

Semiotic analysis of evil eye protector (Dhrishti Bommai) paintings found in the factories of Arni, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract:

Evil eye protector (Dhrishti Bommai) symbols have been associated with Hindu culture for a long time. They are strongly believed to be auspicious signs that can ward off bad influences and jinxes. Paintings of a fearsome demon face with a large moustache, fangs and bug-eyes are prevalent in the walls of factories and houses in Arni, a town in the state of Tamil Nadu, South India. Fear of misfortune, bad fate, unusual and unfavourable phenomena, have made the use of Dhrishti Bommai paintings popular locally. The goal of the study that follows was to analyse the cultural impact and influence of Dhrishti Bommai paintings in local life. Photographs of Dhrishti Bommai were collected through primary research. These photographs were then visually analysed using a semiotic approach where they were deconstructed in order to analyse the connotations and reasons behind their creation. An ethnographic research study was also carried out where local participants were interviewed based on a question guide.

Keywords — Dhrishti Bommai, Visual Research, Semiotic Analysis, Ethnographic Research

I. INTRODUCTION

The roots of the Dhrishti Bommai face can be traced back to the classical art of South Indian temple architecture. Depictions of the face can often be found as an embellishment over the lintel of gates that mark the entry into the temple compound. The fierce monster face with huge fangs, a gaping mouth and bulging eyes is called *kirithimuka*. Its origin can be traced back to a legend from the Skanda Purana and Shiva Purana. The word *mukha* in Sanskrit means face while *kīrti* means "fame, glory". The story of *Kirtimukha* is associated with a great king named Jalandhara, who is an *acuraṇ* (demon) in Hinduism. Legends also mention that the dhrishti bommai is the face of a *Tuvārapālakā* -

a door or gate guardian who is often portrayed as a warrior or fearsome giant, usually armed with a *gada* (mace). Depictions of these legends in temples have influenced people, especially those who live in the countryside, to incorporate this fearsome guardian into the wall art of buildings and factories to ward off misfortune. The paintings are also meant to divert the attention of jealous passers-by who might be longing for a prosperous factory or building of their own. It is believed that this jealous longing creates an aura/energy often referred to as "evil eye".

A. Review of Literature:

Devdutt [3] has stated that the best way to understand the concept of evil eye is to accept the

idea of auras. Every human being has an aura around him or her. This is known as the subtle body. It is a kind of energy shield emerging from our physical and mental health status. There are various layers of aura that flow around our body. When the flow is blocked, disturbed or restricted by negative energy, it causes ill effects. Attempts to ward off the curse of the evil eye has resulted in a number of talismans in many cultures. Rajalakshmi [5] has referenced Drishti Bommai dolls that were made and sold as talismans by the boom boom Mattukaran profession (Fortune tellers with decorated bulls). Deccan Herald [4] has reported that these dolls are a classic example of a decorative culture which is steeped in tradition, mythology and religion. While it's hard to ascertain the origin date of such practices, the custom of hanging a Drishti gombe doll is likely centuries old and has been passed on from generation to generation with almost no variations. The myth around these dolls supposedly originates from the popular tale of the lion-headed Hindu deity Narasimha killing the demon Hiranyakashipu. It is believed that Narasimha destroys demons and wards off evil. The dolls and their paintings have found their way into popular folklore too and are part of much-loved tales like that of the Tenali Ramakrishna. One story goes that a rebuked Tenali Rama who was asked to never show his face to the king, covered his face in a clay pot which was painted and used as a Drishti gombe and presented himself at the king's court. These dolls are thus a cultural fixture from generations and are embedded in the collective identity of South Indians. Thugil [8] has mentioned that these dolls might be classical depictions of an Asura (demon) in Hindu mythology. Asuras were said to rule the netherworld and often clashed with the Gods over possession of heaven. Hariharasudan [6] has stated that the evil eye has such a long and broad history that it is hard to tie it to one religion. This belief system around the use of talismans can be found not only in India, but also in other parts of the world. A similar custom of painting a blue eye symbol in Mediterranean countries is meant to protect the owner from misfortune and the negative

