



Received 02.12.2025 Revised 09.03.2026 Accepted 09.04.2026 Published: 10.04.2026

UDC 741.5:316.7

DOI: 10.30857/2617-0272.2026.1.4

Representation of territorial-spatial identity in modern graphic design

Natalia Udris-Borodavko*

PhD in Social Sciences, Professor
Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts
01601, 36 Yevhen Konovalets Str., Kyiv, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1831-5476>

Abstract. The research relevance is determined by growing value of territorial and spatial identity in the context of globalisation, as well as the need to identify trends and opportunities for socially influential institution of graphic design regarding the issue. The study aimed to substantiate the functionality of graphic design as a representative of territorial and spatial identity and to analyse methodology for implementing identification markers in design projects. The research process involved use of visual description, stylistic analysis, semiotic analysis, content analysis, classification, and comparative analysis methods. An increase in design community's interest in local contexts has been identified, which corresponds to socially balanced position of designers in vectors of development of modern globalised society. As a result of analysis of graphic design projects for 2021-2024, recognised by international professional communities, leading approaches and techniques for reproducing the identity of macro- and micro-spaces were identified. The study established that markers of territorial and spatial identity are evident in three ways: a single sign or a group of signs representing a material object-marker of natural environment; a space created by humans; a combination of markers of both environments with attributes typical of social actions of people in territory. The study underlined that these means reflect the levels of generalisation of territorial identity – from a single iconic sign of natural or anthropogenic origin to a complex system of symbols of tangible and intangible sociocultural connections. Levels differ in intensity of sociocultural influence on addressee, and choice is determined by project goals. The practical value of the study is determined by the use of the results by graphic designers, educators in art and design specialisations, as well as scholars in the fields of design, cultural studies, and sociology

Keywords: sociocultural identity; visual communication; cultural diversity; localisation; sustainability; interdisciplinarity

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, graphic design is recognised as a significant sociocultural phenomenon whose development reflects the dynamics of the communities it serves. Institutionalisation is evident through the activities of international professional associations that cooperate with governmental bodies and educational institutions, contribute to policy-making, and organise public initiatives addressing socially relevant issues. Deep integration of graphic design into social life has fostered a growing sense of responsibility within industry, expressed in designers' efforts to identify and respond to urgent societal challenges.

L.O. Vreja & S. Balan (2023) examined crisis processes in socialisation and construction of self-identity,

refuting the concept of fluid self-identity and the possibility of almost daily change. L. Kipng'etich (2024) offered a new interpretation of identity outside crisis paradigm – the concept of hybrid identity, which is formed in conditions of cultural hybridisation. According to the scholar, media content practices using inclusive and nuanced images of cultural diversity can promote better awareness and appreciation of diverse forms of cultural expression and identity among audiences around the world. O. Bartos & V. Smaga (2025) proposed a concept of global identity, defining as a form of self-awareness that reflects an individual belonging to and connection with global community. At the same time, the study emphasised that global identity does not negate other

Suggested Citation:

Udris-Borodavko, N. (2026). Representation of territorial-spatial identity in modern graphic design. *Art and Design*, 9(1), 44-54. doi: 10.30857/2617-0272.2026.1.4.

*Corresponding author



Copyright © The Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

levels of self-identification, in particular local identity, which can occur in various forms – from ethnic and national to identification with specific social groups or territories. Thus, contemporary identity emerges as a multidimensional structure that combines local and supranational dimensions.

An equally relevant aspect is the conditions for identity formation, which are considered key in both concept of hybrid and global identity. G.P. Conceptions (2025) emphasised that process of identity formation should be based on democratic principles, respect, tolerance, and sociocultural solidarity. According to the researcher, these principles contribute to development of a sense of belonging, strengthening of unity in diversity, and formation of mutual awareness between countries and cultures. J. Gimeno Martinez (2023) explored changes in perceptions of national identity under the influence of migration, also presenting it as hybrid and dynamic. On the example of a design project by D. Bustamante, the study analysed how redefinition of national symbols can spark public debate. The study emphasised the complexity of expansion of binary logic of “glorification or attack” on the nation and need for new theoretical approaches that incorporate mobility of people within national borders. Territorial identity is fundamental to construction of other components of this concept. According to M. de Jong & H. Lu (2022), territorial identity is formed based on a set of phenomena, events, and their heroes, as well as stories about them. All this, according to the authors, alongside stable spatial attributes, forms the basis with which local residents form a new self-identity. This set transforms and develops into a new symbolic form of the region and spreads in a broader extra-regional information field. M. Bartůněk & P. Marek (2025) updated periodic surveys of local communities to study evolution of socio-cultural characteristics of population and document cultural features of regions as perceived by ordinary people.

