

Semiotic Landscape of Chinese Murals in Kya-Kya, Surabaya

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Abstract:

This research delves into how Chinese murals in Kya-Kya, a Chinatown of Surabaya, visually convey meaning from the semiotic landscape point of view. Through Widgren's Theory of Form, Function, Process, and Context, this study seeks to discover how Chinese and Peranakan Cultures are represented in two Chinese Murals in Kya-Kya. The data source of this research is taken from the researchers' photographs of a few representatives of Chinese Murals in Kya-Kya. The data analyzed in this study include text (words), pictures, and colors. The findings show that the murals' text, pictures, colors, and shapes carry messages closely tied to the area's history, culture, and norms. They act as complex communication tools. The first mural uses color and Chinese symbols that match traditional Chinese cultural meanings, showing solid cultural connections. The second mural focuses more on the area's history, especially the influence of Chinese immigrants and Peranakan culture on local business and daily life. This is shown through cultural icons like traditional clothes, food, and building styles, a mixture of Chinese, Peranakan, and Javanese cultures. Both murals celebrate Kya-Kya's rich cultural heritage. The implications of this research extend to developing conservation strategies that respect both the artistic qualities and cultural meanings embedded within the murals, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of how communities express and sustain their heritage in contemporary contexts.

Keywords: Chinese Culture, Chinese Murals, Kya-Kya, Peranakan Culture, Semiotic Landscape

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, murals have increased popularity in Indonesia. This popularity of murals has received negative and positive responses from the government and people depending on their context. Some believe it brings some aesthetics to familiar public places, while others think it is part of vandalism (Prasetya, 2018; Gaisani, 2019; Hikmat, 2021; Sucahyo, 2021). Mural paintings serve as valuable records of life. They have a history that spans from prehistoric eras to the contemporary age. Throughout various locations globally, they can be found, from the ancient cave paintings of Lascaux Grottes in southern France to the modern-day street art murals. These murals hold immense significance for humanity as they portray the activities, daily landscapes,

and religious customs of their respective periods, giving us a priceless look at the diversity of our cultures throughout history. They exist in multiple settings, including urban areas, schools, public buildings, and outdoor spaces (Kordic, 2015). In, some cases, they can manifest as government-sponsored artworks, community-based initiatives, or unsanctioned insurgent artworks (Shwartz & Mualam, 2021). Moreover, murals are a type of public art that creates visuals with a discernible verbal message for public consumption (McAuliffe & Iveson, 2011). Subsequently, it reflected the reality of human interaction with their social environment (Sanabria, 2013).

Mural-making is designed by incorporating public concepts into its production (Young, 2013). It creates visuals with a discernible verbal message for public consumption (McAuliffe & Iveson, 2011). As a result, what is going on in society can inspire artists, and their work is created in response to what is going on in their society (Courage, 2017). Therefore, linguistic aid is needed for people to read murals, understand the message(s) depicted in them, and find out their function. Otherwise, without it, people would only perceive them as street art, have no regard for respecting it, and be left forgotten. For this reason, the semiotic landscape is deemed to be the appropriate tool to mitigate this issue

The semiotic landscape is a linguistic study that examines the relationship between language, context, and interpretation, focusing on the role of textual mediation and spatial practices Jaworski & Thurlow (2010). Furthermore, Lindström et al., (2011) state that the landscape is broader than just tangible forms of land area, buildings, and even paintings. It also covers the related concept of its intangible forms, which include culture, aesthetics, and visual imagery. In other words, Landscape is not limited to physical landforms, cultural images, or ways of seeing; rather, it encompasses the cultural ideas that a perceiving subject or society has about it. Furthermore, various factors such as geography, social, economic, legal, cultural, and emotional factors, as well as practical uses, aesthetics, memory, and myth, are all a part of the landscape that is important for the reader's interpretations.

