

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)



The Post Card (PC) was a cheap medium of communication as well as for advertisement i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$ a as against $\frac{1}{2}$ a for envelopes. The rather small size of these cards (i.e. 121x74) created constraint on the users. So the ingenious Bazaar merchants evolved a larger size of the PC, 138x89mm, assuming that these would go through the post at the usual rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ a. And so they did. Possibly this was adopted from the British UPU Post Card of equivalent size which was in use since 1880, exclusively for foreign correspondence.

The term Bazaar Cards (BC) refers to those type of indigenously manufactured cards by Native printing presses-characterized by the inconsistency in paper and printing, generally of poor quality, though there have been exceptions.

Analyzing the background of their popularity one has to refer back to historical and socio-economic conditions, then prevalent. The National awakening was on the upsurge. Be Indian-Buy Indian (Swadeshi) became the popular credo with the native gentry.

The Bazaar merchants cashed in on the National sentiments prevailing then. These Bazaar Cards made their debut in 1905 without much fanfare, emblazoned with the merchant's advt. and the printer's name. Some of the cards had various printed designs, the popular group being various gods and Goddesses from Hindu mythology, which no doubt gave an aura of religious sanctity, so popular among the locals.

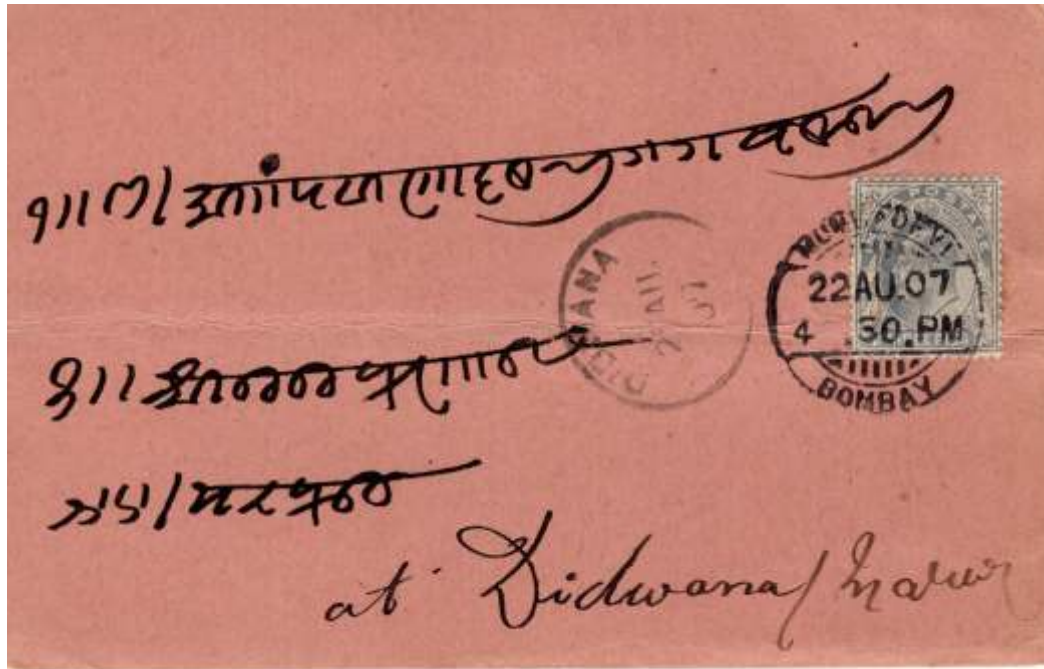
These cards became an instant success, as is evidenced from the wide postal usage during this period. The locals preferred these cards to those issued by the PO (printed in the UK by De la Rue). Apart from the political and religious sentiments, the Bazaar cards had more space for correspondence than their PO counterparts.

As the sale of the PO PC dwindled, the postal authorities became alarmed and as a result a radical change in the format might have been contemplated. Passing away of King Edward in 1912 provided the PO the opportunity to introduce a new PC, which had the format of the Bazaar Cards. So, soon after 1912, these Bazaar Cards gradually faded away.

