



Corporate identity, heraldics and football. Evaluation of shield designs of ecuadorian football clubs

Identidad corporativa, heráldica y fútbol. Valoración de los diseños de escudos de los clubes ecuatorianos de fútbol

José Oleas-Orozco

FIRST AUTHOR AND CORRESPONDING AUTHOR
CONCEPTUALIZATION - METHODOLOGY
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION - WRITING
jose.oleas@ueb.edu.ec
Universidad Estatal de Bolívar
Guaranda, Bolívar, Ecuador
ORCID: 0000-0003-2099-9758

Renato Cabezas Ramos

SECOND AUTHOR
SUPERVISION - FORMAL ANALYSIS - VALIDATION
jcabezas@ueb.edu.ec
Universidad Estatal de Bolívar
Guaranda, Bolívar, Ecuador
ORCID: 0000-0002-4089-0912

Gabriel Orozco Molina

THIRD AUTHOR
VISUALIZATION - RESEARCH - RESOURCES
orozcog@gadmriobamba.gob.ec
Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado
Municipal de Riobamba
Riobamba, Ecuador
ORCID: 0009-0008-5833-0471

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Abstract

The graphic identifiers of football teams, better known as shields, are symbols that represent sports institutions. In Ecuador, searches on the origins of these kind of graphics are unusual. Several publications focus on club's general history, supporters or social impact; however, the preponderance of information available is subjective. This research shows a route through the history of Ecuadorian football clubs and their visual identifiers to provide a morphological analysis established on heraldic elements, the characterization of their elements, constructed on bibliographical references. In addition, through a qualitative sample of professional experts (graphic designers), an assessment of compliance with brand characteristics of graphic identifiers of the football teams was carried out, using quantitative parameters, to identify the functionality of sports graphics. The shields of 16 soccer teams from Ecuadorian Pro League were analyzed, from these two types of matrices could be obtained: the first kind were descriptive of their heraldic characteristics and the rest about brands qualifications of associative and mnemonic functions.

Keywords: sports shields, sports symbols, heraldry, brand, Ecuadorian football

Resumen

Los identificadores gráficos de los equipos de fútbol, más conocidos como escudos, son símbolos que representan a las instituciones deportivas. En Ecuador, las investigaciones sobre los orígenes de estos gráficos son escasos. Muchas de las publicaciones se enfocan en la historia general de los clubes, aficiones o impacto social; no obstante, la mayor cantidad de información disponible es subjetiva. En el presente estudio se muestra un recorrido por la historia de los clubes de fútbol ecuatoriano y sus identificadores visuales para dar paso a un análisis morfológico en función de elementos heráldicos, la caracterización de sus elementos, con base en referentes bibliográficos. De la misma manera, mediante una muestra cualitativa de expertos profesionales (diseñadores gráficos), se procedió a una valoración de cumplimiento de características de marca de los identificadores gráficos de los equipos de fútbol, mediante parámetros cuantitativos, para identificar la funcionalidad de los gráficos deportivos. Fueron sujetos de análisis los escudos de los 16 equipos de fútbol de la Liga Pro de Ecuador, de los cuales se pudieron obtener dos tipos de matrices: las primeras descriptivas de sus características heráldicas y otras de calificaciones de las funciones de marca, asociativa y mnemotécnica.

Palabras clave: escudos deportivos, símbolos deportivos, heráldica, marca, fútbol ecuatoriano

◆ Introduction

The sport of football has been analyzed from different perspectives, such as business administration, communication, marketing, anthropology and sociology, which study it as a human behavior social phenomenon (Salvador Sarauz and Piñeiro Aguiar, 2016). This research focuses on sports institutions, professional football clubs in Ecuadorian space and their graphic identifiers. The analysis emphasizes on the attributes of its shield or badge, present on each and every team as a visual identifier, from which graphic applications for different media are resulting.

The relationship between Graphic Design and football is analyzed inside *Serie A* football teams of *Liga Pro* from Ecuadorian tournament. The study was conducted within football sports institutions shields or badges. Therefore, aspects from heraldic science and associative and mnemonic attributes of brand and corporate identity were considered (Costa, 2004). In this way, the research seeks to support the analysis of graphic design applications within the institutional sports field. In the same way, an attempt is made to provide technical criteria for the analysis of this kind of graphic representations, since with the rise of social networks and the proliferation of audiovisual content (Palabra de Gol, 2023), subjective ratings and evaluations are observed, with opinions lacking arguments, parameters or categories, mainly from content creators on social networks (Futbol por el mundo, 2022).

◆ Football in Ecuador, sports institutions origin and their identifiers

The beginnings of football date back to the emergence of neighborhood clubs, institutional and union teams, first as amateur clubs that eventually managed to become professional. The formation of football clubs has their origin at industrial revolution Great Britain's, approximately 1830. Pedagogical reforms inside religious senior schools were decisive for the configuration of the king sport. From actions to improve the living conditions of students, educational innovations were produced that included the sports practice, through the Muscular Christianity movement, which was the cornerstone of the first football club's formation in England and Scotland (Arranz Albó, 2015).

