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documentation  
of proportion and  
structure in  
"Nirnaaya Sagar  
Typefaces

VEMSR-5

जी. ए. केन्द्र पुस्तकालय Ithi Bachel  
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# VISUAL COMMUNICATION

SPECIAL PROJECT

## DOCUMENTATION OF PROPORTION AND STRUCTURE IN "NIRNAYA SAGAR" TYPEFACES

By  
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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF DESIGN IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION.

Guide : PROF. R. K. JOSHI

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN CENTER, IIT. BOMBAY  
MARCH 1990

# APPROVAL SHEET

THE PROJECT ENTITLED  
**DOCUMENTATION OF  
PROPORTION AND STRUCTURE IN  
"NIRNAYA SAGAR" TYPEFACE**

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RAJEEV PRAKASH

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GUIDE

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am thankful to my guide Prof. R. K. Joshi for his valuable guidance through the duration of this project. I am thankful to Gopal Krishna Modi for his valuable help and guidance without which this project would have been incomplete.

Thanks to Arati, Arlene, Punya and Divekar for many reasons.

## INTRODUCTION

"Universality and permanence are the two aspects of the master piece."

The definition applies fully to the type faces produced by Nirnaya Sagar press and Javji Dadaji type foundry, established in early last century in Bombay under the inspiring guidance of Javji Dadaji. This tradition set up by him has been ably followed by dedicated type-designers and punchcutters like Ranoji aru who have produced excellent designs with an artistic beauty which is still unmatched today.

Even after the arrival of phototype setting, computerisation and other modern techniques, it is worth mentioning that the typefaces done by Javji Dadaji are still excellent in both beauty and function. Javji Dadaji learnt from his mistakes and errors and this working experience helped him to produce

master pieces which cannot be compared and equaled today even with so much of technological advancement in type design.

Thus it is still relevant to study and analyse Nirnaya Sagar types with greater detailed so that what ever we do for the present Indian script follows not only scientific rules of letter design in terms of legibility, but also maintain traditional harmony.

## **O J E C T I V E S**

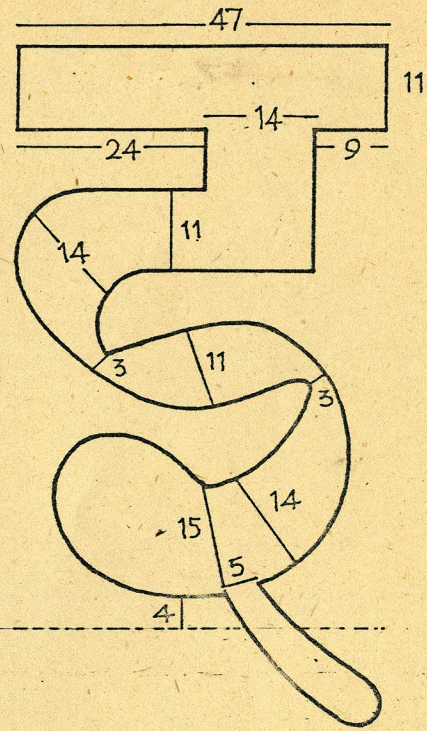
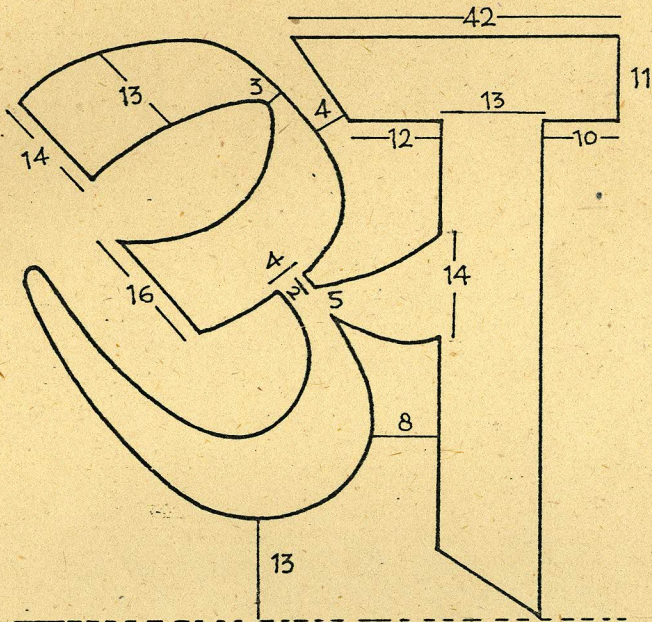
The main objective of this project is to complete a detailed study of letter forms designed by Javji Dadaji and arrive at certain guide lines for future students of type design.

