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**TRANSFORMATION OF THE IMAGE OF EKATERINBURG
FROM BEING INDUSTRIAL INTO CULTURAL**

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Abstract

The article discusses the influence of state media on the geographical transformation of the Sverdlovsk Region. The article aimed to analyse the impact of official media publications on the image of the Ekaterinburg as a Cultural Capital. The formation of the Region's cultural image is regarded as the factor contributing to the economic growth of the territory. In this regard, state-owned media serve as key tools for building the image of the city at the regional, federal and international levels. Creating the image of the city with the help of state media is not able to change the city. The image of the city can become a catalyst for the processes of promoting the city on the world stage and attract additional investment in urban projects. Initially, the Sverdlovsk Region and Ekaterinburg were the centres of the mining industry, an important transport hub with intersecting trade routes rich in natural resources. Currently, the image of these places is being transformed into the capital and is open to communication networks. Campaigns in the capital of the Urals and information policy in the field of media facilitate the image of Ekaterinburg. The content analysis of videos about Ekaterinburg and publications in state media confirms the fact that at present Ekaterinburg positions itself as a cultural and sports capital with a developed infrastructure, medicine and education. This city is a centre for significant international events.

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Keywords: City image, cultural capital, geographical transformation, mass media, territory brand.



1. Introduction

Culture is treated as one of the leading factors contributing to the economic growth of the territory as it became evident at the beginning of XXIst century (Jawahar et al., 2020; Liu, 2015; Shutaleva et al., 2020). It can become the tool of the region's brand geo-transformation. The territory brand is considered in the article as the total sum of values reflecting its peculiar characteristics known to and recognized by society, as well as the aspects that are relevant to a large number of people (Kim, 2018; Ustinkin & Samoylova, 2016). We consider it to be a unique socio-cultural space uniting the cultural-historical, spatiotemporal, axiological, communicative, everyday and creative (organizing new cultural events) aspects of city life that contribute to citizens' identity, posturing it and building a positive image of the city. Reinterpreting the interrelationship between economics and culture, creating cultural brands and developing territories have become relevant within the process of the digitalization of society (Savchenko et al., 2020). The questions concerning raising levels of competitiveness and investment attractiveness, improving the image of the city, its positive perception by the outside and internal audiences are becoming acute within the framework of digital culture, information society development and media space formation. Communication technologies function as the subject (simultaneously the object) of the processes connected with creating a favourable image of the city: media technologies, advertising and PR-technologies (Kalyuzhnaya & Popova, 2019; Sharakhina et al., 2018).

2. Problem Statement

One of the main tasks concerning successful brand promotion is representing some object as attractive for potential visitors (tourists, students, business representatives and the people who are seeking employment in the city) and its citizens, as well as building its positive image, suitable for life, work, doing business and having a rest (Pashkus et al., 2014; Zenker & Martin, 2011). Apparently, creating the image of the city in the state media is not capable of changing the city, but it can act as a catalyst regarding the promotion processes in the city on the global arena and draw additional investment to the city's projects (Scaramanga, 2012). Within the framework of creating a cultural image of the city, we'll stick to the definition put forward by the American architect named K. Lynch who claims that citizens' personal perception alone makes the image of the city alive, revives the city's past making it comprehensible, near and arousing love. Thus, giving rise to patriotism (Mahnken, 2011).

The Sverdlovsk Region enjoys the geo-brand that dates back to Peter I period. The image of Ekaterinburg is closely linked with developing an all-Ural mining and metallurgical centre with an important trade routes junction and the abundance of natural resources responsible for generating mining industry. The main image-making characteristics that help identify Ekaterinburg and distinguish it from other cities, establish evaluation perception and, as a result, influence its development and status are, primarily, its biography, a unique 'personal' line within the socio-cultural historic context. The functional and structural properties of Ekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk) are also determined by its historical development from being a municipal settlement to a capital megapolis: a factory-fortress (in compliance with the decision defined by Peter Ith it was required not only to drill a window to Europe but also to Russia's 'household yard'), the district's chief town, an all-Ural mining and metallurgical centre, the key elements

of the industrial region during the USSR period. The geographic location and the beneficial trade routes crossway determined its development as an important transport junction, while the abundance of natural resources contributed to establishing mining and metallurgical industry (Buxton, 2014; Kycha & Kycha, 2015).

