



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE**

**SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION OF SIGNS IN THE  
COMMUNICATION OF SOCIABLE PLACE ENTRANCES**

**PhD THESIS**

**VEHBİ NOYAN ULUSOY**

**Nicosia  
January, 2024**

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## Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Vehbi Noyan Ulusoy titled **“Semiotic Interpretation of Signs in The Communication of Sociable Place Entrances”** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Interior Architecture.

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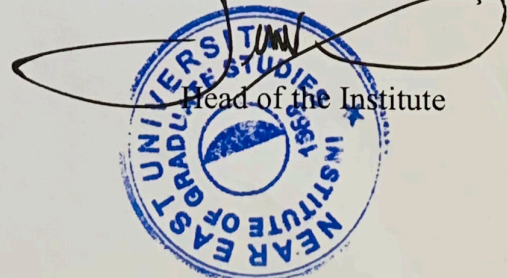
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**Declaration**

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

**Vehbi Noyan Ulusoy**

15/01/2024



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To end, I want to dedicate this thesis to everyone who are working to make the world a better and understandable place.

**Vehbi Noyan Ulusoy**

**Abstract****Semiotic Interpretation of Signs in The Communication of Sociable Place Entrances****Ulusoy, Vehbi Noyan****PhD, Department of Interior Architecture****January /2024, 129 pages**

By interrelating semiotics to design; this study aims to examine the attractiveness of signs on sociable place entrances and their effect on the psychology of people. In addition, this study aims to evaluate whether the signs at the entrances of social places give people the right message about the function of the place. This study has a mixed method design composed of qualitative and quantitative analysis. Qualitative semiotic research was used to analyze the visual displayed data on entrances of twenty one sociable places from different countries. Entrance photographs were either found from internet sources and personal photographs. For semiotic analysis and interpretation; purposive sampling of twenty one entrances were selected among entry signs of social places. An online survey was used to find out the perceived effectiveness of signs influencing customer decisions. Respondents were asked to write/choose which signs at the entrances of social spaces attracted them and aroused their desire to visit. These quantitative data were then subjected to statistical analysis in order to identify the elements that were interpreted by the respondents. A total of five hundred and ninety five respondents from different parts of the world responded to the questionnaire. Chi-square analysis was used for statistical analysis for differences between countries and age groups. Findings of this study showed that specific colors, lights, transparency, right symbols, large scaled forms and gold lettering on black background raise the visibility of social place entrances and can convince people to go inside to spend time indoors.

According to color preferences of countries, differing from previous literature; black or gray tones followed by red was preferred in Türkiye and Cyprus. Red was the most preferred color for entrances of social places in the The USA, Middle East and Far East followed by black and gray tones. 64% of the respondents commented that

color black makes entrances stand out, bringing elegance, clearness and formality to the place. Findings of the present study showed that while choosing the right entrance signs; importance should be given to eye-catching colors, logos, right sized texts, witty phrases and appropriate objects to grab customers' attention.

***Keyword(s):*** semiotics, entrance signs, perception, visualization, color preferences



**Özet****Sosyal Mekan Girişlerindeki İşaretlerin İletişimdeki Rolünün Göstergebilim ile Yorumlanması****Ulusoy, Vehbi Noyan****Doktora, İç Mimarlık Bölümü****Ocak/2024, 129 sayfa**

Bu çalışmanın amacı; göstergebilimi tasarımla ilişkilendirerek, sosyal mekan girişlerinde yer alan işaretlerin çekiciliğini ve insan psikolojisi üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktır. Ek olarak, bu çalışma, sosyal mekanların girişlerindeki işaretlerin insanlara mekanın işlevi konusunda doğru mesajı verip vermediğini değerlendirmeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu çalışmada; nitel ve nicel yöntemlerden oluşan ‘karma araştırma yöntemi’ kullanılmıştır. Farklı ülkelerden yirmi bir sosyal mekan girişinde yer alan görsel verileri analiz etmek için nitel göstergebilim yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Sosyal mekan giriş fotoğrafları internet kaynaklarından veya kişisel fotoğraflardan sağlanmıştır. Göstergebilim ile analiz ve anlamlandırma için; yirmi bir sosyal mekan girişinde bulunan işaretler değerlendirilmiştir. Mekan tercihinde müşteri kararlarını etkileyen işaretlerin etkinliğini sorgulamak için çevrimiçi bir anket kullanılmıştır. Ankete katılanlardan sosyal mekan girişlerindeki hangi işaretlerin onları çektiği ve mekanı ziyaret etme isteği uyandırdığını yazmaları/seçmeleri istenmiştir. Ankete katılanlar tarafından yorumlanan unsurları belirlemek için; bu nicel veriler daha sonra istatistiksel analize tabi tutulmuştur ve ankete dünyanın farklı yörelerinden beş yüz doksan beş kişi yanıt vermiştir. Ülkeler ve yaş grupları arasındaki farklılıkların istatistiksel analizi için ki-kare analizi kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, belirli renklerin, ışıkların, şeffaflığın, doğru sembollerin, büyük ölçekli formların ve siyah zemin üzerine altın rengi yazıların sosyal mekan girişlerinin görünürlüğünü arttırarak; kişilerde iç mekanlarda vakit geçirmek için içeri girme isteği uyandırabileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Ülkelerin renk tercihlerine gözden geçirildiğinde; daha önceki literatürlerden farklı olarak, Türkiye ve Kıbrıs'ta öncelikli olarak sosyal mekan girişlerinde siyah veya gri tonları ikinci sırada ise kırmızı rengin

tercih edildiđi görülmüştür. Amerika, Ortadođu ve Uzakdođu'da ise sosyal mekan girişlerinde en çok tercih edilen renk kırmızı olurken, bunu siyah ve gri tonları izlemiştir. Ankete katılanların %64'ü, siyah rengin girişleri öne çıkardığını, mekana zarafet, netlik ve ciddiyet getirdiđini belirtmiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, doğru giriş işaretleri seçilirken müşterilerin dikkatini çekecek göz alıcı renkler, logolar, doğru boyutta yazılar, esprili ifadeler ve uygun nesnelere önem verilmesi gerektiđini ortaya koymuştur.

***Anahtar kelimeler:*** semiotik, giriş işaretleri, algı, görselleştirme, renk tercihleri

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**List of Abbreviations**

<b>TR:</b>	Türkiye
<b>The USA:</b>	United States of America
<b>p value:</b>	Probability value



## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

In the Introduction, after giving information about entrances for sociable places and signs around, our study is introduced by stating the problem status, purpose, research questions/hypothesis, importance and limitations of our research; Important definitions found in our research are explained.

Entrance is an intermediate space and a threshold forming a barrier between interior and exterior spaces (Boettger, 2014). From the Stone Age to the 21<sup>st</sup> century; entrances have played an important role for mankind to accomplish various activities in places with different functions. According to Umberto Eco; Stone Age man would see the opening of the cave as “*a hole that permits passage to inside*” and the entrance would recall to his mind as a sign reminding the image of inside (Leach, 2005, Asquith et al., 2006).

The characteristics of entrances varied according to the function and are as diverse as architectural styles and historical periods (Polpuech, 1989). The importance of entrance varies depending on the culture and beliefs of people. Today entrance doors are signals pointing to a kind of transition where one is going to transit to. To point out the importance of function of the entrance; people are in need to find adequate signs to raise recognition. Entrances; not only enable transition and passage through boundaries but also carry specific symbolic meanings, rituals, and socio-cultural behavioral codes (Stevens, 2006). They play a pivotal role in setting the tone and creating a sense of anticipation for what lies beyond.

The first impression of an entrance is very important for the decision of people in choosing a sociable place. Signs raise the recognition level of people, act as signals indicating a transition between spaces and have a significant impact on the attractivity of places. A well designed entrance may evoke warm feelings and arouse the desire to pass through the entrance to spend time in the interiors. Interestingly, even in nature, the male vocal cop bowerbird in the rainforests of Irian Jaya showcases the importance of creating an attractive entrance. It constructs a colorful entrance using flowers and natural treasures, which act as eye-catching signs to female birds. Furthermore, the male bowerbird turns over shiny beetle bug

wing cases to reflect light from the nest entrance to the female's eyes, further enhancing its allure (Thompson, 2009).

In today's world; sociable places like clubs, pubs and bars are in competition to attract customers. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many properties were temporarily closed, placing a greater emphasis on the remaining businesses to transmit a perfect message through entrance signs. These signs serve as visual communication tools, allowing customers to quickly understand the concept of the place and determine if it suits their needs. as visual communication tools, allowing customers to quickly understand the concept of the place and determine if it suits their needs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, Semiotics has slowly infiltrated the fields of architecture and design. Everything we see has a meaning and Semiotics gives the opportunity to understand the messages that exist behind what is seen. It is known that signs have emotional and psychological effects on people. In line with the concept of a healthy life balance, Oldenburg (1999) suggests that individuals should allocate time to various spaces, including sociable places. These establishments provide an environment where people can come together, forget about their problems at home and work, and engage in socialization.

Signs play a considerable role in shaping the interrelation between people and these social places, as they contribute to the overall atmosphere and make a crucial first impression on individuals when deciding which sociable place to choose. Social places have some signs placed at their entrances, however some signs do not fully reflect the characteristics of the establishment or may lead to a misunderstanding of the place concept. Signs that do not signify the right concept of an establishment may cause wrong connotation and the customers may refuse to enter that place. From this point of view the design of entrance signs is very important. As people pass by a sociable place; the bright shapes, forms, colors and lighting of the entrance may delight them and arouse the desire to enter the place or may not convince them.

Interior architecture uses a symbolic system in today's modern world to make spaces more recognitive for people. In order to avoid loss of customers; establishment

owners need to get the help of interior architects to make the right selection of signs for entrance design by considering the psychological effects of signs. Research about semiotics studies related with interior architecture showed that there is a lack of semiotics research on design of entrance signs of sociable places. For this reason; this study will make up for the insufficient current interior architecture research related with Semiotics.

### **Purpose of the Study**

By interrelating semiotics to design; this study aims to examine the attractivity of visual signs on sociable place entrances and investigate which signs are recognitive enough in giving clues to convince individuals to enter such sociable places.

### **Research Questions / Hypothesis**

Research questions are the inquiries to explore the relationships among variables in a study. Hypothesis, on the other hand, are the statements that researchers make about how they expect the variables to be related based on existing theories or evidence. These hypotheses are usually expressed as numerical predictions that can be tested using statistical methods. These methods involve collecting data from a sample of the population and using them to estimate the values of the variables for the whole population. In order to confirm the previous theoretical observations; three hypotheses were proposed in this study:

H1-There is no difference between a nontransparent closed entry with signs ‘giving clues about what the place offers’ and a translucent see-through entry which shows ‘what is happening inside’ on influencing the possible customers’ decision to enter the place.

H2 –Bold and large texts around the entrances attract people more than other font sizes and thicknesses.

H3-Age and country of people have no effect on the perception of colors used around the entrances of sociable places.

The hypotheses above will be searched by distributing a questionnaire to respondents to directly answer the below research questions:

*Question 1:* Do the label, sign and logo put around sociable place entrances makes it appealing to attract customers?

*Question 2:* Do visuals of the entrances give right clues to customers which services are offered behind the doors?

*Question 3:* Do entries communicate with the customers whether the place suits their taste and budget clearly or not?

*Question 4:* Are visual signs (lights, neons etc.) more dominant than the building itself?

### **Significance of the Study**

In today's highly competitive world, sociable places face an unprecedented challenge of attracting customers. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic led to the closure of numerous properties, intensifying the importance for remaining businesses to effectively communicate their concept through entrance signs. These signs serve as a crucial means of visual communication, allowing customers to quickly grasp the nature of the place and determine its suitability for their needs. Previous studies on sociable places have explored various aspects, including customer interviews, customer perceptions of offered services, concepts of bars, and the impact of space and place identity (Schmidt & Sapsford, 1995; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996; Skinner et al., 2005, 2008; Bilgenoğlu, 2006; Moss et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2020; Shi & Lee, 2021). These studies contribute valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of sociable places, but there remains a research gap concerning the specific effect of signs on sociable place entrances. As a result, the current interior design research related to semiotics and the impact of signs on these establishments remains insufficient. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by examining the role of signs in these establishments and their significance in attracting customers. The findings will also help to solidify the framework of this study for applying semiotics to interior design. By investigating the impact of signs on customers' perception and experience, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the role of signs in these sociable places and their influence on customer decision-making processes. Since there is no study on the effect of signs of club, pub and bar entrances; this study will make up for the insufficient current interior design research related with Semiotics.



## Limitations

Due to the lockdowns, because of the Covid-19 virus pandemic throughout the world since 2020, there were limitations placed on the study which were beyond control. As there was Covid-19 Virus Pandemic the customers could not be questioned on site about their perceptions of entrance design and signs.

As there was Covid-19 Virus Pandemic data could not be gathered by questioning customers on site about their perceptions of entrance design and signs.

The thesis focuses on the role of signs around sociable place entrances and their influence on customer perception and decision-making process. Not all establishments related to social places were included; only 21 places such as clubs, pubs and bars from different countries all over the world are included in the focus of this study. Icon (sculpture, logo, figure), index (door, specific shapes) and symbol (text, flag and color) signs around these entrances constitute the primary focus and have been analyzed in the study.

## Definition of Terms

Connotation: The cultural or emotional associations that a sign carries (Wood,2017). The secondary, cultural meanings of signs that are used as signifiers for a secondary meaning, e.g., the word "rose" signifies passion (Jie, 2018).

Denotation: the most basic or literal meaning of a sign, e.g., the word "rose" signifies a particular kind of flower (Fiske, 1990).

Icon: A sign that resembles the signified, e.g., a picture (Plowright, 2016).

Index: A sign that is associated with signified, e.g., smoke signifies fire.

Interpretant: The idea that the representamen conveys about the object.

Object: The substituted thing.

Pragmatics: relations of signs to their interpreters or users (Caivano,1998).

Representamen: The substituting sign.

Semantics: Relations of signs to the objects which they may denote (Caivano,1998).

Semiosis: The process of creating meaning through signs.

Semiotics: Semiotics, or semiology, is the study of signs, symbols, and signification. It is the study of how meaning is created, not what it is (Jie, 2018).

Sign: the smallest unit of meaning. Anything that can be used to represent or substitute meaning (Wood,2017).

Signified: the concept that a signifier refers to (Fiske, 1990).

Signifier: The physical form of the sign, any material thing that signifies, e.g., words, a facial expression, an image.

Symbol: A sign where the relation between signifier and signified is purely conventional and culturally specific, e.g., most words (Jie, 2018).

Syntactics: Relations of signs to one another (Caivano, 1998).

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

Chapter II includes the literature on basic concepts of semiotics and sign systems, history of pub signs, perception of sociable places in terms of sense of place and customer-establishment bonds. Building entrance and facades, psychologic effect of colors are also reviewed. This chapter also contains related research on color preference studies, visual communication of entrance studies, sign studies, relationship of architectural design and signage studies.

### Theoretical Framework

#### Basic Concepts of Semiotics

Semiotics, as a systematic study of sign processes and meaning-making, has emerged as a significant research subject in the humanities and social sciences (Eco, 1980, Caivano, 1998, Chandler, 2007, Piqueras-Fizman, et al. 2011, Jie, 2018, Akbaş, 2019, Tomar, 2023). It provides a framework for understanding how signs function and convey meaning.

The development of modern semiotics owes much to the contributions of Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Gérard Barthes, and Charles Sanders Peirce. Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, focused on linguistic semiotics, which he referred to as "Semiology." Roland Gérard Barthes, a French philosopher, made significant contributions to the theory of sign systems. Charles Sanders Peirce, an American philosopher, coined the term "Semiosis" to describe his type of semiotics (Yakin & Totua, 2014).

In recent years, semiotics has gained increasing importance in the fields of architecture and interior design, as it offers valuable insights into the communication and interpretation of spatial environments.

At its core, semiosis involves the interpretation of signs. Signs can be defined as anything that communicates and holds meaning for the interpreter. They can take various forms, including visual, auditory, tactile or linguistic elements. Semiotics examines the relationships between signs, their meanings, and the processes through which meaning is created and understood.

In the context of architecture and interior design, semiotics offers a lens through which to analyze and understand the symbolic, cultural, and communicative

aspects of the built environment. It explores how signs and symbols within a space shape our perception, influence our behavior, and communicate messages. By studying the signs present in architectural elements, such as entrances, facades, and interior design features, semiotics allows us to unravel the layers of meaning embedded within these spaces.

Through the application of semiotics, designers and architects can consciously utilize signs and symbols to create meaningful and engaging environments. They can consider how signs contribute to the overall narrative, atmosphere, and functionality of a space, thereby enhancing the user experience and facilitating effective communication.

Semiotics has become an increasingly important subject within the fields of architecture and interior design. By studying the processes of sign interpretation and meaning-making, semiotics provides valuable insights into the communication and symbolism of spatial environments. Understanding and applying semiotic principles allows designers and architects to create meaningful and impactful spaces that resonate with users and effectively convey intended messages. Indeed, signs play a crucial role in semiotics as they are fundamental units of meaning and communication (Plowright, 2016). In semiotic theory, signs represent something and trigger mental images or associations in the minds of the interpreters. They can take various forms, including textual, visual, auditory, or tactile elements.

Semiotics plays a vital role in recognizing the meaning of signs and exploring their relationship between sender and receiver. It explores how signs function as communicative tools and how they convey messages, ideas, or concepts. Through the analysis of signs, semiotics aims to uncover the underlying meanings and the ways in which they are interpreted and understood. Signs, such as texts, colors, and lights, are significant tools in communication studies, as they carry meanings and contribute to the overall process of communication. By studying signs, semiotics provides insights into the intricate dynamics of meaning-making and communication processes. Signs are rich with meaning and symbolism. Texts carry explicit meanings conveyed through written or spoken language in the study of communication. Colors and lights, on the other hand, evoke emotions, create atmospheres, and contribute to the overall visual communication in various contexts.

Signs are integral to semiotics as they represent something and trigger mental images or associations in our minds. By examining the meaning and relationship of signs; semiotics helps us decipher the complex network of symbols and messages embedded in communication. It provides a framework to understand how signs are constructed, interpreted, and assigned meaning by individuals and within cultural contexts.

### ***Sign, Signifier, Signified***

A sign can be defined as anything that represents or stands for something else and carries meaning (Plowright, 2016). Signs can convey messages through different sensory channels, encompassing the visual (sight), auditory (hearing), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), and gustatory (taste) senses.

In the realm of semiotics, there are two important sign relations: dyadic and triadic. Ferdinand de Saussure proposed the dyadic theory, which consists of the signifier (the form that the sign takes) and the signified (the meaning conveyed by the sign). He named his form of semiotics as “Semiology”. This dyadic model of the sign has been widely used in the study of linguistic signs, where words or symbols are associated with specific meanings. However, signs can also be non-linguistic, such as visual symbols or gestures, and convey meaning through different systems of representation.

The study of signs, whether linguistic or non-linguistic, encompasses the examination of their form, meaning, and the relationships between signs and their interpreters (Elhamy, 2022). Semiotics provides a framework for understanding these sign systems and how they operate in communication and culture.

Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Gérard Barthes, and Charles Sanders Peirce have made significant contributions to the development of semiotics and the understanding of sign systems. Dyadic and triadic sign relations help explain how signs transfer information, with the dyadic model often applied in the study of linguistic signs. However, signs can also be non-linguistic, and semiotics explores the complexity of meaning-making in both linguistic and non-linguistic sign systems.

The distinction between linguistic and nonlinguistic signs is an important aspect of semiotics. Linguistic signs pertain to the study of language as a communication system and examine how meaning is conveyed through words,

grammar, and syntax. They focus on the function of language in communication (Akbaş, 2019). On the other hand, nonlinguistic signs encompass metaphorical meanings and concepts that go beyond language and involve visual, symbolic, and other sensory representations. These signs operate in contexts where the sender and receiver interpret and exchange meanings beyond the confines of traditional linguistic communication (Akbaş, 2019).

Eco (1980) closely associates the concept of the signifier with the form and function within the semiotic framework. Signifier represents the primary function of the sign, which directly perceives the external manifestation of design elements such as form, color, structure, and materials. It can be seen as the denotative aspect of the sign, indicating its immediate and observable characteristics (Eco, 1980). In the context of interior design, the signifier can be understood as the physical attributes of a space that convey specific meanings to its users.

Ferdinand de Saussure also described the sign as consisting of a signifier and a signified. The signifier corresponds to the material form or representation of the sign, while the signified refers to the abstract information, ideas, concepts, meanings, and emotions associated with the sign (Chandler, 2007). The signified represents the secondary function of the sign and can be seen as the connotative aspect of the sign, conveying deeper and more symbolic meanings (Chandler, 2007). In the context of interior design, the signified may encompass the associations, values, and cultural connotations that are evoked by the design elements and choices within a space. The distinction between signifier and signified highlights the dual nature of signs in semiotics. The signifier corresponds to the perceptible, physical aspects of the sign, while the signified represents the abstract, symbolic, and connotative dimensions of meaning. This distinction is relevant in understanding how interior design elements can communicate and convey specific messages and associations to users within a space.

Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of signs offers a distinct perspective from Ferdinand de Saussure's dyadic model. Peirce developed a triadic model of the sign, which comprises three essential components: the representamen, the interpretant, and the object (Caivano, 1998; Peirce, 1998). Peirce's framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how signs function and relate to their referents. Icons exhibit visual or perceptual similarity to their referents, indexical signs have a

direct connection or evidence of what they represent, and symbolic signs rely on convention and cultural agreement.

The representamen in Peirce's model corresponds to the physical sign or the substituting sign, which aligns with Saussure's concept of the signifier. It refers to the concrete, observable form of the sign that stands in for something else and represents it (Caivano, 1998). The representamen captures the sensory and perceptible aspects of the sign, such as its visual or auditory qualities.

In contrast to Saussure's singular concept of the signified, Peirce's model differentiates it into two distinct components: the object and the interpretant. The object represents the thing or concept that the sign refers to, or in other words, the meaning that the sign carries (Caivano, 1998). It is the actual entity, event, or idea that the sign is associated with or signifies.