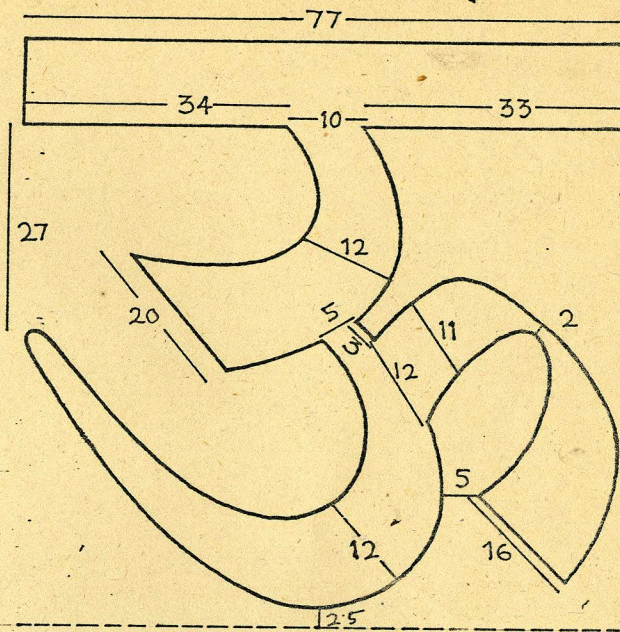
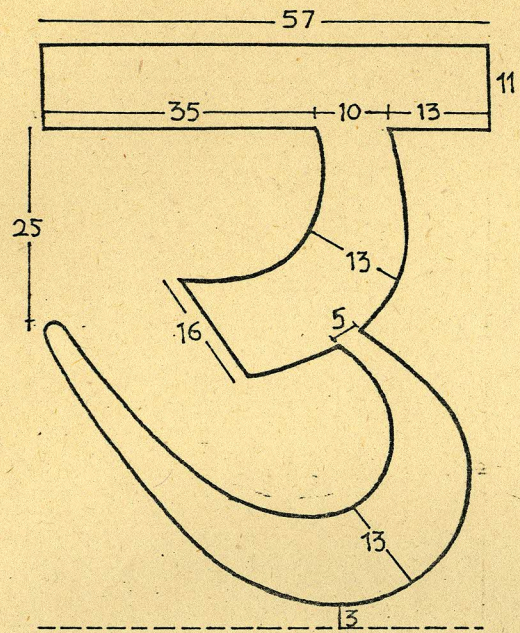
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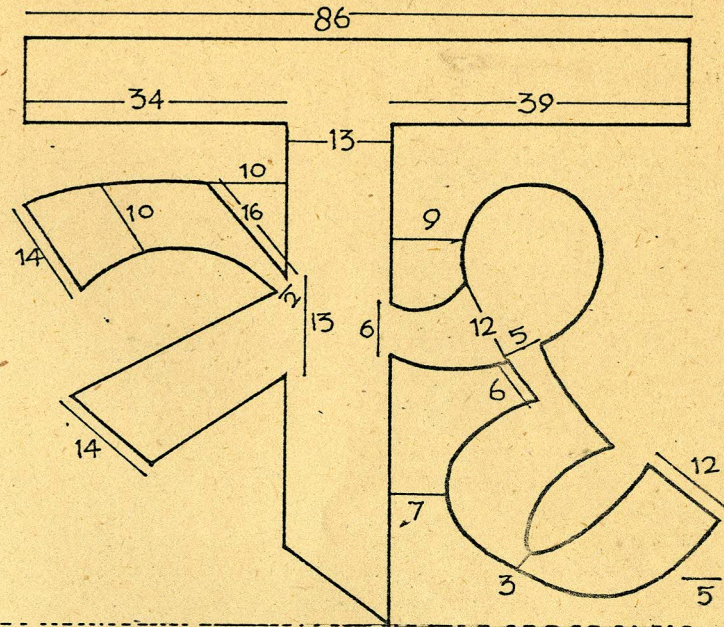
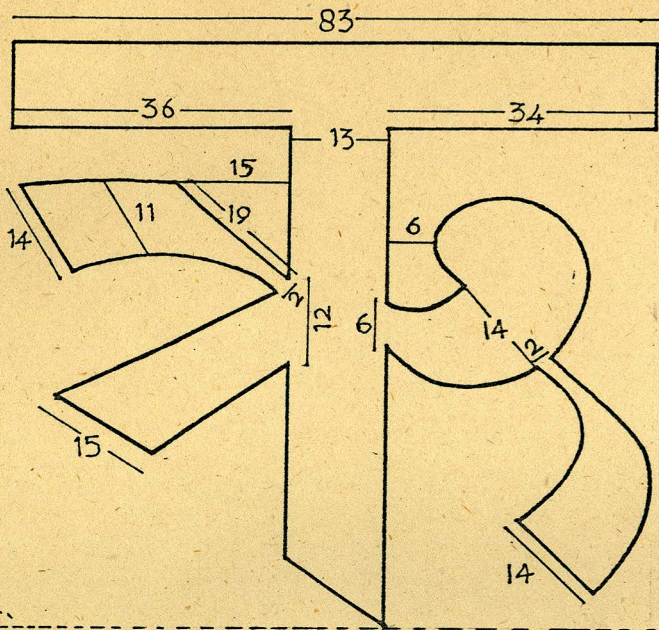
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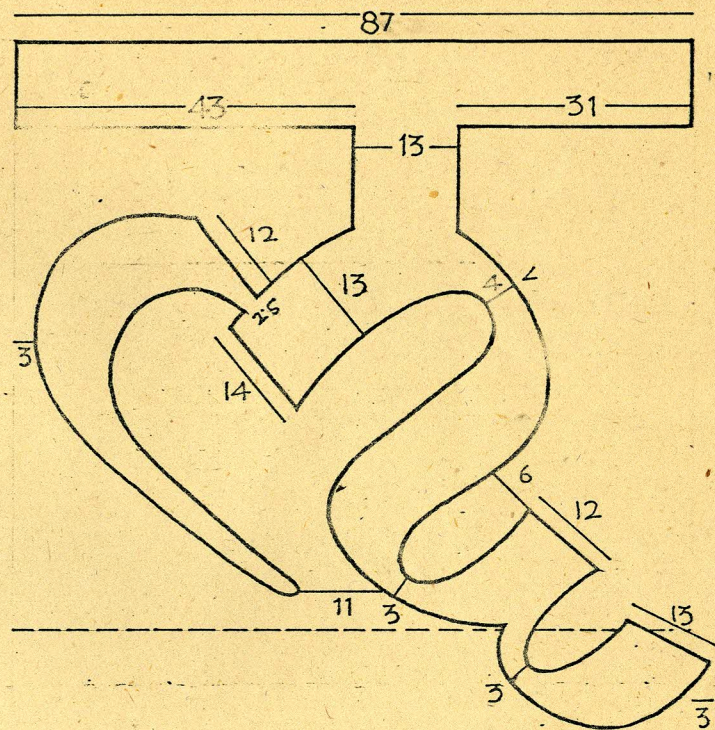