This research on Chinese murals in Kya-Kya, Surabaya, distinguishes itself from previous studies that have analyzed semiotic landscapes. While studies by Goebel (2020) and Pesch (2021) explored multilingual signage and Lindstrom (2019) investigated community identities at Mt. Fuji using Wigen's framework, they did not focus specifically on the semiotic aspects of Indonesian murals. Other investigations, such as those by Stampoulidis et al., (2018) Hariyatni, (2023); Riyanto et al., (2023) have analyzed murals but lack a dedicated semiotic landscape approach. This gap in research highlights the nuanced meanings embedded within Indonesian murals, which have not been sufficiently examined using semiotic theories that consider form, function, and context in their production. The research gap presents an opportunity to explore how the Chinese murals in Kya-Kya function as cultural signifiers and contribute to the understanding of local and diasporic identities. Chinese murals in Kya-Kya are located in the Chinatown of Surabaya and, as the name suggests, have a deep history with Chinese immigrant and their descendants. Thus, to keep the culture, the color theme of the entire place, as informed by the Mayor of Surabaya, Eri Cahyadi, revolved around black, red, and gold, which matches the common theme found in Chinatown. To salvage the modern yet historic feel of the place, there would be few decorations, such as Chinese murals and lantern lights. This leads to the formulation of the following research question: what semiotic elements are present in the Chinese murals located in Kya-Kya, and how do they reflect the cultural identity of the Chinese community in Surabaya?

2.1 Semiotic Landscape

According to Hunt et al., (2023)), a landscape is a portion of the Earth's surface that can be seen simultaneously from a single location. It consists of the geographic features that distinguish or characterize a specific area. The term landscape is derived from the Dutch word *landschap*, which refers to rural landscape paintings. Since then, geographers have borrowed the term from artists. Thus, a landscape can have many different looks, ranging from physical forms, such as land area, buildings, even paintings, and to mental concepts or intangible forms, such as culture, aesthetics, and visual image (Lindstrom et al., 2011).

Meanwhile, semiotics, as defined by Saussure, refers to the study of signs and symbols as part of language or means of communication (Chandler, 2017). This study exists to help people understand any information transmitted through symbols, signs, images, and other forms (Kusumawati, 2016). Hence, combining the two theories is known to be a semiotic landscape. The theory falls within linguistic studies exploring the interplay between the physical environment, context, and interpretation. This field emphasizes the interrelation of language, visual communication, cultural dimensions, and spatial practices. It specifically delves into the role of textual mediation and the discursive shaping of place, highlighting the utilization of space as a semiotic resource in its independent capacity (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010). Following the critical works of Ferdinand de Saussure, Lindström et al., (2011) also argue that Landscapes are perceived as systems of signs, where each component is interconnected, and individual signs form sequences guided by particular social codes. Examining these expressions usually involves considering the receiver's social codes because the interpretation of landscape as a text relies heavily on the reader rather than the sender. This implies that, like language signs, the analysis of landscape signs can employ the same methodological tools used for language, discourse, or text.

2.2 Cultural Semiotic

In understanding meaning-making (semiosis) and its relation to culture, we first need to understand the beginning of semiotics and culture created by Yuri Lotman. In 1970, Lotman defined culture as the organization and preservation of nonhereditary information (Lotman 2000a [1970]). As Ann Shukman (1977) effectively summarizes Lotman's importance of information theory, semiotics acknowledges that communication and information processing are fundamental aspects of human culture, and any study of human culture must consider these aspects. Thus, (Lotman & Clark (2005) defines a cultural semiotic as the same semiotic space in which semiosis (the process of signification) cannot exist outside it. Hence, he introduced the semiosphere system, an interconnected network required for the existence and functioning of languages, as well as another sign system. It serves as a platform for transmitting existing information, creating new information, and preserving and reproducing information based on one's memories (data). Outside of this space, semiosis cannot exist and make sense as there would not be enough signs to provide context for interpretation (Lotman, 1990, Kotov & Kull, 2011).

2.3 Form, Function, Process and Context

Form, function, process, and context are semiotic concepts coined by Widgren (2004). He presents a comprehensive theory of landscape interpretation based on a cultural approach by Yuri Lotman. He argues that, as a concept, landscapes are people's ways of seeing with their collective memory as a mental representation, resulting in a landscape of scenery. Then, it becomes people's means of communication and action with time, and he describes the

landscape as an institution. Lastly, land is a resource when it is used as production to further expand as capital. From this concept, he develops a system of reading landscape to help you, as the “reader,” look into the details of the images. It is important since landscape images are part of our daily lives, and many have taken advantage of them to convey their ideas and feelings. Examples would be Murals, advertisements, propaganda, music videos, etc. In other words, when looking into the details of landscape images, you can understand the messages embedded inside them.