energy of jealous onlookers. At the beginning of the modern era, thinkers such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Martin Luther, and Thomas Aquinas wrote about the Evil Eye in religious and scientific terms. Hemu's art blog [7] has mentioned that such talismans and their paintings loom large and divert all (evil, jealous) attention away from the prosperity of a place or its people. The dolls and wall art are painted in bright and vivid colors, depict asuras (demons) with exaggerated features, and come in different shapes and sizes. Another interpretation might be that they look similar to 'kaval deivam' (Gods of Protection), large and imposing village deities found at the entrance of villages to protect them from external threats. The Hindu [2] has reported that the bommai is the fearsome face meant to be displayed prominently on the premises where the object that needs protection from 'dhrishti' or 'evil eye' is located. The fear of evil eye bringing misfortune has given rise to the tradition of efforts warding off the evil eye in many places. Michael [1] has stated that anthropological approaches to examining the evil eye phenomena and traditions around it have suffered from an analytical inadequacy to deconstruct the evil eye concept. Evil eye accusations are often expressions of a moral-value system in which persons of jealous nature are considered not to be fit for inclusion into village society. Thus it might be pertinent to study them using a semiotic approach focusing on how villagers interpret the personal habits and characteristics of others, on the basis of ethnographic evidence.

II. RESEARCH GAP

All the prior research mentioned above has mostly focused on analysing the Drishti bommai in terms of craftsmanship, mythology and superstition. Not much focused research has been done on how people interpret the meaning behind visual depictions within the contemporary setting of the dhrishti bommai. This study is an attempt to bridge that gap using visual and ethnographic research.

III. OBJECTIVES

- To visually analyse, understand and interpret the meaning behind the evil eye protector paintings using semiotics.
- To study the influence of contemporary evil eye painting on the folk art culture of the town and its people.

IV. METHODOLOGY

B. Ethnographic Research:

A question guide was prepared to conduct an ethnographic study about how villagers perceive the meaning of Dhristi Bommai dolls and paintings. Responses revealed that the size, placement and style of both the dolls and paintings play a vital role in how people perceive their effectiveness in warding off the evil eye. The literal meaning of “bomma” in Tamil is doll. Dhristi bommai dolls are small in size which makes them more suitable for domestic purposes. This small size is not sufficient to grab the attention of passers-by in factories and shops. Thus, the owners of factories approach local artists to paint the evil eye protector in a large size. These paintings are usually the height of an average human. The intensity of the danger caused by the evil eye is considered to be low if the size of the evil eye protector painting is bigger. The placement of the evil eye painting is meant to catch the attention of the viewer first and distract them before they can focus on looking at the rest of the building’s facade. The style of the paintings aren’t intended to be beautiful since their stated purpose is to get passers-by to avert their gaze from the building. . From a psychological perspective they serve as a source of reassurance for the building and factory owners. They make the owners fear the effects of the evil eye and other unknown sources of misfortune less. The style of the paintings also varies depending on the artist who painted them.

Variations might include differing face shapes and body markings

Locals state that the effects of the evil eye were originally warded off by breaking a coconut with a lit piece of camphor placed on top of it into pieces. Later an ash gourd was used to ward off evil eyes. It was considered that when the water in the ash gourd dries the effects of the evil eye also gradually reduces. Originally the ash gourd was painted only in black. Colours were used only for auspicious occasions like housewarming parties. Later colours were introduced for all occasions. This shift from the use of black colour to vibrant colours started 40 years ago. Artists and painters state that they aren’t aware of why this shift took place. They are commission workers and they do what the customer requires. The only condition placed by the painter or artist is that the ash gourd should have a stem. They compare the importance of the stem to the importance of breath of the human body. The stem prevents spoilage of the gourd after painting. Artists state that they also paint this evil eye protector on the rear side of auto rickshaws, trucks and lorries. Locals also follow other practices to ward off evil eyes such as placing a black spot of Kajal on the cheeks of a new born baby. They also hang a photograph of an elephant’s eye or a picture of the Dhristi Pillayar deity or some lemon and green chillies at the entrance of buildings.

Some locals consider the face of the evil eye protector to be the face of devotees of Lord Shiva called Bhootha Kanangal or Shiva Bhootha Kanangal. They believe that the negative effects of the Evil Eye are personified by an evil angel they refer to as the Thusta Devadai, and that depictions of Bhootha Kanangal at the entrance prevent the evil angel from being able to enter the premises.

Respondents also mention that features of the doll are sometimes modified based on caste. People from caste groups that primarily worship the Hindu god Vishnu request face markings known as namams that are a part of their religious tradition to be drawn on to the painting. They don't subscribe to the idea that the faces on these paintings represent Shiva Bhootha Kanangal since they belong to a different religious tradition. Some artists also state that in the last half decade or so even Christians and Muslims who don't subscribe to Hindu traditions have begun commissioning evil eye protector paintings.