From London, thanks to British trade and investments in empire's territories of influence, football became a world sport. In this way, Ecuador was not immune to the practice of the specialty, which arrived in the country 50 years after its officialization in England, later than in countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. However, football has become a characteristic element of Ecuadorian culture, society, politics and economy. At the beginning of the 20th century, foreign economic investment, mainly European, brought with it the football, and as a result, formation of sports teams resulting from activities, such as the seaport commerce for *Barcelona*, in Guayaquil; the railway and transportation to *Olmedo*, in Riobamba; mining or petroleum to *Aucas*, in Quito, and electricity generation to *Emelec* (D. Pontón and C. Pontón, 2006).

Football, as a social practice within human groups, is configured as an integrative activity in neighborhoods, educational centers and workplaces. For Lasso (2006), "football reaches these social scenarios to enhance them through the strengthening of their institutional structures and to be a reference for integration, representation and multiple identity of the population" (p. 22). Other sports institutions in the country originated from the collective and integrative nature of sport. For example, in the capital: *Liga Deportiva Universitaria*, at the *Universidad Central del Ecuador*, and *Sociedad Deportivo Quito*, in the *La Plaza del Teatro* area.

In this background, publications on Ecuadorian football are documented; however, information on the origin of visual identifiers, shields, official colors and identity elements of sports institutions are still primary. In this sense, Velásquez Villacís (2006) makes a description about one of the first Ecuadorian soccer teams, Club Sport Ecuador, where he quotes:

it had an anchor in the central part of it on a gray background. The anchor was covered by half of a ball and on the sides a tennis racket and the flags of Ecuador and Guayaquil. In the most prominent part of the shield, there was a condor with outstretched wings holding in its beak a blue and white ribbon with the name of the nascent institution. (p. 108)

Likewise, to the present there are records about clubs that have gained a place in the popular culture. In reference to one of the most popular teams from Guayaquil, Lasso (2006) points out:

Barcelona Sporting Club, the "Ídolo del Astillero", founded on May 1st, 1925 in Guayaquil city. Its creation arose from the enthusiasm of a group of young people from the Barrio del Astillero, known as "La gallada de la Modelo", who decided to form a multidisciplinary sports club, in the home of the Catalan Eutimio Pérez, who would have Carlos García Ríos, a well-known Ecuadorian as its first President and Onofre Castells, a Spaniard from Catalonia, its first Honorary President. It was precisely in gratitude for the support provided

by the Spanish community in Guayaquil, that it was named Barcelona, with a shield almost identical to the Catalonia team. Shield that is of Swiss origin, because Swiss people participated in the founding of the Iberian Barcelona. (p. 146)

The influence of the Spanish club on the Guayaquil team is undisputable, since the name and the institutional graphic identifier are practically the same.



Figure 1. *Barcelona Sporting Club shield.*
Source: *Barcelona SC, s. f.*



Figure 2. *Fútbol Club Barcelona shield.*
Source: *FC Barcelona, s. f.*

Bustamante (2006), *Deportivo Quito* has its origins in the *Plaza del Teatro*, under the name of *Sociedad Deportiva Argentina*, in 1940; however, in 1955, for legal reasons, it changed its name to *Deportivo Quito*, adopting the city colors. On the other hand, the *Sociedad Deportiva Aucas* was founded in 1945 by officials of the American oil company Shell, who adopted the company's colors. Carrión (2006b) underlines "the Aucas, due to its name and shield, is nothing other than the representation of Texaco exploiting Amazonian oil. Or Barcelona, which represents the Catalan migration allied with Coca-Cola and the *socialcristiano* party"

(p. 183). Likewise, regarding provincial teams, Aguilar and Sarmiento (2006) point out:

The city team was simply called *Deportivo Cuenca*, but the others confirmed curious names. Macará, a canton from Loja, is the name of Ambato's idol team. *José Joaquín de Olmedo*, the Guayaquil poet, lends his name to one of the eldest football clubs in the country, *Olmedo de Riobamba*. (p. 187)



Figure 3. *Centro Deportivo Olmedo* shield.
Source: *Mi fútbol ecuatoriano*, 2014

From the origin of clubs and their names resulted the need for graphic identifiers design. For Costa (2009), the symbols existence or allusive images fortify the institution visual identity and regularly become its main reference. Thus, the symbol becomes a distinctive sign with a great differentiating power independent of its graphic composition.

Regarding the graphic symbols of the clubs and their character as an element of identity of the institutions, Carrión (2006b) points out:

This means the symbology of football makes the population identify simultaneously and multiple around the dispute. For this reason it becomes an important element of social attraction that leads to being a meeting place and confluence of diverse and contradictory wills, passions and interests. The football match is a place where social adhesions are different but not exclusive. (p. 184)

On the other hand, Georges Lomné, quoted in Sosa (2014), points out: “symbols have the property of masses recognition” (p. 18). Likewise, Bustamante (2006), denotes there is a direct correspondence of visual identifier as an identity aspect between a football team and the people, since it strongly links the team and its fans with its symbols, its colors, achievements and sports heroes.