The interpretant, on the other hand, refers to the meaning of the sign as understood by an interpreter (Caivano, 1998). It represents the subjective interpretation, understanding, or mental response that arises when an individual encounters the sign. The interpretant is the result of the sign being processed and comprehended by an observer or interpreter.

Peirce's triadic model expands the understanding of signs by incorporating the dynamics of interpretation and meaning-making into the process. It emphasizes the interplay between the physical sign (representamen), the meaning it carries (object), and the subjective interpretation of that meaning (interpretant).

By adopting a triadic model, Peirce's theory acknowledges the complexity and multifaceted nature of signs, highlighting the dynamic relationship between the sign and its interpretation. This model offers a more comprehensive framework for understanding the process of signification and the role of interpretation in the communication of meaning. Within Peirce's symbolic classification, signs are categorized as iconic, indexical, or symbolic, based on the relationship between the signifier and the signified (Broadbent et al., 1980; Jie, 2018). Icon has a similar appearance with the signified to express its meaning. Index has evidence of what is being represented with an intrinsic relationship between the signifier and the signified. The connection between the index and its indicator is a real connection. According to Peirce, although the symbol has no similarity with its original, it has a long-lasting and stable relationship between the signifier and the signified (Jie,

2018). People understand and communicate with each other through the use of symbol systems (Jie, 2018), but they must have a certain knowledge background to understand the meaning of symbols. Symbols have much more intense and deep meaning and content richness than other signs (Alpagut, 2005). Symbols are used for communication of information to express ideas and emotions of people (Jie, 2018), but they may have different meanings in different cultures. Symbols embody an inherent language that effortlessly transcends borders, cultures, and the constraints of time (Tomar, 2023). Communication by symbols is much different and deeper than other forms of direct communication and takes place in a richer dimension depending on knowledge, culture, experience and perception levels of people (Alpagut, 2005).

Charles Morris, added another factor, the interpreter, to Peirce's triadic model of the sign (Caivano, 1998). He put forward three dimensions of semiosis:

- (1) the dimension of *syntactics*, where the relations among the signs are considered;
- (2) the dimension of *semantics*, where the relations between signs and denoted objects are studied,
- (3) the dimension of *pragmatics*, where the relations between signs and interpreters are studied.

### ***Denotation and Connotation***

Roland Gérard Barthes defined the terms; denotation and connotation and focused on the relationship of signs and photographs with different cultures and ideologies (Akbaş, 2019). Signs have obvious meanings referred to as denotation and also may have metaphoric, multileveled interpretations depending on context, cultural codes, and multiple connotations (Fiske, 1990). Every sign communicates and /or sends a message as long as someone receives and creates a meaning from it (Peirce, 1998; Leach, 2005; Ferreira, 2007; Pane et al., 2018; Schielke, 2019). As a result, communication always involves meanings that are created and exchanged either intentionally or unintentionally (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). Interior designers create different signs or sign combinations according to certain rules and concepts. Different signs and sign combinations have different meanings and create an endless variety of information in the field of interior design. Over time, as new signs and sign combinations are created the old ones become outdated.



When it comes to interpreting interior design signs, individuals often do so based on abstract information. The meaning ascribed to signs can vary from person to person due to differences in cognitive systems, personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and individual perspectives. As society evolves and develops, the interpretation of signs also undergoes change. Factors such as the complexity of information, the globalization of knowledge, the enrichment of imagination, and the emergence of new combinations all contribute to the shifting understanding of signs. These factors influence how individuals perceive and interpret signs within the context of interior design.

The shape and design of signs can also be subject to change. As new design trends emerge and new signs are created, the visual representation of signs may evolve to align with contemporary aesthetics, communication styles, and cultural shifts (Jie, 2018). Designers may innovate and adapt the form of signs to effectively communicate with their intended audience and reflect the changing values and preferences of society.

It is important to recognize that interpretation of signs is subjective and can be influenced by various factors. Individuals bring their own unique perspectives, knowledge, and cultural backgrounds to the process of sign interpretation. Therefore, the meaning attributed to interior design signs can differ among individuals and can be influenced by the broader societal context.

Overall, the interpretation of interior design signs is a complex and dynamic process that depends on the individual's cognitive system, cultural background, and personal experiences. As society evolves and new combinations of information emerge, the interpretation of signs may change, leading to the evolution of sign shapes and designs in response to the shifting needs and preferences of individuals and the broader society.

The role of signs in the communication process and their ability to evoke meanings through the interpretation of connotations is important. Signs, consisting of both the signifier and the signified, are highly relevant in the context of interior design as they can be utilized to effectively communicate messages and create an appealing atmosphere to attract customers.

The signifier, representing the physical form of the sign, encompasses elements such as texts, colors, and lighting within the realm of interior design. These

elements contribute to the visual and sensory experience of a space, influencing the emotions and perceptions of individuals. By carefully selecting and designing these signifiers, designers can create an environment that aligns with the desired message or atmosphere they want to convey.

The signified, on the other hand, represents the abstract information, ideas, concepts, meanings, and emotions associated with the sign. In the context of interior design, the signified can refer to the connotations and associations that are evoked by the design elements, such as the feelings of comfort, luxury, or excitement that a space may convey.

### **History of Signs Around Club, Pub, Bar Entrances**

The use of signs in bars and pubs has a rich history that dates back centuries. In ancient Rome, buildings selling wine, known as "Tabernae," displayed trading signs such as bunches of vine leaves to indicate their offering of wine. However, in Britain, where vine leaves were scarce due to the climate, small evergreen bushes were hung up to mark out the pubs (BarSigns, 2023). These early signs aimed to bring recognition to the services offered inside the establishments.

During the 12th century, signs that resemble modern versions started to emerge. Since the majority of the population was illiterate, painted pictures were used instead of text. Pictorial signs proved to be more easily recognizable for local people and travelers (BarSigns, 2023). This visual communication method allowed potential customers to understand the nature of the establishment without relying on written information.

In 1393, a significant change occurred in bar signs due to King Richard II's decree. It became compulsory for businesses selling beer to display a white stag on their entrances. This regulation led to a shift in bar signs over the following years. Initially, signs had religious connotations, such as the Crossed Keys. Subsequently, royal themes emerged with signs like The King's Head. Famous historical figures, such as The Duke of Wellington and Shakespeare, also became the inspiration for pub names (BarSigns, 2023). This trend of naming pubs after notable individuals continued to evolve over time.

In more recent years, industrial changes and sports have influenced pub names and signage. Examples include names like The Railway, reflecting the impact

of industrialization, and *The Cricketers*, showcasing the popularity of the sport (BarSigns, 2023). These pub names and signs serve not only as indicators of the services provided but also as a reflection of cultural and historical contexts.

The use of signs in bars and pubs has evolved over centuries, from the early hanging of vine leaves and evergreen bushes to the adoption of pictorial signs and the incorporation of religious, royal, and historical figures. This tradition continues to adapt to societal changes, reflecting industrial advancements and popular sports. Through their evolution, bar signs have played a crucial role in attracting customers and conveying the identity and character of these establishments.

Indeed, the use of colorful signs in pub and bar settings has become increasingly common, and these signs have taken on various meanings. In public spaces, signs play a crucial role in minimizing confusion and guiding people in the right direction. They serve as visual cues, ensuring that individuals can easily navigate and find their desired destination.

Today, pub and bar signs have become more specialized according to specific themes and concepts. Many drinking establishments worldwide hang decorated signs over their entrances, providing visual clues about the type of establishment they are. These signs contribute to creating a unique ambiance and attracting potential customers who resonate with the particular theme or concept.

In recent years, pub and bar signs have evolved to incorporate both pictures and text. This combination allows for the clear identification of the establishment's name, enhancing its visibility and appeal. By combining visual imagery with textual information, these signs effectively capture attention and communicate the identity of the pub or bar to passersby.

While the specific designs and styles of pub and bar signs have changed over the years, the fundamental principles of an attractive and well-designed sign remain the same. A visually appealing sign has the power to arouse people's interest and curiosity, enticing them to explore the establishment. This timeless aspect of well-designed signs holds true, regardless of the specific era or historical context.

### **Perception of Sociable Places**

Sociable places have long been an integral part of cultures worldwide, serving as important social hubs where people can gather, socialize, and engage in

lively conversations. Oldenburg (1999), in his book "The Great Good Place," emphasizes the significance of these places in maintaining a healthy balance between home, work, and sociable environments. According to Oldenburg (1999), sociable places provide opportunities for individuals to set aside the concerns of their daily lives and enjoy the pleasures of good company and conversation. Oldenburg (1999), also highlights the social vitality that sociable places bring to a community, suggesting that they serve as grassroots platforms for democracy. These places foster social connections, promote interaction, and contribute to the overall well-being and cohesion of communities.

Sismondo (2011) supports Oldenburg's viewpoint, particularly focusing on the role of bars and taverns in the cultural history of the United States. Sismondo (2011) argues that these local establishments, including dive bars, have played a significant role in shaping American society. Historical events such as George Washington bidding farewell to his troops, the American Revolution, the Whiskey Rebellion, and the Stonewall Riots, all have ties to bars and taverns, which served as catalysts for conversation and social movements.

Both Oldenburg and Sismondo highlight the importance of sociable places, such as bars and taverns, in fostering social connections, facilitating conversations, and playing a role in shaping cultural and historical events (Oldenburg, 1999; Sismondo, 2011). These places serve as vital spaces for community engagement, social interaction, and the development of a sense of belonging and shared experiences.

Sociable places encompass a wide range of establishments where people come together to engage in social interactions, relaxation, and entertainment. Cafes, restaurants, clubs, pubs, bars, theaters, and sports venues like football stadiums and tennis clubs are just a few examples of such places. In these sociable environments, individuals have the opportunity to unwind, have fun, meet new people, observe others, break away from the routine of everyday life, maintain connections with friends, enjoy music, participate in games, learn from others, and share their own knowledge and experiences.

In contemporary times, there is a diverse array of establishments with different concepts, catering to various preferences and interests. Clubs, pubs, and bars come in various forms, each offering a unique atmosphere and experience.

Examples include dance clubs, sports bars, wine bars, dive bars with affordable prices, trendy upscale bars, music bars featuring live performances, country dance bars, tiki bars, and more (Wikipedia, 2020). While alcoholic beverages are commonly served in these establishments, it is important to note that not all sociable places exclusively serve alcohol, as some also offer non-alcoholic options.

The common thread among clubs, pubs, and bars is their provision of alcoholic beverages. However, beyond this similarity, in the past they differed in terms of ambiance, target audience, entertainment offerings, and overall concept. These establishments catered to diverse preferences and interests, providing individuals with choices that align with their personal tastes and desires for social engagement. In order to highlight the distinctions between clubs, bars, and pubs; it can be said that, each of these establishments offers unique features and experiences, catering to different preferences and atmospheres.

Clubs stood out with their focus on live music, often featuring a stage, dance floor areas, and a DJ booth where DJs play recorded music. The emphasis on music and dancing created an energetic and vibrant atmosphere. In terms of beverage offerings, clubs tended to serve a range of classy cocktails and expensive wines, contributing to the overall upscale ambiance.

Pubs, on the other hand, derive their name from "Public House" in countries with a British influence. Pubs are known for providing a relaxed environment where people can spend extended periods of time, enjoying the ambient music and having a few drinks with friends. Pubs typically had a casual atmosphere, serving both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages as well as food. The food menu in pubs often included a variety of options, from filling meals to appetizers, salads, soups, and desserts.

Bars are characterized by their specialized counters where alcoholic beverages are served. The types of bars also differ greatly, ranging from inexpensive "dive bars" known for their laid-back atmosphere to high-concept establishments catering to a more elite clientele (Wikipedia, 2020). They tended to have a more minimal food menu, often offering light appetizers, pizzas, or wings. Bars varied in terms of ambiance, ranging from lively and energetic with loud music and dance floors to more intimate and cozy settings.

It is important to recognize that these descriptions provide general characteristics, and there can be variations within each category. Today the distinction gap among clubs, bars, and pubs have been narrowed. All of these establishments offer similar services to attract more customers. They can find the desired atmosphere and socializing needs they are looking for that best align with their preferences nowadays.

### **Building Entrances and Building Facades**

The entrance area of a building holds immense significance in a context where initial impressions are very important. It acts as a precursor to what lies ahead, signaling the beginning of an architectural experience and establishing the ambiance for the entire interior. Serving as a functional gateway between spaces, an entrance both links and divides, offering protection and safety for both residents and guests. Consequently, each detail within this space should be designed to fulfill this purpose, from the placement of the door to the design of the threshold and even the structure of the ceiling (Montjoy, 2022).

The concept of the entrance in architecture has held significant importance throughout history, playing a pivotal role in design influenced by varying cultures and beliefs. Entrances exhibit diverse characteristics mirroring architectural styles and historical eras (Polpuech, 1989). As architectural styles continuously evolve, incorporating new forms and technologies, the range of design ideas becomes eclectic. Within this dynamic landscape, entrances can align with, complement, or even contrast a particular style. Regardless, they consistently act as a link between interior and exterior spaces. An entrance might be intricately integrated into a building's design, serving a purposeful function (Bain, 1989). A poorly designed entrance can negatively impact many other aspects of the building (Polpuech, 1989). On the other hand Well-designed sociable place entrances can serve multiple purposes such as inviting and orienting visitors, enhancing delight, representing owner's value, offering a viewpoint, and presenting an artistic taste.

The architectural envelope serves as the boundary between a building's interior and exterior, defining its identity and significance. In contemporary architecture, the understanding of this boundary has evolved, redefining its semantic importance. Architectural agendas continue to shift, discussions now encompass a

multidimensional exploration of the envelope's symbolism, value, language, and expression (Düzgün & Polatoğlu, 2016). The study of Düzgün & Polatoğlu, (2016) emphasizes the crucial role of the architectural envelope as a fundamental construction element that shapes a building's identity. It represents the dynamic interplay between inside and outside spaces while holding semantic, technological, and aesthetic value.

The color and materials of building facades is an important aspect of architectural design for the buildings and cities. The color of a building facade can have a significant impact on the building's overall aesthetic and can influence how people feel when they look at it. The materials used in the facade can also affect the building's energy efficiency, durability, and maintenance requirements. Architects and designers must consider several factors when selecting colors and materials for building facades. They must consider the building's location, the surrounding environment, and the building's intended use.

The colors and characteristics of building facades in a city is an important visual representation showing the city's background and character. For example, Turkan (2018) reported that corbels of the XIX. Century Turkish Houses in Cyprus, reflect the local culture and make up the front facade characteristics of the buildings. They are also symbolic elements that dominate the street giving a character to the city. Research on building colors dates back to Vitruvius who lived in the 1st century and suggested natural colors for materials to be used in buildings. Nowadays, the harmony of building colors has been widely applied in many cities of the world (Zhang, et al., 2021). By analyzing the colors of buildings, we can gain an objective and comprehensive understanding of the city, which can serve as a basis for creating guidelines for building color and texture.

### **Psychologic Effect of Colors**

Visual design elements, such as images and paintings, have semiotic resources and “grammars” that use different components, including color, shape, and texture, to make meanings (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2002). Colors have an important role in visual perception of signs on property entrances. Furthermore, colors have the ability to attract people and to keep their attention (Schoormans & Robben, 1997). Understanding the customers' perception of colors and their influence on their

decisions to enter a sociable place is important for design process. Colors have a significant impact on our lives. They can influence our thoughts, inspire our decision-making, and affect our emotions. Colors are more powerful than we realize, as they can cause changes and alter our reactions. Depending on how we interpret them, colors can be used for both positive and negative purposes.

White is a symbol of purity, cleanliness and hope with a positive connotation suggesting safety. According to color psychology, white is a color that symbolizes purity, innocence, cleanliness, blankness, coldness, emptiness, simplicity, and minimalism . White is known to create a sense of space or add highlights, making it a popular choice for interior designers to make rooms seem larger and more spacious . However, it can also be described as cold, bland, and sterile . While some people may find white to be a boring, cold, and distant color, it is also known to promote open-mindedness and self-reflection .

Gold is a symbol of illumination, high quality, wealth, success and evokes the feeling of prestige. It is also known to be optimistic, uplifting, and inspiring . However, the color gold can also have negative connotations. It can be related with arrogance and egotism. The interpretation of gold can vary depending on the context and culture. For example, in China and Western culture gold is associated with good luck and happiness and represents wealth and prosperity. In Canada and America, gold also represents wealth. In South America, gold symbolizes wealth, luxury, positivity. In Hinduism gold is related with meditation and wisdom.

Black can give a chic connotation with the feeling of perspective and depth (Stout, 2019; Scott-Kemmis, 2022). Black is associated with power, prestige, authority, strength and elegance. Its negative traits are; depression, sadness and pessimism.

Gray is a color that is often associated with compromise and intellect. It is a neutral and conservative color and is considered to be both elegant and cool. Gray is also known to be a calming color that can evoke feelings of peace and relaxation. However, gray can also have negative connotations as an unemotional, sad and pessimistic color. According to color psychology the black tones within gray are responsible for this adverse effect (van Braam, 2022).

Red is the most eye-catching and exciting color in the entire spectrum having qualities including love and kindness. Color red demands attention and transmits a



passionate and energetic feeling psychologically (Kurt & Osueke 2014; Stout, 2019; Madden et al., 2000; Scott-Kemmis, 2022). It is a stopping symbol associated with energy and power as well as love and desire. Red has very high visibility bringing out text and images to the foreground stimulating people to stop and make quick decisions. On the other hand, it can have negative connotations of anger, despair, danger, melancholy, revenge. In between its positive and negative traits lies cultural interpretations.

Blue means honesty, trust, wisdom and loyalty. It has a calming effect as a positive trait. Blue also has negative traits such as sadness, depression and weakness (Kurt & Osueke, 2014).

Green has a revitalizing, balancing, relaxing and encouraging effect. It gives hope and symbolizes safety and harmony. Some people relate green with envy and materialism as a negative trait.

### **Meaning of entrance door colors revealing special identities**

Entrance door colors of the houses or public places have different meanings depending upon the cultures. Red front doors have a positive effect among different cultures, but the meaning varies. In the United States, red doors historically conveyed hospitality (Berry, 2020). They traditionally signified a welcoming space for travelers to rest and dine. During the Civil War, red doors indicated safe havens for enslaved individuals within the Underground Railroad network. In Chinese cultural beliefs, particularly in Feng Shui principles aimed at harmonizing energy, red doors symbolize auspiciousness, prosperity, and positive vibes. Meanwhile, in Scotland, homeowners paint their front doors red as a symbol that they've fully paid their mortgages. Red doors also hold significant meaning in Irish culture. Certain regions uphold folklore suggesting that a red door has the power to repel evil spirits. In Irish legend, citizens defiantly painted their doors red in response to Queen Victoria's decree to paint them black.

Bright lemon yellow shades evoke feelings of joy, optimism, and positive vibes. A completely white door, might seem dull initially, yet it symbolizes simplicity. A black door can signify sophistication and authority but it might not have the same impact for some people and might be depressing. For instance, if the

exterior is a deep gray, a black door disrupts the balance within the overall darkness. A dark green front door exudes confidence and signifies a blend of traditional values with a touch of innovation. Blue is known for its calming effect, but lighter shades like sky blue lack the commanding seriousness of navy or other darker tones. Consequently, a light blue front door conveys a laid-back, informal atmosphere (Berry, 2020).

### **Related Research**

According to the subject of this thesis, related previous studies are on various headings such as; color preference studies, visual communication of entrance studies, sign studies, relationship of architectural design and signage studies and studies on different aspects of sociable places. These studies are given below in chronologic order:

Different colors have a significant influence on human emotion, thought, and behaviour. Eysenck (1941) evaluated the work of 50 investigators on color preferences who worked on primary colors including red, yellow, and blue and secondary colors including orange, green and violet. He reported that according to 17 researchers, the order of colors was found to have changed but there were no significant differences between races and gender. The six colors were listed as blue, red, green, violet, orange, and yellow. In the field of color research, the question of whether color preferences are similar or different across cultures has been a topic of interest for many years. The literature on this topic is mixed, with some studies finding similarities and others finding differences. Eysenck (1941) discussed the confusion about hue preferences across cultures and found similarities in color preferences across cultures.

Choungourian, (1968) examined color preference and cultural variation among university students and found that color preferences varied according to cultures. He discovered that American students had a strong preference for the hues red and blue, while Kuwaiti students had the opposite preference.

In 1971, 490 college students were asked to write down a number between 0 and 9 along with the name of any color that first came to mind. The number seven and the color blue were the most often written. The findings identified the "Blue Seven Phenomenon" (Simon, 1971).

Adams & Osgood (1973) examined 89 previous research on color and effects of color and found cross cultural similarities on the meaning of colors. Adams & Osgood (1973) reported that students in 20 countries, preferred blue primarily followed by green and white. Black and red were found to be the most dominant colors among high school students. The confusion about similarities and differences in the literature appears to be existing in the same state nowadays.

In 1977) Venturi et al., critically examined the relationship between architectural design and signage, particularly in the context of Las Vegas. Their observation that the sign at the front often takes precedence over the architectural design at the back reflects the prominence and impact of signage in attracting attention and communicating the purpose of the building. In some cases, the exaggeration of signage and entrance visualizations can be seen as a response to compensate for any perceived architectural deficiencies (Venturi et al., 1977). The observations of Venturi et al. (1977) highlight the significance of signs in denoting and connoting meanings, particularly in relation to the design of entrances. They propose that a sign can denote its meaning through explicit words, while the graphics and visual characteristics of the sign can connote institutional dignity or commercialism. Additionally, the size and positioning of the sign can connote the act of entering, inviting customers into the space.

D'Hondt & Vandewiele (1983), asked elementary and secondary school students in Senegal to choose their favorite color and number (between 0 and 9). Elementary school students preferred the color brown and five, whereas the secondary school students preferred black and nine.

Mick (1986) stated that by ensuring that customers can easily connote and understand the message being expressed through entrance signs and establishments can enhance their branding to attract the right target audience.