I have attempted to classify them in ten main groups, with their attendant sub-types, which represents the whole range of these cards.

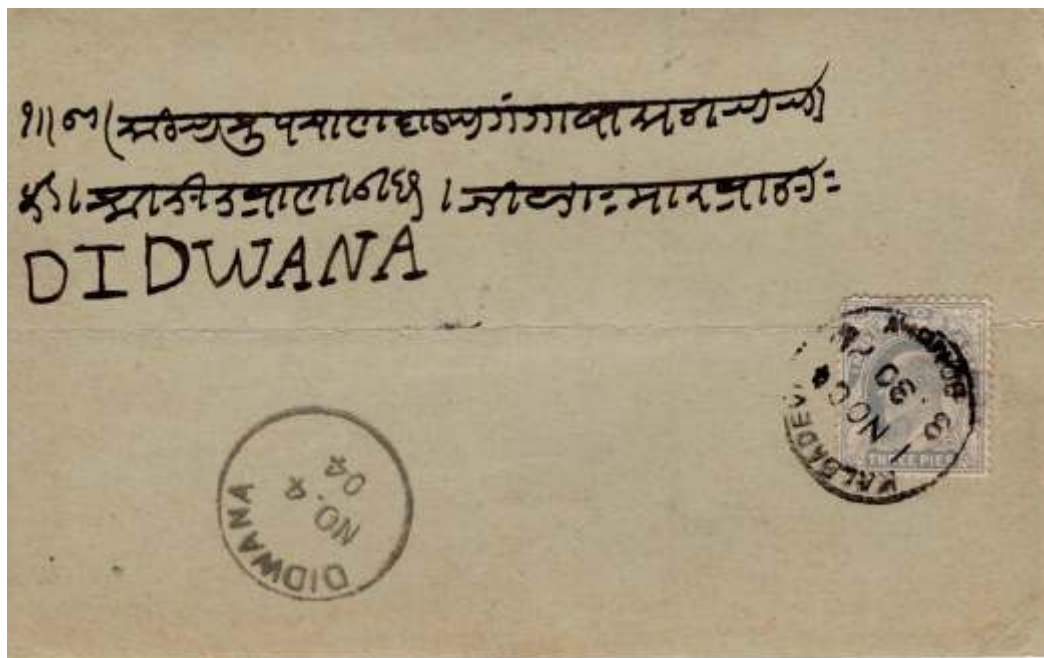
THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - I : Blank card without any printed text.
Only address on the front side



Date : 22/08/1907
City : Mumbadevi
Bombay

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 01/11/1904
City : Kalbadevi
Bombay

Postage : 3 Pies

TECHNICAL ASPECTS :

PAPER : These Bazaar cards were printed on paper card sheet (thin card board) of 0.5 mm to 0.6 mm thick. The card has rough surface and were not uniform in GSM.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - II : Blank card with printed text
Printers name and a single box for ¼a stamps.



Date : 18/01/1907
City : Jodhpur

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 10/07/1909
City : Sujangarh

Postage : 3 Pies

Some cards with no picture but advertisement of the product given in the two line dividing strip of the back side were also available. That gave more space to the writer.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - II : Blank card with printed text

Printers name and a single box for 1/4a stamps.

Spelling mistake : 'Psot' instead of 'Post'

Date : 29/08/1907

City : Didwana



Postage : 3 Pies

Postage due : 1/2 Annas?



Date : 08/09/1907

City : Didwana

Postage : 3 Pies

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - III : Un Authorised use of The 'Lion and the Unicorn' emblem



Date : 22/08/1907
City : Indore

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 01/12/1907
City :

Postage : 3 Pies

The Lion and the Unicorn are symbols of the United Kingdom. They are, properly speaking, heraldic supporters appearing in the full royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom. The lion stands for England and the unicorn for Scotland. The combination therefore dates back to the 1603 accession of James I of England who was already James VI of Scotland.

