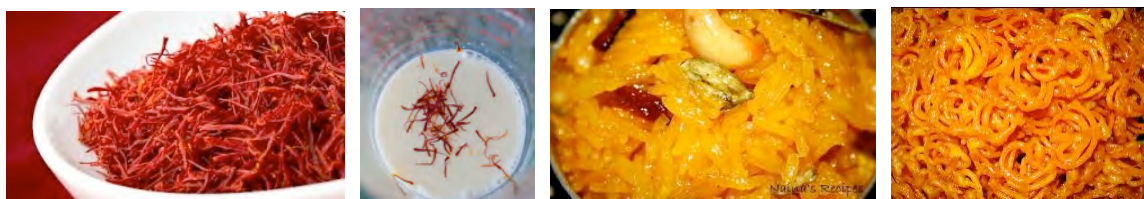


Fig. 4.24: Deep burnt orange of the saffron ingredient used in sweets of northern Indian



Fig. 4.25: Saffron/burnt orange hue distinct tendency in main text of shop signs, Jaipur

3) Summary: main text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The foreground main text shows those general color tendencies that elaborate the rationale of using different color production techniques for old and modern shop signs. Among these, the first tendency of hand-painted shop names in old shop signs occurs mainly because of the socio-political conditions, related choices and symbolism as practiced by the people of India (Fig. 4.20 and 4.21). The second tendency of digital color production in modern sign shop names primarily exists as a living evidence of the post-industrialization time that has been well known for many technical inventions and growth in the trade and commerce in India (Fig. 4.22 and 4.23).

Distinct color tendencies

The foreground main text has a distinct tendency that arises because of deep cultural context related to the specific hue of the ingredient saffron especially added to the sweets in northern and western sides of India (Fig. 4.24 and 4.25). The same hue appears in the main text of sweet shops in the city of Jaipur.

B) Secondary text color tendencies

For tag lines or secondary texts no distinct color tendencies exist in our selected data of shop signs in the city of Jaipur.

C) Background sign panel color tendencies

We see general tendencies in the background sign panel colors of shop signs shared between two marketplaces of Jaipur as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) **White background with blue borders** in the old shop signs of Moti Doongri and Ajmer road marketplaces. The colonial times in India are a collection of revolutions, struggles and social resistance movements. The effect of this socio-political condition of the colonial India gave us poorna swaraj⁹⁴. Gandhi and other Indian leaders actively supervised the salt satyagraha as the first struggle towards attainment of the complete independence for our nation. The occurrence of white boards with blue borders in the shops of these times got established in the midst of the following impelling historically driven forces:

- White color encompassed peace and knowledge that Gandhi and our freedom fighters envisioned for India through various revolutions (Fig. 4.26). Salt march was also called the *white flowing river*⁹⁵. The color symbolism of blue with respect to pre-independence times in India communicates struggle. This determined and revolutionary struggle is synonymous with the blue border outlining the pristine looking white saree that women wore in those times. The dream to acquire peace and a new beginning full of hope is embedded in the generous white canvas of the signboards, the white sarees of women freedom fighters, revolutionaries, political leaders, social workers of the stature like Mother Teresa (Fig. 4.26). White color is also a symbol of self-sufficiency of those times.



Fig. 4.26: a. and b. Salt satyagraha as part of the Dandi march in Gujarat, India, c. white with blue bordered sarees worn by social workers of the times to signify service and sacrifice

- The incitation, enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and the mental set up of the Indian women to confront any possible danger in those times gets a glorious visual identity in the form of white and blue colors. These historical underpinnings get reflected in the use of white

⁹⁴ Poorna Swaraj signifies the declaration of independence officially promulgated on January 26, 1930. Refer: <http://www.mapsofindia.com/on-this-day/26-january-1930-26-january-was-declared-as-purna-swaraj-day>

⁹⁵ The white flowing river or salt satyagraha was the symbol of pure means and intent (Rossier's documentary "the Other Man", 2013). Refer: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nicolas-rossier/meeting-with-ela-gandhi-a_b_3174968.html?utm_hp_ref=india - comments

color with blue borders in the shop panels of Moti Doongri and Ajmer road marketplaces in Jaipur city (Fig. 4.27).



Fig. 4.27: White signboards with blue borders general tendency in background sign panels, Jaipur

2) Distinct color tendency

Light pink wash in the background sign panels in Jaipur

This color tendency is shared between panels of shop signs in Moti Doongri and Khatipura road marketplaces. Pink was adopted for the entire Jaipur city as its official color in late 16th century. Jaipur pink has been described as the sandstone or honey or deep oleander pink⁹⁶ and crushed strawberry⁹⁶ tint by Mark Twain in 1897. Jaipur's pink wash is nothing but a simple coating of red earth color, geru⁹⁷ that belongs to a village north of Kanota in Rajasthan. This geru soil use was an inevitable choice in order to reduce the time and cost of construction works in all the major buildings of Jaipur. The protective coat of geru helped in the protection of buildings, monuments and the shop facades from light, rains and storms. The terracotta hue became a regular element as the background color for the old rajput style miniature paintings and postage stamps in Jaipur belonging to early and middle 20th century (Fig. 4.28). Jaipur didn't have the best quarries of both sandstone and marble. Therefore, they were brought from stone quarries of Jodhpur during the Jaipur city construction in early 16th

⁹⁶ Deep oleander pink has been fondly expressed by the late Maharani Gayatri Devi of the ruling royal family of Jaipur. (Nath, 1996).

⁹⁷ This pink color wash completes the illusion and meaningfully eludes imperial look of the city of Jaipur (Titlotson, 2006).

century. These stone panels used for the shops in Jaipur complement the color wash. The use of rubble from the adjacent hills facilitated the building process by reducing the transportation costs and the necessary application of cosmetic plaster was possible. Therefore, we see many versions of pink in Jaipur facades and signs. With time, the atmospheric affects have further given illusions of mixed grey tones that can be seen in the shop sign background panels (Fig. 4.28 and 4.29).

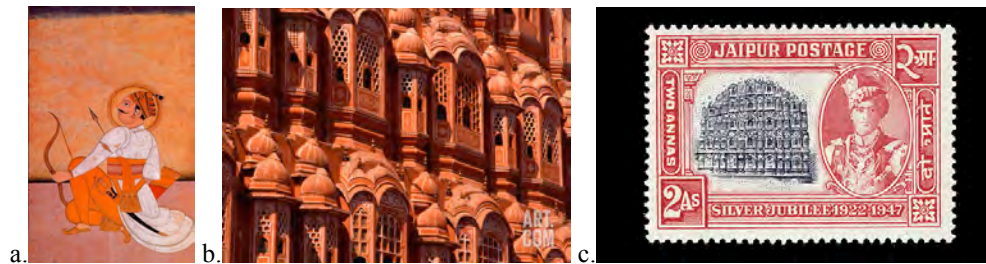


Fig. 4.28: a. Prithviraj Chauhan painting using grades of pink wash, 1916, b. pink wash adorning Hawa Mahal's front façade, c. Jaipur pink impression in an old postage stamp of the Jaipur city, 1931-48

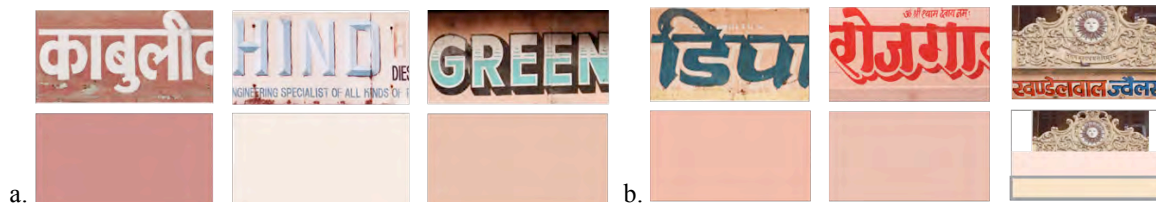


Fig.4.29: a. Pink wash in background sign panels of Moti Doongri road, b. in Khatipura road market, Jaipur

Below, there is an extension of similar hue tendency appearing as a combination with white in a historically popular architectural design pattern used extensively in the facades and buildings of Jaipur.

White and pink color combination in Kangoora designs on background sign panels

For Moti Doongri road, the simple round kangoora designs in pink and white colors adorn the building and old shop sign facades (Fig. 4.30). Jaipur with the characteristic dark terracotta as an official city color has a royal identity. Therefore, the city building, facades and shops. envisage a visual culture including a lot of warm reds, pinks, mixed tints and shades of reds. In the context, there has been a tendency of constructing running continuous strips of kangoora designs in pink and white color combinations⁹⁸ on the top and bottom of the sign

⁹⁸ Kangoora designs are specific to Jaipur city architecture. The front rim of the roof tops (of shops, building facades and city gates) are decorated with uniform kangoora designs (Nath, 2008).

panels and building facades. The city's Rajput style architecture is rooted in the historical narratives of Jai Singh's rule in Jaipur. The typical rounded kangoora designs have a dot in the middle of every arch. On the city gates, the hollow holes helped Jai Singh's soldiers to hide behind the kangooras and see through in order to spot any invasion by their enemies during war times (Fig. 4.30).



Fig. 4.30: a. Geru-white kangoora designs in sign panels, Moti Doongri road, Jaipur

3) **Summary: background panel color tendencies**

General color tendencies

In background sign panels of shop signs we see general tendencies shared between only two marketplaces of Jaipur. No apparent reason appears to explain the non-existence of such tendencies across marketplaces. Our observations are within the limits of the number of shop signs as could be photo-documented by the researcher from Jaipur during the data collection. In the described general tendency for Ajmer and Khatipura road marketplaces, the rationale behind the occurrence of white panels with blue borders is rooted in a national historical context. This imbibes the social aims of the freedom struggle and post-independence ideologies. This tendency also appears in the timeless white sarees with universal blue borders as worn by the common women as well as women social workers and freedom fighters of those times. This color choice is a unique reminiscent of the bygone social status of India. This symbolic representation of a nation-wide pulse is also reflected in the white

background signboards with blue borders to signify shops and their business (Fig 4.26 and 4.27).

Distinct color tendency

The background colors of sign panels in the small and medium business size marketplaces symbolically represent the distinct pink identity of the city of Jaipur (Fig. 4.28 and 4.29). This tendency is rooted in the historical narrative of city construction, the choice of material to visually represent the architectural heritage of buildings, monuments and shop sign facades. This distinct color tendency is one of the most indigenous and unique examples that establish a deep relationship of color with material choice to represent identity of a traditional city in India.

Flat deep pink and mixed undertone hue options have been used for modern shop sign panels across all marketplaces (Fig. 4.30). This tendency has a strong connotation with the pink color identity of Jaipur and the meanings are deeply rooted in the historical context. This tendency exists since the 16th century narrative of the origin of kangoora designs displayed in the royal pink and white color combination in the old city of Jaipur. These colors assimilate historic contextual meanings with respect to Jaipur city.

4.2.1.4 Conventions

***Conventions** are sets of accepted norms, standards and criteria established since ages. In context of shop signs in our study, most of these conventions are either the color codes applied in context of their business meanings or the historical narratives specific to a particular city or India at large.*

Colors represent feelings, people, countries, cultures and color symbolism (Sahlins 1977: 165–180). Color meanings in particular cultures are accepted norms, standards and criteria of visual representation. Likewise, the material object of a signboard displaying the foreground and background elements has certain codes and conventions of colors. They communicate different messages encoded in the main text, secondary text and background sign panel. The established and generally accepted conventions of colors and their use in the shop signs of Jaipur are as follows:

A) Main text color conventions

We see main text color conventions across all marketplaces in the city of Jaipur. Color conventions from the historical as well as business point of views occur for the main text in sections 1) and 2) respectively as follows:

1) Color conventions in the historical context

a) Vermilion color use in the main text

Vermilion or *kum-kum* by convention has played an instrumental role in the Indian customs and beliefs. The colored powder is an intrinsic part of Indian culture. Historically, powdered vermillion is often showered on deities in the temples during prayers. Since ages, in Indian mythology, vermillion also stands for goddess Lakshmi and Durga⁹⁹. It is used as a forehead tilak during the durga pooja and signifies bravery, protection and strength (Fig. 4.31).



Fig. 4.31: Vermilion color represents Gods and Goddesses in Indian mythology

Therefore, the convention depicts mythic and Godly names in the vermillion candor applied to the main text of the shops in the two marketplaces in Jaipur. This historical code has deep causal connection with the content of the words used in the names of shops (Fig. 4.32).



⁹⁹ Durga is a dark goddess. The essence of Sakti is expressed through the color red, while the male essence Siva, is expressed by the color white. A woman's blood connects her directly to the supreme consciousness that is Goddess Durga (Amazonne, 2010).

Fig. 4.32: Vermilion colored mythological words historical convention in the main text of shop signs, Jaipur

2) Color conventions in business context

Colors have definite meanings associated with the product or service rendered. Following color conventions from the point of view of particular business shops in Jaipur are as follows:

a) Everyday service shops use blue color in the main text

In Asia, color blue is considered the spirit color¹⁰⁰ that connotes self-cultivation. Also, blue is a very general color choice for small size old business shops¹⁰¹. By convention, blue is often considered the most positive and safest color for a global audience and has been applied in old and new travel business identities (Fig. 4.33).



Fig. 4.33: National old travel related identities in blue color convention. *Source: timetableimages, logopeople*

Use of blue in shop names conveys grounded candor, well-established trust and security associated with a shop's business. Therefore, blue color has been used for small business shops such as travel agencies, cycle repair work, arms and ammunitions, motor wholesale providers, automobile, product cum repair shop names (Fig. 4.34).



Fig. 4.34: Blue shop names of small size business service stores in Moti Doongri road, Jaipur

b) Luxury hotel names are generally displayed in metallic golden

Conventionally, golden color connotes lavishness. Traditionally, in India wearing gold in everyday life increases personal power, promotes courage and builds confidence. This power

¹⁰⁰ Blue is the color of the spirit in the sense that it embodies persistence and determination to succeed in whichever endeavors it pursues (Pastoureau, 2001).

¹⁰¹ Cool colors like blue and green create an illusion of an enlarged window. In the context, use of blue names against white or lighter background panels adds visual impact to the overall shop sign display (Visual Merchandising, NCRCRD, 1991). Refer: <http://ncrcrd.msu.edu/uploads/files/133/NCRCRD-rrd155-print.pdf>

stands for dynamism and a leading quality that is associated with golden color in the context of business and locally also adds to the royal shine in the city of Jaipur (Fig. 4.35). This color also stands for warmth and hospitality. Therefore, golden becomes a deliberate main text color choice for the lavish luxurious hotels that serve elite visitors in Jaipur (Fig. 4.35).

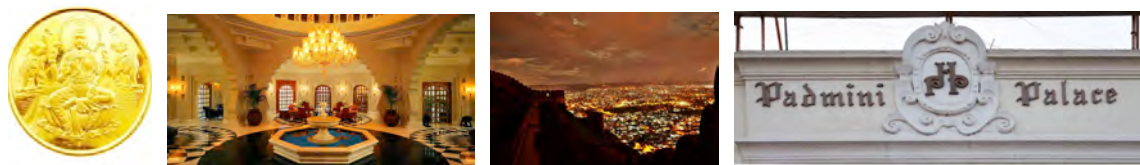


Fig. 4.35: Gold stand for prosperity, Source: *indiasutra*. Courtesy: Hotel Taj Palace, city of Jaipur. Golden shop name of a luxury hotel in Moti Doongri road marketplace

c) Red names of modern shop signs in Jaipur

Red is the symbol of power, protection and commitment in the business context. This color has not faded with the trials of time and stands alone as the most powerful dominating hue among all others in India. Therefore, this meaning of red connects with the business purpose of competing big showrooms and brands in modern context (Fig. 4.36).



Fig. 4.36: Red color convention in the modern shop names across marketplaces, Jaipur

d) Silver or silver-grey in modern shop names of hi-end fashion clothing brands

Silver has been used by man in jewellery for nearly as long as gold¹⁰². In the meaning of colors, silver is associated with prestige and wealth. It is seen as a glamorous color related to female energy, prosperity and modernity. In addition to these, silver connotes a classic appeal, value, sophistication and high cost and has strong association with technology and longevity as the color of Age and Wisdom¹⁰³ (Fig. 4.37). This modern signification connects with the standard use of displaying hi-end fashion, jewellery, hotel and other luxury brand product shops in silver or silvery-whites in Jaipur (Fig. 4.38).

¹⁰² Archaeologists have found that the remains of silver smelting operations dated as early as 4000 BC. In fact until 1400 AD, there were only seven metals known to man. These metals are known collectively as the Refer History of Silver online: <http://www.braybrook.co.uk/jewellery-and-silver-wisdom/history-of-silver>

¹⁰³ The color silver has a feminine energy; it is related to the moon and the ebb and flow of the tides - it is fluid, emotional, sensitive and mysterious. Silver restores equilibrium and stability to both feminine power and spiritual energy. (Brennan, 2013). Refer: http://kpam.com/common/more.php?m=49&post_id=2971

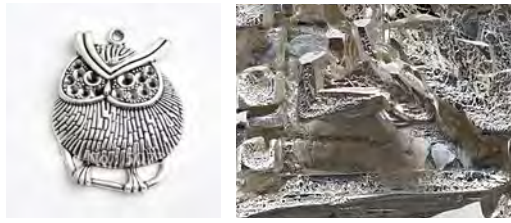


Fig. 4.37: Silver color convention and meaning in business context. Source: *inspectorinsight*

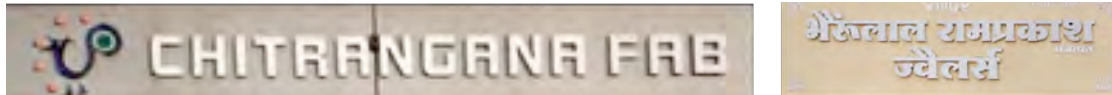


Fig. 4.38: Silver, silver-grey or whites in the modern shop names across marketplaces in Jaipur city

3) **Summary: main text color conventions**

Color conventions in the historical context

The main text in shop signs from two marketplaces with medium and large size business identities is represented in vermilion hue that has a historical significance with respect to Indian culture and ancient mythological symbolism. Interestingly, the mythological names of Gods and Goddesses are used as part words in the shop names that enhance the vermilion identity meaning for these signs. This identity is deep rooted in the content of the shop signs with the purpose of involving an auspicious thought for a successful business from the shop owner's side. Therefore, this color convention presents a meaningful form-content visual relationship in the shop names across two marketplaces of Khatipura and Ajmer road (Fig. 4.31 and 4.32).

Color conventions in the business context

We could identify four color conventions from business point of view in the main text in shop signs of Jaipur. The blue hues for specific business shops present well known business associations and meanings that represent loyalty based services and brands (Fig. 4.33 and 4.34) and luxury, premium and leadership based connotations with respect to gold that also marks prosperity and sustenance of Lakshmi in the business world in India (Fig. 4.35). The modern color palette has become more universal and versatile with time. In this context, the power and meaning of red from global business perspective is what guides its application in the names of illustrated shop signs (Fig. 4.36). Similar to gold, silver too presents an equal candor and significance in context of luxury and premium meanings. Therefore, silver and

silver-grey colors have been used in the main text of the luxury based hi-end fashion and jewellery brand shops (Fig. 4.37 and 4.38).

B) Secondary text color conventions

We see color conventions in the secondary text of shop signs across marketplaces as follows:

1) Color convention in the historical context

a) Vermilion color in shlokas and religious symbols displayed on old shop signs

The shlokas along with religious symbols painted in Vermilion has been an established historical customary practice in India¹⁰⁴. Whenever a shop business is launched or a new look is released after renovation or a vehicle or other products are bought, this color convention using Indian religious symbols and shlokas is practiced (Fig. 4.39). We can see this being applied in the tag lines of small and medium business size old shop signs across marketplaces in Jaipur (Fig. 4.40).

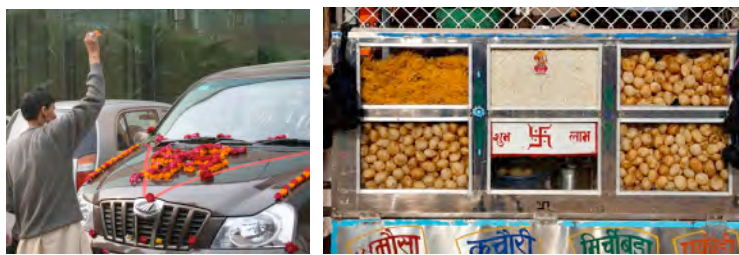


Fig. 4.39: a and b. Vermilion clad symbolism, a customary practice in India to welcome newness. *Source: Alan Grinberg, Flickr; APozzoNYC, Flickr*



Fig. 4.40: Vermilion clad symbols and shlokas historical convention in tag lines of old shop signs, Jaipur

¹⁰⁴ Red indicates both auspiciousness and purity. In India, 'Swastik' and 'Om' symbols and shlokas in vermilion candor are significant painted signs on every door and outdoor signboards. The philosophy behind this practice represents probability of more piousness and auspicious news (Dwivedi, 2004).

2) Color conventions in the business context

a) Blue shop names of local travel agencies

As described for the main text, old everyday service shops have blue color in secondary text too. These shops have a combination of only blue or blue with a warm hue in the tag lines highlighted within yellow frames as illustrated (Fig. 4.41). Similar basis as that for the main text in the shop signs of Moti Doongri marketplace also applies for the taglines of the shop signs from the same marketplace here.



Fig. 4.41: Blue tag lines business conventions in tag lines of local service shop signs, Jaipur

3) Summary: secondary text color conventions

Color convention in the historical context

The vermilion identity in the traditional Indian shlokas is generally seen written in sanskrit as well as the religious symbols displayed on the sign panels. This established practice is an age old tradition in India since ages. The historically practiced convention of vermilion use in Sanskrit shlokas on the products, brands and shop signs is an apparent, ubiquitous mark on streets and spaces in India (Fig. 4.39 and 4.40).

Color convention in the business context

The blue color convention is individually present in only small size business marketplace of Moti Doongri and is yet again based on the same rationale as explained in the main text color convention in Jaipur shop signs (Fig. 4.41).

C) Background sign panel color conventions

For background sign panels, no historical or business context based conventions of colors exist in our selected data of shop signs in the city of Jaipur.

4.2.2 Hyderabad

The city of Hyderabad is known as *the Pearl city of India* as well as the *premier State of India*. The Hyderabad state has been an archetypal Indian princely state (Benichou, 2000). Post 1960s, there was an increase in immigrations of artists from other cities of Indian subcontinent to Hyderabad. This was accompanied by scientific and social developments as well as popular entry of Telugu film industry¹⁰⁵ that led to a decline in the pre-eminent orthogenetic culture¹⁰⁶ along with the native Telugu cultural mix.

The twentieth century Hyderabad has more or less been intact as a major area in India (Smith, 1950:28). The new face of the Hyderabad city in mid-19th century as a cultural hub emerged with the rise in economy and trade. The visual cultural outdoor display of color and forms in Hyderabad is a distinct collaboration of popular themes in cinema and politics echoing the symbolic Visalandhra¹⁰⁷ and native Teluguness. The symbolic meanings of this nativity finds visual expressions in city's architecture, styles, popular traditional textile motifs and related color palette that guides the meaningful use of color conventions in shop signs of Hyderabad. In this city very rich architectural heritage exists. As a pattern, a single structure in Hyderabad often defines a complete site around it, with localities always growing around these structures (Vottery, 2010). This orderly approach of the elements is also reflected in the order and arrangements of the visual elements as patterns of the color attribute in shop signs of the city of Hyderabad. The color analysis of all the four quadrants in shop signs reveals this transformation of Hyderabad city from being the traditional and heterogeneous cultural hub to the modern High Tech twin city of Hyderabad-Secunderabad identity.

4.2.2.1 Patterns

The color patterns observed in the shop signs of Hyderabad are as follow:

A) Main text color patterns

Following main text patterns showcase visual examples for General bazaar, Laad bazaar and Parklane road marketplace shop signs arranged from the left to right in all the visual examples:

¹⁰⁵ In 1950s, Ramabrahmam was instrumental in the establishment of Sarathy Films and laid the ground for cinema's engagement with politics, even as they fore-grounded an issue (Srinivas, 2013).

¹⁰⁶ In early days Islam based orthogenic forces dominated the city of Hyderabad, although later during Asif Jahi's period of 1763, this dominance amalgamated with native Telugu culture (Jaffrelot and Gayer, 2013).

¹⁰⁷ Commonly known as the Telangana movement, in 1953, the State Reorganization commission demanded disintegration of the Hyderabad state on linguistic lines (The Hindu, October 2005).

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.30 to 4.34 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Mostly big size branded shops and modern hi-end big showrooms. Few examples of medium size stores too exist
ii) Red		Mostly in big size shops and showrooms, with one example of an old, small size general shop, 'Gopi Travels'
iii) Silver grey		Big size, modern branded showrooms
iv) Dark brown		Mostly medium size old shops and an example of medium size modern saree store

Table 4.30: Hue patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High values in yellow		Mostly medium size, modern shops and some big size showrooms
ii) Medium value in green		Small size old stores and a medium size modern stores
ii) Low value in dark brown		a) Dark brown (dark values): Mostly medium size old shops and an example of medium size modern saree store

Table 4.31: Color Value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow		For yellow main text – all big size modern stores

ii) Medium saturation in red-blue combination		Medium size old stores
iii) Dull saturation in darkest blue as well as dark brown shop names		Small size old and two examples of modern service shops

Table 4.32: Color Saturation patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red, orange and yellow		For red main text - Medium size old stores and a big size modern hotel For yellow main text – all big size modern stores For orange color in main text – two small size old general shops and a modern medium size bangles store
ii) Cool: blue and green		Medium size old shops and a big size old store
iii) Warm and cool: red and blue		Medium size old shops
iv) Neutral: grey		Medium and big size modern shops and a showroom

Table 4.33: Color Temperature patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red, yellow and blue shop names		<u>Red, blue primary kinds:</u> Mostly big size showrooms and an example of small size <u>Yellow primary kinds:</u> Medium size, old shops
ii) Secondary: orange and green		<u>Orange color in main text:</u> Two small size old general shops and a modern medium size bangles store <u>Green secondary color:</u> Small size old stores and a medium size modern stores

Table 4.34: Color Kinds patterns in main text of shop signs across marketplaces in Hyderabad

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.35 to 4.39 as follows:

a) Combination patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Red and white combination	  	Large size modern service shops and a showroom
ii) Red and blue combination	  	Small size old local shops
iii) Red, green and blue combination	     	Small size old service shops

Table 4.35: Color Combination patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

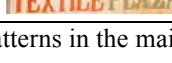
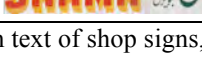
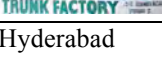
b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: red to blue, blue to red	     	Small size old service shops and equal number of modern, big size stores
ii) Primary to secondary: red/ orange-red to green	     	Mostly medium size, local and old general shops

Table 4.36: Color Hierarchy patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast – white shop names against dark backgrounds	     	Mostly Big size modern fashion brand showrooms and two examples of medium size modern stores
ii) High contrast – deep red / dark brown shop names against light backgrounds	  	Medium size old shops and big size modern restaurant
iii) Cold-warm contrast – for complimentary schemes in shop names	        	Small size old local service shop and two local stores

Table 4.37: Color Contrast patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

d) Effect patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Color attraction – Highlight effect – white drop-shadow around red letterforms of the main texts	   <i>Highlight color effect</i>	All big size, modern shops

ii) Flicker effect in complimentary combinations of colors	  	Medium size old and big size modern stores and showroom
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Table 4.38: Color Effect patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Light Primary color scheme of red, green and blue (Triadic color scheme)	  	Mostly medium size general shops and two examples of big size textile store and a restaurant
ii) Complimentary color scheme of red-green and orange-blue	  	Medium size modern shops and one example of 'Tamanna Suits & Sarees' being a big size, modern store

Table 4.39: Color Scheme patterns in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

3) **Summary: main text color patterns**

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- For color hue patterns, there are single grades. The choice of single hue (medium intensity silver grey) for the main text is perhaps based on the big size branded identity of these showrooms. The purpose might be to celebrate the already established premium tag associated with these shop brand names. The color choice aims to serve this purpose by making the foreground main text of shop name visually harmonize and submerge in the background sign panels (Fig. 4.42).



Fig. 4.42: Color hue pattern of silver-grey-single grade-shop names relationship in shop signs, Hyderabad

Similarly, color kinds, values, saturation and temperature patterns exist in mixed as well as single grades for specifically similar business size shop signs.

- Primary yellow shop names exist in old shop signs of medium business size. In the same shop signs, we can see that bright saturation and high value of hues of yellow names bind them in a visual relationship with primary yellow color kind for similar business size old shops (Fig. 4.43).



Fig. 4.43: Color kind-saturation-value-single grade of yellow / primary color kind-relationship in shop signs, Hyderabad

- *Dull saturation patterns in dark brown and dark blue* appear in small size, old shops and two examples of modern service shops (Fig. 4.44). The dull saturation of dark brown shop names and blackish blue in shop names bear neutral, low values and neutral, cool temperatures respectively.



Fig. 4.44: Color saturation-value-temperature-hierarchy in similar size business shop signs, Hyderabad

For color relationship patterns like schemes, there are single grade patterns. However, for other characteristics like hierarchy and contrast no patterns in grades are seen in similar business size shop signs. A few visual examples are as follows:

- *Triadic color scheme of pattern in red, yellow and blue colors* appear in all small business size, old shops (Fig. 4.45). The red and blue have medium bright saturations and the yellow is very bright with high value too. So, there is a visual relationship between color scheme with color saturation and value.



Fig. 4.45: Triadic color scheme-hue-saturation relationship in names in similar size business shop signs, Hyderabad

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

For color hue and saturation, patterns in single grade only occur in distinct business size shop signs (Table 4.30 and 4.32). Color value, temperature and kinds have both single and mixed grades for distinct size business shops (Table 4.31, 4.33 and 4.34).

B) Secondary text color patterns

Following secondary text patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for General bazaar, Laad bazaar and Parklane shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples with the respective secondary texts enclosed within yellow frames:

1) Color description patterns

All patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.40 to 4.44 as follows:

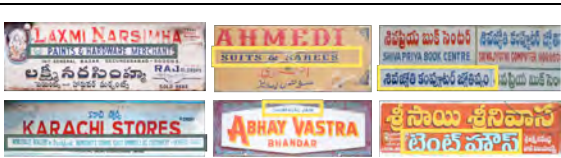
a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Big size modern brand showrooms and stores
ii) Black		Small old and local shops
iii) Blue		Mostly medium size hardware local shops and one medium size, fairly modern store of suits and sarees

Table 4.40: Hue patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High values in yellow		Big size modern shops and showrooms
ii) Medium value in blue		Small size very old stores
iii) Low value in black		Small old and local shops

Table 4.41: Color Value patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow		Medium size, old shops
ii) Dull saturation in blue		Small size very old stores

Table 4.42: Color Saturation patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red		Medium size old shops and a big size modern saloon
ii) Cool: blue and green		In both blue and green taglines, this pattern of cool temperature exists for all medium size, old










Table 4.43: Color Temperature patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

e) Kinds pattern	Example	Business size
i) Primary colors red, yellow and blue		Small size old shops and a medium size modern store

Table 4.44: Color Kind pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

2) Color relationship patterns

Most of taglines are in regular colors, generally used as single colors, in combinations or contrasts in order to amplify shop names. Only a single color contrast pattern exists in the secondary text as illustrated with visual examples in table 4.45 as follows:

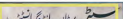
c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
High contrast:		
i) White taglines on darker boards	  	i) Big size modern showrooms
ii) Black taglines on lighter boards	  	ii) Small, old local hardware stores
iii) Dark green taglines on off-white / very light white	  	c. Technology based small and medium size old local shops

Table 4.45: Color Contrast pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Hyderabad

3) Summary: secondary text color patterns

As seen in the main text, for secondary text too we could see visual relationships with different objectives of display in both color description and relationship patterns for similar and distinct business size shops as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- *Color hues only appear in single grade, white / black for similar business size shops*
Likewise, value and saturation too appear in single grades only for similar size business shops. Unlike main text, the purpose behind the hue choice in the secondary text is to display product information. This secondary text is not the main identity in case of already established brand names of these modern big size stores. Therefore, the taglines also appear in white as there is no need to have a separate color distinction in them relative to

the main text in the shop signs. There also exists bright and dull saturation single grades for white and black secondary text hues. Therefore, the relationship characteristic of color contrast has a visual relationship with color hue and saturation description characteristics (Fig. 4.46 and 4.47).



Fig. 4.46: White hue-contrast-saturation-relationship in similar business size shop signs, Hyderabad



Fig. 4.47: Black hue-contrast-saturation-relationship in similar business size shop signs, Hyderabad

- *Color saturation and value patterns in single grades too appear in similar business size shop signs* (Fig. 4.48). For instance, high value single grade exists for yellow tag lines in case of medium business size shop signs. The hue of yellow has bright saturations too. This establishes a visual relationship between hue-value-saturation-temperature for both colors of yellow.



Fig. 4.48: High value-saturation-single grade in similar medium business size old shop signs, Hyderabad

- No color patterns exist for color combination and effect characteristics among all color relationship characteristics. *Color contrast patterns are single grade for similar business size shops* (Table 4.45).

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

Color temperature and kind characteristics have only single grade patterns for distinct business size shops. Few visual examples of color patterns appearing in single grades in color description characteristics of temperature and kinds are as follows:

- *Cool temperature in blue and green taglines* occur in small and medium size shop signs.

The blue has medium value and low saturation, but the green has least value and medium level saturation. This establishes a visual relationship between temperature-saturation and values for blue and green tag lines in the pattern (Fig. 4.49).



Fig. 4.49: Color temperature-saturation-value mixed grades relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Hyderabad

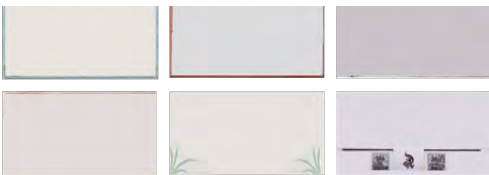
No patterns exist for any of the color relationship characteristics for distinct business size shops. No apparent reasons can be seen for the same except for the simple visual observation regarding secondary texts that are not only less in frequency but occur without combinations, effects and visual treatments of distinction or emphasis via contrast, color schemes etc.

C) Background sign panel color patterns

Following patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for General bazaar, Laad bazaar and Parklane road shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples of background sign panels as follows:

1) Color description patterns

All color description patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.46 to 4.50 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm grey		Mostly medium and small size old shops. Few examples of large size showrooms also exist
ii) White and whitish-grey		Medium size old and new shops and two examples of premium, big size showrooms

iii) Yellow and yellow-green		Medium size stores and showrooms
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Table 4.46: Color Hue pattern in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

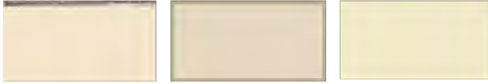
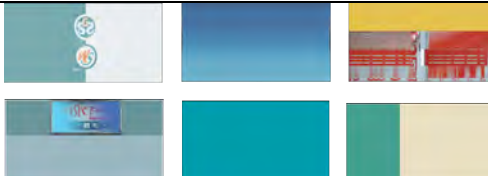
b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in light yellow		Old small and medium size service shops
ii) Medium values in blue and green		Mostly medium size new stores and one big size new showroom

Table 4.47: Color Value pattern in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in red color		Big size, modern and branded shop and two showrooms
ii) Medium bright is seen cool blue-greens		Mostly medium size new stores and one big size new showroom

Table 4.48: Color Saturation pattern in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red		Small size old general shop and a medium and big size modern store and showroom respectively
ii) Cool: blue-greens		Seen in medium size modern stores
iv) Neutral: grey		Mostly small an old shop and few modern brand stores

Table 4.49: Color Temperature pattern in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: pale red, yellow and blue-greens		Red primary color sign panels: Big size modern showrooms <u>Yellow primary color sign panels: Small and</u>

	 	medium size old service shops <u>Blue primary color sign panels:</u> Medium size modern shop and stores
ii) Secondary: reddish orange		Seen in medium size modern shops

Table 4.50: Color Kinds patterns in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

2) Color relationship patterns

All color relationship patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.51 to 4.55 as follows:

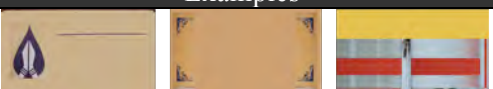
a) Combination pattern	Examples	Business size
i) Yellow boards with blue shapes		Medium size modern shops

Table 4.51: Color Combination pattern in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

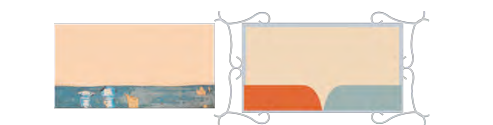
b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary hierarchy: warm yellow to pale grayish blue-green		Medium size modern shops of two marketplaces: General Bazaar and Parklane
ii) Primary to grayish-white hierarchy: dull yellow to light grey, red to lightest grey and bright red to light grey		A small size old general local store and modern big size stores.

Table 4.52: Color Hierarchy patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Hyderabad

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast: red-white, black-white and dark reddish	 	Seen in an old ware store, modern new brand showroom and a hotel.
ii) Cold-warm contrast: orange, yellow-green and pink-dark green	 	Seen in two medium-size stores and a big size modern branded store of suits and sarees

Table 4.53: Color Contrast patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Hyderabad

d) Effect patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Color harmony balances cool and warm colors together, in blue-yellow, green-yellow, blue-green and yellow-orange		Medium size, old shop and two big size, modern stores

Table 4.54: Color Effect patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Hyderabad

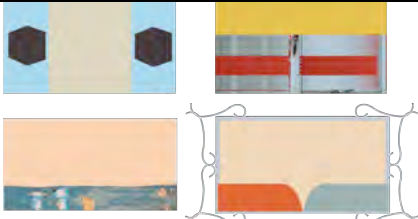
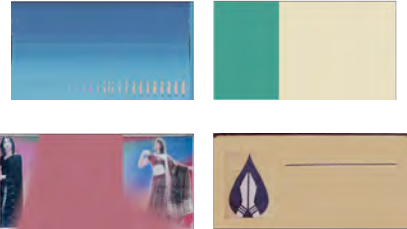
e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Split-complimentary: yellow green- sky blue, orange with blue-green		Seen in an old medium size stores and a medium size, modern shop
ii) Adjacent / analogous scheme: blue-blue green, green-pale green yellow, pink and pinkish-blue and yellow-brown (almost golden) with dark black-blue		Exists for equal number of medium size modern shops and big size showrooms

Table 4.55: Color Scheme patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Hyderabad

3) **Summary: background sign panel color patterns**

Two kinds of visual relationships for the patterns in background sign panels with different objectives of display appear in similar and distinct business size shop signs as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

Among color description characteristics, color hue, saturation and kinds have patterns in single grade. However, color value and temperature patterns exist in both single and mixed grades for similar size shop signs. A few visual examples of these relationships in the patterns are as follows:

- *Yellow, yellow-green and pale yellow panel color pattern exists in medium size stores and showrooms (Fig. 4.50). The yellow hues of panels have warm temperatures and varying values and saturations.*

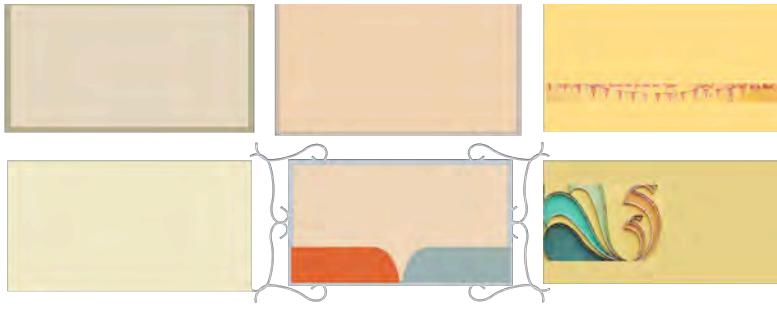


Fig. 4.50: Color hue-temperature relationship in similar business size shop signs, Hyderabad

- *Red Primary color sign panels in big size modern showrooms.* The red hues have medium values and bright saturation for all signboards across marketplaces. This binds the primary color kind with value and saturation in a strong visual relationship (Fig. 4.51).



Fig. 4.51: Color kind-value-saturation relationship in similar business shop signs, Hyderabad

Among color relationship characteristics, only color combination and hierarchy patterns in single grades appear for similar size business shops. One example of such pattern and the related visual relationship has been illustrated as follows:

- *Primary to primary hierarchy (single grade)* is in yellow in panels to the pale grayish-blue across similar business size shop signs of two marketplaces only (Fig. 4.52).



Fig. 4.52: Color hierarchy-kinds relationship in similar business size shop signs, Hyderabad

Visual relationships in distinct size business shop signs

Among description characteristics, color hue, value and saturation are in single as well as mixed grades for distinct business size of shops. However, color temperature appears in mixed grade pattern and color kinds appear only in single grade pattern for the same.

Few examples of visual relationships in the said patterns are as follows:

- *Warm grey (single grade) in sign panels of distinct business size shop signs* exist for medium and small size old shop, with a few examples of big size showrooms. Here, in most sign panels the values are low and there is no saturation in the muted warm grey tones. Therefore, a visual relationship exists between color hue-value-saturation and temperature for this pattern (Fig 4.53).

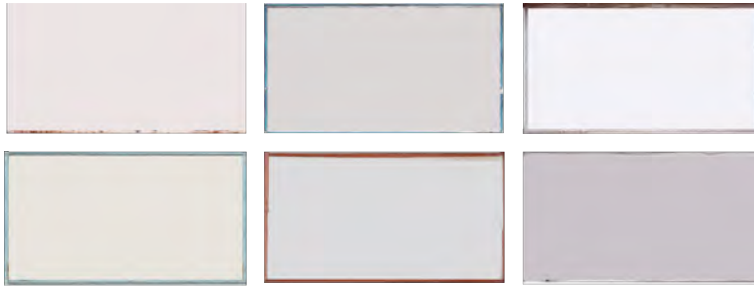


Fig. 4.53: Color hue-temperature relationship in similar business size shop signs, Hyderabad

- *Medium value in blue and blue-green (mixed grade) color pattern* occurs in mostly medium size, modern stores and one big size modern showroom. The medium value of blue and blue-green have cool temperatures and bright saturations that establishes a visual relationship between value-temperature and saturation (Fig. 4.54).



Fig. 4.54: Color value-temperature-saturation relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Hyderabad

- *Primary to grayish-white in dull yellow (single grade) color pattern* occurs in small size, old general local store and modern big stores (Fig. 4.55).



Fig. 4.55: Color saturation-low value and neutral temperature relationship in shop signs, Hyderabad

4.2.2.2 Trends

The detailed color trends observed in the shop signs of the city of Hyderabad are as follows:

A) Main text color trends

We see both transitory and period-specific trends in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) Transitory color trends in the main text

Transitory trend exists only in one of the color description characteristics i.e. hue. We see no clear transitions of any of the color relationship characteristics across time. No such trends appear in combinations, hierarchy, schemes, effects etc. The visual depicts hue trend by representing examples of main text in the shop signs of General bazaar, Laad Bazaar and Parklane road marketplace arranged from top to bottom.

a) Hue transitory trend

In very old signs of 1930-44, two hues of red and blue dominate, but for 1945-59 the sequence of prominence changes slightly from red to green. In the middle periods, in 1960-74 single hue use becomes prominent, that carries forward in the next continuing time periods of 1975-89, 1990-2004 and 2005 onwards (Fig. 4.56).



Fig. 4.56: Color hues frequency transitory trend in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

2) Period specific color trends in the main text

Each time period can be characterized by certain popular themes of visual culture such as the influence of Tollywood movie poster themes, movie title color styles and the background socio-political atmosphere in southern fabric and India. These themes influence the period specific color trends that have been observed in color relationships such as combinations, schemes and effects. Among the color description characteristics, period specific trends appear in only hues and saturation. No period specific trend is seen in 1930-44 time period since this time in India was ruled by the colonial choices of the British Raj.

a) 1945-59, popular themes and color trends

The periods of 1940s witnessed the intricate classic Deccani¹⁰⁸ miniature painting styles using green and blue-greens in the picturesque backgrounds that reflected the royal settings and

¹⁰⁸ Deccani paintings were rendered from the 16th to the 19th century at Golkonda and Hyderabad. The style and themes in Deccani miniatures include elements of early indigenous art traditions of the Deccan.

romantic mood of the kings and queens of the princely Hyderabad state. The theme of Indian mysticism¹⁰⁹ is explored in the form and colors of these paintings. In 40s and 50s, tollywood explored the *folklore theme* as the feature of the socially sensitive stories. Social in telugu cinema as a theme connoted realism and commitment to Teluguness (Srinivas, 2014). This could also be seen in visual rendering styles using deep red, yellow-green or bluish-green colors to create a folklore charm. These hues have a dusty sepia-brown undertone that compliments the mundane social storyline of Telugu society milieu of those times. This time slot is believed to be a trend setting era of idealism¹¹⁰. The Telugu film industry exhibits particular cultural traits that relate to the popular culture on politics (Srinivas, 2009). In the 1950s, the same social themes projected a marked male dominance. Actors like Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (N.T.R) and M.G. Ramachandran (M.G.R.) in Tamil Nadu acquired the positions of star-politicians¹¹¹ (Gokulsingh, 2013). This can be seen as popular expressions in the use of deep red hue. The same red counter balanced aesthetically with mundane olive green hues in the main text of shop signs across marketplaces in Hyderabad. This implied the devotional collaboration of post-independence tollywood with state politics (Fig. 4.57).