Ukrainian researcher V.O. Bobyr (2025) refined theoretical and methodological foundations for studying territorial identity by analysing Domain Name System data and search queries. On example of queries on Kyiv, the study compiled identity markers characteristic of the capital, including categories such as networks, enterprises and institutions, sports facilities, political and institutional entities and events, media, historical and cultural heritage sites, toponyms, and products. Graphic design projects challenge dominant narratives and promote social change. Thoughtful design can contribute to formation of a more inclusive society that accommodates different views and situations, and thus

contributes to formation of a hybrid identity. In the context of design’s influence on sociocultural processes, M. Fonseca Braga (2023) argued that sustainable development goals are becoming more feasible thanks to a comprehensive view of problems from a design perspective. In particular, actualisation of development of communities, cities, and settlements as inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable justifies interest and social responsibility of designers in terms of representing markers of territorial identity.

Despite a significant number of studies on identity from perspective of cultural studies, sociology, psychology, and other humanities, there was a gap in research of possibilities of graphic design as a mechanism for constructing and preserving the territorial and spatial identity of people in the globalised society of the first third of the 21st century. This determines the study aim, which was to substantiate the role of graphic design in representing territorial and spatial identity and to explore approaches to integrating identity markers into design projects.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Achieving the set goal required analysis of empirical material. To this end, a structure of territorial identity markers was developed. It became a criteria-based scheme for selecting projects and organising them following techniques and methods used by designers. Foundation for creation of criteria structure was theory of social action by T. Parsons (1949). It substantiates the model of social reality and markers of human sociocultural identity, including territorial-spatial identity. The research methodology was also based on theory of sign systems by C. Peirce (1991), in particular triad of signs, which are organised by three types of connection between what is signified and what signifies it: iconic sign, sign-icon, sign-symbol. The source base for analysis of graphic designers’ approaches to reproducing territorial identity consisted of projects submitted to international visual communication competitions in 2021 and 2024 and recognised as the best by being included in shortlists or awarded winning places (Table 1). These projects were indicative of the development of graphic design, as they have received professional recognition from a jury composed of leading and influential designers of international practice. The projects demonstrated the position of two categories of participants in the systematic development of visual communications: designers who experiment and embody new ideas (visions) and designers who already have authority and influence and set the highest standards.

Table 1. General characteristics of the source base

Project creation/publication period	From 2021 to 2024.
Project availability	Open access on international visual communications festival platforms Epica-awards, DANDAD, A'Design Award, Red Dot Award.
Project authorship	Local and global design studios from all participating countries (except for Russia).

Table 1. Continued

Necessary component	Realisability, presence of a project annotation with a description of the concept from the designers.
Functional purpose of the project, type of design	All types of graphic design submitted to the festival and competitions in which territorial identity is visually manifested, supported by a description of the project concept in the annotation from the designers.

Source: compiled by author

To analyse empirical material, methods of visual description, stylistic analysis, semiotic analysis, comparative analysis and classification were used. A substantial component of the analysis were texts that justify the designers' visual proposals and reveal additional underlying meanings. Projects selected on this basis were grouped into two categories according to type of semantic connection between specific territories and design products representing them using recognisable markers. First group consisted of projects with an iconic type of connection. These projects are directly related to territories, and their graphic elements are iconic symbols of the objects of these centres. They included branding of cities or regions. Second group included projects with indexical and symbolic types of connection. Their themes are indirectly related to territories they represent. Such project concepts were deliberately chosen by designers to achieve additional socially responsible goals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The systematisation of parameters of a model by T. Parsons (1949) of social reality was used to create a list of criteria for self-identification by a social actor who is the target audience of a graphic design project and reads visual data from it: the macro-space to which it belongs (natural and artificially created by humans) – natural habitat, continent, country; micro-space – place of residence (house, apartment), place of work (office, production facility), leisure area, etc.; social action that the addressee has performed, is performing or plans to perform (goal, conditions, means); social status to which of belonging or which

is referential (desirable); social roles and their typical characteristics; social interactions; combination of modes of social time; cultural affiliation. The context of the stated article topic on formation/preservation/consolidation of a person's territorial identity through graphic design addressed the first two components and their representation in graphic design projects – markers of macro- and microspace.

During analysis of first group of projects, a subgroup of projects was highlighted, whose imagery and semantics were based on reproduction of natural objects. Figure 1 showed projects in which visual concepts conveying the uniqueness of specific regions are based on local flora, fauna, and landscape features. Visual identity of the Parkias Reserve (Brazil) is based on an image of the Parkia Pêndula tree, which is iconic for local biome, executed in aesthetics of local body paintings and feather headdresses of indigenous inhabitants of Brazilian forests. In visual identity of Khortytsia Island (Ukraine), the letter X symbolises intertwined roots that transform into images of local flora and fauna, historical artefacts, images from myths and legends, bronze, water, stone and other materials of inner world of the island. Natural components form the basis of visual branding of national forest park in the picturesque Jingting Mountain area (China). Images of mountain ranges, carefree clouds and wild cranes are complemented by attributes of characteristic pavilions and towers. Notably, use of colour gradients and compositional placement of elements create an illusion of mistiness and sublimity characteristic of high-altitude areas, while at the same time easily correlating with aesthetics of digital technologies.