Wiegersma & Van Der Elst, (1988) reported that some cultures preferred blue primarily ("blue phenomenon") whereas this preference for blue was not the same in all cultures .

Colors are very important in interior architecture and the preference of people for colors should be known during the design process. In 1992, there was a study on preferences of patients and staff for colors in the patient room by Martin who reported that color preference studies began with Cohn in 1894 (Martin 1992).

When Saito conducted a study in 1994 on colors, it was discovered that Tokyo, Taipei and Tianjin had different preferences for hues and tones.

Schmidt and Sapsford (1995) examined the women's view of pubs. They stated that preferences can differ based on gender and women often have a dislike for male-dominated atmospheres that make them feel unwelcome. Creating an inclusive and welcoming environment is essential for attracting a diverse clientele. Providing spaces where all individuals, regardless of gender, feel comfortable and respected is crucial in fostering a positive social experience.

Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) examined the role of place and identity processes on residents living in an area of the London Docklands. They reported that relationship between place and identity is complex. Their findings indicated that the connection between a location and its identity is intricate, shaped by a multitude of factors encompassing social, environmental alterations, and economic transformations within the vicinity.

Hay (1998) investigated sense of place in developmental context. The study pointed out that feelings of rootedness were influenced by growing up in the. Place and pair ties were discovered to interact, and multigenerational patterns for cultural and ancestral senses of place were seen, with sense of place styles being passed down from parent to kid.

Cernovsky et al., (1998) examined color preferences based on the Lüscher Color Test in two groups; 21 Inuit living in the Arctic circle and 49 people living in Southern Canada. In the Lüscher Color Test; there are two categories for colors: auxiliary colors including; violet, brown, grey, black and basic colors including blue, yellow, red, and green. Participants are asked to rate the degree for each hue that accurately reflected their personalities after sorting the cards from most liked to least liked. Cernovsky et al., (1998) found similarities in color preferences for blue, green, red, yellow, purple, brown, grey, and black across cultures supporting Eysenck study in 1941.

Through cognitive process, the brain forms perceptions based on the visual information received. A sign on the entrance of a place serves as a visual cue that is captured in memory. This information becomes learned and can be retrieved as a mnemonic device, allowing us to recall the image and think of that place later on (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999).

Zwaga et al., 1999, stated in their book that determining the understandability of information symbols is important for hospital patients and visitors with regard to their cultural, gender, and age differences.

Cultural differences in color meanings and preferences have also been investigated. The results showed that color preferences changed according to different cultures (Madden et al., 2000).

People form close relationships and bond with various places as part of their personal development and growth. These connections reflect their thoughts, feelings, and lifestyle choices. Gustafson in 2001, made interviews about the meaning of places. The analysis of the respondents answers showed that the meanings respondents ascribed to locations were; environment, others and self (Gustafson, 2001).

Entrance design and signs have an important effect on the attraction of customers making the place distinguishable and welcoming among the other similar sociable place entrances. A well-designed entrance with the right signs may evoke warm feelings and arouse the desire to pass through the entrance to spend time in the interiors. Right signifiers for the entrance designs of target establishments are important to grab customers' attention at first glance. However, not all signs are created equal. Some may lack attractiveness, causing people to pass by without considering their meaning or significance. On the other hand, theme-based and uniquely designed signs have the power to capture attention and generate curiosity, enticing individuals to enter and explore the establishment. These visually appealing signs contribute to the overall allure of the place, increasing its attractiveness and drawing potential customers in. Visual appearance of the entrance plays a significant role in shaping people's perception of a place and influencing their decision to enter. Through strategic design choices, establishments can effectively communicate their offerings and create an inviting atmosphere that appeals to their target audience. This initial positive impression sets the stage for a memorable and enjoyable experience and fosters a relationship between the place and its customers (Groat & Wang, 2002). The visual appearance of the entrance acts as a representation of the overall identity and character of the establishment (Groat & Wang, 2002). It provides a glimpse into the ambiance and experience that await inside, allowing potential customers to quickly assess whether it aligns with their needs and expectations.

Jones et al. (2003) highlighted the importance of safety for women when socializing at night. They found that women desire a sense of security and want to feel safe when entering a pub or other sociable places, particularly when they are alone. Ensuring a safe and welcoming environment is vital for women to feel confident and comfortable participating in social activities. Taking into account the preferences and concerns of both men and women is crucial in designing and managing sociable places. By creating inclusive and safe environments, bar, pub, and nightclub owners can attract a wider range of customers and cultivate an atmosphere where everyone feels valued and able to enjoy their social experiences. This can lead to a more diverse and vibrant social scene, benefiting both the individuals and the establishment itself. According to Jones et al. (2003) who conducted a management study; in addition to the visual aspects, bar owners should employ supportive activities to encourage customers to spend more time in their establishments. Organizing special occasions and events, such as themed nights like karaoke, special drink promotions, or live performances, helps to create a vibrant and engaging atmosphere. These activities provide additional incentives for customers to return on a regular basis and enjoy unique experiences each time.

In the context of visual entrance design, if the goal is to denote the visually communicated message, the representation should have a visual similarity (icon) or a direct connection (index) to the source of the message. If the message requires a more nuanced approach, it can be connotated through the skillful manipulation of text and imagery (symbol). According to Frascara (2004); visual communication designers serve as facilitators of behavioral change within their target audiences. These audiences are not passive consumers of design outputs, but rather active socio-cultural interpreters who consciously and subconsciously derive meaning from them. The design outputs, whether in the form of branding, establishment's personality, or an illustrated text, are driven by the message and aim to solve a communication design problem.

Transmitting a perfect message through entrance design signs is crucial in conveying the concept and identity of a place to potential customers. The visual communication at the entrance allows individuals to quickly assess whether the establishment aligns with their needs and preferences (Reber et al., 2004).

Club, pub, and bar owners recognize the importance of not only attracting customers for a single visit but also fostering regular patronage (Skinner et al., 2005). To achieve this, owners carefully curate various aspects of their establishments, such as the name, drink menu, entrance decor, and lighting, to appeal to a specific customer profile. These visual elements play a significant role in creating an initial impression and attracting the target audience. To effectively communicate these supportive activities and attract people, it is crucial for bar owners to visualize them at the entrance of their establishments using signifier signs (Skinner et al., 2005). Eye-catching and well-designed signs can serve as powerful visual cues that convey the upcoming events and promotions, arousing curiosity and generating interest among potential customers. By curating the visual elements, organizing supportive activities, and leveraging effective signage, they can create an engaging and appealing atmosphere that encourages patrons to step inside and spend more time in their establishments, fostering a loyal customer base. Moreover, offering special drink promotion nights and discounts is an effective strategy for attracting customers. These initiatives provide an added incentive for people to visit the establishment and experience the offerings at a more affordable price point. By effectively promoting and visually emphasizing these offerings at the entrance, bar owners can capture the attention of passersby and entice them to enter.

Visual communication holds immense power in delivering messages and creating lasting impressions that resonate deeply with individuals, fostering a universal understanding that surpasses linguistic limitations (Tractinsky et al., 2006).

Lindgaard et al., (2006) examined how soon people form opinions about what they see. According to the research, they suggested that web designers should know that a good first impression only takes 50 milliseconds to form an opinion. In a study that was similar to Lindgaard et al.'s (2006); Tractinsky et al. (2006) discovered a strong correlation between the average attractiveness evaluations of web pages following a 500 ms exposure and those following a 10-s exposure.

A study was conducted by Bilgenoğlu in 2006, on changing identity of space/place in Bodrum. This study addressed the problems of space/place with respect to continuity and change (Bilgenoğlu, 2006).

By carefully considering the visual elements, typography, colors, and other design aspects of the entrance sign, establishments can enhance the communication

and persuasive power of their message (Ares et al., 2011). The sign should effectively convey the unique selling points and value proposition of the place, ensuring that customers understand and resonate with the intended message in a concise and compelling manner. Well-designed signs placed at entrances serve as visual cues that can guide customers and influence their subconscious perceptions of a place (Clement, 2007). These signs communicate important information about what the space is offering and whether it aligns with the customers' needs and preferences. Visual cues provided by entrance signs play a significant role in shaping customers' initial impressions and expectations of the establishment. They act as hidden stimuli that influence customers' subconscious decision-making processes (Clement, 2007).

Manav (2007), made a color emotion study in Türkiye and examined the use of colors in residences. Results showed that green was mostly preferred in residences and value and saturation levels influenced emotional responses to colors.

Skinner et al., (2008) studied the preferences of nightclub and bar customers in the emerging and developing Polish market. This analysis focused on understanding customer needs regarding the servicescape (the physical environment and atmosphere) and the services offered by these establishments. The perception of a place is indeed crucial in influencing people's decision to enter a social establishment. The strategic placement of signs, thoughtful choice of colors and typography and cohesive branding elements all contribute to conveying a coherent and impactful message about the place (Skinner et al., 2008). The interrelation between people and places is strongly influenced by the visual cues presented at the entrance. By creating a positive and appealing perception through the entrance design, establishments can attract and engage their target audience, establishing a foundation for building a relationship between the place and its customers (Skinner et al., 2008).

Moss et al. (2009) investigated whether young men and women, who constitute the primary demographic for mainstream nightclubs and bars, share similar or distinct priority preferences during their initial and subsequent visits to these venues. This exploration implies that comprehending how spaces are perceived differently based on gender and understanding the varying preferences between men and women can aid businesses in tailoring their products and services to meet customer needs. The results suggested that, this can be achieved by studying



preferences and expectations related to pricing strategies and other differentiating factors beyond pricing.

By strategically designing signs with appropriate visuals, colors, typography, and branding elements, establishments can convey specific messages and create a desirable atmosphere that appeals to their target audience. These visual clues can communicate various aspects of the place, such as the type of cuisine or beverages served, the ambiance, the level of formality, or the overall experience offered (Orth et al., 2010). They help customers quickly assess whether the place suits their needs and preferences, even before entering. This subconscious processing of visual information guides customers in making decisions about whether to enter the establishment or explore other options.

Tangkijviwat et al. (2010), conducted a study on color. The results pointed out that people preferred bright and most saturated colors. They also found that the effect of hue was small on color preference.

Ural & Yilmazer (2010), studied colour with various visualization techniques in architectural studies by investigating the consistency of their evaluations via semantic ratings.

Solli & Lenz (2011) stated that color emotion studies were mostly done for single colors or on combination of two colors. They studied on multicolored images and found no visual difference between images.

Research has shown that the initial exposure to visual stimuli has a significant impact on subsequent judgments and decision-making (Piqueras-Fiszman et al., 2011). By creating visually appealing and informative entrance signs, the concept, atmosphere, and offerings of the place, captures the attention and interest of potential customers within a short span of time. This plays a crucial role in influencing customer perceptions, decisions, and subsequent interactions with the place.

Visual communication designers possess an innate understanding that their creations, through skillful manipulation of text and imagery, convey an intended message to a specific audience. If their design or illustration is successful, the audience will interpret the message as intended. Seeley (2012) suggests that the effectiveness of design is frequently assessed based on the extent to which the people can establish perceptual, emotional, and cognitive responses and actively engage with it.

There have been research about the relationship of color and semiotics. Bacci, (2012), suggested that companies should consider the perception of people in marketing activities and examine meanings of color in their studies.

Hue et al., (2014) made a pilot study to find out the effectiveness and characteristics of color harmony in design. The results showed that both professionals and inexperienced persons were able to compose color schemes in harmony with each other easily. The studies on color indicated that type of color stimuli and individual preferences of color had a considerable influence on the strength of the effect of colors.

McDonagh (2015) gives equal importance to design for both the practical aspects and addressing the emotional needs of the user. In this process of visual communication, the fundamental principles of Peirce's Semiosis theory can be used.

The Rosetta Stone; a famous ancient artifact, serves as a symbol of the key that unlocked the secrets of an ancient language and provided insights into the rich history of Egypt (Wood, 2017). It is inscribed with text in three different scripts: hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek. Icons and imagery, function as the hieroglyphs of visual communication, condensing intricate concepts into succinct and universally understood symbols. The metaphor of the Rosetta Stone serves as a designer-centric bridge between the intricate realm of semiotic theory and the practical requirements of designers. By adopting a semiotic Rosetta Stone approach, it becomes possible to harmonize a designer-centric meta-language, enabling them to seamlessly integrate theory into their practice with enhanced speed and clarity (Wood, 2017). The development of a designer-centric meta-language is an active area of design research that would greatly benefit from the collaboration between designers and Peircean semioticians. In essence, visual communication designers create outputs that engage their audiences as active participants in the interpretation process, shaping their behaviors and responses through the visually solved communication design problem. By employing Peirce's classifications of semiotic signs and understanding the interrelationships between the message / object, representation / representamen, and successful understanding / interpretant, visual communication design can effectively enhance its ability to convey meaning visually.

Ultimately, by harnessing Peirce's semiotic framework, visual communication design can enhance its communicative power and engage viewers in

meaningful and impactful ways (Wood, 2017). This approach may seem paradoxical, considering the modern movement's rejection of ornamentation. However, it highlights the role of signage as a means to compensate for lacking architectural elements and create a visually engaging and attention-grabbing presence. One example that exemplifies this concept is the Big Duck in New York. This concrete building shaped like a Pekin duck serves as a retail shop for duck eggs and poultry. Beyond its functional purpose, the Big Duck has become an iconic landmark that symbolizes the rise of Long Island's duck farming industry (Wood, 2017). The oversized and distinctive form of the building itself, along with the symbolic representation of the duck, captures attention and becomes a recognizable symbol within the local context. The example of the Big Duck demonstrates the potential impact of iconic and symbolic architectural elements. When applied thoughtfully and in balance with the overall design, signage and visual elements can create memorable and engaging experiences in the context of sociable places.

Jie (2018) stated that a designer is in fact a "communicator" in a way and designers should first consider the correctness of information and then go on analyzing of symbols of modern design.

The process of seeing and perception is indeed a fundamental aspect of how we interpret signs, including those on the entrance of a place. When we see a sign, the eye forms an image on the retina, which then sends signals to the brain for processing and analysis (Henley, 2018).

The visual appearance of the entrance serves as a significant factor in shaping this perception and creating an initial impression. It communicates important information about the atmosphere, offerings, and concept of the place (Kim et al., 2020). These visual elements play a crucial role in expressing what the place offers and how individuals perceive it. Even the smallest sign usage with contrasting figure ground relationship between the text and the background can demonstrate cleverly managed establishment branding and customers can easily interpret and understand the message being conveyed (Kim et al., 2020). A well-executed entrance design with clear and visually appealing signage can effectively communicate the essence of the establishment, attracting the attention and interest of potential customers (Kim et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining whether individuals will return to a social establishment. This can be influenced by factors

such as the ambiance, customer service, atmosphere, and overall enjoyment of the experience (Kim et al., 2020).

International Sign Association Research (2020) reported that size, angle, location, luminance and contrast of signs are important during the design. Visual communication transcends language barriers, evoking emotions and conveying meaning to people regardless of their spoken language. The human sense of sight plays a paramount role in our perception of the world (Wang & Haapio-Kirk, 2021). It is through visual stimuli that we first identify and attempt to comprehend events, objects, and situations in our environment. Furthermore, information acquired through visual perception tends to be retained more vividly compared to information obtained through other senses.

When customers can quickly and accurately interpret the visual communication, they can make informed decisions about whether the place suits their needs and preferences, leading to higher customer satisfaction and engagement (Shi & Lee, 2021). When customers have a positive experience with the services offered inside, both psychologically and economically, they are more likely to develop a desire to revisit the place (Shi & Lee, 2021). Economic satisfaction, on the other hand, relates to the perceived value and benefits customers derive from the services provided. This can include factors such as the quality of the drinks, affordability, promotions, and overall value for money (Shi & Lee, 2021). When customers feel that they have received a fair and satisfactory return on their investment, they are more inclined to consider revisiting the establishment. Positive recommendations and personal satisfaction are powerful motivators for individuals to return to a place they had a satisfactory experience with.

Continuously striving to meet and exceed customer expectations, maintaining high standards of service quality, and listening to customer feedback are key strategies to ensure customer satisfaction and encourage repeat visits (Shi & Lee, 2021).

By consistently delivering a positive and satisfying experience, establishments can cultivate customer loyalty and create a strong foundation for long-term success.

Designers produce practical work that visually communicates a message either denotatively or connotatively through representation enabling the audience to comprehend and interpret it (Elhamy, 2022). Within the context of a

communicational situation, designers structure the visual communication of the intended message. There are various approaches to achieve this, ranging from simple denotation (directly representing the message) to more subtle and nuanced connotation (suggesting or implying the message). Similar to Peirce's theory, designers have a range of options, from simple to complex, to visually communicate meaning. This collaboration would help to contextualize the application of Semiosis within the enhancement of aesthetic practice.

By possessing the ability to surpass language barriers, these visual representations establish an immediate connection, articulating messages that hold resonance across various cultures and generations (Tomar, 2023). By incorporating semiotics into entrance design, designers can evaluate how texts, colors, and lighting contribute to the overall attractiveness of a space and align with the customers' expectations. This evaluation involves considering the intended message, the connotations associated with specific design choices, and the impact on customers' perceptions and experiences. Through careful design choices, such as the use of colors, materials, lighting, and signage, the entrance conveys specific messages and evokes desired emotions and perceptions.

Balabanoff (2023) stated that the mood or ambience of a space is significantly influenced by the interplay of color, light, and darkness, shaping whether it gives a sense of safety, friendliness, threat or calmness.

In two studies; the trendy colors in the architectural environment in public spaces were examined (Yu 2023 and Yu & Bell 2023). The results showed that white or gray colors of buildings have changed saturated colors.

In a study of visual communication, it was reported that the analysis of color is a fundamental aspect of the compositional meta-function because color carries important symbolic meanings and has a significant impact on the way viewers perceive and feel about the visual (Shahnaz, & Suleman, 2023).

All of the previous studies offer valuable insights into the complex characteristics of social spaces. However, there is still a research gap regarding the precise impact of signage on the entrances of these sociable places.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

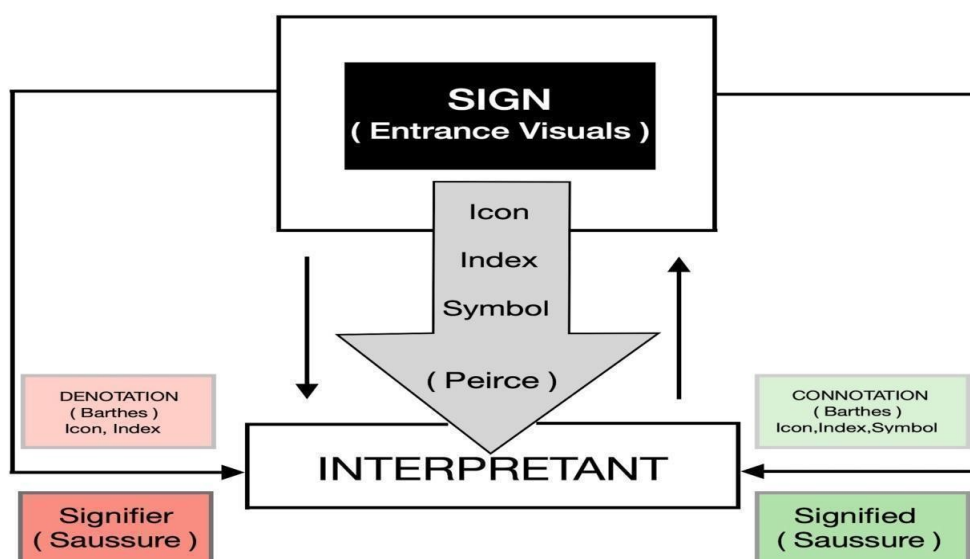
Chapter III continues with a framework for the method of the study including research design, participants/population & the sample/study group, data collection tools/materials, data collection procedures and data analysis plan.

#### Research design

This study is based on mixed method design, composed of qualitative and quantitative analysis. The methodology for qualitative analysis was based on a semiotics model of the entrances created by the author in the light of Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Gérard Barthes and Charles Peirce's theories (Jie, 2018) for qualitative analysis of collected data from the Semiotics point of view (Figure 1). Signifiers and signified signs were classified as icon, index and symbol and their relation with the chosen signs as well as their denotative and connotative meanings were analyzed according to the semiotic model of entrance visuals as in Figure 1. Results of qualitative data analysis led to quantitative data collection and an online survey was planned to better interpret the qualitative findings. of the study,

**Figure 1**

*Semiotics model of entrance visuals*



(Source: N. Ulusoy - 2022)

## **Participants/Population & The Sample/Study Group**

After getting the approval from the ethical committee of Near East University (on 16/11/2021; with the application number NEU/AS/2021/133); an online survey was prepared and circulated to several websites and various online communities.

Participants were asked to answer the questionnaire over the internet by filling out the form. A total of 595 people responded from all over the world within a time period of 3 months. The respondents were divided into subgroups by age and countries /regions

## **Data Collection Tools/Materials**

Photographs of 21 sociable places from different countries including Cyprus, Türkiye, The USA, China, Japan, Spain, Ireland, England and Finland were used for data collection of qualitative analysis, Photographs of sociable place entrances taken at different hours of the day and night demonstrating how the day and night time recognition levels of the entrance signs changed the identity of the establishments were chosen as tools for analysis.

Data collection for quantitative analysis was assessed by online survey. The web link of the survey was prepared on 'Google Forms program' and sent to colleagues and friends in The USA, Cyprus and Türkiye. To reach more respondents around the world; the survey web link was also shared through surveycircle.com, whatsapp.com and facebook.com. The respondents were informed that the data collected during the study was going to be used for academic research purposes only and may be presented at national/ international academic meetings and/or publications.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

The framework of the study for qualitative analysis was based on sociable place entrances. The selected cases were interpreted according to the semiotics method in the qualitative analysis part of the study; in terms of applied signs on entrances as signifiers and signified through different perceptions (Figure 1)

Online survey was used in the quantitative part of the study because it is a more effective way to reach out to the respondents, less expensive and less time

consuming than the traditional way of gathering information through one-to-one interaction.