2.4 Chinese Culture and *Peranakan* Culture in Indonesia

As explained by Jiang, (2021), Chinese culture was created through three eras, namely ancient, imperial, and modern China, from 2100 BC to the present day. Much of that Chinese culture and its products still exist today, not only within China but across the world. However, as time passed, Chinese culture has evolved and changed. Especially the culture that exists outside of China. This is because when Chinese people begin migrating outside of China, they bring their culture to the new country as part of their identities. With time, the original Chinese culture begins interacting with the local culture, creating a new culture because of the acculturation. In Indonesia, the acculturation between Chinese and Local cultures created Peranakan Culture or Peranakan Tionghoa. Historically, the culture can be traced back to Peranakan Chinese, culturally distinct descendants of Chinese immigrants who settled in the Malay Archipelago approximately 300-500 years ago (Wu et al., 2021).

According to Romanti (2023), the history behind Peranakan culture in Indonesia started in the 14th-15th century, when Chinese people started migrating to Nan Yang. The area includes Malacca, Singapore, and a few islands of Nusantara. The people who settled in the area married some locals and created their own families there. However, in the 18th-19th century, the Government of the Dutch East Indies created a law to limit the existence of Chinese foreigners in Indonesia. Hence, it created a huge surge in interracial marriage, which allowed the Chinese to be accepted as people of Nusantara or Current Indonesia. This phenomenon of acculturation and assimilation created the Peranakan Culture. It has many things ranging from language, food, traditional clothes, and batik arts, and it also created a new kind of curving art in the country. In addition, some aspects of Chinese culture, traditions, and symbolism still exist and are practiced by descendants.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design. It is employed because this research only conducted an in-depth analysis of the data and reported the result of data analysis before concluding it (Mishra & Alok, 2017). Furthermore, to analyze the qualitative data of this research, this study also operated based on a theory proposed by (Miles et al., 2012). He suggested four steps for analyzing qualitative data: data collection, data condensation, data display, and verifying or drawing conclusions. In this study, the data were taken from the researcher's photograph of two representatives of Chinese Murals in Kya-Kya.

Several steps are taken to collect the data. First, observing several Chinese murals in two places, Kya-Kya and Pecinan villages in Surabaya. From there, it was discovered that the murals in Pecinan village are covered by cars owned by the people living there. Thus, the murals in Pecinan village are eliminated as the data source for this research. Once the data source was finalized, the researcher documented (photographed) two representative Chinese murals in Kya-

Kya and ensured that the murals were captured as a whole. This is because all of the signs in the mural are taken as the data for this research. The two Chinese murals in Kya-Kya were chosen for their different themes: one mural represents festivity and celebration, while the other focuses on business.

After collecting the data, the next step in the analysis is data condensation. Data condensation is selecting and simplifying data from its original form. Thus, the data is categorized and displayed in a table that consists of two columns: form and function. Then, the result of data condensation is analyzed and further explained using the form, function, process, and context theory of (Widgren, 2004). Furthermore, to better explain the form, function, and process in the Chinese and Peranakan cultural context, this research also relies on several studies, including color symbolism in Chinese culture by (Olesen, 2022), Chinese Symbols and symbolism, and art motifs by Williams (2006), Eberhard (2006) and Li, (2014).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Semiotic Landscape Analysis of Chinese Mural Representing Festivity and Celebration

Table 1 presents an overview of the form and function of Chinese murals that depict festivity and celebration, particularly in the context of KYA-KYA shown on Figure 2. The table categorizes various elements of these murals, including their artistic techniques, symbolic representations, and cultural significance.

Table 1: Form and Function of Chinese Mural Representing Festivity and Celebration in KYA-KYA

No	Form	Function
1	The background color of the wall is pastel pink	To give a bright background and symbol of auspiciousness and beauty
2	<i>Kembang Jepun</i> in yellow (background color gradation of brown and black)	To showcase the area's name and its history
3	Accented Door (grey and brown)	To represent the Chinese heritage households that still exist in the area
4	Stairs (brown)	To showcase and represent the path or journey to Kya-Kya
5	A pair of Windows (blue and grey)	To represent Chinese heritage households and good spirit
6	Accented roof and pillars (yellow, brown, silver, and green)	To represent the Chinese heritage households that still exist in the area
7	A pair of Chinese lanterns (red with yellow tassel)	To represent hope and a bright future
8	A pair of colorful lion dance heads	To represent prosperity, good luck, and chasing away evil spirits
9	Orange Marigold	To represent wealth, prosperity, success, and abundance
10	Yellow Daffodils	To symbolize good fortune and help attract positive energy.
11	Pink Hollyhocks	To symbolize ambitions and perseverance.
12	Flower buds (yellow and pink)	To represent the new beginning
13	Leaf (green)	To represent treasures
14	Winds (grey and light brown)	To represent good luck and prosperity
15	Clouds (pink and blue)	To represent luck and blessing