In the same way, symbols support the construction of identity. The identity values of sports institutions ground, build and establish sentimental connections with people through colors and signs. Thus, the direct relationship between identity and symbol can be established. As an example of this, D. Pontón and C. Pontón (2006) point out:

The name "albos" not only invoked the team's colors but also an alleged racial whitening, since according to some descriptions, the first promotions of footballers from the *Liga Deportiva Universitaria* responded to the demands of these stereotypes; that is, white half Blood players, with socially recognized surnames and professionals. (p. 84)

As the previous quote corollary, the designation of "albos" resulted in the transfer of this characteristic to the graphic symbols of Quito's sports institution: towards the colors applied to flags, uniforms and, mainly, to the white "U".

Besides, Carrión (2006a) and Costa (2004) refers about different identities that football generates, the first one from a social perspective and the second one from communication. Socially, the symbolic aspect of graphic distinctives matches directly to the identity of the uniform, expressed by shirt colors with the supporter identifies. In terms of communication, distinctive colors are signals/signs, signals as immediate optical incentives and signs because they signify the club. The communicative capacity of club colors is immediate, since automatically it associates the team only with the color spots, whether it is the case of *Barcelona* with yellow and black, *La Liga* with white, *Emelec* with blue, *Nacional* with red, *Deportivo Quito* with blue and scarlet, and so, in the same way, with any of other teams. On the other hand, Sosa (2014) points out:

The same symbols also have, depending on their degree of popular acceptance, the ability to multiply on their own, without the interference of political justifications, driven rather by emotional and even reverential motivations of the usufructuaries. (p. 82)

◆ Sports shields design and Heraldry

From design morphological perspective, authors such as Munari (1996), Guillam Scott (1982) and Wong (1997) explain the principles on which visual communication products are founded. However, heraldic science explains the formation and design of sports identifiers and their origin from their shields, insignia and coats of arms.

Costa (2004), mentions about roots of currently known as corporate identity, in its visual identity section, are found in various heraldic manifestations. From this origin symbolic codes arise in shields, military coats of arms and heraldic art. All of them have generated a notable

influence on identity brands. On the other hand, for A. García and A. García (1920), heraldry is significant, since:

It should not be believed that the study of the science of the coat of arms is only useful and exclusive for nobility; To assume that would be to commit a serious mistake; Historians, poets, novelists and specially painters, sculptors, draftsmen, engravers and architects must know how to emblazon the coats of arms that are asked of them and those that they find in their path. (p. 3)

Thus, Cordero Alvarado (2014) provides a currently viewpoint on the role of heraldry. Initially considered for families, religious, cultural or educational institutions, it has been adopted by commercial, advertising and sports areas.

But the world of coats of arms is not limited to these areas alone. In modern times, this science—and this art—have acquired an unusual boom, with new branches appearing. Thus: commercial and advertising Heraldry; sports (since soccer teams—and those of other athletic modalities—show off authentic coats of arms on their shirts), (p. 80)

Regarding the application of heraldry in the current Ecuadorian context, Oleas-Orozco, P. Sánchez, D. Sánchez, Sandoval and Villacís (2020) designed institutional shields for a political territorial division with heraldic and graphic design foundations:

Graphic Design is a specialty from the modern era, while Heraldry is a medieval art auxiliary to history. In current times, as noble titles are not a very persistent element, graphic designers fill that void for this type of requirements, with the appropriate foundation in heraldry for the development of proposals for shields, for other types of requirements, these being institutional, sports, political among others. (p. 14)

Symbolisms in football club badges

Sosa (2014) provides the semantic definition of a shield, placing it as a defensive weapon of protection against attacking weapons, used by almost all civilizations and covered in leather. Particular emblems and signs were painted on it. Time and war technology have made it an obsolete weapon for defense, which is why it has become exclusively a heraldic element. Regarding the coat of arms, and consequently the shields, A. García and A. García (1920) point out:

What the herald described was called a blazon [...] this entire group was also called a coat of arms. The Blazon is, therefore, the art that, with its own terms and voices, rules and fixed precepts, teaches

how to compose and explain the Coats of Arms that affect each lineage, city and person. (p. 14)

For Belting (2007), "in the case of tournaments it happened that the knights, who fought with their visors down, were recognized either as contenders or winners not by their faces but by the colors of their weapons on their shields" (p. 147). Historically, emblems, badges and army shields were covered with each kingdom symbol, were taken to the battlefield for the confrontation between the factions. In a medieval novel analogy taken to a sport current scenario, each football team could be identified as an army, the battlefield with the stadium where the game takes place, the warriors, soldiers and knights of each kingdom would be the players, and their armor would take the place of uniforms adorned with colors, symbols and insignia of their clubs on the shirts.

Throughout history, sports teams have gone from neighborhood, union or social clubs to institutions, for this reason, Monreal Casamayor (2012) points out:

Considering that Institutional Heraldry is quite far from the classic Nobility Heraldry (for which the voices of this science were created), we are going to find armored shields that do not look like it, because they do not adopt the classic forms of the heraldic shield as such as normally drawn for nobles (p. 150)

Sports emblems are under the laws of heraldry. Sports heraldry, since the mid-20th century, thanks to the growth of athletic practice, was born from the need to differentiate sports societies from each other. For Cadenas and Vicent (1994), the colors of clubs are applied and reflected in flags and uniforms. Sometimes sports symbols are allusive to the shields of their original towns, others are simply issues related to sports, where symbols such as balls, rackets, pellets and others are incorporated.