C. Semiotic Analysis:

The significance of this drishti bommai on the walls, machines and chimneys of industries have always been the superstitious belief of people that they parry evil eyes. Walking through the roads of Thirumani of Arni, you can find rice mills, powerlooms and cement factories. The first thing that grabs your attention while looking at the factories would be the drishti bommai paintings. The prime importance of having this painting is to act as the center of attraction and cut off or seize the evil glare of a jealous person who might be looking at the building. For this semiotic analysis, 15 different pictures of Dhrishti Bommai painted on factory entrances and machines were collected. The method of Dyadic model of sign by Ferdinand de Saussure was used for the analysis.

1) List of signs:

Signs of Drishti bommai are classified into two elements-Traditional and Contemporary.

1) A) Traditional Elements of Drishti Bommai:

1) A) (i) Features:

- A fearsome face & bug eyes- To frighten or horrify the viewer. The raised brows depict

anger and are meant to strike fear in the viewer.

- Sharp horn-To stab the evil aura emanating from the gaze of the viewer
- Large moustache, large tongue, wide mouth with fangs- The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs is used to depict anger and to shoo away jealousy, as shown in Fig.1.



Fig. 1 Drishti Bommai on a cement factory compound wall

1) A) (ii) Ornament:

- Big traditional Golden Kadukan (Hoop) earring- Kadukkan is a traditional ornament of Hindu male gods. To highlight the features of large ears, a thick and big kadukkan is worn. They symbolise that the face belongs to a man, as shown in Fig.1.

1) B) Contemporary Elements:

1) B) (i) Skin Tone:

- Traditionally only black colour was used as an outline to paint the evil eye protector.
- But as the years passed by, the taste and requirements of people changed.
- Some of the artists used the nude tone and few used blue, green, yellow or red skin tone to depict the agony and scariness of the face.

1) B) (ii) Placement and size of the face:

- The face is the size of an average human in height. It is believed that the bigger the size of the evil eye protector, the more effective it is at warding off the intense danger caused by the evil eye, as shown in Fig 2.



Fig. 2 Drishti Bommai on a rice mill parapet wall

- The placement of the face is mainly on compound walls, chimneys and on the bodies of machines.
- On the wall, the doll is placed on a white or solid background to create depth and contrast, allowing the face to stand out and get noticed, as shown in Fig.3.



Fig. 3 Drishti Bommai on a rice mill compound wall

- On the machines and chimneys, the face is drawn consciously at the center in order to attract attention, as shown in Fig.4.



Fig. 4 Drishti Bommai on machines

- In some cases, as shown in the fig.5 & 6, the face is drawn next to logos and business names.



Fig. 5. Fonts & face alignment



Fig. 6 Fonts & face alignment

1) B) (iii) Body Marking:

- There are two styles of face marking on the forehead. The Shaivite (religious tradition that involves the worship of Hindu god

Shiva) & Vaishnavite style (religious tradition that involves the worship of Hindu god Vishnu) of marking.

- The Shaivite style has three horizontal lines called thiruneer pattai and the vaishnavite style has three vertical lines called thirunamam.
- The shaivaite mark is sometimes drawn with a little curve at the tips to indicate that the brows are raised along with the skin of the forehead, as shown in the Fig.7.



Fig. 7 Drishthi Bommai on compound wall

- Another marking on the tongue is a scorpion moving inward. Scorpion depicts venom and the imagery of it moving inward depicts that the face swallows poisonous or evil thoughts of the viewer, as shown in the Fig.7.

1) B) (iv) Style of the artist:

- Influence of artist style on the painting is more visible on the form of the face painted.
- 30 to 40 years ago there was no scorpion mark. A new generation of artists introduced the scorpion as a highlighting element to the large tongue.
- The paint used by artists today is oil paint. About twenty years ago artists switched over from using watercolor paint.


2) Connotation:


- The cultural significance of the Drishthi Bomma paintings lies in the fact that people believe it wards off the negative aura emanating from jealous onlookers by


distracting their attention away from the building.


- Certain meanings of the signs were not present already. They were intended by the locals for their well-being.


TABLE I
 DYADIC MODEL OF SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF DRISHTI BOMMAI


Sign	Signifier	Signified
Sign:1 	The main signifier is the Drishthi Bommai. Various signs within this signifier are listed below.	
	Demon Face	To frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.