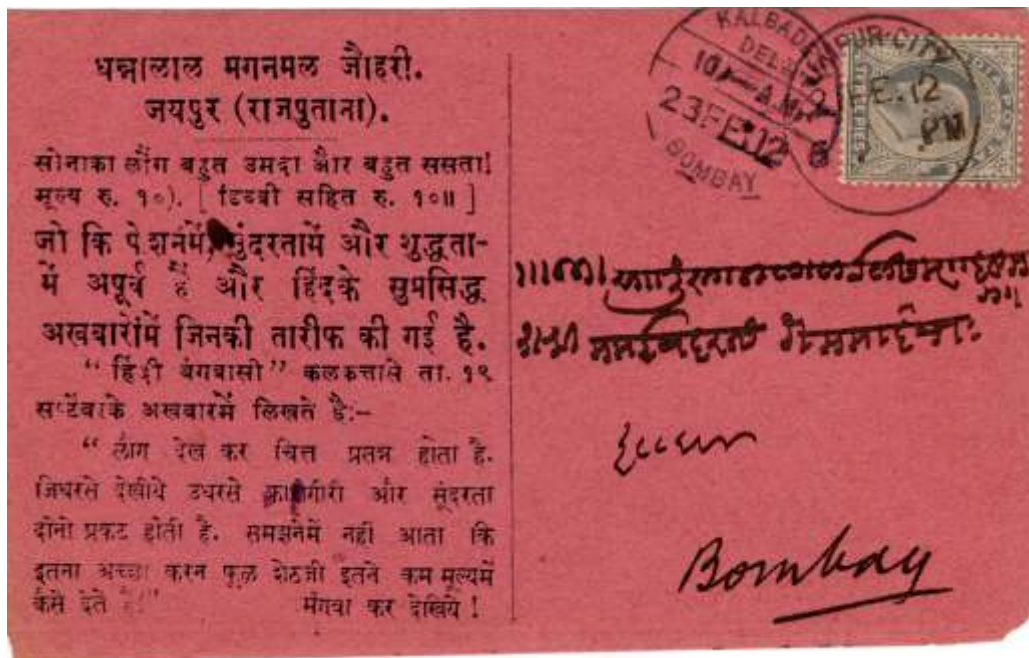
THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - IV : Printers (or merchants) name with advertisement



Date : 02/02/1906
City : Didwana

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 23/02/1912
City : Jaipur

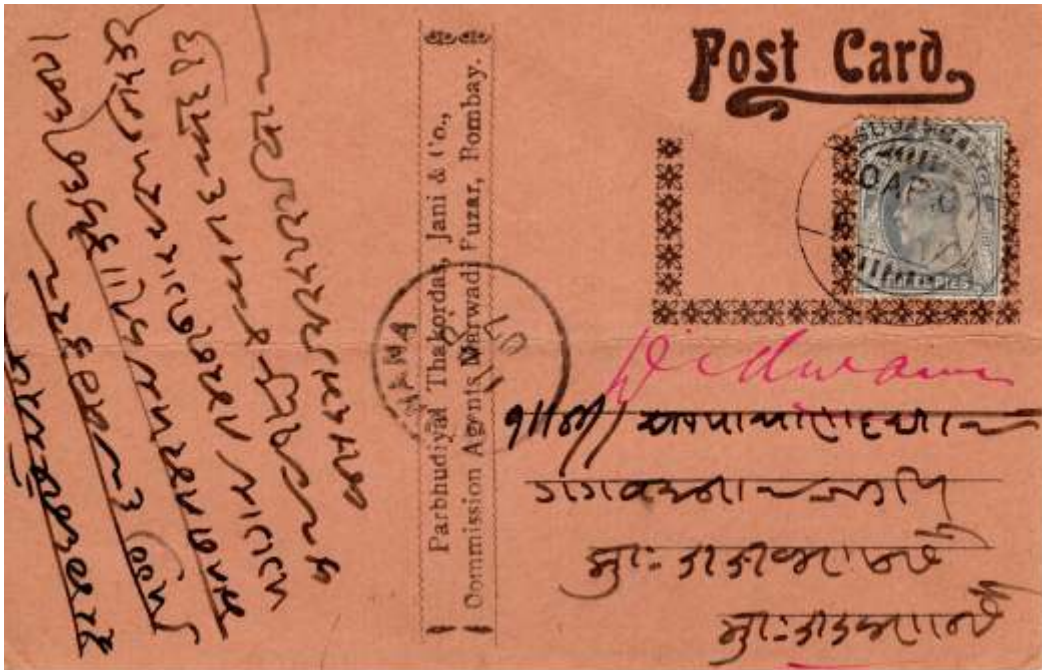
Postage : 3 Pies

SALES :