The questions were centered on the signs of entrances. Respondents were asked to write/choose the factors that would be most likely to attract them for a visit to a club, pub or bar. The survey included three sections. The first section included consent. Information about the survey questions was given to the respondents and were informed that; by marking the approval check box, they would agree with their own will for their answers to be used in this scientific study as ethical consent. Participation was voluntary and the respondents were informed that the collected data would be confidential. Participants were informed that the data collected through the study was going to be used to understand peoples' perception and opinions regarding recognitive signs. The second section had 13 questions including 6 questions framed suitably in multiple-choice patterns about the selected cases. 7/13 of the questions included open ended answer options along with the multiple-choice answers. In order to minimize the risk of misinterpretation; pictures of some entrances were included in the questionnaire. Demographic details such as age, education level and frequency of visiting social places were asked in the third section of the questionnaire. Respondents were also asked to write/choose the factors that would be most likely to attract them for a visit to sociable places.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

All written documents of the research was stored in a database and will be kept for 2 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be deleted from all of our databases.

The collected quantitative data was subjected to statistical analysis by an expert in the field. 'R Core Team 2020' was used in the statistical analysis (R: A language and environment for statistical computing, R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL: <https://www.R-project.org/>). Pearson Chi-Square and Pearson Exact Chi-Square analyzes were used in the analysis of the created cross tables. Categorical data was given as a percentage (%). A value of  $p < 0.05$  was accepted as a criterion for statistical significance.



## CHAPTER IV

### Findings and Discussion

Chapter IV contains the Findings and Discussion including findings obtained through documentation, direct observation supported with online questionnaire. Sociable place entrances were examined in terms of sign systems including signifier and signified and icon, index and symbols furthermore findings for interpretation of entrance visuals and analysis according to research questions are reviewed. This chapter also contains the statistical analyses of the online questionnaire.

#### Qualitative Semiotic Analysis Findings

The analysis of sign locations in establishments has revealed interesting patterns. Many establishments have signs positioned in the middle or off-center above the entrance, or next to the entrance on the facade. This placement is strategic and visually prominent, attracting the attention of passersby and clearly indicating the function of the place. However, it is worth noting that there are exceptions to this trend. In one extreme case, an establishment did not have any written text signs denoting its function during the daytime (Figure 2). This absence of textual signage leaves customers without any explicit clues about the nature or purpose of the place.

The decision to forgo traditional written text signs may be a deliberate choice aimed at creating a sense of mystery, curiosity, or exclusivity. By relying on other visual elements, such as distinctive logos, unique architectural features, or unconventional design choices, the establishment may aim to capture attention and generate intrigue among potential customers. This unconventional approach to signage can spark interest and curiosity, prompting individuals to explore the establishment further to uncover its identity and offerings. However, it also presents a challenge in terms of effectively communicating the function of the place to potential customers who may not be familiar with its branding or reputation. In such cases, the establishment relies heavily on its visual appeal, exterior design, and overall ambiance to attract customers and convey a sense of the atmosphere or experience offered within. The use of compelling visual cues, unique architectural elements, or striking artistic displays may serve as alternative ways to capture the attention and interest of passersby, inviting them to step inside and discover the

establishment's offerings. This unconventional approach to signage highlights the role of visual communication and non-verbal cues in creating an intriguing and memorable first impression. It demonstrates that effective signage goes beyond traditional textual elements and encompasses a broader range of visual strategies to engage customers and convey the essence of a place.

While many establishments follow the common practice of positioning signs in the middle or off-center above the entrance, there are exceptions that choose to forgo traditional text signage. These establishments rely on visual elements and alternative forms of communication to create intrigue and curiosity among potential customers. The absence of explicit textual clues may prompt individuals to explore further, relying on visual appeal and overall ambiance to understand the function and experience offered by the place.

## Figure 2

*Day time view of 1015 Folsom nightclub, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2021)

This place has a pale gray exterior look with no visible signs on its walls, expressing itself totally different about its function in daytime. Volumetrically, from street view expression, this place also does not denote enough that it is offering a large airy space in the interiors. On the contrary at night-time a cat logo wearing nightclub sunglasses is used as an icon to attract people to the place. At working

hours; Figure 3 shows highly usage of lighting; clarifying the event name and logo making it appealing to customer's eyes. Figure 3 depicts the text and logo lit on the facade which can be clearly seen to make one stop and want to get in. APPBASH text is a symbol referring to an event that invites a charming experience. Waiting line is lit via rope lights from above and rope border usage clearly makes it well defined, referring as a sign, where to stop and wait and where to pass by from the sidewalk.

From night time street view analysis, the reservation desk and security waiting in front of the line (Figure 3) at the entrance clearly makes one connote that it is a well-defined and expensive entertainment place. With that right denotation of the place at night, the people who are looking for an inexpensive place will immediately pass by.

### Figure 3

*Night time view of 1015 Folsom Dance Club, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2021)

In some establishments, the display of their names is carefully considered and designed to make a strong visual impact. One common approach is to use uppercase letters in a sans serif typeface, which can convey a sense of modernity, simplicity, and boldness. These letterforms are often prominently positioned near the entrance walls or on the facade of the establishment, ensuring high visibility and legibility. In the example provided (Figure 4), the name of the place is written with bold and large silver-colored uppercase letters that are adhered to the building. This creates a

striking contrast against the black facade, drawing attention to the name and making it visually prominent. The choice of silver color adds a touch of sophistication and elegance to the overall design.

**Figure 4**

*Cheetah Club, Kyrenia, Cyprus*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2022)

Backlit large uppercase letters create a three-dimensional illusion at night. The use of uppercase letters in a sans serif typeface, along with the bold and large size, adds a sense of strength, professionalism, and modernity to the establishment's identity. It conveys a confident and authoritative presence, inviting potential customers to take notice and consider entering the establishment.

The placement of the name on the building's facade ensures that it is easily visible from a distance, attracting the attention of passersby and reinforcing the establishment's branding. By employing such visually impactful signage, the establishment aims to leave a lasting impression on customers and create a memorable visual identity.

The deliberate contrast between the silver letters and the black facade creates a strong visual statement. The high contrast enhances legibility and ensures that the name stands out, even from a distance or in low-light conditions. This design choice emphasizes the importance of clear and bold visual communication, enabling customers to quickly and easily identify the establishment and its name.

In summary, the use of uppercase letters in a sans serif typeface, along with bold and large size, is a common approach to make an impactful visual display of an establishment's name. The example provided showcases the use of silver-colored letters adhered to a black facade, creating a striking contrast and drawing attention. This design strategy aims to create a strong visual identity and leave a lasting impression on potential customers.

The brand name of the place was also written near the entrance wall with a smaller sized text under the glossy look of a cheetah head which is used as an icon (Figure 5). The silver-colored phrase 'more than you know' written on a black background, takes one's attention, denoting this place might have surprising potentials (Figure 5).

### Figure 5

*Cheetah Club entrance, Kyrenia, Cyprus*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2022)



**Figure 6***Cheetah Club, Kyrenia, Cyprus*

(Source: N. Ulusoy-2022)

Usage of expensive materials at the entrance facade and silver lettering pops up from the polished black entrance wall panels grab attention (Figure 4). The design elements and figures used on the entrance facade can play a significant role in conveying the intended message and creating a specific atmosphere for an establishment. In the example provided (Figure 4, 5, 6), the contrasting colors, figures, and compositions contribute to the overall perception and interpretation of the place. The connotation driven from the seductive vivid pink cheetah icons and the text 'More than you know' make one think that this place could be a striptease club. Wrong perceptive signs may reduce the number of customers who just want to socialize and dance with their friends. The dominance of blacks and silvers in the solid entrance, in contrast to the translucent facade on the second floor, creates a strong visual impact. These colors convey an elegant and sophisticated ambiance, setting the tone for the interior atmosphere of the establishment. The solid entrance design suggests a sense of exclusivity and a focus on quality and refinement.

The presence of a vivid pink-colored male cheetah standing at the balcony and holding two bottles serves as a clear icon, explicitly expressing that the place offers drinks and entertainment. This figure stands out against the dark building facade, capturing attention and effectively conveying the establishment's identity and

offerings. The panther figure creates a strong visual focal point and acts as a visual cue for potential customers.

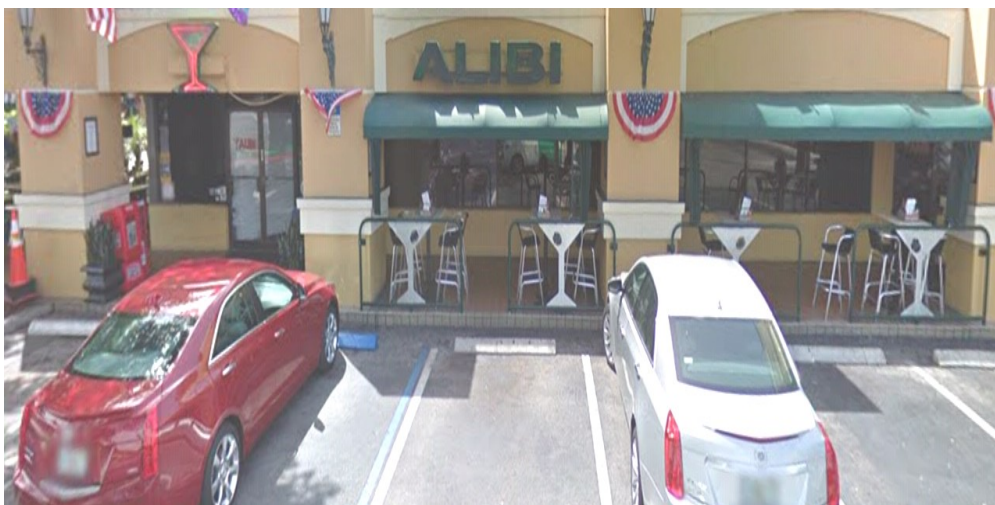
However, it is important to consider the perspective from different viewpoints. From the road entrance, a female pink panther lying down on a branch (Figure 6) and another pink female panther climbing on a tree (Figure 5) may give the wrong impression about the place's identity. These figures, in isolation, might suggest a different theme or atmosphere that may not align with the actual offerings of the establishment.

This connotation by means of cheetahs highlights the importance of carefully considering the overall design and composition of signage and visual elements. It is crucial to ensure that the chosen figures, colors, and compositions accurately represent the intended identity and concept of the place. This helps to avoid confusion or misinterpretation among potential customers and ensures that the visual cues align with the desired perception and experience.

The design elements and figures used on the entrance facade play a vital role in expressing the identity and atmosphere of an establishment. The contrasting colors, figures, and compositions in the example provided create a visually striking and memorable impression. However, it is important to ensure that the chosen elements accurately convey the intended message and align with the overall concept to avoid any misinterpretation or confusion among potential customers.

### **Figure 7**

*Alibi night club, Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



(Source: Tripadvisor-2022)

**Figure 8**

*Night time view of Alibi Club, Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



(Source:Outclique-2022)

The shape of the patio sitting area table borders resembling a martini glass (Figure 7), serves as an index that connotes the serving of alcoholic drinks in this place. This design choice effectively communicates the establishment's focus on offering a variety of beverages, particularly alcoholic options. The martini glass shape acts as a visual cue, instantly conveying the type of drinks that customers can expect to find within the establishment.

The usage of window darkening screen films is an interesting design feature that connotes a specific atmosphere and experience for customers. By darkening the windows, the establishment creates the perception that even during the daytime, customers will step into a space with a night-time ambiance. This design choice sets a particular mood and adds an element of mystery and intrigue, enticing customers to enter and discover the interior environment.

The effect of neon lighting on the facades at night adds a cheerful and vibrant atmosphere to the place (Figure 8). Neon lighting is often associated with nightlife and entertainment, and its presence suggests that the establishment offers a lively and dynamic experience. The use of colorful neon lights can enhance the visual appeal of the facade, creating an inviting and exciting atmosphere for potential customers. The neon lighting not only contributes to the aesthetic aspect but also serves as a denotation of the colors of the dance stage inside. It visually connects the exterior



with the interior, creating a cohesive visual language and reinforcing the overall concept of the establishment.

Overall, the shape of the patio sitting area table borders, the usage of window darkening screen films, and the effect of neon lighting on the facades all play a role in connoting the type of experience and atmosphere that customers can expect within the establishment. These visual cues and design elements help to create a distinct identity and attract customers who are seeking a specific ambiance and offerings related to alcoholic drinks, nightlife, and entertainment.

### **Figure 9**

*2100 Club, Hangzhou, China*



(Source: Pinterest-2022)

The usage of expensive materials at the entrance facade, along with gold lettering popping up from the polished black entrance wall panels, creates a visually striking and luxurious impression (Figure 9). The choice of materials and the incorporation of gold lettering at the entrance convey a sense of elegance, sophistication, and high quality. This design approach aims to grab one's attention and create a sense of prestige and exclusivity.

The character of the numbers and letters used in the signage also contributes to the connotation of institutional dignity. The design of the lettering, whether it's a specific typeface or a customized typography, can evoke a sense of formality, professionalism, and importance. The use of gold lettering against the black

background enhances the contrast and visibility, further emphasizing the significance of the signage and the establishment.

The position of the sign over the door plays an important role in connoting entering. Placing the sign directly above the entrance door guides people's attention and reinforces the idea of crossing the threshold into the establishment. This positioning creates a visual cue that signals the beginning of the customer's experience and invites them to enter the space.

The combination of expensive materials, gold lettering, and the strategic placement of the sign over the door contributes to the overall connotation of the establishment. It aims to create an impression of elegance, dignity, and exclusivity, while also signaling to potential customers that they are about to enter a space that offers a distinct and high-quality experience.

### **Figure 10**

*2100 Club, Hangzhou, China*



(Source: archello.com-2022)

The chic entrance of the Japanese club, with its fancy folding large windows and the display of drinks on fancy shelves, connotes a sophisticated and stylish atmosphere (Figure 10). This design choice suggests that the establishment has a certain level of exclusivity and elegance, indicating that a dressy dress code may be required to enter. The visual presentation of the drinks through the large windows serves as a visual cue, enticing potential customers and creating a sense of anticipation for what awaits inside.

The text sign written in gold lettering on a black shiny background near the entrance door of the 2100 Club carries a specific message and concept (Figure 10). The use of gold lettering against the black background further enhances the sense of luxury and sophistication. The text itself, which expresses the idea of 'to own, to think, and to live until 2100,' contributes to the establishment's branding and identity. It conveys a sense of forward-thinking, intellectualism, and perhaps even a long-term vision or philosophy.

The interrelation between the text sign and the interior space design concept is crucial for maintaining a cohesive and consistent experience for customers. When the text sign aligns well with the overall concept and atmosphere of the interior space, it creates a harmonious and unified impression. This consistency helps to reinforce the establishment's branding, communicate its values or philosophy, and attract customers who resonate with the intellectual level and concept being presented.

The chic entrance design with fancy folding windows and the display of drinks, along with the text sign written in gold lettering near the entrance, collectively convey a sense of sophistication, exclusivity, and intellectualism. These design choices create a visually captivating and conceptually aligned entrance that sets the tone for the interior experience and attracts customers who appreciate the refined ambiance and intellectual atmosphere of the club.

The protruding 'black closed boxy' entrance volume, with its silver-colored door, creates a distinctive visual element that stands out from the translucent facade of the bar (Figure 11). This design choice not only serves as a welcoming entrance but also conveys the concept of combining and contrasting old and new, past and present. The contrasting colors and materials between the entrance volume and the translucent facade create a dynamic visual effect, capturing attention and inviting exploration.

The connection between the interiors and exterior is emphasized through the design of the entrance. By protruding from the facade and incorporating a door, the entrance physically bridges the gap between the indoor and outdoor spaces. This connection allows for a seamless transition and interaction between the two areas. Guests can easily move between the interior and the outdoor bar area, creating a sense of continuity and fluidity in the overall experience.

The presence of an outdoor bar area, which is open to every guest, further reinforces the connection between the interior and exterior (Figure 11). This design feature provides an additional space for socializing, enjoying drinks, and taking in the surrounding environment. The extended bar counter that links the interior to the exterior creates a focal point and serves as a gathering area, enhancing the social dynamics and creating opportunities for interaction between guests.

The design of the protruding entrance volume, the silver-colored door, and the connection between the interiors and exterior contribute to the overall experience and concept of the bar. These design elements create an inviting and dynamic entrance that not only welcomes guests but also conveys the idea of blending old and new, and encourages interaction between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

### Figure 11

*CatWalk Barcelona, Spain Spain*



(Source: YouBarcelona-2019)



**Figure 12***Catwalk Barcelona, Spain*

(Source: Miguel Sa-2019)

The selection of backlit text symbols for the nightclub sign at Catwalk Barcelona indicates a preference for a visually striking and contemporary aesthetic (Figure 11). The use of text symbols, specifically the uppercase letters spelling out 'CATWALK,' conveys a sense of boldness and visual impact. The backlit feature enhances the visibility of the sign, making it easily noticeable and drawing attention from passersby.

The presence of heart and star symbols on the facade serves as symbol signs, representing the types of experiences and atmosphere that can be expected inside the nightclub (Figure 12). These symbols function as visual cues, suggesting a sense of excitement, fun, and entertainment. The use of indexical signs helps to create an immediate association between the symbols and the desired emotional response from potential customers.

The neon-colored pink, blue, and yellow wall washing signs on the facade create a vibrant and attention-grabbing effect, especially against the dark backdrop of the night (Figure 12). These signs act as visual stimuli, capturing the viewer's attention and conveying a sense of energy and excitement. The contrast between the neon colors and the surrounding environment helps the signs to stand out and attract

attention from the street view, effectively drawing potential customers towards the nightclub.

The lit portion of the sidewalk leading to the entrance serves as a clear indicator for the waiting line, directing guests towards the entrance (Figure 12). This design feature helps to manage the flow of people and ensures an organized entry process. The presence of a crowded waiting line can be seen as a social sign, indicating that the nightclub is a popular and desirable place to be, adding to its appeal and drawing in more people. The selection of backlit text symbols, the use of heart and star symbols, the neon-colored wall washing signs, and the clear delineation of the waiting line all contribute to the visual communication and attraction of Catwalk Barcelona nightclub. These design choices create a visually captivating and socially appealing entrance, inviting people to experience the various music styles and sensational parties offered within its two different zones.

### Figure 13

*Envy Night Club, Albuquerque, New Mexico, The USA*



(Source:Flickr-2023)

The distinctive texture of the exterior of the night club facade, with its color-changing LED lighting that switches between gold and purples, creates a visually captivating effect that grabs the attention of guests (Figure 13). The use of color-changing LED lighting adds a dynamic element to the facade, creating a sense of excitement and allure. The changing colors attract the eye and draw people's

attention as they walk around the sociable place, enhancing the overall visual experience. The backlit white contoured thick black 'ENVY' text sign further reinforces the visual impact and draws attention to the services offered inside the nightclub (Figure 13). The choice of a large, bold font and the contrasting colors of white and black create a high contrast, making the sign highly visible and easy to read. The backlighting adds an extra layer of emphasis, making the sign stand out even more against the backdrop. The word 'ENVY' itself carries connotations of desire, luxury, and exclusivity, which may align with the atmosphere and offerings of the nightclub. The use of such a prominent and visually striking sign helps to communicate the club's branding and concept to potential customers, enticing them to enter and experience the environment inside.

The combination of the distinctive texture of the exterior facade with color-changing LED lighting and the attention-grabbing backlit 'ENVY' text sign creates a visually captivating entrance for the nightclub. These design elements work together to draw guests' attention, communicate the nature of the establishment, and create a sense of allure and excitement.

#### **Figure 14**

*Envy Night Club, Albuquerque, New Mexico, The USA*



(Source: Flickr-2023)

The well-managed organization of the giant curvilinear suspended radial lighting soffit creates a visually captivating and immersive experience within the dance stage area (Figure 14). The radial arrangement of the lighting fixtures

establishes a dynamic visual connection between the floor and ceiling, enhancing the overall sense of volume and space. The dynamic color-changing LED lighting fixtures controlled by the DJ booth, and the neon blue backlit stairway all contribute to the overall visual experience and ambiance of the nightclub. These design elements create a visually captivating and immersive environment where guests can enjoy the music, dance, and socialize in a dynamic and engaging atmosphere.

The use of color-changing LED lighting fixtures, controlled by the DJ booth, adds an element of versatility and dynamism to the lighting design (Figure 14). With various changing pattern animations, the LED lighting fixtures can create a range of visual effects, syncing with the music and enhancing the overall energy and excitement of the dance floor. The synchronized lighting animations add a dynamic element to the space, creating a visually stimulating experience for the guests. The neon blue colored backlit stairway leading to the second floor serves both a functional and aesthetic purpose (Figure 14). The use of neon lighting in a vibrant blue hue not only illuminates the stairway for safety and visibility but also adds a visual accent and creates a sense of anticipation as guests ascend to the next level of the establishment. The neon blue color provides a striking contrast against the surrounding environment, drawing attention to the stairway and inviting guests to explore the second floor.

### **Figure 15**

*The Midnight Sun, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source: [www.midnightsunsf.com](http://www.midnightsunsf.com)-2017)



The Midnight Sun, located in San Francisco, is a vibrant club that catches the attention of passersby with its welcoming and eye-catching design (Figure 15). The vivid red protrusion, which pops up from a shiny metal wall panel facade above the sidewalk, immediately draws the attention of pedestrians and piques their curiosity about what lies inside. This architectural feature serves as a visual cue, enticing people to stop and take a closer look.

In addition to the entrance sign, Midnight Sun utilizes a side sign placed on the sidewalk to further express what the establishment offers and to attract customers (Figure 15). This side sign acts as a symbol, providing pedestrians with information about the activities or menu available at the bar. It is crafted on a chalkboard using hand-written capital letters in different colors, adding a personal and artistic touch to the communication. By incorporating a chalkboard sign with colorful hand-written lettering, The Midnight Sun adds a playful and approachable element to its exterior design. This form of signage not only conveys information about the bar's offerings but also creates a sense of authenticity and a connection with the local community. The dynamic and visually appealing presentation of the side sign invites pedestrians to engage with the bar and discover what experiences await them inside.