The mural's pastel pink background symbolizes auspiciousness and beauty in Chinese culture, reflecting hopes for the success and prosperity of the newly reopened Kya-Kya, which aims to support small and medium enterprises in Surabaya. At the center of the mural, the name

"Kembang Jepun" is written in yellow, signifying that this location is not merely the site of Kya-Kya but also a historical and cultural focal point. The name "Kembang Jepun," translating to "Japan Flower," is rooted in historical context, referencing women in the Surabaya area during the Japanese occupation who were perceived as "friends" of Japanese soldiers. This street has since evolved into a significant cultural landmark, now recognized as the Chinatown of Surabaya. The recent reopening of Kya-Kya, a night market in this area, is marked by the use of yellow in its signage, symbolizing prosperity, despite the color's negative connotations in Chinese culture, which often associates yellow with bad luck. The market faced temporary closure for renovations in early 2024, highlighting the ongoing development of the area.

The murals adorning Kya-Kya serve as a reflection of the area's heritage and current socio-cultural dynamics. Central to the mural is a grey and brown door, symbolizing nature, humility, and balance, flanked by stairs that represent the historical journey of Kembang Jepun. The stairs are painted brown, signifying stability. Accented windows in the mural showcase the blend of Chinese and local cultures, with designs inspired by both Chinese and Dutch architectural influences, particularly the Louvre window style, which signifies cultural assimilation during the Dutch colonial era. The mural features a roof and pillars that echo the Chinese heritage of the area, with a unique upward-curving roof design that is characteristic of Chinese architecture. The color palette of yellow, brown, silver, and green conveys wishes for good fortune and harmony within the community. Additionally, red Chinese lanterns, symbolizing hope and unity, adorn the mural, celebrating the reopening of Kya-Kya. A prominent feature of the mural is the depiction of lion dance heads, which carry deep cultural significance, representing power, strength, and the warding off of evil spirits. The lion dance has historical roots in China, evolving from imperial court performances to a popular folk tradition. The vibrant colors of the lion heads symbolize various auspicious wishes for Kya-Kya's future.

The mural also incorporates various flowers, including orange marigolds, yellow daffodils, and pink hollyhocks, each carrying symbolic meanings of wealth, good fortune, and perseverance. Flower buds, particularly yellow hibiscus and pink hollyhocks, further represent new beginnings and ambitions. The presence of leaves symbolizes growth and harmony, while the depiction of wind in grey and light brown signifies stability and prosperity. Lastly, clouds in the mural, colored blue and pink, symbolize luck and blessings, aligning with Chinese beliefs that associate clouds with fortune. Collectively, these elements in the murals not only celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Kembang Jepun but also express hopes for the future prosperity and harmony of Kya-Kya and its surrounding community.



Figure 2: Chinese Mural Representing Festivity and Celebration in Kya-Kya

4.2.Semiotic Landscape Analysis of Chinese Mural Representing Business and Kya-Kya in the Early 20th Century

Table 2 shows an in-depth overview of the features and functions of Chinese murals that depict themes related to commerce and Kya-Kya during the early 20th century, as demonstrated in Figure 3. This table categorizes various dimensions of these murals, including their artistic techniques, symbolic interpretations, and cultural significance.

Table 2: Form and Function of Chinese Mural Representing Business and KYA-KYA in The Early 20th Century

