

Fatima Fuad ABDULLA

Master's student at Western Caspian University

E-mail: fatima.fuad@gmail.com

THE USE OF NATIONAL ORNAMENTS IN THE DESIGN OF VISUAL AND GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS OF LOCAL FASHION BRANDS IN AZERBAIJAN

Abstract

The reinterpretation of traditional cultural heritage in contemporary design has become an important strategy for the development of fashion brands operating within the global creative economy. This article examines the use of Azerbaijani national ornaments in the visual and graphic communications of local fashion brands. The research explores how decorative motifs historically associated with carpet weaving, traditional textiles, and national costume are transformed into elements of modern branding systems including visual identity, textile patterns, packaging design, and digital media communication. Particular attention is given to the symbolic meaning of traditional motifs such as the buta, geometric carpet ornaments, and stylized floral patterns that function as visual markers of cultural identity. The study combines theoretical analysis of design and fashion studies with examination of Azerbaijani decorative traditions and contemporary branding practices. The findings demonstrate that national ornamentation functions not only as an aesthetic element but also as a communicative and semiotic tool that conveys cultural heritage and strengthens brand authenticity. The integration of traditional motifs into contemporary fashion communication contributes to the preservation of national identity while allowing local brands to participate in the global fashion market.

Keywords: national ornament, visual communication, Azerbaijani design, fashion branding, cultural identity.

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Introduction

The contemporary fashion industry operates within a complex global environment in which visual identity plays a central role in the formation of brand recognition and cultural meaning [1,2]. Fashion brands increasingly seek to differentiate themselves through the use of distinctive visual languages that communicate authenticity and cultural heritage. In this context traditional decorative systems and ornamental motifs have become significant sources of inspiration for designers and brand strategists. Azerbaijan possesses a particularly rich tradition of ornamental art that has developed through centuries of cultural exchange and artistic practice. Decorative motifs appear throughout the history of Azerbaijani applied arts including carpet

weaving, textile production, ceramics, jewelry, and architectural decoration [3].

These ornamental systems form a structured visual language characterized by rhythm, symmetry, and symbolic meaning. According to the art historian Latif Kerimov [4], Azerbaijani ornamentation represents a complex system of signs that reflects the aesthetic principles and worldview of the societies in which it developed. In recent decades the revival of interest in national heritage has significantly influenced the development of creative industries in Azerbaijan. Designers increasingly incorporate traditional motifs into contemporary design practice, particularly in the fields of fashion and graphic

communication. Fashion brands use ornamental elements not only in the design of garments but also in visual identity systems that include logos, packaging, digital media graphics, and promotional materials [5].

Despite the growing presence of traditional motifs in contemporary fashion design, academic research examining the role of national ornamentation in the visual communication of Azerbaijani fashion brands remains limited [6]. Most studies focus primarily on the historical development of decorative arts rather than on their transformation within modern branding strategies. Therefore, the objective of this research is to analyze how traditional Azerbaijani ornaments are reinterpreted within the visual and graphic communication systems of local fashion brands and to explore the cultural meanings embedded in these design practices.

Cultural and historical context of Azerbaijani ornamentation. The ornamental traditions of Azerbaijan have deep historical roots that reflect the cultural diversity of the region. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that decorative patterns appeared in local artistic traditions as early as ancient times, particularly in ceramics and metal objects. Over centuries these decorative elements gradually evolved into sophisticated ornamental systems characterized by geometric order, stylized natural forms, and symbolic representations. One of the most significant areas in which ornamental traditions have been preserved is carpet weaving. Azerbaijani carpets are internationally recognized as important works of decorative art and cultural heritage [7,8]. According to Kerimov's comprehensive research on Azerbaijani carpet art [4], the ornamentation of carpets functions as a complex visual language in which each motif carries specific symbolic associations. Geometric patterns, stylized plant forms, and symbolic figures are arranged in balanced compositions that express ideas related to protection, fertility, and harmony with nature [9]. Regional carpet schools such as Karabakh, Shirvan, Guba, and Tabriz demonstrate the

diversity of Azerbaijani ornamental traditions [10]. Each region developed distinctive motifs, color schemes, and compositional structures that reflect local cultural influences. These regional variations illustrate the dynamic nature of ornamental design and its ability to adapt to different cultural contexts while maintaining a recognizable artistic identity. Another important area in which ornamental traditions are preserved is textile production, particularly the creation of silk scarves known as *kelaghayi* [11]. These scarves are decorated with printed patterns that combine geometric and floral motifs arranged in symmetrical compositions. The cultural significance of *kelaghayi* extends beyond its decorative function; the patterns and colors often carry symbolic meanings related to social rituals and cultural identity. In recognition of its cultural importance, the traditional art of *kelaghayi* production and ornamentation was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity [12].