Heraldry plays a major role in sport, because club insignia are usually framed within the shields blazon or symbolized by flags. For this reason, they enter directly into vexillology, a discipline of heraldry. In addition, they are represented with monograms to reflect the name of the team and, although they look defective, they are intended to feature insignia, flags, trophies and uniforms to symbolize the ancient pieces, figures, enamels and liveries. As Cadenas and Vicent (1994) indicate:

By the need to distinguish sporting societies from one to another, Heraldry arises in its application to this human activity and its importance develops with intensity as interest in the practice of sport grows over the course of half a century. Thus arises the emblem that, due to its peculiar characteristics, fully enters Heraldry and must be governed by its laws and rules. Enamels, figures and pieces are used in sports heraldry. From the full shield, to the band, sash

and tatters; from the eagle to the lion; Castles and towers are all signs to differentiate teams or clubs, and each branch of the sport adopts its characteristic figure. The heraldic liveries correspond to the flags and are in turn represented by the teams' t-shirts and pants. (p. 123)

The heraldic elements in sports shields are maintained nowadays. Arranz Albó (2015) points out the following about the origin of English clubs and the distribution of heraldic elements in the composition of their identifiers:

Currently there are teams that maintain these inscriptions on their shields, in case of Sheffield (*"rerum cognoscetere causa"*), —know the causes of things— Blackburn Rovers (*"arte et labore"*) —with art and work—Manchester City (*"superbia in praelia"*) —pride in the fight—, Everton (*"nil Satis nisi optimum"*) —nothing is enough except the best—. [...] Teams like Chelsea or Cardiff City have the Saint George dragon on their shields. Wigan FC's shield bears the inscription ("progress with unity"), referring to the value of cooperative work. Liverpool has as one of its best-known signs of identity and belonging its anthem: "I'll never walk alone." —you will never walk alone—, referring to group unity and fidelity. (p. 10)



Figure 4. Liverpool Football Club shield.

Source: Liverpool FC, s. f.

For Hofmann (2015), the shield and insignia heraldic design unites teams, clubs and fans on and off the playing field. The symbolism of badges is familiar to all of them, being an aesthetic element and a practical one to express collective identities and serve as a visual signifier of the football importance. Several sports clubs from leagues around the planet keep the history of their symbols, with their changes and evolution as an intangible asset of identity, as they show their symbols development and evolution, from their heraldic roots to becoming corporate identifiers. For this reason, on its institutional websites there is information about

its emblems and colors, which can be interpreted as sporting and institutional growth. Regarding the institutional use of emblems, Herrera Casado and Ortiz García (2001) refer:

finally, and as typical of evolution of design world currently, we are witnessing the transformation of ancient Heraldry to the world of Logo. Logo that, not because it is more modern and current, leave out the original shield shape and its components. (p. 14)

As an example, there is the case of Barcelona Football Club shield, which has experienced minimal changes since 1910, year in which an open competition was called to carry out its design. The winner was Carles Comamala, a club player at that time. The description of the institutional website states:

It is a pot-shaped shield that maintained the *Creu de Sant Jordi* and four bars in the upper quarters, representative elements of Barcelona and Catalonia, respectively. In the shield center, in a stripe, the club initials appear, F.C.B., and at the bottom the colors blue and scarlet with a football ball. In short, a shield that reflected the sporting dimension and the connection of the club to the city and the country. (FC Barcelona, s. f.)



Figure 5. Fútbol Club Barcelona shield evolution.
Source: FC Barcelona, s. f.

In the same way, the Boca Juniors shield evolution has had five different designs over the years. The team's official website quotes: “The shield, like the flag and the shirt, are the most important symbols of our club. They are the identity and the proper name of a story that has been flying around the planet for more than a hundred years” (Club Atlético Boca Juniors, s. f.).



Figure 6. Club Atlético Boca Juniors Barcelona shield evolution.
Source: Club Atlético Boca Juniors, s. f.

❖ **Heraldic elements in the design of shields**

Through heraldry, common forms can be identified, such as blazons, chromatics, division and partitions, figure and pieces, as detailed by A. García and A. García (1920) and Herrera Casado and Ortiz García (2001), are compiled in Oleas-Orozco et al. (2020) indicating:

- ❖ **Blazon or shield shape:** models and designs according to their origin country, the main ones: France, England, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Poland. Below are the variants of the Spanish shield:

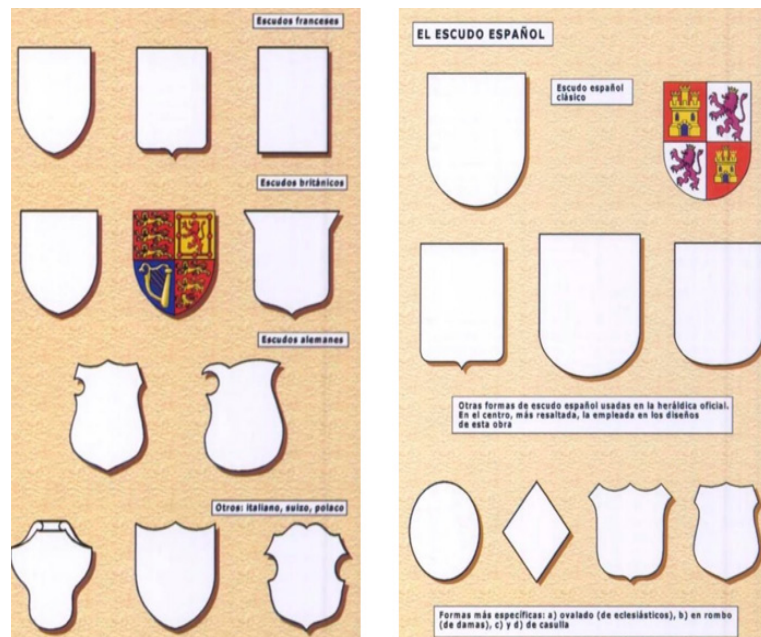


Figure 7. Shield designs according to their origin country.
Source: Herrera Casado & Ortiz García, 2001.

The classification of A. García and A. García (1920) provides complementary designs to those that originate by country, such as:

Shields 1 and 2 are Spanish, 3 and 4 are blazon forms used in France. The most used German forms are 5, 6, 7 and 8. In England, they use the same French and Spanish designs, in addition the 9. The shapes used by the Italians are the numbering 10 and 11. The shield 12 used by maidens and later through cities and churches. The blazons from 13 to 15 are registered as family emblems. Likewise, artistic criteria applied to shields design are presented in the emblems from 17 to 20. (p. 13)

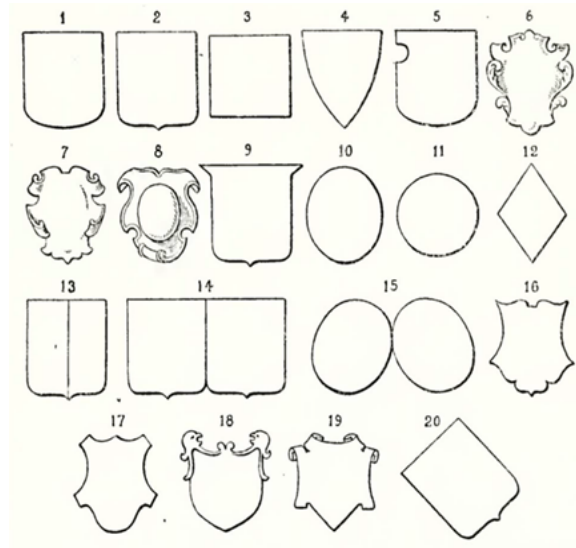


Figure 8. Shield designs according to their origin. Source: A. García & A. García, 1920.

❖ **Chromaticism:** or enamel, according to heraldry indicates how the correct form of the term adds appeal to the design. Vivar del Riego (2012) and A. García and A. García (1920) detail the names of glazes in proper and vulgar names in figure 9:

NOMBRES VULGARES Y PROPIOS DE LOS COLORES DEL BLASON				
VULGARES EN ESPAÑOL	VULGARES EN FRANCÉS	PROPIOS DEL BLASÓN	PARA LOS TÍTULOS	PARA LOS REYES Y SOBERANOS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amarillo. • Blanco. • Rojo. • Azul. • Negro. • Verde. • Morado. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jaune. • Blane. • Rouge. • Bleu. • Noir. • Vert. • Violet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oro. • Plata. • Gules. • Azur. • Sable. • Sinople. • Púrpura. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topacio. • Perla. • Rubi. • Zafiro. • Diamante. • Esmeralda. • Amatista. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sol. • Luna. • Marte. • Júpiter. • Saturno. • Venus. • Mercurio.

Figure 9. Proper and vulgar names of colors in heraldry. Source: A. García & A. García, 1920.

- ❖ **Division and partitions:** these are the parts into which the shield is divided by lines forming several sections. 1. The Party. -2. The Cut. -3. The *Tronchado*. -4. The *Tajado*. -5. The Tertiary. —6. The Barracks in cross and sotuer. —7. The *Gironado*

Five divisions of shields are exemplified in figure 10.

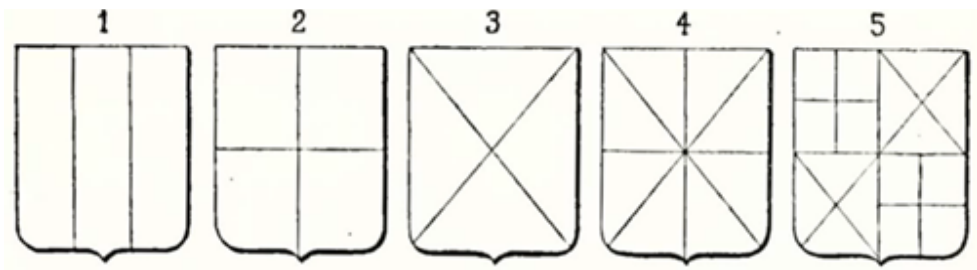


Figure 10. *Shield divisions.*

Source: A. García & A. García, 1920.