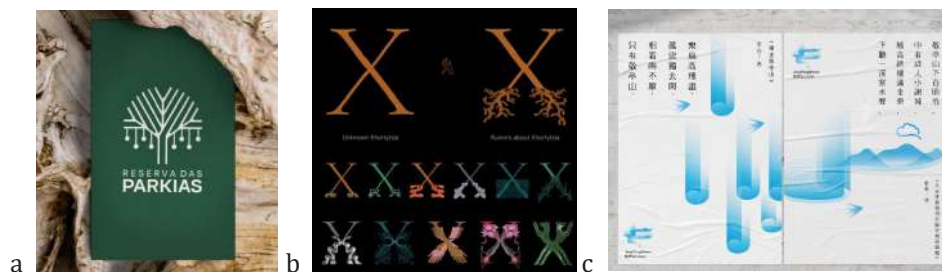


Figure 1. Representation of territorial identity through single objects of the natural environment

Note: an iconic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – Reserva Das Parkias nature reserve, Brazil (2024); b – Khortytsia Island, Ukraine (2021), Khortytsia “Bickerstaff”; c – area in the Jingting Mountains, China (2023)

Source: Reserva Das Parkias (n.d.), Bickerstaff.658 “Bickerstaff” (n.d.), Jingting Mountain scenic area (n.d.)

The sign systems of the second subgroup of projects contain a combination of natural components and those that are the results of human activity (Fig. 2). In promotional poster for Feixi County (China), calligraphic characters “fei” and “hi” contain images of representative modern structures (industrial parks, bridges, high-speed railways and skyscrapers) and cultural heritage (local recognisable palaces and ancient buildings with historical and cultural imprints). Image style of cultural event celebrating the New Year in historical and cultural gardens of Joyful Garden Tour (China) is based on pictograms of local buildings of traditional architecture and a dragon (the symbol of 2024). Notably, colour scheme of the project (blue and pink) was

chosen to reflect new vitality that has emerged from the long history. Elements of territorial-spatial identity are also present in visual accompaniment project for games of Japan’s main basketball league, namely buildings and landmarks that identify the host city of Mito. Compositional modules feature random arrangements of photo portraits of sports stars alongside symbolic images of traditional and modern buildings, as well as cherry blossoms and fish. Projects contain symbolic combinations of natural attributes of territory with attributes of historically established social actions in these centres. Such content presents the multi-layered nature of social reality that surrounds a person in their perception, and therefore the complexity of their territorial identity.



Figure 2. Representation of the macro-space identity through a combination of natural ecosystems and man-made environment objects

Note: an iconic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – Feixi County, China (2023-2024); b – Joyful Garden Tour event, China (2024); c – Mito, Japan (2023)

Source: The impression of Feixi (n.d.), Joyful Garden Tour (n.d.), B. League All-Star Game 2023 (n.d.)

A notable example of redefined elements of micro-space, namely local everyday life, is presented in identity of Brazilian Roots Restaurant, located in Amsterdam (Netherlands) (Fig. 3). Brazilian designer reinterpreted such elements of Brazilian everyday culture as checkered tablecloth, which traditionally decorates tables in bars and homes, as well as tambourine, an essential musical instrument for accompanying traditional samba. Thus, square pattern comes from traditional tablecloth, and visual symbols filling these squares are associated with dining (plates and glasses) and entertainment (dancing and music). The colour scheme (pastel variations of green, yellow, and blue) refers to the Brazilian national flag.



Figure 3. Representation of microspace identity through man-made objects

Note: an iconic type of connection between a project and the territory it designates

Source: R. Gomes (n.d.)

Three projects presented in Figure 4 are the result of preliminary research and demonstrate a systematic approach to representation of territorial and spatial identity of the region. Efficiency of territorial and spatial identity of a particular region is related to a systematic approach to representation and preliminary research. A series of stamps, printed materials, and an interactive web application interface created for Japanese railways as part of My Japan Railway brand communication campaign feature identifying images of over 900 stations across the country. They present what is most characteristic of region and include, in addition to natural objects (Mount Fuji, bridges over gorges and reservoirs, unique structures), dishes, drinks, and people engaged in traditional local activities and sports. All components of the project reveal not only travel between regions, but also value of diversity of everyday life in Japan, as well as possibility of diversifying lifestyle simply by moving to another station. The project as a whole reveals social reality not only of a specific station area, but also of a macro-space of Japan in historical socio-cultural development. A similar approach was used for cultural rebranding of tourist region of Kukup (Malaysia). Project logo features an image of a fish and the colour blue, associated with sky and ocean as main natural features that define way of life in the region and symbolise peace and freedom.