The status of the city changed at the end of the XXth century. Ekaterinburg became the main competitor for the role of one of the leading cities in Russia, namely the capital of the region. A new image of the city started to be actively created: it developed from a purely industrial and manufacturing centre to a trade, financial and commercial and service one with the catalysation of long-term communication (setting up foreign embassies, consular agencies etc.). These tendencies testify to the fact that the city is developing, actively seeking a place within quickly-changing Russia and becoming open for communication (Fedorova & Rotanova 2020). The image of the city is currently undergoing the process of geo-transforming into a megapolis and the centre open for communications networks. State media sources can be referred to as key components in building the image of the city on the regional, federal and international levels (Rotanova & Fedorova, 2019).

3. Research Questions

The following questions are fundamental for the research under consideration:

- 3.1. What major characteristics referring to the city of Ekaterinburg are covered in the state media sources?
- 3.2. Do these characteristics match the existing image of Ekaterinburg?
- 3.3. What influence do mass media outlets impose on geographical transforming Ekaterinburg and its promotion at regional, federal, and international levels?

4. Purpose of the Study

The article aimed to analyse the impact of official media publications on the image of the Ekaterinburg as a Cultural Capital.

5. Research Methods

The content-analysis of videos about the city and its main events was conducted to study the image of Ekaterinburg. The following media provided the video content of 2017 and 2018 under analysis: 1st Channel; 41st channel; Russia 1; Russia 24; OTV; The 'Rain' Channel; the RIA News; 'YouTube' bloggers' channels.

As for state media PR-texts content-analysis, more than 150 texts from 5 resources were analysed:

- Ekaterinburg official portal (<https://ekaterinburg.rf>);
- the Sverdlovsk Regional Government official site (<http://midural.ru>);
- the Sverdlovsk Region Legislative Assembly (<http://zssso.ru>);
- Ekaterinburg city Duma (<https://www.egd.ru>);
- the Leninsky district Administration (<http://leninskij.ekaterinburg.rf>).

6. Findings

6.1. The content-analysis of videos about the city

All in all, 60 videos were considered in the article:

- 30 out of them over the year 2017: 11 videos shot by bloggers on YouTube ‘Cool Times’, ‘EasyTech’, as well as 19 news reports on the channels mentioned above.
- 30 videos over the year 2018: 4 videos on YouTube from ‘Den Stalk’ blogger, as well as 26 news reports provided by the channels mentioned above.

The content-analysis of videos was carried out through underlining keywords, key ideas and topics passed along through them and, subsequently, calculating their percentage of the total number to identify the most popular keywords further on.

The following key words were mostly common for the videos of the year 2017. The percentage of references was the following: ‘Innoprom’ – 8 %, ‘infrastructure’ – 8 %, ‘international’ – 8 %, ‘sports’ – 8 %, ‘theatre’ – 8 %, ‘technologies’ – 8 %, ‘business-like’ – 4 %, ‘industry’ – 4 %, ‘art’ – 4 %, ‘history’ – 4 %, ‘culture’ – 4 %, ‘museum’ – 4 %, ‘music’ – 4 %, ‘education’ – 4 %, ‘contemporary’ – 4 %, ‘social’ – 4 %, ‘tourism’ – 4 %, ‘financing’ – 4 %, ‘championship’ – 4 %, ‘tower explosion’ – 0 %, ‘attractions’ – 0 %, ‘innovations’ – 0 %, ‘politics’ – 0 %, ‘justice’ – 0 %, ‘Universiade 2023’ – 0 %, ‘Europe and Asia centre’ – 0 %, ‘EXPO 2025’ – 0 %. (Table 1).