- ❖ **Figures and pieces:** they are the most attractive elements of shield designs. These are attractive figures to which significances are attributed. Oleas-Orozco et al. (2020) cite Vivar del Riego (2012) to point out:

It can be said that a figure is any element suitable for being represented on a shield, with frequent figures such as lions, dragons, wolves, castles, among others, considered classic, as well as characteristic modernity shapes such as vehicles, cars and musical instruments to mention some. (p. 16)

According to their nature, heraldic figures are classified as natural, artificial and fantastic. As Vivar del Riego (2012) refers, natural figures are those that heraldry obtains from nature (such as stars, elements, fire, earth, air, water), human figures (such as kings, warriors, clerics, workers, saints), divine figures, animals (mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, fish) and plants. For their part, artificial figures are the result of art and are created by man. The most common in the composition of the shields refer to religious ceremonies, war, music, hunting and fishing, navigation, arts and crafts. Finally, fantastic or chimeric figures are elements that only exist in the imagination, that is, mythological beings, such as dragons, griffins, unicorns, Greek or Roman deities or legendary elements. As a complement, Vivar del Riego (2012) writes:

I do not intend to contradict the classical writers, but I think I should point out a fourth category, which we could qualify as symbolic figures. I am referring to certain elements that do not represent natural,

artificial or fantastic realities, but rather are elements that are included in the blazon with a mere symbolic purpose. (p. 299)

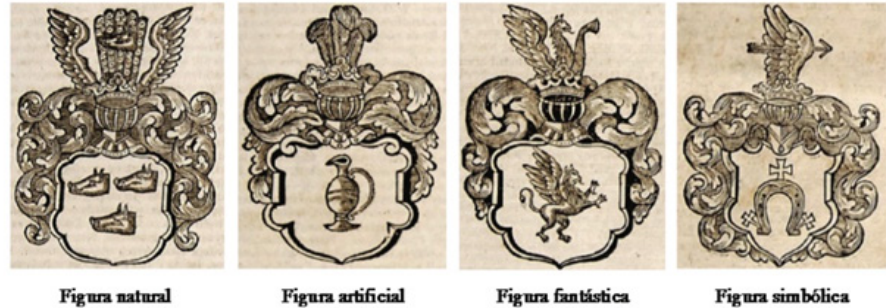


Figure 11. *Heraldic figures models.*
Source: Vivar del Riego, 2012.

◆ Graphic design, branding, associative and mnemonic functions.

Costa (1994), talks about the brands existence dates back approximately the 5th century BC. In the history of brands, three eras are distinguished: The Middle Ages, when the birth of brand is known; the pre-industrial era, which had developed mainly empirical uses and practices; and Western industrialism, which revealed the brand as a fundamental element in business development. Furthermore, at the beginning of the 20th century, thanks to the printing press, transportation and distribution, the brand was established as an essential element in consumer societies systems.

Branding and heraldry were established in the Middle Ages. At that same time, heraldic shields also originated, which to this day retain their legitimacy in shields, insignia, badges and identification emblems. However, heraldry is a highly codified system, while social emblems are made up of simpler and more direct elements.

The following table describes characteristics that, according to Costa (1994), the brand must fulfill in associative and mnemonic functions.

Associative function

Table 1. Brand associative function elements

Associative function	
Association by analogy	The association is produced by analogy - just as photography is produced by the model -, by the perceptual similarity between the image and what it represents [...] the mind associates with what it seems.

Association by allegory	The allegory in which elements recognizable in reality are combined inside the image, but recombined in an unusual way.
Emblematic association	The use of emblematic element transfers institutionalized meanings to the brand. An emblem is a conventionally adopted figure, its purpose is to represent an idea, a physical or moral being. Flags are emblems of their respective countries [...] Countless brands use emblematic and heraldic figures.
Association by symbol	The association occurs through the symbol, between a highly ritualized figure and an idea.
Conventional Association	The association between the brand and what it represents is achieved “artificially” in a conventional way. There is no direct or indirect equivalence [...] There is therefore a forced, imposed or agreed association, these are conventionalized trademark signs.
Association by name	The opposite extreme to the iconic aspect of the brand: the linguistic aspect. The association is not entrusted to a brand graphic, but to the name of the brand itself (Walter Diethelm called it a “verbal brand”) and takes the form best defined by the term logo.

Source: Costa, 1994.

Mnemonic function

Table 2. Brand elements of mnemonic function

Mnemonic function	
Originality	Feature or trait different from its similar ones, it is better retained in memory. It is iconic and visual memory.
Denotations	What the brand expresses unequivocally, the iconicity scale levels.

Connotations	The aim is to know the result of the subjectivation of a population sample.
Pregnancy	Is defined as the strength measure with which a form imposes itself on the receiver spirit.
Mnemonic potential	The sum of positive factors. That is, originality (novelty), denotations-connotations (symbolism) and pregnancy (impact-memory) for the memory capacity of a brand.
Brand awareness	Is the accumulated result of its diffusion, It means of the social sphere it reaches. Also, is the brand quantitative feature.

Source: Costa, 1994.