While the fish is a dominant conceptual character, territorial and spatial identity is revealed through a wide range of images of local architectural forms, from palaces to fishermen huts on stilts, religious buildings, boats, tableware and household items. Identity of Schweizer Berghilfe, an organisation dedicated to economic development of disadvantaged mountain regions in Switzerland, reveals the appeal of places and character of local people not only through photographs, but also through language of concise pictograms that have been used to mark roads and farms in Alpine regions for centuries.

The project's logo and pictograms depict mountains, forests, water bodies, and typical occupations of the inhabitants (agriculture, cattle breeding, carpentry, construction). Minimalist images reflect an in-depth study of the region with established systemic links between the various components of socio-cultural development. They represent elements of macro- and micro-space. This significantly increases variability of identity representations and interpretations of images in projects by target audience, ensuring that a larger number of people are reached.



Figure 4. Representation of macro-space identity through complex sign systems of natural objects, man-made objects, and attributes of traditional social actions

Note: an iconic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – My Japan Railway, Japan (2024); b – Kukup, Malaysia (2024); c – Schweizer Berghilfe, Switzerland (2022)

Source: My Japan Railway (n.d.), Be a fish in Kukup (n.d.), Schweizer Berghilfe (n.d.)

In projects under consideration, semantic connection between implied by project and image that signifies is direct, thematically determined and visible. Manifestation territorial identity through depiction of iconic and indexical signs of macro-space objects in projects representing a specific territorial centre is logical and predictable. Second group of empirical basis of the study included projects with indexical and symbolic types of connection between a product or service and a sign system representing a specific territory. As in the first group, there are projects in which imagery is based on images of nature and projects in which the sign system is synthetic in nature. Figure 5 showed projects in which visual communication is achieved by highlighting a single object. In addition to unique regional significance, this object is imbued with semantics formed within local culture. For example, packaging of Green Field Watchmen rice, grown in highly ecological environment of Hangzhou (China), features images of wild animals and birds from product's place of origin. Images of roe deer, red cranes, Manchurian tigers, scaly cormorants and sables have miniscule connection with rice as such, but their indirect connection is the demonstration of territorial spatial identity, thus carrying deep meaning. Use of peony flower on the label of the Shun Pin Lang alcoholic beverage bottle is justified not only by physical prevalence in China, but also by symbolic meaning of prosperity, good luck, favour and abundance, reinforced by symbolism of the colour blue, such as wisdom and broad horizons, which, according

to the designers, brings a sense of joy and harmony to users. Use of panda image in two variations for identity of a creative company producing various fashion accessories, based in Chengdu (China), is expected given the uniqueness of this representative of fauna, which lives exclusively in China and, accordingly, is a substantial component of national territorial and spatial identity. Symbol of Tahitian airline Air Tahiti Nui is a tiare flower, which is a key element of the island's identity, embodying exceptional and sincere impressions and hospitality. Asymmetrical image of a white flower with seven petals, whose shape emphasises authenticity and organicity in reproduction, is used on various media with compositional transformations. Image of a flower is also key in the set of image materials for the Slovak national folk ballet "Luchnica". Stylised form of a wildflower, as a generalised image of wild vegetation of those lands, symbolises beauty, fragility and, at the same time, vitality and endurance. These are traits that designers have endowed the figure of the dancer with, whose silhouette resembles a stage costume and a flowering plant. The examples discussed demonstrate that emphasis on visual communication on a single image provides a profound and convincing conveyance of territorial and spatial identity. Such an object acts as a carrier of multi-layered cultural, symbolic, and value-based meanings rooted in local context. As a result, design not only identifies place of origin, but also forms an emotional connection between the product, culture, and consumer.



Figure 5. The representation of macro-space identity through individual objects in the natural environment
Note: the indexical and symbolic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – Green Field Watchmen rice, China (2022); b – Shun Pin Lang 480 Blue, China (2023); c – Six Pandas company, China (2023); d – Air Tahiti Nui, Tahiti (2020s); e – Lúčnica, Slovakia (2024)
Source: Green field watchmen (n.d.), Shun Pin Lang 480 blue (n.d.), Six pandas (n.d.), FutureBrand (n.d.b), Lúčnica (n.d.)

A more comprehensive representation of natural locations is presented in Figure 6. These projects reveal contextual connections and demonstrate a macro-space in all complexity and evolution. The labels on Love Hanshui water bottles feature images of protected wetlands and tourist attractions in Wuhan (China), combined with four local animals (finless

porpoise, blue duck, black stork and elk), representing four seasons in this location. Design of the gift set for guests of the Oasyhotel cottage resort in the hills of Tuscany (Italy) is based on images of animals and birds, which are presented as icons on a graphic map of local forests and characters on packaging in form of a tangram game.



Figure 6. Representation of macro-space identity through a group of natural environment objects
Note: indexical and symbolic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – Love Hanshui water labels, China (2023); b – Oasyhotel hotel, Italy (2022)
Source: Love Hanshui (n.d.), The 6th “When in the woods” (n.d.)