No	Form	Function
1	The background color of the mural is blue with a slight accent of cloud-like pattern	To give a bright background and symbol of advancement, luck, fortune, and blessing
2	Shadows of tall buildings with accented roofs.	To showcase the Chinese heritage buildings in the area and a tribute to the local Chinese Temples
3	Yellow grid and pattern on the left side of the murals	To represent prosperity
4	A wall with some damage (red grid) and a round green window	To represent public space in the older period of Kya-Kya
5	An old house with accented roofs and tiles (green and brown), an arched door, few windows, and a few wild plants	To showcase the situation for commoners' houses in the older period of Kya-Kya
6	One big clay barrel	To represent the local culture
7	One food stall (green roof) with a stock pot and the text "Pangsit Kya-Kya"	To represent one of the businesses in the older period of Kya-Kya
8	One man in a white bandana and shirt is pulling noodles	To represent one of the jobs found in the older period of Kya-Kya
9	One woman in traditional clothes sitting on top of <i>Becak</i> (traditional rickshaw)	To represent the customer in the older /period of Kya-Kya
10	One woman in traditional clothes serving a drink	To represent one of the jobs found in the older period of Kya-Kya
11	One man in uniform (a customer)	To represent the customer in the older period of Kya-Kya
12	A set of wooden chairs and a table on uneven ground	To showcase the situation for commoners in the older period of Kya-Kya
13	Different materials of tableware	To showcase the richness of culture in the older period of Kya-Kya

The mural at Kya-Kya in Surabaya serves as a vibrant representation of the area's rich cultural heritage, particularly highlighting the interplay between Chinese and Javanese influences. The background of the mural is painted in light blue, adorned with delicate cloud patterns that symbolize hope and advancement. These clouds are not merely decorative; they carry significant meanings of luck, fortune, and blessings, which are especially pertinent for new business ventures like the recently reopened Kya-Kya. The shadows of tall buildings depicted in the mural pay homage to the local Chinese heritage, specifically referencing the Suka Loka and Hong Tiek Hian temples, two of the oldest Chinese temples in Surabaya, located near Kembang Jepun.

On the left side of the mural, a yellow grid pattern signifies prosperity, drawing from auspicious Chinese cultural symbols. This grid is representative of how deeply Chinese culture has influenced local art and customs. Additionally, the use of red griding and a round green window in the mural further emphasizes themes of good fortune and growth. In Chinese and Peranakan

culture, red is a widely recognized symbol of good luck, while green represents new beginnings. Together, these elements reinforce the mural's overarching message of success and prosperity for the businesses in Kembang Jepun.

The architectural elements depicted in the mural also reflect the cultural fusion present in the area. An old house is illustrated with a distinctive roof style known as Xuan shanding, along with tiles in two colors: green and brown. This color scheme represents the collaboration between Chinese (Peranakan) and Javanese cultures. In traditional Peranakan homes, red, green, and gold are common colors that symbolize good luck and growth, while the brown tiles reflect Javanese architectural practices, which often utilize red clay. The brown color is significant in Javanese culture, as it symbolizes the earth and serves as a reminder of human origins and mortality. The mural also captures the essence of daily life and economic activities in Kembang Jepun. A food stall named "Pangsit Kya-Kya" is prominently featured, highlighting the area's culinary heritage. Pangsit, known as wonton in Chinese cuisine, reflects the integration of Chinese culinary traditions into Indonesian culture. The stall's green roof symbolizes growth and prosperity, while the depiction of a man pulling noodles emphasizes the labor-intensive nature of food preparation, showcasing the dedication of local food vendors.

Cultural attire depicted in the mural further illustrates the harmonious coexistence of Chinese and Javanese influences. Women are shown wearing Kebaya Encim paired with Kain Jarik, a traditional Javanese fabric. This attire is emblematic of cultural assimilation, combining elements from Malay, Chinese, and Dutch traditions. The colors and patterns of the clothing symbolize prosperity, nature, and bravery, reinforcing the theme of cultural collaboration in the Kembang Jepun area. The Kya-Kya mural serves as a rich visual narrative that encapsulates the historical and cultural dynamics of Surabaya. It celebrates the interplay between Chinese and Javanese traditions, conveying messages of hope, prosperity, and the vibrant heritage of the Kya-Kya community. Through its intricate details and symbolism, the mural not only reflects the past but also inspires a vision for the future of the area, emphasizing the importance of cultural continuity.



Figure 4: Chinese Mural Representing Business and Kya-Kya in the Early 20th Century

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings above, it can be interpreted that all of the signs found inside the murals carry messages. These messages are depicted in the form (words, pictures, colors, and shapes) of Chinese murals in Kya-Kya. They are interrelated and created through the relationship between

past processes, social activities, and norms in the surrounding areas. Thus, interpreting and explicating any messages depicted in the two Chinese murals requires substantial knowledge of the surrounding area's history and social culture, as it provides context and limits for any attempt at interpretation. As Kull, (2015) mentioned, the realm of text and meaning-making has no limit, unlike the physical reality restricted by physical laws. Thus, context allowed us to read and interpret the murals from a more precise vision to create more successful communication.