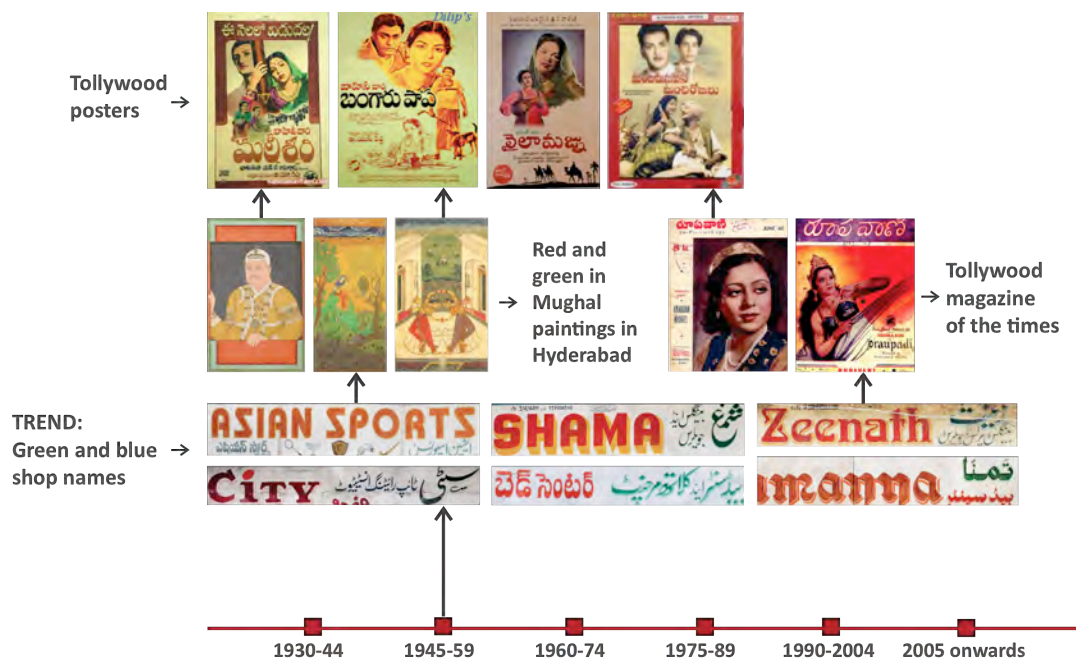


Fig. 4.57: Period specific color trend (1945-59) of combination, scheme in red-green hues in main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

¹⁰⁹ 'A religious practice based on the belief that knowledge of spiritual truth can be gained by praying or thinking deeply.' (Merriam Webster, 2014). This mysticism has been explored in old Deccani style paintings.

¹¹⁰ 1940s were best times for Telugu cinema, with progressive outlook [History Of Birth And Growth Of Telugu Cinema (Part 1)], <http://www.cinegoer.net/telugucinema13.htm>

¹¹¹ Chiranjeevi is Megastar. Chiranjeevi's son Ram Charan Teja holds the title of Mega Power Star. The common thread running through this constellation of stars is politics.

b) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

This historic period provided a strong impetus to the film industry with themes of relevant social issues along with some fun-n-frolic based subjects popular in bollywood. The themes also depict the popular discontent in the poster designs too. Parallel to this in tollywood, the themes portrayed discontent and anxieties about the linguistic isolation of actors and movies with respect to different regional languages leading to cine-populism¹¹² (Prasad, 2004: 27-114). On the socio-political front, Andhra Pradesh was hit by worst crisis especially from 1969-72, when the state was rocked by two political agitations popularly known as the *Telangana* and the *Jai Andhra* movements¹¹³ respectively.

Parallel to this, in bollywood vicarious social themes were prevalent in the posters. Likewise, tollywood themes were vehement enough to envisage the pulse of very aggressive and tumultuous socio-political revolutionary times of Andhra Pradesh in the red-orange and warm blood red hues used in the movie titles. This influence also appears as popular color expression in the main text of shop signs across marketplaces in Hyderabad (Fig. 4.58). Tamil cinema's Neo-nativity¹¹⁴ in movies became the theme of popular imagination in this time period. Likewise, Telugu cinema themes too marched in the same domain in order to foster linguistic unity and Teluguness with the emergence of *Telangana* (Srinivas, 2013; Gokulsing and Dessanayake, 2013). The complimentary scheme of deep red-orange and yellow-green is perhaps a visual representation of the opposing expressions that conceptually co-exist to trigger the linguistic unity aimed to preserve nativeness of Telugu land and its ideologies (Fig. 4.58).

¹¹² The patriarch notions of Telugu nationalism have been explored in the 1940s films (Prasad, 2004:97-114).

¹¹³ The influx of the people from the coastal region into the city of Hyderabad created many social tensions. (Bhargava and Bhatt, 2006: 192).

¹¹⁴ Neo-nativity thematic films included the rurality of the plot and its settings, essentially popular in the era of 60s and 70s in Tamil cinema (Kaali, 200:170).



Fig. 4.58: Period specific color trends (1960-74) of warm hues with effects in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

c) 1975-89, popular themes and color trends

The period of masala films signified the quintessential bollywood entertainer themes of the 1970s. Parallel to this, Telugu movies were made with big budget and glittering stars along with introduction of new faces like Rajendra Prasad and Naresh in few low budget comedies. Politics played even more aggressive role in these times of revolutions to nurture *Telugutanam*¹¹⁵ concept in this post N.T.R period of 60s to 70s. This concept was re-positioned in a new costume of a village storyline with multilingual dialects. In this regard, there is a beautiful influence of using multilingual main text in Telugu, Arabic/Urdu and English to signify shop business across marketplaces in Hyderabad.

The visual effects of hard edge undercasings, drop shadows, bold outlines to letterforms have been used to visually amplify the names and subtly preserve the harmony of ideologies. This three color use also subtly echoes the masala based entertainment themes in the telugu movies poster titles. As a visual stylistic influence of this period, movements like pop art and psychedelic art add a strong graphic vitality to the main text in the said hues and effects (Fig. 4.59).

¹¹⁵ *Telugutanam* or Teluguness was a wave introduced by Kodavaganti Kutumb Rao and Gudavali in The emergence of N.T.R. in context of a strong political authority (Srinivasa, 2010:22).



Fig. 4.59: Period specific color trends (1975-89) of deep red-orange, red hues and effects in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

In Hyderabad, there is a popular style to depict political color identifications in street art, graffiti and hand-painted lettering on shops along with life-size figures of major film stars cum legendary political figures like NTR, ANR, Chirenjeevi and Venkatesh in later times. Andhra Pradesh's cinema, politics and hand-painted street art are one collaborative unit of display in the same way as is the case of Tamil Nadu. In Hyderabad, this display is an aesthetic representation¹¹⁶ of the star politicians instead of the socio-political propaganda and a cultural representation¹¹⁷ of self-image of Tamil star-politicians (Prasad, 1999). The people of Andhra Pradesh harbor strong devotion and efforts to sustain Telugu nation's linguistic communion¹¹⁸. This practice is almost a consistent visual motif that adorns the text in signboards, hoardings, wall art, the street graffiti and cut outs as part of popular visual culture in the urban spaces of Hyderabad. The multi-color hues of red, green and blue act as an aesthetic representation of the indigenous and multi-ethnic Teluguness (Fig. 4.60 and 4.61).

¹¹⁶ NTR films were not known for the kind of propaganda content that MGR's films included (Prasad, 1999).

¹¹⁷ Cultural representation often takes the form of an investigation of the "politics" of representation, here the term politics is used in a broad sense to mean those effects of persuasion (Prasad, 1999).

¹¹⁸ One feature that is distinctive in the south Indian case is the fact that adulation is based on the ascription to the star of the status of a representative. NTR becomes a re-presentation of the Telugu "nation" (Prasad, 1999).



Fig. 4.60: a. and b. Cine-political visual representation in warm primary colors and supporting secondary colors in wall art texts signifying the image of Teluguness, b. Tollywood's star-politicians, Hyderabad

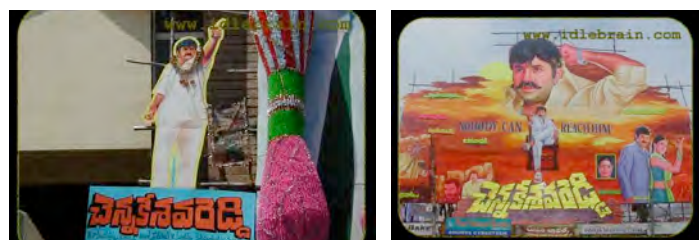


Fig. 4.61: Large cut-out posters in red, green, blue, yellow and black and color effects, Hyderabad

d) 1990-2004, popular themes and color trends

1990s is well known for mixed themes in the bollywood as well as tollywood cinema. With liberalization in Indian economy in this time period, the new tastes according to changing cultural preferences of new generation could be observed in the visual culture of commercial signs as well as popular themes of imagination in the creative visual medium of films in Chennai. Telugu cinema was relocated from Chennai to Hyderabad in 1990s. Dr. Akkinenni Nageswara Rao was the first person to come to Hyderabad in the 90s and build a studio named Annapurna (Saran, 2014).

More number of Telugu films have been released since 1990s. They are a devotional copy of the bollywood form and content to attract audience because of which they seem to have lost the spirit of the Telugu soil and identity. This loss of indigenous identity is signified in the more globally popular, glossy and trendy modern forms and choice of colors in the movie titles as well as the main texts of shop signs in the marketplaces across Hyderabad (Fig. 4.62). In this period, Hyderabad seems majorly influenced by globalized¹¹⁹ identity of tollywood movie poster designs as a trend towards modernity. The new Coca-Cola generation of brands and consumerist approach as a universal theme has been captured in the white telugu movie titles and shop names (Fig. 4.62).

¹¹⁹ Globalization is 'an attitude of mind of living harmoniously in an interdependent world with finite natural resources contradicted by infinite sources of exploitation of nature, violence, conflicts (Ahmad, July 2013).



Fig. 4.62: Period specific color trend (1990-2004) of white hues in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

e) 2005 onwards, popular themes and color trends:

2005 onwards time period in India celebrates the themes of globalization and modern branding strategies applied in movie poster designs in order to address the chic and westernized tastes of the new generation. Mostly we see simulations in 3D with different colored outlines, drop-shadows and effects that create a dynamic and rhythmic movement in the main text mostly displayed in white. With the new digital color production technique in modern times, both the bollywood and tollywood posters use the same color identity and simulation in the movie titles. In the late 20th and early 21st century, there is a new emerging theme of the cyber-culture as a vital new space for public culture (Sundaram, 2000). There is an integration of various mediums in modern times converging in a participatory regime (Punathamberkar and Kavoori, 2012: 284). This cyber-culture governs the form and color choices as part of larger visual culture of name identifications in movies and shop signs. This thematic influence can be seen in the color display techniques and treatments to create modern brand image for each of the shops via the color display on their signboards. For

instance, the drop shadow effect¹²⁰ color technique has been used in modern logo designs, film titles as well as the shop names in the signs of this period (Fig. 4.63).

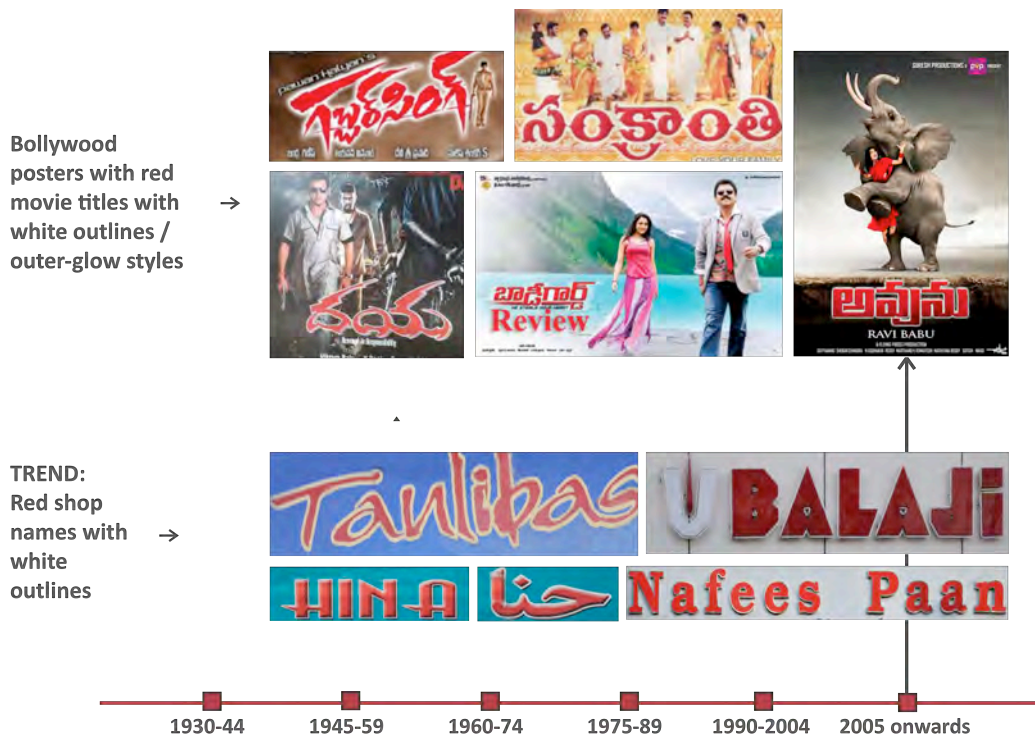


Fig. 4.63: Period specific color trend (2005 onwards) of white and color simulation effects in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

3) Summary: main text color trends

Transitory color trends

No continuous transition exists for any of the color relationship characteristics that mostly appear according to the visual representation expressions of colors in independent time periods. However, only one color description characteristic of hue undergoes continuous change in the frequencies across the six time slots in the main text of shop signs across marketplaces in the city of Jaipur (Fig. 4.56).

Period specific color trends

Period specific color trends across marketplaces have been influenced mainly by popular telugu movie poster trends that depict the thematic title displays. These display styles emerged at the backdrop of popular themes in movies, certain socio-political conditions of the Telugu nation as well as arts-n-aesthetics developments in India in specific time periods. For

¹²⁰ Gradients are very useful for creating shading for three-dimensional and metallic effects. Refer: <http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/glossary/g/gradient.htm>

instance, during 1945-59 the theme of Indian mysticism embedded in the style of blue and green colors used in the Deccani paintings seems to influence the use of same hues in the main text of shop signs. The socio-realist themes of tollywood in those times also use the same hues as part of the film titles as well as the poster backgrounds (Fig. 4.57). In the period of 1960-74, the characteristic rural aspect at the backdrop of Andhra villages was explored in the color language of telugu movie posters. These colors have a marked influence on the use of a suggestive orange-red with white outlines in the main text of the shop signs belonging to the same time period. This color palette also connotes the aggressive and harsh times amidst the socio-political movements of Telangana as well as Jai Andhra that led to a lot of popular discontent and agitations in public sphere (Fig. 4.58).

In case of Hyderabad as the capital of Andhra Pradesh, visual styles in color use have become a unique vogue due to a strong collaboration of Telugu movements, politics and cinema to a higher degree during 1975-89. Tollywood movie protagonists like NTR, ANR and Chirenjeevi stood for Teluguattam of the Telugu linguistic harmony, well-known as part of Jai Andhra and Telangana movements. Hence, there is an aesthetic representation of the Telugu indigenous identity rather than a cultural propaganda of self-image by the Tamil star-politicians. Therefore, three colors of red, blue and green as the main colors in shop names and simultaneous tollywood movie titles represent a lingually unified teluguness in Hyderabad (Fig. 4.59 to 4.61).

On the other hand, with the relocation of tollywood to Hyderabad, an exploration of modern mixed themes to address the changing tastes of the post 1990s and late 20th century have been employed in the forms and colors of shop names. The new wave of branding, globalization and a consumerist approach in contemporary times echoes an idiom of universal expression that is most effectively envisaged in white. White is modern, versatile and gives an international appeal to a shop's brand identity (Fig. 4.62 and 4.63).

B) Secondary text color trends

Tag lines are not a permanent feature on a signboard. This is especially noticeable in the shop signs of Hyderabad wherein the main text occupies around eighty to ninety percent of the visual space on a sign panel. Taglines specifically serve as a promotional punch on the signboards and are in medium level prominence from 1930-44 till 1975-89 time periods for

General and Laad Bazaars only. Park lane road being the major large scale branded modern marketplace is a showcase of top brand showrooms and factory stores mostly. The names of the showrooms themselves are enough to complete the visual communication of the business identity. Therefore, Park lane shop signs have hardly any tag lines. With a few number of tag lines on the boards along with their fluctuating occurrence till only a group of time periods has led to a lack of transitory as well as period specific color trends in context of the limited data of shop signs in our research for Hyderabad city.

C) Background sign panel color trends

The background sign panels in our data show no transitory color trends in Hyderabad in the context of each and every sign panel that imbibes multiple hues, values, saturation, kinds and temperatures. In case of period specific trends, there are some affinities of color use and applications on the background sign panels that have been followed in the foreground main text as well. The detailed descriptions of period specific color trends in background sign panels are as follows:

Period specific color trends in the background sign panels

a) 1930-44, 45-59, 60-74 and 75-89, no period specific color trends occur

Unlike Jaipur, Mumbai and Chennai, no period specific trends are seen in 1930-44 and 1945-59 time slots for the background sign panels in the marketplaces of Hyderabad. We can give a few pointers towards a total absence of trends from pre-independence times till 1959, before the start of swinging sixties. We could gather following pointers explaining the urban identity, architecture and mood of Hyderabad as a princely state around those times as follows:

- In pre-independence times, there were a lot of migrations to the *anderun*, a persian word meaning inner city / the walled city of Hyderabad. In those times, city owed a lot of its development largely to the presence of the ruler and his nobles in the wake of heavy revenues extracted from peasantry, royalty and nobility (Deb, 1986:70). In the Nizam's rule from 30s till mid-40s, it was an era of a feudal city ruled by callous aristocratic objectives leading to apparently no self-generating, autonomous trade and economic structure within the walled city of Hyderabad.

- In our data, the first two marketplaces belong to the anderson city near the majestic architectural icon called Charminar. Therefore, in the time periods from 1930s till 1949 we see an incessant Islamic influence in structures other than shop fronts or boards, that are perhaps forgotten entities in the midst of harsh bureaucracy, anarchy and unfortunate unemployment leading to an absence of a local and autonomous trade and business network.
- 1949 onwards there was a dismantling of the feudal economic base. At the backdrop of introduction of Telugu as the official language of Andhra Pradesh, the remaining Telugu population lacked basic skills, education and linguistic knowledge for employment in the urban economy roughly before 1960 (Deb, 1986: 71).
- Similar to Chennai, the Hyderabad inner city presented an indigenous identity and experimental themes in the visual expressions of color combinations and their visual representation with other elements of form and shape. There is a strong influence from the traditional notions of visual display that have been a unique aspect of Hyderabad city.

Each of the following sections describes the material kinds present in the specific time period and their influence on color trends in modern day shop signs illustrated in the visual examples:

b) 1990-2004, popular theme and color trend

In the modern 1990s, liberalization and open economy wave led to great development and progress in trades, technology and commerce at a broader level in all cities of India. The development of print technology gave us a variety of color options and effects to mass-produce in a cost-effective manner saving time and labor.

The background sign panels across marketplaces in this period have primary hues of red, blue and yellow-orange mostly crafted in vinyl flex followed by a few examples of grey colored acrylic boards. Parallel to this, stylistic influence of tollywood movie poster backgrounds and vinyl LP covers can be seen (Fig. 4.64).



Fig. 4.64: Period specific color trend (1990-2004) of color production and materials of vinyl flex dark in the background sign panels, Hyderabad

c) 2005 onwards, popular theme and color trend

A kind of modern eclectic¹²¹ identity in color and its production using contemporary print and display solutions emerges in a variety of signboards of all large-scale showrooms and stores in the periods of 2005 onwards across marketplaces in the city of Hyderabad. The effects of globalization and a consumerist display mode to create brand identity have an active participation in channelizing the color and form styles as part of tollywood movie poster backgrounds as well as background sign panels of modern day large-scale business shops (Fig. 4.65). The contemporary popular themes of display design and commercial business style have been explained in detail for the main text in section A) of this analysis.

¹²¹ Deriving ideas, style, or taste from a broad and diverse range of sources. For instance, *He is very eclectic and his mix of abilities is so different from the common concept of an artist* (Oxford Dictionaries, 2014).

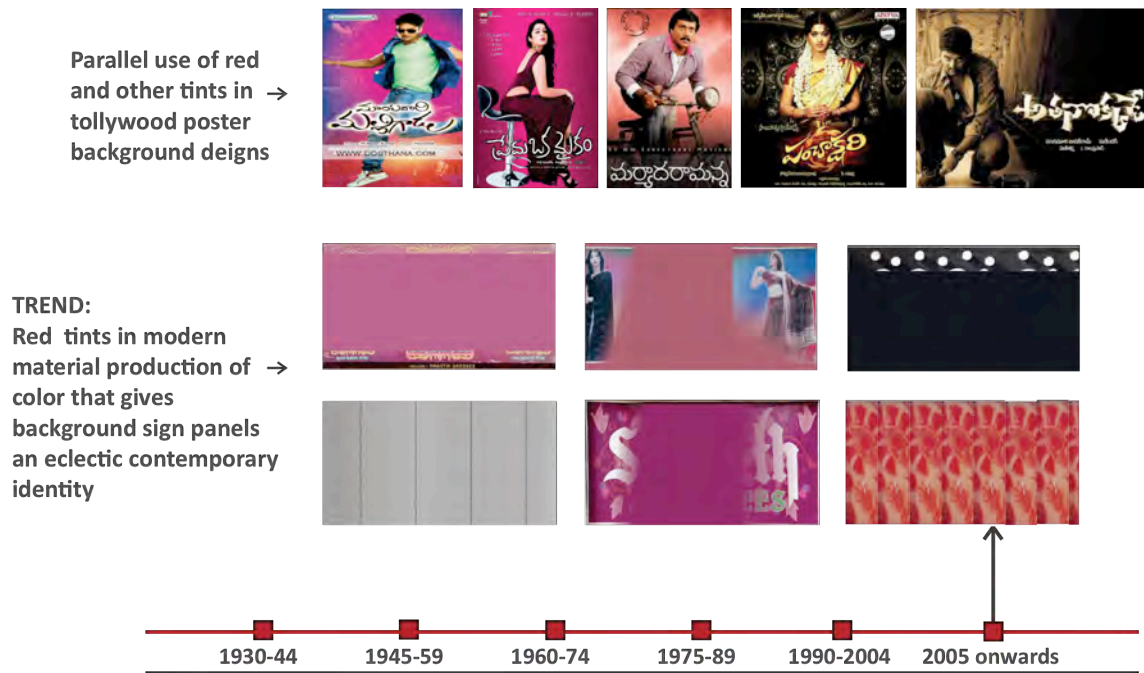


Fig. 4.65: Period specific color trend of vinyl flex based mostly dark and bright primary hue background sign panels across all marketplaces, Hyderabad

3) Summary: background sign panel color trends

Transitory color trends

Technically, the background sign panel carries the foreground main text and secondary text. As the base material of the sign panel changes, the texture and color choice gets largely affected. No transitory trend in the city of Hyderabad appears due to occurrence of multiple values and saturation grades together in each background sign panel in case of shop signs data for the city in our research.

Period specific color trends

In the case of period specific color trends across marketplaces in Hyderabad, no color trends appear for first four time periods from 1930-44 till 1975-89 mainly due to unfortunate feudal era of economic suppression through peasantry etc. in the times of anarchy as established since Nizam's rule in late 19th century. The traders took a lead in developing shop business of cloth, bangles, utensils etc. especially in the traditionally significant marketplaces around the Charminar. Therefore, this progression in trade and business identities in form of color display in shop names appear in the modern time periods.

In the modern times from 1990s till 2005 onwards, branding, consumerism, cyber-culture and related new contemporary likes and dislikes to create strong brand image and

associations for successful business and enterprise influence the form and color language of background sign panels. There is a mix of materials and color production techniques applied to the backgrounds that create innovative and distinct color display (Fig. 4.64 and 4.65).

4.2.2.3 Tendencies

A lot of impelling forces operating Hyderabad's shop signs are rooted in the Nizam garments, stone work characteristic of the Qutub Shahi style and certain effects of socio-political ambience in the erstwhile state of Hyderabad. There exists another extremity of ultra-modern material expressions that create character deviant visual language and a monotony in the modern shop signs in the city. The following sections outline the color tendencies as observed and analyzed in the foreground and background layers of information in the shop signs of Hyderabad:

A) Main text color tendencies

We see both general and distinct tendencies in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

The main text general color tendencies in the shop signs of Hyderabad are as follow:

a) Old shop signs have prominence of hand-painted followed by hand-crafted colors in the main text

A majority of the shop signs having this tendency are at the backdrop of colonial time period and post independence times in India till the mid-80s. The shop signs from marketplaces of General bazaar and Laad bazaar in particular belong to the inner city. The inner walled city area and its marketplaces, the street culture and social milieu in the very early time periods from 1930s till the early 50s sets apart itself from the rest of the city. This area was symbolic of urban decay, dilapidated structures, poor housing conditions and other urban environmental civic issues. In the context, Kamalakar and Deb (1986) express in their writings, "The city of Hyderabad was, then, primarily an administrative centre. It had no self-generating autonomously growing economic base and city growth was propelled by the exogenous factor of surplus extraction from rural fiefdoms".

In this scarcity of resources to avail materials alongside dearth of production processes, Hyderabad only harbored general stones of granite and lime mortar prominently as a business till 1947. The popular Islamic architecture of Charminar inlaid with a confluence of Muslim and *Deccani architectural*¹²² features in granite, sandstone and mortar also appear in other intermediate facades of shop fronts (Fig. 4.66 and 4.67). In the case of hand-painted main text in Hyderabad shop signs, we mostly see dark and medium intensity main texts mostly in burnt red-brown and bright red/ green hues displayed over off-white withered stone panel backgrounds – with or without the borders (Fig. 4.67).

Originally as the Hyderabad state, this city has been home to Stone Age materials and weapons belonging to 2000 B.C. that have been used during British colonial times in buildings and facades of marketplaces with full fervor. These buildings, facades and visual motifs were cultural manifestations in a sense that became instrumental in showing an imposed authority over the people by the Nizams and the governing British Raj. This impelling force somewhere influences the use of stone and mortar base panels with similar hues used to cover the boards and shop fronts. The earthy reds and browns hand-painted in the main text compliment the stone base and represent the material identity (Fig. 4.66 and 4.67).

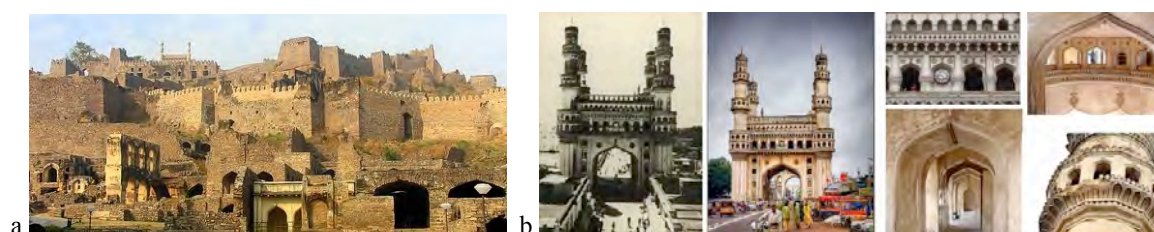


Fig. 4.66: a. Golconda Fort with Islamic architecture made in brick and lime mortar, b. Charminar of the city
Anderun / inner walled city displaying Qutub Shahi princely styles, Hyderabad

¹²² “There is a fundamental difference between Islamic Architecture in northern India and in the Deccan which includes the Qutb Shahi style. The links of Deccani kingdoms were very close and the great fortress cities of Golconda and Gulbarga.” Refer: http://www.aponline.gov.in/quick%20links/HIST-CULT/architecture_qut.html



Fig. 4.67: Hand-painted and crafted production general color tendency in the main text of old shop signs, Hyderabad

b) Modern shop signs have equal dominance of handcrafted and digital color production in the main text

The new face of shop signs came into being at the backdrop of various new developments in modern twin city of Hyderabad-Secunderabad with an upsurge of IT and electronics and formation of HITEC City¹²³. Between 1970-80, the character of multi-storey commercial plazas envisaged very artificial sense of commercial identifications. The ultra-modern acrylic¹²⁴ panels have been extensively used in the main text as well as in the backgrounds of the modern sign panels of the street marketplaces as well as commercial complexes. Materials used are acrylic and good quality aluminum to craft the main text letterforms in contemporary styles (Fig. 4.68 and 4.69). Along with the new HITEC status of Hyderabad and the related inventions, there is also an emergence of a *character deviant expression*¹²⁵ in the wake of sameness in the visual language and appeal of attributes and their design grammar as displayed on the modern shop signs. For instance, in the visual examples of shop names in the Telugu and Latin scripts that are in 3D acrylic forms or digitally produced letterforms merge and unify as facilitated by similar material make. This leads to a visual monotony in the styles of two otherwise distinct scripts or forms of writing in India. Shop names as illustrated use

¹²³ The major township of Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy City (HITEC city) – a visionary project developed by Larsen and Tubro Limited; that caters to all small and medium IT services and enterprises. As a part of this, the first IT Block ‘Medha’ was inaugurated in 2010 by K. Rosaiah, CM of Andhra Pradesh. Refer: <http://www.ltinforcity.com/>

¹²⁴ To present a more conceptual view regarding acrylic it has been shared that acrylic is used to “give distinctions to your signs....making them modern (Treu, 2012).

¹²⁵ By character deviant expression, we indicate towards a kind of situational character (that deviates from local character) in context of modern day display in the realm of mass-produced digitized culture.

silvery grey and white that echo a typical modern contemporary display design approach in commercial context of outdoor signboards (Fig. 4.69).



Fig. 4.68: Character deviant expressions in modern shop names, Hyderabad

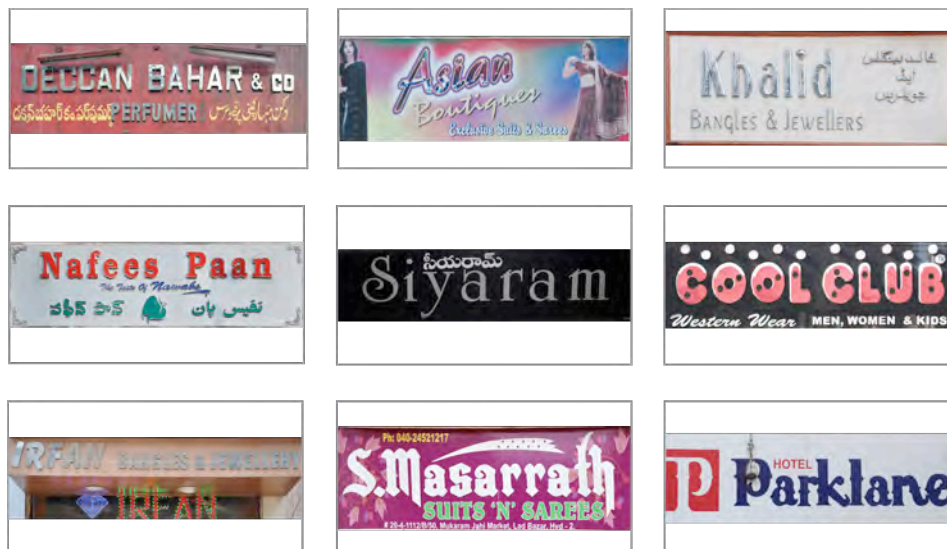


Fig. 4.69: Hand-crafted and Digital production in general color tendency in the main text of modern shop signs, Hyderabad

2) Distinct color tendencies

The following color tendencies are common in two marketplaces of Laad bazaar and Parklane road marketplace in Hyderabad:

a) Silver color in main text of jewellery and fashion modern brands

Hyderabad is very well known as a city of pearls and the largest state in the southern part of India. The city acquired this moniker due to its generous benefaction by the Nizams who ruled the city for about 200 years. The wealthy lifestyles of the Nizams attracted scores of gem traders and jewelers from all over the world, particularly those from the Middle East, who offered pearls to the Nizams at unbelievable rates (Fig. 4.70). Typical Hyderabad

jewellery sets use pearls called satlads that are made out of seven strands of pearls and precious stones, Kundan sets, lacchas, rassi, chokers, chatai sets and Tanmani. These are available in all big jewellery houses across the city¹²⁶. The silver or silvery white of the pearls¹²⁷ and other famous diamond jewellery in Hyderabad connotes and celebrates the luxurious and wealthy repertoire of the brands of jewellery business promoted in the city of erstwhile classic Nizams (Fig. 4.70). In the Hyderabad context, nothing is less than three generations old-gold dinner service, seven rows of Basra pearls or *mehmaan nawaazi* or hospitality that is almost a trademark. The purity of silver white, its lustre and reflective quality subtly depicts this old world charm, longevity, test of time and heritage value associated with this color, silverfish pearls and diamond jewellery accessories and artifacts of Hyderabad. This communication regulates the tendency of using silver color in shop names of specifically modern jewellery and fashion branded accessories and clothing available as contemporary business brands for public of Hyderabad in modern times (Fig. 4.71).

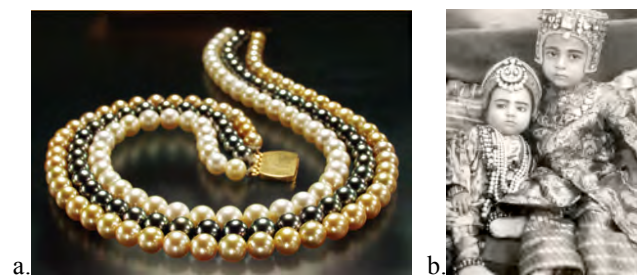


Fig. 4.70: a. White Pearls, b. Sahebzada Salabath Jah & Sahebzadi Ahmed Unnisa, son and daughter of The Nizam VI, circa. 1910



Fig. 4.71: Silver hue distinct color tendency in the main text of modern shop signs, Hyderabad

¹²⁶ Considered auspicious for women, it also accentuates their feminine beauty, especially the jewellery in silver. There was a lot of European influence and men competed with women in wearing exquisite pearl and silver jewellery in Hyderabad those days. These men and women belonging to Secunderabad presented a superiority as a counter contrast to the old world charm of the Mughalai Hyderabad (Sarma, 2008)

¹²⁷ White Pearls and Silver jewellery signifies power, wealth, status of modern day brands grounded since the old Nizam culture to the new face of cosmopolitan culture of Hyderabad.

3) Summary: main text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The foreground main text shows those general color tendencies that elaborate the rationale of using different color production techniques for old and modern shop signs. In this context, the first tendency of co-existence of equal number of hand-painted and hand-crafted shop names in old shop signs occurs mainly because of the material based identities, architectural styles and materials used in the facades of buildings and shop fronts of the erstwhile times (Fig. 4.66 and 4.67).

An opposite tendency exists in the present scenario of contemporary boom effect of IT in the HITEC city with corporate business culture. The names of modern shops of present times have strong influence of this impelling force in terms of contemporary identity styles, template culture of a single visual language use in most ultra-modern materials like acrylic (Fig. 4.68 and 4.69).

Distinct color tendencies

Among all marketplaces, Laad bazaar and Park Lane road marketplace in the city of Hyderabad share distinct color tendencies. Certain impelling forces such as the traditional use of silver in jewellery by the Nizams in Hyderabad is seen as a historical and heritage related causal influence that guides the color communication of name identifications in shop signs as a tendency common across these two marketplaces (Fig. 4.70 and 4.71).

B) Secondary text color tendencies

There are hardly any tag lines in the shops signs in Hyderabad. The main text is the main information based meaning operator that represents the shop business as a whole. Therefore, no distinct tendencies appear in tag lines since wherever they appear on signs they are mainly as an extension of information provided by the shop names. Perhaps, this seems to be one of the reasons that we see only general tendencies in the secondary text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) Old shop signs have prominently hand-painted colors in the secondary texts

Hyderabad's old world charm is a persistent impelling force that till date guides the visual language and representation of design attributes in its built structures, facades, fronts and boards as part of inner city streetscapes and marketplaces (Fig. 4.72). The tag lines of the

illustrated old shop signs are only hand-painted in mostly primary colors with a few examples in black secondary texts displayed over white or light background sign panels (Fig. 4.73). Unlike the main text, no handcrafted treatment in colors exists for secondary texts of same old shop signs in the city of Hyderabad.



Fig. 4.72: a. and b. Old world charm and respective identity markers of the erstwhile Hyderabad state, c. Lime mortar material in Charminar with same material identity, Old Hyderabad city



Fig. 4.73: Hand painted production general color tendency in the tag lines of old shop signs, Hyderabad

b) Modern shop signs have prominently equal handcrafted and painted secondary texts

Modern material revolution with the introduction of acrylic and other digital production is a generic template seen in all modern day shop signs irrespective of the kind of city they belong to. This general tendency is rooted in the context of modern technology and the twenty first century digital revolution.

However, there are slight variations in the case of this color production tendency in modern shop signs for the city of Hyderabad. Here, along with the modern digital look of colors, there are also examples of handcrafted tag lines in few shop sign panels that apply modern materials to craft the letterforms in the texts (Fig. 4.74). This tendency is similar to the general tendency of secondary texts in modern shop signs across marketplaces.



Fig. 4.74: Hand-crafted and digital production general color tendency in the tag lines of modern shop signs, Hyderabad

2) Distinct color tendencies

None exist for the secondary text of shop signs in the marketplaces of Hyderabad. In this city, shop names dominate and capture 80-90 percent of the space on signboards.

3) Summary: secondary text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The secondary text shows same general color tendencies for old and modern shop signs across all marketplaces in Hyderabad for the characteristic of color production only (Fig. 4.72 to 4.74) as summarized for the main text of the same shop signs (refer the overall summary of main text general color tendencies).

Distinct color tendencies

They do not appear in the secondary text in shop signs across marketplaces in Hyderabad.

C) Background sign panel color tendencies

We see general tendencies in the background sign panel colors of shop signs shared between two marketplaces of Hyderabad as follows:

1) General color tendencies

Dull warm grey background sign panels with blue or brown borders in shop signs

The yellow tone in the stone panels here has a lime mortar base, a material popular in the Qutub Shahi style architectural buildings and facades (Fig. 4.72c). This particular general

tendency exists for all other cities in the respective shop sign backgrounds too. Comparatively, in the city of Hyderabad this tendency is part of very less number of background sign panels and the white main background is a withered yellow white for most sign panels (Fig. 4.75).

The same social and aesthetic underpinnings guide the arrangement of white and blue borders in background sign panels in all the cities. For detailed description of these underpinnings refer to ‘General color tendencies’ in part C) of 4.2.1.3 section describing the color tendency analysis for the pink city of India.



Fig. 4.75: Dull warm grey sign panels with brown/blue borders general color tendency, Hyderabad

2) Distinct color tendencies

Yellow in background sign panels of old shops

The characteristic lime mortar and granite stone that communicates the princely identity of the Hyderabad state has a historical context of yellow color semantics that governs its use in the city building facades and shops (Fig. 4.72c).

The yellow color signifies Hyderabad city’s stone identification and vintage lifestyle, tastes and old world charm conception of the ancient times in this city. This color is of high value for the locals of Hyderabad and other prominent cities in Andhra Pradesh. This color has not faded with the trials of time and stands alone as the most innovatively applied and dominating hue especially in erstwhile architectural styles of India such as the Islamic architecture of the city of Hyderabad (Fig. 4.76).

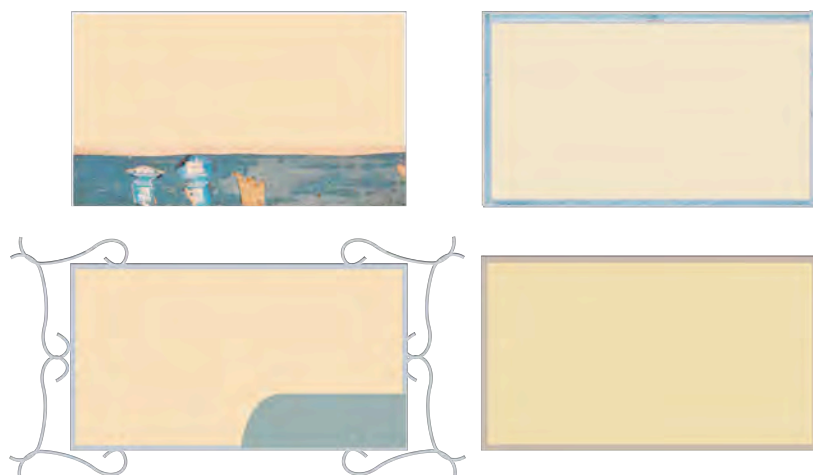


Fig. 4.76: Yellow background sign panels distinct color tendency of old shop signs, Hyderabad

3) **Summary: background sign panel color tendencies**

General color tendencies

In the general tendency for background sign panels across all three marketplaces in Hyderabad, the rationale behind the occurrence of withered yellow and off white panels with blue or brown borders is rooted in a national historical context (Fig. 4.75). This tendency also exists for all other cities as well. The underpinnings and their detailed descriptions for this inter-city general tendency of background sign panels is there in part C) of section 4.2.1.3 on Jaipur city color tendencies.

Distinct color tendency

In Hyderabad, we find a distinct tendency of using pale yellow color in background sign panels that replicates the characteristic lime mortar material's yellow hue used in the city's old architectural buildings, their facades and monuments (Fig. 4.76).

4.2.2.4 Conventions

The established and generally accepted conventions of colors and their use in the shop signs of Hyderabad are as follows:

A) Main text color conventions

We see main text color conventions across all marketplaces in Hyderabad city in context of history and business meanings of colors as follows:

1) Color conventions in the historical context

a) Green color use in the main text

The traditional use of green in prominently urdu or arabic scripts can be seen in the main text of shop signs across marketplaces in Hyderabad. In this context, different values of Green¹²⁸ have been used in the translated names of shop identifications in Urdu or Arabic scripts. We have highlighted these names within a yellow box in the illustrated examples (Fig. 4.77 and 4.78).



Fig. 4.77: Green is the sacred color of Islam and is a sign of respect and veneration and in the Muslim world Green signifies the Prophet Muhammad



Fig. 4.78: Green color in Urdu script historical convention in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

b) Deep vermilion and blackened vermilion in main text of shop signs

By convention, vermilion has played an instrumental role in the customs and beliefs in India, as already explained in the main text conventions in Jaipur shop signs in the section 4.2.1.4. Similarly, mythic and Godly names have been displayed in the vermilion candor in the shop names of signs from the oldest General bazaar of Northern Secunderabad-Hyderabad. This cultural code is rooted in the historical heritage of our mythology. For instance, names ‘Ganga’, ‘Shatrughan’, ‘Gopi’, ‘Gurus’ and ‘Laxmi’ are in vermilion as part of the shop names (Fig. 4.79).

¹²⁸ ‘Green’ means ‘paradise’ in the Muslim belief system is full of greenery, lush vegetation and so on. (Downs, 2013; Espotio, 1999). Green shades signify Islamic beliefs and values (Downs, 2013; Surah Al-Insan, 76: 21).



Fig. 4.79: Vermilion in the mythic words historical convention in the main text of shop signs, Hyderabad

Vermilion comes from the mineral cinnabar, an ore of mercury. Gradually, its use saw a downfall since it blackens with time by reacting with the hydrogen sulphides present in the air. A little blackened painted red is visible in shop names displayed on only iron base old sign panels across all marketplaces. Indirectly, the connection seems to be with the weathering of vermilion in the painted names of signs from specifically these two time slots (Fig. 4.80).



Fig. 4.80: Blackened vermilion hue in the main text of old shop signs, Hyderabad

2) Color conventions in business context

a) Everyday service shops use blue color in the main text

Blue is a very general color choice for small size old business shops¹²⁹. The same convention appears in the main text business context based conventions for the city of Jaipur (section 4.2.1.4).

Use of blue in shop names conveys grounded candor, well-established trust and security associated with the shop's business or service. Here, this blue is used for local product brands, service shops and a craftsman's store (Fig. 4.81).

¹²⁹ Blue and green create an illusion of an enlarged window. In the context, use of blue names on lighter panels adds visual impact (Visual Merchandising, NCRCD, 1991).

silver, silvery-whites and silver-grey in the big brands of premium and luxury based shop signs in the marketplace of Parklane road (Fig. 4.83).



Fig. 4.83: Silver and silvery whites business convention in main text of modern shop signs, Hyderabad

3) **Summary: main text color conventions**

Color conventions in the historical context

Green in Urdu or Arabic shop names across marketplaces in Hyderabad is rooted in a well-known historical and cultural heritage related with display of this hue as part of both the scripts (Fig. 4.77 and 4.78). In the second convention, names of Gods and Goddesses are used as part words in the shop names that enhance vermilion's expression and inherent meaning of words with respect to Indian mythology. This convention is common to similar shop names in marketplaces from both traditional cities of Hyderabad (Fig. 4.79 and 4.80) and Jaipur (section 4.2.1.4). Therefore, this color convention presents a meaningful form-content visual relationship. Additionally, the painted Vermilion projects the blackened face on iron base of old sign panels (Fig. 4.80). This property of vermilion occurs due to its constant reaction with sulphide concentration in the air and is visible here in those signboards that have been exposed to atmosphere since a long time. This concentration is prominent in traffic congested areas such as the old marketplaces in a city.