Second subgroup in this category of selected projects reproduces, in addition to the specifics of the natural habitat, the results of human communities’ activities (Fig. 7). These products of activity remained relevant and have become stable markers of space. Mineral water “Hang Water” producer features iconic landmarks of Hangzhou (China) on labels, covering history, culture, environment, ecology and modernity (the archaeological ruins of Liangzhu, the Grand Canal, West Lake,

Sisi National Wetland Park and the venues of the Asian Games). The redesign of Acqua Panna® water labels and advertising materials features images of hills and cypress trees. Designers stated that by demonstrating the Tuscan spirit and way of life, they have created a visual universe that resonates with consumers in their everyday lives (FutureBrand, n.d.a). The source of colour for the advertising campaign for this water is also macro-space objects – tiles on the roofs of iconic

architectural structures and fields of purple irises. The labels of a limited series of bottles for dairy products from Ukrainian manufacturer Halychyna in 2022 presented territorial identity of 14 historical regions of Ukraine. They contained images of landscapes with key objects of these locations. Graphic map of the country is features a linear composition that synthesises individual landmarks and natural features. Design of labels and soft packaging for Green Captain, a producer of traditional products from Šipan Island (Croatia), is based on recreation of authentic atmosphere of the area,

maritime, natural island and architectural heritage. Wine labels feature patterns with pictographic and concise images of sea waves, seafaring attributes, olives, carob fruits, bridges, buildings and architectural details in four colours with several shades. Images of tangible and intangible heritage formed by long-term human activity in a particular territory ensure the recognisability and historical continuity of territorial identity. This approach combines local context with modern forms of communication to create a coherent and emotionally rich image of a place.



Figure 7. Representation of the macro-space identity through a combination of natural ecosystems and man-made environments

Note: an indexical and symbolic type of connection between the project and the territory it represents; a – labels for Hang Water mineral water, China (2023); b – Green Captain brand, Croatia (2024); c – Galychyna milk products, Ukraine (2022); Acqua Panna Italy (2022)

Source: Images of Hangzhou scenery (n.d.), Bickerstaff.658 “We instead of me” (n.d.), Green captain (n.d.), FutureBrand (n.d.a)

Use of all three types of signs reproduces territorial identity, albeit at different levels of semantic connections. When used in design, symbols reveal a deeper connection, which, on the one hand, requires additional descriptions in brand stories, and on the other hand, provides broader connotations, imagery, communicative

effect, and cultural influence on recipient. Demonstration of markers of territorial spatial identity in graphic design projects is implemented by various compositional and semantic means. Examples generalised that territorial-spatial identity in graphic design projects can be manifested in three ways (Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of project approaches to representing territorial-spatial identity in graphic design		
Approach	Natural space	Space created by humans
A single material object characteristic of a specific territory	An object of living or non-living nature	A building, a household object, or any other marker of physical space
A group of material objects characteristic of a specific territory	Exclusively natural components that comprehensively represent the natural ecosystem	A complex of buildings of ancient or modern architecture, monuments, bridges, unique small architectural forms
A mixed combination of natural and man-made elements		
A group of objects and related social actions and interactions of people that are typical for a specific territory	Objects of flora and fauna around which traditional crafts and ritual events were formed	Man-made attributes of traditional customs and modern types of production, sports, entertainment, culture

Source: compiled by the author

Main condition for graphic reproduction of identity markers is a combination of conventional schematisation and maximum recognisability through characteristic details and proportions. Recognisability in specific terms ensures representation of space through a painted object outside of general context and, accordingly, reproduces territorial and spatial identity. A design that uses only one sign of territorial and spatial identity focuses the viewer's attention on that object, therefore selection is based on complex reasoning. In such cases, image-identifier combines the of an index sign and a symbol sign, since the appropriateness of choosing this particular identifier is justified by symbolic links with theme of the project. The second and third approaches are used for serial projects or those with variable content branching. In cases where graphic design represents a specific centre, territorial and spatial identity is usually manifested in project in a complex and synthetic way. It is based on a systematic method that reproduces social and cultural components in an inseparable integrity.

Graphic design projects, whose role in shaping meanings and influencing the consciousness and behaviour of recipients has been repeatedly proven by various publications (Raff, 2012; Norman & Stappers, 2015; O'Shea, 2024), can be an influential factor in reproduction, transmission and preservation of people's socio-cultural identity in changing social reality. Despite graphic designers' attraction to the visual language of universal supranational design, whose principles were stipulated in late modernist period, there is now a growing interest in and awareness of value of local component. This applies to both semantic content and graphic representation. An increase in number of projects presenting markers of territorial and spatial identity will contribute to greater respect for diversity of local identities in the context of hybridisation and globalisation. The acceptance of projects with local representations and the recognition of their significance at international competitions confirm the implementation of a course of democracy and inclusiveness.