Among the numerous motifs used in Azerbaijani decorative art, the *buta* occupies a particularly significant position. This distinctive curved motif has been interpreted by scholars as representing a flame, a plant sprout, or a symbol of spiritual energy [13]. Some researchers associate the motif with ancient fire symbolism connected with historical Zoroastrian traditions in the region. Over time the *buta* became one of the most recognizable symbols of Azerbaijani ornamental culture and continues to appear in a wide range of artistic and design contexts.

Methodology

The research presented in this article is based on qualitative analysis combining theoretical and visual approaches [14]. The study relies on interdisciplinary methods drawn from design studies, fashion theory, and cultural studies in order to examine the relationship between traditional ornamentation and contemporary visual communication.

The first stage of the research involved a literature review of academic sources related to Azerbaijani decorative arts, fashion theory, and graphic design. It was examined in order

to establish a theoretical framework for understanding the cultural and communicative functions of ornamentation [1,4,15,16].

The second stage of the research involved visual analysis of contemporary fashion branding materials produced by Azerbaijani designers. These materials include clothing collections, textile prints, brand logos, advertising imagery, and digital media graphics. Through comparative analysis the study identifies recurring ornamental motifs derived from traditional decorative systems and examines how these motifs are adapted within contemporary design practice.

The final stage of the research focuses on interpreting the symbolic and communicative functions of these motifs within fashion branding systems. By examining the interaction between traditional ornamentation and modern design principles, the study seeks to understand how cultural heritage is translated into contemporary visual language.

National ornament in fashion branding and visual communication. Visual communication plays a fundamental role in the development of modern fashion brands. According to design historian [16], visual communication systems operate through the interaction of images, symbols, and graphic forms that convey meaning without relying exclusively on text. Within fashion branding these visual elements form a coherent aesthetic identity that shapes how consumers perceive a brand [5]. Ornamental motifs are particularly effective tools of visual communication because they combine aesthetic appeal with cultural symbolism. When integrated into fashion branding, traditional patterns can communicate narratives related to heritage, craftsmanship, and cultural authenticity [17]. In the context of globalization, such narratives become valuable assets that allow brands to distinguish themselves within international markets.

In Azerbaijan many contemporary fashion designers incorporate ornamental motifs derived from carpet weaving and textile decoration into their visual identity systems. These motifs appear not only in clothing designs but also in brand logos, packaging

materials, fashion show graphics, and social media imagery [18,19]. Through the process of stylization, complex historical patterns are simplified into graphic elements that can be reproduced across different media platforms.

The adaptation of traditional ornaments to contemporary design contexts often involves balancing historical authenticity with modern aesthetic principles. Designers frequently reinterpret motifs through minimalistic compositions, digital illustration techniques, and contemporary color palettes. This process allows traditional visual elements to remain culturally recognizable while also aligning with global design trends.

Cultural meaning and semiotic function of ornament in fashion. From a semiotic perspective, ornaments can be interpreted as visual signs embedded within cultural systems of meaning. Cultural sociologist Diana Crane [20] argues that fashion functions as a form of symbolic communication through which individuals and institutions express social identities. Within this framework, the use of traditional ornamentation in fashion branding can be understood as a strategy for communicating cultural heritage.

The communicative power of ornaments lies in their ability to evoke cultural memory through visual form. Patterns and motifs that have existed for centuries carry associations related to historical traditions and collective identity [21]. When these motifs are incorporated into contemporary fashion design, they create a visual bridge between past and present.

In the case of Azerbaijani fashion branding, the use of motifs such as the buta or stylized floral ornaments allows designers to reference national heritage while presenting their work within a modern aesthetic context. These motifs function simultaneously as decorative elements and symbolic representations of cultural continuity.

For international audiences such ornamental motifs serve as markers of cultural specificity that distinguish Azerbaijani design within the global fashion landscape. For local audiences they reinforce a sense of cultural

belonging and pride in national artistic traditions.

Discussion

The integration of national ornamentation into contemporary fashion branding reflects broader cultural transformations occurring within the creative industries of Azerbaijan. As globalization expands access to international markets, designers increasingly seek ways to maintain cultural distinctiveness while engaging with global design trends.

The reinterpretation of traditional ornaments provides a powerful strategy for achieving this balance. By transforming historical motifs into contemporary graphic elements, designers create visual identities that communicate both innovation and cultural continuity. This approach contributes to the formation of a unique national design language that reflects Azerbaijan's rich artistic heritage.

Furthermore, the use of traditional ornamentation in fashion branding can be understood as part of a larger process of cultural preservation. When traditional motifs are integrated into modern creative industries, they remain active components of cultural expression rather than becoming purely historical artifacts.