Color conventions in the business context

Few business context based color conventions appear in large business scale marketplace of Parklane road. This is probably because the modern color palette is becoming more and more commercially oriented. In the context, red and blue shop names have different communication meanings and symbolism in context of the kind of business promoted. The two specific hues of blue and red for specific business shops present a lifestyle oriented and

economically based identities of color meanings respectively (Fig. 4.81 and 4.82). Like-wise, premium, high quality silver jewellery and fashion shops use silver color that connects well with female energy, contemporary taste, longevity and precious values associated with silver since ages in the context of India (Fig. 4.83).

B) Secondary text color conventions

None from historical or business context exist for the city of Hyderabad. The reasons can be referred in the color conventions of Jaipur city.

C) Background sign panel color conventions

We do not see any color conventions from either historical or business perspectives in background sign panels of the shop signs in the city of Hyderabad. They may be absent in some cities due to lack of images of such shop signs in our limited data.

4.2.3 Mumbai

Mumbai presents a multidimensional approach in terms of color choices, their grades of occurrence in color characteristic small patterns such as hue, kinds, combinations, hierarchy etc. Because of the city's cosmopolitan identity, the shop signs color palette reflects the use of a variety of syntax styles, arrangements and color moods. There is a fusion of opposing techniques of display in old as well as modern shop signs in the marketplaces. The structure of the city of Mumbai with its visual cultural forms such as shop signboards displays the taste of the local Mumbaikar's choice as well as the different preferences of its increasing urban population. Author and renowned sociologist Sujata Patel notes that Mumbai not only functioned as a facilitator in the colonial expansion of western India, it also laid the foundation for a national commerce based domestic market¹³¹. The city's ascendancy was furthermore attributed to its inherent cosmopolitan ethos that ensured both adaptability and a proclivity for new challenges¹³². Likewise, the shop sign color patterns exhibit all these requisites of Mumbai being the most cosmopolitan urban metropolis.

The complete color analysis of all the three information layers of the main text, secondary text and background sign panels in the three selected marketplaces in Mumbai has

¹³¹ Sujata Patel, "Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, politics, and populism," in *Bombay and Mumbai: The City in Transition*, ed. Sujata Patel and Jim Masselos (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp 3–30.

¹³² Claude Markovits, "Bombay as a business centre in the colonial period: A comparison with Calcutta," in *Bombay: Metaphor for Modern India*, ed. Sujata Patel and Alice Thorner (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp 26–46.

led to the insights about the kind of patterns used, the popular trends that change across time periods, the unique city or market specific impelling forces i.e. tendencies in the colors used and lastly, the conventions of color display in the shop signs.

4.2.3.1 Patterns

A) Main text color patterns

Following main text patterns showcase visual examples of Abdul Rehman street, Dadar road marketplace and Mohammad Ali road shop signs arranged from the left to right as follows:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.56 to 4.60 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples			Business size
i) White				Modern hi-end big size fashion garment showrooms
ii) Blue				Medium sized modern furniture stores, garment store, perfumery store and a modern cafe
iii) Red				Medium size modern stores
iv) Black				Modern big size fashion / accessory brand stores

Table 4.56: Color Hue patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

b) Value patterns	Examples			Business size
i) High value in yellow				Old small size shops, medium size brand stores and big size modern showroom and a hotel
ii) Medium value in red, orange and green				Medium size old local stores and big size modern store and a showroom

iii) Low value can be seen in dark blue, black and dark maroon red	  	Medium size modern stores and big size modern showrooms
	  	

Table 4.57: Color Value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

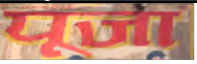
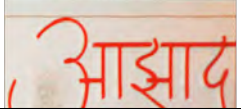
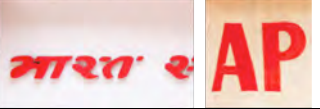
c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in red color shop names and a reddish pink	  	Medium and big size old shops and modern stores respectively
ii) Medium saturation in golden yellow	 	Big size modern stores and showrooms
iii) Dull saturation in blue	  	Small size old shops, medium size local product stores and big size modern stores

Table 4.58: Color Saturation patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red, orange and yellow	  	Medium size old stores, medium size new stores and big size modern restaurant and sweet shop
ii) Cool: blue and blue-green	  	Mostly medium size modern stores and two examples of big size modern showrooms
iii) Warm and cool: red and blue	  	Small size old general store and local items shops
iv) Neutral: grey, brown	  	Three small and medium size old shops and three medium sized modern stores

Table 4.59: Color Temperature patterns in the main text of shop signs across, Mumbai

e) Kind patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red, yellow and blue	  	Medium size old and modern service shops and a big size restaurant
ii) Secondary kind in green and orange	  	Old small size café and two medium sized modern stores

Table 4.60: Color Kind patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.61 to 4.65 as follows:

a) Combinations	Examples	Business size
i) Red and black		Old size small stores and medium size modern stores and a showroom
ii) Red or orange-red and blue		Small size old local shops

Table 4.61: Color Combination patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

b) Hierarchy	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: Red to blue, Red to yellow		Seen in medium size business local café and item stores.
ii) Primary to white: Red to white		Small size old cafes and a parlor

Table 4.62: Color Hierarchy patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

c) Contrast	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast – white shop names against dark backgrounds		Big size modern fashion brand showrooms
ii) High contrast – black shop names against light backgrounds		Medium size old shops and a big size modern local brand store
iii) Cold-warm contrast: red and blue		Small size old local general shop and two medium size local stores

Table 4.63: Color Contrast patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

d) Effect patterns	Examples	Business size
Color attraction – i) Highlight effect - This pattern is the use of lighter color drop-shadows (yellow, white and light blue drop shadows below). ii) Highlight effect - This pattern is the use of warm/primary colors with black drop shadow (yellows and reds with bold black drop shadows).	 	Small size old general store and two local service stores Big size modern stores and a hotel

Table 4.64: Color Effect patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

d) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary red, yellow and blue	  	Small size old shops and a medium size old local items store
ii) Polychromatic color scheme only in Abdul Rehman street	 	Modern big size store

Table 4.65 Color Scheme patterns in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

3) **Summary: main text color patterns**

Following visual relationships emerge with different objectives of display in similar as well as distinct business size shop signs:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

The following text gives identified visual relationships in color description patterns as follows:

For color hue patterns in the main text, the choice of white and black may or may not be based on the colors of the background sign panels. These patterns appear in single grade only. The purpose might be to give visual impact to the main text as against the backgrounds (Fig. 4.84).



Fig. 4.84: White shop names against dark colored panels in large-scale business shop signs, Mumbai

- The second objective in some sign designs is to merge the content with the background or amplify it visually by using high contrast. This has been visually established by the placement of colors in context¹³³ that is an established practice in color perception as part of color theory. According to such placements, the color black appears brighter for Pioneer Leathers against white while dull against a dark red board for Platinum jewellers showroom (Fig. 4.85).



Fig. 4.85: Black shop names with hue-contrast relationship in similar business size shops, Mumbai

¹³³ Colors together behave in relation to other colors and shapes is a complex area of color theory. Refer: <http://www.colormatters.com/color-and-design/basic-color-theory>

For color temperature and kinds characteristics of the main text the patterns appear in mixed grades for similar business shops. However, for saturation characteristic there occurs mixed grade too for similar business size shops.

- Likewise, color temperature pattern for old and small size business shops appears in mixed grade of warm and cool temperature in specifically red and blue combination in shop names (Fig. 4.86). In this example there is a visual relationship between hue combination, temperature and value. This relationship unifies color description characteristic of temperature with color relationship characteristics of combination and hierarchy.



Fig. 4.86: Color temperature-hue combination-hierarchy relationship in similar business size shop signs, Mumbai

- *All color relationship characteristics like color hierarchy, contrast, effect as well as scheme has patterns that use single as well as mixed grades for similar size business shops. We illustrate the figure showing primary to white hierarchy in shop names. In case of both hierarchy (Fig. 4.87) and contrast pattern in mixed grades (Fig. 4.89), the purpose seems to be to give visual harmony¹³⁴ and visual impact respectively. Primary color red to white hierarchy has medium to bright saturation and red and white color combination that represents a visual relationship in shop signs across marketplaces (Fig. 4.88).*



Fig. 4.87: Color hierarchy-saturation-hues and combination relationship in similar size business shop signs, Mumbai

- *High contrast is there in white shop names against dark backgrounds shared between all big size modern fashion brand showrooms (Fig. 4.88)*



Fig. 4.88: Color contrast in main text hue-value-saturation rhythm for similar size shop signs

¹³⁴ It has been observed in case of color, that by strategy of mixing applied colors help build an organization that is a consistent system of selected color hues, visually providing an emphasis to accentuate hierarchy (White, 2011).

In case of color attraction effect of highlight we see two variations for two different sets of similar business size shop signs (Fig. 4.89 and 4.90 illustrated below).

The first effect pattern is the use of lighter color drop-shadows, such as yellow, white and light blue drop shadows below. The colors are closer in value too with white color having slight higher value than similar high values of yellow and light blue (Fig. 4.89). This visual relationship of similar value and effect of three different hues for similar size business shop signs animates the main text by making it more visually dynamic¹³⁵



Fig. 4.89: Color contrast in main text with hue-value-saturation relationship for similar size shop signs, Mumbai

The second effect pattern uses warm/primary colors with black drop shadow. The primary color acts as an accent with more brightness than the black drop-shadow. This again animates the main text outlines by giving them more visual solidity¹³⁶ in the form of a bold black casing style provided by the drop-shadows (Fig. 4.90).



Fig. 4.90: Color contrast in main text with hue-value-saturation relationship for similar size shop signs, Mumbai

Visual relationships in distinct business size shops

Both single and mixed grade patterns in saturation and value characteristics appear for distinct business size shops. We illustrate both grades in the value characteristic in Fig. 4.91 and 4.92.

- Medium value single grade appears for hues red, orange and green in distinct business size stores of medium size and a modern, big size showroom (Fig. 4.91).

¹³⁵ With the aid of a colored drop shadow, a movement is created along the edges of the letterforms of the main text. This creates a dynamism through a movement. Seeing a color means “to see the action of this color, as well as to see the effect of relations between colors” (Albers, 1963:5)

¹³⁶ Color black is well known to give a sense of commanding quality (solidity) to the forms. Refer: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/color/>



Fig. 4.91: Medium value in orange, green, blue shop names of Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai

- *Color contrast of single grade of black main text over very light background panels in distinct business size shops creates a visual impact as well as dominance as compared to other shop signs (Fig. 4.92).*



Fig. 4.92: Color hierarchy of primary to primary color order of distinct business size shop signs, Mumbai

B) Secondary text color patterns

Following secondary text patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Abdul Rehman street, Dadar road market and Mohammad Ali road shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples with secondary text highlighted inside the yellow frames:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.66 to 4.70 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples			Business size
i) White				Small size old local service stores and a big size modern store
ii) Black				Modern big size stores and a medium size local items shops

Table 4.66: Color Hue patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

b) Value patterns	Examples			Business size
i) Medium value for red, maroon and green				Medium size modern business shops
ii) Low value is seen for blue				Small size old local shops and a modern brand store

Table 4.67: Color Value patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in red and green	  	Small size old local shop and big size modern restaurant and a showroom
ii) Dull saturation in blue	  	Small size old local shops and a medium size modern store

Table 4.68: Color Saturation patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red	  	Medium size old shops and a large size modern service store
ii) Cool: blue and green	     	Small size old shops and medium size modern store
iii) Cool and warm: blue/green and red	  	Small size old local shops and a store

Table 4.69: Color Temperature patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and blue	  	Small size old shops and a medium size modern store
ii) Primary and secondary color combination in red and green	 	Small size old shop and a big size modern clinic

Table 4.70: Color Kinds patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.71 to 4.73 as follows:

a) Combination pattern	Example	Business size
ii) Red and blue with white outlines	  	Exists for two small size old local stores and a big size modern cafe

Table 4.71: Color Combination pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

c) Contrast pattern	Example	Business size
i) Cold-warm contrast is seen for blue, red and green and red		Small size old shops and a medium size modern local brand item store

Table 4.72: Color Contrast pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

e) Scheme	Example	Business size
Complimentary scheme: red-green		Medium size old local travel agency and a big size modern store

Table 4.73: Color Scheme pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Mumbai

3) **Summary: secondary text color patterns**

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- *Color hue and saturation patterns appear only in single grade for similar size business shop signs. Color value too presents a similar relationship (Fig. 4.93).*

The purpose for single grade of medium value in red and green colored tag lines in all local medium size shops might be to amplify the shop names prominently. Therefore, the colors with high value of red and green may have been chosen (Fig. 4.93).



Fig. 4.94: Value-red or green hues-saturation relationship in similar business size shop signs, Mumbai

- *In case of color temperature patterns, mixed grades specifically appear for similar size business shop signs. Cool and warm temperature in mixed grade for similar size shops might have a purpose to create a visual balance along with a simultaneous contrast especially in the cool and warm combination of green and red respectively. This also helps in creating an order of importance in the content depending on the cool or warm hue in the mixed temperature grade (Fig. 4.94).*



Fig. 4.94: Temperature in mixed grade with combination-temperature-hues relationship in similar business size shop signs, Mumbai

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

Color description patterns of hue, value, saturation and temperature appear in single grades only for distinct business size shop signs. However, it is only in the case of color kinds pattern that both single as well as mixed grades appear for distinct business size shop signs. We have illustrated a few examples of these pattern relationships below (Fig. 4.95 to 4.96).

- The purpose behind the *single grade of bright saturation of red and green* color tag lines seem to be strong persuasion and visibility¹³⁷ amidst other taglines in mostly blue, white and black (Fig. 4.95). There's another relationship of a high contrast of red tag line against off-white sign panel backgrounds.



Fig. 4.95: Medium saturation-red/green hues-high contrast relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Mumbai

- The *single grade of primary colors in red and blue* have two different saturation levels in distinct size business shop signs. The purpose may be to endow different information in the two different hues. The two primary colors (single grade) in mixed values have a visual relationship (Fig. 4.96).

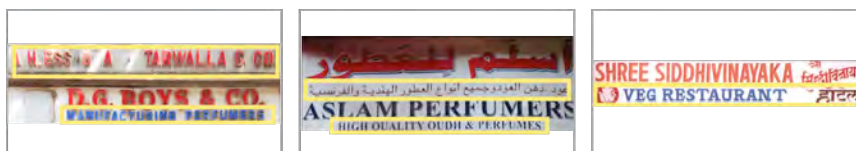


Fig. 4.96: Primary red, blue single grade pattern with color kinds-values relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Mumbai

C) Background sign panel color patterns

Following patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Abdul Rehman street, Dadar road marketplace and Mohammad Ali road shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples of background sign panels:

¹³⁷ Sometimes it is advisable, 'not to force the eye to have to constantly contend with and process dominant colors. Instead, give yourself the option of using strong colors to highlight and draw attention to the data layer' (Kirk, 2012). In our case, secondary text /tag line is the data layer of information display on the particular shop signs (Fig. 5.81 above). Refer: <http://www.visualisingdata.com/docs/ExtractFromDataVisualization-ASuccessfulDesignProcess%5BUseofColour%5D.pdf>

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.76 to 4.80 as follows:

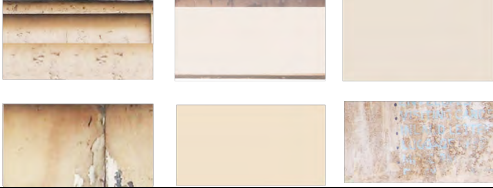
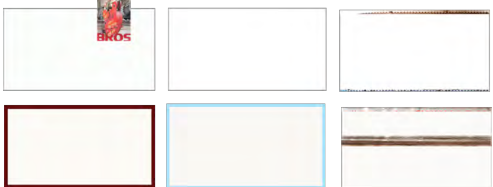
a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Withered yellow stone		Seen in both old and small size stores and medium size modern local stores
ii) White hand-painted		Seen in mostly old local service and items shops

Table 4.74: Color Hue patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in light greens and a medium pink		Medium size modern stores and a big size modern jewellery store
ii) Medium values in blue shades and a pale green		Seen in both old and small size stores and a medium size old local store

Table 4.75: Color Value patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow-orange and deep orange		Medium size old local brand shops and a big size modern restaurant
ii) Medium saturation in greens and a yellow		Seen in both small old café and a medium size modern arms service store. Also seen in a modern big size gifts showroom.

Table 4.76: Color Saturation patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: yellow-orange and deep orange		Medium size old local brand shops and a big size modern restaurant

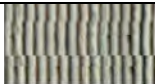
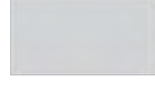
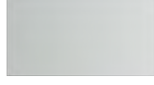
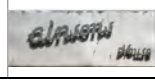
ii) Cool: blue shades and a pale green	     	Seen in both old and small size stores and a medium size old local store
iii) Neutral: grey tones	     	Seen in medium size modern stores and a big size modern jewellery showroom

Table 4.77: Color Temperature patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

e) Kinds patterns	Examples			Business size
i) Primary: red and golden yellows	     	Seen in medium size modern store, and old medium size local items shop and a big size modern perfumery store		
ii) Secondary: orange and green	     	Exists for two medium size modern local items stores and a big size modern restaurant		

Table 4.78: Color Kinds patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

2) Color relationship patterns

There are only two patterns for contrast and effects among the color relationship characteristics.

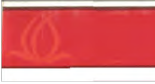
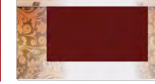
c) Contrast patterns	Examples			Business size
High contrast: Appears in red-white combination in panels Appears in off-white panels	         	Seen in big size brand stores and a jewellery brand showroom Seen in medium size local arms store and a big size modern local furniture brand store.		
ii) Cold-warm contrast	     	Exists for red-yellow-green, green-blue and yellow-green background panel cold-warm contrasts		

Table 4.79: Color Contrast patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

e) Scheme patterns	Examples			Business size
i) Adjacent color scheme in green-yellow, red-yellow and light blue-darker blue				Old small size local shops and a big size modern furniture showroom
				
ii) Monochromatic color scheme in grey, yellow and whitish and light grey tints and shades				One old small size local shop and two big size modern store and an accessory showroom
				

Table 4.80: Color Scheme patterns in the background sign panels, Mumbai

3) **Summary: background sign panel color patterns**

Visual Relationships in similar business size shop signs

In color description characteristics, only color hue patterns have visual relationships appearing in only single grade for background sign panel color syntax. We illustrate these in the given visual examples (Fig. 4.97 and 4.98). Rest all other characteristics have patterns and respective relationships that do not exist for similar business size shop signs.

- *White and withered off-white boards in a single grade color hue pattern appear for similar size business shop signs (Fig. 4.97).*

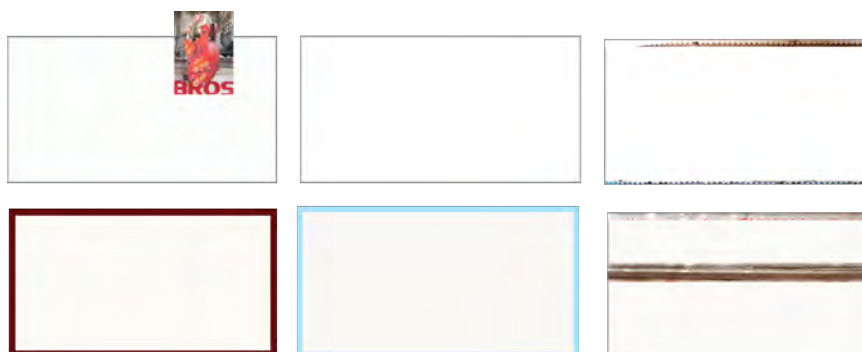


Fig. 4.97: Light off-white or white boards in all medium size old business shop signs, Mumbai

In color relationship characteristics, only contrast and scheme patterns appear in similar business size shop signs in mixed grades alone. No color combination, hierarchy and effect patterns in any grade for similar business size shop signs exist.

- *Color combination pattern example illustrated appears in mixed grade for similar business size shop signs (Fig. 4.98). This relationship pattern shares a visual relationship with colors, respective saturation and temperatures for the two separate hues.*



Fig. 4.98: Red-white combination-same hues-values-temperature relationship in mixed grade for similar big size modern stores in Dadar marketplace, Mumbai

Visual Relationships in distinct business size shop signs

In color description characteristics, hue, value, saturation patterns have visual relationships appearing in both single and mixed grade for background sign panel color syntax. Only, color kinds have a mixed grade pattern for distinct business size shop signs. We illustrate a few of these pattern relationships in the given visual examples (Fig. 4.99 and 4.100).

- *The color yellow in stone shares a visual relationship with value in single grade for distinct business size shop signs. Illustrated is the example of yellow colored stone panels for two very small size old shops and a medium size old store (Fig. 4.99).*

There is no special purpose of color choice here. It is the most generic way of having stone panels in light colors to visually amplify the main text of old shop signboards.

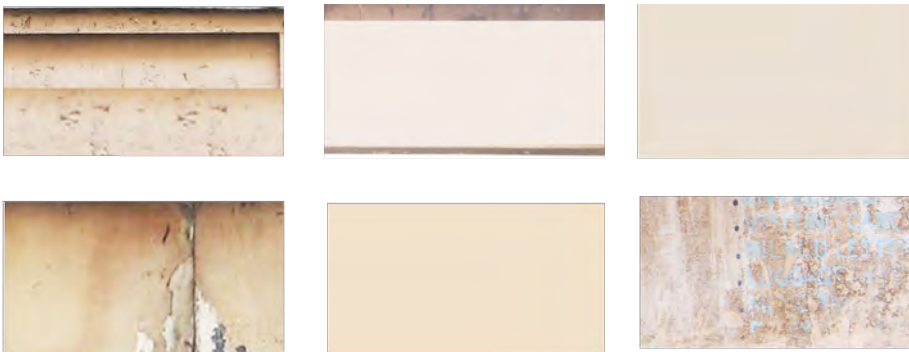


Fig. 4.99: Single grade withered yellow stone panels-value-distinct business size relationships, Mumbai

- *The visual relationship is between single grade of saturation with the mixed grade of color hues used in the sign panels of distinct business size. In the single grade of color saturation pattern, the illustrated example shows use of medium grade of saturation in two*

colors of green and yellow (Fig. 4.100). This is to create a medium level, muted vividness¹³⁸ in the color panels of distinct business size shop signs.



Fig. 4.100: Medium saturation in green and yellow in distinct size business shop signs, Mumbai

- *Monochromatic color scheme has been used in mixed grades of color options in white, grey, silver-white, marble-white, yellow with orange-yellow as illustrated (Fig. 4.101). In this visual relationship color value description pattern almost equal grade appears for the monochromatic scheme color relationship pattern. The monochrome colors bind the color syntax composition on these sign panels in harmony.*



Fig. 4.101: Scheme of monochromatic hues in mixed grade with high value of whites, grey and yellow in distinct size shop signs, Mumbai

4.2.3.2 Trends

The detailed color trends observed in the shop signs of the city of Mumbai are as follows:

A) Main text color trends

We see both transitory and period-specific trends in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) Transitory color trends in the main text

The illustrated visual depicts the color hue trend by representing one example of main text in the shop signs of Abdul Rehman street, Dadar road and Mohammad Ali road marketplaces

¹³⁸ From a perceptual point of view saturation influences the grade of purity or vividness of a color/image. Refer: <http://www.workwithcolor.com/color-properties-definitions-0101.htm>

arranged from top to bottom (Fig. 4.102). This trend only exists for description characteristic of hue. No definite and continuous change occurs in other description characteristics of value, saturation, temperature and color kinds.

Color hue

In very old shop signs, only single hues have been used in the main text. The two and single hue use together came into the picture whereas for the middle time periods of 1975-89 there is a sudden drop in the two hue trend and an equivalent upsurge in the single hue trend. The most recent time periods of 2005 onwards show the most odd trend of a random mixture of single, two, three or many hues in different shop signs across marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.102).



Fig. 4.102: Color hues frequency transitory trend in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

2) Period specific color trends in the main text

No period specific trend is seen in 1930-44 time period in the city of Mumbai.

a) 1945-59, popular themes and color trends

The popular theme of 1945-59 color trends in the main text of shop signs in Jaipur city has been applied in the same color hues of blue and green in the main text of shop signs across marketplaces in Mumbai city as well (Fig. 4.103).

The colors, strokes and new painting techniques in the shop signs of both Jaipur and Mumbai visually translate the modern cultural idiom of changing India from this time period. The detailed description of the theme and related popular styles has been given in the period specific color trends of main text in Jaipur shop signs (section 4.2.1.2).



Fig. 4.103: Period specific color trend (1945-59) of green and blue hues, combinations in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

b) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

The provocative hues of orange, red and yellow in different visual representation styles could be seen in film titles as well as the shop names of this period (Fig. 4.104). The popular themes influencing the colors choice and their visual representation in the shop name display design in Mumbai is similar to the ones in the case of the city of Jaipur (section 4.2.1.2).

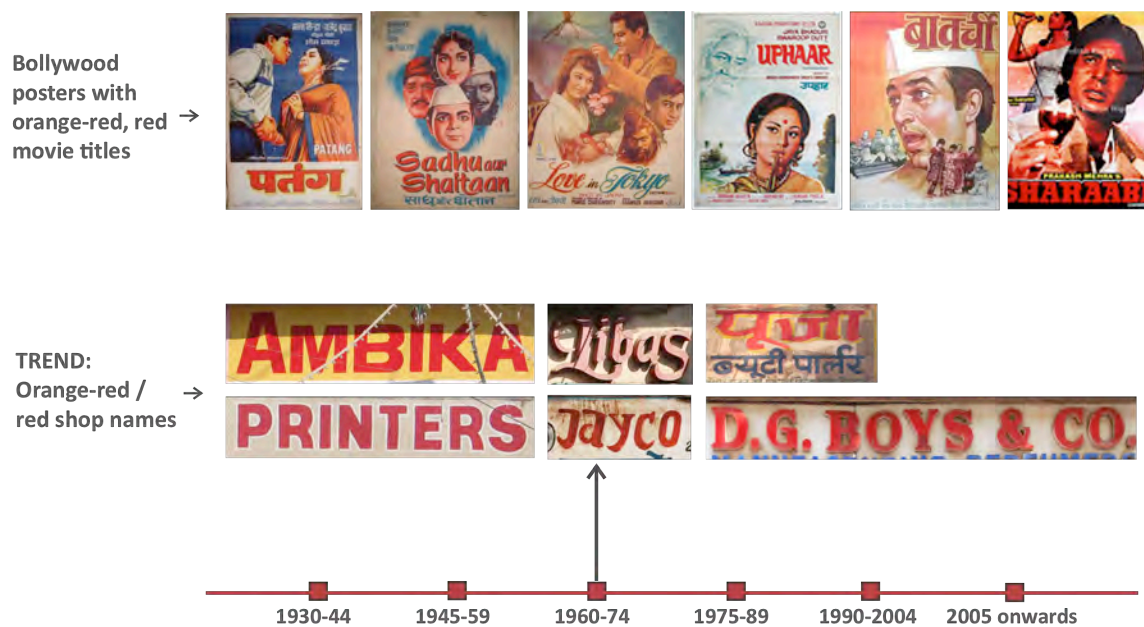


Fig. 4.104: Period specific color trends (1960-74) of hues and effects in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

c) 1975-89, popular themes and color trends

With the emergence of pop art, a lot of fantastic yellows with a strong graphic vitality provided by the hardedge black under casing given to the movie titles as well as shop names present the local identities and sentiments prevailing in the popular social themes of this time period in Jaipur shop signs. In case of Mumbai, the same social theme influenced the stylistic representation in a slightly different manner.

In Mumbai shop signs, orange and red colors in deep popular tones preserved inside the free-flowing, bulbous retro letterforms and type styles that do not have any black under casing (Fig. 4.105). Instead, the same social theme of tumultuous and difficult times in India and aesthetic style of psychedelic art seems to influence the use of black in bold graphic style letterforms in the shop names of Mumbai.

The detailed description of the theme and related popular styles has been given in the period specific color trends of main text in Jaipur shop signs (section 4.2.1.2).

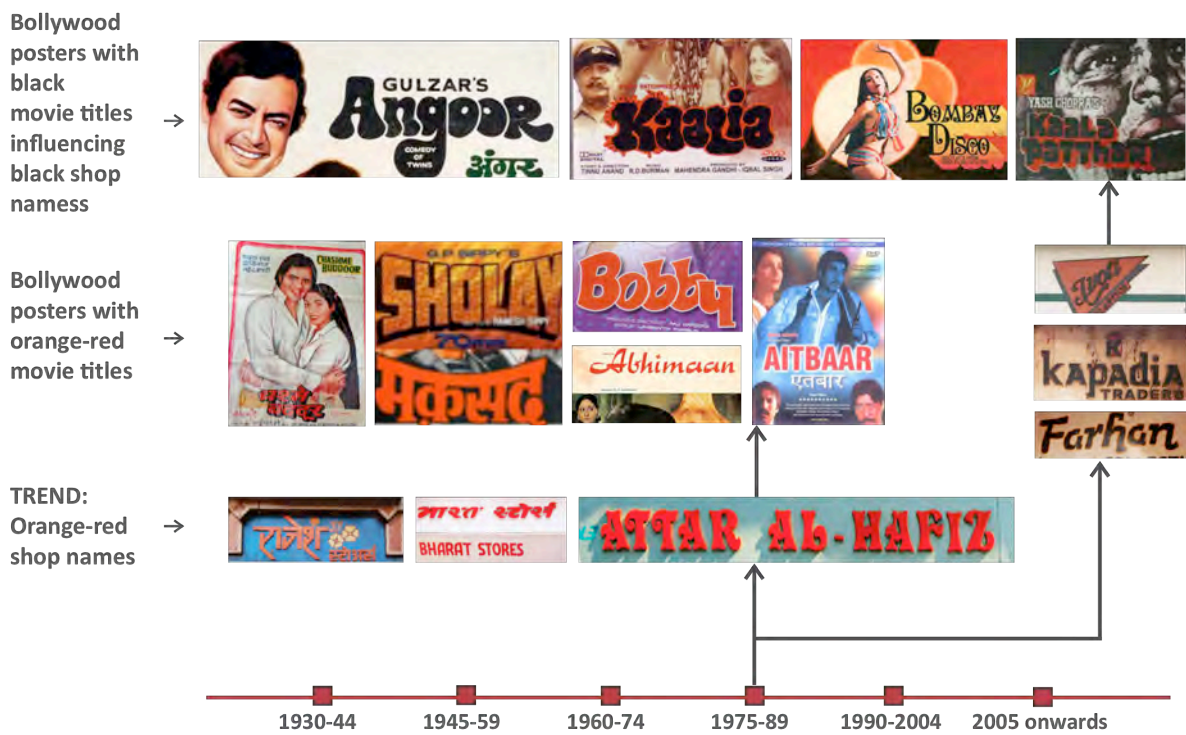


Fig. 4.105: Period specific color trends (1975-89) hues and effects in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

d) 1990-2004, popular themes and color trends

We can see white and silvery whites used in shop names depicting the fresh, stabilized and progressive economy (Fig. 4.106). This popular theme influencing the style of white in the shop

names is similar to the one used in the shop names of Jaipur city. There are a few depictions of main text in red and dark blue hues reminding of the 1990s well known mixed themes in Indian cinema. The international appeal in form of 3D color display in the context of modern brand identities like logos is the underlying theme common to both Mumbai and Jaipur main texts in shop signs. The detailed description of the theme and related popular styles has been given in the period specific color trends of main text in Jaipur shop signs (section 4.2.1.2)

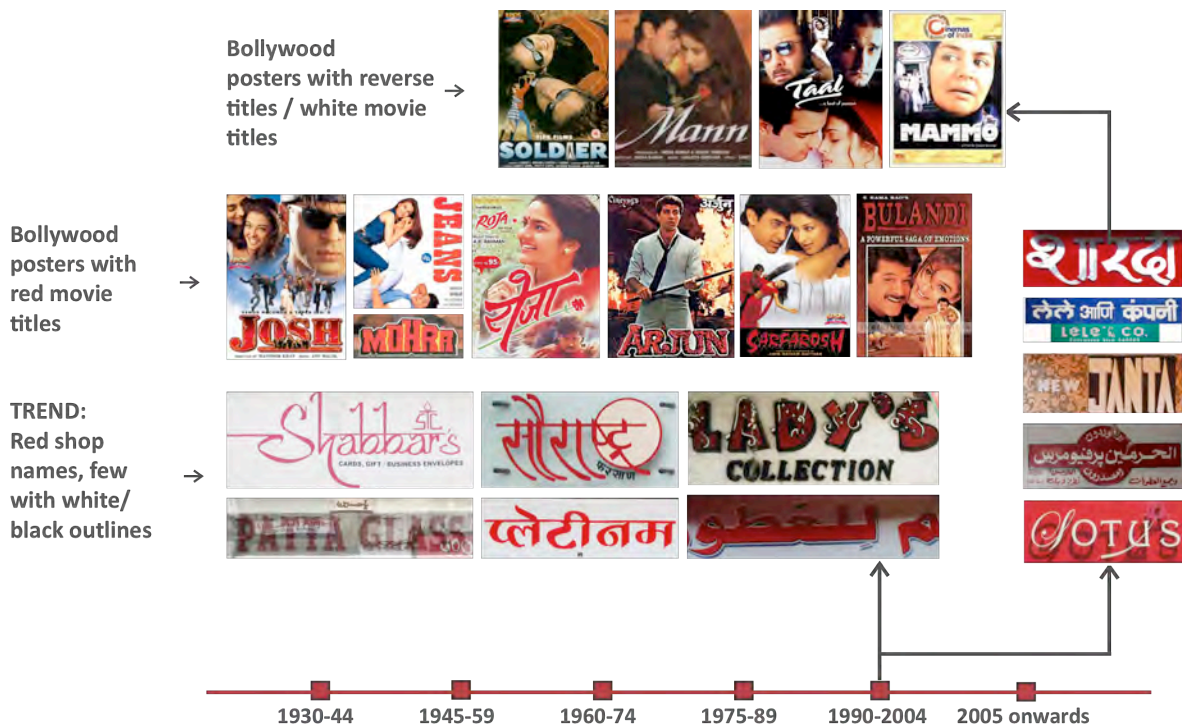


Fig. 4.106: Period specific color trends of hues, combinations and production in main text of shop signs, Mumbai

e) 2005 onwards, popular themes and color trends

2005 onwards in India is well known for the globalization of Bollywood poster art as well as the popular social lifestyles and tastes of the public. For instance, shop names in blue and black color with white outlines for main text follow the color combination style as seen in brand logos of MCG products, websites and other corporate identities (Fig. 4.107).

Therefore, similar themes of Bollywood poster art and modern globalization in commercial brand display can be seen in the main text color trends of Mumbai shop signs in the same period of 2005 onwards. The detailed description of the theme and related popular styles has been given in the period specific color trends of main text in Jaipur shop signs (section 4.2.1.2).



Fig. 4.107: Period specific color trends in combinations and effects in main text of shop signs, Mumbai

3) Summary: main text color trends

Transitory color trends

Frequency of hues undergo a smooth and clear change only in the color description characteristic of hue in the main text of shop signs across six slots in the city of Mumbai (Fig. 4.102).

Period specific color trends

The popular themes reflect the pulse of different time periods. For instance, the trends of old shop signs celebrate the color trends that signify the igniting ideas and philosophies of old time periods, namely pre-independence and immediate post independence times (Fig. 4.103 to 4.105). On the other hand, the newer shop signs glorify the developments, discoveries and progressions as well as tensions of modern and present 21st century times in India (Fig. 4.106 and 4.107).

B) Secondary text color trends

Tag lines are not a permanent feature on a signboard. There is a lack of a single variable changing continuously with time i.e. transitory trend. Likewise, no period specific trends for tag lines are observed in the very small number of tag lines per period in the selected data of shop signs in the city of Mumbai in our research.

C) Background sign panel color trends

The detailed descriptions of the trends in background sign panels are as follows:

1) Transitory color trends

The visual depicts the color hue trend that exists for Mumbai panels in the shop signs of Abdul Rehman street, Dadar road and Mohammad Ali road marketplaces arranged from top to bottom (Fig. 4.108).

Hue transitory trend

In very old shop signs single hues have been used as part of stone background sign panels. In the middle time periods, three hues in panels appear followed by some panels using two hues. These panels include majority of medium size fairly modern shops selling a variety of products and services, the range is probably depicted in the increased number of hues used together as against single hue sign panels of old time periods of 1930-44 and 1945-59. Two hues are again used in 2005 onwards sign panels (Fig. 4.108).

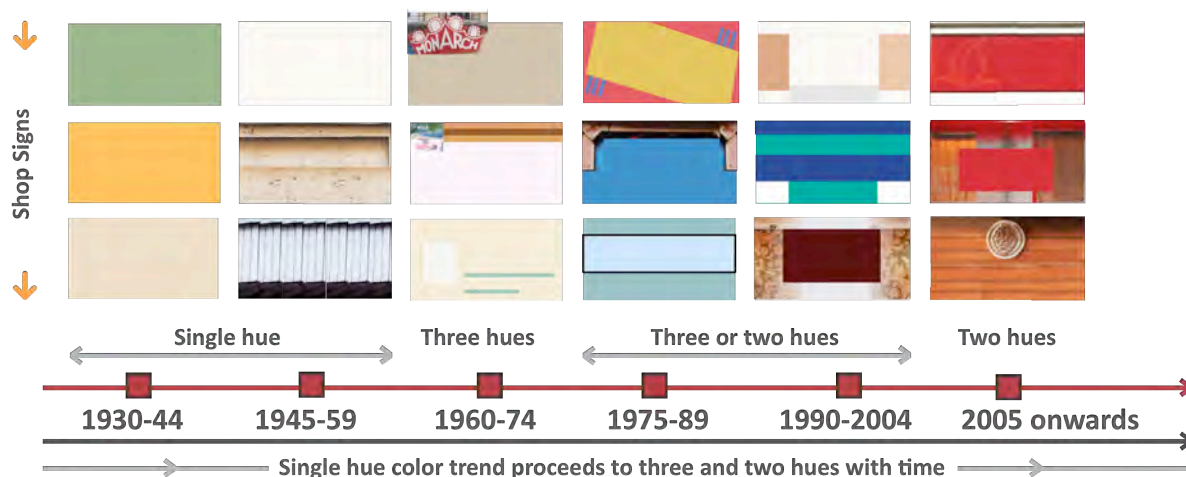


Fig. 4.108: Color hues frequency transitory trend in the background sign panels, Mumbai

2) Period specific color trends in the background sign panels

Among color description characteristics, period specific trends appear for only color hues. Each of the following sections describes the material kinds present in the specific time period and their influence on color trends in shop signs illustrated in the visual examples.

a) 1960-74, popular theme and color trend

In 1960-74, the material theme presents limestone white panels and some withered yellow panels occurring in this period across all marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.109). Overall in India the time periods of 1960s and 1970s were socio-politically tumultuous times.

Therefore, we can witness a lot of warm hues in marble base material panels that subtly remind of those popular social scenarios. For the detailed description of this popular theme please refer the main text period specific trend of 1960-74.

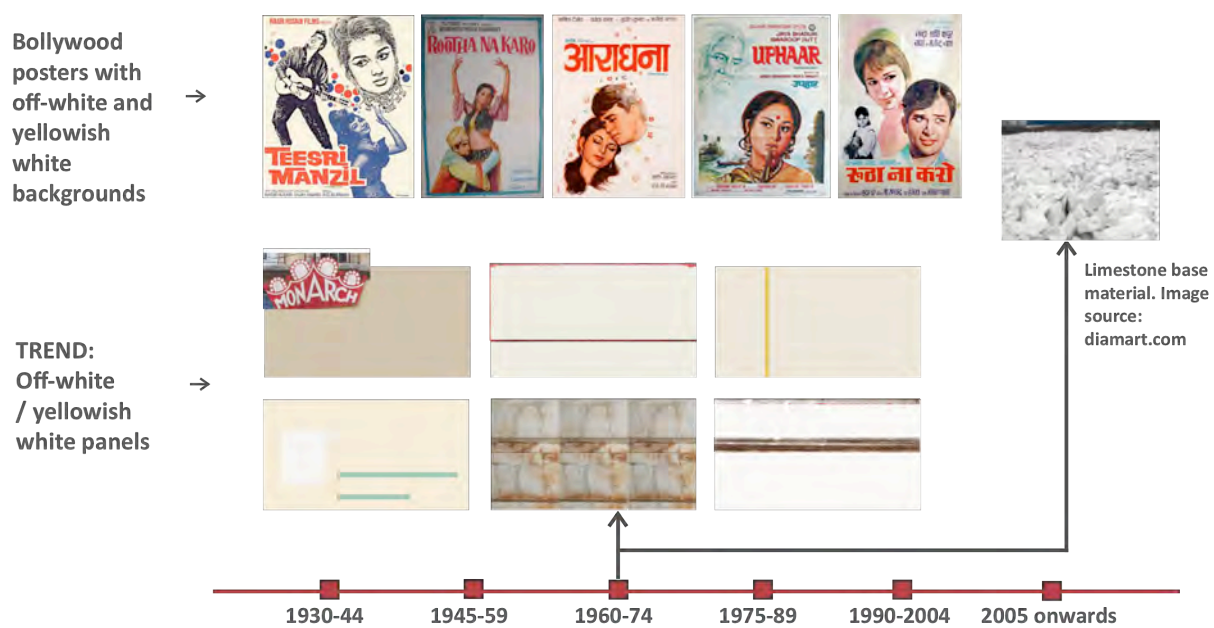


Fig. 4.109: Period specific color trend (1960-74) of limestone base in the background sign panels, Mumbai

b) 1975-89, popular theme and color trend

In 1975-89, India witnessed political unrest in society along with highly charged up creative renaissance in the arts field. This popular idiom becomes the color trend in the use of warm hues like orange, yellows and deep earthy browns in the background sign panels (Fig. 4.110). For the detailed description of this popular theme please refer the main text period specific trend of 1975-89.

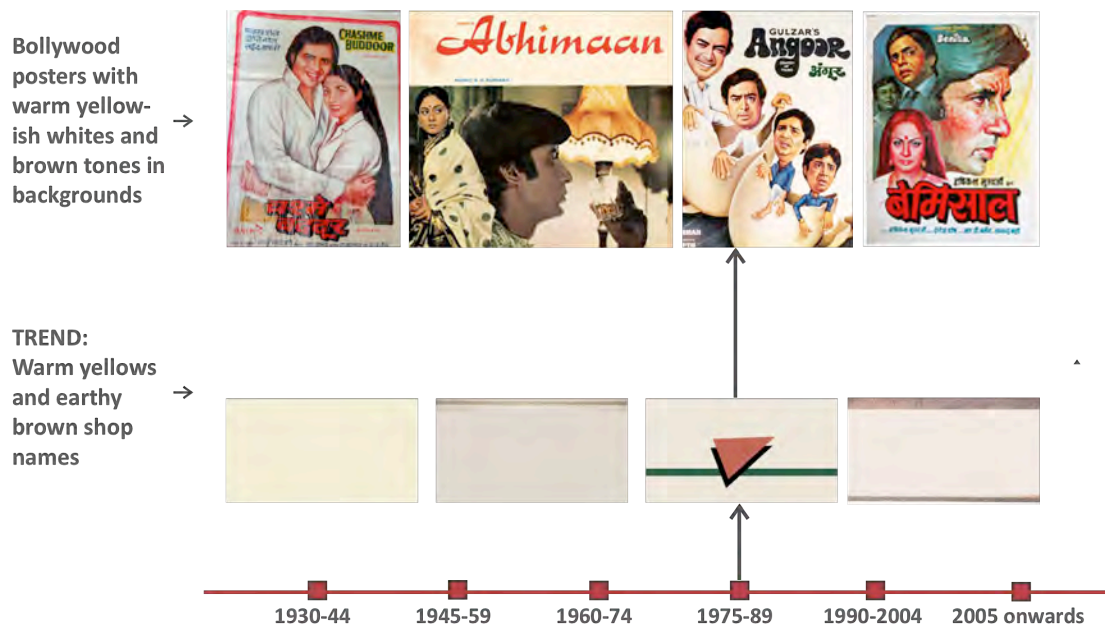


Fig. 4.110: Period specific color hue trend (1975-89) of red and orange background sign panels, Mumbai

c) 1990-2004, popular theme and color trend

Post 1990s after the advent of open economy, a lot of trade and material development happened in order to match the international appeal in facades, materials and respective color choices. Acrylic sign panels have been used prominently in the shop sign backgrounds. This explains the occurrence of variety of colors (Fig. 4.111). Acrylic is the pioneering material of the modern commercial display design and stands for the present day themes of clarity, solidity and minimalism in form and structure.