The combination of the vibrant red protrusion and the creative use of the side sign effectively captures the attention of people passing by, encouraging them to explore Midnight Sun and enjoy its video bar atmosphere.

### **Figure 16**

*The Midnight Sun, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source: [www.midnightsunssf.com](http://www.midnightsunssf.com)-2017)

The exaggerated protruding exterior signs surrounding the club create a visual connection with the interior design elements, specifically the backlit panels on the walls (Figure 16). This design choice creates a cohesive and visually appealing aesthetic throughout the venue. The large size of the exterior signs is proportionate to the interior large size screens, establishing a sense of balance and harmony in the overall design. By mirroring the design elements both on the exterior and interior, the club creates a sense of continuity and unity. The backlit panels on the walls serve as eye-catching features that enhance the overall atmosphere of the space. Their integration with the exterior signs reinforces the club's branding and creates a cohesive visual experience for visitors. The matching sizes of the sign items and interior screens create a sense of coherence and provide a seamless transition from the exterior to the interior. This intentional design choice not only attracts attention from the outside but also enhances the immersive experience once inside the club. The interrelation between the exaggerated exterior signs and the backlit interior panels showcases the attention to detail and thoughtful design approach of the club. This design consistency creates a visually engaging and memorable experience for guests, making the club stand out and leaving a lasting impression.

**Figure 17**

*Village Pub, Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



**ICON:**

1. Olive on a wood stick

**INDEX:**

1. Martini glass shaped 'V' Letter connoting alcoholic drinks.

**SYMBOL:**

1. The name: Village pub
2. Rainbow flag expressing it is an LGBT friendly place.
3. Earthy colors on the stone wall expressing village ambiance.
4. Large texts about open hours, age limit, parking rules.

(Source: N. Ulusoy-2017)

The glass doors of the Village Pub feature informative signs that use text symbols to convey important information to potential customers (Figure 17). The use of thin and large fonts in uppercase letters ensures that the signs are easily visible from a distance, allowing passersby to quickly gather information about the establishment's open days and hours, age limit, and parking rules. The iconic sign of an olive on a wood stick serves as a recognizable symbol for a martini glass (Figure 17), effectively denoting that the Village Pub is a place where patrons can enjoy martini cocktails

The presence of a rainbow flag as a symbol near the door handle conveys an important message: the Village Pub is an LGBTQ+ friendly establishment (Figure 17). This learned sign represents inclusivity and welcomes individuals from the LGBTQ+ community to enjoy their time at the pub.

The contradictory name of the place, Village Pub, in the modern streets of Fort Lauderdale can be seen as a symbolic choice (Figure 17). By using the term "village" in the name, the pub connotes a sense of a close-knit and community-oriented atmosphere, evoking a rural ambiance within an urban setting. These carefully selected signs and symbols not only inform potential customers but also contribute to the overall branding and atmosphere of the Village Pub. They create a visually engaging and inviting entrance, attracting individuals who resonate with the concept and values represented by these signs.

### **Figure 18**

*The North Shield Pub, Istanbul, Türkiye*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2022)

Interior designers often utilize metaphors and imitation to create a specific atmosphere inside a place, using colors, light, and icons as signs to convey what is offered (Shojaee and Saremi, 2018). Colors play a significant role in attracting people to a particular establishment (Figure 18, 19). The name of the establishment is prominently displayed on a black background in the center of a brick wall, using golden lettering (Figure 18). Black background creating dominance on the English bonding facade pops up the glossy golden lettering as an emphasis raising attention. The text is written in a modern sans serif font with swirls and calligraphic design elements, ensuring that it can be easily seen from a distance. This design choice adds a touch of elegance and sophistication to the entrance. In contrast, the name of the place is written in thin fonts and gold color on a vivid red background of the canopies, standing out against the gray facade (Figure 19). Although the name may not be easily readable from a distance, the text informing people about the menu is placed on a black background above the canopy, ensuring its visibility. North Shield logo, positioned above the entrance door, serves as an iconic sign (Figure 19). The logo takes the form of a shield, divided into four portions, with two in green and two in red. The name of the place is written in black color and thin fonts on a narrow strip with a yellow background, placed on top of the logo. The visual elements, including colors, fonts, and icons, contribute to the overall aesthetic and branding of the establishment. They serve as signs that communicate the concept and ambiance of the place, attracting customers and creating a memorable visual experience.

### Figure 19

*The North Shield Pub, Istanbul, Türkiye*



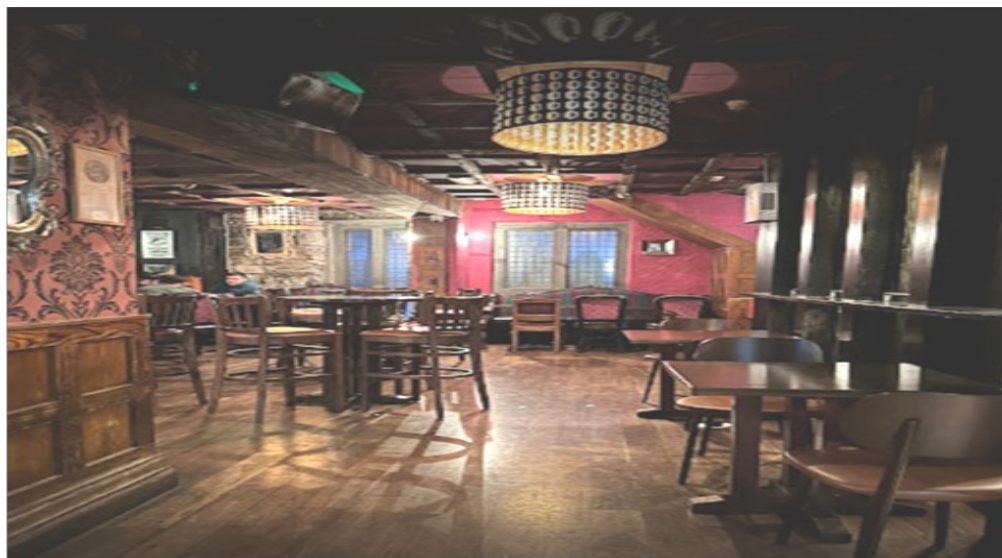
(Source: N. Ulusoy-2022)



**Figure 20***Kings Head Pub in Galway, Ireland*

(Source: Beate-unterwegs.de-2022)

The use of the color red on the bay window of the establishment in Figure 20 serves as a stopping symbol, demanding attention and conveying a passionate and energetic feeling (Scott-Kemmis, 2020; Stout, 2019). The color red is known to have psychological effects, evoking emotions such as excitement, stimulation, and urgency. In this context, the red bay window acts as a visual cue that draws people's attention and invites them to stop and explore what the establishment has to offer.

**Figure 21***Kings Head Pub in Galway, Ireland*

(Source:Chris Reece-2022)

The bright protrusion painted in vivid red, pops up as a volumetric sign. It drives one's attention from a stone wall, giving rustic ambiance offered inside (Figures 20, 21). Symmetrical usage of signs can be highly seen at this entrance facade design organization as in the medieval times. The large gold 'The King's head' name of the place is a text symbol. Gold evokes a prestigious connotation which symbolizes high quality. The king's head figure, as an icon located on top of a baywindow, also strengthens the royal identity. Looking deeply at the king's head icon and its sign board shape; usage of serpentine form is also a sign expressing medieval feeling, bringing customers to the 16th century.

Colors of flags, located symmetrically on both sides of the bay window as symbols, express Irish identity. Flags were located on the poles on both sides of the bay window referring to mediavel castles' flag signs. For a well-managed public place entrance; it is crucial to define the borders of its exterior seating areas clearly from the sidewalk pavement. To obtain this division, in this case, signs have been used in the form of metal border fencing. Hence the owner of the pub may obtain its customer's well-being while staying at the exterior seating. It gives rise to their safety and comfort while spending time there. By organizing signs and defining borders of their place well; the establishment owners make their customers come and gather at their place regularly. Additional sign boards have been located on the sidewalk; literally adding up a drink menu, can be also a way to express what the place offers to grab the customers' attention.

## Figure 22

*Red Lion Pub, Lincoln Park, Chicago, The USA*



(Source: [cdn.usarestaurants.info](http://cdn.usarestaurants.info)-2023)

**Figure 23**

*Front view of Red Lion Pub, Lincoln Park, Chicago, The USA*



(Source: zmtcdn.com-2023)

The use of twenty-four karat gold leaf on the durable plastic letters of the pub's signage (Figure 22) adds a touch of classic elegance and richness to its identity. The raised gold letters, mounted on a black background, create a visually striking contrast that captures attention and conveys a sense of sophistication. Triangular British flags under the place name adds up British expression to the place.

In Figures 22,23; the column-like graphical representations with vertical gold-colored stripes near the front door of the establishment evoke the imagery of ancient Roman columns, reminiscent of the grandeur and architectural beauty of structures like the Pantheon. Palladian window form (Figure 23) as a symbol on the facade; brings up the Renaissance identity. This window form is still being used in Europe and the United States. This design element adds to the overall welcoming appearance of the entrance and contributes to the establishment's unique character. White stone lion head icon above the Palladian window is placed on English bonding brick facade. Both the gold leaf letters and the column-like graphical representations



on both sides of the entrance serve as symbols, representing the establishment's identity and evoking a sense of history and glamour.

### Figure 24

*Six Pence Pub, Savannah, GA, The USA*



(Source: tripadvisor.com-2022)

The typical British features that pop up from the dark green background on the entrance create a sense of familiarity and nostalgia, evoking the atmosphere of traditional English pubs. These features include elements such as ornate woodwork, vintage signage, and iconic sign of telephone boot associated with British culture (Figure 24). The dark green background provides a complementary backdrop for these features, allowing them to stand out and catch the attention of passersby. The combination of the traditional English elements and the inviting green background creates a welcoming and enticing atmosphere, encouraging people to enter the establishment and enjoy a drink with their friends. The gold colored 'The Six Pence Pub' text on the dark green background over the entrance door



**Figure 25***Brazen Head Pub, Dublin, Ireland*

(Source: <https://brazenhead.com/gallery/>-2023)

**Figure 26***Brazen Head Pub, Dublin, Ireland*

(Source: Jacub Szoska-2023)

The Brazen Head Pub in Dublin holds the distinction of being one of the oldest pubs in the city, with a history dating back to 1653. Its long-standing presence in the community has made it a popular destination for locals and visitors alike (Figure 25). Earthy brick tones of the facade expresses a cozy pub ambiance. Wine barrels in front of the place; are iconic signs expressing this is a socializing place to

drink (Figure 25). Near the entrance door; there is a brazen plate on the brick wall with a head relief design on it as another icon (Figure 25). Contrasting black backgrounded gold text sign letterings on brick facade are clearly visible symbols. The sign board explains the history and function of this place.

The Brazen Head Pub has become renowned for its historical significance and traditional Irish ambiance. The pub's rich history is often reflected in its interior design, featuring elements such as exposed brick walls, wooden beams, and cozy fireplaces, which evoke a sense of nostalgia and authenticity (Figure 26).

Over the years, the Brazen Head Pub has served as a gathering place for people to enjoy a pint of Guinness, savor traditional Irish cuisine, and immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere of Dublin's pub culture.

The pub has hosted live music performances, storytelling sessions, and other events that celebrate Irish heritage and entertainment. Visiting the Brazen Head Pub is not just about enjoying a drink; it is also an opportunity to experience a piece of Dublin's history and be part of a longstanding tradition that has been cherished for centuries.

### **Figure 27**

*The Cockpit Pub, London, England*



(Source: Flickr-2022)



**Figure 28**

*The Cockpit Pub, London, England*



(Source: David Newman-2022)

**Figure 29**

*The Cockpit Pub, London, England*



(Source: Mark Duff-2022)

**Figure 30***The Cockpit Pub, London, England*

(Source: Wade Brice-2022)

Until 1835, it was a popular trend in England to witness cockfights, where male chickens would fight until one died, while spectators placed substantial bets on the outcome. However, this practice was eventually made illegal. Overall black painted place brings a dominance in contrast with the adjacent buildings; takes attention of pedestrians at the first glance (Figure 27,28). Adding up golden letters as symbols and golden moldings on this black background raises the visibility of the place. The cock relief as an icon; on a red plate is located on the facade of the place. Two fighting birds figures on a hinged plate on brick facade is an index sign reminding the historical function of this place about cockfighting. Golden colored 'Fine Wines' text sign symbol expresses the function of this place. The peculiar layout of the pub, with most seats arranged in a semi-circle facing the bar (Figure 29), might be influenced by its previous role as a cockpit. Surprisingly, this arrangement manages to work well. The establishment features a traditional design, characterized by red carpets and wooden panels, complemented by abundant windows (figure 30) and glass doors that create an inviting and airy ambiance. The

Cockpit has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The pub proudly displays its history of cockfighting, evident through the presence of cockerel picture icons and models adorning its interior.

The deliberate use of icons and indexes in signage can be an effective way for establishments to communicate their message and capture the attention of potential customers. The owners of the establishment chose to use a wine glass sectional shape instead of the letter 'U' in the text, creating an unusual and amusing visual representation that directly references the offering of wine. This shape acts as an index, providing a clear and recognizable association with the concept of a wine glass (Figure 31).

### Figure 31

*Rumors Bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2017)

In addition to the iconography, the choice of typography also plays a role in conveying the desired message. The use of uppercase letters in informing people about the establishment's offerings can enhance recognition and make the functions more easily identifiable. In the case of the sports bar named "Rumors," the name is written on a variable baseline in a sans serif font with uppercase letters, which adds a sense of boldness and impact to the signage. The texts "Video Bar" and "Bar and



Grill" are written in different styles, with the former using thick and large old-style sans serif fonts, and the latter using smaller and thinner fonts (Figure31). These typographic choices contribute to the overall visual aesthetic and help convey the specific character and atmosphere of each offering.

By combining icons, indexes, and thoughtful typographic choices, establishments can create visually engaging and informative signage that effectively communicates their message and attracts customers.

### Figure 32

*Scandals Bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2017)

While bringing a contradictory architectural style to an entertainment place in a city with modern architecture; adding country western features that connote rural identity to the place is a head turner tactic as a sign to attract customers in an urban environment. In interior design, the shape of entrance doors express the functional interrelation between interior and exterior spaces. The Old West swinging saloon doors at the upper floor are the visible indexes located just above the entrance. Furthermore; cowboy silhouettes on the windows of ground and upper floors are indexes. In the ground floor; on the right and left side of the entrance there are some

silhouettes which are in contrast with the black filmed window (Figure 32). On the right side of the entrance; a horseback riding cowboy silhouette is a visible index sign. On the left side of the entrance; a cactus, a cattle car wheel and a group of cowboy silhouettes sitting on a fence under a text sign as a symbol. These wild western features around the entrance give a well managed country place expression. ‘The place to make friends’ written with all uppercase letters are all eye-catching signs. This text sign literally expresses that this place is for socializing. Symmetrically located cattle car wheels (Figure 32) and two horse sculptures as icons (Figure 33) welcome customers through the colonial style veranda to the entrance door. These country western traces that develop rural and colonial style appearance are clearly some signs as symbols, indexes and icons that the establishment owners selected (Figures 35, 36).

### Figure 33

*Scandals Bar Fort Lauderdale, The USA*



(Source: N. Ulusoy-2017)

Silhouettes of three men wearing cowboy hats are icons placed on the logo of the establishment. ‘Scandals’ text symbol is popping up on the entryway on a lit sign board. It is written in country western font on a white signboard background (Figure 32, 33), clearly making it recognizable about the place's identity to the ones who are interested in this concept. All these signs express well about country rural life ambiance for customers to experience in modern city, Fort Lauderdale. These signs

apparently are useful both for the ones who want to experience a place offering country music and for the establishment management attracting these customers.

### Figure 34

*Shinagawa Highball Bar, Tokyo, Japan*



(Source: retaildesignblog.net-2022)

Shinagawa Highball Bar, is an expensive bar Tokyo, Japan. On a dull and plain street, this giant cove like hole on the wall, grabs attention first and makes one want to get through the entrance into the exposed bar. A wooden wall covers the facade. Circular entrance opening on the enclosed facade of the establishment with focalizing transparency raises customers' scopophilia (Figure 34).

The chic circular entrance as a symbol of this Whiskey-Centric Japanese bar also resembles interior section of a barrel as an index that connects the interior door and the exterior. Instead of creating a theme bar; this design concept interprets its intellectual spirit. Name of the bar is backlit and written in white colored giant fonts popping up from the wooden entrance wall panel. The character of the white letters as symbolic signs, mounted on wood, connote institutional dignity (Figure 34). The position of the bar's name written in smaller fonts on a polished black frame on the round shaped entrance, connotes entering this place for the customers who can afford to pay for this expensive bar. There are also informative signs printed on paper with different colors. Two signs placed near the entrance, inform the pedestrians passing



by the street about the menu and the services. Another informing sign is mounted on the lower facade giving the address and telephone of the place. The logos located both on the left and right end border lines of the establishment have been chosen as icons. In the interior, the bulbs are exposed to give a modern as well as an industrial feeling. Also track lighting is used to highlight the area above the tables and bar (Figure 35).

**Figure 35**

*Shinagawa Highball Bar, Tokyo, Japan*



(Source: retaildesignblog.net-2022)

**Figure 36**

*Blush Wine Bar, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source: google map street view-2023)

**Figure 37**

*Blush Wine Bar, San Francisco, The USA*



(Source:google map street view-2023)

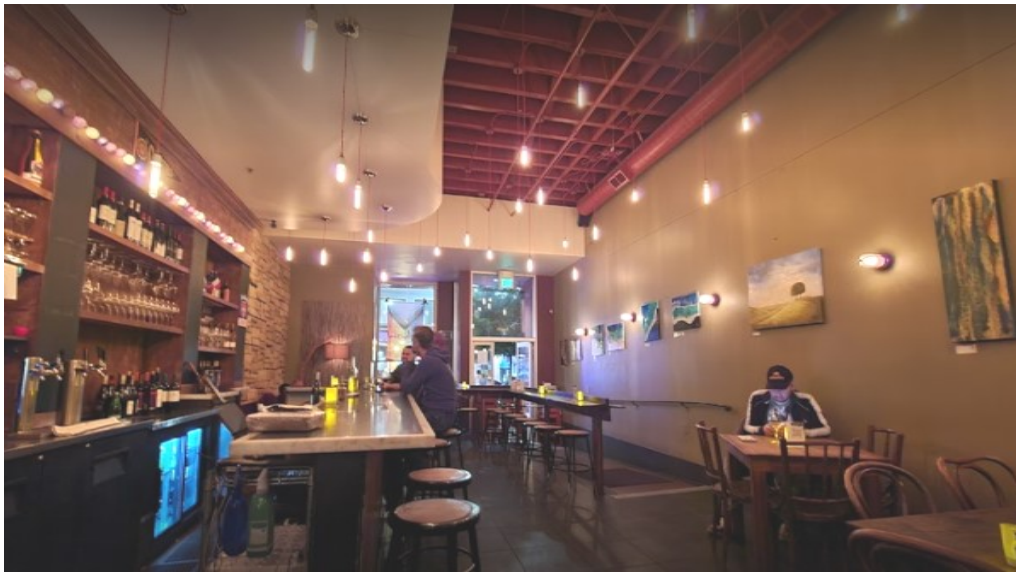
Initiating the idea of what zones (indoor and open air) the place offers by showing at entrance facade is a good way to invite people. Transparent balustrades right above the entrance expose that it offers an open air zone attached with red wine color 'Blush wine bar sign'. The additional wine color usage at the entrance walls strengthens the "Wine" concept (Figure 36). Wine bottle cork and cork opener logo on place name plate expresses the drinking function of the place.

In addition to the signage on the facade, providing a drink menu on the sidewalk can also be a creative way to express what the place offers and attract the attention of potential customers (Figure 37). This additional information on the sidewalk serves as an informative sign, giving people a glimpse of the drink options available inside and enticing them to enter.

By strategically incorporating visual elements such as transparent balustrades, color choices, and additional signage like drink menus, establishments can effectively communicate their offerings and create a welcoming atmosphere that entices passersby to explore what the place has to offer.

**Figure 38**

*Blush Wine Bar, San Francisco, USA*



(Source: Wes Harris-2023)

The strategic placement of windows allows people passing by to catch a glimpse of the pleasing and inviting atmosphere inside the establishment, as shown in Figure 37. This visual connection between the interior and the exterior creates a sense of curiosity and may entice potential customers to step inside.

The display of drinks on fancy shelves further enhances the inviting ambiance, as shown in Figure 38. This visual presentation showcases the variety of drinks available and invites people to indulge in a drink and enjoy the atmosphere of the place.

In addition to the overall atmosphere, the establishment offers live performances of jazz and Queer Comedy on specific days of every month. This adds an element of entertainment and gives customers the opportunity to enjoy unique and engaging experiences during their visit. These aspects, such as the inviting atmosphere, visually appealing displays, and live performances, contribute to creating a vibrant and engaging environment that attracts customers and offers them enjoyable experiences.



**Figure 39***Speakeasy bar, Shanghai, China*

(Source: awol.junkee.com-2022)

The secret bars have become a different trend adding mystery and letting customers experience a whole new concept; named as ‘‘hidden club or speakeasy bar’’. At the Prohibition era (1920–1933) in the United States history, it was illegal to consume and sell alcohol, so people were serving it behind closed doors in discreet locations, known as the ‘‘speakeasy bars’’. In these bars there are no visible signs denotating the function and giving clues to the customers about the place. Only a selected few were able to get in with a secret password or a special invitation. Speakeasies largely disappeared after the Prohibition era in 1933. But some hidden bars are adapted to modern times and live on in retro style. Nowadays, there is a secret bar in almost every big city where people can go and have a great time while enjoying a unique, exotic cocktail.

From the viewpoint of the owners; solving mysteries raise the customers’ curiosity and finding the signs denotating what is hidden behind the doors is an exciting experience. Being closed can be a sign. In this case; speakeasy bar is hidden in a sandwich shop, behind old coke machine, in Shanghai, China. Analyzing color and background relationship; a closed vivid red door of an old coke vending machine pops up as an iconic sign from the dull grey wall behind it (Figure 39). The red color is a symbol sign for customers to stop and think something can be hidden behind.