Bazaar post cards were on sales in the general market at stationery shops to at that times. As these were in massive use by traders and merchants, these were available in whole sale. Even advertisements were done on these cards mentioning availability and sales of these cards. The price was quite low. Such as Rs.1-8 for 1000 pcs.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - V : Printers (or merchants) name with double ornamental boxed rectangle



Date : 11/04/1907
City : Sujangarh

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 26/11/1906
City : Jodhpur

Postage : 3 Pies

The reason for this is not clear, since 1/4a was the lowest denomination provided this additional space should the card be sent by registered post, when an additional stamp would be required.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VI : Printed design and space for address on the front.

RELIGIOUS AWAKENING : THE MYTHOLOGICAL, RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL DEPICTION :

SHIVA AND PARVATI



Date : 13/07/1907

City : B-17_OUT

Postage : 3 Pies

GANESH



Date : 23/02/1912

City : Jaipur

Postage : 3 Pies

Some of the cards had pictures of heroes of various mythological epics of India showing various deities, gods, scenes / images of the episodes of the epics. These cards certainly helped in promotion of religious awakening and enthusing religious spirits in India.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VI : Printed design and space for address on the front.
“Picture” Motifs - Mythology - Gods and Goddess

GODDESS SARASWATI



Date : 25/07/1905
City : Barsi

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : /01/1905
City : Jaipur

Postage : 3 Pies

A close study of such cards revealed that there was a huge variety of such cards which highlighted Hindu Mythological images on them as one could see the glimpse of heroes of Ramayana, Mahabharata, various Hindu deities and gods & scenes / images of various other epics on the pictures imprinted on the cards covering partial, half or in some cases full side of such the cards and covers.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VI : Printed design and space for address on the front.
"Picture" Motifs - Mythology - Gods and Goddess

KRISHNA



Date : 26/07/1907
City : Kolia

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 08/11/1904
City :

Postage : 3 Pies

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VI : Printed design and space for address on the front.
“Picture” Motifs - Mythology - Gods and Goddess

HANUMAN



Date : 01/11/1904
City : Kolia

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 25/11/1906
City :

Postage : 3 Pies

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VI : Printed design and space for address on the front.
 "Picture" Motifs - Mythology - Gods and Goddess

RAM AND SITA (of Ramayana)



Date : 09/07/1907
 City : Gulbarga

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : /10/1904
 City : M-3 IN

Postage : 3 Pies

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VII : People

Women



Date : 13/04/1905
City : Ajmer

Postage : 3 Pies

Un Authorised use of The 'Lion and the Unicorn' emblem



Date : 03/08/1907
City :

Postage : 3 Pies

These post cards highlighted images of various facets of social life of that period such as women in different moods and dresses, aerial views of various places and locations, mythological features, various rulers and administrators etc etc.; with span of all over India. As such, these have become source of learning more about social history of British India.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VII : People
Nobility



Date : /10/1904
City : M-3 IN

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 29/11/1906
City : Nanded

Postage : 3 Pies

Many of the bazaar cards depicted / portrayed images and pictures of various eminent kings and rulers to inculcate awareness amongst the people about them. It also portrayed images and pictures of various eminent warriors and freedom fighters to inculcate the spirit of freedom and love for motherland amongst the Indian who were striving hard for their rights and freedom.

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - VIII : BIRDS

A Bird



Date : 18/07/1907
City : B-17 OUT

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 11/12/1907
City :

Postage : 3 Pies

THE BAZAAR CARDS OF INDIA (1905 - 1912)

Type - IX : Historical Places

Architecture



Date : 26/05/1906
City : Beawar

Type - X : Religious Symbols

Symbol

Postage : 3 Pies



Date : 20/11/1905
City : Aburja

Postage : 3 Pies