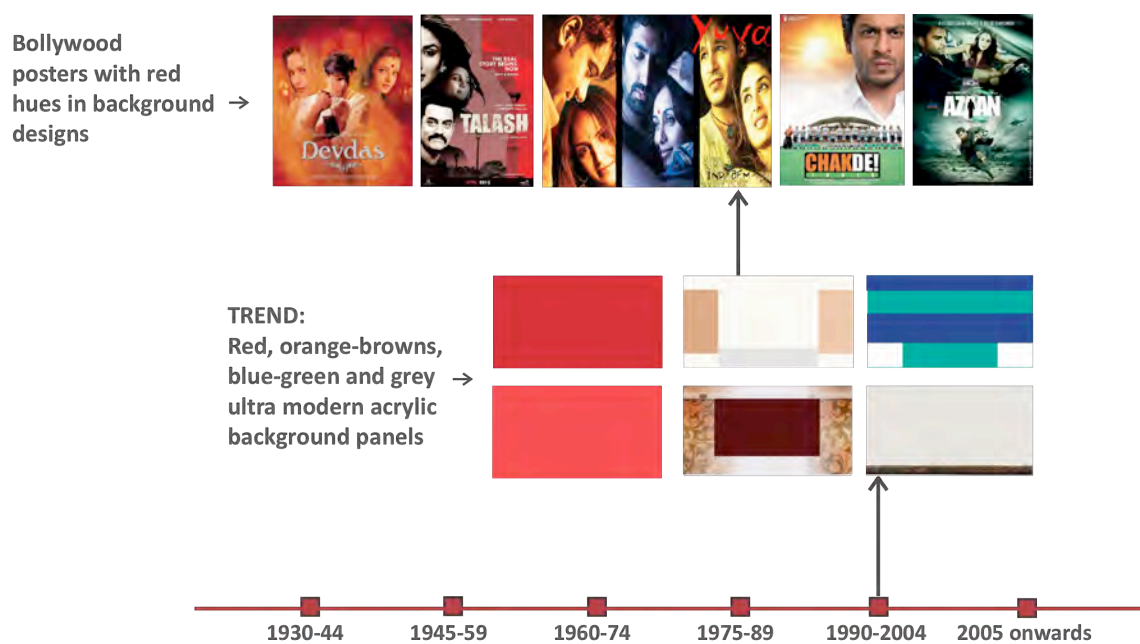


Fig. 4.111: Period specific color trend (1990-2004) of ultra modern acrylic background sign panels, Mumbai

3) **Summary: background sign panel color trends**

Transitory color trends

As the base material of the sign panel changes, the texture and hue choice gets largely affected. So, this trend undergoes a smooth transition only in frequency of hues for background sign panels of Mumbai. With times, the increase in hues from single to two-three hues can be linked to the increased product range in the business of shops included in the middle time periods in our data (Fig. 4.108).

Period specific color trends

In the case of period specific color trends across marketplaces, the popular socio-political conditions and related popular themes prevalent in the Bollywood movie posters with parallel color display belonging to those time periods in previous cities of Jaipur shop signs main text and background sign panels also influence the background panel color trends in the city of Mumbai (Fig. 4.109 to 4.111).

4.2.3.3 Tendencies

A lot of such impelling forces operating Mumbai's shop signs are rooted in the architecture, the city's pan Indian identity and effects of socio-political movements having great impact on the business and trade status of especially small and medium scale business. The following sections outline the color tendencies as observed and analyzed in the foreground and background layers of information in the shop signs of Mumbai:

A) Main text color tendencies

We see both general and distinct tendencies in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) Old shop signs have equal prominence of hand-painted and handcrafted color production in the main text

Most of the old shop signs having this tendency are at the backdrop of colonial time period and post independence times in India. "Bombay is one of the most characteristically Victorian cities in the world, displaying all the grand effrontery of *Victorian eclecticism*" (Morris, 2009). In this context, the co-existence of hand-painted and 3D handcrafted production of colors has

preserved the Victorian eclectic¹³⁹ identity in the main text of Mumbai shop signs (Fig. 4.112). In the case of hand-painted main text in Mumbai shop signs, we see dark main text displayed over very light grey, off-white and white panel backgrounds, with or without the borders (Fig. 4.113). Mumbai being the main centre of British anarchy in 30s and 40s included materials like wood and stone¹⁴⁰. Wood was at easy disposal along with omnipresent skill of carpentry work in those times (Fig. 4.112 and 4.113).

This could be an affect of post-industrialization with the advent of machine processes and cheaper production and innovation¹⁴¹. For instance, plywood and cast iron panels and sheets availability meant that public could afford to buy decorative items from clocks to china to furniture because they were cheaper. Post 1911 the city of Mumbai became receptive to a lot of synthesis of architectural idioms, the first one being Gothic and later the romantic Art Deco styles that emerged as identity markers¹⁴².



Fig. 4.112: a and b. Hand-painted visual tendency endowed in the erstwhile painting, c. shop signboard.
Source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/britishraj/Jackson6/chapter05.html>

The legacy of wood and stone use in context of handcrafted color production as well as enamel paints for hand-painted signs is rooted in the very concept of interchangeable forms¹⁴³ of the materials used in old buildings and their facades. The shop signs with this tendency here belong to marketplaces that are located in Southern Mumbai with one of the oldest buildings and monuments that imbibe a synthesis of materials and styles in their visual representation. As

¹³⁹ *Eclectic* is a combination of different styles together that evolved at different times. Refer: <http://www.indiaprofile.com/heritage/bombayarchitecture.htm>

¹⁴⁰ Mumbai was *the base of industrial goods* in those times of Gandhiji's satyagraha and civil disobedience. Refer: http://www.mu.ac.in/myweb_test/FYBA - History of Modern Maharashtra.pdf

¹⁴¹ Industrialization not only promised self-sufficiency and offered external economies accruing from technical progress (Hauptmann and Hambrook, 1999). Refer: <http://www.tcd.ie/Economics/SER/archive/1999/essay20.html>

¹⁴² The art deco eclectic Victorian-era structures of the neo-Gothic, Indo-Saracenic and Venetian Gothic have come to define Mumbai. Read: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/india/mumbai-bombay/things-to-do/>

¹⁴³ Indian art employs various materials...most of the wooden monuments of the early period have perished but have been imitated in stone. (Britannica Educational Encyclopedia, Ed. Kuiper, 2010).

the shop sign facades are part of these buildings in order to combat perishing building material, plasticity is endowed to the material used that affects the color display accordingly (Fig. 4.113).



Fig. 4.113: Hand-painted and crafted production general color tendency co-existence in main text of shop signs, Mumbai

b) Modern shop signs have prominence of handcrafted and digital color production in the main text

The new face of shop signs came into being at the backdrop of various printing, scientific and technological inventions in modern India. Material used is mostly acrylic followed by wood to craft the main text letterforms. Many new techniques and materials originated in the 1980s. Among the new materials, the ultra-modern acrylic has been used in the main text as well as in the backgrounds of the modern sign panels of marketplaces (Fig. 4.114).

Along with the new inventions, there is also an emergence of experimentation since more flexibility and variety can be seen in the materials. For instance, in the visual examples there is a shop sign name in the Arabic script crafted as 3D letterforms in acrylic. The thick-coated green color in Arabic letterforms gives them a statuesque identity in old wooden blocks. Therefore, there is a philosophy of mix and match and color is an attribute that identifies these forms and creates a distinction for the shop names by constructing a reality¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁴ A preferred version of a reality rather than a direct reflection of reality (Kenney, 2010). In context of communication, it has been applied by semioticians and journalists the most. Such preferred versions of reality are always perceived by audience as “natural, obvious or commonsensical” (Allan, 1998: 105-106).

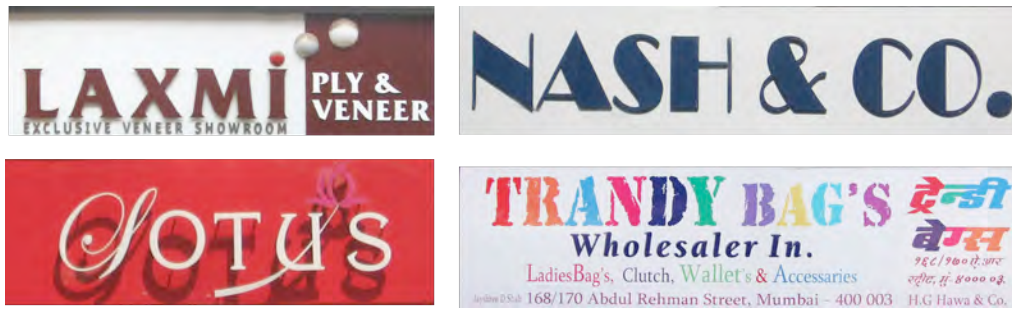


Fig. 4.114: Acrylic crafted and digital color look in modern shop names, Mumbai

2) Distinct color tendencies

No distinct tendencies appear in the main text of the shop signs across marketplaces in Mumbai for selected shop signs in our data.

3) Summary: main text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The foreground main text has general color tendencies that elaborate the rationale of using different color production techniques for old and modern shop signs. Among these the tendency of hand-painted shop names in old shop signs occurs mainly because of the architectural identities and material interventions at the backdrop of Victorian eclectic concept in Bombay during British Raj times and the modern day material experimentation for enhanced and technically easier way to mass-reproduce color in ultra modern acrylic (Fig. 4.112 to 4.114).

B) Secondary text color tendencies

There are surprisingly very few tag lines in the shops signs in Mumbai. No distinct tendencies appear in tag lines since they function only as an extra informatory text about the product and service details that the respective shops provide. Therefore, we see only general tendencies in the secondary text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

These color tendencies for the secondary text exist across all marketplaces as follows:

- a) **Old shop signs have co-existence of handcrafted colors in the secondary text followed by some examples of hand-painted color production**

The tag lines of old shop signs are also hand-painted and crafted like the shop names on the same sign panels. Therefore, the description of similar impelling forces cause the hand-painted as well as crafted identity of these tag lines as well (Fig. 4.115).



Fig. 4.115: Hand-painted and crafted general color tendency in tag lines of old shop signs, Mumbai

b) New shop signs have prominently handcrafted color production in the secondary text followed by digital color production

The tag lines of new shop signs have digitally produced colors like the shop names on the same sign panels. Therefore, the descriptions of similar impelling forces cause the digital color identity of these tag lines as well. This is a tendency common to the new and modern shop sign secondary texts in both the cities of Mumbai (Fig. 4.116) as well as Jaipur. Modern material revolution with the introduction of acrylic and other digital production is a template seen in all modern day shop signs, irrespective of the kind of city they belong to. This general tendency is rooted in the context of modern technology and the twenty first century digital revolution.



Fig. 4.116: Handcrafted and digital general color tendency in tag lines of modern shop signs, Mumbai

2) Distinct color tendencies

None exist for the secondary texts or tag lines of shop signs in the marketplaces of Mumbai.

3) Summary: secondary text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The secondary text shows same general color tendencies for old and modern shop signs across all marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.115 and 4.116) as summarized for the main text of the same shop signs.

C) Background sign panel color tendencies

We see general tendencies in the background sign panel colors of shop signs across marketplaces of Mumbai as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) White background sign panels with blue borders

In the city of Mumbai this tendency is part of lesser number of background sign panels and the white main background color is a withered yellow white for most sign panels (Fig. 4.117). The same historical underpinnings guide the arrangement of white and blue borders in background panels in all the cities. For detailed description of these underpinnings refer to General color tendencies in part C) of 4.2.1.3 section describing the color tendency analysis for the city of Jaipur.



Fig. 4.117: White boards with blue borders distinct color tendency in old background sign panels, Mumbai

1) Distinct color tendencies

a) Yellow tone replication on malad stone background sign panels

The city of Mumbai is known for its legacy of colonial style buildings and landmarks that represent the city's history of British Raj times and cultural ethos. Architecturally, these monuments depict a combination of art deco and colonial styles, reminiscent of Indian materials, Victorian times and British rule¹⁴⁵. Among these materials, the local yellow malad stones as well as white limestone slabs have been popular with their gothic style use in the

¹⁴⁵ The symbolic style and materials made Bombay India's 'Gothic city' and a major international mercantile port. Refer: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/945>

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus building design in the later years of 19th century. The same materials and surface treatments can be seen in the background sign panels of 1930-44 across marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.118).

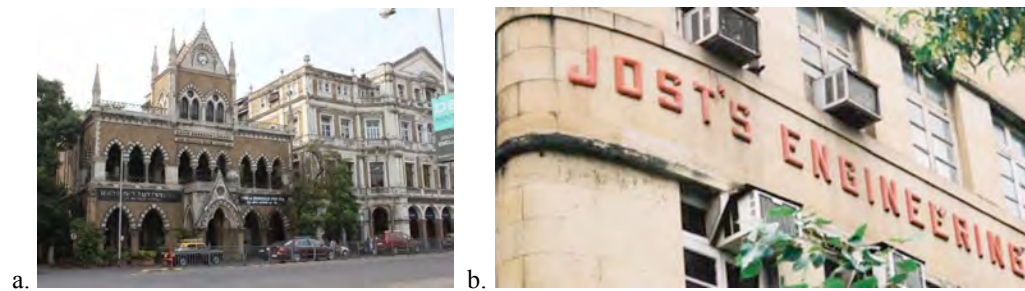


Fig. 4.118: Colonial architectural material base of malad stones in, a. David Sassoon Library, b. Jost's Engineering Firm as examples illustrated from the city of Bombay during old British Raj times



Fig. 4.119: White, yellow-white malad stone base distinct color tendency in old background sign panels, Mumbai

b) Light sea-green color in the background sign panels of medium size modern stores

In the context of local ambience and city colors, the sea green and blue-green in the panels coincides with sea green of the beaches of in Mumbai city. In the context of cultural symbolism, green is sacred in both Muslim and Parsi religions¹⁴⁶ and their population is prominent in Abdul Rehman, Dadar and Mohammad Ali road marketplaces.

In Maharashtra, green represents life and happiness. Likewise, the flourishing growth and prosperity meaning associated with green in context of Mumbai, it can be seen in mostly medium business size modern stores selling local products in a good range (Fig. 4.120).

¹⁴⁶ Green is a color that is embraced by most religions in India and may facilitate a coming together of communities, because to the Muslims and Parsi, who make up 15% of the population, green is a sacred color. Refer: <http://colourfutures.vn/hue/green/association.html>



Fig. 4.120: Sea green colored distinct color tendency in old and new background sign panels, Mumbai

3) Summary: background sign panel color tendencies

General color tendencies

In the general tendency of background sign panels of Mumbai, the rationale behind the occurrence of white panels with blue borders is rooted in a national historical context (Fig 4.117). The contextual underpinnings and their detailed descriptions for this inter-city general tendency of background sign panels is there in part C) of section 4.2.1.3 on Jaipur city color tendencies.

Distinct color tendency

The background colors of sign panels in the small and medium business size marketplaces symbolically represent the distinct yellow hue in the city of Mumbai. This tendency is rooted in the historically well known malad stone material used extensively in constructions and other buildings in Mumbai (Fig. 4.118). This distinct color tendency is one of the most indigenous and unique examples that establish a deep relationship of yellow color replication of the local malad stone on the background sign panels across marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.119).

The second tendency is the use of light blue-green hue in the background sign panels across marketplaces. The cause of this tendency is rooted in the color meanings and associations for the shop sign owners as well as prominent customers belonging to muslim and parsi population prominent in all the marketplaces for the respective shops (Fig. 4.120).

4.2.3.4 Conventions

A) Main text color conventions

We see color conventions in the main text of shop signs in the marketplaces of the city of Mumbai as follows:

1) Color conventions in the historical context

a) India Saffron or orange-red color used in the main text

We could observe that this color convention with varied meanings of saffron red or orange-yellow has been symbolically used in both hindi as well as english words used in the main text of the shop signs across marketplaces in Mumbai. The context of this convention of saffron reminds of India's history of colors and design evolution in the national flag. *India saffron* originated in 1904 by mixing red and yellow. It was the same year in 1904 when the first Indian flag (Fig. 4.121) came into existence, designed by Sister Nivedita¹⁴⁷ (De, 2009; Lochtefeld, 2002). This color is positioned as the top most color on our flag now and stands for sacrifice, courage and complete renunciation of materialism¹⁴⁸. Red and its saffron hue are associated with Lord Ganesha as well since red color is the first color of the visible spectrum¹⁴⁹. This color also envisages a long time association with Ganesh utsav and related festive traditions especially in Mumbai that connotes festivity, joyousness and optimism¹⁵⁰ in context of India (Fig. 4.121 and 4.122).

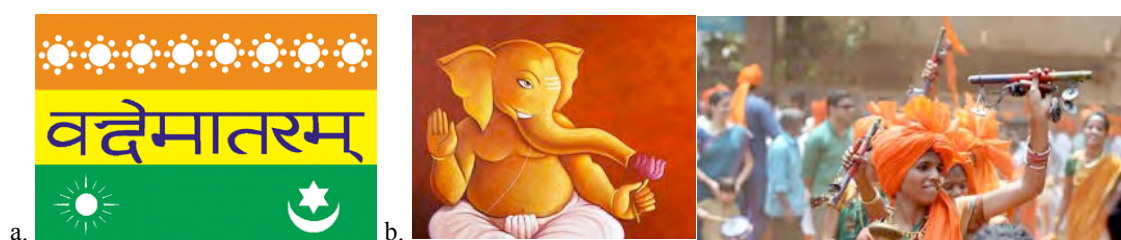


Fig. 4.121: a. India saffron as part of the first design of the Indian National Flag (1904). *Source: Gandhi National Museum, photo by Nozomi Kariyasu*, b. Red as Ganapati's signature color and Orange-red (saffron) meaning joyousness in the festivals of Maharashtra. *Photograph by: Vasant Prabhu*



Fig. 4.122: India saffron hue historical color convention in the main text of old and new shop signs, Mumbai

¹⁴⁷ Sister Nivedita, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda, designed a red flag, with a yellow inset in 1904 (De, 2009).

¹⁴⁸ '...saffron, white, and green stripes stand for, respectively, courage and sacrifice, peace and truth' (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013).

¹⁴⁹ Lord Ganesha is one of the prominent deities worshipped by Maharashtrians during the Ganesha Chaturthi.

¹⁵⁰ Ganesha also represents the beginnings of anything good. Red is the first color visible and Lord Ganesha's signature color is red (Dinesh, 2012).

b) Green color used in the main text

The traditional use of green in prominently urdu or arabic scripts can be seen in the main text of shop signs of Abdul Rehman street and Mohammad Ali road marketplaces in Mumbai. This convention is the same as one for the main texts in shop signs in Hyderabad. The application of green color in Urdu/Arabic scripts has been a historically well-known practice to represent a cultural identity as part of visual display design (Fig. 4.123).



Fig. 4.123: Green hue in urdu/arabic historical color convention in main text of old shop signs, Mumbai

2) Color conventions in the business context

a) Red color in the main text

In Abdul Rehman street, most of the old, local and small size business shops selling locks and manometer items use the simple and striking approach to present the shop names in one of the energetic and attractive color red. This red name identification against white color is a common feature in the old shop signs in most of the cities in India. The reason here is rooted in relation to prosperity of a business. As per the symbolic meanings of red in context of India, it is the color of the fertile clay that reaps harvests and ensures a business profit¹⁵¹. Likewise, in the old, small as well as medium size cafes in Dadar road marketplace shop names appear in shades of deep red (Fig. 4.124).

In context of this medium business size marketplace, the use of this red connotes meanings other than the established meanings of red in the context of India. The business of food and eateries has to attract the food lovers with constant temptation in the form of attractive cuisines along with an equally stimulating look in the shop identity sign. In this context, the approach of color appropriateness¹⁵² mainly explains the importance of red in a restaurant's name, logo or the visual identity. Red color is a potent¹⁵³ expression in the main text of these

¹⁵¹ Red stimulates the appetite and increases hunger and is an amazing color to be used for any product associated with food and its service, including restaurants and take-away businesses.

¹⁵² 'red is more appropriate than blue for sensory-social products, the converse being so for functional products' (Bottomley and Doyle, 2011). Refer: <http://mtq.sagepub.com/content/6/1/63>

¹⁵³ Color is a potent element. For example, in the fast food trade we see bright colors of oranges and reds. They move us in and out of the restaurants quickly (Prezio, 2012).

local cafes and restaurants. It expresses energy, stimulation and tempting appeal in the mood of the shop name in order to establish the shop's identity with an impact on the foodies who mostly hang out for timely refreshments in such cafes quite often (Fig. 4.124 and 4.125).



Fig. 4.124: Red color business convention in the main text of local cafes and restaurant shop signs, Mumbai

b) Red and blue color combination in the main text

The red and blue colors in the main text of shop signs in Mohammad Ali road have been in two kinds of shops dealing with fragrance or perfumes and flavors in the restaurants. Of these, flavors of cuisines served by restaurants are symbolically captured in the red. In case of the perfume shops, the combination of red and blue subtly represents the distinct choice of fragrance of both men and women. This color combination has been found to be the most preferred one among all others by adults in a research study conducted in past¹⁵⁴.

Color combinations are considered culturally bound with certain ideologies and traditions (Geboy, 1996). In this context, red is considered prosperous and auspicious for a business to flourish in India. Blue is the color of self-cultivation, creativity, timeless reliability and security. Therefore, different meanings create a dialogical¹⁵⁵ exchange between the two different hues as part of color communication on these signboards (Fig. 4.125).



Fig. 4.125: Red and blue color combination in perfume shops and restaurants main text in shop signs, Mumbai

c) Black main text in shop signs

In Abdul Rehman street most of the modern shops selling gifts, stationery, plastics, belts and

¹⁵⁴ It was also found that the combination of red and blue was the most preferred color by adults (Khouw, 2002). Refer: <http://personal.stevens.edu/~rchen/creativity/impact%20of%20color%20on%20marketing.pdf>

¹⁵⁵ Dialogic dialogue between hues here creates a network of color elements along with their meanings. Refer: <http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/irvinem/theory/bakhtin-maintheory.html>

wallets have black main text in shop signs. Color takes a secondary position in the case of these brands (Fig. 4.126). This black name identification against lighter color background is the most generic approach. The use of black main text against a bright yellow background pertains to the modern day color combination styles of attraction and impact put forth in context of big commercial business. Perhaps that is why the aim of identification need not be active here as is in the case of red names. Generally known among color meanings, black and grey are the most passive colours¹⁵⁶.



Fig. 4.126: Red and blue color combination business convention in main text of perfume and restaurant shop signs, Mumbai

d) Golden color used in the main text

Golden color has been reproduced in 3D materials along with hand-painted representation on signboards across the selected marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.127). In the context of ornamentation in India, golden hue and its metallic lustre signify lavishness¹⁵⁷. Symbolically, the metallic lustre of gold is believed to have the power to purify whatever it touches. Over centuries and millennia gold has become an inseparable part of the Indian society. Indians see the metal as a symbol of purity, prosperity and good fortune. In India, gold metal and color always were and still are much more in meaning. They are essential parts of the fabric of our culture and an inseparable part of our belief system (Bombay Times, October 18, 2001).



Fig. 4.127: Golden hue business color convention in the main text of shop signs, Mumbai

e) Silvery white in the main text

Silver color convention meaning for modern day brands of accessories and clothing is the same as has been applied in similar modern brand showroom names in the city of Jaipur. The

¹⁵⁶ A survey was conducted among high school students in 20 countries, asking them to rate 7 colors in 12 semantic differential items. The results were reported for the dimensions of evaluation, potency, and activity.

¹⁵⁷ Today ornaments are more popular with women than men. The use of ornaments in India dates back to the ancient civilizations at Harrappa and Mohenjodaro. Refer: <http://www.punditravi.com/belief.htm>

meaning of silvery white candor in Maharashtra connotes the meaning of *abhushan*¹⁵⁸. Both the meanings influence the use of silvery white in the shop names illustrated below (Fig. 4.128).



Fig. 4.128: Silvery white hue business color convention in main text of modern stores and showrooms, Mumbai

3) **Summary: main text color conventions**

Color conventions in historical the context

The main text in shop signs across marketplaces with mostly medium and large size business identities is represented in India saffron. This orange-red is symbolic of our Indian culture that has a marked prominence in famous festivals celebrated (Fig. 4.121 and 4.122). In the use of green hue for the main text in shop signs, the color convention is a known cultural symbol that is applied since the times of the Mughal reign. Symbolically, this convention is part of the green main text of shop signs of only two marketplaces (Fig. 4.123).

Color conventions in the business context

Red stimulates and creates a tempting image for food outlets and cafes. In order to ensure higher sales and business profits, red color communicates prosperity and an auspicious mood as well. In context of commercial visual design, red is one of the most eye-catching ascent¹⁵⁹ colors other than blue or black for main text set against lighter or white background sign panels (Fig. 4.124). The choice related to the perfume products targeted to the adults guides the use of the popular red and blue combination that visually creates a balance in the shop names (Fig. 4.125). Black shop names prominently appear in Abdul Rehman street marketplace, though in these visual examples, black against very bright colors such as yellow colored panels expresses a passive mood (Fig. 4.126). Black and grey as main text options are generally used to establish strong but neutral mood unlike the pigment in red that sets a symbolism deeply ingrained in the local lifestyle and culture of Indians. The golden hue is seen as a prominent convention in the modern store signs main text across marketplaces in Mumbai. Golden communicates an indigenous belief of prosperity and good fortune in context of India (Fig. 4.127). The

¹⁵⁸ Abhushan means the ornaments or things, which is used to adorn. Where health maintains the physical beauty, Abhusana enhances it. Refer: <http://www.punditravi.com/belief.htm>

¹⁵⁹ Red brings text and images to the foreground. Use it as an accent color to stimulate people to make quick decisions; it is a perfect color for 'Buy Now' or 'Click Here' buttons on Internet banners and websites. Also, many flags use this color for instant attraction and notice ability (Lester, 2013).

symbolism of silver appears in the main text of modern shop signs with the underlying meaning of seeing a luxurious, precious or premium quality in jewels namely *abhushan* (Fig. 4.128).

B) Secondary text color conventions

1) Color conventions in the historical context

None occur in the secondary text of shop signs across marketplaces in Mumbai.

2) Color conventions in the business context

We only see those color conventions in the secondary text that occur in context of the business identity of the shops in individual marketplaces of Abdul Rehman and Mohammad Ali road in Mumbai as follows:

a) Blue color used in the secondary text

Local item shops in Abdul Rehman street have blue color in both secondary as well as main texts. The basis of blue usage is similar to that found in the main text of old shop signs of Jaipur city. By convention, use of blue in shop names conveys grounded candor, well-established trust and security associated with the shop's business or service. Therefore, this established rule of blue color display is present in the illustrated shop signs (Fig. 4.129).



Fig. 4.129: Blue color business color convention in tag lines of local items and old shop signs, Mumbai

b) Black color used in the secondary text

Most of them are the same shop signs as illustrated in Fig. 4.126 earlier in the present section, that use black in the shop names. The convention of black that has been used for the main text applies for secondary text too, highlighted within the yellow frame (Fig. 4.130).



Fig. 4.130: Black taglines business color convention in tag lines of modern and big business shop signs, Mumbai

c) Golden color used in the secondary text

Golden color is symbolic of personal power, warmth and lavishness that exudes the best and premium quality. In the marketplace of Abdul Rehman street, the modern material and accessory stores have either religious marks or company signatures in form of tag lines. These stores present the premium quality tag associated with the products available for high class customers. Therefore, the traditional meanings or conventions of gold in premium business context have been symbolically depicted in the secondary text of the shop signs as illustrated below (Fig. 4.131).



Fig. 4.131: Golden hue business color convention in tag lines of big business size shop signs, Mumbai

d) Red and blue colors used in the secondary text

A few shop signs display the secondary text as well as the main text in red and blue color combination in Mohammad Ali road marketplace. The reasoning, choice and the implied meanings of the two colors used together as a combination is seen mostly in relation to the products sold for adults (Fig. 4.132).



Fig. 4.132: Red and blue combination business color convention in tag lines of big business shop signs, Mumbai

3) Summary: secondary text color conventions

Color conventions in the historical context

There are no color conventions in the historical context at all for secondary text of shops signs across, in two or in individual marketplaces. Shop names communicate the complete identity using the elements of visual attributes of color and type. The communication about the shop business, its scale and nature is complete in the form and content chosen for the main text. Thus, the confirmatory texts or tag lines stand alone as a promotional information layer in a shop sign.

Color conventions in the business context

We could identify color conventions in business context in only Abdul Rehman street and Mohammad Ali road marketplaces. These conventions are in the same nature for secondary text as have been for the main text in the same shop signs. Comparatively, Abdul Rehman street shop signs present more number of color conventions with business based meanings in the use of blue, black and golden taglines displayed on the shop signs (Fig. 4.134 to 4.136). Blue communicates sustained trust, loyalty and authenticity in the business. Black stands in the form of a passive and formal confirmatory tag line. Golden taglines imbibe the same business oriented meaning association as explained for the golden main text belonging to same marketplaces in Mumbai city in section A). Only a color combination of red and blue in the tag lines is a visible convention in a few shop signs of Mohammad Ali road (Fig. 4.137). The color meaning with business associations are the same as followed for the main text in few shop signs from the same marketplace.

C) Background sign panel color conventions

None occur in the background sign panels in context of both history and business types in Mumbai shop signs in the limited data of the three marketplaces for this city in our research.

4.2.4 Bengaluru

Founded by Kempa Gowda¹⁶⁰ in 1537 and famously entitled as the *City of Gardens*, It is presently an emerging gateway to IT and electronics industries on national as well as international fronts. The twentieth century Bengaluru is known to be Asia's fastest developing international urban space (Dittrich, 2007). Often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India¹⁶¹, the city includes vast reserves of granite. These identity markers of the city reflect in the analysis of color patterns and trends of information layers on shop signs. In a nutshell, Bengaluru shop signs with a range of product or service business identities envisage a flourishing urban competitiveness to confront a challenging global economic environment. In context of culture and symbolism, Bengaluru translates a good fit as a contemporary urban metropolis as well as a living legacy of the erstwhile chola kings of Tanjore. Their traditional beliefs, symbolism and embedded expressions are subtly depicted in the analysis of Tendencies and Conventions of the colors used in shop signs.

The complete color analysis of all the three information layers – main text, secondary text and background sign panels in the three selected marketplaces in Bengaluru has led to insights about the kind of patterns, the popular styles or trends that change across time periods, the tendencies and lastly the conventions of color display in the shop signs.

4.2.4.1 Patterns

The color patterns observed in the shop signs of Bengaluru are as follow:

A) Main text color patterns

Following main text patterns showcase visual examples for Shivajinagar, Avenue road and Narasimha Raja road marketplace shop signs arranged from the left to right in all the visual examples:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.81 to 4.85 as follows:

¹⁶⁰ Also referred to as *Modern Bengaluru* / '*gandu bhoomi*', '*Land of Heros*' (History of Bangalore, Bangalore Guide, 2005; Department of IT and Biotechnology, 2006).

¹⁶¹ The title signifies Bengaluru as an IT Centre. This has a geographic reference to the fact that Bangalore is located on Mysore Plateau, that is referred as "Silicon Plateau" by geologists. An international reference to the name and its role happened in the year 2000 (Canton, 2012).

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White	     	Equal number of medium business size old shops and big business size modern shops
ii) Yellow	  	Medium size, medical related shops and an example of big size, modern garment stores

Table 4.81: Hue patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High values in yellow	  	Medium size, medical related shops and an example of big size, modern garment stores
ii) Medium value in red and green	  	An old, small size store and two medium size local and fairly modern service stores
iii) Low value in dark blue	   	Mostly medium size stores and one big size branded fashion showroom

Table 4.82: Color Value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in orange and yellow	     	For orange color in main text: equal number of small and medium business size shop signs For yellow color in main text: all medium size, local and modern stores
ii) Medium saturation in golden-yellow	  	Big business size modern jewellery stores

Table 4.83: Color Saturation patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

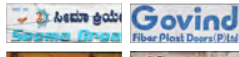
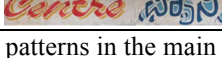
d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red, orange and yellow	           	For red color in <u>main text</u>: equal number of small and medium business size shop signs For orange color in <u>main text</u>: equal number of small and medium business size shop signs For yellow color in <u>main text</u>: all medium size, local and modern stores
ii) Cool: green, blue in	       	For cool green: Small and medium size, old and local shops For cool blue: Medium size, old shops mostly and two examples of big size, modern stores
iii) Warm and cool: red-green and red-blue	    	Equal number of small and medium size old shops

Table 4.84: Color Temperature patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red, yellow and blue	            	For red color in <u>main text</u>: equal number of small and medium business size shop signs Primary yellow color: all medium size, local and modern stores Primary color blue: Medium size, old shops mostly and two examples of big size, modern stores
ii) Secondary: green	   	Small and medium size, old and local shops
iii) Primary and secondary: red and green	   	Mostly medium size shop signs and one example of a big size, modern sweet store

Table 4.85: Color Kinds patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.86 to 4.90 as follows:

a) Combinations	Examples	Business size
i) White and black, white text and black drop-shadows		Mostly white shop names with black drop-shadow in modern, big size shop names and medium size, old general shops
ii) Red and blue		Mostly medium size, old local shops

Table 4.86: Color Combination patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: red to blue, blue to red		Small size old service shops and equal number of modern, big size stores
ii) Primary to secondary: red, orange-red to green		Mostly medium size, local and old general shops

Table 4.87: Color Hierarchy patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

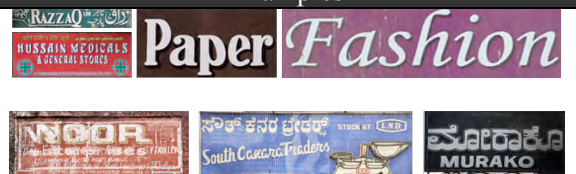
c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast- white shop names against dark backgrounds		Mostly white shop names in medium size, old general shops and modern, big size stores
ii) High contrast-yellow shop names against dark backgrounds		All medium size, local and modern stores
iii) Cold-warm contrast in mostly red-blue combinations with few examples of red-orange with blue/green		Equal number of small business size, old shops and medium size, old local stores

Table 4.88: Color Contrast patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

d) Effect patterns	Examples	Business size
Color attraction: i) <i>Highlight effect</i> – white drop-shadow around red letterforms	 <i>Highlight color effect</i>	Two medium business size shops and a small business size, old cafe

of the main texts		
ii) Flicker effect in complimentary colors		Medium business size shops and only one example of big size, modern stores

Table 4.89: Color Effect patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary color scheme of red, green and blue (Triadic color scheme)		Mostly medium size general shops and two examples of big size textile store and a restaurant
ii) Complimentary color scheme of red-green and orange-blue		Equal number of small size, old shops and medium business size fairly modern stores
iv) Primary color scheme of Red, yellow and blue (Triadic color scheme)		Two old, small business size general shops and one medium size, fairly modern toys store

Table 4.90: Color Scheme patterns in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

3) Summary: main text color patterns

The main text patterns of Bengaluru have less range or variations in terms of hues, combinations, hierarchy and schemes. However, for many pattern examples, we could identify visual relationships between a color description characteristic and a color relationship characteristic. Following visual relationships emerge with different objectives of display in similar as well as distinct business size shop signs:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- Among color description characteristics, hue, saturation, temperature and kinds have single patterns: The choice of single hue, for instance white for the main text is perhaps based of the kind of products sold by these stores. Perhaps, the color choice aims to serve a purpose by visually making the foreground main text visually distinct against dark colored panels. The white presents high contrast against darker sign panels (Fig. 4.133).



Fig. 4.133: White with no value-no saturation-high contrast relationship in shop names, Bengaluru

For color relationship patterns like combinations, hierarchy and schemes there are mixed grade patterns for similar size business shops. However, for color effect characteristic only single grade patterns appear in similar size business shops. A few visual examples are as follows:

- *Red-blue and Red-blue-green combinations* appear in medium size, old local shops (Fig. 4.134). The red-blue and red-green-blue combinations have medium saturations-medium values for red and green, while low values and dull saturation for blue hue in the combinations. So, there is a visual relationship between color combination with other description characteristics of value and saturation. The purpose might be to give visual harmony in the main text. For instance, red-green-blue is also a color scheme with cold-warm contrast of warm red along with cool blue and green. This visual relationship establishes a unity and balance of hues in the main text.



Fig. 4.134: Complimentary color combination of [red-blue, red-green-blue]-value-saturation-temperature-contrast-scheme relationship in shop signs, Bengaluru

- *Primary to Secondary color kind hierarchy* appears in all medium size, old and local general shops (Fig. 4.135). The red and green have medium saturations and low values respectively. Red-green is also a complimentary color scheme. In this pattern, color hierarchy has a visual relationship with scheme, value, saturation and combination characteristics.



Fig. 4.135: Primary to secondary color hierarchy pattern (mixed grade)-value-saturation-scheme-combination visual relationship in shop signs, Bengaluru

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

For color value and saturation, patterns in single grade appear in distinct business size shop signs. However, for temperature and kind description characteristics, single as well as mixed grades patterns appear for distinct business size shop signs.

- Bright saturation in orange and yellow shop names exist in the small and medium size business shops. There is a visual relationship of description characteristics like color saturation – hues (orange and yellow) – values (medium, light) – kinds: secondary and primary (orange and yellow) – temperature (warm temperatures in orange and yellow), with color relationship characteristic of high contrast of orange against light yellow backgrounds. Similar, high contrast exists for yellow names against dark backgrounds (Fig. 4.136).



Fig. 4.136: Color saturation-hues-values-kinds-temperature in distinct business shop signs, Bengaluru

- Primary and secondary colors of red and green together in shop names appear for mostly medium size shop signs and one example of a big size, modern sweet store (Fig. 4.137).



Fig. 4.137: Color kinds-hues-values-saturations-temperature-contrast relationship in distinct business shops, Bengaluru

For color relationship characteristics, combination, contrast and effects have single and mixed grades appearing in distinct business size shop signs. However, color hierarchy and schemes appear in only mixed grade patterns.

- For instance, white and black combination (white text with black drop-shadows) in mixed grade appears mostly in modern, big size and old, medium size general shops (Fig. 4.138). There exists a visual relationship of color combination-value-saturation-contrast.



Fig. 4.138: Color combination-hues-saturation-temperature relationship in distinct business shops across marketplaces, Bengaluru

B) Secondary text color patterns

Among all color relationship characteristics, there are no color combination and effect patterns in the secondary text of shop signs. Following secondary text patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Shivaji Nagara, Avenue road and Narasimha raja road marketplace shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples with the respective secondary texts highlighted within the yellow frames:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the secondary text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.91 to 4.95 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Equal number of small size, old shops and big size modern brand showrooms
ii) Black		Small business size, old shops, medium business size old shops and big business size modern shops

Table 4.91: Color Hue patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in light blue		Big business size stores
ii) Medium value in green		Small size old local shop and one medium size modern store

iii) Low value in black		Small old, local shops and big business size modern showroom
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Table 4.92: Color Value patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in yellow		Medium size, old shop and a big size, modern showroom
ii) Low saturation in blue		Small size very old stores

Table 4.93: Color Saturation patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red and yellow		Medium size old shops and a big size modern saloon
ii) Cool: blue and green		In both blue and green taglines, this pattern of cool temperature exists for all medium size, old shops

Table 4.94: Color Temperature patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and yellow		Small size, old local general shops
ii) Secondary: green		Small size, old local general shops
iii) Primary and secondary together in red-green, blue-orange and yellow-orange		Two medium and two small business size, old and local shops

Table 4.95: Color Kinds patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the secondary text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.96 and 4.97 as follows:

b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to secondary: red to green		Small tea café and a medium size old and

		local general medical shop
ii) Secondary to primary: orange to blue, orange to yellow		Medium size, old and local textile stores

Table 4.96: Color Hierarchy patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

c) Contrast pattern	Examples	Business size
High contrast: i) White taglines on darker backgrounds	i) 	a. Big size modern showrooms
ii) Black taglines on lighter withered boards	ii) 	b. Small, old local hardware stores

Table 4.97: Color Contrast patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Bengaluru

3) Summary: secondary text color patterns

Technically, the secondary text is present to reconfirm the business identity already established in the main text from time to time. As seen in the main text, for secondary text too we could see visual relationships with different objectives of display in both color description and relationship characteristics for similar and distinct business size shops as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

Color description characteristics of value, saturation, temperature and kinds only appear as single grade patterns.

- *High value (single grade) in light green-blue tag lines appears in similar business shop signs (Fig. 4.139). These high value taglines in blue also have dull saturations, cool temperatures and primary color kind. This establishes a relation between hue-value-saturation-temperature-kind for blue color.*



Fig. 4.139: High value-saturation-single grade relationship in blue taglines in similar small business size old shop signs, Bengaluru

- *Cool temperature exists in blue and green taglines appearing in all medium size, old shops. Both green and blue tag lines have medium values and bright saturations, establishing a relationship between temperature-hues-values-saturations for this pattern (Fig. 4.140).*

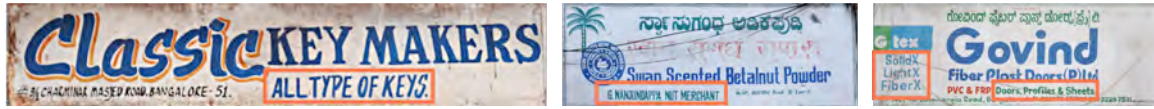


Fig. 4.140: Blue and green taglines (cool temperature, single grade pattern)-medium values-high saturation relationship in shop signs, Bengaluru

Color relationship characteristic of hierarchy appears in mixed grade for similar size business shops, while color contrast appears as a single grade pattern for these shops.

- *Secondary to Primary color hierarchy (mixed grade) from orange to blue/yellow (primary colors) in tag lines appears in similar business size shop signs. Orange and blue have bright saturations and medium values. Whereas, yellow has high value and very bright saturation in the illustrated example of shop signs (Fig. 4.141).*



Fig. 4.141: Secondary to Primary color hierarchy in similar small business size old shop signs, Bengaluru

- *White taglines on darker backgrounds and black taglines on lighter, withered boards exist in big size, modern showrooms and small business size, old local hardware stores respectively. White has no saturation and high value. Black has no saturation and low value. This establishes a visual relationship between contrast pattern in single grade with value and saturation (Fig. 4.142).*



Fig. 4.142: White and black taglines (high contrast-single grade pattern) relationship in similar small business size old shop signs, Bengaluru

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

Color value, saturation and temperature characteristics have single grade patterns for distinct business size shop signs. Only color kinds pattern appears in a mixed grade.

- Medium value appears in medium saturation of green tag lines in small size, old, local shop and a medium size, modern store. The blue shades of tag lines have medium saturation and cool temperature (Fig. 4.143). Additionally, these green tag lines are also a secondary color kind. Therefore, there exists a visual relationship between value-saturation-color kind and temperature for this pattern.



Fig. 4.143: Blue hue (single grade)-value-saturation-temperature-kind relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Bengaluru

- Bright saturation in yellow taglines occur in medium business size, old shop and a big size, modern showroom across two marketplaces of Avenue road and Narasimha raja road. The yellow has high value, warm temperature and is a primary color kind (Fig. 4.144). This establishes a relationship between saturation-value-temperature-kind-hue characteristics for this pattern.



Fig. 4.144: Very dull color saturation in black taglines (no value)-single grade relationship pattern in shop signs, Bengaluru

C) Background sign panel color patterns

Following patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Shivaji nagara, Avenue road and Narasimha raja road shop signs placed from left to right in the visual examples of background sign panels:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.98 to 4.102 as follows:

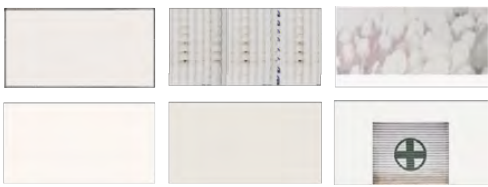
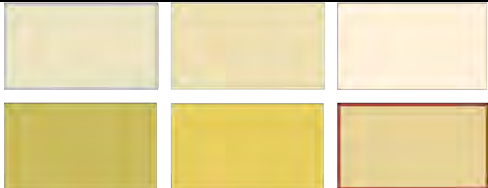
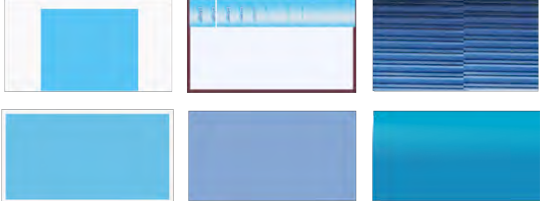
a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm grey panels with faint yellow undertones		Mostly medium and small size old shops. Few examples of large size showrooms also exist
ii) Yellow / yellow-green and pale yellow panels		All business size shops include yellow/ yellow green
iii) Dark green panels		Equal number of medium size, modern stores and big business size, modern shop sign panels

Table 4.98: Color Hue patterns in the background sign panels, Bengaluru

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in white		Small old/medium size signs and a modern big size showroom.
ii) Medium values in red		Mostly medium size new stores and one big size new showroom

Table 4.99: Color Value patterns in the background sign panels, Bengaluru

c) Saturation pattern	Examples	Business size
i) Medium saturation in cool hues of green and blue		Almost equal medium size new stores, big size new showrooms

		
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Table 4.100: Color Saturation pattern in the background sign panels, Bengaluru

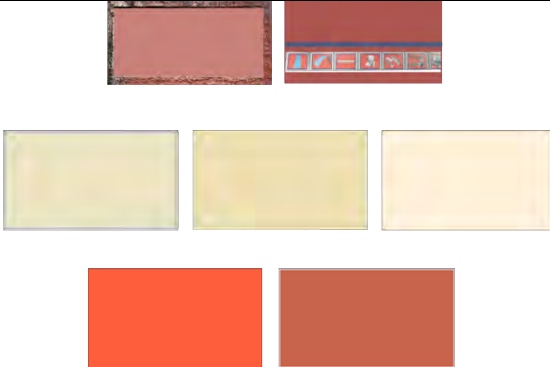
d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red, yellow, orange		Red: Small size, old shop and three big business size, modern Yellow: All medium business size shop sign panels Orange: Big business size, modern stores
ii) Cool: blues, green and violet		Seen in medium size modern stores
iii) Neutral: grey (warm and cool)		Warm grey tones are present in sign panels of medium business size. Cool grey sign panels belong to a medium size, local and big size, modern showroom.