This correlates with Lindström et al., (2011), who argue that landscapes are systems of signs where each component is interconnected. Any individual signs form sequences guided by particular social codes and norms related to Kya-Kya and or Kembang Jepun. Hence, when examining these expressions, the reader's knowledge of social codes heavily influences the interpretation of landscape as a text relies heavily on the reader rather than the sender. Therefore, to successfully read the Chinese murals in case, any past process and context is essential. This finding is also consistent with Widgren, (2004) and Lindström, (2019), who suggest the importance of form, function, process, and context in reading landscapes, such as murals.

An in-depth analysis of the Chinese mural of festivity and celebration in Kya-Kya reveals that the mural has strong cultural relations with Chinese culture. However, the first thing that caught your attention is the text *Kembang Jepun* at the center of the murals. This phenomenon is explained by Goebel, (2020), who suggested that the most important text is either placed in the center or written in the largest font and placed above subordinate text. On the other hand, the mural's theme is festivity and celebrations of the newly re-opened Kya-Kya, which is strongly influenced by Chinese culture. Thus, Chinese culture becomes the dominant context in interpreting the mural.

Color symbolism is one of the few important aspects of this mural. Each and every color carries its own meaning, which is interrelated with other physical forms, such as words, shapes, and pictures. The meaning or function of the forms can vary depending on the combinations of those aspects. For instance, the background color of the first mural is pastel pink, a very pale of cool toned pink that is lighter than both light pink and baby pink (Olesen, 2022). Yet, it does not mean that the symbolism of this color differs from the original color of pink. According to Yelang (2023), pink symbolizes auspiciousness and beauty in Chinese culture. Similarly, the statements of (Olesen, 2022), Mandarin, (2022), and Liu, (2022) suggest that red symbolizes good luck and fortune, yellow marks the auspicious date, orange represents fortune, green represents the environment's vitality and renewal, blue represents advancement, white represents peace and success, etc. These findings align with Li (2014), who analyzed how color could have different meanings depending on which culture interacts with it. In her study, she compares how color in English and Chinese culture differ in meaning. Moreover, color symbolism in Chinese culture is mostly based on the Five Elements Theory: Fire, Earth, Water, Metal, and Wood. These elements also significantly influence many Chinese beliefs and customs (Mandarin, 2022; Olesen, 2022).

The mural contains several Chinese Symbols, symbolism, and art motifs. For example, the colorful lion dance heads, red lanterns, and leaves represent hope, a bright future, good luck, prosperity, treasure, and chasing away bad spirits. These findings corroborate those of Mohamed et al., (2016), who suggested that good luck, prosperity, and treasure in Chinese culture are not

limitedly represented by the several ornaments above but also by gemstones. He found that the more expensive a gemstone is, the more luck it brings to its wearer.

Moreover, Gaumond, (2023) also pointed out how flowers hold significant cultural symbolism in China and feng shui. Various plants and blossoms, distinguished by their features and colors, are used in designs to enhance energy, harmony, and specific life aspects. According to him, Orange Marigolds, Yellow Daffodils, and Pink Hollyhocks often signify wealth, prosperity, and good fortune. They also attract positive energy, ambitions, and perseverance.

Next, this study interpreted that flower buds could symbolize a new beginning, resembling its function in reality. In addition, as Beaumont, (2023) suggested, the wind brings good luck and prosperity. Similarly, as Chinasage, (2018), stated, the clouds symbolize Luck. Therefore, those findings suggest that their existence in these murals represents the wishes for the newly reopened Kya-Kya to be successful.

Meanwhile, other pictures, such as accented doors, roofs, pillars, and windows, most likely represent the heritage buildings and houses in the area. For instance, the look of the windows in the mural is evidently traced back to the era of Dutch colonialism. This is in parallel with the finding of Purnomo et al., (2017), which stated that architecture in Oranje Fort, Ternate (built during the Dutch colonialization), has the exact same type of windows. All of the findings above corroborate with those of (Hariyatmi, 2023) and Stampoulidis et al., (2018), who suggest that social and cultural factors influence the meaning-making behind murals.