Research methodology

At the first stage, grounded on bibliographic research, a heraldic morphological description of *Liga Pro* shields was completed, based on A. García and A. García (1920), Herrera Casado and Ortiz García (2001) and Vivar del Riego (2012) specifications.

In the second phase, a brand assessment was proposed with the suggested criteria described by Costa (1994) about the brand as a mnemonic method or mental systems and its associative function. This in order to determine if sports shield function as brands. For this purpose, a questionnaire was applied, under qualitative expert criteria sample (Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza Torres, 2018), where 30 graphic designers participated, professionals and qualified teachers from cities of Ambato and Riobamba, experienced about the brand concepts, proposed by Costa. The associative parameters were measured based on the characteristics that the symbols have, while the mnemonic parameters were evaluated using a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest in parameter compliance.

The sports shields under analysis were 16 registered in alphabetical order, as shown on *Liga Pro* website (2023), as shown in figure 12.







Figure 12. Ecuadorian Serie A, Liga Pro shields.
Source: Liga Pro, 2023.

Results *Heraldic formal description*

In first instance, it has been possible to make a formal description of shield elements based on their heraldic components, it can show that each football shield contains its own characteristics, according to its blazon and enamels, partitions and figures. The results are presented in table 3:

Table 3. Shields Heraldic features of football clubs

Shields Heraldic features of football clubs			
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swiss blazon • Gold and gules enamels • No partitions • Natural figure of a Huaorani warrior with symbolic text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish chasuble blazon • Gold, gules, azure and sable enamels • Cut division • Artificial ball-shaped figure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Sable, silver and sinople enamel • Partial <i>tranchado</i> division • Symbolic figure in his initials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Gold, azure and silver enamels • <i>Tranchado</i> division • Natural animal figure, dolphin abstraction
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish blazon • <i>Sinople</i>, gold and gules enamels • Vertical cut division • Natural figures: lion and ball • Artificial figures: ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish chasuble blazon • Azure and silver enamels • Horizontal cut division • Symbolic figures in text and natural ones: the stars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish chasuble blazon • <i>Sinople</i> and gold enamels • Party quartering • Artificial figure: the ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian blazon • Azure enamels in two shades • Vertical cut division • Natural figures: lion and water; artificial: tower and flag
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Sable, silver and <i>sinople</i> enamel • Party quartering • Symbolic figure in his initials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Gold and sable enamel • Horizontal cutting • Symbolic, artificial and natural figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon (variant) • Azure enamel, gules and gold lines • Symbolic figure in the U 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unidentified blazon • <i>Sinople</i> enamel and gules • No partitions • Natural figure: the man and artificial: the ball





			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Gold, azure and gules enamel • Slice partition • Artificial figure: ball and symbolic in the N 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French blazon • Sinople and gold enamels • Horizontal cutting • Natural figures: the man and symbolic in the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish chasuble blazon • Gules and silver enamel • No divisions • Symbolic figure in its initials and artificial: the ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unidentified blazon • Azure enamel • Symbolic figures

Source: Own Elaboration.





Brand evaluation: associative and mnemonic

This section presents the evaluations results provided by the designers based on the brand functions: associative function and mnemonic function.

Table 4. Associative and mnemonic evaluations of Ecuadorian soccer shields

Shield	Associative Function		Mnemotechnic Function	
	Association by analogy	26,7%	Originality	5
	Association by allegory	13,3%	Denotation	2
	Emblematic association	33,3%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	6,7%	Pregnancy	3
	Conventional association	6,7%	Mnemotechnic potential	4
	Association by name	26,7%	Brand awareness	3
	Association by analogy	12,5%	Originality	1
	Association by allegory	6,5%	Denotation	2
	Emblematic association	37,5%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	0%	Pregnancy	3
	Conventional association	37,5%	Mnemotechnic potential	2
	Association by name	6%	Brand awareness	2
	Association by analogy	25%	Originality	4
	Association by allegory	6,2%	Denotation	3
	Emblematic association	6,2%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	18,8%	Pregnancy	3
	Conventional association	31,3%	Mnemotechnic potential	2
	Association by name	12,5%	Brand awareness	2
	Association by analogy	37,5%	Originality	2
	Association by allegory	34,8%	Denotation	3
	Emblematic association	6,2%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	0%	Pregnancy	3
	Conventional association	0%	Mnemotechnic potential	4
	Association by name	12,5%	Brand awareness	4

