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## VISUALIZATION OF REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS IN IDENTITY DESIGN OF CHINESE CITIES OF SHANDONG PROVINCE

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*This paper discusses the role of regional characteristics in the formation of city visual image on the example of the logos of the Chinese cities of the Shandong province. The paper highlights three aspects of regional characteristics, namely geographical features, traditional symbols and historical buildings, which play an important role in shaping the city's image. Through the study of the city's visual image, it can highlight the city's appearance and culture, point out the future direction of the city's image shaping, and create a highly recognisable city brand image.*

**Key words:** *city visual image design, logotype, city image, regional characteristics, cities of the Shandong province.*

### INTRODUCTION

City visual image design is an effective driving force for city development, a comprehensive embodiment of city concepts and behavioural habits, and a carrier of elements such as city connotation and culture. Each Chinese city has its own unique visual language, which is a reflection of local culture and social phenomena. Shandong Province has been attracting attention for its regional characteristics formed through millennia of development and its rapid urbanisation. This cannot be separated from the cultural factor.

Regional culture is an important carrier for cultural identity, and regional characteristics lead to the emergence of different cultural concepts. Cultural identity influences the inheritance and development of regional cultures, giving them unique cultural connotations, aesthetics and values [2]. A logo is not only a visual symbol of a city itself, but also a key factor to enhance people's sense of regional identity and improve the competitiveness of the city. This question needs deep research.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the regional cultural elements in the logo design of the Chinese cities of Shandong Province. The logos of 16 cities in Shandong Province, which have deep historical and cultural roots, were selected to analyze the role and significance of regional culture in the design of the visual image of Chinese cities.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

City visual image design is a design activity to reflect the inner spirit and outer characteristics of the city by displaying the image of the city in visible visual form with the help of artistic methods, such as human history, folk culture, natural environment and other non-material aspects. City visual image design cannot be separated from regional cultural factors. Regional culture is influenced by local humanities, customs and geography, and under the effect of time, it reveals a unique cultural form [4].

City is a product of regional development, and conveying city image through city signs is the most typical and direct way of city visual image design. Through the dissemination of city signs, the city's charm can be revealed and people's knowledge of the city can be deepened [3].

Regional cultural identity is first and foremost related to the geographical environment. Geographic environment is the foundation and soul of city culture, which profoundly affects the shaping and dissemination of city image. Incorporating geographic environment elements into city image logo design can visually show the natural appearance of the city. From the city image logos of Jinan, Tai'an, and Yantai, we can see that the logos of these three cities have a better combination of such regional characteristics (tabl.1:1-3).

The visualisation of the city's geographic location is provided by unique natural resources, notably the springs in Jinan (Jinan logo), Taishan in Tai'an (Tai'an logo) and the Yellow River in Dongying (Dongying logo). Jinan city logo selects the city's unique spring water as the main body of the logo, with lotus, willow and other natural elements for symbolic treatment, presenting people with a vibrant image of the city. Tai'an city logo takes Mount Tai as the main picture, which brings a strong visual impact to people and creates a majestic city logo; Dongying's city logo is designed with the Yellow River, wetlands and the ocean in a wave shape, highlighting the dynamic characteristics of its unceasing flow and the positioning of Dongying's eco-city development.

Regional cultural characteristics are also related to traditional symbols. Traditional symbols are the embodiment of the city's historical and cultural deposits, which carry the memories and stories of the city. The city logos of Jining, Dezhou and Weifang are representative of the full use of such features (tabl.1:4-6).

The city logo of Jining City adopts the traditional square seal system, with traditional calligraphy font, water pattern and auspicious cloud pattern, which highlights the history and culture of Jining City; the city logo of Dezhou adopts the Chinese character "德" in regular script as the image, and the traditional square seal system has another meaning in Chinese traditional context, which indicates the character traits of the people of Dezhou based on "De"; the regional colour has a traditional symbol - butterfly, and the Weifang City logo symbolizes the image of butterfly in the image processing. The regional colour has a traditional symbol - butterfly, the Weifang logo summarizes the image of butterfly symbolically, and the designer has made a shape contrast in the image processing to make the image very symmetrical.









Historical architectural elements are an indispensable part of regional cultural characteristics. Historical buildings are important carriers of city history and culture,



from which we can obtain rich historical and cultural information and feel the charm of time. Qingdao and Liaocheng both selected models of historical buildings as their city identity images (tabl.1:7,8).

**Table 1**

Regional features in the logos of the Chinese cities of Shandong province

Regional features	City	City Branding Examples	Elements
Geographical environment	Jinan	 1	Spring water, lotus, willow and rivers, etc.
	Taian	 2	Mount Tai is the main element.
	Dongying	 3	Yellow River, wetland and sea.
Traditional symbol	Jining	 4	Traditional square seal, calligraphy, traditional pattern.
	Dezhou	 5	Traditional square seal, calligraphy, etc.
	Weifang	 6	Traditional handicrafts kite.
Historical architectural	Qingdao	 7	Historic building trestle and waves.
	Liaocheng	 8	Historical building, water and lotus.

The logo of Qingdao City takes the famous historical building of Qingdao Trestle Bridge as the main image of the logo, supplemented by waves, which reflects the characteristics of Qingdao as a coastal city. The city of Liaocheng, on the other hand, adopts a similar design concept as Qingdao's. The logo takes Guangyue Tower, a historical building in Liaocheng, as the main image of the logo, and the lower part of the logo is paired with the elements of water and lotus, highlighting the characteristics of the "Water City in the North of the Yangtze River".

City visual image design is inspired by the city's geographic features, historical and cultural heritage, folklore and spiritual qualities, which need to be considered in a holistic manner in the design of the city environment, in order to create a unique city visual symbols and city brand image with regional characteristics. In the context of globalisation, the shaping of city image has



become inseparable from the excavation of regional culture, which is an important means of highlighting the city's advantages, demonstrating the city's culture and promoting the development of regional culture and economy. Designers need to deeply grasp the value and resources brought by regional culture, consider the visual image of the city from the perspective of aesthetics, show the vitality of the city and shape a diversified city image. Signage design that takes regional characteristics into account can promote the generation and development of city-related industries and economy, establish an excellent brand image [1].

### CONCLUSIONS

This paper analyses the brand image logos of cities in Shandong Province, which contain obvious basic features of regional culture. It is found that geographical features, traditional symbols and historical buildings are important in shaping the visual image of a city in a certain region. It has been proved that in-depth excavation of regional culture can shape a vibrant and historical city brand image and inject personalised content into city development. This can better address the "one-size-fits-all" status quo that exists in city construction and achieve sustainable city development.

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### ВІЗУАЛІЗАЦІЯ РЕГІОНАЛЬНИХ ОСОБЛИВОСТЕЙ У ДИЗАЙНІ ВІЗУАЛЬНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ КИТАЙСЬКИХ МІСТ ПРОВІНЦІЇ ШАНЬДУН

У статті розглядається роль регіональних особливостей у формуванні візуального образу міста на прикладі логотипів китайських міст провінції Шаньдун. Висвітлено три регіональних аспекти у проектуванні, а саме: географічні особливості, традиційні символи та історичні будівлі, які відіграють важливу роль у формуванні іміджу міста. Вивчення візуального образу міста дозволяє висвітлити зовнішній вигляд та культуру міста, вказати на майбутній напрямок формування іміджу міста, а також створити добре впізнаваний образ бренду міста.

**Ключові слова:** дизайн візуального образу міста, логотип, імідж міста, регіональні особливості, міста провінції Шаньдун.