On the other hand, the mural of business and Kya-Kya in the early 20th century has a theme that revolves heavily around business and the old period of Kya-Kya. This is consistent with Halim et al., (2018), who explain that most Chinese Immigrants and Peranakan settling in Surabaya during the 19th and 20th centuries were mostly traders who often sold common necessities and locally produced products. Thus, the illustration of the seller and food stall in the murals appropriately reflected the situations in the area. Moreover, the influence of Peranakan and Local culture is much more pronounced in these murals. This can be seen through the illustration of accented roofs, Becak (traditional rickshaw), traditional clothes (Kebaya Encim), "Pangsit Kya-Kya," and tableware (chopstick). To begin with, the illustration of the accented roof on the house is often referred to as a resting hill roof (Xuan Shanding). Khudori, (2019) suggested that this roof is the most commonly used in Chinese-themed buildings.

Next, in the statement of Duits (2023), the Japanese initially made becak (human-powered rickshaw), and in the 19th century, it managed to spread to countless Asian countries, including Indonesia. Similarly, "Pangsit Kya-Kya" and chopsticks are also a product of Peranakan culture. originally, they were from China; however, with time, they were introduced and slowly blended in with our local culture. These findings are consistent with Rudiansyah & Sijabat (2022), who suggested that Chinese immigrants or Peranakan leave many legacies (through acculturation) in Indonesian cuisine, such as Pangsit and Chopstick. It is then no longer just Peranakan culture. Instead, it has integrated and become part of Indonesian Culture.

Lastly, the traditional tops the females wore in the mural represent Chinese women's clothing in the 20th century (during Dutch and Japanese colonialism). These findings agree with Fadlia (2022), who argues that Chinese-Peranakan women began to wear them in the 1930s. From then on, Kebaya Encim became something that could represent the identity of the community that wears it. In addition to that, the women seem to pair the top (Kebaya Encim) with green

Jarik (traditional Javanese fabric) with the Parang (traditional Javanese pattern) pattern at the bottom. According to Hasyim (2018), green in Javanese culture often carries the connotative meaning of nature and fertility. Meanwhile, the pattern of Parang in the Jarik, as stated in Casual (2023), often represents power and bravery. Hence, from all of the key findings mentioned above, it can be concluded that the mural is most likely trying to portray the business and life in Kya-Kya during the 20th century.

Therefore, after comparing the two Chinese murals, this study found several interesting points. First, while both murals are located in Kya-Kya, their cultural influences (context) are slightly different. The first mural that represents festivity and celebration is significantly influenced by Chinese culture. In contrast, the other murals representing business and Kya-Kya in the early 20th century had much more Peranakan influence. This aligns with the findings of Riyanto et al., (2023) that there could be various murals within the same area with different messages and contexts. Second, while the themes of both murals appear different, the underlying messages are pretty clear, suggesting that both murals exist to remind people of the beauty and histories of Kya-Kya and Kembang Jepun. This correlates with Hariyatmi, (2023), who argues that murals as communication tools can be used to remind people of their previous knowledge and reinforce the new one to raise awareness of the current messages in the murals. Hence, both murals exist as decoration and as new icons for the area, and it could be interpreted that the murals do not belong to just one culture. Instead, they celebrate Kya-Kya, which is rich in culture and history.

6. CONCLUSION

The previous discussion on the two Chinese murals in Kya-Kya reveals that the murals' text, pictures, colors, and shapes convey messages deeply rooted in the area's historical and social context. Therefore, based on the discussion above, the researcher arrives at the following conclusions. The first mural, often featuring traditional Chinese symbols like Lion dance heads, red lanterns, and clouds, represents festivity and celebration, conveying wishes for good luck, wealth, and prosperity in the re-opening of Kya-Kya. on the other hand, the second mural highlights the historical influence of Chinese immigrants and Peranakan culture on Kya-Kya's business practices and daily life through cultural symbols, blending Chinese, Peranakan, and Javanese elements to represent early 20th-century life. They both celebrate Kya-Kya's rich cultural heritage and significance, reminding them of the area's historical significance and cultural diversity.

Nevertheless, the complexity of semiotic landscape, culture, and meaning-making is limitless. This research only analyzes how Chinese Culture is depicted in Chinese murals in KYA-KYA. Thus, the portrayal of Chinese and Peranakan culture in other murals or paintings in Indonesia is also a question for further research. Therefore, the researcher hopes the next researcher will consider analyzing more murals in Surabaya, possibly using the same Semiotic Landscape theory or another theory within the linguistic branch for deeper analysis.

7. REFERENCES

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