**Figure 40**

*Atomic Liquors, Las Vegas, The USA*



(Source: atomic.vegas-2022)

**Figure 41**

*Atomic Liquors, Las Vegas, The USA*



(Source: atomic.vegas-2022)

Atomic Liquors, established in 1952, quickly became a popular destination in Las Vegas due to its unique features and welcoming atmosphere. The establishment's vibrant neon sign displayed outside is another standout feature. Neon signs have long been associated with the energetic and lively ambiance of Las Vegas, and the



exaggerated size and design of the sign for Atomic Liquors (Figure 40) certainly catch the attention of passersby. This giant sign serves as a visual cue, attracting both local residents and visiting celebrities who are seeking a more relaxed and authentic drinking experience away from the bustling casino scene. Caricaturistic ‘explosion’ formed yellow plate as an iconic sign is attached to ‘liquor cocktails’ text symbol sign plate and grabs attention of pedestrians (figure 40).

One notable aspect is the spacious bar that encircles the interior (Figure 41), providing ample seating and a social atmosphere for patrons to enjoy their drinks and engage in conversations. By combining a spacious interior layout with a distinctive and eye-catching giant neon sign; Atomic Liquors successfully created an environment that appealed to a wide range of customers, from local regulars to high-profile visitors. Its reputation as a popular and iconic drinking spot in Las Vegas continues to this day.

### Figure 42

*Molly Malone's Irish bar, Helsinki, Finland*



(Source: molly-malone.com-2022)

**Figure 43**

*Molly Malone's Irish bar, Helsinki, Finland*



(Source: molly-malone.com-2022)

Molly Malone's Irish bar is recognized as one of Europe's finest Irish establishments. With its two levels and three bars (Kitty, Molly and June) is referred to by locals as "The Wild Girls". This venue offers live Irish music throughout the week.

Shapes and forms as symbols have an important role in architectural interpretation. Triangular pediment is a symbol from ancient Greek architecture. As a signifier, the triangle makes it recognitive for customers where to enter and 'Bar' text on the triangular pediment is a symbol showing the function of the place. The owner of this establishment wanted to preserve the idea of using a triangular pediment from Greek architecture as an architectural shape and form and imply it on this case (Figure 42, 43). The triangular pediment extending from the building wall in Molly Malone's bar also provides a shelter. Generally, the shelter motif has an effect on guests which allows preparation before the act of entering and may encourage the

feeling of being welcomed. Usage of the Molly Malone's name in quotations is an emphasis as a symbol at this case entrance. Analyzing the typography of the name indicates that it has a cozy and comfortable atmosphere inside. A woman's face figure on the entrance door is used as an icon.

Semiotically, color green activates motion, symbolizing harmony and freshness. Green has strong emotional correspondence with safety. Brightness level of this green on entrance facade, clearly drives one's attention (Figure 42).

Like in this case, some owners of smaller entertainment places; have the idea of 'quality not the quantity'. By organizing signs and defining borders of their place well; they make their customers loyal to the place who always want to come and gather at their place regularly. For a well-managed public place entrance; it is crucial to define the borders of its exterior seating areas clearly from the sidewalk pavement. To obtain this division, in this case, signs have been used in the form of metal border fencing. Hence the owner of the pub may obtain its customer's well-being while staying at the exterior seating (Figure 43). It gives rise to their safety and comfort while spending time there.

### **Quantitative Semiotic Analysis Findings.**

The results of the qualitative semiotic analysis helped us in preparing the survey questions. Information has been gathered from the qualitative analysis results and questions on color preferences, transparent or non-transparent entrances and size of the texts were asked to the survey respondents to find out the quantitative results.

The data obtained from 595 respondents were divided into subgroups by age; (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60 and above) and countries/regions (Türkiye, Cyprus, The USA, countries of Middle East and Far East and other countries mainly from Europe and Australia) are shown by Table 1 and Table 2



**Table 1***Age Groups of the Respondents According to the Countries (p<0.001)*

Age Group	TR (N=333)	Cypriot (N=117)	USA (N=90)	Other (N=21)	Middle East (N=15)	Far East (N=19)	True (N=595)
(20-29)	179 (54%)	44 (38%)	15 (17%)	6 (29%)	13 (87%)	2 (11%)	259 (44%)
(30-39)	34 (10%)	19 (16%)	15 (17%)	3 (14%)	2 (13%)	8 (42%)	81 (14%)
(40-49)	47 (14%)	28 (24%)	15 (17%)	3 (14%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	94 (16%)
(50-59)	15 (5%)	3 (3%)	15 (17%)	5 (24%)	0 (0%)	3 (16%)	41 (7%)
(Above60)	38 (11%)	11 (9%)	30 (33%)	4 (19%)	0 (0%)	5 (26%)	88 (15%)
(Under20)	20 (6%)	12 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	32 (5%)

**Table 2***The Education Level of the Survey Respondents from Different Countries*

EDUCATION LEVEL	TR (N=333)	Cypriot (N=117)	USA (N=90)	Other (N=21)	Middle East (N=15)	Far East (N=19)	TOTAL (N=595)
Elementary School	1 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	1 (0 %)
Middle School	1 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	1 (0 %)
High School	13 (4 %)	16 (14 %)	7 (8 %)	3 (14%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	39 (7 %)
College Degree	25 (8 %)	4 (3 %)	8 (9 %)	3 (14%)	6 (40%)	0 (0 %)	46 (8 %)
Bachelors Degree	190 (57 %)	53 (45 %)	33 (37 %)	4 (19%)	8 (53%)	12 (63 %)	300 (50 %)
Masters Degree/ MFA Degree	48 (14 %)	19 (16 %)	25 (28 %)	5 (24%)	1 (7 %)	7 (37 %)	105 (18 %)
PhD Degree	55 (17 %)	24 (21 %)	17 (19 %)	5 (24%)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	101 (17%)

**Other countries:** Great Britain, Canada, Cuba, Netherlands, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kenya, Libya, Ukraine, Australia, Austria

**Middle East Countries:** Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria

**Far East Countries:** India, Japan, Taiwan

The analysis of the respondents' answers to the research questions highlighted the role of entrance signs on the interpretation of people 55% of the respondents preferred bold and large fonts for text signs because bold and large size of the fonts make it noticeable among the other semiotic resources.

15% preferred bold and small lettering whereas 26% preferred thin and large lettering and only 4% of the respondents liked thin and small lettering. 39% preferred lit lettering. There was a significant difference among the respondents for gold lettering on a black background ( $p < 0.001$ ); and 78% think that gold lettering on a black background raises the visibility of lettering.

When the image without any signs, texts or logos was asked (Figure 2), respondents from different countries pointed out statistically significant answers about what this place could be ( $p < 0.001$ ). Most of the respondents thought that this place could be a depot (60%), some thought it could be a mechanics store (21%), a market (5%) and only 14 % thought that this place could be a dance club (Table 3). However, when the night picture of the same place (Figure 3) was asked; the usage of lighting clarifying the event name and logo lit on the facade (text symbol APPBASH and cat face logo as an icon) made it clear to 75% of the respondents that it is a dance club. This shows the power of signs in giving the right message about the function of the places.

**Table 3**

*Response to Survey Question ‘Considering the Entrance of This Place; What Do You Think This Place May Be?’*

	<b>Under 20</b> (N=32)	<b>20-29</b> (N=259)	<b>30-39</b> (N=81)	<b>40-49</b> (N=94)	<b>50-59</b> (N=41)	<b>Above 60</b> (N=88)	<b>TOTAL</b> (N=595)
<b>Depot</b>	17(53%)	176(68%)	49(60%)	55(59%)	15(37%)	43(49%)	355(60%)
<b>Market</b>	5 (16%)	8 (3%)	2 (2 %)	4 (4%)	5 (12%)	8 (9%)	32 (5%)
<b>Mechanics store</b>	7 (22%)	44 (17%)	16(20%)	21(22%)	10(24%)	26(30%)	124(21%)
<b>Night club</b>	3 (9%)	31 (12%)	14(17%)	14(15%)	11(27%)	11(12%)	84(14%)

When the text ‘Village pub’ was asked and the index used for letter V (Figure 17) was questioned; a significant difference was observed among 595 respondents ( $p < 0.001$ ). 88% agreed that the symbol expressed ‘Martini glass’, 5% answered as wine glass whereas 6% thought that it was the letter ‘Y’(Table 4). The decreasing order of selecting the right answer; ‘Martini glass’ among people of different

countries was as follows; Americans (97%)> Cypriots (90%)> people from Far East (89)> Turkish people (87)> people from Middle East (67%)

**Table 4**

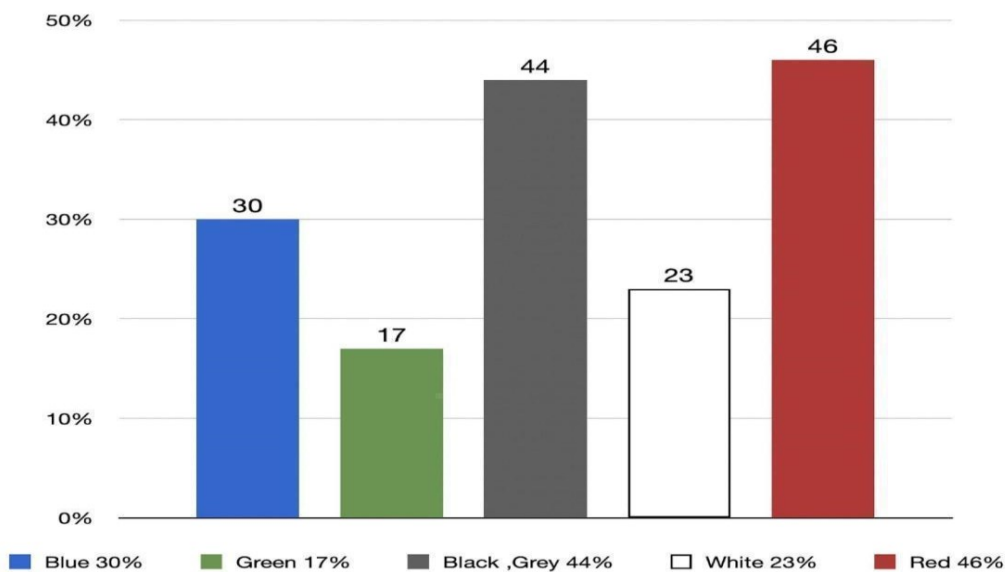
*Response to Survey Question 'What Do You Think This Symbol Expresses?'*

	<b>Under 20</b> (N=32)	<b>20-29</b> (N=25)	<b>30-39</b> (N=81)	<b>40-49</b> (N=94)	<b>50-59</b> (N=4)	<b>Above 60</b> (N=88)	<b>TOTAL</b> (N=59)
<b>Letter 'V'</b>	7(22%)	22 (8%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (3%)	34 (6%)
<b>Martini Glass</b>	22(69%)	218(8%)	74 (91%)	91(97%)	38(93%)	8(94%)	526(88%)
<b>Wine Glass</b>	3(9%)	17 (7%)	5 (6%)	2 (2%)	2 (5%)	1 (1%)	30 (5%)

When respondents were asked to select the colors that grab their attention around the sociable place entrances; 44% of respondents liked black and gray colors (Figure 44). Decreasing order of color preferences for the entrances of clubs, pubs, bars were red> black and gray tones > blue> white > green (Figure 44). Color preferences according to age and countries are shown in Figure 45 and Figure 46 respectively. In terms of color preferences according to age groups for color blue; age group 50-59 differs from 20-29 age group significantly.

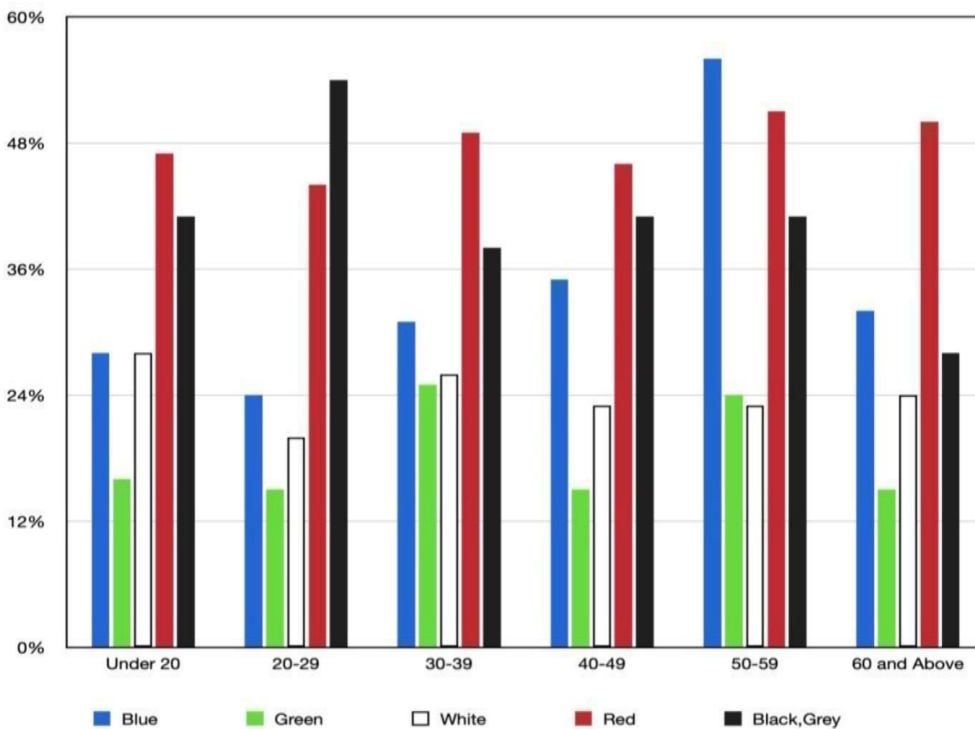
**Figure 44**

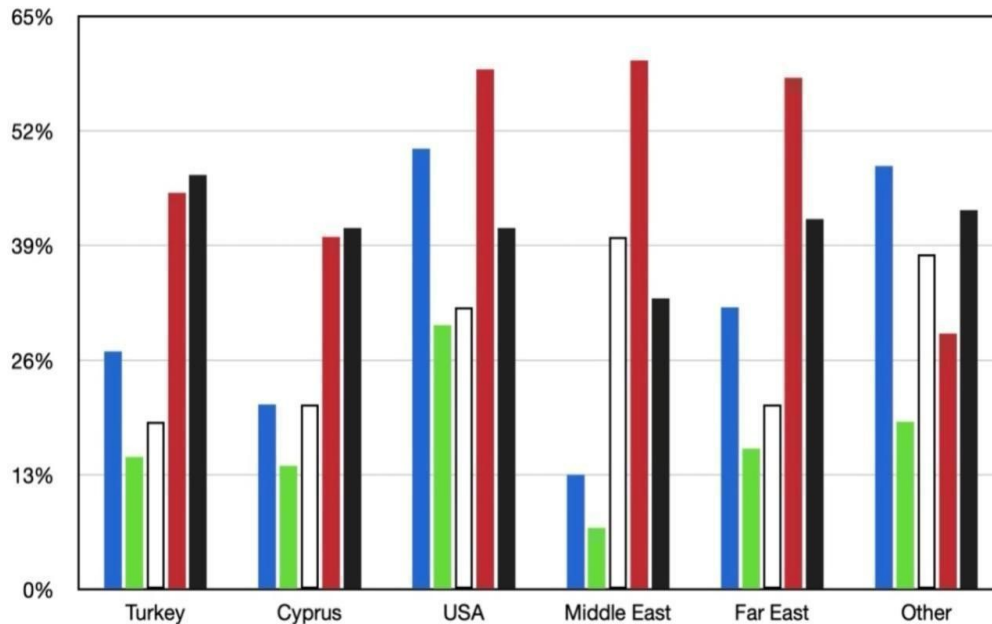
*Frequency Distributions of Preferences of 595 Respondents on Color*



**Figure 45**

*Color Preferences According to Age*



**Figure 46***Color Preferences According to Country/Region*

**Other countries:** Great Britain, Canada, Cuba, Netherlands, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kenya, Libya, Ukraine, Australia, Austria.

**Middle East countries:** Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria

**Far East Countries:** India, Japan, Taiwan

Findings for semiotic interpretation of entrance visuals and perceptions in sociable place entrances and findings for entrance visuals and communication of sociable places analyzed by the research questions are shown in Tables 5 and 6 respectively.

**Table 5***Semiotic Interpretation of Entrance Visuals and Perceptions for Sociable Place Entrances*

<b>SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION OF ENTRANCE VISUALS AND PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIABLE PLACES</b>				
<b>Sociable places</b>	<b>Signifier/ Signs</b>			<b>Signified /Perception</b>
	<b>Icon</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	
1015 Folsom dance club, San Francisco, The USA	cat face logo (at night)	entrance door	'APPBASH' text	night club look at night, no visual sign of a night club at day time
Cheetah Club, Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus	cheetah sculptures (leaning, climbing)	entrance door	Cheetah text	striptease club
Alibi night club, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	Three dimensional Martini glass form on the entrance door	Martini glass silhouette on the exterior sitting area borders	Alibi text	night club look at night,
2100 Club, Hangzhou, China	Iconic curvilinear roofline expressing Asian identity	entrance door	2100 Club text	Usage of gold, black colors denoting the chic club.
Cat Walk Nightclub, Barcelona, Spain	—	entrance door	heart and star symbols on the facade , Catwalk text	Neon lights , backlit texts, denoting night club, waiting line defined by rope borders denoting the club entry.
Envy Night Club, Albuquerque, New Mexico, The USA	—	Road pavement as a directing pathway to entrance door.	Envy night life text	backlit 'ENVY' text sign creates a visually captivating entrance for the nightclub.
The Midnight Sun Club, San Francisco, The USA	—	entrance door	The Midnight Sun text,	Protrusion from the facade and the large text sign of the
Village Pub, Fort lauderdale, The USA	olive icon in martini glass figure	'V' shape referring martini glass	chalkboard side sign 'Village Pub' text, rainbow flag, open hours info text	place clearly create an invitation to the bar cozy pub look
The North Shield Pub, Istanbul, Türkiye	North Shield logo in the form of a shield	transparent entrance door	red color as stopping symbol, North Shields text	clear pub look

**Table 5 (Continued)**

Kings Head Pub, Galway, Ireland	King's head figure,	entrance door	red color of the bay window, King's head text, flags on the facade near the bay windows	clear pub look
Red Lion Pub, Lincoln Park, Chicago, The USA	white stone lion head figure on the red brick facade	entrance door	Red Lion Pub text written with raised gold letters, column like graphical representations, triangular British flags	clear pub look
Six pence Pub, Savannah, The USA	telephone boot associated with British culture	entrance door	gold colored 'The Six Pence Pub' text	clear pub look
Brazen Head Pub, Dublin, Ireland	Wine barrels in front of the place, head relief on the brazen oval board	entrance door	Place name text sign, Board with golden text signs,	cozy pub look
The Cockpit Pub, London, England	The cock relief on a red plate on facade,	Entrance door ,fighting birds figures on hinged plate on brick facade	Golden text letterings as place name, Fine wines text sign	clear pub look
Rumors bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	border line logos of the place	wine glass sectional shape on the windows	'Rumors' text	clear bar look
Scandals Saloon bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	horse icons ,cattle car wheels	cowboy silhouettes on the windows, Western swinging saloon doors	'Scandals Saloon' text , 'The place to make friends slogan, red color as stopping symbol	Wild western country bar look
Shinagawa Highball Bar, Tokyo, Japan	logos on both borderlines of place.	Barrel formed circular opening surrounding the entrance door.	Backlit place name on facade	Chic bar look
Blush Wine Bar, San Francisco, The USA	——	Transparent entry door, Wine bottle cork and cork opener logo on place name plate	Blush text sign, wine, beer, food text signs showing function of place. Flags on the roofline	clear bar look
Speakeasy bar, Shanghai, China	——	——	——	Hidden access to bar entrance
Atomic Liquors bar , Las Vegas, The USA	caricaturistic explosion formed yellow plate	entrance door	Various sized text signs showing the name and function of the place	Highly clear bar look with exaggerated signs
Molly Malone's Irish bar, Helsinki, Finland	woman's head on the entry door	entrance door	Text sign of bar name, Triangular pediment form above entrance	clear bar look

**Table 6***Entrance Visuals and Communication of Sociable Places Analyzed by the Research Questions*

<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>	<b>Research Question 1:</b> Do the label, sign and logo put around sociable place entrances makes it appealing to attract customers?	<b>Research Question 2</b> Do visuals of the entrances give right clues to customers which services are offered behind the doors?	<b>Research Question 3</b> Do entries communicate with the customers whether the place suits their taste and budget clearly or not?	<b>Research Question 4</b> Are visual signs (lights, neons etc.) more dominant than the building itself?
1015 Folsom dance club, San Francisco, The USA	yes, glossy and large 'APPBASH' text, Cat face icon and rope line usage visible at night makes it appealing; but the building has a dull effect during day time with no visual signs	wrong clue during daytime,  right clue at night	at night it is clear that it is an expensive place, no clue at daytime	lights are dominant at night making the place more dominant than the building, but there are no visual signs during daytime
Cheetah Club, Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus	No., glossy look of cheetah head, pink cheetah climbing on a tree, cheetah on the balcony and cheetah leaning on a branch draw attention but give wrong clue	wrong clue; because it is not clear if it is a regular club or a striptease club	it is clear that it is an expensive place	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
Alibi night club, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	yes, cheerful index signs of the front patio, usage of colorful/ inviting nighttime lighting	right clue	It is clear that it is an acceptable priced club	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
2100 Club, Hangzhou, China	yes, elegant and appealing signs	right clue	it is clear that it is an expensive place	transparency of building is more dominant than signs
Cat Walk Nightclub Barcelona, Spain	yes, colorful backlit cheerful signs	right clue	It is clear that it is an acceptable priced club	signs are more dominant than building's architectural character at night
Envy Night Club, Albuquerque, New Mexico, The USA	yes, directive road path and backlit giant place name attract visitors	right clue	it is clear that it is an expensive place	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
The Midnight Sun Club, San Francisco, The USA	yes. giant red protrusion, large place name and charcoal signboard attracts visitors	right clue	It is clear that it is an acceptable priced club	glossy facade and giant sign protrusion are equally attractive
Village Pub, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	yes, usage of Martini glass shaped logo at entry makes the place appealing	right clue, LGBT friendly place conotation : rainbow flag on the door	it is an acceptable priced pub for the budget	signs at the entrance are more dominant than the building itself



