

THE SYMBOLIC GEOGRAPHY OF BRAŞOV IN THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

Lorena OPRICA¹

Abstract: *This paper analyzes how a city that seems to have had a great potential to develop more complex associations, being, the city where the first Romanian school developed and which later offered the first printing house in Romania, the first grammar in Romanian (and many other "first" objects of culture), is associated almost exclusively with an (especially) extrinsic feature - that of the beauty of nature and, only centrally, the beauty of the old city.*

Key words: *symbolic geography, mental map, online image, mediated experience*

1. Introduction

The city of Brasov has a very good image among Romanians. According to the national survey, if possible, a third of Romanians would move to Brasov. Most of them are young, with higher education and above average income. People want to come to Brasov because here the quality of life is above the national average. Two years ago, Brasov placed fourth place among Romanians' preferences, and now it has climbed a place in the ranking. [...] For pleasure tourism, Brasov is the main destination. Young people and those with high incomes are more attracted to Brasov (Cristea, 2018).

Brasov is the absolute leader in the Central Region with a percentage of 45% of the total number of tourists coming to the area.

Indeed, it is an observation that I also made empirically: Brasov has a very good image among Romanians. In order to identify the "place" that Braşov occupies in the mental map of the people of Braşov but also of the (Romanian) tourists, I provoked discussions on this topic when the moment allowed (for example: in the various interactions we had in trips around the country, if I was asked "where are you from" I would answer "from Braşov; have you visited the city?"). The perception of Braşov, as far as I could identify it empirically, is generally a favorable one both from the perspective of the people of Braşov and from that of the tourists / potential tourists.

¹ National School for Political Administrative Studies, lorena@cercetari.ro.

It is interesting that almost all the positive aspects that people told me about Braşov today, were related to the geographical positioning of the city, the fact that it is between the mountains and that it is close to Poiana Braşov, where especially in winter it is very beautiful. A kind of Constanţa upside down. At the same time, a large part of those I spoke to evoked the industrial past of the city: "What an industry was there...".

Nobody told me about today's companies in Braşov, although there are some local brands that have made their way in the national market (eg Bilka, Mathilde, S'Karp, etc.), nobody told me about local festivals, except for the Golden Stag, which, on top of that, has not been organized for years, although there are some very beautiful and already traditionally cultural events in the city (Dracula Film Festival, Amural, etc.), by the University of Braşov or by the big companies that came to Braşov.

I wondered why these landmarks are not on the map of my interlocutors. Is Braşov much more beautiful in terms of physical geography than Sibiu (which is primarily identified with the idea of "culture" / "cultural events") or Cluj (which is identified mainly with the IT industry or the university) or does the city not communicate anything else? In order to answer this question, we analyzed several data from the public media, especially online, relevant for the positioning of Braşov.

2. Theoretical Arguments

It is necessary to understand the symbolic geography present in public space because mental maps are formed not only through direct experience, but also mediated (Pocock, 1972), which means that the image of Brasov in public space will generate a certain type of symbolic map in the minds of potential consumers. .

Andraş (2008) considers that symbolic geography is the generic name that the discipline Social and Cultural Geography received due to the new tendencies of symbolizing space and place. The subject of social geography, of mental maps, is not new. It has been documented since the beginning of the 20th century and consecrated in the second half of it.

Pocock (1972) stated in *City of the mind: A review of mental maps of urban areas* that

"Environmental perception is the cognitive structuring of physical and social environments in which the real or objective world is replaced by a simpler environment, perceived subjectively. Mental filtering and coding of sensory data is necessary because it is impossible for the human brain to understand total reality. In practical terms, it ensures the orientation, comfort and movement of man in his environment. (One of the clearest demonstrations in this regard is the uneasiness felt in navigating an unknown and busy city). Mental coding is done both in terms of non-localized ("whatness") and localized ("Whereness") aspects of the environment, the information being accumulated through first-hand experience and second-hand knowledge.