Table 01. The percentage of key words references in videos about Ekaterinburg city in 2017

Nº i/n	Keyword	% of references
1.	Innoprom	8
2.	Sport, World Football Cup	8
3.	Infrastructure	8
4.	International	8
5.	Theatre	8
6.	Technologies	8
7.	Businesslike	4
8.	Industry	4
9.	Art	4
10.	History	4
11.	Culture	4
12.	Museum	4
13.	Music	4
14.	Education	4
15.	Contemporary	4
16.	Social	4
17.	Tourism	4
18.	Financing	4
19.	Championship	4

The following topics were acute in 2017 and received broad coverage in various videos: the coming World Football Cup, as well as the ‘Innoprom’ exhibition and advanced technologies related to it. The bloggers sharing their viewpoints about Ekaterinburg in their videos consider this city to be of universal value and give a positive evaluation of its culture and history. The Opera House celebrated its jubilee in 2017, which was also mentioned in their videos.

The percentage of key words references in the videos of the year 2018 underwent some changes: ‘Innoprom’ – 0 %, ‘Infrastructure’ – 6 %, ‘international’ – 9 %, ‘sport’ – 12 %, ‘theatre’ – 3 %, ‘technologies’ – 9 %, ‘business-like’ – 0 %, ‘industry’ – 0 %, ‘art’ – 0 %, ‘history’ – 0 %, ‘culture’ – 0 %, ‘museum’ – 0 %, ‘music’ – 0 %, ‘education’ – 0 %, ‘contemporary’ – 0 %, ‘social’ – 0 %, ‘tourism’ – 3 %, ‘championship’ – 0 %, ‘championship’ – 12 %, ‘TV tower explosion’ – 12 %, ‘sights’ – 6 %, ‘Innovations’ – 3 %, ‘politics’ – 9 %, ‘justice’ – 3 %, ‘Universiade 2023’ – 3 %, ‘The Centre of Europe and Asia’ – 3 %, ‘EXPO 2025’ – 6 % (Table 2).

Table 02. The percentage of key words references in videos about Ekaterinburg in 2018

№ i/n	Keyword	% of references
1.	Sport, World Football Cup	12
2.	TV tower explosion	12
3.	International	9
4.	Politics	9
5.	Technologies	9
6.	Infrastructure	6
7.	Expo 2025	6
8.	Sights	6
9.	Theatre	3
10.	Tourism	3
11.	The Centre of Europe and Asia	3
12.	Innovations	3
13.	Justice	3
14.	Universiade 2023	3

The TV tower demolition proved to be the most burning topic for discussion among the citizens in 2018. It received broad media coverage both in the local news and by bloggers. The people negatively received this piece of information. Based on people’s comments, it was emphasized that the TV Tower used for serving as a symbol and a sight for the vast majority. World Football Cup was not a less heated topic for discussion. This fact contributed to an increase in the number of videos concerning sport and local sights. Moreover, the city got the image of an ‘international centre’, the place for tourism, which was highly appreciated by foreigners judging by one of the videos.

One more question that aroused concerns among the local population in 2018 was politics, namely the cancellation of mayoral elections in Ekaterinburg. The majority of citizens support the opinion put forward by Eugene Roizman concerning the importance of elections. Some videos of the year 2018 were devoted to such coming events as “Universiade 2023” and “EXPO 2025”. They tackled the topics related to technologies and innovations. However, the video about “EXPO” gave rise to the citizens’ negative feedback regarding “rent-seeking” behaviour and the point that Ekaterinburg was not ready for holding the forum. Thus, complying with the conducted content-analysis of the videos in the media, we came to many relevant conclusions. The most common topics for discussion within the period of 2017-2018 were sports, the World Football Cup, innovations, the TV tower demolition and mayoral elections cancellation.

A particular economically-based image of the city is currently established. Owing to a large number of activities, Ekaterinburg is gaining the status of a city with international importance, attractive to business and holding cultural events. Many of Ekaterinburg’s cultural events were covered in 2017

using different videos (The Opera House Jubilee, Music Night, Museums Night and other events), as well as Innoprom. Some of the city's main image-making characteristics are tourist itineraries and the dialectic representation of the city history which allows making individual conclusions regarding the past and the contemporary future of Ekaterinburg.