Table 6 (Continued)

The North Shield Pub, Istanbul, Türkiye	yes, very attractive with stopping color red usage and popping red canopies from stone wall makes the place attractive	right clue for a pub with its signs	it is clear that it is an expensive place.	both building and informative signs, logo and red canopies are equally attractive
Kings Head Pub, Galway, Ireland	yes, very attractive with stopping color red usage, popping bay window, various eye catching signs	right clue	It is clear that it is an acceptable priced pub	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
Red Lion Pub, Lincoln Park, Chicago, The USA	yes. lion relief sign on english bonding facade and giant palladian window creates attraction	right clue	clear budget denotation on a pricy place	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
Six pence Pub, Savannah, The USA	yes, signs are attracting customers	right clue	yes, clear budget denotation, menu sign board on sidewalk shows prices	signs are more dominant than building
Brazen Head Pub, Dublin, Ireland	yes, signs are attracting customers	right clue	It is clear that it is an acceptable priced pub	signs are more dominant than building
The Cockpit Pub, London, England	yes, signs are attracting customers	right clue	it is clear that it is an expensive place	black building with gold moldings is more dominant than signs
Rumors bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	yes, very attractive by wine glass sectional shapes on the windows	right clue for a pub	it is very clear that it is an acceptable priced place	visual signs are more dominant than the building
Scandals Saloon bar, Fort Lauderdale, The USA	yes, usage of country features on a modern city makes the entry attractive	right clue with western traces for the people interested in this concept.	it is clear that it is an acceptable priced place	equal, both the building and the signs are equally attractive and dominant
Shinagawa Highball Bar, Tokyo, Japan	Yes, giant hole on the wall surrounding entry door and giant text signs attract customers.	right clue	it is clear that it is an expensive place	equal, both the building and visual signs are equally attractive
Blush Wine Bar, San Francisco, The USA	yes, informative charcoal sign board, backlit place logo and name attract customers	right clue	it is very clear that it is an acceptable priced place	signs are more dominant than building
Speakeasy bar, Shanghai, China	no clue	no clue	no clue	no clue
Atomic Liquors bar, Las Vegas, The USA	yes, giant signs are attracting customers	right clue	it is clear that it is an acceptable priced place	signs are more dominant than building
Molly Malone's Irish bar, Helsinki, Finland	yes, vivid green facade paint, golden signs are attractive	right clue	it is clear that it is an acceptable priced place	equal, both the building and the signs are equally dominant

## **Findings for Semiotic Interpretation of Entrance Visuals and Perceptions in Sociable Place Entrances**

By carefully considering the selection and arrangement of signifiers, designers can create visual communication that resonates with the audience and promotes successful understanding. In 1015 Folsom dance club; there were no signs during day time pointing out that this place is for entertaining purposes. On the other hand; Cheetah Club had edgy and marginal signs that create misinterpretation about the place (Table 5,6) giving rise to loss in the number of customers. In five sociable places; there were no iconic signs (1015 Folsom during day time, Catwalk, Envy, Midnight Sun, Blush, Speakeasy bar), around the entrances (Table 5).

Except the speakeasy bar; all sociable place entrances had index and symbol signs to attract the customers (Table 5). Among 21 establishments, except the speakeasy bar; 8 sociable places (Alibi, Envy, Village Pub, Cockpit, Rumors, Scandals, Shinagawa, Blush) had different index signs in addition to entrance doors. In all of the sociable places; symbols were used.

## **Findings for Entrance Visuals and Communication of Sociable Places Analyzed by the Research Questions**

***Question 1:*** Do the label, sign and logo put around sociable place entrances makes it appealing to attract customers?

The use of appropriate visual cues, composition techniques, color symbolism, and cultural references can all contribute to the effectiveness of the visual message. By using label, sign and logo around sociable place entrances a perfect message may be transmitted to potential customers and attract them making the place appealing at a glance. In the present study; 73 % of 595 respondents stated that texts, signs and logos put around club, pub and bar entrances make it appealing to grab their attention to enter the places and no significant difference was found according to the countries. Glossy and large text, cat face icon and rope line usage visible at night made the place appealing to customers in 1015 Folsom whereas use of colorful neon lights on the facade of Alibi, Cat Walk and Envy night clubs created an inviting and exciting atmosphere for potential customers. Elegant and appealing signs of 2100 Club, as

well as the signs of Six Pense, Brazen Head, Red Lion, Scandals, Shinagawa and Cockpit attracted visitors. Sectional shapes of Martini glass on the door of Village pub, Wine glass section on the front patio of Alibi night club as well as the wine glass sectional shapes on the windows of Rumors bar were inviting indexes for customers to enjoy themselves while having a drink and socializing with friends. Stopping color red; used in the protusion of Midnight Sun and North Shield or on the facade of King's head also attracted customers. Signs of Molly Malone and giant signs of Atomic Liquors also made the places appealing to customers (Table 6).

Effective visual communication at the entrance helps customers assess whether the establishment aligns with their needs, fostering a positive and informed decision-making process. Cleverly managed establishment branding through signage contributes to attracting the right audience and creating a strong and memorable impression.

**Question 2:** Do visuals of the entrances give right clues to customers which services are offered behind the doors?

A door or window may create a communication between outside and inside spaces with the transparent or non-transparent closed entries and facades. Transparency allows flow of light through thresholds giving the customers a clue of the services likely to be found inside the place (Figures 4, 19, 20, 22, 34). On the contrary, a nontransparent entry and facade (Figures 11, 28, 40) implies curiosity. In the present study; 55 % of the respondents preferred translucent entry in order to see what is happening inside but 5% did not find transparency appropriate for customers' privacy. 53% preferred nontransparent closed facades and wanted their curiosity to be aroused by attractive signs at the entrance giving clues about what the place offers. No significant difference was found among the age groups. Except the speakeasy bar; in two establishments; there were either no clue (1015 Folsom dance club) during day time or wrong clue (Cheetah Club) with some edgy and marginal signs that create misinterpretation about the places (Table 6). The speakeasy bar had no visual signs and only the people to whom clues were given could enter the place. The rest of the establishments the visuals of the entrances gave right clues to customers which services were offered behind the doors.

**Question 3:** Do entries communicate with the customers whether the place suits their taste and budget clearly or not?

Except the speakeasy bar and daytime view of 1015 Folsom dance club which had no clues only during day time; sign selections and usage of appropriate facade materials in all of the cases, attracted customers by giving a clue whether the sociable place meet their taste and budget or not (Table 6).

***Question 4:*** Are visual signs (lights, neons etc.) more dominant than the building itself?

In 7 sociable places (Folsom at night time, Cat Walk, Village Pub, Six pence, Brazen head, Blush and Atomic Liquors) visual signs (lights, neons etc.) were more dominant than the building itself. In 2 establishments (2100 Club and Cockpit) the building were more dominant than the visual signs. Both the buildings and visual signs were equally attractive in 10 sociable places (Cheetah, Alibi, Envy, Midnight Sun, North Shield, King's Head, Red Lion, Scandals, Shinagawa and Molly Malone).

## CHAPTER V

### Discussion

Chapter V contains the discussion. The findings of the study are discussed with the findings of previous researchers in this chapter. Especially the similarities and differences of previous color preference studies according to different ages and cultural values are put forth in this chapter.

Despite the fact that there are various sociable places that can be semiotically analyzed; in this study; the research is limited to analyzing visual communication of entrance signs around sociable places. 21 sociable place entrances from different countries with effective and ineffective entrance signs were evaluated in this study. Although evaluation of the signs may be made by considering many factors; the evaluation of the entrance signs in the study is limited to icons (sculpture, logo), indexes (door, specific shapes) and symbols (text, color).

Peirce's classifications, such as icons, indexes, and symbols, provide a framework for designers to select appropriate signifiers and create visual representations that align with the intended message. Icons, for instance, can directly resemble or imitate the object being represented, making the message easily recognizable. Indexes establish a direct connection between the representamen and the object, allowing for a more immediate association. Symbols, on the other hand, rely on learned associations and cultural conventions to convey meaning.

Peirce's framework, which allows for a more nuanced analysis of the different sign types and their roles in conveying meaning, is incorporated into this study. Saussure's concept of the signifier and signified complemented Peirce's triadic model by emphasizing the physical form and the meaning associated with signs. Barthes' denotation and connotation were also used to further explore the layers of meaning that can be attributed to signs highlighting the explicit and implicit associations they evoke. By combining these theoretical perspectives, this study analyzed various dimensions of signs and their relationships with entrance design. It allowed for a deeper exploration of how signs denote and connote meanings, and how they influenced the perception and interpretation of the entrance space. This integrated approach offered a more comprehensive understanding of the semiotic aspects involved in the design and communication of entrance signs.

Research questions are being used instead of hypothesis for the qualitative studies. On the contrary; quantitative studies use a variety of quantitative research questions and hypothesis for defining and specifically focusing the study's purpose (Tashakkori & Creswell 2007, Creswell & Creswell 2018). In the present study; mixed methods research consisting of qualitative and quantitative research was used and both research questions and hypothesis were examined. When a qualitative or quantitative method is used alone; the complete picture may not be reached and the results of the study will be weak because of using only one method. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) stated that the outcome of a research may not be satisfactory when only a qualitative method is used and added that this inadequacy may be eliminated by using the quantitative research data. When mixed methods research is used; data collection, analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative research is incorporated in the study (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Mixed research method makes the study more reliable by combining the benefits of the two methods (Tunali et al.2016). Qualitative analysis supported the quantitative data in our study.

Regarding the qualitative analysis results; discussing the signifier and signified of a place which had no signs during daytime (Figure 2) with the right denotation of lit signs giving clues about the activities in the interiors at night time (Figure 3), one clearly connotes that it is an entertainment place. In Figure 4, the pink male panther standing at the balcony holding two bottles denotes that this place offers drinks. On the other hand; seductive female pink panther which lies down on a branch (Figure 6) and another pink female panther climbing on a tree denoting pole dance (Figure 5) make people think about the function of the place. Although this place is a dance club only, the denotation is confusing and gives a wrong connotation if it is a strip club or not.

The V like index in the name of 'Village Pub' grabs attention in Figure 17. Martini glass with olive on a wood stick in it, as denotation in the letter V, connotes that alcoholic drinks are served in this place giving the right denotation (Table 5). This visual cue strengthens the association between the sign and the concept it represents, making it easily identifiable to customers. Additionally, the 'V' shaped figure near the entrance acts as an index sign, further reinforcing the concept of a martini glass (Figure 17). This shape, resembling the silhouette of a martini glass, serves as a visual cue that invites customers to indulge in their favorite cocktails.

The cattle car wheels, cowboy and horse silhouettes are right signs (Figure 32) that express rural life ambiance for customers who want to experience a place offering country music in modern city; Fort Lauderdale.

The analysis of the respondents' answers to the research questions highlighted the role of entrance signs on the preferences of people in the quantitative part of the study. Nearly half of respondents preferred establishments with nontransparent entries however, another big part of customers preferred establishments with translucent doors and windows showing what is happening inside. According to this result it can be stated that there is no statistically significant preference between the non-transparent or see-through translucent entries. As the p-value is more than 0.05 there is strong evidence in favor of the hypothesis 1; 'There is no difference between a nontransparent closed entry with signs giving clues about what the place offers and a translucent, see-through entry which shows 'what is happening inside' on influencing the possible customers' decision to enter the place is accepted.

Texts are developed by locating pictorial, semantic and structural sign elements (Kim, 2006). The p-value of bold and large font preferences is more than 0.05 and is not statistically significant. It indicates strong evidence in favor of the null hypothesis, as there is more than a 5% probability the null is correct. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 'Bold and large texts around the entrances attract people more than other font sizes and thicknesses' is fully accepted.

Only 30% of the respondents preferred the color blue. On the contrary, people aged 50-59 found blue attractive (56%) and this choice was statistically different from the other age groups ( $p < 0.002$ ). As the p-values are less than 0.05 according to age and colors; these statistically significant results indicate strong evidence against the null hypothesis as there is less than a 5% probability the null is correct. Therefore, the age part of null hypothesis 3 'Age and country of people have no effect on the perception of colors used around the entrances of sociable places' for ages is rejected.

According to the results of the present study it can be stated that the country part of hypothesis 3; related with colors is also rejected as there is less than a 5% probability the null hypothesis to be correct. This result shows that despite globalization; color preferences still vary in different cultures.

According to Wassily Kandinsky, an expressionist painter; ‘Color is a power which directly influences the soul’. Like a master painter who uses brushstrokes to imbue his/her work with depth and vitality, colors play a similar role in enriching visual communication. Every hue carries a wealth of associations, cultural meanings and psychological influences. Whether it's the glowing passion of red or the calmness of blue, colors play an important role in directing our emotional reactions and influencing the unfolding narratives that captivate our gaze (Tomar, 2023). In fact, colors are design symbols influencing emotion and psychology of people (Madden et al., 2000; Labrecque et al., 2013; Won & Westland, 2017; Kauppinen-Räsänen & Jauffret, 2018). While color is an important design element, it also has a symbolic value. Color alone can send a message, direct the behavior and have an impact on human physiology. This physiological effect is effective in the formation and use of color as a symbol (Alpagut, 2005).

Madden et al., (2000) stated that selection of matching colors changed according to cultures; Canadians paired green with yellow whereas green was paired with blue in Colombia, with white in Austria. Chinese and Taiwanese paired green with yellow or red. In the present study; in terms of figure ground relationship; gold lettering on a black background was found to raise the visibility of lettering. The decreasing order of countries and regions who agreed that gold lettering on a black background raises the visibility of lettering was as follows; Middle East > Cyprus> Türkiye > The USA > Other countries including Europe and Australia > Far East.

These colors and their combinations can be useful for interior designers; on selecting the right signs while designing the entrances of target establishments in different countries. Modern gray is linked to fields involving metals and structures, its original connotation shifting from somber and religious to a more contemporary, futuristic image (Lee & Kim 2006). According to Lee & Kim (2006); black has undergone a significant transformation from its historical implications, evolving from a symbol of novelty and utility to embody a chic, daring, practical, forward-thinking, and cutting-edge essence. 64% of the respondents in this study commented that color black makes entrances stand out, bringing elegance, clearness, sharpness and formality to the place. Differing from previous literature, black or gray tones were found to be the primarily preferred colors for social place entrances in Türkiye and Cyprus. Although color preferences were statistically significant in this study for



black and gray tones; there was a significant decrease for this preference with advanced age ( $p < 0.001$ ). Young people aged between 20-29 liked black and gray colors more than people above 60. For people above 60; black and gray tones produced strong feelings of dislike; the preference for color black and gray tones decreased. This result shows that with advanced age, the preference for black decreases because of remembrance of death (Figure 45).

Jadva et al., (2010) examined the preferences of 120 infants, aged 12, 18, or 24 months for different toys, colors, and shapes. Their findings about shapes showed that infants preferred rounded shapes over angular shapes. The results of the present study were parallel with Jadva et al., (2010) study because 61% of the respondents preferred round form for the social place entrances. This finding shows that extraordinary forms in the design may grab the attention of people.

Silver & Ferrante, (1995) found that red was preferred over green among elderly people in Florida, The USA Dittmar (2001), reported that older people prefer red more because reception of red areas remain stable in elderly. The findings are in accordance with our study showing that towards the end of life people are attracted to the color red. In the present study, red was also the most preferred color among the 595 respondents (Figure 45) and the popularity of red increased with advanced age (Figure 45). According to ages (Figure 45) older people; aged 50-59 and above 60 liked red whereas young people aged 20-29 liked red less. Among all age groups; the least preferred colors were white and green respectively.

Figure 46 shows that respondents from Türkiye and Cyprus primarily prefer black then red whereas respondents from the The USA primarily prefer red then blue. Middle Eastern respondents primarily prefer red then white whereas Far Eastern respondents primarily prefer red then black. For the people at the age of 60 and above; the preference for blue and black and gray tones decreased ( $p < 0.001$ ) whereas the popularity of red increased in this study. Red color grabbed the attention of people from the The USA, Middle East and Far East (Figure 46) and their perception of red color is statistically more significant than the respondents from Türkiye and Cyprus ( $p < 0.0283$ ). Elderly people prefer warmer temperatures in interiors and avoid cold due to the decrease in basal metabolic rate. Change of body temperature and yellowing of the lens, resulting in less sensitivity to the blue end of

the color spectrum, may explain the decreased preference of cool color blue due to aging (Waldman, 2002).

Simon, (1971) asked 490 college students to write down a number between 0 and 9 and the name of any color that came to their mind. The most commonly written number was 7 and the color was blue. The results pointed out the "Blue Seven Phenomenon" (Wiegersma & Van Der Elst, 1988). Similarly, Paul, (2002) reported that Asians, blacks, Hispanics, and white ethnic groups in the The USA all preferred blue. In contrast, in the present study; respondents from the The USA preferred 'red' as the primary color of choice whereas 'blue' was the second preferred color. Similarly, the first color of choice was red among the Middle East and Far East respondents. This change in the preferences can be attributed to the globalization of the world minimizing the intercultural differences.

Choungourian, (1968) investigated color preference and cultural variation among 160 university students from The USA., Lebanon, Iran and Kuwait in Beirut. He found that red and blue were highly preferred by the American students, while they were the least preferred colors by students from Kuwait. Choungourian (1969) found that at age 5 red was the most preferred color and green was the least preferred color by the American and Lebanese children. In the present study, 50% of the respondents from The USA liked color blue whereas Turkish people, Cypriots people from the Middle East and Far East preferred color blue less (Figure 46).

Respondents from The USA preferred green better than the people from Far East, Türkiye and Cyprus however green was found to be the least preferred color by the respondents from the Middle East (7%) in the present study (Figure 45). In contrast, the results of a study in Germany showed a preference of green over red among elderly people aged between 52-90 years (Dittmar, 2001).

The frequency distributions of the percentages of color white also differed according to countries in the present study. People from the Middle East and The USA preferred white more than people from Far East and Cyprus however, white was preferred less in Türkiye than other countries/regions (Figure 45). In contrast, white was mostly preferred in Japan (Saito, 1996) because it is an elegant and refreshing color meaning purity, infinity, peace, cleanliness and gentleness (Feldman,1987; Luo, & Shamey 2023). In the same study white color was disliked in Taiwan and China because this color referred to end of life, and loneliness.

These findings show that according to different ages and cultural values, different colors may give rise to different perceptions. White may be a less liked color in Chinese, Turkish and Cypriot cultural spheres in the present study because of its association with the image of death reflecting the culture and social customs of these areas. During the design process, interior designers should keep in mind that; deep meanings of signs may vary in different cultures; for example; color white represents death in some Eastern cultures whereas it may represent purity and innocence in Western cultures.

Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and their interpretation, is at the core of visual communication. This field delves into the multifaceted meanings woven into design, dissecting the cultural, social, and historical contexts that mold our comprehension. By unraveling the intricate network of signs, we reveal the layers of storytelling and uncover the concealed depths beneath the surface. Within the expansive realm of design, the language of signs stands as the ultimate communicator, addressing the soul directly and transcending the limitations of spoken words. Through the interplay of shapes and lines, the harmonies of colors, the eloquence of icons and imagery, and the craftsmanship of typography, visual communication engages our senses and molds our perspectives. The language of signs possesses the potent ability to inform, persuade, and inspire and serve as a powerful force to convince customers.

In public spaces, signs are vital for directing people and minimizing confusion. Colorful signs have become increasingly prevalent in pub and bar settings, serving various purposes and conveying different meanings. Today, specialized pub and bar signs with themed decorations are common providing visual clues about the establishment's concept. These signs now often incorporate both pictures and text to clearly convey the establishment's name. Despite the evolution of pub and bar signs over time, their ability to attract attention and spark curiosity remains unchanged, demonstrating the enduring power of a well-designed sign.

A successful, pleasant, and humane atmosphere can be readily designed at the entrance of sociable places. In reality, the characteristics of entrance signs of sociable places might give a clue for an enjoyable environment for socializing. Recently; hoping to find a winning sign layout around entrances of sociable places to attract the right customers and gaining their approval to enter; advertising signs are

constantly evolving. In this respect, this study has revealed that Semiotics can be helpful in the design of late-night social place entrances to give the right message with signs by taking the preferences of different cultures into consideration.

## CHAPTER VI

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter VI includes strategies with guiding recommendations drawn from the present study. Recommendations according to findings for interior architects and designers, and recommendations for further research are also given in this chapter.

Entrance signs play a vital role in attracting customers to sociable places. They act as visual clues, conveying the concept and suitability of the place to potential visitors. In the competitive world of the entertainment market, a sign, a logo, colors, lights or entrance design of a club, pub or bar has only a few seconds to make an impact and catch the customer's eye to communicate its message and convince the customer. Drawing inspiration from iconic examples, designers can consider the impact of visual elements and symbolism in creating memorable and iconic clubs and bars. By incorporating elements that capture attention and represent the essence of the establishment, designers can create visually striking spaces that attract customers and establish a strong presence within the community. However, it is important to strike a balance between architectural integrity and the use of signage and visual elements. While signage can enhance the visibility and identity of a place, it should complement and enhance the overall design rather than overpower or compensate for architectural shortcomings. By creating attractive and well-designed signs, businesses can make a strong first impression and enhance the overall appeal of their establishment, ultimately attracting more customers and standing out in the competitive market. In today's world, where sociable places are in constant competition to attract customers, the role of entrance signs becomes even more crucial. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many properties were temporarily closed, placing a greater emphasis on the remaining businesses to transmit a perfect message through entrance signs.