	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:2		<p>Demon Face</p> <p>Ferocious face with red forehead to frighten or horrify the viewer.</p> <p>Horn</p> <p>Sharp horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.</p> <p>Bug-eyes & Raised brows</p> <p>The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs facing downward is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.</p> <p>Wide mouth & Fangs</p> <p>The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger</p> <p>Large Tongue</p> <p>The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that the poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.</p> <p>Big Earrings</p> <p>To highlight the feature of large ears</p>

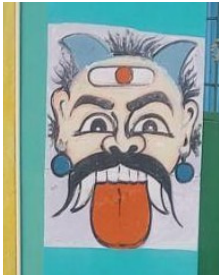
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Vishnu-Vaishnavite Style. There are two types of namas. Motta nama and Padha nama. This style comes under motta nama.
Sign:3		<p>Demon Face</p> <p>Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.</p> <p>Horn</p> <p>Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.</p> <p>Bug-eyes & Raised brows</p> <p>The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.</p> <p>Wide mouth & Fangs</p> <p>The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.</p> <p>Large Tongue</p> <p>The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on</p>


		the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:4		
	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.


	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:5		
	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to

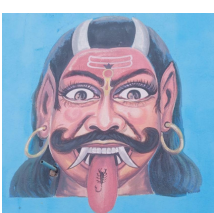
		scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:6 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs facing down is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.


	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Hairless to show another version of bhoodakalas.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:7 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.


	Large Tongue	The tongue with the scorpion mark is put out to scare.
	Hair	Hairless to show another version of bhoodakalas.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Goddess.
Sign:8 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows


	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign:9 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare.
	Big Ears	Some artists show variation by depicting an animal ear.
	Hair	Hairless to show another version of bhoodakalas.


	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Goddess.
Sign 10 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.

	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign 11 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs facing down is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows

	Flared nose & Moustache	that it doesn't belong to a normal person. The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign 12 	Demon Face	Ferocious face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing outward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male. Here mundam (Skull) is painted as an earring which indicates the munda mala of lord shiva.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows

	Flared nose & Moustache	that it doesn't belong to a normal person. The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Shiva-Shaivite Style.
Sign 13 	Demon Face	Ferocious face with red forehead to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare the viewer. And the scorpion mark on the tongue means that any poisonous or evil spell uttered will be absorbed by the mark.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.

	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Vishnu-Vaishnavite Style. There are two types of namas. Motta nama and Padha nama. This style comes under pada nama.
Sign 14 	Demon Face	Ferocious red face to frighten or horrify the viewer.
	Horn	Sharp stepped horns facing upward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having raised brows with eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.
	Large Tongue	The tongue is put out to scare.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears

	Hair	and to depict that the face belongs to a male. Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Vishnu-Vaishnavite Style. There are two types of namas. Motta nama and Padha nama. This style comes under motta nama.
Sign 15 	Animal Face	The artist has painted a dog face to show that the evil eye protector guards and also shoo away the evil eye.
	Horn	Sharp horns facing inward to stab and throw away the evil angel/ evil eye.
	Bug-eyes & Raised brows	The large eyes having eyeballs at the center is to depict the high level of anger and fear to shoo off the evil aura.
	Wide mouth & Fangs	The 3 dimensional pattern of grinding teeth with fangs & wide mouths is to scare the evil angel/evil eye away and depict anger.

	Large Tongue	The tongue with the scorpion mark is to scare.
	Big Earrings	To highlight the feature of large ears and to depict that the face belongs to a male.
	Hair	Uncombed and uncut hair shows that it doesn't belong to a normal person.
	Flared nose & Moustache	The big flared nose & moustache again depicts to scare or ward off evil.
	Forehead body mark	The forehead mark depicts that the owner of the construction is a devotee of Lord Vishnu-Vaishnavite Style. There are two types of namas. Motta nama and Padha nama. This style comes under motta nama.

markings and tongue were not intended but created under socio-cultural influence.

E. CONCLUSION:

Through observational research we focus on some unique features of the contemporary visual setting in Arni, Tamil Nadu, India, which starts from an unusual sight of the big painted demon faces. These are warning signs by the business owner for the possessors of bad wishes or jealousy. Though the origin belongs to the history of the tradition, set in the superstition of people, who wanted to have the well-being of self, family and their trade, its contemporary usage presents a hybrid form along with other signs that create an absurdity, especially with industrial and urbanised culture.

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D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contemporary visual culture is an amalgamation of various kinds of visual elements drawn from various sources. These paintings draw inspiration from the cultural heritage and folklore of South India. They are a demonstration of folklore hybrid visual imagery. While the cultural and religious significance of the placement of similar depictions in temples is clear, the placement of these paintings on a compound wall or chimneys of factories is somewhat arbitrary. The person who sees it cannot come to a conclusion or know the meaning of what it is until it has been decoded by someone else. It shows an anomaly within visual culture. Certain effects like forehead