Analysis of projects revealed that designers often refer to symbolic systems representing a particular region, its history, and cultural heritage when developing project concepts. In addition, this approach, combined with thoughtful stylistics, creates project images that are recognised by professional international community as most memorable international experience. This suggests that despite minimisation of significance of territory factor in context of globalisation, it remains integral to human social activity, issues of identity, and construction of visual communication process. According to L. Kipng'etich (2024), in situations of layering and ambiguous combinations of various sociocultural aspects in a subjective model of human self-determination, markers of objective surrounding space of a person's stay, which they perceive

and fix in their memory, organise and stabilise identification responses.

A study of project annotations showed that designers' approach to theme of territorial identity requires preliminary collection of materials and justification of logic for selection of certain markers, as well as their implementation in a specific design. However, as W. Liu (2022) highlighted, not all designers are aware of and master inner meaning of regional cultural markers and highlight only visual effect of form does not exist in projects submitted to international competitions, as they are accompanied by teamwork norms, which are chosen rather superficially. This problem is personal responsibility of designer as a professional. This experience should be disseminated on a smaller scale.

According to M. de Jong & H. Lu (2022), a wide range of markers of territorial identity includes regional climatic conditions, topography, hydrogeology, animal resources, historical relics, historical remains, cultural resources, as well as signs of various activities and behaviours of people in space. Cultural markers include cuisine, characteristic artistic events, public performance traditions, historically formed public buildings and infrastructure. F. Knaps & S. Herrmann (2018) and M. Buschgens *et al.* (2019) considered elements that are perceptually perceived and create spatial organisation, natural phenomena (trees, mountains, and weather), as well as the role of people in creating the physical environment (architecture, clothing, and art), as substantial. According to results of a survey of Saudi Arabian designers conducted by W.M. Aleshawie (2019), 50.8% of respondents refer to architectural symbols (famous architectural and historical monuments and iconic modern structures) in their practice; 50.8% use images of animals and plants associated with macro and micro-space, and half (55.6%) of respondents use various references to lifestyle, including cuisine, clothing, and behaviour at work and leisure.

Review of projects in the article confirmed diversity of designers' approaches towards creation of a visual concept and using a wide range of territory markers. Result and addition to discourse on the topic is the structuring according to criteria of representation of natural objects, man-made objects, and mixed systems. Such systematisation is relevant for analysis of future projects to determine priorities in selection of markers. In addition, it is beneficial for practicing designers, who can use it as a project matrix. Attributes of social actions and interactions between people, which are recorded by historical objects and what has been created in the present, are also added to markers of territorial identity. The selection between a single object or a group of different markers depends on the complexity of the project task, seriality of developments, and target audience for which project is intended. At the same time, according to results of the review, projects in which the index or symbolic type of connection between the

project and the territory prevails have a deeper and more unexpected impact. Based on analysed projects, sign systems representing artificially created markers of territories mostly contain objects of tangible and intangible heritage. This confirmed the view of S.M. Hassan & T.A. Al-Dajani (2025) that graphic design is substantial for documentation and presentation of socio-cultural heritage, while T.H. Nguyen (2024) insisted that preservation and promotion of traditional values, identity, and tangible and intangible cultural values is one of primary tasks of educating global citizens in modern context of global integration and meets common global criteria. Thus, construction of a design concept based on the idea of representing territorial identity is a method of harmonising social reality, facilitating social orientation, and expanding functionality of graphic design to the level of social design.

Conscious emphasis on preservation and promotion of territorial and spatial identity is a counterbalance to tendency of modern graphic design toward a single global style. Appeal to identity markers is defined by designers and scholars not as an escape from the problem of globalism, but as a consciously chosen mechanism for transmitting cultural diversity to harmonise cultural hybridity. An analysis of concepts and approaches to identity reproduction projects by scientists and designers from different countries shows that the main tool is a system of visual signs, semantics of which reveal the sociocultural uniqueness of communities and modern societies.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of theoretical studies and internationally recognised graphic design projects (2021-2024) demonstrated a growing professional interest in local contexts and representation of territorial and spatial identity. Although universal supranational visual language remained widespread, contemporary design practice increasingly emphasised identity-based approaches. The study identified three main ways of implementing territorial identity markers in graphic design projects. First involves use of a single material

object typical of a specific area, either natural or man-made. Second method is based on representation of a group of material objects characteristic of a territory, including natural ecosystem elements or architectural and cultural landmarks. Third approach combines material markers with social actions and interactions associated with a locality, such as traditions, customs, production, sports, and leisure. In general, these three methods reflect different levels of generalisation of territorial identity – from a single symbol to a complex system of tangible and intangible connections.

Analysis of projects demonstrated that designers adhere to priorities of sociocultural development of modern globalised society, which are widely declared by social analysts and scientists. This influences concepts of their projects, choice of methods and means of developing project images, and choice of techniques, materials, and technologies. Furthermore, it demonstrates their social inclusion in social processes. A promising direction is further analysis of interdisciplinary cooperation between designers and scientists, particularly in fields of cultural studies, sociology, and anthropology. Another relevant area is development of pedagogical models for professional training of graphic and digital designers, in which preservation of cultural identity is considered a component of social responsibility. This involves integration of research approaches, critical analysis of local context, and ethical principles into educational programs, which will help future designers develop cultural meaning handling skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None.