	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Association by analogy</td><td>13,3%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by allegory</td><td>40%</td></tr> <tr><td>Emblematic association</td><td>26,7%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by symbol</td><td>6,7%</td></tr> <tr><td>Conventional association</td><td>13,3%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by name</td><td>0%</td></tr> </table>	Association by analogy	13,3%	Association by allegory	40%	Emblematic association	26,7%	Association by symbol	6,7%	Conventional association	13,3%	Association by name	0%	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Originality</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Denotation</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Connotation</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Pregnancy</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Mnemotechnic potential</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Brand awareness</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	Originality	1	Denotation	2	Connotation	4	Pregnancy	2	Mnemotechnic potential	2	Brand awareness	1
Association by analogy	13,3%																									
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	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Association by analogy</td><td>12,5%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by allegory</td><td>6,1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Emblematic association</td><td>43,8%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by symbol</td><td>0%</td></tr> <tr><td>Conventional association</td><td>18,8%</td></tr> <tr><td>Association by name</td><td>18,8%</td></tr> </table>	Association by analogy	12,5%	Association by allegory	6,1%	Emblematic association	43,8%	Association by symbol	0%	Conventional association	18,8%	Association by name	18,8%	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Originality</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Denotation</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Connotation</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Pregnancy</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Mnemotechnic potential</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Brand awareness</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	Originality	2	Denotation	4	Connotation	4	Pregnancy	3	Mnemotechnic potential	3	Brand awareness	3
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	Association by analogy	25%	Originality	4
	Association by allegory	18,8%	Denotation	4
	Emblematic association	18,8%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	12,5	Pregnancy	4
	Conventional association	12,5%	Mnemotechnic potential	3
	Association by name	12,5%	Brand awareness	4
	Association by analogy	6,2%	Originality	3
	Association by allegory	37,5%	Denotation	3
	Emblematic association	18,8%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	0%	Pregnancy	4
	Conventional association	12,5%	Mnemotechnic potential	2
	Association by name	25%	Brand awareness	2
	Association by analogy	12,5%	Originality	4
	Association by allegory	6,2%	Denotation	3
	Emblematic association	18,8%	Connotation	2
	Association by symbol	0%	Pregnancy	2
	Conventional association	12,5%	Mnemotechnic potential	2
	Association by name	25%	Brand awareness	2
	Association by analogy	18,8%	Originality	3
	Association by allegory	6,2%	Denotation	3
	Emblematic association	6,2%	Connotation	3
	Association by symbol	18,8%	Pregnancy	3
	Conventional association	6,2%	Mnemotechnic potential	2
	Association by name	43,8%	Brand awareness	3

Source: Own Elaboration.

Results discussion

The graphic analysis results have been studied under the heraldic criteria presented by A. García and A. García (1920), Herrera Casado and Ortiz García (2001) and Vivar del Riego (2012). This made it possible to identify blazon shapes, interior figures, enamels and others that, regardless their graphic style, are currently maintained within the heraldic structure to a greater or lesser level.

Associative and mnemonic assessments provide a quantitative perspective that aims to be objective, based on academic publications on the evolution of brands and their dynamics. Likewise, it provides technical parameters that contribute arguments to the analysis of sports institutional graphic identifiers. In this sense, the best valued emblems are: *Liga de Quito*, *Delfín*, *El Nacional* and *Aucas*, which obtained high ratings. On the other hand, the emblems of Barcelona, Mushuc Runa, Libertad and *Gualaceo* obtained low ratings in parameters proposed by Costa (1994).

Conclusions Heraldic science can be considered one of Graphic Design precursors. In this context, both disciplines collaborate to design corporate identities in sports institutions. Several heraldry characteristics are preserved in sports shields designs, adapted to new graphic and illustration styles.

In addition, in relation to the brand functions, parameters are provided to evaluate the graphics from a professional perspective. The ratings go beyond superficial opinions or subjectivities of supporters, fanaticism, favoritism or preference for one team or another. Thus, under technical parameters it can be analyzed whether or not the equipment shields need formal reconsiderations in their design. From here, it can be determined that less valued shields need a revision of their forms for current audiences, with heraldic and corporate bases. ●

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About the authors

Jose Oleas-Orozco

Bachelor in Graphic Design, Master in Corporate Communication and PhD (c) in Design. With a career of more than 15 years in design, photography and audiovisual production in the commercial area, he has also been working for a

decade in higher education institutions in teaching and academic research in the fields of graphic design, visual communication, animation and multimedia. He is author of book: *Tatuajes. Contextos, historia, prácticas y formación profesional*, as well as several book chapters and academic papers. Likewise, he has participated in numerous local and regional scientific meetings in areas of design, digital animation, digital technologies and visual communication. He was research coordinator of *Centro de Estudios en Arquitectura, Artes y Diseño (CEAAD)*, of *Facultad de Arquitectura, Artes y Diseño*, from *Universidad Indoamérica* until 2022, and currently is a professor-researcher in the *carrera de Comunicación* of *Universidad Estatal de Bolívar*.

Renato Cabezas Ramos

Doctor in University Education, Master in Educational Informatics and Graphic Designer, he is a professor-researcher at *Universidad Estatal de Bolívar* and institutional evaluation and branding technical coordinator. He is also author of scientific publications and advisor on research and linkage projects at various universities in the country. He has extensive experience as a college professor in specialties of design, visual communication, digital animation, semiotics and multimedia. Likewise, he has chaired various degree projects throughout his 19 years of education experience and has held positions as senior designer, diagrammer and community manager in prestigious companies in Ecuador.

Gabriel Orozco Molina

Master in Integrated Advertising: Creativity and Strategy and graphic designer with eight years of experience for public institutions in the country in corporate identity management and creation. He has participated in several workshops related to communication and journalism, as well as editorial design courses. The development areas in which it has ventured are the following: corporate image, brand creation, branding, content creation and social media management.



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