6.2. The content-analysis of state media PR-texts

Based on the analysis of the text, it was determined that Ekaterinburg were primarily portrayed as the 'Cultural Capital (38 and 40 % of articles respectively)' from 2017 to 2018. Different annual cultural, regional, federal and international events were covered in the media at that time:

- the Night of Museums,
- the Viennese festival,
- the 'Super Mega Fest' festival,
- the XIst International modern drama 'Kolyada-Plays' festival,
- the 'Ural Music Night' musical Project,
- the 'Open Air Fest', the street art 'Stenography' festival,
- the International Jazz 'EverJazz' festival with the participation of the best musicians from Russia, Great Britain, the USA, Austria, Germany, Columbia, Georgia,
- largest federal gastronomic 'Oh, yes! Food!' festival,
- the Open documentary films 'Russia' festival.

The 'August' festival was established in 2010 as a present to Ekaterinburg author song lovers for City Day. The Bike-rock-festival is held by the 'Black knives' moto club. The agenda of the festival includes retro bikes exhibitions, moto pipes, customizing, flag-tag competitions, a bike-cinema hall and two mobile baths. The Urals rock stars perform on stage. The 'Malachite jewel-case' folklore festival – folk crafts fair is devoted to popularizing the cultural traditions and crafts of Ural. There are many other events. 'Yandex' specialists have rated the best theatres of Russia excluding Moscow and Saint Petersburg. There are two cultural establishments from Ekaterinburg on the list out of 19. The Opera and Ballet Theatre and 'Kolyada-theatre' are among the best ones on the list.

The publications representing Ekaterinburg as the city with a comfortable social environment (34 % of publications in 2017 and 40 % of publications in 2018) realized by the city Administration hold the second place. More and more attention is paid to people's awareness concerning the following strategic programs:

- 'Ekaterinburg is a Healthy City' tackles the sphere of family and childhood healthcare;
- 'Education is the Basis of Development, Key to Success' is devoted to the sphere of education, cultural development and upbringing;
- two programs related to cultivating family entertainment, rest and health improvement called 'Sports-oriented Ekaterinburg';
- 'Ekaterinburg is a Megapolis of Culture and Art'.

Different events are held in the city connected with safeguarding children, young citizens' socializing and self-realizing, allowing them becoming successful, take an active part in the social,

economic, political and cultural life of the city, decreasing the rate of antisocial behaviour and psychological disadaptation of families and young people, involving people with disabilities and the elderly inactive life, establishing the system of values related to a healthy lifestyle. The pilot project 'Accessible environment' has been realized since 2017 on the territory of the Sverdlovsk Region concerning improving approaches to building the system of complex rehabilitation of disabled people, including children with limited abilities. It has been sponsored by the Russian Federation from 2011 to 2020.

The following characteristics under consideration are educational (26 and 25 % of publications respectively), innovative (28 and 32 % respectively), youth (12 and 8 % of publications respectively). The main topics of press releases are as follows: admission campaigns at universities and specialized secondary colleges, 'Teacher of the Year', 'Young Teacher of the Year' competitions results. Head of the Department of Education in Ekaterinburg city Administration kept under attention summer healthcare campaign. The next keywords are developing (24 and 20 % of publications respectively), infrastructure development (2 and 26 % of publications respectively). Various events obtain wide media coverage. Some of them are connected with developing the infrastructure in the city, implementing integrated urban development projects and building a comfortable environment for living under the collaboration agreement between the city's authorities and districts. One of the key aspects is joining efforts in the field of advancing innovations regarding medical cluster on the territory by building new places of medical significance and the necessary infrastructure. All seven city districts are being improved. During the summer period of street-road network repair and construction, the official portal of Ekaterinburg reports to citizens concerning what pedestrian zones will be taken care of in the city apart from roads and overhead roads.