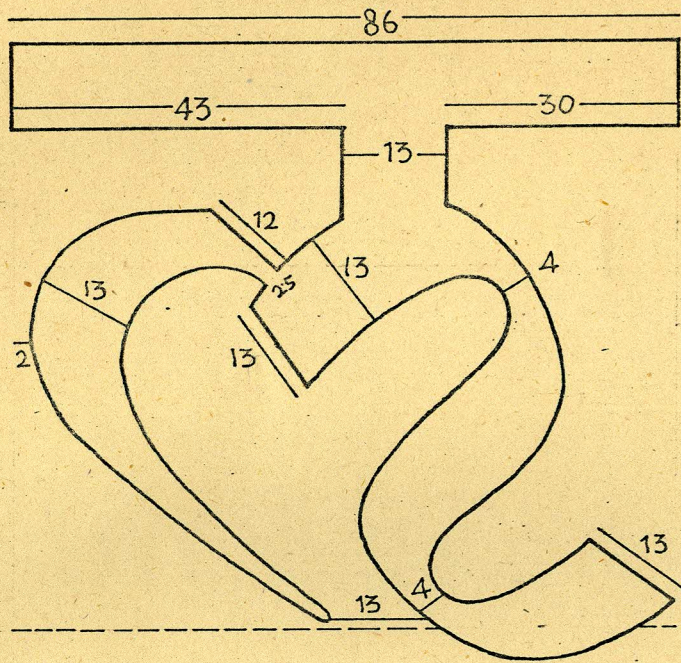
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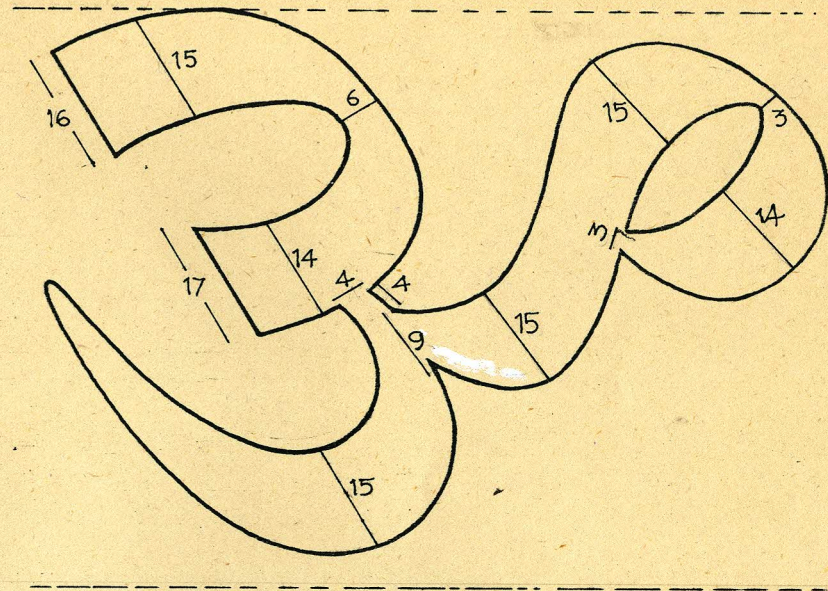
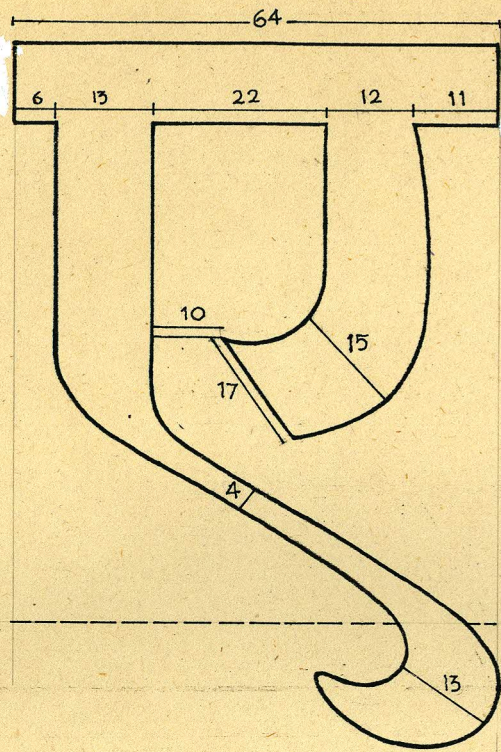
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## **A N A L Y S I S**