Table 4.101: Color Temperature patterns in the background sign panels, Bengaluru

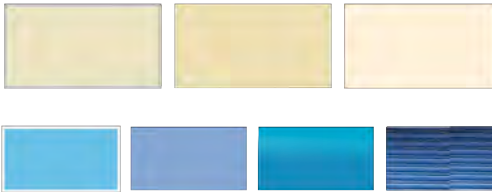
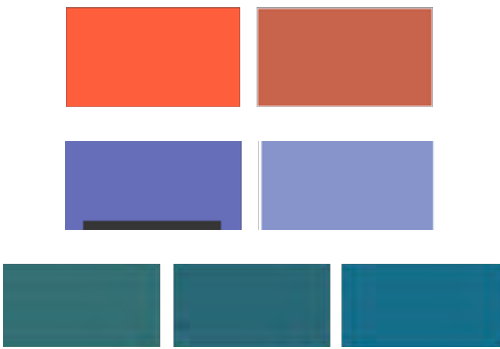
e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: yellow and blue-greens		<u>Yellow primary color sign panels</u>: Small and medium size old service shops <u>Blue primary color sign panels</u>: Medium size modern shop and stores
ii) Secondary: reddish orange, violet and green		Orange and Violet background sign panels are medium size, modern stores and showrooms Dark green background sign panels are in equal medium size new stores, big size new showrooms across marketplaces.

Table 4.102: Color Kinds patterns in the background sign panels mostly across marketplaces, Bengaluru

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.103 to 4.106 as follows:

a) Combination patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White boards with blue frames		One small business size, old shop and two medium business size, old shops
ii) Warm grey panels with dark brown borders to the panels		Medium size, fairly modern stores and an example of small size, old shop

Table 4.103: Color Combination patterns in the background sign panels, Bengaluru

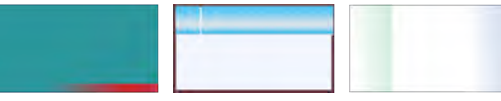
c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast: red-light grey, black-light grey		Equal number of medium size, old shops and big business size modern stores
ii) Simultaneous contrast: blue-greens with grayish whites mostly, with one blue-green and red example		Two big size modern shops and a medium old, local cafe

Table 4.104: Color Contrast patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Bengaluru

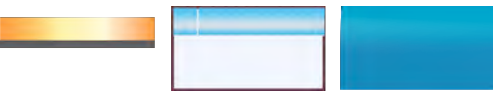
d) Effect pattern	Example	Business size
Color gradient effect mostly in cool blue tints and shades		Medium size, old shop and two big size, modern stores

Table 4.105: Color Effect pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Bengaluru

e) Scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
Adjacent / analogous scheme is seen for blue-blue green mostly, with one example of orange-yellow analogous scheme in sign panel		Exists for equal number of medium size modern shops and big size showrooms

Table 4.106: Color Scheme pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Bengaluru

3) **Summary: background sign panel color patterns**

Visual Relationships in similar business size shop signs

Among color description characteristics, hue, value, saturation and temperature have patterns in single grade. However, color kind pattern exists in both single and mixed grades for similar size shop signs. A few visual examples of these relationships in the patterns are as follows:

- *Yellow, yellow-green and pale yellow panels in huge number across marketplaces. The yellow hues of panels have warm temperatures and is a primary color kind, with varying values and saturations. Hence, there exists a visual relationship between hue-temperature-kind in taglines of shop signs across marketplaces (Fig. 4.145).*

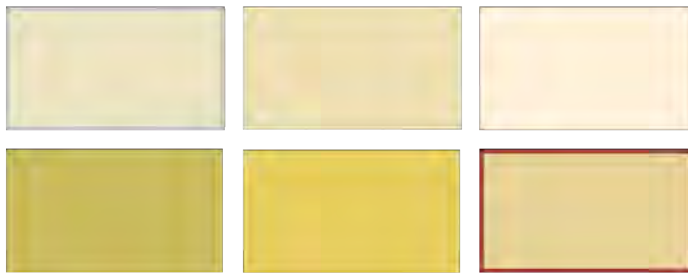


Fig. 4.145: Color hue-temperature relationship in similar business size shop signs, Bengaluru

- *Medium value (single grade) is seen in red background color appearing in the background sign panels of medium size modern stores. No connecting visual relationship between characteristics exist in this pattern (Fig. 4.146).*



Fig. 4.146: Color temperature of blue-green / blue in similar business shop signs, Bengaluru

Visual relationships in distinct size business shop signs

Among description characteristics, color hue, value and saturation have single grade patterns. However, color temperature and kinds appear in single as well as mixed grade patterns in distinct business size shop signs. Few examples of visual relationships in the said patterns are as follows:

- *Dark green background sign panels (single grade) occur in equal number of medium size, modern stores and big business size, modern shop sign panels. Here, in most sign panels the values are medium but saturation levels are muted / dull. The green and blue-greens*

have cool temperatures and are secondary color kinds. Therefore, a visual relationship exists between color hue-value-saturation-temperature and color kind exists for this pattern (Fig. 4.147).



Fig. 4.147: Color hue-primary colors-single grade relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Bengaluru

- *Medium bright value (single grade) pattern is there in green and blue background sign panels in distinct business size shop signs. All these colors have cool temperatures and occur in all medium size new stores and big size, modern showrooms.*

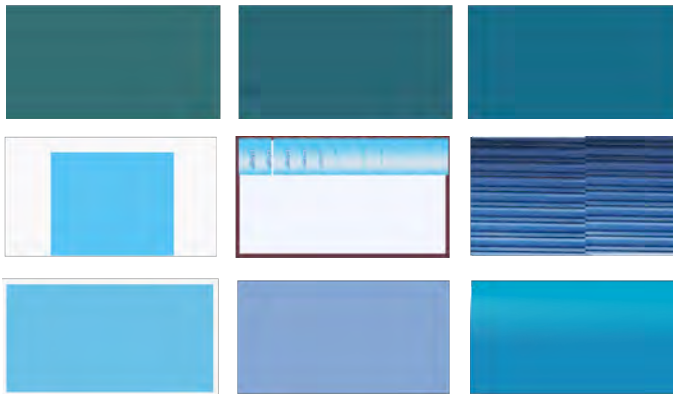


Fig. 4.148: Color hue-value-saturation relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Bengaluru

In color relationship characteristics, color effect and scheme characteristics have single grade patterns only. However, color contrast and combination characteristics have both single and mixed grade patterns in distinct business size shops.

- *Analogous/ adjacent color scheme (single grade) color pattern occurs in medium size modern shops and big size showrooms having colors: blue-blue green and one example of orange-yellow scheme in sign panel.*



Fig. 4.149: Adjacent color scheme (single grade) in backgrounds sign panels, Bengaluru

4.2.4.2 Trends

A) Main text color trends

No clear transitory trend we see for any of the color description characteristics of hue, value, saturation, temperature and color kinds. Bengaluru imbibes a diverse confluence of colors, styles and traditions within its boundaries. The overwhelming range is also seen in the data of shop signs per marketplace in Bengaluru studied as part of this research. Therefore, a clear transition of hues or other descriptive color characteristics from pre-independence till modern time periods exist. Therefore, we see only period-specific trends in the main text of shop signs in Bengaluru as follows:

Period specific color trends in the main text

Among color description characteristics, period specific trends appear for color hues and saturation. No period specific trend is seen in 1930-44 time period since this in India was ruled by the colonial British Raj. Each of the following sections describe the popular themes of a specific time period and their influence on the color trends in the shop signs as illustrated in the visual examples. No single dominant vogue of color display in shop names of Bengaluru and parallel use in Kanadda film poster titles is seen in 1945-59 as well. The exact reasons are not known in the selected shop signs data in this time period in our research. Likewise, no single dominant vogue of color display exists in shop names of Bengaluru and parallel use in Kanadda film poster titles in the time periods of 1975-89, 1990-2004 and 2005 onwards.

a) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

This trend is only seen in the shop names of signs across two marketplaces of Avenue Road and Narasimha raja road in Bengaluru. This historical period provided a strong impetus to the film industry with themes of relevant social issues along with some fun-n-frolic based subjects popular in bollywood and even in the Kannada cinema. This is projected in the use of orange-reds providing a vicarious pleasure to cinema lovers. Neo-nativity of the Tamil and Telugu cinema also exists in Kannada movie themes. The local flavor in the themes became the New Cinema¹⁶² in context of Kannada movies that gained popularity with the entry of new directors and faces such as P. Kanagal, Uday Kumar and Kalpana being cast in fun

¹⁶² The meticulous N. Lakshminarayanan, considered as one of the first experimental directors in Kannada, proclaims some of the themes of the New Cinema (IndiaNetZone, 2009).

based melodramas in those times. The provocative color hues of orange-red and yellow in different visual representation styles can be seen in the shop names of the signs belonging to the same time period in Bengaluru (Fig. 4.150).

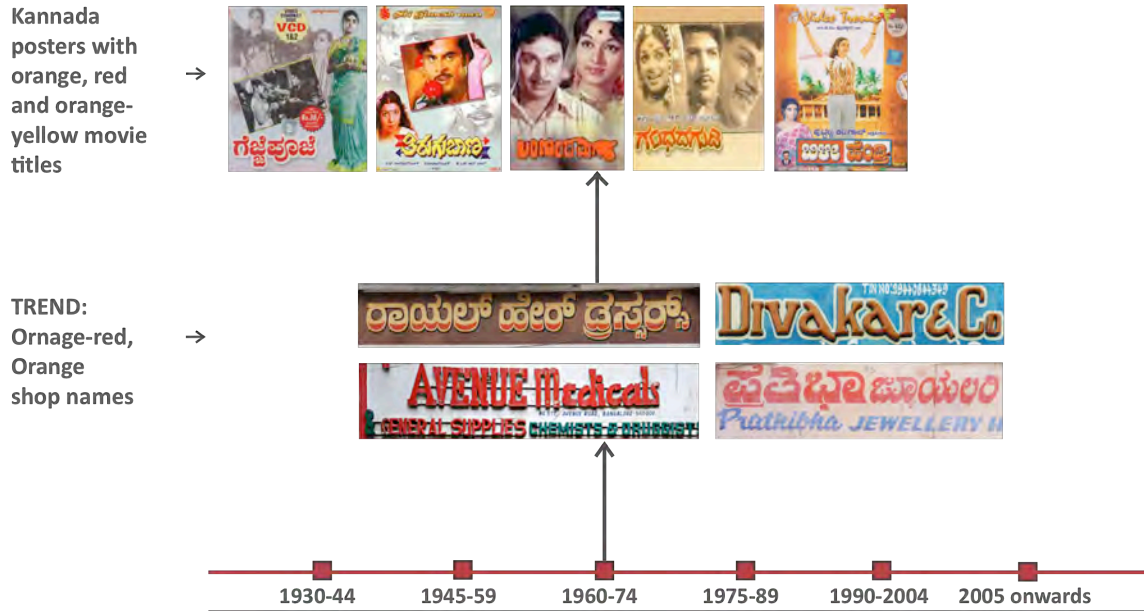


Fig. 4.150: Period specific color trends of hues with effects in the main text of shop signs, Bengaluru

3) Summary: main text color trends

Transitory color trend

In the case of transitory trends of Bengaluru, there are no continuous changes with time in any of the variables of color characteristics in both description and relationship dimensions of color.

Period specific color trend

Period specific color trends across marketplaces in case of Bengaluru, is only present in the time period from 1960-74. The Kannada cinema poster themes celebrated the New Cinema that stood for fun-n-frolic melodramas and swinging 60s themes that were made in bollywood at the time. The related vicarious pleasure, pomp and show are part of the orange-red and yellow film titles in Kannada movie posters, with the same hues also signifying the name identifications in shop signs across marketplaces in Bengaluru (Fig. 4.150). The characteristic rural subculture was also presented in these colors of film titles influencing the main text color palette in the shop signs belonging to the same time period.

B) Secondary text color trends

Tag lines are a promotional layer of information on a shop signboard. In our data of Bengaluru shop signs, the tag lines occur in very less percentage on the signboards. Therefore, there is a lack of a single variable changing continuously with time in the form of a transitory trend. This is especially noticeable in the shop signs in a city like Bengaluru, where the main text occupies around eighty to ninety percent of the visual space on a sign panel. Likewise, period specific trends do not exist for tag lines in shop signs of this city.

C) Background sign panel color trends

With multiple hues used in multiple formats and extensive mixing of materials and production techniques, no clear transitions of any color characteristic holds strong as transitory trends. Likewise, no single background sign panel period specific vogue emerges in any of the six time slots in the selected data of sign panels in our research.

4.2.4.3 Tendencies

The following sections outline the color tendencies as observed and analyzed in the foreground and background layers of information in the shop signs of Bengaluru:

A) Main text color tendencies

We see both general and distinct tendencies in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

All the color tendencies and their underlying reasons are outlined in the following sections:

a) Old shop signs have prominence of hand-painted color production followed by a few examples of handcrafted color production (wood on stone panels) in the main text

Most of the old shop signs having this tendency are at the backdrop of colonial time period and post independence times in India. The hand-painted color production cause is the same as explained in the main text general color tendencies of Hyderabad and Mumbai. In the case of hand-painted main text in Bengaluru shop signs, we see dark main text displayed over very light grey, off-white and white stone panel backgrounds – with or without the borders (Fig. 4.151 and 4.152).



Fig. 4.151: Hand-painted visual tendency endowed in the erstwhile stone symbolic forms and related carpentry work, Bengaluru



Fig. 4.152: Hand-painted and crafted production general color tendency in main text of old shop signs, Bengaluru

b) Modern shop signs have prominence of handcrafted and digital color production in the main text

The new face of shop signs came into being at the backdrop of various new developments in modern Bengaluru with an upsurge of IT and electronics. In the 1980s, this city realized a newly found status of a metropolis, replacing Mysore as the *urbs prima* of the Karnataka region (Gopalan, 2010; Nair J., 2005).

Among the new materials, the ultra-modern acrylic has been used in the main text as well as in the backgrounds of the modern sign panels of the marketplaces. Along with the modern status of Bengaluru and the related inventions, there is also an emergence of experimentation that caters to more flexibility and variety in the use of materials and their fabrication techniques. For instance, in 'Naraya silks' shop sign, the name written in Dravidian script bears 3D crafted geometric letterforms in acrylic (Fig. 4.153).



Fig. 4.153: Handcrafted and digital production general color tendency in main text of modern shop signs, Bengaluru

2) Distinct color tendencies

None exist for the main text of shop signs in Bengaluru in the data of our research.

Summary: main text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The foreground main text shows those general color tendencies that elaborate the rationale of using different color production techniques for old and modern shop signs. Among these the first tendency of hand-painted shop names in old shop signs occurs mainly because of the old tradition of making with hands in those times (Fig. 4.151 and 4.152).

On the other hand, the contemporary effect of IT and electronics has influenced the shop names in modern shop signs that saw upsurge as a by-product of liberalization post 1990s (Fig. 4.153).

B) Secondary text color tendencies

There are hardly any tag lines in the shops signs in Bengaluru. No distinct tendencies appear in tag lines in case of Bengaluru. Perhaps, this seems to be one of the reasons that we see only general tendencies in the secondary text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

These color tendencies for the secondary text exist across all marketplaces are as follows:

a) Old shop signs have prominently hand-painted colors in the secondary texts

The tag lines of old shop signs are also hand-painted like the painted shop names on the same sign panels. Therefore, the similar impelling forces cause the hand-painted as well as crafted identity of these tag lines (Fig. 4.154 and 4.155). Unlike the main text, no hand-crafted treatment in colors exists for secondary texts of same old shop signs in the city of Bengaluru, may be because of the fact that this modern city presents a mixed approach in terms of the choices of color in secondary texts and other layers of information on the shop signs.



Fig. 4.154: Hand-painted production general color tendency in tag lines of old shop signs, Bengaluru



Fig. 4.155: Few handcrafted production general color tendency in tag lines of old shop signs, Bengaluru

b) New shop signs have prominently handcrafted color production in the secondary text followed by digital color production

Modern material revolution with the introduction of acrylic and other digital production is a common template seen in all modern day shop signs, irrespective of the kind of city they belong to. In the first small business scale marketplace of Shivajinagar in East Bengaluru, the new and modern shop signs have taglines in digital color production prominently followed by two examples of handcrafted taglines. This general tendency is rooted in the context of modern technology and the twenty first century digital revolution. However, there are slight variations in the case of this color production tendency in modern shop signs for the city of Bengaluru. Here, along with modern digital look of colors in tag lines, there are examples of handcrafted tag lines in few shop sign panels that apply modern materials to craft the letterforms in the texts (Fig. 4.156).



Fig. 4.156: Hand-crafted and digital production general color tendency in tag lines of modern shop signs, Bengaluru

2) Distinct color tendencies

None exist for the tag lines of shop signs in the marketplaces of Bengaluru. This case is similar to Hyderabad and Mumbai secondary texts tendencies as well. In all these cities, the shop names dominate and capture 80-90 percent of the signboard space in the data in our research.

3) Summary: secondary text color tendencies

General color tendencies

The secondary text shows same general color tendencies for old and modern shop signs across all marketplaces in Bengaluru for the characteristic of color production (Fig. 4.154 to 4.156) as summarized for the main text of the same shop signs. Refer the overall summary of general color tendencies in the main text of shop signs in the city of Bengaluru above.

C) Background sign panel color tendencies

We see general tendencies in the background sign panel colors of shop signs shared between two marketplaces of Shivajinagar and Avenue road in Bengaluru as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) White background sign panels with blue borders in shop signs

This particular general tendency exists for four out of the five selected city shop sign backgrounds in the data of our research. Comparatively, in the city of Bengaluru this tendency is part of very less number of background sign panels and the background color is a withered yellow white (Fig. 4.157). The social and aesthetic underpinnings guide the

arrangement of white and blue borders in background sign panels as outlined in section 4.2.1.3 representing the same color tendency in the pink city of India.



Fig. 4.157: White boards with blue borders general color tendency in old background sign panels, Bengaluru

2) Distinct color tendencies in background sign panels

a) Yellow color in background sign panels of old and new shop signs

Bengaluru has been popular as a city of paradox in terms of social mix of people, culture, economy, politics and also the historical and newer forms of architecture that it preserves in its facades and old shop fronts. At present, Bangalore is definitely trapped into an in-between situation offering neither the vivacity of the traditional city nor the efficiency of a modern one. In the same line of thought, the city's architecture presents an interesting use and fusion of materials to communicate with a range of visual representations. The yellow color signifies the city's stone identification, vintage lifestyle, tastes and old world charm conception of the ancient times (Fig. 4.158).



Fig. 4.158: a. 'Rash-e-Jannat' palace made by Tipu Sultan, Bengaluru, b. B.R.V. theatre, Cubbon road

This color of lime base and brick mortar has not faded with the trials of time and stands alone as the most innovatively applied and dominating hue especially in erstwhile architectural styles of Bengaluru. The meaning of this withered yellow of the stone base connects with the business purpose of old, locally driven and indigenous small business shops in the old times in Bengaluru. The base panel materials range from old to new materials (Fig. 4.159). Similar tendency also exists for Hyderabad (section 4.2.2.3).



Fig. 4.159: Yellow-green/ brownish yellow distinct color tendency of old background sign panels, Bengaluru

3) **Summary: background sign panel color tendencies**

General color tendencies

Unlike the traditional city of Jaipur and Hyderabad, in the modern city of Bengaluru as a cosmopolitan, the background sign panels of shops include shared general tendencies between two marketplaces. No apparent reason appears to explain this particular difference between color tendencies for panels belonging to these cities.

Our observations are for the shop signs photo-documented from Bengaluru during the data collection stage in this research. In the first general tendency for background sign panels across two marketplaces in Bengaluru, the rationale behind the occurrence of white panels with blue borders is rooted in a national historical context (Fig. 4.157).

The contextual underpinnings and their detailed descriptions for this general tendency of background sign panels is there in part C) of section 4.2.1.3 on Jaipur city color tendencies.

Distinct color tendency

The present distinct tendency is the use of light yellow-green hue in the background sign panels across marketplaces in Bengaluru. The cause of this tendency is rooted in the color meanings and associations of yellow for merchants in Bengaluru.

The material and colors used belong to an ancient architectural style that is a visual heritage of facades, buildings and other structures such as shop signs in the Bengaluru city (Fig. 4.158 and 4.159).

4.2.4.4 Conventions

A) Main text color conventions

Color conventions from business point of view only occur in the main text as follows:

Color conventions from business point of view

Colors have definite meanings associated with the product or service provided by the shops. Following color conventions from the point of view of particular business shops are prominently present across marketplaces as follows:

a) Blue color in the main text

This color convention is same as seen in shop names across marketplaces in Jaipur and Hyderabad cities. Therefore, the meaningful basis of applying blue in shop names is the same as that for Jaipur and Hyderabad shop signs (sections 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.2.4). Blue is used for local product brands, service shops and a craftsman's store in the main text of shop signs in Bengaluru (Fig. 4.160).



Fig. 4.160: Blue hue business color convention in main text of small size service shop signs, Bengaluru

b) White main text against dark backgrounds

Conventionally, white connotes purity and universality. One of the most striking and enduring examples of psychological meanings occur in large business size medical clinics and stores. An interesting notion existed in the past that scientists wore beige coats. But, later in the late 19th century, medical professionals chose white ones. The color white was chosen because of the idea of hope and expectations for healing and recovery that the physicians would bring¹⁶³. This new notion of white for medical profession and service can be associated with its application in the name identifications of such medical clinics and pharmacy shops (Fig. 4.161).

¹⁶³ Read more at: <http://www.sensationalcolor.com/color-meaning/color-meaning-symbolism-psychology/all-about-the-color-white-4369#.VCscECiQkTM> | Sensational Color



Fig. 4.161: White business color convention in main text of modern clinic and pharmacy shops, Bengaluru

c) Golden yellow in the main text of shop signs

Golden jewellery is considered to be the purest, long lasting and most valuable as is the case with silver jewellery (Fig. 4.162). In Indian business context, gold signifies purity and power (Fig. 4.162). Lavishness is represented by the yellow-golden color used in the names of showrooms selling pure gold jewellery across the marketplaces in Bengaluru (Fig. 4.163). Since ancient times, people around the world have associated gold with magic and divinity as well. This historical belief is also followed in the gold metal, hue and lustre that are part of south Indian jewellery and the special silk cloth of South India (Weatherford, 2009).



Fig. 4.162: Golden color in high-end south Indian golden jewellery showrooms, Bengaluru



Fig. 4.163: Golden-yellow hue business color convention in main text of premium and luxury branded gold jewellery shop signs, Bengaluru

c) Silvery white main text in shop signs

Brand names that project female products are mostly represented in white shop names set against darker backgrounds. Three out of four visual examples having this convention as illustrated below belong to the prominently large business scale marketplace of Narasimha raja road (Fig. 4.164). This convention is distinct for specifically fashion garments and other female oriented brands. In South India, silver is considered pure and sacred. The white look of this silver may perhaps reveal the purity, finish as well as *sattvaguna* associated with the inner meaning of white according to the vedas (Frawley, 2008).



Fig. 4.164: Silvery white hue business color convention in main text of female fashion, silk saree showroom signs, Bengaluru

3) **Summary: main text color conventions**

Color conventions in the business context

In the context of local everyday service shops, the most general convention of blue color has been applied in such local service shop names (Fig. 4.160). In the context of changing notions and meanings of white in the late 19th century, it has been used in modern clinic and pharmacy shops in modern times (Fig. 4.161). The golden shop names reflect the commercial significance of the gold jewellery business associated with the established power and concept of metal gold (Fig. 4.162 and 4.163). Silver with a whitish look has a connotation of sattvaguna pertaining to the meaning ascribed by the Vedas for shining white hue in context of southern India. This embedded tendency influences the meaningful cause of the shining silvery white of the shop name identifications in the two marketplaces (Fig. 4.164).

B) Secondary text color conventions

None from historical or business context in the shop signs that exist in the city of Bengaluru, as has also been the case in the southern city of Hyderabad.

C) Background sign panel color conventions

None from historical or business context exist for the city of Bengaluru.

4.2.5 Chennai

Singara Chennai or *beautiful Chennai* as popularly known, imbibes the traditional beauty of the city plan, architecture, history, dense population and the green content sustained at its best in the northern city along with the tech savvy IT identity of the southern corridor that forms the salient feature of this city as a cosmopolitan metropolis. Chennai is like an organic entity, constantly changing in form and function. This change is a result of both history and geography (Muthiah, 2008). This city is the melting pot of the conservative and orthodox with the contemporary and the futuristic (Moorjani, 2012).

There are many theories describing *Chennapattanam* or *Chennai*. One of them reveals a profound basis and significance of Chennai associated with Tamil language. The word *Chenni* in Tamil means *face* and it is believed that the city's name has emerged from Chennakesava¹⁶⁴ Perumal temple that dates back to 1646 CE. This temple is believed to be the face of the city, hence the name (Srinivasan, 2002). The quadrants of tendencies and conventions reveal the embedded meanings of color and the symbolism mainly rooted in the temple customs, beliefs and the related iconography. The visual cultural outdoor display of color and forms in Chennai is a distinct collaboration of popular themes in cinema and politics echoing the symbolic Tamil cultural nationalism¹⁶⁵. These themes influence the color trends occurring in all the information layers of shop names, tag lines and background sign panels in the selected marketplaces from Chennai for the color analysis. In this city, the planned and the unplanned co-exist simultaneously and get revealed by exploring them little by little (Kamath, 2000).

4.2.5.1 Patterns

The color patterns observed in the shop signs of Chennai are as follows:

A) Main text color patterns

Following main text patterns showcase visual examples of shop signs from Thiruvelluvar nagar, Poonamallee High road and Thyagaraya nagara marketplaces arranged from the left to right in all the visual examples:

¹⁶⁴ Chennakesava is a manifestation of Lord Vishnu. The Chennakesava Temple, originally called Vijayanarayana Temple. Refer: <http://srivishwakarmans.com/history.aspx>

¹⁶⁵ Tamil cultural nationalism / Dravidianism is a deeply cultivated feature of South India. Since 1967, it has been a potential political force celebrated by the Tamil nationalist parties (Hancock, 2008).

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.107 to 4.111 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Small size very old and medium size old shops
ii) Orange		Medium size modern stores mostly
iii) Yellow		Large size store and showrooms

Table 4.107: Color Hue patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in yellow		Medium size and big size new stores and showrooms
ii) Medium values in red and blue		Small size old stores and a medium size modern stores

Table 4.108: Color Value patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Medium saturation in orange, green		Medium size old and modern local stores
ii) Low saturation in blue		Medium size old local shops

Table 4.109: Color Saturation patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: orange, yellow		Medium size old and big size modern stores and showroom
ii) Cool: blue and green		Medium size old and local service shops
iii) Warm and Cool: red and blue, red and green		Small and medium size old and modern stores
iv) Neutral: silver grey		Small and medium size old local stores

Table 4.110: Color Temperature patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and blue		Small and medium size old local service shops

ii) Secondary: orange and green		Small and medium size local old and modern stores
iii) Primary and secondaries: red, blue and green		Small and medium size old service shops

Table 4.111: Color Kinds patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the main text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.112 to 4.116 as follows:

a) Combination	Example	Business size
i) Red and white		Medium size modern shops and stores

Table 4.112: Color combination pattern in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

b) Hierarchy	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: red to blue, blue to red		Small size old local shops
ii) Primary to secondary: orange-red to green		Small size old service shops and a textile store

Table 4.113: Color Hierarchy patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast: white against dark backgrounds		Medium and big size modern store and showrooms
ii) High contrast: yellow against darker backgrounds		Medium size local stores
iii) Cold-warm contrast: for complimentary schemes		Medium size old shops and a medium size modern restaurant

Table 4.114: Color Contrast patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

d) Effects patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Color attraction: Highlight effect – white outlines around letters <i>Inner emboss</i> (to give a relief effect) in dark grey inside red, yellow and blue colored	 <i>Highlight color effect</i> <i>Inner emboss color effect</i>	Medium size modern showrooms and a restaurant Medium size inner emboss effect in grey

letterforms of the main text		
ii) Flicker effect in complimentary colors: red-green and orange-blue	     	Medium size old and modern local shops

Table 4.115: Color Effect patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

e) Schemes patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Triadic color scheme of red, green and blue	  	Medium size modern shops and an old store
ii) Complimentary color scheme of red-green and orange-blue	  	Medium and big size modern stores and a showroom
iii) Split complimentary color scheme of yellow-sky blue and green-yellow	  	Medium size modern service shops
iv) Monochromatic color scheme	  	Medium size old, local service shops

Table 4.116: Color Scheme patterns in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

Summary: main text color patterns

In Chennai, we find both color description and relationship patterns that present a variety in the color syntax in terms of order and arrangements. For a few pattern examples, we could identify visual relationships between a color description and a color relationship characteristic in similar and distinct business size shop signs as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

- For color temperature description characteristic, there is only one example occurring in single grade of temperature of similar size business shop signs. In this example, there also emerges a visual relationship between color temperature, saturation and contrast levels of both blue and green (Fig. 4.165). This relationship unifies two color description characteristics (temperature and saturation) with color relationship characteristics (contrast and combination).



Fig. 4.165: Green-blue combination-cool temperatures-medium contrast-medium saturation relationship in main text of similar business shop signs, Chennai

- *Color scheme characteristic has patterns in single grades*

The purpose might be to give visual balance and coherence by using two-color harmony in the main text. For instance, split complimentary colors in mixed grade appears in all medium size old service shop signs (Fig. 4.166). This relationship endows a consistent distinction in the words used in the main text of these shop signs across all marketplaces. Additionally, same saturation grades of yellow and white, yellow and blue can also be seen (Fig. 4.166). This binds a color description characteristic of saturation with a color relationship characteristic of scheme.



Fig. 4.166: Color split-complementary-scheme-saturation relationship in similar business shop signs, Chennai

Monochromatic scheme inside letterforms of main text appears for grey and its tints (light grey / white) for two out of the three marketplaces. Therefore, a visual relationship between description characteristic of hue and relationship characteristic of scheme is very evident (Fig. 4.167).



Fig. 4.167: Monochromatic color schemes in grey/white hue relationships in similar business shop signs, Chennai

- *Mixed grades of combination, contrast and effect color relationship patterns exist for specifically medium size old and modern business shop signs*

In case of red and white combination in main text, there is a relationship between hues, saturation, value and combination characteristics (Fig. 4.168).



Fig. 4.168: Color combination (mixed grade)-saturation-value relationship in shop signs, Chennai

Color contrast pattern in single grade of bright yellow hue inside the main text against dark backgrounds appears in only medium size old and modern shops. Here, the hue and brightness have a relationship with color contrast characteristic (Fig. 4.169).



Fig. 4.169: High contrast- bright yellow against darker backgrounds relationship in similar business shop signs, Chennai

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

- *For color hue patterns, the choice of colors yellow and orange for the main text is based on the color choice for the background sign panels*

The purpose might be to give visual impact to the main text against the background sign panels. The objective may be to provide a visual impact in the name identifications. This objective seems to be the most striking feature in yellow colored backgrounds of panels followed by orange-red colored main text against lighter backgrounds (Fig. 4.170).



Fig. 4.170: High contrast single grade (yellow, orange reds) relationship in distinct business shop signs, Chennai

- *For color value both single and mixed grade patterns appear for distinct size business size shop signs. However, for hue, saturation, temperature and color kind, only single grade patterns appear in distinct business shop signs.*

For instance, the illustrated pattern for distinct business size shops appears in mixed grade of medium and dark value and medium and low saturation in red and blue color combination (Fig. 4.171). This relates two description characteristics (value and saturation) with a relationship characteristic (combination).



Fig. 4.171: Color value-saturation-combination-relationship in the distinct business shop signs, Chennai

Emboss effect in form of inner shadow in dark grey has been used in the main texts of medium size and two big size modern shops in different marketplaces (Fig. 4.172).



Fig. 4.172: Color attraction effect - single hue of grey inline to amplify shop names in the signs, Chennai

- *Contrast, scheme patterns in single, mixed grades in distinct business size shop signs*

A mixed grade complimentary red-green / cold-warm contrast of red and green in main text exists for medium size old shops and a big size modern restaurant. Here, the cold-warm contrast has also a parallel with same color combination of red and green that is also an established complimentary color scheme (Fig. 4.173).



Fig. 4.173: Cold-Warm contrast-combination-hue in complimentary colors in the main texts of distinct business size shop signs, Chennai

B) Secondary text color patterns

Following secondary text patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Thiruvelluvar nagar, Poonamallee High road and Thyagaraya nagar signs placed from left to right in the visual examples with the respective secondary texts enclosed within yellow frames:

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the secondary text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.117 to 4.121 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White		Small size, old local service shops
ii) Black		Small old, local stationery stores
iii) Light blue		Small size, old local service shops and a cafe

Table 4.117: Color Hue patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Medium value in blue		Small size very old shops and a medium size shop
ii) Low values in green and red		Mostly small size old general shops and a big size modern showroom

Table 4.118: Color Value patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

c) Saturation pattern	Example	Business size
i) Bright saturation in red and blue		Mostly small size local shops and one example each of medium size shops for both bright red and blue taglines

Table 4.119: Color Saturation pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Cool: blue and green		Small size old shops and a medium size modern store
ii) Neutral: dull grey or dull brown-grey		Medium size old local service shops and a store

Table 4.120: Color Temperature patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary: red and blue		Red and blue primary color taglines - Small size old shops and a medium size modern store (in each primary color kind tagline)
ii) Primary and secondary: red and green		Small size old shops
iii) Primary and white: red/brown and white		Big size modern stores and a medium size old shop

Table 4.121: Color Kinds patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the secondary text are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.122 to 4.127 as follows:

a) Combinations patterns	Examples	Business size
ii) Red text and white outlines		Modern big size stores and a showroom
iii) Red and green, Red and blue		Small size old local shops

Table 4.122: Color Combinations patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: blue to red, pink (red tint) to yellow		Small size old local Store and a service shop
ii) Secondary to primary: green to red, green to blue		Small size old / local café and a modern big size clinic.

Table 4.123: Color Hierarchy patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

c) Contrast patterns	Pattern examples	Business size
High contrast: i) White on dark grey, green and red boards	i) 	i) Small size old shops
ii) Black on lighter withered light pink, light yellow and bluish white boards	ii) 	ii) Old local hardware and technology based old local stores and medium size modern shops
ii) Cold-warm contrast is red-blue and green-red		Old-small and fairly modern-medium size shops and stores respectively

Table 4.124: Color Contrast patterns in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

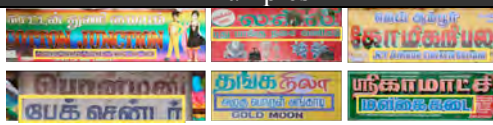
e) Effect pattern	Examples	Business size
i) Highlight effect by using white outline around colored letterforms of secondary texts		Mostly medium and Large size modern shops and one example of an old, local small size service shop

Table 4.125: Color Scheme pattern in the secondary text of shop signs, Chennai

Summary: secondary text color patterns

As seen in the main text, for secondary text too we could see visual relationships with different objectives of display in both color description and relationship characteristics for similar and distinct business size shop signs as follows:

Visual Relationships in similar business size shop signs

Color hue, value, saturation and temperature patterns appear in single grade for similar business size shop signs. However, color kinds have mixed grade patterns. The exact reasons may not be known. Single and more direct hues like white, red, blue etc. are used with almost same value and saturation single grades in case of secondary texts. Depending upon content emphasis objectives, certain words or sentences are made secondary in a tag line. To fulfill this visually, contrast is required that is achieved by using a primary and a secondary color together.

- *White tag lines on dark backgrounds exist in small size, old local service shops* (Fig. 4.174). There is high contrast of reverse letterforms in white in the taglines. This creates a visual relationship between high contrast-value, no saturation in white hue on the signboards.



Fig. 4.174: White hue-contrast-saturation-relationship in similar business size shop signs, Chennai

- *Dark green tag lines on light backgrounds exist in medium size, old local stores and a medium size modern shop.* This dark green, a cool hue has less value in all signs. This also includes very low saturation (Fig. 4.175). Hence, there exists a visual relationship between hue-temperature-value-saturation in all visual examples.



Fig. 4.175: Black hue-contrast-saturation-single relationship in similar business size shop signs, Chennai

Visual relationships in distinct business size shop signs

Color kinds, value and temperature specifically in single grade appear for distinct business size shop signs. Few visual examples of the color patterns of both grades are as follows:

- *Red taglines with low value (single grade) appears for mostly small size, old general shops and a big size, modern showroom* (Fig. 4.176). Red hue has low value, but medium level saturation and warm temperature. The characteristics are bound together in a visual relationship for this pattern.



Fig. 4.176: Color (red)-value-hue-saturation-temperature relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Chennai

Among color relationship characteristics, hierarchy and contrast have patterns in mixed grades for distinct business size shop signs as illustrated in visual examples below.

- *Primary to primary hierarchy in taglines (mixed grade) appears in small size old local store and a service shop.* Color kind-combination-hierarchy-temperature and hues are bound in a visual relationship in mixed grade in this pattern.

Similarly, *secondary (green) to primary (red) hierarchy exists in tag lines* is another pattern in small size old / local café and a modern big size clinic (Fig. 4.177).



Fig. 4.177: Color kinds-combinations (blue, red and red, green)-hierarchy-temperature patterns in secondary text in distinct business size shop signs, Chennai

- *High color contrast in white / black taglines (single grades respectively) appear in small size old shops and a service shop; old local hardware and technology based old local stores and medium size modern shops in case of pattern of black taglines* (Fig. 4.178).



Fig. 4.178: White and Black taglines on lighter and darker backgrounds-high color contrast relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Chennai

C) Background sign panel color patterns

Following patterns showcase visual relationships that are repetitive for Thiruvelluvar nagara, Poonamallee High road and Thyagaraya nagara marketplace shop signs placed from left to right in the proceeding visual examples of background sign panels from Chennai.

1) Color description patterns

All such patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.126 to 4.130 as follows:

a) Hue patterns	Examples	Business size
i) White and off-white		Seen in equal number of small size old shops and medium and big size stores
ii) Blue		Old, medium and big size modern shops and stores

Table 4.126: Color Hue patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

b) Value patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High value in off-white		Old small size service shops
ii) Medium value in red and blue		Medium, big size modern showrooms Small size old shops and medium size modern stores

Table 4.127: Color Value patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

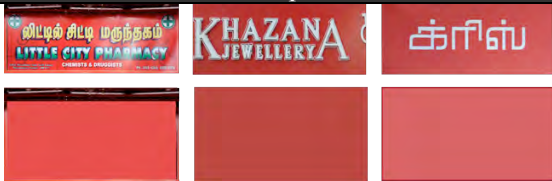
c) Saturation patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Bright saturation in red		Medium size modern showrooms and a store
ii) Medium saturation in yellow		Seen in new/modern big size stores and a old/small size store.

Table 4.128: Color Saturation patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

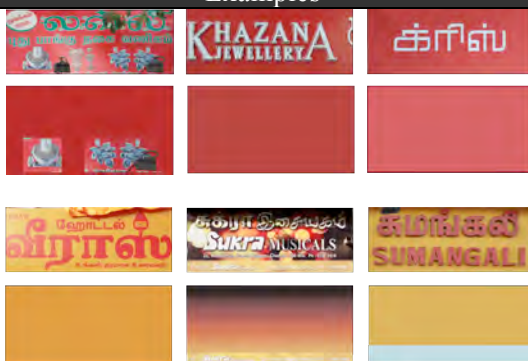
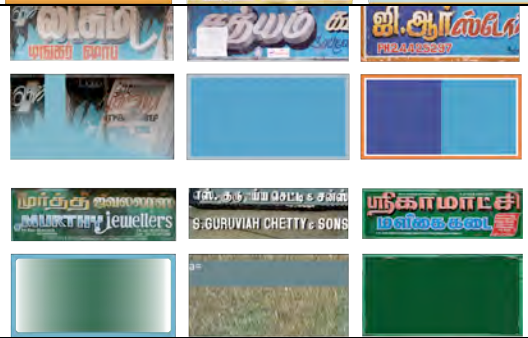
d) Temperature patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Warm: red and white, orange-yellow		All big size, branded, modern shops and showrooms (both local as well as national brands)
ii) Cool: blues and green		Small size local old shops and medium size
iii) Neutral: grey		Small size old general shops as well as few examples of big size modern showrooms

Table 4.129: Color Temperature patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

e) Kinds patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary colors: in pale red, yellow and blue		Small and medium size old service shops
ii) Secondary color in green and red		Green sign panels – for mostly medium size old shops and stores. Orange sign panels –

		for mostly big size stores and showrooms
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Table 4.130: Color Kinds patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

2) Color relationship patterns

All such patterns in the background sign panels are illustrated with visual examples in tables 4.131 to 4.135 as follows:

a) Combination pattern	Examples	Business size
i) Green/blue/blue-green horizontal bands		Medium size old local shops and big size modern showrooms

Table 4.131: Color Combination pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

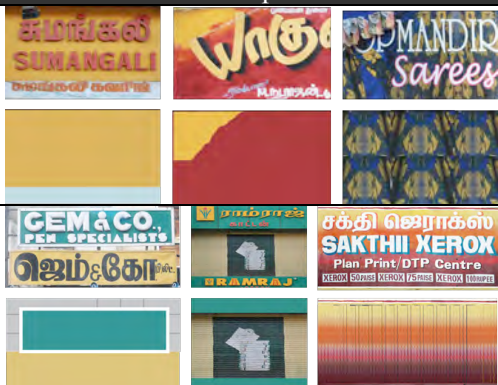
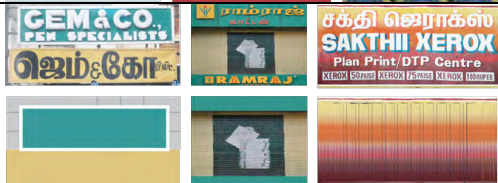
b) Hierarchy patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Primary to primary: yellow to blue, yellow to red, dark blue to yellow		Big modern big business size modern stores and a medium size old shop
ii) Secondary to Primary: green to yellow, one example of orange to red shades in gradient form		Medium size hardware and service stores; in a big size modern showroom too

Table 4.132: Color Hierarchy patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

c) Contrast patterns	Examples	Business size
i) High contrast: red-white white-black and white-orange etc.		Mostly medium size stores and two examples of big size modern showrooms in deep red-grey and green-yellow.

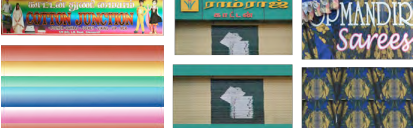
ii) Cold-warm contrast: green-yellow and blue-yellow		Seen in big size modern stores
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Table 4.133: Color Contrast patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

d) Effect pattern	Example	Business size
i) Color gradient effects: multi-colors and one chrome		This pattern exists for medium size stores and a big size, modern shop

Table 4.134: Color Effects pattern in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

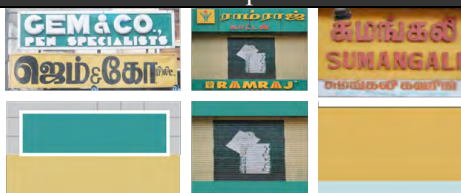
e) Color scheme patterns	Examples	Business size
i) Split-complimentary schemes: yellow green- blue green, yellow-green and yellow-orange with blue		Seen in an old medium size store, modern big size showroom and a big modern family restaurant
ii) Monochromatic color schemes		Exists in mostly big size, modern showrooms and some medium size modern stores

Table 4.135: Color Schemes patterns in the background sign panels of shop signs, Chennai

3) **Summary: background sign panel patterns:**

There is a strong influence of white / withered grey of the concrete as well as stone panels in old shop signs. Likewise, in the new signs, acrylic base and good quality flex panels channelize the use of fantastic red, blue and yellow (primary hues) in backgrounds. Because of this, a color attribute acts as a visual anchor that creates distinction between background sign panel from main text and secondary text in shop signs in context of contemporary color visual display design. Two kinds of visual relationships for the patterns in background sign panels with different objectives of display appear in similar and distinct business size shop signs as follows:

Visual relationships in similar business size shop signs

Among description characteristics, color value, saturation and temperature patterns are in single and mixed grade for similar business size shops.

There is a huge variety of colors used in Chennai, pertaining to specific requirements and identities of shops, though the group of shops share similar business size, but include very different product/service provisions.