Owing to the World Football Cup, the part of the city centre closely linked to the stadium was improved. The key phrase sports-oriented (16 and 14 % of publications, respectively) is taken into consideration. The publications, overall, were mainly devoted to holding the World Football Cup. Other sportive events were not adequately covered. It is necessary to mention the key expression being built (18 and 16 % of publications respectively). New builds delivered remain high in Ekaterinburg. As of 2017 and 2018, it was delivering residential buildings by budget sources amounted to 1mln square meters annually. The next keyword is historical (18 and 16 % of publications, respectively). The publications do not touch upon the history of Ekaterinburg. All of them are devoted to the events that are held in the city in connection with significant historical dates. Throughout June and July, the reading halls of the Municipal Union of Ekaterinburg libraries host exhibitions of books and periodicals entitled 'The Circle of Books for the Imperial Family'. They are devoted to the traditionally organized in the Ural capital 'Tsarist Days' festival of the Orthodox culture. A memorial tablet was put on the house where the family of the world-famous sculptor, artist and philosopher named Ernst lived from 1937 to 1945. The keyword tourist (18 and 24 % of publications respectively) is relevant as well. The number of publications referring to tourism opportunities is increasing in Ekaterinburg and its Region. Some activities connected with improving the level of service in the sphere of hospitality were carried out when preparing for the World Football Cup. More than 500 employees representing hospitality sphere received training in 2017 using regional budget funds. It aimed to upgrade the employees' qualification and professional skills.

Private investors put six new tourist infrastructure objects into operation in the early 2000s. This fact contributed to increasing hotel room capacity in 60 rooms and providing employment opportunities to 100 people. The brand tourist itinerary was introduced in the Sverdlovsk Region under the title 'Semiprecious Stories of Ural'. The route places were chosen in compliance with the recommendations put forward by the Import Substitution Program Realization Committee under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. The Region is included into the federal Imperial itinerary that comprises Moscow, Saint Petersburg, the Perm Territory and the Tyumen Region apart from the middle Urals. On average, more than 158 thousand people booked a room in Ekaterinburg hostels and hotels during the World Football Cup, according to the data provided by the Tourism Development Centre of the Sverdlovsk Region. There were representatives of various countries, like Peru, Mexico, Uruguay, Great Britain, New Zealand, Egypt, France, Sweden, Australia, Canada, Belarus, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Austria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Columbia, Italy, Morocco, Malta, Croatia, Chile, Finland, Germany, Senegal, the USA, Israel, Norway, Singapore, Turkey, Poland, Ukraine, the Netherlands, Lebanon, the Philippines.

Statistically, an estimated 7500 of foreigners visit the Sverdlovsk Region annually. This figure increased eightfold in June of 2018 approaching the semi-annual value. More than 1200 fans with disabilities from all over the world visited the World Football Cup matches in Ekaterinburg. The keyword safe (8 and 8 % of publications respectively) is significant in this context. The number of publications has not changed so far. There are several other key expressions, such as territory for prospective collaboration with other regions and countries and international (12 and 16 % of publications respectively). In general, they are devoted to the international industrial exhibition 'Innoprom' that has been functioning in Ekaterinburg since 2010. The notions of economically attractive (10 and 12 % of publications respectively), industrial, manufacturing (8 and 4 % of publications respectively) should be mentioned here. There are few articles focusing attention on product development and manufacturing plants of the city. The keyword medical (8 and 18 % of publications respectively) is significant. There is a marked increase in the number of publications concerning the healthcare system of the Sverdlovsk Region in 2018 in comparison with 2017. The following relevant keyword is patriotic (4 and 4 % of publications respectively). These publications cover the events devoted to the memory of those soldiers fallen during GPW or the date when the Soviet troops were brought into the territory of Afghanistan.

7. Conclusion

Culture is an obligatory component of developing the brand of the city. Publications in the state media alongside with various types of events play an important role in the process of the region's geo-transformation from being industrial to becoming a cultural centre and turning the city into the capital of culture.

Complying with the data provided by viral videos content-analysis and official publications about Ekaterinburg, it is possible to conclude that the city's image is changing from purely industrial to an open cultural centre that hosts a large number of international music, theatrical, sportive and business events. It is becoming attractive for investing in infrastructure and developing economics.

Many publications are devoted to social problems and medical care system projects, tourism and international collaboration.

The sphere of tourism is paid much attention to. Investing in the sphere of hospitality and creating new itineraries testify to the fact that the city is well-recognized and attractive to tourists.

The topics referring to education, development, innovations, construction, historical events and economic attractiveness of the city are acute.

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