Conclusion

The research demonstrates that national ornaments play a significant role in the visual and graphic communications of local fashion brands in Azerbaijan. These decorative motifs represent important elements of cultural heritage and function as visual symbols that convey historical memory, artistic tradition, and national identity.

Through the reinterpretation of traditional decorative systems such as carpet patterns, textile ornaments, and historical costume motifs, contemporary designers create branding strategies that combine cultural authenticity with modern design principles. This integration allows Azerbaijani fashion brands to establish distinctive visual identities while participating in the global fashion industry.

The continued exploration of traditional ornamentation within contemporary design practice contributes not only to the development of innovative fashion branding but also to the preservation and promotion of Azerbaijan's rich cultural heritage.

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Fatimə Fuad qızı ABDULLA
Qərbi-Kaspi Universitetinin magistrantı

YERLİ DƏB BRENDLƏRİNİN VİZUAL-QRAFİK KOMMUNİKASIYALARININ DİZAYNDA MİLLİ ORNAMENTLƏRİN İSTİFADƏSİ

Xülasə

Ənənəvi mədəni irsin müasir dizaynda yenidən şərh edilməsi qlobal kreativ iqtisadiyyatda fəaliyyət göstərən moda brendlərinin inkişafı üçün mühüm strategiyaya çevrilmişdir. Bu məqalədə Azərbaycan milli ornamentlərinin yerli moda brendlərinin vizual və qrafik kommunikasiya sistemlərində istifadəsi araşdırılır. Tədqiqat xalçaçılıq, ənənəvi tekstil məmulatları və milli geyimlərlə tarixən əlaqəli olan dekorativ motivlərin müasir brendinq sistemlərinin elementlərinə necə transformasiya olunduğunu təhlil edir. Bu elementlərə vizual identiklik, tekstil naxışları, qablaşdırma dizaynı və rəqəmsal media kommunikasiya vasitələri daxildir. Xüsusi diqqət buta, həndəsi xalça ornamentləri və stilizə edilmiş çiçək motivləri kimi ənənəvi naxışların simvolik mənasına yönəldilir. Bu motivlər mədəni identikliyin vizual göstəriciləri kimi çıxış edir. Tədqiqat dizayn və moda sahəsində nəzəri təhlili Azərbaycan dekorativ ənənələrinin və müasir brendinq praktikalarının öyrənilməsi ilə birləşdirir. Tədqiqatın nəticələri göstərir ki, milli ornamentlər yalnız estetik element kimi deyil, həm də mədəni irsi ötürən və brendin autentikliyinə gücləndirən kommunikativ və semiotik vasitə kimi çıxış edir. Ənənəvi motivlərin müasir moda kommunikasiya sistemlərinə inteqrasiyası milli identikliyin qorunmasına töhfə verir və eyni zamanda yerli brendlərin qlobal moda bazarında iştirakına imkan yaradır.

Açar sözlər: milli ornament, vizual kommunikasiya, Azərbaycan dizaynı, moda brendinqi, mədəni identiklik.

Фатима Фуад АБДУЛЛА
Западно-Каспийский университет, магистрант

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ ОРНАМЕНТОВ В ДИЗАЙНЕ ВИЗУАЛЬНЫХ И ГРАФИЧЕСКИХ КОММУНИКАЦИЙ ЛОКАЛЬНЫХ МОДНЫХ БРЕНДОВ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА

Резюме

Переосмысление традиционного культурного наследия в современном дизайне стало важной стратегией развития модных брендов, функционирующих в глобальной креативной экономике. В данной статье рассматривается использование азербайджанских национальных орнаментов в визуальной и графической коммуникации локальных модных брендов. Исследование анализирует, каким образом декоративные мотивы, исторически связанные с ковроткачеством, традиционными текстильными изделиями и национальным костюмом, трансформируются в элементы современных систем брендинга, включая визуальную идентичность, текстильные узоры, дизайн упаковки и цифровые медиа-коммуникации. Особое внимание уделяется символическому значению традиционных мотивов, таких как бута, геометрические ковровые орнаменты и стилизованные цветочные узоры, которые функционируют как визуальные маркеры культурной идентичности. Исследование сочетает теоретический анализ в области дизайна и моды с изучением азербайджанских декоративных традиций и современных практик брендинга. Полученные результаты показывают, что национальная орнаментика выполняет не только эстетическую функцию, но также выступает коммуникативным и семиотическим инструментом, передающим культурное наследие и усиливающим аутентичность бренда. Интеграция традиционных мотивов в современную коммуникацию модных брендов способствует сохранению национальной идентичности и одновременно позволяет локальным брендам участвовать в глобальном рынке моды.

Ключевые слова: национальный орнамент, визуальная коммуникация, Азербайджанский дизайн, модный брендинг, культурная идентичность.

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