Three types of urban perception have been recognized - (1) operational, when the elements are noted for the direct purpose of orientation or movement; receptive, (2) a more passive type, in which the elements are "observed" as they happen around the city; and (3) inferential, where new elements are classified and

perhaps even designed, based on previous experience of similar situations. The composite result, the so-called spatial scheme or mental map, is the result of the interaction between the environment and the individual. This is not only a matter of mechanical observation of physical attributes (size, shape, arrangement, color, etc.), but also of motivational, functional or social significance for the observer. "The observer selects, organizes and endows with what he or she sees." On the human side of the equation, the relative stimulus of an environment is a function of the physiological, sociological and psychological makeup of the individual. Lifestyle, life cycle stage, social classes and value orientations were used as independent compound variables.

Although the mental image of each person is unique, the degrees of conformity allow the recognition of common or group images. This fact, plus the printed behavior of the man who acts as if responding to ordinary images, offers both the validity and usefulness of the analysis of mental maps. The techniques used to create the mental image are mapping exercises, verbal descriptions and evaluation exercises. The resulting studies could be concerned with the structure of an entire city, a district or the structure perceived along a route; can examine particular properties of maps, such as distance, size, or direction; or they may seek to assess certain parts of the city - the perceptual assessment of residential areas or shopping centers, for example." (Pocock, 1972, pp. 115 - 116)

According to Pocock, mind maps have the following characteristics:

1) are partially representative. "The mind map shows only a portion of the real world, as it is impossible for man to have first-hand experience or even second-hand knowledge of all parts." (Pocock, 1972, p. 116)

2) are represented schematically.

"Unable to obtain a synoptic vision, the brain apparently shows a bias towards recording and deducing symmetry, with features such as parallelism, continuity and closure. [...] The tendency towards symmetry can also be seen in the perception of the city as a whole." (Pocock, 1972, pp. 117 - 120)

3) are designed non-Euclidean.

"The mind map is an ego-centered projection, the product of the aforementioned reciprocal process between the observer and the observed. The variable nature of this relationship militates against any uniformity of the scale of the map and reveals the cognitive structuring of space that has no Euclidean character. The size, distance, and orientation of conventional map values are replaced by more complicated measures, contributing to its apparent inaccuracies and inconsistencies when tested in the real world. [...] Inferential structuring adds additional complexity to the scale construct. As a result of his collective experience, an individual tends to extend his mental map beyond his field of motion to unclear or unknown areas. [...] In this regard, an important research question is whether individuals perceive the structure of the city in terms of

concentric areas or multiple nuclei, as presented in simple physical models." (Pocock, 1972, p. 123)

4) have an evolutionary nature.

Pocock's conclusion is that symbolic geography is possible "by the fact that, although each person's image is unique, the degrees of conformity allow the recognition of common or group images." (Pocock, 1972, p. 123)

"Studies on the perception of urban space challenge the validity of objective knowledge to analyze this space and emphasize the importance of considering the sensitive and affective dimensions to understand the psychological, emotional and existential attachments of urban space. Some refer explicitly to derivatives and psycho-geography (Radovic, 2016) or to the working writings of Perec's field (Phillips, 2016). In fact, most of this research has focused on fieldwork methods. With the exception of cartography (O'Rourke, 2013), the articulation of the investigation process and the design of the representation are rarely discussed." (Vivant, 2018, p. 60)

Vivant (2018) points out that we are facing a first problem related to the polysemy of "public space".