FUNDING

This work received no external funding.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aleshawie, W.M. (2019). Cultural identity in graphic design. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 9(4), 50-63. doi: 10.30845/ajicr.v9n4p6.
- [2] B. League All-Star Game 2023. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=152302>.
- [3] Bartos, O., & Smaga, V. (2025). Global identity as a type of social identity. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University*, 2(55), 14-18. doi: 10.24144/2524-0609.2024.55.14-18.
- [4] Bartúněk, M., & Marek, P. (2025). Territorial identity of a region: A review of data collection techniques. *Hungarian Geographical Bulletin*, 74(1), 37-55. doi: 10.15201/hungeobull.74.1.3.
- [5] Be a fish in Kukup. (n.d.). *Indigo Award*. Retrieved from <https://www.indigoaward.com/winners/7575>.
- [6] Bickerstaff.658 "Bickerstaff". (n.d.). *Epica Awards*. Retrieved from <https://winners.epica-awards.com/2021/winners/56-00756-ALT/bickerstaff658/bickerstaff>.
- [7] Bickerstaff.658 "We instead of me". (n.d.). *Epica Awards*. Retrieved from <https://winners.epica-awards.com/2022/winners/04-00951-DIG/bickerstaff658/we-instead-of-me>.

- [8] Bobyr, V.O. (2025). Territorial identity through the lens of domain names and search queries: A case study of Kyiv. *Ukrainian Geographical Journal*, 2, 104-112. doi: [10.15407/ugz2025.02.104](https://doi.org/10.15407/ugz2025.02.104).
- [9] Buschgens, M., Figueiredo, B., & Rahman, K. (2019). How brand visual aesthetics foster a transnational imagined community. *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(11), 2268-2292. doi: [10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0655](https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0655).
- [10] Concepcions, G.P. (2025). Constructing ASEAN identity through shared cultural heritage and socio-cultural solidarity: A proposal. *SUVANNABHUMI*, 17(1), 7-31. doi: [10.22801/svn.2025.17.1.7](https://doi.org/10.22801/svn.2025.17.1.7).
- [11] de Jong, M., & Lu, H. (2022). City branding, regional identity and public space: What historical and cultural symbols in urban architecture reveal. *Global Public Policy and Governance*, 2, 203-231. doi: [10.1007/s43508-022-00043-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-022-00043-0).
- [12] Fonseca Braga, M. (2023). The fifth order of design: The value of design in times of transition. *Cubic Journal*, 6(6), 98-115. doi: [10.31182/cubic.2023.6.63](https://doi.org/10.31182/cubic.2023.6.63).
- [13] FutureBrand. (n.d.a). *Curaters of beauty, embellishing simple moments*. Retrieved from <https://www.futurebrand.com/our-work/acqua-panna>.
- [14] FutureBrand. (n.d.b). *The ambassador of a nation*. Retrieved from <https://www.futurebrand.com/our-work/air-tahiti-nui>.
- [15] Gimeno Martinez, J. (2023). Pluralizing the code: Designed national symbols beyond reverence. In S.A. Lichtman & J. Traganou (Eds.), *Design, displacement, migration: Spatial and material histories* (pp. 219-231). Boca Raton: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781003194293-18](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003194293-18).
- [16] Gomes, R. (n.d.). Brazilian roots – restaurant. *Behance*. Retrieved from <https://www.behance.net/gallery/123838197/Brazilian-Roots-Restaurant>.
- [17] Green captain. (n.d.). *Zambelli Design*. Retrieved from <https://www.zambellidesign.com/portfolio/green-captain-branding>.
- [18] Green field watchmen. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=159138>.
- [19] Hassan, S.M., & Al-Dajani, T.A. (2025). Utilizing graphic design trends to reimagine Saudi culture identity. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 4(2), 2552-2578. doi: [10.62754/joe.v4i2.6667](https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v4i2.6667).
- [20] Images of Hangzhou scenery. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design-image.php?v=2023&design=159134>.
- [21] Jingting Mountain scenic area. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=152983>.
- [22] Joyful Garden Tour. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=159119>.
- [23] Kipng'etich, L. (2024). Cultural hybridity and identity formation in globalized societies. *International Journal of Humanity and Social Sciences*, 2(5), 14-25. doi: [10.47941/ijhss.1885](https://doi.org/10.47941/ijhss.1885).
- [24] Knaps, F., & Herrmann, S. (2018). Analyzing cultural markers to characterize regional identity for rural planning. *Rural Landscapes: Society, Environment, History*, 5(1), article number 1. doi: [10.16993/rl.41](https://doi.org/10.16993/rl.41).
- [25] Liu, W. (2022). Regional cultural symbols in visual communication design. *International Journal of Frontiers in Sociology*, 4(5), 75-80. doi: [10.25236/IJFS.2022.040514](https://doi.org/10.25236/IJFS.2022.040514).
- [26] Love Hanshui. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=152699>.
- [27] Lúčnica. (n.d.). *Zlatý klinec*. Retrieved from <https://surli.cc/auitln>.
- [28] My Japan Railway. (n.d.). *D&AD Awards*. Retrieved from <https://surl.it/uuimcm>.
- [29] Nguyen, T.H. (2024). The Preserving and promoting national cultural identity for students majoring in the University of Greenwich Vietnam's Graphic and Digital Design in an international University environment. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Research in Education*, 1(1), 37-43. doi: [10.33422/icreconf.v1i1.605](https://doi.org/10.33422/icreconf.v1i1.605).
- [30] Norman, D., & Stappers, J.P. (2015). DesignX: Complex sociotechnical systems. *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation*, 1(2), 83-106. doi: [10.1016/j.sheji.2016.01.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2016.01.002).
- [31] O'Shea, M. (2024). Graphic design needs to take responsibility: Embedding social awareness and ethics through social science knowledge and pedagogical change. *Design Issues*, 40(2), 15-27. doi: [10.1162/desi_a_00752](https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_a_00752).
- [32] Parsons, T. (1949). *The structure of social action*. Glencoe: Free Press.
- [33] Peirce, C.S. (1991). *Peirce on signs: Writings on semiotic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- [34] Raff, J.-H. (2012). Theoretical frameworks for the conceptualization of graphic design in use. *Iridescent*, 2(2), 10-21. doi: [10.1080/19235003.2012.11428507](https://doi.org/10.1080/19235003.2012.11428507).
- [35] Reserva Das Parkias. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=161512>.