In case of color relationship characteristics, patterns appear only for contrast in mixed grades for similar size business shop signs. A few visual examples of these relationships in the patterns are as follows:

- *Yellow-white single grade of hue background pattern exists for all medium size modern shops. The same hue in backgrounds of shop signs across marketplaces also bear the same value and saturation (Fig. 4.179).*



Fig. 4.179: Color hue (yellow-white)-brightness-value relationship in similar business size shop signs, Chennai

- *Bright Red background panels trend appears for all medium size shops and showrooms. Here, the visual relationship is between bright red-the hue-warm temperature and red as a primary color kind (Fig. 4.180).*

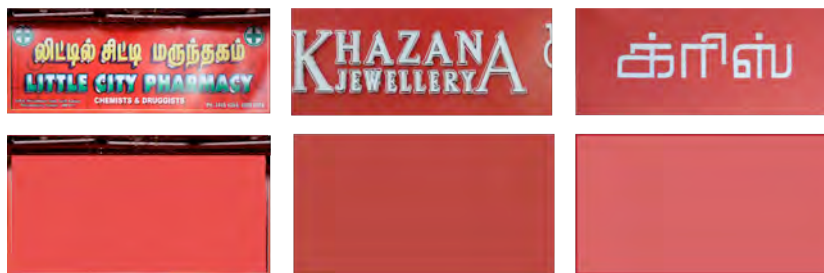


Fig. 4.180: Bright color saturation-temperature-kind-single grade relationship in similar size shops, Chennai

- *Neutral and cool temperatures mixed grade are seen in light off-whites and light pale blue color background sign panels across marketplaces in Chennai (Fig. 4.181).*



Fig. 4.181: Color temperature-value-saturation-relationship in similar business size shops, Chennai

- *Cold-warm color contrast of all other relationship characteristics appear in a mixed grade pattern.* For instance, primary color kind (single grade pattern) in mixed options of pale red, yellow and blue appears in all small size service shop background panels (Fig. 4.182).

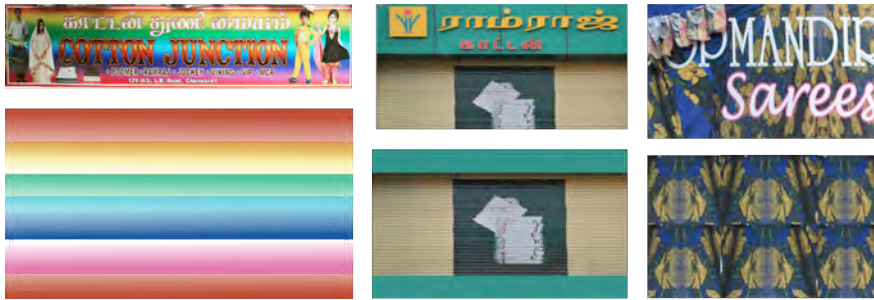


Fig. 4.182: Cold-warm color contrast pattern in the similar business size shops signs, Chennai

Visual relationships in distinct size business shop signs

The purpose here is to use color combinations and contrasts as tools to create desired emphasis and distinction of different layers of information of foreground text as follows:

- *Color hierarchy pattern from Secondary to Primary color kind occurs in Medium size hardware and service stores in a big size modern showroom too* (Fig. 4.183). For instance, green (secondary) to yellow (primary) arrangements in this pattern is common across two marketplaces.

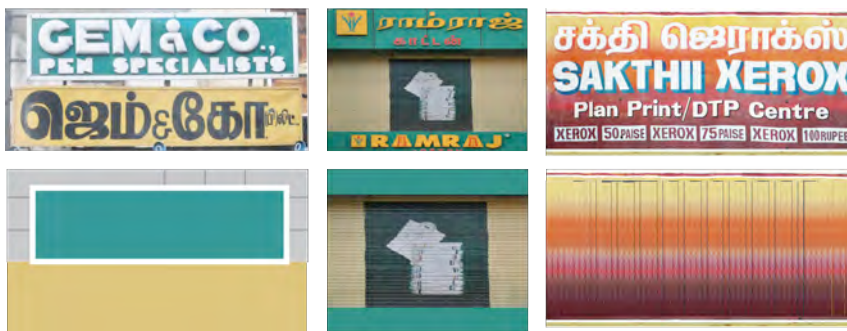


Fig. 4.183: Color hierarchy-temperature mixed grade relationship in distinct business size shop signs, Chennai

4.2.5.2 Trends

A) Main text color trends

We see both transitory and period-specific trends in the main text of shop signs in Chennai as follows:

1) Transitory color trends in the main text

For the city of Chennai, there occurs a lot of diversity in case of hues leading to no clear transitory trends.

2) Period specific color trends in the main text

No period specific trend is seen in 1930-44 time period. Each of the following sections describe the popular themes of a specific time period and their influence on the color trends in the shop signs as illustrated in the visual examples.

a) 1945-59, popular themes and color trends

In the periods of 1940s and 50s, films that were made in Tamil language imbibed freedom struggle and sacrificial heroic themes being the dominant feature of the stories. In Kollywood²⁴⁸ there was a celebration of many melodramas like social ills, family breakdowns, good versus bad etc. The film titles of all these movies are in white color and the main text of shops signs specifically belonging to this time slot is also displayed in white. The ascendancy of the two stars, M. G. Ramachandran and Sivaji Ganesan increased the popularity of cinema and established their aristocracy in Tamil movies. Their admirers formed a fan club that ultimately emerged as a strong political network (Pandian, 1992:110).

White color use in these films portraying the grand actors like MGR, Sivaji Ganesan and the likes implies an almost classical and aesthetic essence that captures the cultural tastes and subjects of interests of Dravidians of Tamil Nadu in those times. Elaborating further, white in the bold strokes of the Dravidian letterforms as a popular style echoes the political cultural idiom of Dravida Nadu in these years of revolution of Periyar¹⁶⁶ based on the

²⁴⁸ Tamil cinema is often referred to as kollywood. The term kollywood dates back to the 1940-80s when the term began to be widely describe Tamil cinema. Refer: <http://www.tamilfilmbox.com/what-is-tamil-film/>

¹⁶⁶ E. V. Ramamsamy is known as Periyar or Thanai Periyar is a social activist, politician and businessman who started the self-respect movement in Dravida Nadu (Mehta and Pantham, 2006).

philosophy of Tamil Nationalism²⁵¹. This can be seen in the use of pure white as a marquee of revolutionary objectives that finds an aesthetic style that was adopted in the hand-painted main text in the shop signs of the same time periods (Fig. 4.184).



Fig. 4.184: Period specific color hue trend (1945-59) of white in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

b) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

This historical period provided a strong impetus to the film industry with themes of relevant social issues along with some fun-n-frolic based subjects popular in bollywood. The themes also depict the popular discontent in the poster designs as well. The same themes of swinging fun filled 1960s and aggressive 1970s were also popular in the Tamil cinema.

Neo-nativity in tamil movies became the theme of popular imagination in those times. In the context, the movie titles use orange-reds and yellows in the kollywood movie posters of those times. The provocative hues in different visual representation styles can be seen in the shop names of the signs belonging to the same time period in Chennai (Fig. 4.185).

²⁵¹ Tamil nationalism was thus based on three ideologies: dismantling of Brahmin hegemony, and the revitalization of the Pure Tamil language and social reforms (Moorti, 2004: 549).

their Tamil icons and this practice is almost a consistent visual motif that adorns the text in signboards, hoardings, wall art or the guirella street grafitti (Fig. 4.186).

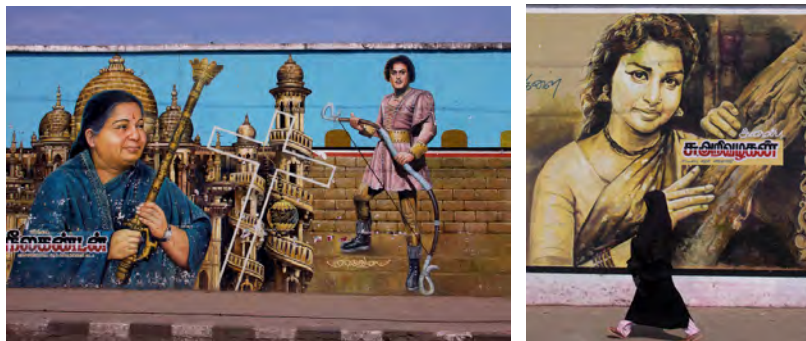


Fig. 4.186: Visual political identity of colors in wall art texts and symbolic Kollywood as well as legendary poiliticians of Tamil Nadu hand-painted as lifesize statesque icons, Chennai

Also in this period, photo-realism technique was applied in poster designs. A strong graphic vitality in these hues was contributed by hardedge black under casing given to the movie titles as well as shop names (Fig. 4.187).

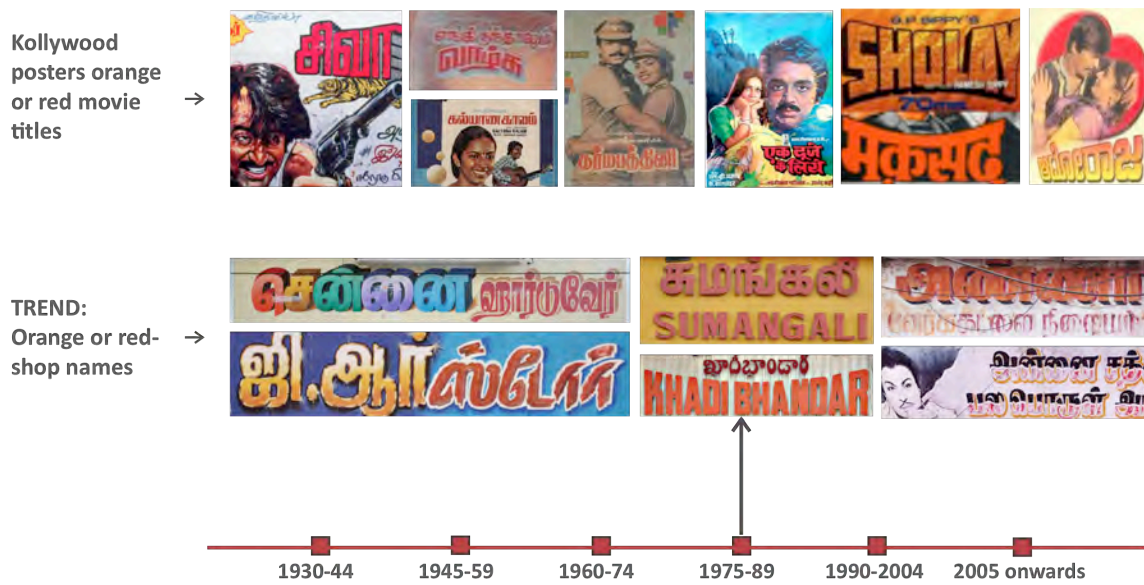


Fig. 4.187: Period specific color trends (1975-89) and combinations of hues parallel to art movements in main text of shop signs, Chennai

d) 1990-2004, popular themes and color trends

1990s is well known for mixed themes in the bollywood as well as kollywood. With liberalization in Indian economy in this time period, the new tastes according to the changing cultural preferences of new generation could be observed in the visual culture of commercial

sign design as well as popular themes of imagination in the creative visual medium of films in Chennai. Preminda Jacob's essay on the history and use of banner advertisements in Tamil cinema is a testimony of a unique design form of creating visually and physically imposing painted figures of the movie stars in urban spaces. This connects with more tech savvy audience that prefers an international appeal in visual form and representation of identities (Jacobs, 2007). Therefore, we see a lot of globally popular color combinations of red and blue or red with blue and green together in the shop names. This depicts a modern taste in context of globalization along with the preservation of deep saturated hues of red, blue and green combination of colors as an established identity of the southern visual cultural color display. There are a few depictions of the main text in red and yellow bright hues that subtly connote the passionate drive of present day youth of India. This new global popular theme of current time period is a hybrid cultural product. For instance, shop names in red color with white outlines follow the color combination style as seen in the film titles of this time period in Chennai (Fig. 4.188). The global theme affects main text in shop signs color display in the culturally different cities of Jaipur and Hyderabad in the same way as is it is for the city of Chennai as a cosmopolitan.



Fig. 4.188: Period specific color trends (1990-2004) of hues, combinations and effects in main text of shop signs, Chennai

e) 2005 onwards, popular themes and color trends:

2005 onwards time period in India celebrates the themes of globalization and modern branding strategies applied in bollywood poster art in order to address the chic and westernized tastes of the new generation. Mostly we see simulations in 3D with different colored outlines, drop-shadows and effects that create a dynamic and rhythmic movement in the main text displayed in white. With the new digital color production techniques in modern times, both the bollywood in Mumbai and kollywood posters in case of Chennai use the same color identity and simulation in the movie titles. Therefore, the Tamil modern movie poster title trends influence and regulate similar color display techniques and treatments to create modern brand image for each of the shops via the color display on their signboards. For instance, the drop shadow effect color technique has been used in modern logo designs, film titles as well as the shop names in the signs of this period (Fig. 4.189).

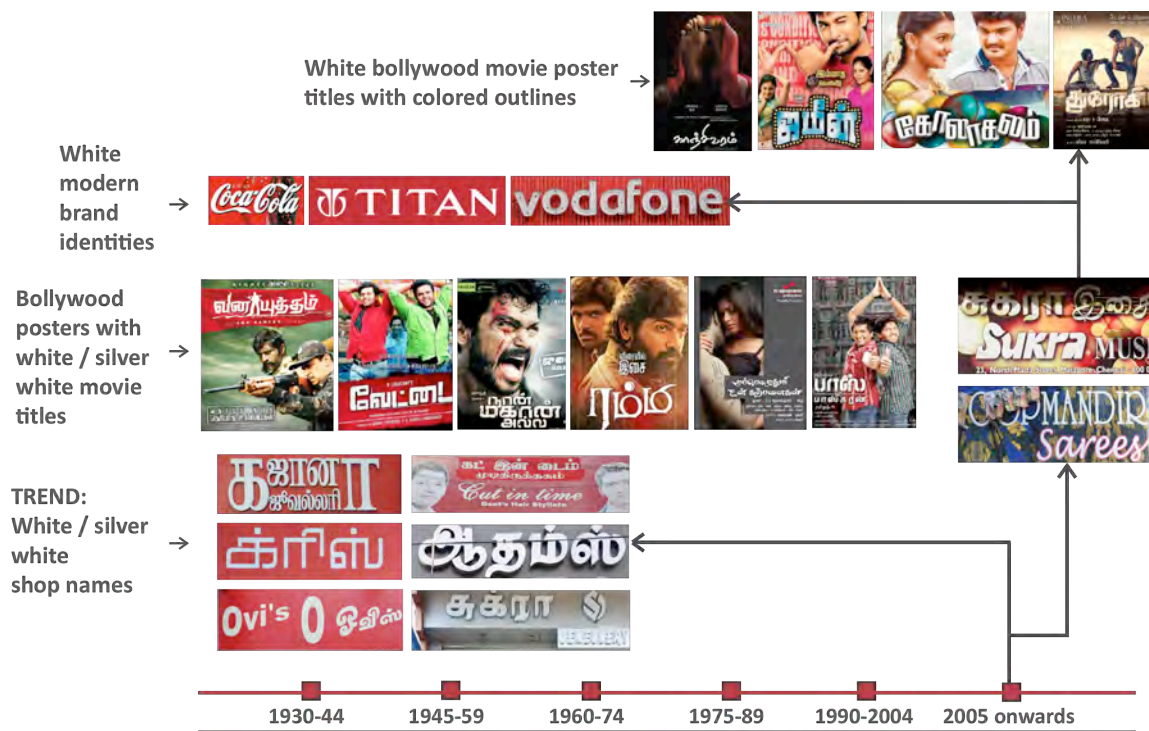


Fig. 4.189: Period specific color trend (2005 onwards) of white and related color simulation effects in the main text of shop signs, Chennai

3) Summary: main text color trends

Transitory color trends

For the city of Chennai, there occurs a lot of diversity in case of hues leading to no clear transitory trends.

Period specific color trends

In case of Chennai, visual styles in color use have become a unique vogue due to a strong collaboration of city's politics and cinema. With all the stars of tamil film industry being the most legendary politicians (with most of them being the chief ministers of the city), there is an emphasis of massive sizes of their images in striking colors, combinations and the visual styles of representation in different outdoor mediums like wall art, hoardings and banners. The same styles in color display are followed in the main text of shop signs in Chennai. For instance, the use of white visually echoes the ideology of Tamil nationalism that originated in these revolutionary self respect movement times, as initiated by E.A. Ramasamy (Fig. 4.184). On the other hand, there are period specific trends that celebrate the characteristic of rural subculture being a prominent feature of Chennai and Tamil Nadu. The backdrop of Tamil villages and their visual styles have been explored in the popular theme of neo-nativity in the tamil films of those times. The colors of these film titles in posters has a marked influence on the use of earthy red colors with white outlines in the main text color palette of the shop signs belonging to the same time periods (Fig. 4.185).

- The seccionistic movements and related socio-political tumultus times in India affected the outdoor visual display in Tamil Nadu in 1970s to 80s time periods. Therefore, in the capital city of Chennai in these periods a lot of aggressive warm hues like red, orange and chrome yellow became popular display feature of shop names in the signboards to signify different business identities (Fig. 4.186 and 4.187).
- The use of red with white outlines in the letterforms of shop names in signboards belong to 1990-2004 time period. This period is representative of both the preservation of a hybrid cultural product along with the celebration of a contemporary style in the times of globalization. The parellel use and influence appears in similar fashion in the movie titles of the Kollywood poster designs belonging to the same time periods (Fig. 4.188).
- Acquiring the new digital production techniques and related effects in the display design can be seen in the Kollywood movie poster titles of 2005 and onwards. The characteristic 3D simulation effect is part of these titles and also influences same appearance in context of new digital color effects and identity creations in the shop names of signboards of the same time periods (Fig. 4.189)

B) Secondary text color trends

In Chennai, the main text occupies around eighty to ninety percent of the visual space. With very less tag lines on the boards along with their fluctuating occurrence for a period or a group of time periods varies from marketplace to marketplace in Chennai. Therefore, there is a lack of transitory and period specific color trends in secondary texts in shop signs from Chennai in our data.

C) Background sign panel color trends

With lot of variety of colors and the complexity seen in their characteristics for the city of Chennai, shop signs in our data show no transitory and period specific color trends for this city.

4.2.5.3 Tendencies

A) Main text color tendencies

We see both general and distinct tendencies in the main text of shop signs as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) Old shop signs have prominence of hand-painted color production in the main texts

Most of the old shop signs having this tendency are at the backdrop of colonial time period and post independence times in India (Fig. 4.190) The city of Chennai has also been the parent city, where, the method of hand painting of billboards for advertising flourished in the film industry.

In Chennai especially for over half a century, they dominated the city's skyline, dwarfing the buildings and the traffic. But very few specimens of this magical hand-painted renaissance exist now as a rare art (Fig. 4.191). The other grounding of this tendency is influenced by the well-known art movements such as expressionism, art deco, pop art etc. as already explained in a similar tendency of shop names in Jaipur signs across marketplaces (section 4.2.1.3).



Fig. 4.190: Hand-painted production general color tendency in main text of old shop signs, Chennai



Fig. 4.191: Rare murals like this one at Adyar Junction are surviving signs of unsanctioned hand-painted art.
Source: <http://www.maristmessenger.co.nz/2011/11/01/>

b) Modern shop signs have almost equal prominence of handcrafted and digital color production in the main text

The new face of shop signs came into being at the backdrop of various new developments in Chennai. Among the new materials, the ultra-modern acrylic, MS and neon make up the modern Chennai signboards of shops (Fig. 4.192). In most parts of the city, signs are built within the facades of modern architectural style, crafted in concrete, glass and metal. Colonial ideology established western visual cultural tradition synonymous with modernity (Jacob, 2009). In the context, the contemporary styles of 3D crafted name identifications and visual styles appeared after post 60s at the backdrop of more modern materials highly influenced by retro styles, the choice of form, colors and pop art. Together, these reasons and similar

impelling forces exist for the same color tendency in modern shop names for the cities of Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru (sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4).



Fig. 4.192: Handcrafted and digital production general color tendency in main text of modern shop signs, Chennai

2) Distinct color tendencies

The following color tendency in Chennai's main text in the shop signs appears across two marketplaces of Thiruvelluvar and Thyagaraya Nagar.

Use of golden yellow in shop names against rich indigo blue panels

Historically, the legacy of the beautiful and majestic Tanjore paintings¹⁶⁷ as part of the ancient temple architecture in Chennai have been in practice since the golden era of the Chola empire in Tamil Nadu. Brilliant color schemes and inlay of semi precious stones, cut glass, pure gold foils and real pearls are the hallmark of Tanjore paintings with dark indigo and other dark colored backgrounds. Dyes are added to the colors of gold, indigo and other saturated hues in order to add vibrancy and richness.

The same hues can be seen in the 3D sculpted forms of gopurams in the south Indian temples with decorative motifs on the ceilings (Fig. 4.193). The use of same golden yellow in the shop names against dark blue sign panels are present in specifically old shop

¹⁶⁷ Known for its elegance, use of rich colors and attention to detail, this Tanjore art dates back to early 16th century, when the Chola kings were the rulers of this part of South India (Iyer, 2013).

signs in our data. This is rooted within the cultural and aesthetic underpinning in context of the rich Tanjore painting traditions (Fig. 4.193 and 4.194).



Fig. 4.193: Golden yellow and dark blue/indigo color palate in painting and other structures of Sri Siva Vishnu Temple, T. Nagar, Chennai. *Courtesy: D'Source*



Fig. 4.194: Golden yellow hue distinct color tendency in main text of shop signs, Chennai

3) **Summary: main text color tendencies**

General color tendencies

The foreground main text shows those general color tendencies that elaborate the rationale of using different color production techniques for old and modern shop signs. Among these the first tendency of hand-painted shop names in old shop signs occurs mainly because of the material based identities followed as a devotional tradition in building facades having old shop signs (Fig. 4.190 and 4.191).

However, the upsurge of contemporary materials in the wake of modern architecture influence can be seen in the names in modern shop signs. There is an equal prominence of digital name identities along with the modern crafted ones (Fig. 4.192). The hues, their treatment in modern materials and aesthetic basis are the result of advent of new printing techniques in the 1980s-90s in the ambience of liberalized economy in India.

Distinct color tendencies

Among all marketplaces, only Thiruvelluvar and Thyagaraya nagar marketplaces in the city of Chennai share a peculiar distinct color tendency. The impelling force has been the traditional use of gold against dark blue/indigo in south Indian temple art as seen in the rich application of these hues in different spaces inside and outside such temples (Fig. 4.193). The richness and vibrancy in colors are the affect of dyes added and the same traditional hues and effect can be seen in the main texts of shop signs in two traditionally driven marketplaces of Chennai (Fig. 4.194).

B) Secondary text color tendencies

There are hardly any tag lines in the shops signs in Chennai. The main text is the main information as well as meaning operator that represents the shop business as a whole. But, only one general tendency in the secondary text of shop signs appears in Chennai as follows:

1) General color tendencies

a) Old shop signs have only hand-painted colors in the secondary texts

The tag lines of old shop signs are also hand-painted like the shop names on the same sign panels. Therefore, the similar impelling forces cause the hand-painted identity of these tag lines (Fig. 4.195).



Fig. 4.195: Hand-painted production general color tendency in tag lines of old shop signs, Chennai

2) Distinct color tendencies

None exist for the secondary texts of shop signs in the marketplaces of Bengaluru. This case is similar to Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad secondary texts tendencies as well. In all these cities, the shop names dominate and capture 80-90 percent of the space.

3) **Summary: secondary text color tendencies**

General color tendencies

The secondary text shows only one general color tendency for old shop signs across all marketplaces in Chennai for the characteristic hand-painted color production alone (Fig. 4.195) as summarized for the main text of the same shop signs.

C) Background sign panel color tendencies

1) General color tendencies

White background sign panels with blue borders

This particular general tendency does not exist for the selected old shop sign panels only in the city of Chennai in our data.

2) Distinct color tendencies

a) Light pale yellow panels mostly in stone of old shop signs in Chennai

Indo-saracenic is the architectural style prevalent from the 1870s to the early 20th century for colonial buildings in India (Fig. 4.196). In this historical context, use of local basalt with dressings of yellow stone is seen in many local building architectural facades in the city of Chennai (Becker, 2014). In the context of local taste and meanings associated with yellow stone in south, it also appears as part of ancient Dravidian style architectural stone heritage in temples (Fig. 4.197). Likewise, the use of same yellow hue exists on the old background basalt stone panels across marketplaces in the city of Chennai (Fig. 4.198).



Fig. 4.196: Indo-saracenic basalt yellow dressed stone old college facades in Chennai

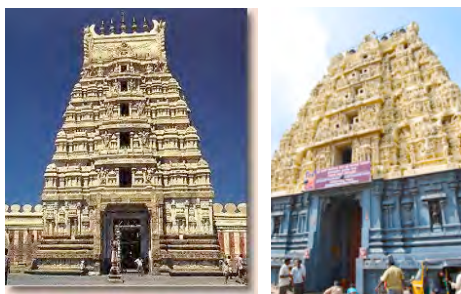


Fig. 4.197: Kamakshi temple ancient Dravidian style architecture using yellow stone, Chennai



Fig. 4.198: Light pale yellow stone distinct color tendency in old background sign panels, Chennai

3) Summary: background sign panel color tendencies

General color tendencies

The white boards with blue borders general color tendency that exists for the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru; is completely absent in the old background sign panels selected for the city of Chennai in our data.

Distinct color tendency

One material and architectural style influenced distinct color tendency exists in background sign panels of Chennai. Basalt based yellow stone dressed panels belonging to the colonial influenced Indo-sarascenic style are the impelling force that influence the background panel look in old shop signs in Chennai. This color also subtly relates to the medium saturated tones of yellow hues in pigment colors in old temple architecture of Chennai that connotes the devotional basis of Chennapattnam in Tamil Nadu (Fig. 4.196 to 4.198).

4.2.5.4 Conventions

The established conventions of colors in the shop signs of Chennai are as follows:

A) Main text color conventions

Color conventions from historical and business point of views in main text are as follows:

1) Color conventions in the historical context

a) Maroon or cherry red in the main text of shop signs

Maroon red, a dark brownish red, enjoys a position of exclusivity in the southern culture especially with respect to Chennai. This exclusivity is related to the highly imperial mood of maroon that represents royal demeanor and high-class status. For instance, the imperial red of Chennai's high court, museum, senate and university buildings reflect the changing horizons

of the economy¹⁶⁸ (Fig. 4.199). In the context of historical traditions in India, cherry red has been considered to be more sophisticated than true red. It indicates controlled power, determined ambition and dignified action and has often been favored by the wealthy. This controlled, determined and at the same time more auspicious cherry red also represents name identifications of certain exclusive products like plywood services, carnic music classes mini-centre, lifestyle brand shop and image optics store (Fig. 4.200).



Fig. 4.199: a. Chennai's High court, b. Museum, c. Senate building using red sandstone and brick mortar



Fig. 4.200: Maroon-dark red hue historical convention in main text of medium size, old shop signs, Chennai

2) Color conventions in the business context

a) Blue color in the main text of shop signs

This convention is same as seen in the shop names of all marketplaces in Bengaluru and Hyderabad as described in sections 4.2.3.4 and 4.2.4.4. The detailed description of blue meanings in business context can be seen in section 4.2.4.4 of Bengaluru shop signs from business point of view (Fig. 4.201).

¹⁶⁸ “Yellow and Maroon are auspicious symbols for us. (Padmanabhan, 2008). *Color, color, what color?*), METRO PLUS, THE HINDU ONLINE <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-metroplus/colour-colour-what-colour/article1428828.ece>



Fig. 4.201: Blue business color convention in local service main text of old shop signs, Chennai

b) White in the main text of big size showroom signs

Conventionally, white color connotes purity and universality. Global branding association of white with large business scale branded showrooms in Chennai is represented across marketplaces (Fig. 4.202).



Fig. 4.202: White business color convention in main text of modern clinic and pharmacy shop signs, Chennai

c) Bright Yellow or yellow-orange in main text of shop signs

This convention bears a historical association with yellow being a sacred color in India that is popularly associated with local trade and merchants (Cousineau, 2013). The same yellow hue is used in the main text of shop signs in medium and large-scale stores across marketplaces in Chennai (Fig. 4.203 and 4.204).



Fig. 4.203: Yellow signifying merchants and sunflowers in Chennai [context: India]



Fig. 4.204: Yellow hue business color convention in main text of modern shop signs, Chennai

Summary: main text color conventions

Color conventions in the historical context

Cherry red or deep maroon has been used in housing, tourist buildings, facades and lettering and other fixture accessories as part of old shop fronts. This convention is rooted in the material identity of royal demeanor that is associated with historical architectural buildings and their designs in the city of Chennai (Fig. 4.199 and 4.200).

Color conventions in the business context

The most general convention of blue color has been used in local service shops (Fig. 4.201). In the context of changing notions and meanings of white in the late 19th century, it has been used in modern showrooms as part of branding and outdoor display design, promotion of big brands and products in modern time periods in Chennai across marketplaces (Fig. 4.202). The use of yellow hue in Chennai shop signs denotes sacredness and auspiciousness in the context of popular Indian color symbolism (Fig. 4.203 and 4.204).

B) Secondary text color conventions

None from historical or business context exist for the city of Chennai, similar to other southern cities of Hyderabad and Bengaluru. The reasons can be referred in the sections 4.2.2.4 and 4.2.4.4 respectively.

C) Background sign panel color conventions

We see two color conventions from historical perspective and business perspectives in background sign panels of the shop signs in the city of Chennai as follows:

1) Color conventions in the historical context

a) Deep cherry red or maroon in background sign panels

Cherry red is a well-known auspicious and sacred color in Chennai. It also has an architectural significance in terms of being the main hue of major historical administrative buildings and facades. It also adorns the background sign panels of big business size shop

signs, the shops in majority belong to most premium fashion/accessories and branded lifestyle products (Fig. 4.205). Red as a hue in business depicts youth, passion, energy and stimulation.



Fig: 4.205: Cherry red in background sign panels of modern stores and showrooms, Chennai

b) Color conventions in the business context

None exists, the apparent reason is not known.

3) Summary: background sign panel color conventions

This convention has strong connotation of the stone replicating the cherry red hue color identity as well as association with the heritage buildings. This cherry red has also been part of auspicious customary practices since ancient times in the city of Chennai. These meanings are deeply rooted in the historical context as well as the modern commercial display meanings of red in these contemporary times (Fig. 4.205).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

“Everything has to come to an end, sometime.”

— *L. Frank Baum, The Marvelous Land of Oz*

This chapter is presented in seven sections. Section 5.1 gives a summary of the entire research work done in this thesis. It presents the aims, objectives and inferences of two initial pilot research projects that were carried out to plan the final research design. Section 5.2 moves forward to describe the formulation of a visual analytical framework to analyze color in shop signs. Section 5.3 brings forth inferences and insights of the color analysis in shop signs from five selected cities in our research. Section 5.4 presents solutions to the three research questions asked at the onset of our study. Section 5.5 includes all contributions that this doctoral work has achieved in the field of visual design of shop signs with respect to color. Section 5.6 outlines the limitations of this research study. Finally, section 5.7 concludes with the suggestions for future research work, not only in the undertaken area of visual design of shop signs, but other kinds of signs and signage designs as well.

5.1 Summary of research

In the subject area of design of shop signs, there is a paucity of published literature in the formulation of visual analytical tools and frameworks that explain the design elements, attributes and their relationships. The attributes of color, typography, layout, materials and graphics are important parts of the design of shop signs and get to define the relationships between form and content. These relationships within an attribute or group of attributes together define a shop sign design's visual identity. The purpose of this identity is to communicate the main business message of a shop. In order to understand the ramifications of these relationships in the design of shop signs, this research started by gathering historical emergence of signs and shop signs, their visual designs, functions and meanings in different countries around the world. We have documented signs and shop signs from the Asian Pacific Rim countries, Europe and finally from the Western Pacific Rim countries. The journey documented has been put forth from a diachronic perspective. The overview of visual design of shop signs across countries has helped to re-define shop signs in the context of India.

We initiated this research by conducting two pilot research projects. The first pilot research project utilizes the method of visual semiotic analysis including semantic, syntactic and pragmatic inquiry of shop signs. The shop signs belong to the historically well-known marketplace of Abdul Rehman street of the metro city of Mumbai. The second pilot research project utilizes the methods of open card sorting, hierarchical cluster analysis and semi-structured questionnaire involving viewers' perspectives and preferences in selecting classification labels for Bengaluru city's shop signs (sections 2.3 and 2.4).

The following sections briefly describe the two pilot research projects and their inferences.

5.1.1 Pilot project I

Semiotic analysis of shop signs in Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai (India)

The objective of this project was to study cross-relations between the visual designs of shop signs belonging to a street marketplace. For this, we documented through photography fifty-four shop signs from Abdul Rehman street market of South Mumbai that involved a few field visits. A walkthrough map was designed to present documented fifty-four shop signs from this street market (Appendix I). During the visits, a background

study of shop signs on this street was done that involved informal interactions with the respective shop owners. The study recorded the date of installation, evolutions in design, materials of fabrication, meanings and concepts for each shop sign design from the shop owners' perspective. We got different instances of the designs of shop signs that belong to separate decade-wise divisions, like 1930s, 1940s, 1950s etc. It was interesting to find this diachronic existence of shop signs as part of one marketplace of Abdul Rehman street in the city of Mumbai. This decade-wise existence of the designs of shop signs gave us a timeline from pre-independence times of 1930s till the present times in context of a street marketplace in India. This followed the mapping and distributions of these shop signs under separate decades that include their dates of origin or installations as shared by the shop owners during the field visits (Appendix II).

The units of composition, their expressions or the semantics, visual syntax and finally their materials of fabrication and representation belonging to the shop signs in this pilot research project were relatively analyzed (Appendix III). This meaning making process was an interpretive approach that tried to articulate the meanings starting from the smallest units of text, graphics, layout, color, names and their typographic styles to the larger denotations and connotations. The outcomes of this analysis along with comments made by the shop owners gave us the semiotic meanings of shop signs as follows:

- Shop names are the semantic operators that guide the choice of visual representations on shop signs. The expressions of letterforms in different type styles have been used to display the shop names. This creates a distinct business identity for a shop sign amidst similar business shops. The shop owners regard the names of their shops as the epicenter of all the content and form related choices. According to them, the complete information about the business, products or services provided by a shop is embedded in a shop name. They regard shop names as an important mark of their ownership, business autonomy and goodwill.
- Both the visual syntax and the pragmatics (production techniques or materials of fabrication) together play a balanced role in order to arrange signifiers and provide them with a visible material representation in a shop's sign design. The distinction comes across when the signifiers are displayed in a mix of materials for a new visual hierarchy in shop names and graphics displayed on the signboards. This was found to

be a major approach of the maker in the design of shop signs. For instance, a lot of mixed materials for the fabrication of shop signs of Abdul Rehman street is prominently visible on the boards that were installed in 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s. The syntax and material identity of the text foregrounds it as the primary signifier against other secondary background signifiers of patterns and other kinds of graphics.

5.1.2 Pilot project II

Classifying shop signs: Open card sorting of Bengaluru shop signs (India)

The purpose of this project was to know how viewers mentally classify shop signs and what are the criteria for the classifications made by them. For this, we documented through photography a total of ninety shop signs from the city of Bengaluru. Ninety shop sign picture cards were made. Two methods that were used in this pilot research project are: Open card sorting and Hierarchical cluster analysis. The ninety cards were given to 15 designer and 15 non-designer participants for making classification labels and structures via open card sorting.

After card sorting, each participant was asked to select good and bad shop signs of their choice from the classification structures made by them. They were asked to share the reasons behind their choice of good and bad signs. The classification structures made by the 30 participants were documented through photography (Appendix 4). The formulated classification labels were analyzed via hierarchical cluster analysis. The results gave mutually exclusive clusters of the labels. These results and the criteria of good and bad shop sign designs shared by participants were collated into a classification table as illustrated below. We present below the details of the outcomes of this project:

- 1) During the semi-structured inquiry about the choice of good and bad shop signs made by designers and non-designers, it was observed that they selected good signs prominently on the basis of color and picture-text relations (Table 2.5). In the choice of bad signs, designers based their choice on unlikeable fonts. However, non-designers shared visual chaos and clutter as the basis for their choice of bad signs from the classification structures formulated (Table 2.6).

- 2) We could observe that the attributes considered by the participants were based on parameters and associated values. For instance, the attribute of color emerged on the basis of the parameters of color contrast and perception. These parameters of color were observed in the values of foreground and background of shop signs. They in turn belong to a context of design or content.
- 3) The final classification table presents the most preferred attribute of Color followed by Representation to Text to Fonts used and lastly, the Language (Fig. 5.1). This finding also matched the results of hierarchical cluster analysis where values of color and representation clusters are almost the same (Fig. 2.7).



Elements (Primary attributes)	Parameters (Functional basis)	Values (Selected units)	Context
CO	Colour Contrast, Colour Perception	Foreground-Background; Warm-Cool	Design
RP	Material Culture	High-Low quality	Design
TT	--	Painted-Handcrafted	Design and Content
FS	Font Kind; Readability	Regular-Stylized; Readable-non-readable	Design
LA	Multilingual identity	Bilingual-Multilingual	Content
SF	Business Strategy	General-Specific products	Content

Table. 5.1: Classification table of attributes, parameters, values and context in ninety shop signs Bengaluru

5.1.3 Future directions from the pilot research projects

- 1) The first pilot research project establishes the strength of conducting a semiotic analysis along with a diachronic study of shop signs analyzed within a perspective of a researcher. The second pilot project revealed that color is the most significant attribute of visual design of a shop sign. This was based on viewers' mental classification of Bengaluru city shop signs into labels. The selection of color as the major visual attribute from this pilot project has guided our selection of color as being of primary importance for further research into visual design of shop signs.
- 2) The application of two analytical methods in the second pilot research project gave ideas for classification of variables based on the principles of parameters or groupings and values or orderings.

- 3) The final research design inculcates a mixed-method approach that utilizes visual semiotic analysis of color, the diachronic arrangements of shop signs across selected cities of India and the classification principles of groupings and orderings.

5.1.4 Data collection and sampling

Around 3500 shop signs were documented through photography from different marketplaces belonging to 12 different cities in India. As done for the pilot research project on Abdul Rehman street shop signs, here too as part of the data collection, the year of installation of shop signs, their design changes, materials of fabrication and concept or approach were gathered through informal interactions with the shop owners. The entire compilation of 3500 shop signs archived from 12 cities was re-organized by eliminating damaged, repetitive shop signs in terms of visual representation and time periods. Then the method of stratified sampling was used to reduce this large data and get the most representative sample of shop signs, marketplaces and cities. Distribution of shop signs in each of the twelve cities was random initially. The first step reduced the number of cities from twelve to five. These five cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai were selected on the basis of a good representative number of 300 shop signs per city. From a gamut of six marketplaces per city the sample was reduced to three marketplaces. We could identify three marketplaces representative of three kinds of business scales, i.e. small, small and medium and large-scale business. Each of the selected marketplace had 50 shop signs, out of which 20 were further eliminated to overcome repetitions and errors in data. This led to 30 shop signs per marketplace and 90 shop signs per city giving a total of 450 shop signs for 5 cities. The data included shop signs as old as pre-independence times as well as post-independence times to the modern late 20th and early 21st centuries. A slot-wise, continuous ordering of six timeslots that represent significant time periods of pre and post-independence in India were finalized as follows: 1930-44, 1945-59, 1960-74, 1975-89, 1990-2004 and 2005 onwards.

The details of formulation of a visual framework of color analysis of 450 shop signs have been outlined in the next section.

5.2 Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in India

As an extension to the summary above, in this section we further elaborate on the steps involved in selecting a methodological approach and its application to design a framework for the final analysis of colors in shop signs in our research.

5.2.1 Proposed nomenclature for analysis of color and layers of information

- 1) There are color analysis methods for the fields of fashion, clothing, packaging, websites etc. as part of the published literature. From existing methods, we selected the method of *four seasons and their twelve color types*, devised by Carole Jackson in her book *Color Me Beautiful* (1987) for fashion and accessories. Likewise, in the attribute of color, the researcher could identify four main dimensions and thirteen color characteristics, which include *color description, color relationship, color pragmatics and color symbolism*. The thirteen color characteristics include: *color hue, value, saturation, temperature, kinds, combinations, hierarchy, contrast, effects, schemes, production, functionality and identity*. There is an extra characteristic called *color functionality* that we could identify in the design of a shop sign (Table 3.1). These characteristics describe semantics, syntactics and pragmatics based roles of color as an important aspect in design of shop signs.
- 2) Viewers in a marketplace notice or read the contents displayed on a shop's signboard. This content is made of three layers of information, namely the main text or shop names, the secondary text or tag lines and the background sign panels (Fig. 4.1). The layers of main text and secondary text are in the foreground design of a shop sign face. The layers of information were extracted from each of the 450 shop signs for final color analysis. Visualization graphs of hue transitions were designed for the main text or shop names and background sign panels for all 450 shop signs across cities and six time slots (Appendix 9 and 10). This visualization helped in identifying the larger patterns and trends of colors in specific time periods for different kinds of shop signs per city. With relatively scarce number of secondary text or tag lines in our data of shop signs, no such visualization graph were designed for them.

5.2.2 Identifying and redefining quadrants

- 1) We observed the entire data of shop signs in our study as visual forms. For this, we looked into the three layers of information (shop names, tag lines and background sign panels) to

identify design elements and their arrangements that made us discover *Patterns*. With all shop signs distributed along the selected timeline of six slots, we could see certain popular styles emerging with time that we called *Trends*. Then, further on, we could identify more embedded impelling forces and established meanings in the form of *Tendencies* and *Conventions* respectively. Therefore, the design of a shop sign could be fully understood from the four factors patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions. After this we realized that they can be put at the four corners of the visualized framework as *quadrants*.

- 2) There have been established definitions for each of the factors formulated by designers, researchers and practitioners. All these definitions and etymologies for all four factors were collected and the characteristic keywords were selected. An inductive approach was then followed to re-define the four quadrants in context of visual design of shop signs in India as follows:

Patterns are composed of similar elements of a visual attribute and similar arrangements or visual relationships between those elements that guide the concrete form or the formal syntax in the visual design of a shop sign.

Trends are the simultaneous movement or change of one or more characteristics (variables) of a visual attribute of design of a shop sign in a certain direction along time as the constant variable. Here, the objective or goal may not be clear for any single factor. But, the direction has some link with respect to visual, social, economic or even historical popular themes belonging to a specific time period.

Tendencies are causal behavioral inclinations or prevalence toward a specific line or direction that may or may not vary in the designs of shop signs. They are those innate qualities in a visual attribute that develop because of impelling social, aesthetic or historical forces.

Conventions are sets of accepted norms, standards and criteria established since ages. In context of shop signs in our study, most of these conventions are either the color codes applied in context of their business meanings or the historical narratives specific to a particular city or India at large.

5.2.3 Formulation of the visual framework of color analysis

The four factors of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions form the four corners of the quadrants. In order to integrate the quadrants, we applied methodological Bricolage as a research approach. This method has its roots in French expression and has been adopted by crafts people who integrate left over materials together to design new artifacts. The researcher, in the role of a bricoleur, integrated unrelated quadrants of Patterns, Trends, Tendencies and Conventions within a modular framework of color analysis of shop signs in India. With the given theoretical knowledge base of bricolage visual research method (section 3.5.1), we examined the role of colors and how it can be understood by knowing all quadrants and their kinds, one by one in a sequence as part of the framework. This sequence starts with, 1: elements and their arrangements that make patterns, 2: popular trends emerging with time, 3: causal and impelling forces or tendencies and, 4: established color codes or conventions (Fig. 5.2).

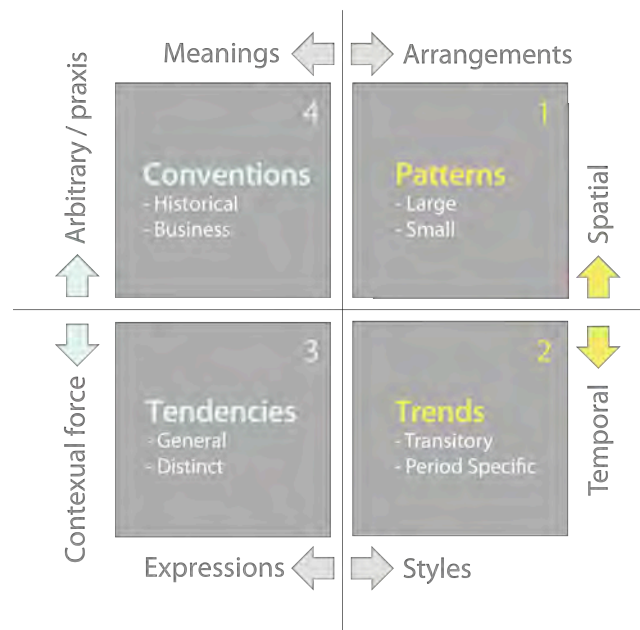


Fig. 5.2 Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs in India

For each of the quadrants, we identified vertical and horizontal functions as domains. These domains make the foundation for each quadrant analysis later. Two domains together define the x and y-axis per quadrant. For instance, patterns are relational due to *variety of arrangements* in color within the *space* of a shop sign. Therefore, the **spatial domain** and **arrangements domain** together formulate patterns. Trends are not spatial or relational, but freely occurring *visual styles of color* that undergo *simultaneous movement across time periods*. Therefore, the **domains of temporality** and **visual styles** that occur in specific points

of time help explain what are trends. Tendencies are those *expressions* that are not temporal, nor are they based on visual arrangements. They are causal behavioral inclinations of color that are grounded within an impelling contextual force. Therefore, the domains of *expressions* and *contextual impelling forces* together form tendencies. Conventions are not spatial, relational, temporal or causal in nature. They are *abstract* codes or *symbolic meanings* of colors that have been established and *practiced over a long period of time*. Therefore, the domains of *arbitrary / praxis* and *meanings* together create conventions.