Quercia, Aiello and Schifanella (2017) show in *The map of a good city life* that

*"a geographical map of a city consists of streets and buildings and reflects an objective representation. Instead, a symbolic map (symbolic geography) is a subjective representation that the inhabitants carry in their heads. Tourists in a strange city start with a few landmarks (for example, hotels, main streets) and then expand the representation in their minds; in short, they are slowly beginning to build an image. To see how these subjective representations matter, he believes that, starting with Kevin Lynch's groundbreaking book, *The Image of the City* (1960), studies have shown that easy and good representation allows city dwellers to feel at home and -and increase the well-being of the community. In general, people feel at home in cities whose neighborhoods are easily recognizable. Comfort resulting from little effort, the argument continues, would have an impact on individual and ultimately collective well-being."*

"If we want to analyze the visual aspect of a city, we will find that nowadays many layers of different ages exist together. We explore the city where we live in a very different way from the city where we are just tourists. We will be disoriented when we are displaced from our own cultural field. For example, when the streets are numbered instead of named, when we encounter traffic on the left instead of the right, and so on. This means that in differently planned cities, people must orient themselves differently. It can be assumed that a city has several layers of significance and these are closely linked to common cultural values"(Jasz, 2018, p. 289)

Mihăilescu (2015, p. 82) insists on the political significance of symbolic geography: "We are no longer in local spatial practices, but in a symbolic geography produced by a political discourse". Also, as an element of a political nature, which separates two

worlds, that of the host and that of the guest, the “symbolic geography of the threshold” is also seen (Mihăilescu, 2015, p. 54). Referring to the way Hungarians look at Romanians, Mihăilescu also uses “symbolic geography” to explain the fact that they use, in fact, a Western model of representation of the East (Mihăilescu, 2015, p. 127).

Here, then, these elements of mental representation of a physical reality also have the value of political communication, of generating power. Rose-Redwood (2009, p. 431) also refers to this kind of situation in the work “From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City”, when she indicates that “Numerous studies have highlighted the importance of naming streets as a strategy for building “places of memory”. Thus, symbolic capital becomes an instrument of urban regeneration, remodeling and redefinition (rebranding).

Rusu (2020) also debates the symbolic power of street names, for the regeneration of this symbolic geography, in “Political patterning of urban namescapes and post-socialist toponymic change: A quantitative analysis of three Romanian cities”, making a comparative analysis between the renaming of streets in Sibiu, Cluj Napoca and Braşov, “Romanianized” cities that were dramatically resized in their population structure after the First World War, when Transylvania ceased to be part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was incorporated into the Romanian kingdom ”(Rusu, 2020, p. 2). Rusu (2020) shows how all the streets that were symbolically associated with the communist period were renamed by post-December authorities using strong anti-communist symbols. For example, V.I. Lenin was renamed on November 15, 1987, after the revolt in Brasov (Rusu, 2020, p. 6). All these renaming have the role of changing the geography of the memory of the inhabitants, of “introducing an authorized version of history in the usual settings of daily life” (Rose-Redwood, 2009 apud Maoz Azaryahu (1996, p. 312)).

The French sociologist M. Halbwaches (1950) has convincingly demonstrated that the main function of collective memory is to maintain the cohesion of society and its reproduction by transmitting common history, rather than preserving its past. This is why collective memory is often embellished, falsified and mystified. Halbwaches (1950) connected social memory with the mechanisms of social power. Social memory preserves group identities and is understood as a history of “collective mentalities”. “Based on the appropriate image of the past, the national or group identity is outlined.” (Yanushkevich, 2014, pp. 44 - 45) “Social memory becomes one of the key elements that determine the current state of society and actively shape its future.” (Yanushkevich, 2014, p.49)

Summarizing the definitions and theoretical approaches presented up to this point, it results that symbolic geography is the mental representation of a physical space and the elements that determine it (inhabitants, urbanism, history, etc.), being generated by direct or mediated interaction of the subject with that space and shaped by structural and subjective factors.

3. Case Study

For a start, I searched on Google engine, as the most popular online search service²,

² <https://www.smartinsights.com/search-engine-marketing/search-engine-statistics/>

the question "How is it?", instead of suspension points, the names of the cities of Braşov, Bucharest, Sibiu and Cluj were passed, one by one.