- [36] Schweizer Berghilfe. (n.d.). *MetaDesign*. Retrieved from <https://metadesign.com/en/work/schweizer-berghilfe-1>.
- [37] Shun Pin Lang 480 blue. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=152682>.
- [38] Six pandas. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=160636>.
- [39] The 6th "When in the woods". (n.d.). *Epica Awards*. Retrieved from <https://winners.epica-awards.com/2022/winners/55-00547-ALT/the-6th/when-in-the-woods>.
- [40] The impression of Feixi. (n.d.). *A' Design Award & Competition*. Retrieved from <https://competition.adesignaward.com/design.php?ID=160807>.
- [41] Vreja, L.O., & Balan, S. (2023). Contemporary identity crisis and socialisation. *Proceedings of the International Management Conference*, 17(1), 739-746. doi: 10.24818/IMC/2023/05.05.

Репрезентація територіально-просторової ідентичності в сучасному графічному дизайні

Наталя Удріс-Бородавко

Кандидат соціологічних наук, професор
Київський національний університет культури і мистецтв
01601, вул. Євгена Коновальця, 36, м. Київ, Україна
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1831-5476>

Анотація. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена зростанням значущості територіально-просторової ідентичності в умовах глобалізації, а також потребою у виявленні тенденцій і можливостей соціально впливової інституції графічного дизайну у динаміці цієї проблематики. Метою роботи було обґрунтування функціональності графічного дизайну як репрезентатора територіально-просторової ідентичності та вивчення методики впровадження її ідентифікаційних маркерів у дизайн-проекти. У процесі дослідження застосовувалися методи візуального опису, стилістичного аналізу, семіотичного аналізу, контент-аналізу, класифікації та порівняльного аналізу. З'ясовано зростання інтересу дизайнерської спільноти до локальних контекстів, що відповідає соціально виваженій позиції дизайнерів у векторах розвитку сучасного глобалізованого суспільства. В результаті аналізу проектів графічного дизайну 2021-2024 років, відзначеними міжнародними професійними спільнотами, визначено провідні підходи й техніки відтворення ідентичності макро- і мікропросторів. Встановлено, що демонстрація маркерів територіально-просторової ідентичності реалізується трьома способами: одиничним знаком або групою знаків, що репрезентують матеріальний об'єкт-маркер природного середовища; простору, створеного людиною; поєднання маркерів обох середовищ із атрибутами типових для території соціальних дій людей. Узагальнено, що зазначені засоби відображають рівні узагальнення територіальної ідентичності – від окремого іконічного знаку природного чи антропогенного походження до комплексної системи символів матеріальних і нематеріальних соціокультурних зв'язків. Рівні відрізняються інтенсивністю соціокультурного впливу на адресата, їхній вибір визначається проектними цілями. Практична цінність роботи полягала у використанні результатів графічними дизайнерами, освітянами мистецьких і проектних спеціалізацій, а також науковцями у галузі дизайну, культурології, соціології

Ключові слова: соціокультурна ідентичність; візуальна комунікація; культурне розмаїття; локалізація; сталий розвиток; міждисциплінарність