Each quadrant could be classified into further two categories. For instance, in patterns we identified small or large. Small patterns are similar arrangements within a color characteristic such as small patterns of hue, value, saturation etc. Large patterns are made of all small patterns of color characteristics belonging to one color dimension. In case of trends, two categories of transitory and period specific were identified. Transitory trends show a movement or change in a single color characteristic with time. Period-specific trends belong to different color characteristics that emerge in specific time periods. In the case of tendencies, they are either general or distinct. General tendencies are the common inclinations of color display in the design of shop signs. Distinct tendencies are those indigenous inclinations of color that are based on the locally driven causal forces in the design of shop signs. Conventions are well-established color meanings in the context of history of a place or business of a shop.

5.2.4 Application of the visual framework for color analysis

The formulated visual framework was used to analyze colors for patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions in all the three layers of information in 450 shop signs from the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai in India (sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.5). Table 5.2 below illustrates a sequential log of color characteristics and their role in respective quadrants that has been followed in the final analysis.

Color Dimensions	Color characteristics	Quadrants
1) Color description	Color hue Color value Color saturation Color temperature Color kinds	Patterns, Trends
2) Color relationships	Color combinations Color hierarchy Color contrast Color effects	Patterns, Trends

	Color schemes	
3) Color pragmatics	Color production Color functionality	Tendencies, Conventions
4) Color symbolism	Color identity	Conventions, Tendencies

Table 5.2 Sequential log of color analysis of shop signs in selected five cities of India

5.3 Inferences and insights of color analysis

The details of the color analysis using the visual framework are included in chapter 4 of this thesis. The following points highlight the core inter-city insights acquired from the analysis of 450 shop signs for all the four quadrants of the framework as follows:

5.3.1 Patterns

A group of small patterns together create large patterns on shop signs that have been presented per city in chapter 4 for the thirteen color characteristics in our data. The following large patterns have been identified in the main text, secondary text and background sign panels across the selected cities in our data.

A)_Main Text

- 1) **White in main text of shop signs:** This pattern appears in large business size, modern stores and showrooms in the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai (Tables 4.2, 4.30 and 4.56). However, white names appear for medium and small size business shops in Bengaluru and Chennai respectively (Tables 4.81 and 4.107).
- 2) **Red in main text of shop signs:** This occurs in big size business stores in Hyderabad (Table 4.30), medium size business shops in Mumbai (Table 4.56).
- 3) **High value in yellow main text of shop signs:** This pattern occurs in medium and big size business shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.3, 4.31, 4.57, 4.82 and 4.108).
- 4) **Warm and cool in red and blue main text of shop signs:** This pattern is observed in big and small size business shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.5, 4.33, 4.59, 4.84 and 4.1120).
- 5) **Primary to secondary in red to green in main text of shop signs:** This occurs in small and medium size business shops across the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai in our data (Tables 4.8, 4.36, 4.87 and 4.113).
- 6) **High contrast of white main text against darker backgrounds:** This pattern exists in big size business shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.9, 4.37, 4.63, 4.88 and

4.114).

B)_Secondary Text

- 1) **White secondary text in shop signs:** This pattern appears in all business size shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.12, 4.40, 4.66, 4.91 and 4.117).
- 2) **Black secondary text in shop signs:** This occurs in all business size shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.12, 4.40, 4.66, 4.91 and 4.117).

C)_Background sign panels

- 1) **White background sign panels:** This pattern is seen in all kinds of business size shops across the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai in our data (Tables 4.20, 4.46, 4.74 and 4.126).
- 2) **Medium values in green and blue background sign panels:** This appears in all business size shops across the cities of Hyderabad and Mumbai in our data (Tables 4.47 and 4.75).
- 3) **Cool blue background sign panels:** This pattern appears in medium business size shops across all five cities in our data (Tables 4.23, 4.49, 4.77, 4.101 and 4.129).

Outcome of Pattern analysis

Two kinds of visual relationships emerge in the pattern analysis of five city shop signs. For example, the following points give typical examples of these two kinds from the city of Jaipur:

1) Color characteristics of the same dimension unify to form a visual relationship

In the background sign panels of Jaipur, there is a visual relationship between the color description characteristics of *yellow - hue, high value, warm temperature and the primary color kind* (Fig. 4.11).

2) Color characteristics of two different dimensions unify to form a visual relationship

In the shop names of signs in Jaipur, there is a visual relationship between a color description and a color relationship characteristic. *Highlight effect* in the forms of either a monochromatic shadow or a dark inner shadow has been used to lift up the letterforms of names visually from the board. Here, the color *effect and hue* form a visual relationship (Table 4.10). Likewise, *Flicker effect* is observed between two opposite colors used together as a combination in names. For instance, *red-green combination used together in shop names* form a visual relationship between *color hues and combinations* on shop signs (Fig. 4.10).

5.3.2 Trends

Following are the core insights of transitory trends, followed by period specific trends occurring in all the three layers of information:

Transitory Trends

In this research, transitory trends for five cities exist only for the characteristic of color hue. No definite and continuous change occurs in other description characteristics of value, saturation, temperature and color kinds.

A) Main text transitory color trends

- 1) For the cities of Jaipur and Hyderabad, use of three hues in the main text occur in old shop signs prominently and gradually reduce to use of one hue in the most recent modern shop signs. In Hyderabad, the appearance of single hues starts from 1945-59 till the recent time slot of 2005 onwards. In Jaipur, however, single hues in shop names appear only in 1990s and onwards.
- 2) For the cities of Chennai and Bengaluru, there is a lot of diversity in case of hues, leading to no clear transition. For instance, this diversity is present in form of multiple hues used together in shop names belonging to six time slots.
- 3) For the city of Mumbai, the transitory trend in number of color hues in shop names show abrupt changes belonging to different time slots with no gradual transitions happening as time moves ahead. This, perhaps, could be because of the very cosmopolitan nature of the city of Mumbai, that envisages people belonging to varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

B) Secondary text transitory color trends

- 1) Tag lines or secondary texts are rare and appear irregularly in the entire timeline in random fashion. Therefore, transitory color trends are absent for secondary texts for all five city shop signs. This is primarily because of the fact that tag lines are mostly purpose-based, confirmatory texts that are not as significant as the shop names. In reality, shop name, not tag line stands for business identity of a shop.

- 2) In the southern cities of Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai, the second reason for rarity of tag lines might be the use of over-powering political figure names along with the shop names that sideline the need for confirmatory tag lines.

C) Background sign panel transitory color trends

As the base material of the sign panel changes, the texture and color choice gets largely affected. New material options for old and new sign panels showcase different surface textures and color representations. This in turn affects the transitory trends appearing in background sign panels as follows:

- 1) For the cities of Jaipur and Mumbai, similar transitory trend occurs in number of color hues used per panel. For instance, in both the cities single hue has been used in old sign panels that gradually increase to double or triple hue application in later modern sign panels.
- 2) For the cities of Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai, no transitory trend in number of hues occurs due to occurrence of multiple values and saturation grades together in each background sign panel.

Period specific color trends

Period specific color trends in all the three layers of information appear in color hue characteristic as part of color description dimension. These trends prominently occur in the relationship characteristics of color combinations, schemes and effects. Each of these trends are influenced by certain popular themes of bollywood and regional cinema poster designs at the backdrop of certain socio-political conditions and arts/aesthetic developments in India in specific time periods. 1930-44 shop signs have no period specific color trends in any of the information layers, perhaps because in those times no particular national vogue in the arts and crafts emerged at the backdrop of British colonial rule in India.

A) Main text period specific color trends

1) 1945-59, popular themes and color trends

- a) For the cities of Jaipur and Mumbai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in blue and green color combination trend. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular theme of this period, that was realism in the arts. This theme celebrated a non-representational color combination of blue and green in prominently

bollywood movie titles in posters. In Jaipur shop names, the same hues could also be influenced by their parallel appearance in the Rajput miniature paintings of that period in Persian style (part A, section 4.2.1.2, Fig. 4.14).

- b) For the city of Hyderabad, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in red and green color scheme trend. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular theme of folklore and realism as part of telugu (regional) cinema movie titles in posters. They seem to be influenced by same color scheme trend that was part of classic Deccani miniature style paintings that depicted Indian mysticism in the city of Hyderabad in those times (part A, section 4.2.2.2, Fig. 4.57).
- c) For the city of Chennai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in white color hue trend. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular themes of freedom struggle and sacrificial heroism depicted in the regional movie titles in posters. White in those times connoted the then prevailing Kannada and Dravidian socio-political scenarios pioneered by the star politicians of the likes of MGR, Sivaji Ganesan etc. This further implies an almost classical and aesthetic essence of the local cultures in Chennai captured in the movie titles as well as shop names of those times (part A, sections 4.2.5.2, Fig. 4.184).

2) 1960-74, popular themes and color trends

- a) For the cities of Jaipur and Mumbai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in orange, red and yellow warm color combinations trend. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular theme of this period that was fun-n-frolic based subjects portrayed in bollywood movie titles of posters. This theme celebrated the vicarious pleasure of the upper-middle class tastes and the warm color choice depicted in the bollywood movie posters and shop names of those times (part A, section 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.3.2, Fig. 4.15, 4.104).
- b) For the cities of Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in red and orange-red hues with color effects at times in yellow in order to visually amplify the names against dull backgrounds in movie posters and shop signs. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular theme of neo-nativity depicted in the regional movie titles in kollywood and tollywood posters respectively. Also, these warm hues in those times stood for rural atmosphere, the rustic hero as well as the local social milieu in a village (part A, sections 4.2.2.2, 4.2.4.2 and 4.2.5.2, Fig. 4.58, 4.150 and 4.185).

3) 1975-89, popular themes and color trends

- a) For the cities of Jaipur and Mumbai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in orange / red / yellow warm color hues with black under-casing color effect trend. This trend seems to be influenced by the underlying popular theme of masala movie posters in bollywood, featuring the angry young man at the backdrop of aggressive and tumultuous discontent in India's social ambience. There was an advent of commercial advertising, color broadcasting along with emergence of Pop art in those times. This led to a lot of creative experimentation by adding graphic vitality with the use of hard-edge black three-dimensional under-casing to the movie titles as well as shop names of those times (part A, section 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.3.2, Fig. 4.16 and 4.59).
- b) For the cities of Hyderabad and Chennai, the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in red and orange-red hues with green-blue combination trends in movie posters and shop signs. This trend also seems to be influenced by the local revolutions of those times in both cities. This trend is similar to that in Jaipur and Mumbai since the aesthetic influence of pop art and color effects can also be seen in movie titles and shop signs (part A, sections 4.2.3.2 and 4.2.5.2, Fig. 4.59 and 4.187).
- c) No period specific trend appears for Bengaluru for the selected shop signs from our data between 1975-89.

4) 1990-2004, popular themes and color trends

- a) For the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai the main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in white or silvery white hues. This trend seems to be influenced by liberalization in Indian economy. Therefore, we see a lot of white used in shop names depicting the fresh, stabilized and progressive economy. The new coca cola generation of brands and consumerist approach as a universal theme has been subtly captured in the white movie titles as well as shop names on signboards (part A, sections 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.3.2, Fig. 4.17, 4.62 and 4.106).
- b) No period specific trend appears for Bengaluru and Chennai for their selected shop signs in our data between 1990-2004.

5) 2005 onwards, popular themes and color trends

- a) For the cities of Jaipur and Hyderabad, main texts in shop signs across marketplaces are in red with white outline color effects. This trend seems to be influenced by hybrid cultural products at the backdrop of globalization in bollywood as well as tollywood posters. Therefore, we see an experimentation in the visual display of colors and techniques. For instance, gradient effect color technique has been used in shop names and labels of these times. The cyber culture in present times governs the forms, colors and their effects in the movie titles and shop names in both cities (part A, sections 4.2.1.2 and 4.2.2.2, Fig. 4.18 and 4.63).
- b) No period specific trend appears for Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai for their selected shop signs in our data from 2005 onwards.

B) Secondary text period specific color trends

No period specific trends for tag lines are observed in the very small number of tag lines per period in the limited selected data of shop signs in our research.

C) Background sign panel period specific color trends

Background sign panels are made of different materials in specific time periods. This affects the color choice as well as the surface appeal of panels. The use of materials and the application of colors extensively vary among cities.

- a) In the cities of Bengaluru and Chennai, no period specific trends exist. Perhaps, color and its characteristics appear in multiple ways leading to no popular trend influenced by a theme.
- b) Hyderabad shop signs in our data present a contrast to the cities of Bengaluru and Chennai shop signs. In Hyderabad, period specific trends are seen in color characteristics appearing prominently in the later modern time periods of 1990-2004 and 2005 onwards.
- c) In Mumbai, the influence of bollywood movie poster background colors have influenced the background sign panel colors in the middle time slots of 1960-74 and 1975-89, along with later influence carried forward in modern 1990-2004 time slot as well. This poster design color trend influence is also a vogue present in movie titles on these posters as well as the shop names belonging to the same time periods.

5.3.3 Tendencies

Following are core insights of general tendencies (mention compelling or contextual forces), followed by distinct tendencies for all three layers of information:

General color tendencies

A) Main text general color tendencies

1) Hand-painted color production in the main text of old shop signs in all five cities

Most of the old shop signs exist at the backdrop of colonial and post independent times in India. Movements like Khadi and Swadeshi by M.K. Gandhi in India instigated the tendency to produce with one's own hands. In the context, the main text of shop signs have been visually depicted in hand-painted techniques. This practice takes a causal lead from similar color production technique used in paintings of those times. The tool of paint and brush was a manifested human agency in those times to create objects manually in the absence of new materials and technologies.

2) Co-existence of hand-painted and 3D handcrafted production of colors in the main text of Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai shop signs

In the cities of Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai the legacy of wood and stone use in context of hand-crafted color production as well as enamel paints in hand-painted signs is rooted in the very context of interchangeable forms of the materials used in old buildings and their facades. Wood was at easy disposal along with ubiquitous carpentry work in those times. This has resulted in a variety of mixed crafted color production in shop names (Fig. 4.113 and Fig. 4.152).

3) Digital color production in the main text of modern shop signs in all five cities

The new face of shop names came into being at the backdrop of various printing and technological inventions such as offset, new additive color, dot-matrix and thermal printing techniques in the 1980s. With the advent of digital press, more mass production came into the foray resulting in a universal color and material approach in the name displays of shop signs.

4) Co-existence of digitally reproduced and 3D handcrafted production of colors in the main text of Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai shop signs

There is a simultaneous appearance of digitally reproduced and 3D crafted letterforms in modern acrylic material used in the shop names in these cities. In context of modern display production of color in digital mediums along with high quality plastics used in different scripts, such as devanagari, arabic and latin representing shop names in the illustrated examples (Fig. 4.69, 4.114, 4.153 and 4.192); imbibe a monotony and unity in terms of material identity of these shop signs. In addition, from the context of visual communication, there is a character deviant expression due to use of similar mix of production materials in different scripts in the shop names display. This means, that the range of scripts have their own local characters; but those characters deviate to only one contemporary material meaning in the realm of mass-produced digitized and 3D crafted culture. Among these cities, in the city of Chennai, the legacy of ancient architectural materials merge beautifully with the use of modern materials such as acrylic, MS and neon technology to craft the letterforms in the name display identification. Glass and metal are at easy disposal since there increased use post-industrialization times in Chennai and other cities of India.

B) Secondary text general color tendencies

1) Hand-painted color production in the secondary text of old shop signs in all five cities

This tendency in tag lines is synonymous with similar color production general tendency in names of the same shop signs in all five cities. The causal impelling forces of using hand-paint have been described above in the shop names general tendency. This tendency in the tag lines of Mumbai shop signs in our data are guided by similar color production rationale as in other cities, with only few hand-crafted old tag lines co-existing with hand-painted tag lines.

2) Digital color production in secondary text of modern shop signs in all five cities

This tendency in tag lines is synonymous with similar color production general tendency in names of the same shop signs in all five cities. For secondary texts here, there is an absence of modern hand crafted color production, unlike those appearing in the shop names tendency as explained in above point. The causal impelling forces of using hand-paint have been described above in the shop names general tendency. Slight difference in terms of equal number of hand-crafted boards in modern materials co-exist with the digitally reproduced modern color panels in the city of Mumbai.

C) Background sign panels general color tendencies

White background panels with blue borders in old shop signs in the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru

This distinct color tendency is rooted in a national historical context that revolved around the freedom struggle times in pre-independent India. In those times, white stood for non-violence, peace and knowledge. In the context, the attires of freedom fighters along with social service figures were only in white. This underpinning traveled to the white sign panels of those times. Along with white, blue borders in the clothes of people as well as signboards of shops also appear. The blue borders communicated the determined mood behind the freedom struggle and selfless sacrifice presented by the freedom fighters and general public in colonial India. So, this symbolic representation of a nation-wide pulse is reflected in the white background sign panels with blue borders to signify old shops and their business in those times (Fig. 4.27, 4.75, 4.117 and 4.157).

Distinct Color Tendencies

A) Main text distinct color tendencies

1) Saffron or burnt orange color tendency in main text of sweet shop signs in Jaipur

In India, saffron is the most commonly used ingredient in sweets. Saffron is a popular ingredient added in Indian sweets, such as jalebis, imarti and rabdi. It has a burnt orange hue when cooked for long duration. The same saffron as burnt orange in hand-paint occurs in the names of specifically sweet shops in Jaipur city in our data.

2) Golden yellow main text against dark blue or indigo panels of shop signs in Chennai

In Chennai, the color combination of dark blue or indigo with golden yellow is made vibrant by addition of dyes in order to be used over temple walls in motif designs, patterns, Tanjavur style paintings as well as symbolic Gopuram murals of temple exteriors. This traditional application has a historical base since the times of the Cholla empire in South India. The same golden yellow in the shop names against dark and vivid blues in the sign panels is used in all local old shop signs across marketplaces in Chennai.

3) In other cities of Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru no distinct color tendencies in the main texts exist for selected shop signs in our data.

B) Secondary text distinct color tendencies

For tag lines or secondary texts no distinct color tendencies exist in our selected data of shop signs across all five cities.

C) Background sign panel distinct color tendencies

Color hue distinct tendencies are directly related to specific stone material in specific city

In each of the five cities, we found that it has been an impelling force to use the color hue that resembles or corresponds to the tonal look of the locally available and used stone materials as follows:

a) The Pink wash color tendency in sign panels of Jaipur

In the city of Jaipur, shop signs across marketplaces show the distinct tendency of pink color hue in background panels. There is a historic cum aesthetic underpinning that causes this particular tendency in the sign panels. In 16th century, Maharaja Jai Singh decided to adopt pink hue of the quartzite stone for the city of Jaipur. Since Jaipur did not have the best quarries of sandstone, it was brought from the sandstone quarries of Jodhpur in Rajasthan. In order to reduce time and transportation costs, geru soil was applied as pink wash that resembled the local and unique pink quartzite sandstone look (Fig. 4.29).

b) The earthy brown stone or mortar color tendency in sign panels of Hyderabad

Hyderabad, originally as the Hyderabad state, was home to stone-age materials and weapons belonging to 2000 BCE that have been used during British colonial times in buildings and facades of marketplaces with full fervor. As part of this historic impelling force, the use of stone and mortar base with characteristic ancient earthy brown hue has been used in the background panels of shop signs in those times (Fig. 4.76).

c) The Yellow Malad stone color tendency in sign panels of Mumbai

Mumbai city has been known for its legacy of Victorian style, Art Deco buildings and monuments of the later years of 19th century during British Raj rule. During these colonial times, the local yellow malad stone slabs were characteristic of façade designs and old signboard panels in the marketplaces of South Mumbai. Along with the yellow malad stone color, related surface treatments are also present in the background sign panels in those times (Fig. 4.19).

d) The faded yellow-white marble color tendency in sign panels of Bengaluru

Bengaluru is the established stone city of India since old stone-age times. This city has been well-known for granite and marble stone slabs production and even exports these stones as a major business with international firms. In context of this historic impelling material force, very light grey, off-white with yellow undertone and faded yellow-white marble stone background panels have been used in the shop signs of the city (Fig. 4.159).

e) The basalt panels and dressed yellow stone color tendency in sign panels of Chennai

Chennai is well known for Indo-Saracenic architectural style that diffused from the 1870s to the early 20th century for colonial buildings and facades in India. In this historical context, this city has most local building facades and fronts made of basalt in dressed yellow stone. The same yellow is extensively used in the old background panels of shop signs across marketplaces. The yellow stone and basalt panels are also part of the city's Dravidian architectural style of the temples and the muddier yellow version stands for harvest for both merchants and farmers alike in context of India (Fig. 4.198).

5.3.4 Conventions

Following are core insights of color conventions in historical context, followed by those in business context for all three layers of information:

Color conventions in the historical context

A) Main text color conventions in the historical context

The following color conventions applied in the shop names present shades of red hue in varied historical contexts in the cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai. Likewise, Green color convention in respective historical contexts is observed in the cities of Hyderabad and Mumbai. However, for the city of Bengaluru, no color conventions in historical context exist in the selected group of shop signs across marketplaces in our data.

1) Vermilion main text in shop signs of Jaipur and Hyderabad

The symbolic use of Vermilion in shop names unifies the form and content relationship on shop signs in the two cities. This cultural code is rooted in the historical heritage of Indian mythology, where Vermilion stands for bravery, protection and strength. It also represents Lakshmi and Durga. Taking the same form-content meaning forward, mythic and godly

names such as Lakshmi, Ganesh, Ganga and Gopi have been displayed in vermilion (Fig. 4.32, 4.79 and 4.80).

2) Orange-red or saffron red main text in shop signs of Mumbai

Saffron red reminds of India's history of color and design evolution as part of our national flag that originated in 1904 by mixing red and yellow hues signifying freedom struggle in those times. Also, in the city of Mumbai, this color has a long time association with local city festivals such as the Ganesh Utsav and related festive traditions. This saffron red is symbolically used in both devanagari as well as latin shop names in the signs across marketplaces in Mumbai (Fig. 4.122).

3) Maroon or cherry red main text in shop signs of Chennai

In the broader context of history of Indian traditions, cherry red or maroon stands for an imperial mood, royal demeanor, controlled power and exclusivity in south Indian culture. This imperial red of Chennai's High court, museum, senate and university buildings has been taken forward as a symbolic color to signify exclusive business identities represented in the names of shops such as premium plywood store, Carnatic music class centre and image optics store etc. in Chennai (Fig. 4.200).

4) Green main text in shop signs of Hyderabad and Mumbai

The traditional use of green in prominently Urdu or Arabic scripts can be seen in the main text of Hyderabad and Mumbai shop signs (Fig. 4.78 and 4.123).

B) Secondary text color conventions in the historical context

The color convention in historical context for secondary texts has been observed in the city of Jaipur only.

Vermilion shlokas as secondary texts in shop signs of Jaipur

Historically, in India, symbols and shlokas in vermilion are displayed over newly bought vehicles, products or on signboards of newly launched business. This historical convention is also seen in the display of secondary texts in form of vermilion symbols and shlokas on shop signs across marketplaces in Jaipur (Fig. 4.40).

C) Background sign panel color conventions in the historical context

The color conventions in historical context for background sign panels have only been observed in the city of Chennai. The convention of cherry red in Chennai sign panels is based on similar symbolic meaning of the hue in the main text of shop signs in Chennai itself (Fig. 4.205).

Color conventions in the business context

Most of the color hues have definite meanings in the world of small or large-scale business. Therefore, the color conventions in this section have a symbolic association with the kind of business, product or a service. Business oriented color conventions may be absent in some cities due to lack of images of such shop signs in our limited data.

A) Main text color conventions in the business context

1) Blue in main texts of everyday local service shop signs in Jaipur, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai

Blue in shop names conveys grounded philosophy that is bound in well-established trust and security. This is mainly associated with service related business. In this larger service business context, blue also represents positivity and safety. Therefore, it has been symbolically applied in everyday service shops such as medical stores, travel agencies and cycle repair shops (Fig. 4.34, 4.81, 4.160 and 4.201).

2) Red in main texts of shop signs in Jaipur and Mumbai

Red is the core symbol of power, protection and commitment in larger business context. It has been the most powerful and dominating hue among all others in India. Therefore, it is used in competing big showrooms and logos of brands in modern business context. Red also expresses stimulation and tempting appeal in the mood of the main text of local cafes and restaurants to attract food lovers and triggers sustained temptation (Fig. 4.36 and 4.124).

3) Metallic hues of gold/silver/silver grey in main texts of shop signs in Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru

Gold symbolically means lavishness, purity, courage and power in business context especially in a country like India, where some gold ornament is generally worn against the skin. It also stands for warmth and hospitality. Therefore, it becomes a deliberate main

text color choice for lavish and luxurious hotels that serve elite visitors. Silver also has been used in jewellery as long as gold in India. It is associated with classic appeal, value and hi-end sophistication. Therefore, it becomes a deliberate choice to display hi-end fashion, jewellery, hotel and other luxury based branded showroom names (Fig. 4.35, 4.38, 4.83, 4.127, 4.128, 4.163 and 4.164).

4) White in main text of shop signs in Bengaluru and Chennai

Conventionally, white connotes purity and universal appeal. Medical professionals in past used to wear beige coats, later changed to white ones with the idea of hope and expectations for healing and good recovery that the doctors would bring to the patients. Therefore, white has been used to display the names of modern clinics and pharmacy shop signs (Fig. 4.161 and 4.202).

B) Secondary text color conventions in the business context

Secondary texts in shop signs across cities have been very scantily used. But, wherever tag lines appear, color conventions in the business context have the same symbolic association as in the main text. For instance, blue tag lines are used in everyday service shops as well as travel agencies in Jaipur and Mumbai (Fig. 4.41 and Fig. 4.129). In another example from Mumbai, golden color has been used in tag lines of modern and big business size shop signs (Fig. 4.131).

C) Background sign panel color conventions in the business context

No clear business context based color conventions exist in background sign panels for any city data in our research.

5.4 Solutions to the Research questions

This section provides solutions to all the research questions asked in the introduction chapter of this thesis. The answers to these questions raised were satisfactorily found during the course of the study in the following manner:

1) What sort of visual framework is needed for the analysis of color in shop signs?

The attribute of color is made up of many dimensions and characteristics in context of visual design of a shop sign. When this attribute becomes a main design tool to distinguish

between different parts of visual display over a signboard of a shop, other contextual forces of business, marketplace, city, time period, material identity, historical traditions that influence color use, socio-economic conditions of trade and ownership, popular visual styles, stereotypes, established conventions, cultural beliefs etc. influence the design of shop signs.

Based on this observation, color becomes an even more dynamic marker of identity creation and display design influenced by multiple forces. Therefore, during the initial stages of this research, we have not only accumulated the scientific nomenclature of dimensions and characteristics that make color a concrete attribute, but have also made efforts to investigate the more abstract and lesser known influences and qualities that can be associated with colors. In this regard, we searched for such a methodology that would integrate both the concrete and abstract notions of color within a framework. Therefore, the visual research methodology of Bricolage or making-do to create new outcomes by integrating unrelated and autonomous parts was applied. What we learnt in the process of applying this qualitative method is that elements and their relationships in color are organized in alignment with certain specific quadrants of the framework in such a way that the design researcher in the role of a bricoleur may build upon. The abstract side of color includes the semiotics of color. As part of semiotics, we observed patterns that are arrangements of elements to describe syntactics; trends that are popular styles or expressions based on certain themes in time to bring forth the semantics and, finally tendencies and conventions give embedded causal qualities as well as established symbolic meanings help describe the pragmatics of color. The proposed framework is a visual analytical tool that analyzes the attribute of color, including patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions along specific functional domains.

2) How do we use this framework to visually analyze color, its characteristics and modes of communication on shop signs in India?

The answer to this question is two fold. The first part elaborates on the structure of each of the four quadrants of our framework. The second part explains the variables of color that are to be analyzed in the structure of each quadrant.

In the first part, the formulated framework of color analysis lays out the structure of each of the four quadrants into classifications. The first quadrant, *patterns* are large and small patterns of color in our data of shop signs in India. The second quadrant, *trends*

highlight color styles and expressions as part of continuous transitions or period-specific vogues in the context of movie poster designs and related popular themes in India. The third quadrant, *tendencies* reflect upon the general causal prevalences as well as some distinct ones rooted in the local identity of the city or the national contexts of architecture, design and aesthetic underpinnings. The fourth quadrant, *conventions* describe age-old established standards of color display either in the context of business or as the historically ingrained codes of color in the five cities of India in this research.

The second part of the framework presents the identification of variables within the attribute of color for final analysis. For this, a table of color dimensions, characteristics and quadrants was outlined before starting the analysis of color in shop signs of each of the five cities in this research. This table includes the four dimensions, namely *color description*, *color relationship*, *color pragmatics* and *color symbolism*; each including their respective characteristics. This table explained the role of color characteristics as variables to study specific quadrants in the proposed framework. For instance, all the *color description* characteristics of *hue*, *value*, *saturation*, *temperature* and *color kinds*; along with *color relationship* characteristics of *color combinations*, *hierarchy*, *contrast*, *effects* and *schemes* are the variables to study patterns and trends in shop signs. Other dimensions of *color pragmatics* and *symbolism* include characteristics of *color production*, *functionality* and *identity* that are variables to study tendencies and conventions in shop signs. Therefore, the proposed visual framework analyzes color in shop signs by studying variables of color dimensions and characteristics in the four quadrants and their respective classifications in order to gather different modes of color display across the selected five cities and six time slots.

3) What are the emerging transitions, affinities and differences in colors and their applications in design of shop signs in India across cities and time periods?

The answer to this question lies in the visualization graphs that we generated to record the changing hue transitions across cities and time periods for our limited data of shop signs from five cities in India (Appendix 4 and 5). Therefore, the emerging changes in color across time periods are restricted to the sample of the data selected and cannot be generalized per city. In the pre-independence times represented by time slot of 1930-44, there is a dominance of red shop names followed by white. Parallel to this, in case of background sign panels, lot of white boards appear followed by yellow, mostly as part of stone or iron base panels in old

times. These were readily available materials and two specific cities of Hyderabad and Mumbai included different qualities of dressed yellow stone, complimented by application of pale yellow hues to connote the material influence in colonial times that gradually reduced post independence times in India. Between 1945-59, red shop names still dominated in different kinds of business shops, but there was a downfall in white shop names. Use of other hues of blue and black in shop names increased in this period. Parallel to this, number of white sign panels increased even more. In the middle periods from 1960s till 1990, red names followed by black, blue and white appeared in good numbers across cities. Background sign panels in same time periods saw a downfall in white boards and an increase in the use of yellow, blue and green boards. These times are marked by the golden age in bollywood movie posters that explored multiple themes in the movies that were also visually represented as part of experimental visual display and color production techniques. In latest modern times post 1990s till the present day, white and grey names have gained popularity and are displayed against black, red and other darker hues in context of modern promotional design of branded products and services. The use of more universal achromatic hues of white, grey and black in present times is pertaining to the effect of globalization and international appeal expected from modern day products and brands. Theme based underlying socio-political influences may have regulated dominant use of some color hues and other description and relationship based characteristics. Therefore, the visualization graphs throw light on the emerging transitions that describe the affinities and differences appearing in the hues of the main texts and background sign panels across cities and time periods in the context of color applications in the visual designs of the selected data of shop signs from five cities in India.

5.5 Contributions

5.5.1 Visual framework of color analysis of shop signs

The four-quadrant open, flexible and multi-perspective framework is a distinctive contribution of this research. This framework aims to analyze color in the design of shop signs in India. Such a framework provides more flexibility and freedom for imagination to the researchers as well as visual communication designers with whatever knowledge tools they have in their repertoire to deconstruct the meanings of signs through their designs. A designer's role in the present times has changed from the traditional one that applied a unilateral way of thinking and approaching a subject area, to the contemporary need to know: 1) multiple points of view and apply them as multi-perspective approach in research and, 2)

to create designs with multi-functional, versatile and more open-ended solutions. This would help in continuous evolution of designs, systems and frameworks for innovative and creative ideas as part of the future work. To address this new role and need in visual designs, the present framework of visual analysis of color in shop signs of India reciprocates this multi-perspective opportunity by providing a range of autonomous quadrants.

5.5.2 Visual mode of diachronic analysis of colors in shop signs

The data collection gave us a large number of shop signs belonging to different time periods of their making. The distinct feature of the diachronic analysis of colors in the shop signs conducted in this research work has been able to capture the shop signs belonging to six time slots (each slot of 14 years duration), belonging to five cities and three different marketplaces per city in India.

A group of design case studies were gathered from both western and eastern parts of the world mainly to explore either the urban design or the architectural influences on shop signs as part of streetscapes. Thus, they reveal insights (even if historical) only in the said subject areas. Our study has been unique in a sense that the applied method of stratified sampling has helped us to simplify and reduce the large documented data of shop signs in terms of cities, marketplaces and time periods. All these factors have led to a detailed study of shop sign as an artifact of urban material cultural with historical underpinnings.

5.5.3 Inductive theoretical process to redefine quadrants

Following a set of assumptions for this research, we could observe the presence of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions in the attribute of color. These terms have been defined, studied and researched by various designers/scholars/analysts for new meanings. The existing definitions, etymologies and meanings were collected and examined for the most characteristic keywords that explain them in the true picture. Thus, this inductive approach of joining the significant keywords helped us redefine all the terms in the design context of shop sign – this context being the major ground for our research. The inductive joining of words for new definitions and meanings presents a new approach to simplify theoretical complexity of terms for design researchers.

5.5.4 Rich qualitative associations in the visual analysis of color

As part of the creatively explored and articulated observations, as part of the visual analysis of color has been the kind of associations identified within quadrants. For instance, in case of period specific trend analysis, popular themes as part of movie posters, socio-economic conditions in national and local context, regional political influence and other arts and aesthetics movements in the specific periods could be associated to the parallel color display on shop signs. Distinct tendencies are other interesting qualities that use specific color hue in order to correspond with the look of the locally available stone panels in case of background sign panels across cities. For instance, the pink of the background sign panels in the city of Jaipur has been replicated taking a direct cue from the tonal identity of quartzite sandstone that is the official royal stone material used in city's buildings, monuments and shop fronts. Likewise, other such parallels have been drawn for other city shop signs as part of the vast visual color analysis in chapter 4; with the core ones being discussed in section 5.3 of this chapter. This study has been able to multiple vantage points specifically in the research of shop signs and signs in general in context of India.

5.5.5 Relevance of the framework for signboard designers

The framework of visual analysis of color designed in this research has been envisioned to act as an analytical tool that can aid designers or makers of signboards in the context of promotional design strategy, identity creation and business image building from the perspective of marketing and branding. This is so because the framework with patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions views color in this research from multiple perspectives. Likewise, other attributes of typography, graphics, layout and material can be analyzed for identifying patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions of the framework by sign designers in India.

To elaborate on these perspectives and influencing factors, for instance, trends of visual display design in shops would give information about the changing fashion and make of designs, related naming trends in case of different business kinds, new techniques of displaying shop names along with tag lines or sometimes tag lines themselves assuming the role of brand identity for a shop's business. The perspective of patterns would help resolve the mechanical coherence of all content on the signboard, that at many times is also followed on the printed visiting business card of a shop. These patterns of specific hues and other characteristics would help create a color or any other attribute's distinct grammar for the shop

name identity, tag line identity or even background sign panels. This would give required cues to the sign designer to create a distinct syntax for a shop business in context of information design in these contemporary times. With tendencies and conventions being more locally, nationally, traditionally, historically and commercially ingrained meanings, the designer would get familiarized with certain unknown qualities and age-old known practices to portray form and content of the business in context of its kind, scale, purpose, history and future visions.

The suggested visual framework can act as effective analytical tool to decode the communication aspects of different kinds of signs in context of visual design or may be the larger perspective of semiotics and conceptual modes of meaning-making and signification systems with which different signs operate in a range of semiotics. Semioticians have provided us the theoretical foundation of this subject area. The current framework in the focused context of visual design, takes a lead from the mode of semiotic analysis in order to create a design thinking based visual analysis mode that studies an attribute, its characteristics and their modes of visual communication.

5.6 Limitations of the study

- 1) The domain of visual design of shop signs in India is vast and complex including many overlapping aspects. For this, it was decided to look at only five cities and to restrict to three different types of marketplaces presenting three distinct business scales in each of the five cities. So, research work has analyzed a total of 450 shop signs from the selected five cities of India, namely Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai. The data of shop signs from the five cities analyzed as part of this research work covers time slots (each of fourteen years: 1930-44, 1945-59...), starting from 1930s till the present times.
- 2) The formulated framework in this research analyzes focused on the visual attribute of color. Whereas, the other visual attributes such as typography, layout, graphics, materials and fabrication techniques of shop signs have not been analyzed as through the visual framework in this research.

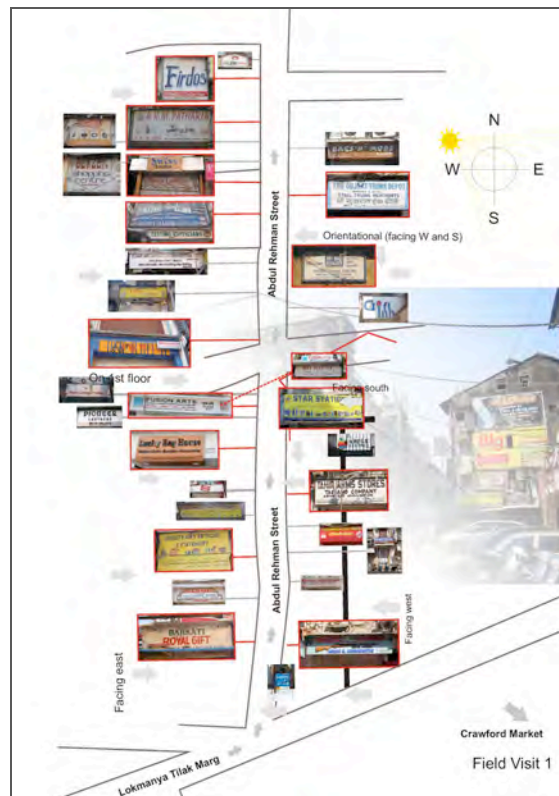
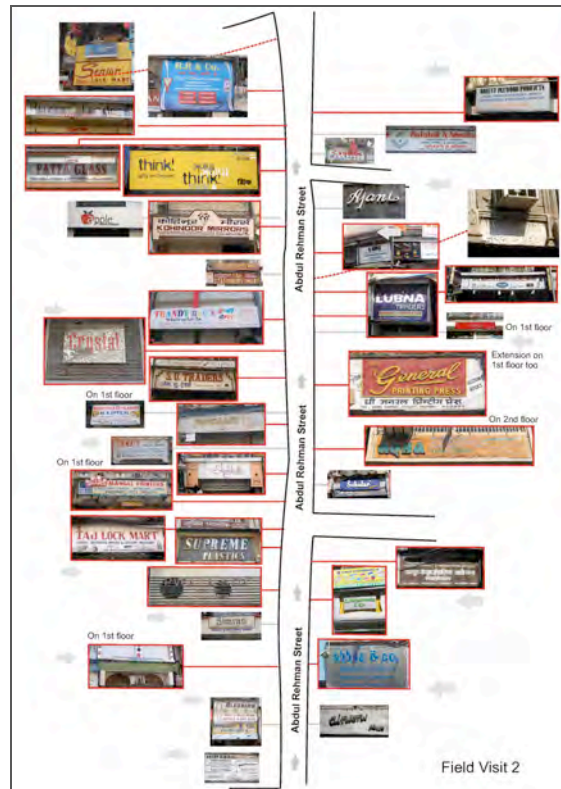
The limitations in this research can be taken up as future opportunities elaborated in the following section.

5.7 Suggestions for Future work

- 1) The visual analytical framework for shop sign designs as part of this research has focused on color attribute in selected cities of India. This visual analytical framework can be taken up for further analysis of other attributes such as typography, layout, graphics, materials, production and fabrication techniques in the context of the visual design of shop signs in not just in India but anywhere else.
- 2) The formulated framework provides a scope to identify and use a nomenclature of visual attributes for analysis as part of the design of a shop sign. A nomenclature of color in the form of dimensions and characteristics has been identified and applied to analyze the quadrants of the formulated visual framework in this thesis. Similarly, another nomenclature of display typography, layout designs, composition of graphics, choice and properties of materials used and given tangible representation through techniques and treatments of fabrication. Dimensions, characteristics or a separate nomenclature can be identified in these visual attributes. This broadens the range of future analytical possibilities with the same four quadrants as part of the proposed visual framework to analyze attributes in the visual design of a shop sign.
- 3) The same framework of quadrants can also be used to conduct cross-country analysis of attribute(s) in the design of shop signs. For instance, a comparative visual analysis of shop signs in the eastern and western countries can be a future research study. The further scope of a comparative visual analysis in other forms of signs and symbols across countries with affinities in terms of visual culture and architectural style(s) in context of history etc. For instance, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and Poland celebrated renaissance architectural styles in buildings between 15th and 17th centuries. The buildings have symbolic forms inculcate the design principles symmetry, proportion, regularity, geometry etc. The four quadrants of the framework patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions can be analyzed in the four design principles – that can be seen as design domains for a cross-relational country analysis of architectural symbolic forms.
- 4) This visual framework of analysis studies color in the visual design of shop signs in our research. The same could be applied to other forms of communication such as directional

Appendix I

Walkthrough map of Abdul Rehman Street, Mumbai (India)



Appendix II

Mapping of shop signs in decade-wise time slots, Abdul Rehman Street, Mumbai



Appendix III

Semantic, syntactic and pragmatic analysis of shop signs in Abdul Rehman Street, Mumbai, India

Semantic analysis

signifiers	truth conditions	meanings
- HASHAM & SHAKOOR OPTICIANS - Estd. 1875 (by special appointment to) - H M THE KING OF AGHANISTAN'S Bombay / Consultant	- family legacy - years of legacy - Status / Prestige factor - Status / Prestige factor	- family business as opticians - business since 1875 - consultants with expertise - consultants with expertise
- HASHAM & SHAKOOR OPTICIANS (Hindi) - Eye image (iconic)	- family legacy - overcomes language barrier	- family business as opticians - corrected vision for customers
- QUALIFIED-OPTICIANS-OPTOMETERISTS (English) - Eye image (iconic)	- shop owners profile - overcomes language barrier	- service provided - corrected vision for customers

SEMANTICS - Quantitative data

"Name Meanings", various kinds of influences

Mixed names (word denoting status, esteem, prestige + word denoting the product) >

- Product function oriented (shop name – "Novelty" selling Novelty items)
- Conceptual names (e.g. "Fusion" connoting mix of traditional and modern jewellery items for customers)

Name Syntax:

Mix name (family member name) (functional word for shop)
 Mix name (product oriented function word) (word denoting product)
 Mix name (conceptual word) (word denoting brand of product)
 Mix name (conceptual word) (product) (functional word for shop)
 Mix name (family member name) (words denoting business service)
 Mix name (Complete owner name) (punch line detail of shop service)
 Family member name (single name – members' names, friend's name)

Name Syntax:

Single family name (first name / full name) plus Bros.
 Single family name (first name / last name) plus sons
 Single family name (first name/ last name) plus Co.
 Single name (foreign influence) plus Co.
 Foreign / borrowed naming
 Beliefs (based on religious influence or superstitious notions)
 Place specific naming (e.g. Bombay Products, The Gujarat Trunk Depot)

AMAR TRADERS

Mix name (family member name) (words denoting business service)

SUPREME PLASTICS

Mix name (product oriented function word) (word denoting product)

Senior LOCK MART

Mix name (conceptual word) (product) (functional word for shop)

JAYANTILAL BROS.

Single family name (first name / full name) plus Bros.

NASH & CO.

Single name (foreign influence) plus Co.

THE GUJARAT TRUNK DEPOT

Place specific naming

Syntactic analysis

2000 - 2010

- a) Name Signifiers:
 - 1) Characteristic use of word which could be seen in most of the shop names here, would be use of adjectives like "Styles", "Trendy", "Power", "Fusion", "Novelty".
 - 2) There are also names like "Crystal" and "Diamond" that connote words, "exclusive" "precious" in relation to the products being sold by the shops.
 - 3) Six shops have family names exclusive in the shop names. (Juzer Traders, Amar Traders & N.P. Exports, C. Hargovandas & Co., R.R. Corporation, Firdos Cosmetic Collection and Nilesh Bag House. Hence, again the condition of "preserving family legacy" is important signifying agent of these names acting as major Semantic Operators.
 - 4) Characteristic "foreign language" and cultural influences"
 - a) One special case of shops, like Firdos Cosmetic Collection shop, the text in Arabic means TAWAKAL - Faith.
 - b) Another shop, "Barkati Royal Gifts" has cultural connotation through letters KGN (Khwaja Garib Nawaz - Dargah in Fatehpur Sikri.
 - i) The translation of shop name "Barkati" overcomes "language barrier" for people knowing Arabic.
 - ii) There's also mention of "Haza min fazli rabbi", "All thing with the mercy of Allah." "sab cheje Allah ke fazal se", shows importance of "beliefs" used to generate meanings for the shop name and business.