The typefaces produced by Javaji Dadaji exist in series as well as in different sizes and weights for each font.

Firstly a chart has been prepared to give a comprehensive list of all the fonts designed by Nirnaya Sagar along with the different styles weights and names.

Secondly the process of analysis demands the detailed observations through the enlargements (2inch height) of all the characters of one font in one common size so that the counters as well as the white space within the characters can be analysed accurately.

The white space between characters in Devanagari, the proportions of the thickness of the horizontal line

and the structure of their strokes determine the characteristics of the typeface. The principles for constructing the half-consonants, conjuncts and vowel signs were conceived and were used by Javji need be studied. The books printed by him using his typefaces maintain legibility by careful planning of every aspect of design such as inter-line spaces (leading), margins etc.

The Devanagari typeface has the inherent limitation of the straight jacket (शिरो रेखा) and therefore in the construction of characters the contours have to be emphasized and highlighted so that the monotony of the straight line is broken or avoided. The depth study examines the skill with which similar contours have been observed without generating monotony or being a stereotype. The original shape of the consonants have been maintained in the conjuncts as well, hence a definite characteristic of type style is

maintained within each family. The type faces of Javji are mostly based on the reed pen stroke and the pen flow can be distinctly recognized. It is now for us to examine and find out the skill behind this achievement. The aspect of legibility and readability have never been sacrificed. Normally, it is considered to be difficult to align the set-width of a character especially for Devanagari and this can be achieved only with great care and extra ordinary skill. Nirnaya Sagar typefaces thus excel in perfect composition being both legible and beautiful.

## **C O N C L U S I O N**

A systematic and methodical examination of this kind of a typeface is long over due especially to avoid imposition on the Indian market of distorted typefaces in Devanagari. An attempt has been made here to

systematically analyse and document the Nirnaya Sagar typeface giving adequate technical information essential for students of type designing. The Documentation is printed in the form of a booklet which could be made accessible to type designers as a basic source material.