### Recommendations

In order to achieve a successful eye-catching entrance for sociable places; the below conclusions were drawn from the present study and the following strategies can be recommended:

#### Strategy 1: Signs bring more attraction:

Establishment owners should have a demographic knowledge of potential customers. General preferences of target customers are important and age, race, gender, ethnicity, social status, work-life habits should be taken into consideration for creating the strategy. Texts, signs and logos should be put around club, pub and bar entrances according to the demographics of target customers to arouse their desire to enter the place and explore further.

By analyzing in a semiotic point of view; it clearly showed that the designers should select the signs very carefully, otherwise marginal signs may lead to misinterpretation on the place's function and result in loss of customers who have wrong denotations by the marginal signs.

#### Strategy 2: Exaggerated forms and signs focalize the entrance:

The extraordinary forms chosen while designing entrances may make the entrance center of attention. Majority of the respondents in this study preferred round form for the entrance. Exaggeration on the size of signs may be beneficial if the sociable place is not architecturally giving clues by itself, as in the Atomic Liquors bar in Las Vegas

#### Strategy 3: Text font size matters:

Text size is important for legibility from the street distance. More than half of the respondents agreed that bold and large fonts for text signs raised the attraction. Creating clever contrast and choosing the right legible fonts for signage are key factors for grabbing attention. Figure ground relationship of the text signs and their background is very important. If adequate contrast can not be obtained, legibility of signs decrease. As a finding in the present study; gold and thin lettering on light red background is found illegible as in the North Shield bar in İstanbul whereas gold or silver lettering on a black background is found successful in terms of readability a in Cheetah club, Kyrenia and 2100 club, Hangzhou. Young population found the usage of gold lettering on a black background very charismatic and elegant.

Strategy 4: Eye catching lit signs creating pop up effect clarifying the services offered inside:

Lack of day time signages may reduce the advertising effect of the sociable place's recognition and may lead to loss on the number of customers at night time. However an entrance with lit signs around, creates a wonderful feeling and undoubtedly an

amazing impact on the individual entering the establishment. Neon light usage on entry facades will grab more attention. Usage of backlit signs about the activities inside create a pop up effect on the entry facades of sociable places clarifying the services offered inside will be beneficial to grab more customer attention.

#### Strategy 5: Transparency:

The choice for a transparent or non-transparent entry may differ according to the demographics of the potential customers. Although some people prefer see-through entries, some think that nontransparent closed facades are appropriate for customers' privacy. Additionally; using closed facades with smartly selected signs and opaque entrances may raise curiosity of people for what is being offered inside. Usage of transparency on the entry facade may save time to customers on perceiving what is being offered inside. Based on our findings; there was no statistical difference between the people who preferred translucent or nontransparent entry and facades.

#### Strategy 6: Power of colors:

Adding contrast on the sociable place in terms of architectural style, color, transparency in relationship with its environment will raise the focal attraction. The color of the door case in the entrance should be color contrasted to the building facade and lighting around the entrance should create a focal point that naturally drives the attention. Red, yellow and orange are known as warm colors which evoke warm feelings; whereas cool colors including blue, green and purple are associated with calmness and sadness. Based on our findings; the colors from the most liked to the least were as follows: red, black & gray, blue, white and green. Designers must carefully use variations of color because colors carry multiple meanings in different cultures and affect customer decisions. For instance; white color expresses purity in Japan whereas in Taiwan and China this color refers to death and loneliness.

#### Strategy 7: Iconic logos and objects:

Adding up an iconic logo brings identity to the place's recognition. Semiotically, selection of icon, index and symbols play an important role for customers in getting right or wrong connotations. Cowboy hats and cowboy silhouettes around the entrance of Scandals bar denote Country Western style and may direct interested customers inside the place. The sign that is chosen matters in order to express what is offered. For instance; Martini glass at the sitting area table borders of Alibi club refers to alcoholic drinks being offered inside. It is directly proportional in grabbing



attention. Planters can be positioned to draw attention to the entrance. Carefully chosen objects or statues defining the concept of the place is important whether to pull or push customers. The seductive cheetah icons and the text “ More than you know” around the Cheetah club give wrong impression about the place identity and result in loss in the number of customers. Placing a menu on the sidewalk as an informative sign, shows the drink options available, enticing potential customers to enter.

Usage of flags around the entrance will add motion with wind and grab the attention of customers. Usage of protruding signs with dominant eye catching colors raise more attention. Defining a waiting line by bordering ropes and adequate lighting on an axis will raise recognition from the street view.

Strategy 8: The usage of head turner, catchy slogans, amusingly bright and witty taglines:

Thinking about the target audience, considering their limit of cultural moral values, balancing the level of sense of humor by choosing the right signs with an eye-catching size will be beneficial in order to not to lose customers. Neons, texts, colors, transparency of an entrance and flow of light through doors, windows and screens may attract people. Choosing the stopping colors, eye-catching lighting, the usage of amusing text slogans with a witty phrase in an appropriate level, adding text symbol information and a lit menu near the entrance are good ways to express what the place offers to grab customers' attention.

In terms of creativity; meaningful slogans play an important role in marketing the brand of entertainment establishments. While choosing conceptual slogans, adding uniqueness, simplicity and intuition will be faster and easier for customers to catch the idea of what the place offers. To reach the maximum effect, matching the slogan referring to the concept of the place and adding a remarkable logo should be considered.

Strategy 9: Connecting the interrelation of signage into a kind of communication with the customer:

Mind tickling sign selections around entrances of sociable places attract customers with a sense of humor. Storytelling through images; like comic strips or storyboards tell stories without relying on spoken or written language. They engage viewers and create empathy. The material quality level used for the entrances of

sociable places will give an idea to the customers whether the sociable place suits their budget or not. The choice of materials, transparency and gold lettering of 2100 Club, give the customers right perception about the function and expense of the place.

### **Recommendations According to Findings**

The results of the present study showed that while choosing the right entrance signs; importance should be given to colors, logos, right sized texts, eye-catching phrases and appropriate forms and objects. While creating a legible figure-ground relationship on signs; it is crucial to select the right color combinations and contrasting tints and tones. Although iconic signs can define cultural meaning beyond their obvious functions; balance, color and lighting are crucial to grab attention. For this purpose; interior designers can use various icons, indexes and symbols to create different combinations in order to develop effective and constantly evolving sign selections. All these strategies interrelated with semiotics will help the entrance design of establishments to step up and be the winner in this competitive market of entertainment business world.

When attractivity of visual signs on sociable place entrances was questioned; most of the respondents in this study agreed that texts, signs and logos around entrances grab attention. A country bar out in the rural area requires a different point of view in design to an urban area bar. The Scandals bar has some signs such as ; the old West swinging saloon doors, cowboy silhouettes on the windows , cactus, a cattle car wheel reminding the people that this place is a country bar. These wild western features around the entrance give a well managed country place expression. Contrasting architectural style of this bar is different from the urban area bars which have modern architectural style.

Through the interpretation of entrance signs from the perspective of semiotics; this research enabled us to view the issue from a new perspective; and has also made up for the lack and insufficient current interior designers research on entrance designs. Our results will be beneficial for property owners/managers, customers and interior designers.

The results of this study will be influential to property owners, by raising their awareness to give importance to interior design and get the help of interior designers while choosing the right entrance signs to be designed uniquely for their

own place identity. If an establishment wishes to be successful as in the nest entrance example of male vocal cop bowerbird in the rainforests of Irian Jaya; it is important for its managers to understand the strength of the psychological attraction of well-designed entrances. The recognitive entry signs will give right clues about the services inside and will raise the number of customers. For this purpose; owners of the establishments should get help from interior designers for a unique and effective design with a place identity, in order to reach a globally expressive recognition level. Considering people from various age groups, cultures, education levels; the sign on the entrance has to express the concept of the place appropriately to attract the right audience. By strategically crafting the visual clues, establishments can communicate important information and create an enticing atmosphere that resonates with their target audience. For older individuals, a comfortable pub located in a pleasant setting with comfortable seating may be more appealing. Such a pub offers a relaxed ambiance where they can socialize with friends, engage in conversations, and enjoy the company of others. On the other hand, younger people may be drawn to establishments that feature loud music, creating an energetic and vibrant atmosphere. Nightclubs and bars that cater to a younger crowd often focus on providing a lively environment where individuals can dance, enjoy the music, and have an exciting nightlife experience.

Well-designed signs around entrances giving clues about the concept of the place are visual cues as hidden stimuli to guide customers in finding a place that suits their taste without spending too much time and will raise their wellness, making them understand that they are at the right place to relax, forget the stress of work and socialize. This subconscious influence plays a crucial role in shaping customers' perceptions and decisions regarding whether to enter and engage with the establishment. Right invitation, right service to the right customer which means happy customer and happy property manager as well.

Interior designers must first have knowledge about the preferences of people of different ages and cultures to express a design concept according to the needs of customers and establishment owners. The respondents' answers to the questionnaire pointed out the importance of specific colors, size and type of texts that would be useful for the selection of signs for an establishment identity. Furthermore; the answers opened up a guiding set of clues about the meanings of signs across cultures

that interior designers and designers should consider during their designs. The outcome of this research assists interior designers in realizing how people perceive entrance signs. People of different ages, education, countries and cultures may give different meanings to signs. According to the outcome of this research; the below suggestions should be taken into consideration by interior architect and designers while designing signs for entrances of sociable places:

- 1- Signs should have universal meaning and should be understandable by people who do not speak the country's language.
- 2- Signs should be memorable and easy to learn.
- 3- Symbols should be as visually simple as possible, contain few details, and be easily understood.
- 4- Signs should be eye-catching and easily noticed by people who need information.
- 5- Signs should be different from other symbols and easily distinguishable.
- 6- Signs should be readable from an appropriate distance and legible even in poor weather conditions.
- 7- Signs should be quickly recognizable from a distance and give its message at one glance.

During the design process; interior architect and designers should take into account the shape-to-space ratio, size of the shape, and the relationship between the shape and the background color.

Understanding the semiotic aspects of entrance design allows designers to strategically utilize signs in creating a visually appealing and engaging atmosphere. By aligning the signifiers and signifieds effectively, designers can communicate messages that resonate with customers, evoke desired emotions, and ultimately influence their decision to enter a space.

Semiotics plays a significant role in entrance design by utilizing signs to communicate messages and create an attractive atmosphere. The conscious and unconscious interpretation of signs as connotations influences individuals' perceptions and experiences. By considering the relationship between the signifier and signified, designers can evaluate the effectiveness of texts, colors, and lighting in meeting customers' expectations and creating an appealing entrance environment. In essence, this research shows that semiotics may be helpful in attracting the right customers through the use of cognitive factors that are associated with signs giving

the right message. The semiotic approach of interior architects in selecting right signs and attractive architectural materials for entrance designs will add up to the identity of sociable places. Interior designers can benefit from the recommended strategies of this study in selecting right design solutions for the entrances of sociable places and create more attractive and recognitive designs. In essence, the strategies and suggestions of this study will assist interior architects and designers to find a perfect sign layout around sociable place entrances for positive perception of customers.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

In essence; future semiotic studies are needed in interior architecture, focusing on signs and their interpretation by people of different cultures and ages. Also future research should come up with complementary information for the sociable place entrance designs to establish a positive effect on customers. Further studies will enhance the power of semiotics integrated interior architecture and design.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A- Ethics



16.11.2021

Dear Vehbi Noyan Ulusoy

Your application titled “Semiotic interpretation of signs in the communication of some place entrances in hospitality industry” with the application number NEU/AS/2021/133 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol


Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee



**Note:** If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

## Visual Signs at Sociable Place Entrances: User Perceptions and Preferences

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine which signs are cognitively sufficient to convince the viewer to enter a social place, through the integration of semiotics and design. Photographs of 6 social places were obtained through personal photographs. A semiotic model of entrances was created and qualitative data were analyzed. An online survey was used to find out the perceived effectiveness of signs influencing customer decisions. A total of 595 respondents from all over the world responded to the questionnaire. Chi-square analysis was used for statistical analysis for differences between countries and age groups. Results of this study showed that specific colors, lights, transparency, right symbols, large scaled forms and gold lettering on black background raise the visibility of social place entrances and convince customers to enter the place and explore further. According to color preferences of countries, differing from previous literature; black or gray tones followed by red was preferred in Turkey and Cyprus. Red was the most preferred color in the The U.S.A., Middle East and Far East. In order to convince the customers to enter sociable places; this study has pointed out the importance of right signs to be used at sociable place entrances considering the different cultural connotations.

### Keywords

sociable place entrances, visual signs, perception, interior design, color preferences

### Introduction

Entrance is an element of architecture which has an important role in the design process. An entrance which is an intermediate space and a threshold forming a barrier between interior and exterior spaces allow entry to spaces (Boettger, 2014). While allowing transition, mediation, and passage through boundaries, entrances are associated with specific symbolic meanings, rituals, and socio-cultural behavioral codes (Stevens, 2006).

Signs are elements which raise the recognition level of people. Today signs on entrances act as signals indicating a kind of transition where one is going to transit to and signs have a considerable effect on the attractiveness of places. Even in nature; to raise the attractiveness of the nest entry; male vocal cop bowerbird in the rainforests of Irian Jaya, creates a colorful entrance; using flowers and natural treasures as eye-catching signs to make it appealing to female birds. Furthermore; the male bowerbird turns over shiny beetle bug wing cases to reflect light from the nest entrance to the female's eyes (Thompson, 2009).

Oldenburg (1999) suggests that for a healthy life; people must balance the time they are spending in home,

office, workplace and sociable places. Nowadays clubs, pubs and bars are some of the sociable places in which customers come together and forget about problems at home and work while socializing with others. Signs also have a considerable effect on the interrelation between people and social places and the first impression is very important for the decision of people in choosing a sociable place.

Some signs are not attractive and people just pass by them without thinking about their meaning and what they denote. Theme based uniquely designed signs may grab attention and make one want to enter the place and want to explore the establishment.

In today's world; sociable places are in competition to attract customers more than ever before. During the Covid 19 pandemics, many properties were closed. It

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## Appendix C- Survey Questions

### Around Entrances of some Hospitality Places

Questions should be answered according to your habits before Covid 19 pandemic conditions.

**Aim:** Due to the interpretations of the evaluators; by using Semiotics discipline; entrances of specified sociable space signs will be evaluated to complete the doctorate thesis research.

Form Duration: 5-10 minutes

#### SECTION 1

1-1- If you "HAVE NEVER BEEN TO" clubs , pubs or bars please check the box.

2- I send this survey with my own will and I approve ,my answers to be used in this scientific study.  
(required)

This survey context doesn't ask for your personal information. Answers will be confidential and collected data will only be used in statistical analysis.

#### SECTION 2

1-Do the texts, signs and logos put around Club, Pub/Bar entrances make it appealing to grab your attention to enter the places?

A-Yes

B-No

2-While walking on the street; I want....

(Mark the fitting check boxes for you.)

A: To see what is happening inside from a translucent entry/ Facade

B: My curiosity to be aroused by attractive signs at the entrance giving clues about what the place offers.

3- Select the colors that grab your attention; used for the lighting and the entrances of clubs, pubs, bars.

A- Black, Grey tones

B- Red

C- White

D- Blue

E- Green

4- This place entrance signs/features makes me think about the place as ;



(If you select the option 'other' please add your comment)

- A: Dive(cheap drinks) bar
- B: Night club/dance club
- C: Striptease club
- D: Other

5-Considering this place entrance , what do you think this place may be ?



- A: Market
- B: Depot
- C: Night club
- D: Mechanics store



6- Mark the fitting check boxes about color red usage on entrance and how it makes you feel.



( If you select the option 'other' please add your comment )

- A- Color red makes me stop and see what is being offered at that place
- B- Color red pops up the space from pale facade attracting more attention
- C- Usage of red is not that necessary.
- D- Color red makes me spend less time there and move on
- E- Color red brings power to entry
- F- Other \_\_\_\_\_

7- Considering the entrance function of this place; what do you think this place may be ?



- ( If you select the option 'other' please add your comment )
- A- Cinema
  - B- Restaurant
  - C- Night club
  - D- Pet Shop
  - E- Other \_\_\_\_\_

8- Mark the fitting check boxes about color black, gold lettering and transparency usage on entrance and how it makes you feel?



( If you select the option 'other' please add your comment )

- A- Color black brings elegance and formality to place entry
- B- Black color stresses me to spend time at that place
- C- Gold lettering brings a cheesy ambiance
- D- Gold lettering makes me think this place is expensive and I have to be dressy to enter this place
- E- Gold lettering on a black background raises the visibility of lettering.
- F- Transparency expresses the function of this place more effective.
- G- I don't find transparency appropriate for customers' privacy, showing interiors
- H- Other \_\_\_\_\_



9- According to entry picture of this place, which features of this place entry grabs your attention. Please mark multiple check boxes



- A- Round form grabs my attention
- B- Lit lettering grabs my attention
- C- Large fonts grab my attention
- D- Lit Menu plates grab my attention
- E- Transparent 'giant hole on the wall' idea at the entrance showing services inside grabs my attention

10- Which type of lettering attracts your attention more on the entrances in terms of font size and thickness?

- A- Bold and Small
- B- Bold and Large
- C- Thin and Small
- D- Thin and Large

11- What do you think this symbol expresses?



( If you select the option 'other' please add your comment )

A- letter 'Y'

B- Martini Glass

C- Wine glass

D- Other \_\_\_\_\_

12- If you would guess the function of this visual; what would it be?



( If you select 'other', please explain what it could be.)

A- Coca Cola Vendor

B- Refrigerator

C- Toy

D- Bar Entrance door

E- Other \_\_\_\_\_

13- Considering the icons and text signs near the entrance (cheetah head, climbing pink cheetah, silver cheetah text sign) which services may be offered in this place?



Please write your opinion below.

---

### SECTION 3

1- Age Group you belong to:

- A: (Under 20)
- B:(20-29)
- C:(30-39)
- D:(40-49)
- E:(50-59)
- F:(above 60)

2- Please choose / write (if you choose 'other') your Nationality(Country).

- A: Turkish
- B: Cypriot
- C: American(U.S.A.)
- D: Other \_\_\_\_\_

**3- Education level:**

- A: Elementary school
- B: Middle school
- C: High school
- D: College Degree
- E: Bachelors Degree
- F: Masters Degree/ MFA Degree
- G: PhD Degree

**4- Please check the option related with you. ' I am \_\_\_\_ ' ;**

- A: Student
- B: Working
- C: Not Working
- D: Retired
- E: Other

**5- Please mark the related activity for you in Clubs, Pubs, Bars.**

- A: Dancing, Drinking in clubs
- B: Drinking only and sitting by myself in bars
- C: Drinking and Socializing with my friends in bars
- D: Eating, Drinking, Socializing at pubs/bars
- E: Drinking and meeting new people
- F: Listening to music , Karaoke performance and drinks
- G: All of the above

**6- How often do you go to Clubs/Pubs/bars?**

- A: Several times a week
- B: Once a week
- C: Several times a month
- D: Once a month
- E: Seldom
- F: Never

## Appendix D- CV

<b>Name - Surname</b>	<b>: Vehbi Noyan Ulusoy</b>		
<b>Birth Date</b>	<b>: 01/05/1981</b>		
<b>Title</b>	<b>: Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Interior Architecture</b>		
<b>Education Status</b>	<b>: Master of Fine Arts (MFA)</b>		
<b>Degree</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>License</b>	Faculty of Fine Arts, Design and Architecture Interior Architecture and Environmental Design	Bilkent University, Ankara, Türkiye	2005
<b>Master's Degree</b>	Interior Architecture and Design	Academy of Art University, San Francisco, USA	2009
<b>Proficiency in Art</b>	Interior Architecture and Design	Academy of Art University, San Francisco, USA	2009
<b>Academic Titles:</b>			
<b>Title</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b>Lecturer</b>	Faculty of Architecture/ Department of Interior Architecture	University of Kyrenia	2017-
<b>Lecturer</b>	Faculty of Architecture/ Department of Interior Architecture	European University of Lefke	2015- 2018
<b>Lecturer</b>	Faculty of Architecture/ Department of Interior Architecture	Near East University	2010- 2014

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**Publications**


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Ulusoy, N., and Turkan, Z.(2021).Contradicting naked space: Centre Pompidou with its historical surrounding. *Journal of Near Architecture*, 5(1), 65-84.

<https://dergi.neu.edu.tr/index.php/yakinmimarlik/article/view/352/156>

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**Articles published in international refereed journals (SCI & SSCI & Arts and Humanities)**


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Ulusoy, N., and Onur, Z.(2023). Visual Signs at Sociable Place Entrances: User Perceptions and Preferences.SAGE Open, 13(2),

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**Other Publications**


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- Poster Design for US Terra Corporation / published in Architect Magazine 2010 in USA

- Tessellation design on the geometry of sacred space, colored with red wine Academy of Art Gallery / San Francisco,CA, USA , 2009

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**Memberships to Scientific and Professional Organizations**


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Chamber of Interior Architects, Ankara ,Türkiye (2005 – 2012)

[Academy of Art University Alumni Association](#), San Francisco, USA

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**Honors and Awards**


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High Honors/ Near East University, Nicosia,TRNC /Interior Architecture (PhD). (2020-2021 Spring)

High Honors/ Near East University, Nicosia,TRNC /Interior Architecture (PhD). (2020-2021 Fall)

High Honors/ Near East University, Nicosia,TRNC /Interior Architecture (PhD). (Summer 2019-2020)

High Honors/ Near East University, Nicosia,TRNC /Interior Architecture (PhD). (2019-2020 Spring)

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Presidents Honor List / Academy of Art University San Francisco, California, USA  
(IAD 2008)

Presidents Honor List / Academy of Art University San Francisco, California, USA  
(IAD 2007)

Dean's Certificate of High Honor / Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkiye (LAUD 1999)

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## Appendix E- Turnitin Similarity Report

SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION OF SIGNS IN THE  
COMMUNICATION OF SOCIABLE PLACE ENTRANCES

## ORJİNALLIK RAPORU

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[discovery.dundee.ac.uk](http://discovery.dundee.ac.uk)

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