Signboard design (2004 - 2008)

III. Big Display Typography

Visual Context

- a) The display styles includes *Signature style* lettering to modern display typefaces used as originals, to those altered digitally and then used on the signboard panels.
- b) **Material amplifiers:** The maximum visible Display Typography, as solid letters pasted on panels as shop names occurs in 13 signboards. The materials include use of stone (granite), steel textured base, base made of mirror pieces placed in a "crystal pattern", complimenting the shop name "Crystal".
- c) **Hand-painted technique:** This is followed by occurrence of 8 signboards with characteristic hand-painted display typography.
- d) The first signifier word in case of mixed names, appears as bigger display in comparison to other words in the signifier chain. (observed for 8 signboards under the category)
- e) **Display size complimenting Panel shape:** An interesting point is observed in relation to a). That, many panel shapes of signboards seem influenced by the display size i.e. the display letter size seems to be the first decision to finalize the size of the rectangular panels. The reason being that these rectangular shapes seem elongated or condensed exaggerations of signboards.
- f) **Colour schemes**
 - a) Mostly, primaries of red and blue colour combinations have been used for shop names in this category of signboards.
 - b) The extra big type for shop names covers 80 - 90 percent of the panel area, with other text put as a baseline centered or corner-

Lingual context

- a) The typography here is for presents only shop names in English.
- b) There are maximum no. of signboards here, with big size English names with just no translation in Hindi or foreign or local language.
- c) The nature of the words used includes modern conceptual words, service oriented words making shop names.
- d) There are six cases, wherein the complete shop name is the main name plus the names of products in the same size and display forms as the main name presents.
- e) There are five display styles of modern typography for shop names, where the form variations in the letterforms, or background panel effects amplify the shop name. These special cases of display and identity are five under the category.



Old Signboard (1986)



New Signboard (2002)

Pragmatic analysis

III. Colour Red

Visual Context

a) *Monopoly in the Visual Syntax:*

There are a great number of signboards with shops names depicted in colour "red", a great no. of 21 such signboards are there out of the 53 boards studied in Abdul Rehman street.

b) *Material varieties* to represent "**red names**" are maximum in old style hand-painted letters (9 in no.), embossed in stone, as solid acrylic letters (8), as digital prints (2) and only one as Vinyl-sticker letters.

c) There are 11 shops where white panels present names in "red" colour.

d) There are only four signboards, where shop names in red letters are amplified with use of other primary "yellow".

e) There are mixed cases where, first word of shop names are red, more as against the second word of the mixed shop names in red.

f) There is an additional occurrence of red shop replicated names on additional boards to the six shop names.



Signboard Design (1940)



5.1.3 PRAGMATICS

The information about the make of signboards (materials and maintenance factors) helped understanding the reasons behind their change in design (if any); from the old look to new look.

The data for each signboard was analyzed, by applying pragmatic reasoning about the historical evolution (first launch of the shop signboard and the change(s) to new forms of representation(s).

This was related to the information about materials used to make the signboards, in the wake of maintenance factors, changing trends of display like colour, typography, images.

The Process of change was also analyzed to view what would be the resulting emerging profiles of makers or designers (individual and team).

Change in design

a) Big Renovations of shop signboards to overcome faulty materials for better durability and look, is the main reason given by 31 / 53 shop owners in the street.

b) 16 / 53 shops are those with signboards that have not undergone any change. These all are new business shops using current trends of durable, easily maintained materials for shop signboards. They also use the latest trends of display of names and the visual arrangement of elements on the panel. They cover range of estd. businesses from 1995 to 2010.

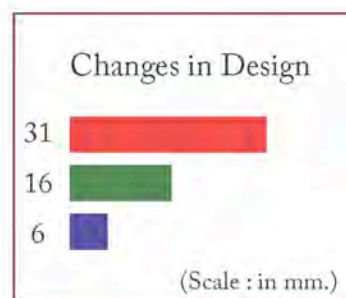
c) 6 / 53 shop signboards have to be maintained by frequent re-paints from time to time. They are all old-style signboards, covering the business estd. from 1875 to 1995.

Other factors governing change (of lesser importance):

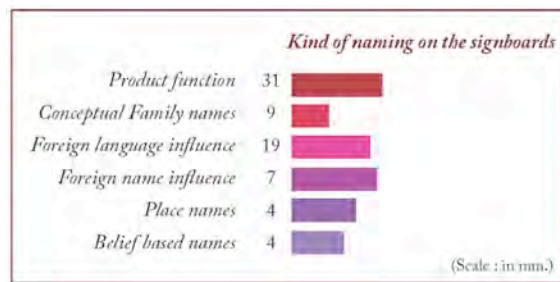
Change happens only when there's a competitive target:

a) b) Or, changing idea might come as "a suggestion" from a family members or friends or customers.

c) Franchise Monopoly: Some shops are more in no., which have craftsmen undertaking the job of new signboard creation and general renovations of the shop.



Quantitative data visualization of semantics, syntactics and pragmatics of shop signs in Abdul Rehman street, Mumbai



Various Elements of Visual Syntax :

Panel form

Rectangular : 45

Designed : New shapes : 9, Experimented / textured backgrounds: 7

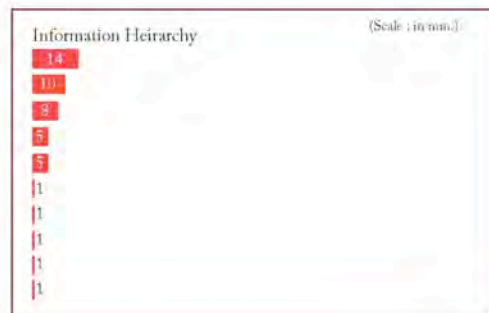
Signboard extensions

- 1) Shop signs with more than 1 signboard: 14
- 2) Shop signs with different signboard extensions (as shop-shutters): 5
- 3) Shop sign with 3D installation, as signboard extension: 1
- 4) Shop panels entirely hand-painted: 12
- 5) Shop panels entirely hand-crafted: 13



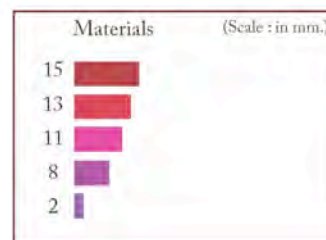
Information Hierarchy

- 1) Name - service & product information - address: 14
- 2) Name - images - Product info.- address: 10
- 3) Name & Address : 8
- 4) Name - product information - images - address: 5
- 5) Images - name - address: 5
- 6) Date - name - product information - images: 1
- 7) Date - service - name - service - address : 1
- 8) Date - name - images - product information - address: 1
- 9) Name - date - address: 1
- 10) Name - Product Image - 3D installation image: 1
- 11) Name - Date - name (translation) - Address: 1



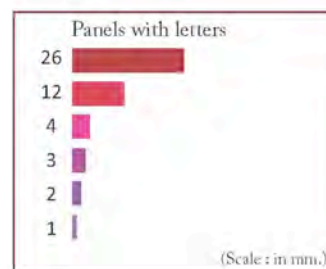
Materials

- 1) Panels using Aluminium base: 15
- 2) Panels with wooden base: 13
- 3) Panels with MS / Fiber mixed Aluminium base: 11
- 4) Panels using iron (locally called "patra") base: 8
- 5) Painted Ply base + Ply letters: 2



Panels and letters

- 1) Panels with Acrylic letters: 12
- 2) Panels with painted letters: 26
- 3) Panels with printed letters on Flex base: 4
- 4) Panels with Vinyl sticker letters: 3
- 5) Panels with Ply letters: 2
- 6) Panels with Screen printed letters: 1



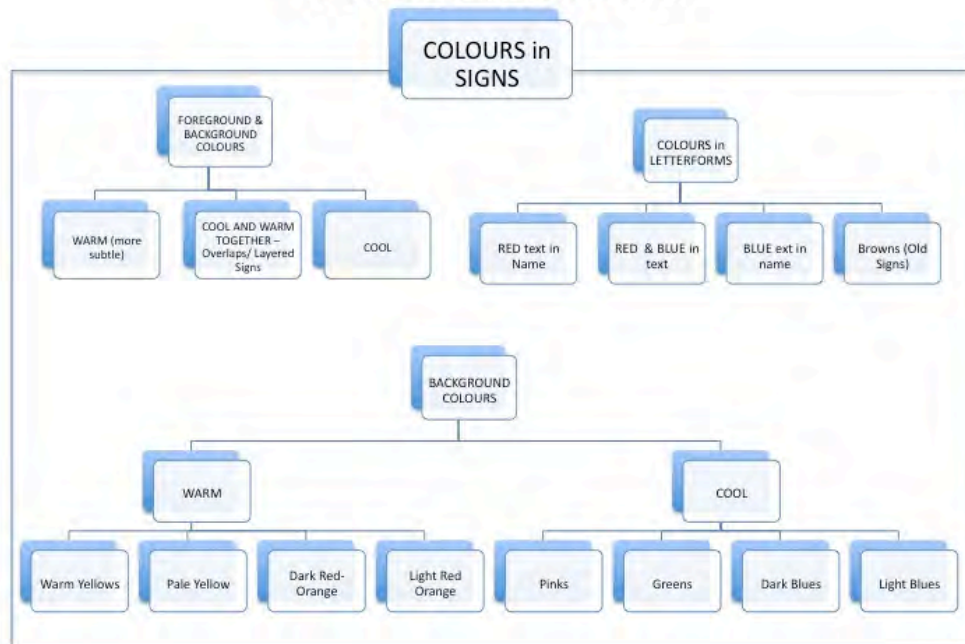
Appendix IV

Photographs of classification labels and structures made by participants for ninety shop signs of the city of Bengaluru



Classification structures by a designer and a non-designer participant

Anisha Malhotra



Classification structure made by a designer

Ram Manohar Singh

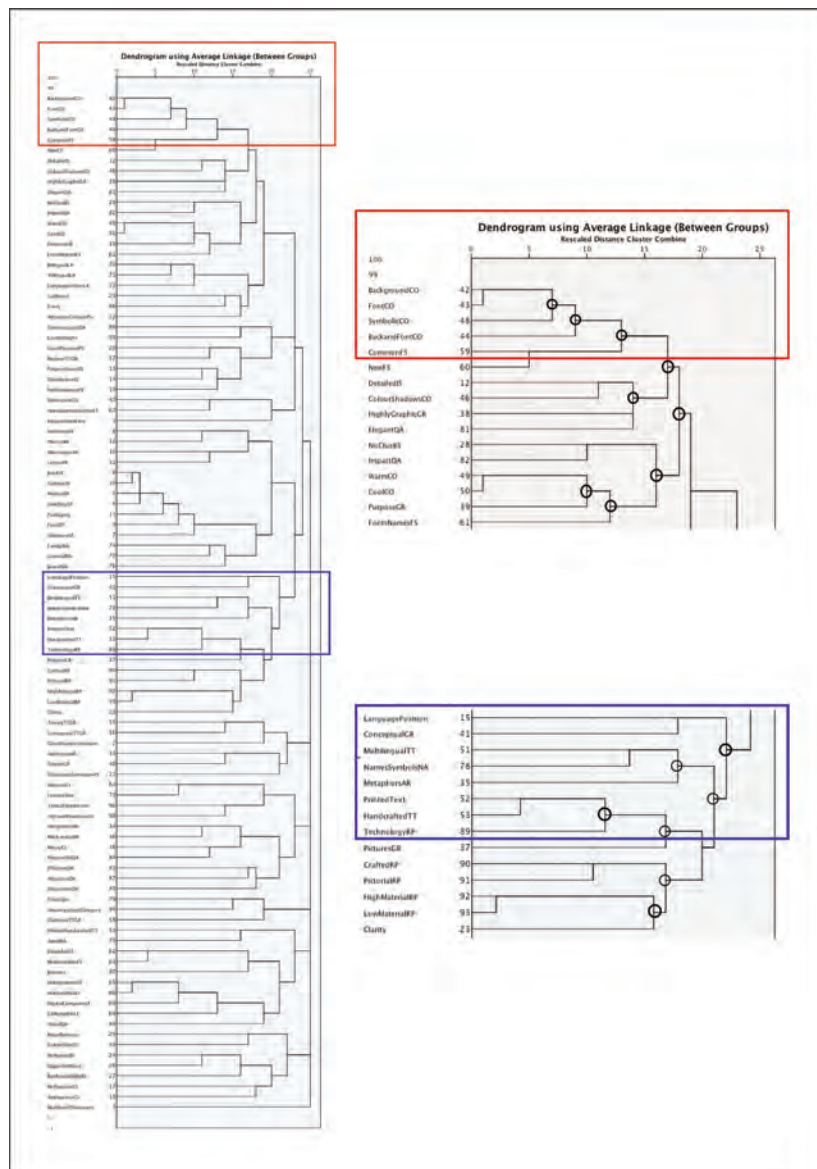


Classification structure made by a non-designer

Appendix V

Outcomes of Hierarchical cluster analysis of 90 shop signs of Bengaluru in SPSS

1) **Dendrogram:** Measure of average distances between two leaf notes (forming a close cluster). A cluster may have several leaf notes, but the average distance between the leaf notes may be more. This makes the group statistically not a cluster i.e. the group of variables are not that co-related as compared to others with lesser distance between the variables.



The **red box** encloses the smallest cluster similar cases together with color the topmost attribute among all. The **blue box** encloses less preferred attributes of representation, text and type represented in larger clusters with dissimilarities.

2) **Proximity matrix:** With $n = 99$ (all variables), we measured n -by- n matrix of similarities and dissimilarities (Table 5.1). Similarly, we have observed five more cases.

Fashion shops	Packaging shops
-0.242	-0.365
-0.087	0.002
0	0
0.89	0.794
0.894**	0.769
0.946	0.893**

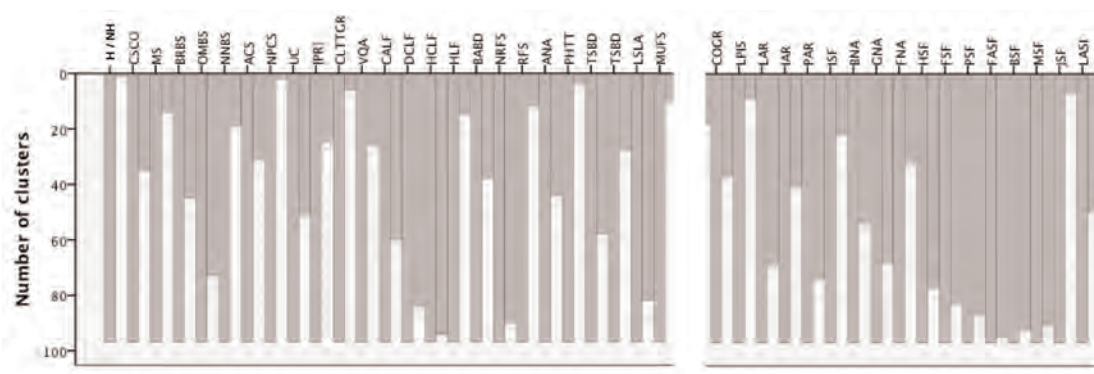
Table 5.1: Co-relation Values of two adjacent variables
Source: Analysis - IBM 19.0 SPSS: Output sheet of Proximity Matrix

3) **Agglomeration table:** Third outcome was the Agglomeration schedules (AS) table that helped us to find relevant clusters to study as the final solution of cluster analysis. Significant cluster formations are those that presented sudden jumps in the coefficient values (Table 5.2).

Stage	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Coefficients
38	65	69	0.486
39	55	56	0.470
68	12	28	0.300
69	23	37	0.269
91	1	4	0.066
92	54	58	0.037

Table 5.2: Highlighted part of The Agglomeration Table
Source: Analysis - IBM 19.0 SPSS: Output sheet of Agglomeration table

4) **Vertical Icicle:** The presented parts of *Vertical Icicle* here represent how separate cases are combined into clusters per iteration of the analysis at the scale of 0 to 100 clusters formed (Appendix 5). In the two enlarged views of parts of the big Icicle that we got for 99 variables, we can see Appendix 5 (part a of the illustrated figure), we can see that all Letterform (LF) cases are 60 at 60 clusters, 80 at 80 clusters and 100 at 100 clusters (Fig. 5.2 in following page).



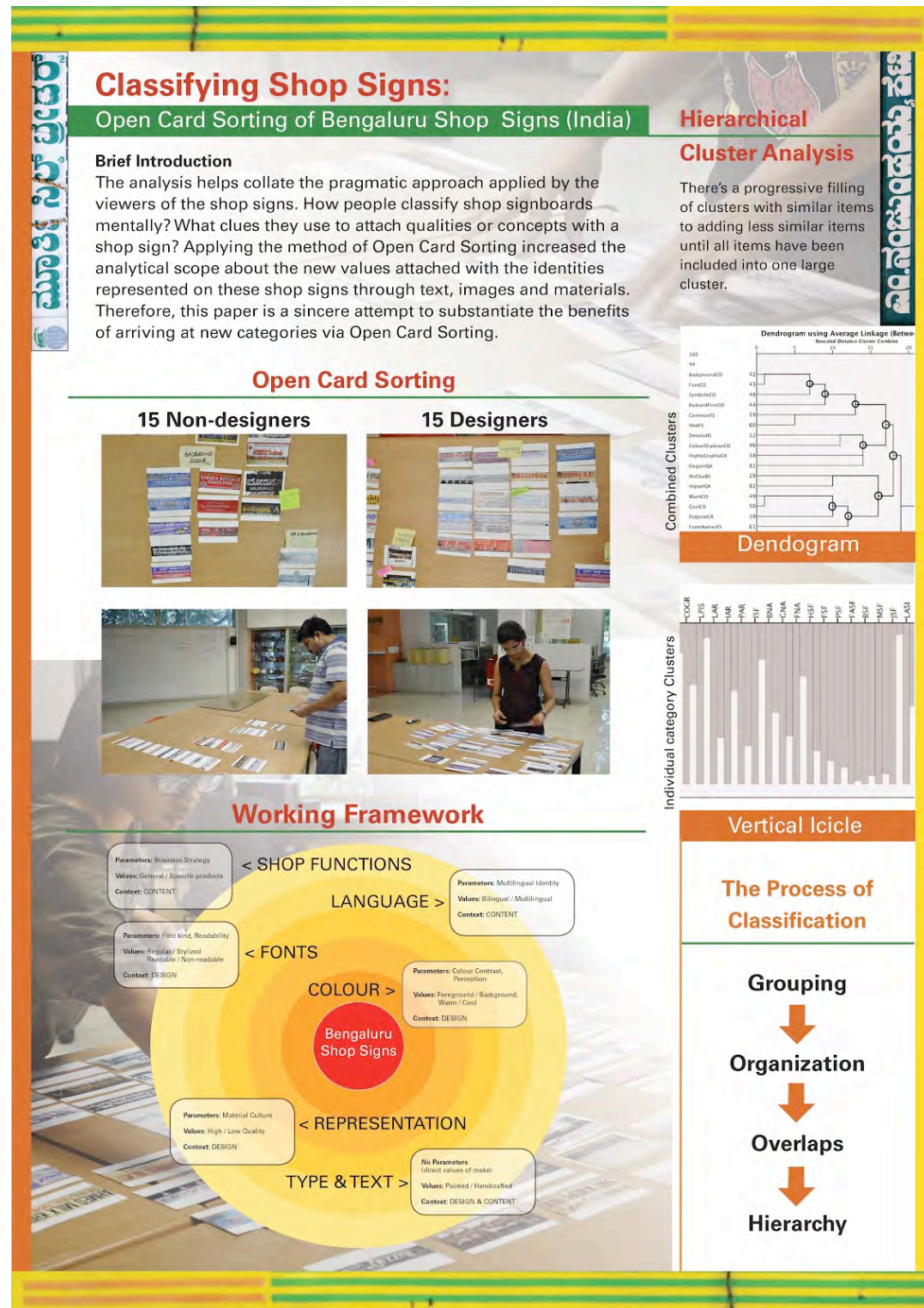
Vertical Icicle plot related with part a-(left) and part b-(right)

Appendix VI

Poster design of the presented paper:

“Classifying shop signs: Open Card sorting of Bengaluru shop signs (India)” in ICoRD 2013, IIT Chennai

Authors: Nanki Nath and Ravi Poovaiah



Appendix VII

Sample records from interviews of sign painters

1) Painter employed by Murugan Arts sign painters - BANGALORE

Interview with Mr. Shiv Kumar (Head of the painters)

Karnataka tourism pictures are our visual reference. Murugan Arts started this wall-painting project in Bangalore one and a half years ago. Actually four years ago in Matheran, other parts of Rajasthan side. This idea of painting wall-art started off in Jaipur. Here, Lal bagh was painted first, then rest of places in Bangalore was painted (a govt. funded project scheme by B.B.M.P.). Murugan Arts started with the initiative of painting walls – Sheshadripuram walls also has the same hand-painted forms on the wall. In Sheshadripuram, the Murugan painters started the project. (1st was done – Mysore bank opposite). Then, it was Lalbagh we touched with painting places of historical and cultural importance (for attracting and familiarizing tourists to the place) as life-size paintings on walls of Bengaluru.

The life-size paintings produce a majestic aura and you start to admire one identity of a metro narrated through the interface of wall in deep, thick painted images of Bengaluru natives, their activities, monuments and other places of Bengaluru. For visual reference, following are the wall art paintings that were painted by Prakash and his co-painters in the month of May 2011:



Comments by Prakash – I am a wall painting artist, working since last 10 years as a shop signboard painter. His work requires him to paint from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Q: Have you learned this art from somewhere ?

Prakash - Money an issue, otherwise would have done the course. Its per day Rs. 450/ day (around 6 to 7 Rupees Per Square feet). We first write on paper first and start painting big letters gradually. Then, with practice the technique gets better. We put the forms according to what's coming in the mind. Then, after giving colors then we look from distance. Then, we get to know the faults and the incompleteness in the depth. Then, we could correct them.

Q: How do you create letters with three-dimensional effects?

Prakash - Varying the color of the background and foreground can dramatically alter the mood of the type, and allow this small collection of designs to produce quite a number of different textures. Certain color combinations can even extend the usefulness of these display types into unusually small sizes.

The light pink – an area where maximum light falls. This idea is pre-supposed in mind. (in his words – ‘light red matlab orange ya yellow’)

The adjacent light falls to create orange and yellow is where light falls in a medium way. Hence, more warm colors have been used.

Ek letter mann mein sochtaa – phir banaata (imagine overall letter in mind first). APPLY LOGIC WHILE THINKING OF THE LETTER SHAPE – and then applying two colors to the two divisions of chromatic type.

Red –main color for the letter is the guiding color for the letter. This is that division of the chromatic type where light doesn't fall. The painters create decide according to their imagination of the letter, whether to choose the left side / the right side division of the letter.



The light is falling from top, hence the top part must be the lightest red – pink. Light falling from top, makes the letter look pink.

Medium intensity light coming from side would create a deep yellow hue on the sides. Hence a light chrome yellow to offset light pink (and gel well with the main color of the letter – deep red). Whenever the light falls on the inner side of a letter, the red would mix with yellow with greater intensity. Hence, warmer chrome would be produced.

'Dooor se depth nahin aati - Door se blue pe red letter accha nahin dikhtaa' (his words). White border removes the incompatibility of red and blue colors between red letter (the object) and the blue background.

Light to Dark interplay of colors: Where no light falls, is the darkest (shade of red). This makes the light parts of the letter to come out. In reality this process is not that spontaneous as something like an abstract painting. Its real life forms created in their contextual scenes, giving the view of the city to people visiting from India and abroad. His thoughts on the changed identity of signboards – to more DIGITAL SIGNBOARDS. *'Gaana humne khud hi gaya tow relief hotaa...par agar sunaa tow tension hota'*....a metaphoric way of explaining the difference between 'handmade' and 'digitized' (*original* made by hand v/s *handmade*). They take a lot of inspiration from Cinema Poster Art and the related techniques. Even the kind of clothes people wear, their choice in fashion, lifestyle and products tell us their preference for forms and colors. These forms then evolve into metaphors that are specific to the place (influenced very strongly by changing social and living scenario).

2) Sign Makers, Painters, Set Designers, Model Makers

JOUI ARTISTS - CHENNAI



Translated from Tamil to English – *interview with Jothi artist*

Q: Since when have they been into painting business ?

Since last 17 years. Other than that, the painting hobby and regular practice for Jothi has been since his childhood days. (roots of his Guru – Shankar, a master of Thanjavur Arts – Therma Arts). Seven people are working under Jothi. Their overall earning per month comes to Rs. 40,000 per month. Signboard painting is one among the gamut of jobs. But, big set designs and work for Cinema posters and sets again are taken up professionally in large

Q. The way Tamil letters are written with paintbrush, is there any visual ref. for the same?

More than the form, it's the color combinations they think of. The combinations are viewed from distance. Small exercises with hand give them an idea of a preferred color palette for boards, walls, sets, metal frames and other different kinds of surfaces. Are there ways of measuring letters before making them with hand. They are sometimes written vertically (as our eyes flow from left to write – following the generic way of left to right) and/or sometimes also written vertically.

Q: Do you refer to any letter styles or make your own visuals and letters?

— They have a catalogue of different styles of paintings having different color and form applications while creating the compositions – (includes paintings of Stage design – cloth painting, 'tree' painted on plywood, simple village life depicted on wall – the regular wall painting style in rural India. Also includes Ganesha on stone –called it mould work. A temple prototype created in Thermocole (called it miniature work). Also includes models in thermocole of buildings (to be made as sets for movie – '22' – Shankar directed film has them), *Onion* picture – the special faces made on huge rocks- a prop hand-painted in life-size faces as a backdrop for a very popular song in that film. Actors' faces made in pure Enamel (anti-reflective paints – along with large scale road paintings) – on roads also oil based, anti-reflective enamel paints are used. Also, political leader's name board (as a self-promotional hoarding to be placed outside his house has been. A painted Ganesha (with gold leaf lining along the forms) etc. The painter showed all the works taken by them additionally to signboard painting. The following visuals display part of his album for signboard painting reference:



Appendix VIII

Color dimensions and characteristics

1) Color description dimension

There are characteristics like hues, values etc. that describe the foremost qualities of colors. Color description is the first and basic dimension among all others. The following groups of characteristics construct color description dimension in the design of shop signs:

- a) *Hue*⁸⁴ is any color's name related to a specific wavelength. A hue without any white, black, grey or complementary in it is called a pure hue. There are seven pure hues (Fig. 3.7).



Fig. 3.7: Seven hues of the color spectrum

- b) *Value* is the lightness or darkness of a color. The hues have a natural value where they look the purest. For instance, yellow is naturally light and violet is dark (Fig. 3.7). All hues can be made in all values. White is the highest possible value while black is the lowest (Fig. 3.8). Gray as the midpoint between black and white is a medium value, neither dark nor light⁸⁷.



Fig. 3.8: Value gradation scale from black (lowest) to grey tones (medium) to white (highest) values

- c) *Saturation* is the brightness or dullness of a hue. It is a comparative property and like value is linear and progressive. The beginning of a saturation scale is a color that is hue-intense. The end step is a color so muted that its hue can just be identified (Fig. 3.9).

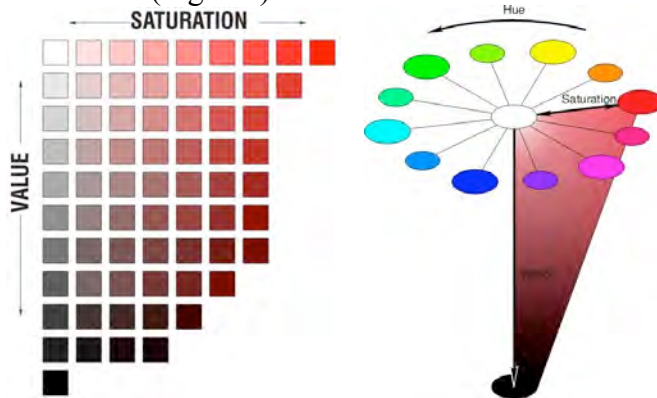


Fig. 3.9: a. Saturation and value variations in red, b. Slice of HSV color mode

- d) *Temperature* is the relative warmth or coolness of a hue. Color temperatures help determine how objects appear positioned in space. Warm colors are said to

⁸⁴ Trey and Bill (2009) describe, 'hue is the gradation of a color that involves a description of how similar or different a color can be described in relation to red, yellow, green and blue'

https://www.academia.edu/4631186/Engineering_Ethics_Color_and_Technology

⁸⁷ Value definition and kinds explained in the *Visual Design – Color Theory* course on D'Source.

Refer: <http://www.dsource.in/course/colour-theory/colour-description/colour-description.html>

advance closer to the observer. Cool colors tend to recede farther from the observer (Fig. 3.10).



Fig. 3.10: Warm and cool colors of the color wheel

e) *Color kinds* belong to the traditional color wheel⁸⁸. According to this color wheel, there are kinds of colors based on a triadic mixture of pigments with red, yellow and blue as the primary triad (Fig. 3.11). According to this color wheel, following color kinds emerge:

i) *Primary colors*:

They are pure hues of red, yellow and blue that cannot be obtained by mixing of hues.

ii) *Secondary colors*:

All hues are formed from mixtures of equal or unequal amounts of primaries. Equal mixtures of two primaries result in the secondary hues and form the triad of green, orange and violet (Fig. 3.11).

- Red + Yellow = Orange
- Yellow + Blue = Green
- Blue + Red = Violet

iii) *Tertiary colors*:

- Mixing a primary and an adjacent secondary color together creates tertiary colors. No apparent single hue dominates in the case of tertiary colors (Fig. 3.11).
- Red + orange = Red-orange
- Orange + Yellow = Yellow-orange
- Yellow + Green = Yellow-green
- Green + Blue = Blue-green
- Blue + Violet = Blue-violet
- Violet + Red = Red-violet.

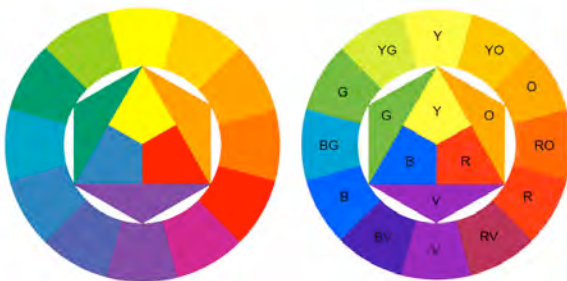


Fig. 3.11: The Pigment color wheel by Johannes Itten in 1973

⁸⁸ The color wheel is a visual representation of colors. It is of three kinds: The Pigment wheel, The Process Wheel and the Munsell Wheel. We have taken the basis of the generally followed pigment wheel (Itten, 1973). This color wheel is a twelve hue color circle developed by Johannes Itten.

2) Color relationship dimension

Colors also interact and relationships are formed by the use of two or more colors together in design. These relationships are based on the principles of combinations, schemes, contrast, hierarchy and effects. Color relationships form different moods as well as specific visual identities within a context. These characteristics as part of the color relationship dimension have been described as follows:

a) *Color combinations*

These combinations are where hues are either randomly combined or their purpose falls within a specific context such as commercial, cultural, social or historical. Color combinations are used by artists to bring in fantastic effects in compositions (Fig. 3.12).

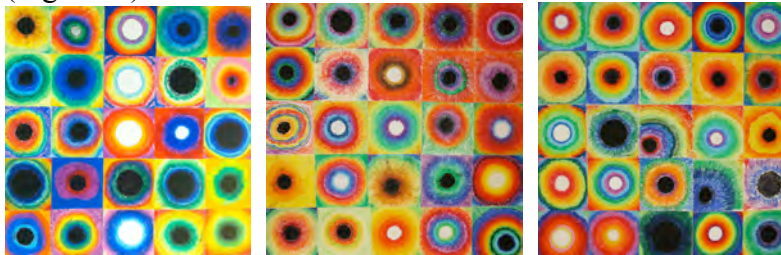


Fig. 3.12: Color combinations by using adjacent color schemes as part of a classroom exercise

b) *Color hierarchy*

The order that arranges primaries, secondaries, tertiaries and achromatic (white, grey and black) in the foreground and background elements of paintings, designs and other compositions in arts etc (Fig. 3.13).

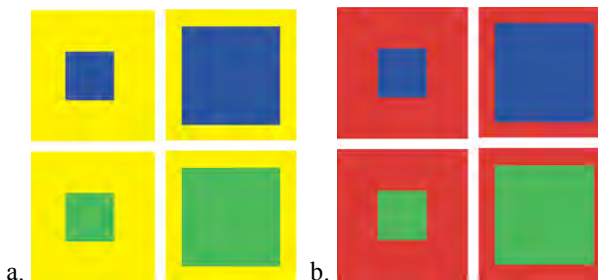


Fig. 3.13: Color hierarchy: a. primary to primary, b. primary to secondary colors. *Source: D'source*

c) *Color contrast*

One hue against other creates functions of distinctions, emphasis, simultaneity, exchange and harmony (Fig. 3.14). Color contrast as a visual element of color relationship between two or more contrasting tones that help recognize and distinguish foreground and background elements of design and other artistic compositions etc.



Fig. 3.14: Combinations representing simultaneous contrast

d) *Color effects*

These are the effects that a specific color or combinations of different colors depict visually. These are specifically effects of visual display based on the science of

colors. For instance, *rhythm* as well as *harmony* is created by using one hue represented in its tints and shades (monochromatic color scheme). *Balance* is created by arrangement of same or contrasting hues in a visual balance (Fig. 3.15).



Fig. 3.15: Color effect of *visual balance* set in asymmetrical fashion. Source: D'source

e) Color schemes

According to the color wheel, there are schemes of similar and dissimilar colors that are guided by some specific principle (Fig. 3.16). Color schemes are generally used by artists, painters and designers in order to highlight, create contrast, emphasis, balance, proportion and dynamism in designs, labels, titles, shapes etc. Schemes observed and studied as part of science of colors are complimentary, split complimentary, analogous, monochromatic and polychromatic (Fig. 3.16).

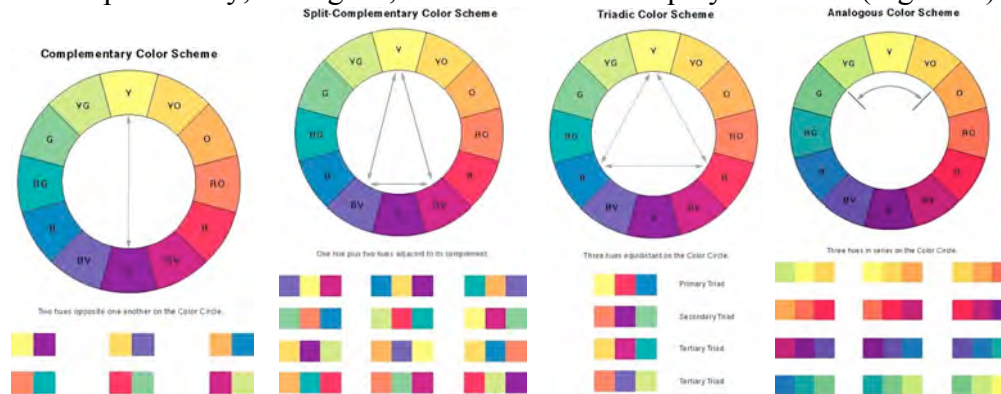


Fig. 3.16: Complimentary, split-complimentary, triadic and analogous color schemes in color wheel

3) Pragmatics of colors

This dimension of color includes the actual look and visual representation of color display. We could observe two pragmatic characteristics: color production and color functionality, described as follows:

a) Color production

The production techniques of hand-paint as 3D treatments or fabrication of materials by digital means are used to create visual representation on the display signboards for the viewers of these signs in the context of this study. Hence, it lies under the pragmatics of colors that presents different color production techniques (Fig. 3.17).



Fig. 3.17: Color production: hand-painted, crafted and digital production in shop signs, India

b) *Color functionality*

The connection between the form and content is color functionality. In the context of designs, it is the message that a particular hue or combination of hues communicate through the design of a shop sign. It is either denotative or connotative. E.g. Black or brown - popular colors used for arms and ammunition shop. Blues majorly used to signify shop names for services, small traders and local restaurants (Fig. 3.18).



Fig. 3.18: Color functionality in relation to different business identities in shop signs, India

3) Symbolism of colors

Color identity is the symbolic meaning of colors pertaining to their established conventions (Fig. 3.19).



Fig. 3.19: India: a country of symbolic colors. Courtesy: <http://www.sensationalcolor.com/>

Appendix IX

Part A: Visual display charts of shop signs from five selected cities

The display below presents diachronic arrangement of shop signs per marketplace for two cities: Bengaluru (90 shop signs placed in the top row of the display in all three marketplaces from left to right), and similarly 90 shop signs arrangement in the bottom row belong to the city of Chennai. Following the same style of display, the other 270 shop signs belonging to the rest of the three cities of Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai were also displayed in the same Shenoy Innovation studio space, IDC, IIT Bombay. This display was particularly useful in identifying the factors: patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions that later became the four quadrants of the visualized framework of color analysis of shop signs in India.

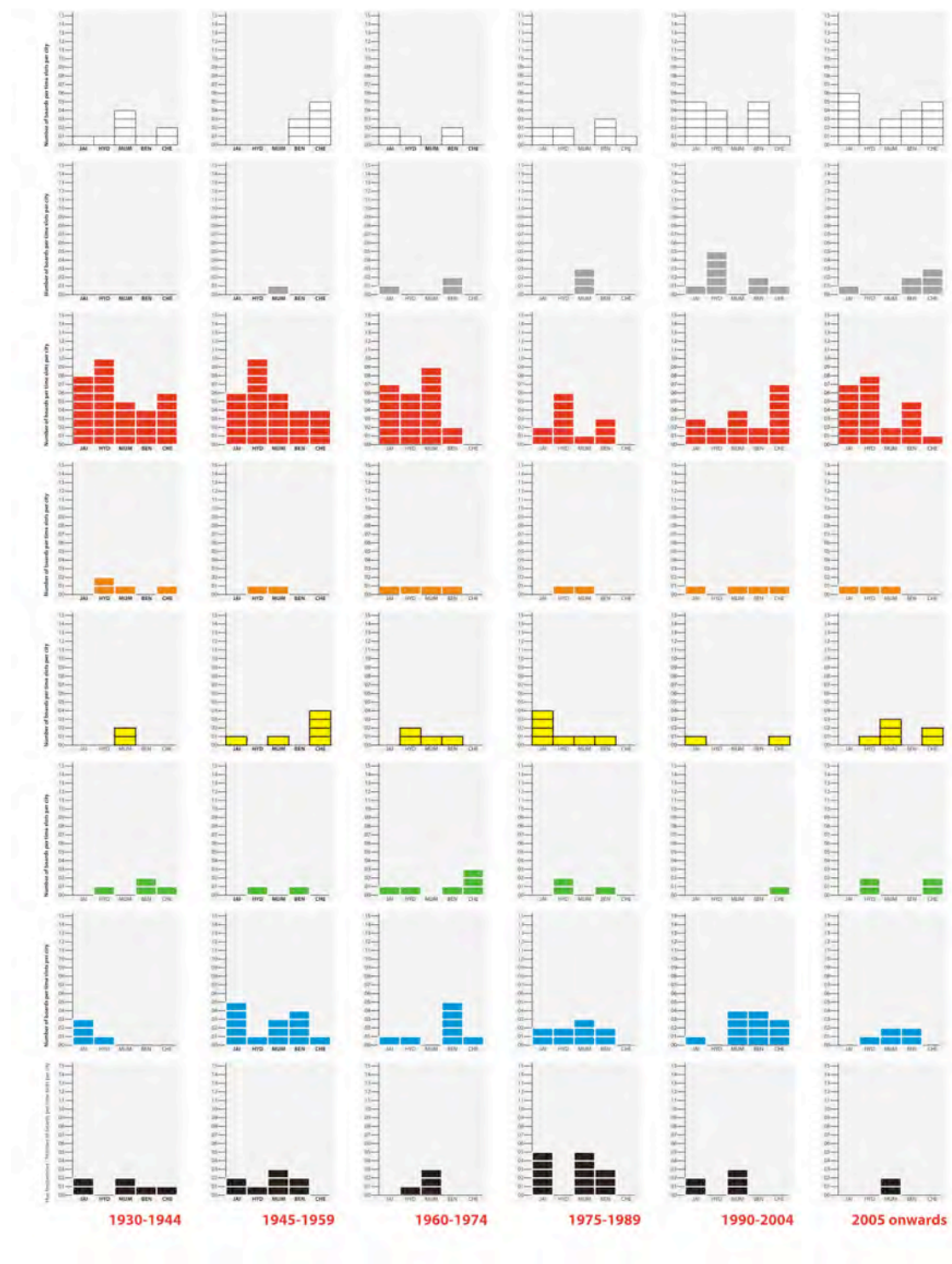
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Part B: A3 charts of per marketplace record of 30 shop signs along six time slots

From the next page and onwards, we have illustrated large A3 sheets presenting per marketplace view of 30 shop signs that include the main text and secondary text; and the graphically extracted background sign panels of these shop signs along six time slots from 1930-44 till 2005 onwards. Each sheet displays the data of shop signs per marketplace in a city.

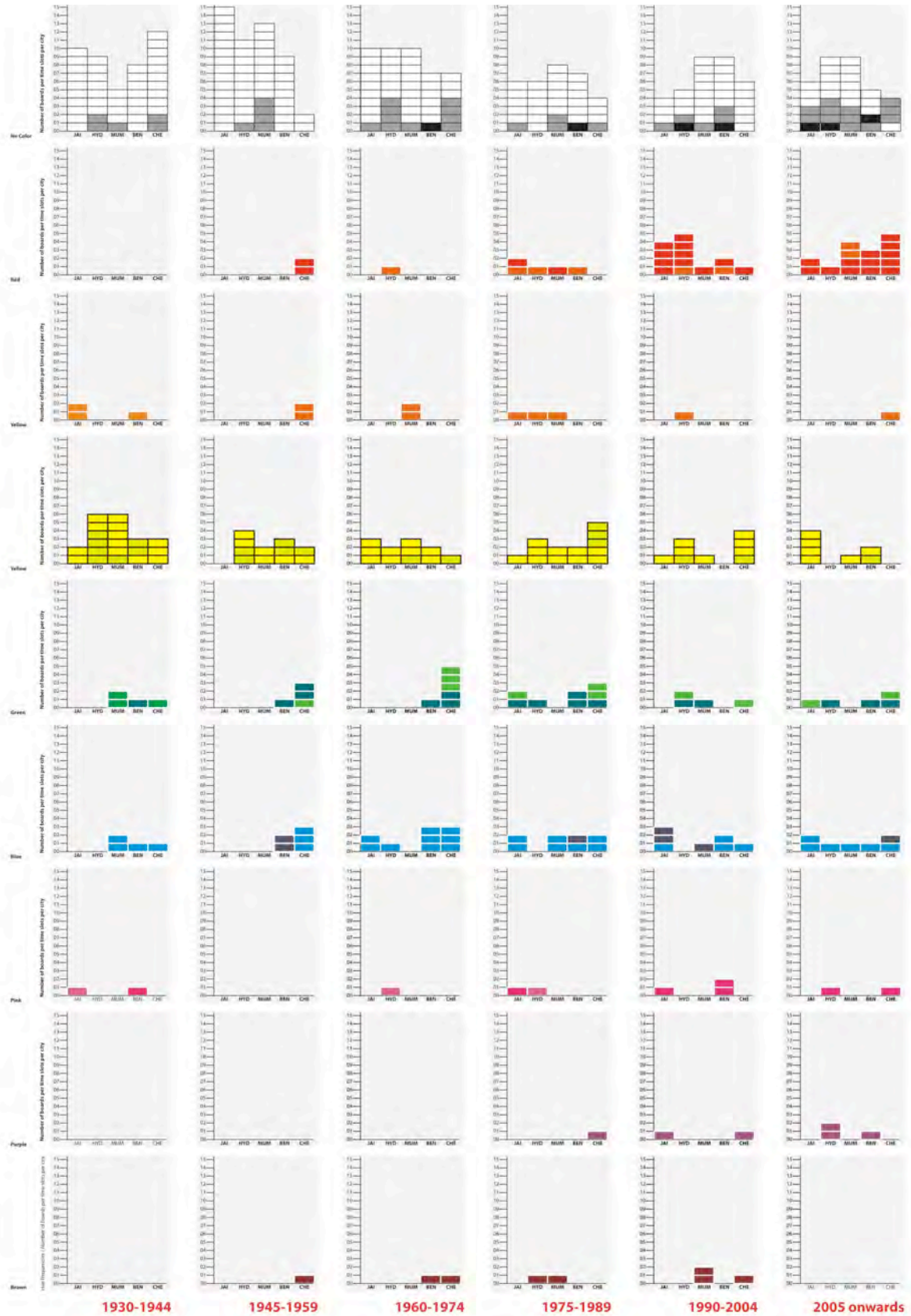
Appendix X

Visualization graph of hue transitions in the main text



Appendix XI

Visualization graph of hue transitions in the background sign panels



Appendix XII

Visualization graph of type style transitions in the main text



signage, editorial compositions, graphic symbols, identity symbols etc. For instance, a research based detailed inquiry into the elements and attributes of road signs, directional as well as warning signs can give us critical insights about the presence and roles of patterns, trends, tendencies and conventions in the visual language of these signs.

- 5) Exterior signs in our research study are shop signs from marketplaces and cities of a country. They have an economic context that varies across street marketplaces and the business scale of those marketplaces. A similar kind of research inquiry applying the same framework with the four quadrants can be undertaken for other kinds of exterior signs and signage as part of commercial districts, transit-oriented districts, entertainment districts suburbs, commercial shopping centers, specialty retail areas, tourist locales, so on and so forth.

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