In the analysis of the image of the mentioned cities we took into account the first three pages of results, pages for which we captured the content using the Nvivo software, without opening each result separately. With the help of NVivo, software dedicated to content analysis, we conducted a series of queries which resulted in a text-info-graphic relevant to the image of each of the four cities analyzed. Thus, I found that the image broadcast online for each of the cities corresponds to the one I intuited from informal interviews.

Bucharest is perceived and communicated as a place where business is done, events take place and it is full of life. A special element highlighted in the chart is "Therme", referring to the SPA location inaugurated relatively recently outside Bucharest, a location that attracts a large number of visitors, including from outside the capital.

Sibiu is very strongly associated with theater (culture), tourism and Transylvania, being an exponent of Transylvanian cities. And in this case, the results obtained from the analysis of the online image match with those obtained empirically.

Cluj is the "center", the "capital" of Transylvania, a city full of students and "life", cosmopolitan, European, but also expensive. It is noteworthy that in all three cases presented above (Bucharest, Sibiu, Cluj) there are 4-6 keywords that stand out and characterize the city in a wider spectrum, indicating 2-3 different directions of analysis.

In the case of Braşov, there are only two directions, and even these can be integrated into one: the "beautiful center". Secondly, at a great distance from the "beautiful center" we identify the words corona, Stalin and "life", the first two referring to the old names of the city and "life" to the good quality of life in the city.

The structure of the 30 delivered results is as follows: 9 materials are published by the national or local media (EVZ, Adevărul, fwdBV, etc.), 7 materials are published by online or offline travel agencies (half of which are advertorials), 5 pages belong to institutions, 4 could not be included in any individual category, 3 blogs and 2 pages of Wikipedia.

I accessed and read the content of the materials in the top 3 pages of results, including those with advertorials. The result is a very positive one for Braşov, the number of positive materials (12) being 6 times higher than the negative ones (2). The content of the 3 blogs was divided as follows: one positive, one negative and one neutral. The materials from institutional sources and those from wikipedia had a neutral content, and the materials from the national or local media are mostly positive.

In 2010, Braşov was declared "The city where it is best to live" following a campaign conducted by EVZ among readers of the publication. In the same note is the article from Adevărul, "Braşov, the city with the most advantageous cost of living in Romania." Another more recent article in Forbes presents an analysis of a real estate ad platform in collaboration with a market research agency.

The same big-data study, conducted by D&D Research for stori.ro (a site specializing in real estate), showed that two neighborhoods in Braşov, Răcădău and Noua, are perceived as having the best air quality. The information is quoted over by Adevărul, which briefly presents the Răcădău neighborhood.

Bloggers are more subjective and, due to the lack of restrictions specific to classic

media, more authentic. Dorin Alexandrescu (2014), a professional strategist and marketer, originally from Ploieşti, describes in a very crafty manner what he learned in 10 years in Braşov. The article generated over 9300 likes, almost 10 thousand distributions and 169 comments (only on the home page), most confirming the author's summaries. With his consent, I continue to reproduce most of the text "What I learned in 10 years of Brasov" because it describes very punctually, in 22 steps, defining elements of the city. Even if it is a bit older (the last upgrade was made in 2014), the material is still current and captures in a very picturesque way both the negative elements and the positive elements. A specific statement caught my attention because it can be a possible explanation for the fact that Brasov is a pleasant city for most people who visit it. At point 10, Alexandrescu states that: "In Braşov you can't get lost. With a big mountain in the middle, which you know is in the historic center, you don't need GPS. Maybe that's why I know Braşov much better than my hometown." This means that Brasov is a simple city, which is not scary. And if something (a city) doesn't scare you, the chances of liking it are much higher than if it initially caused you fear. In the last point, which is the conclusion, Alexandrescu highlights even better this quality, not to scare, but blaming it on the "beauty" of the city (a kind of quasi-universal conclusion of all those I interacted with):

"I learned over the years that Brasov is such a beautiful city that it's worth the effort to settle down and raise your child here. It is a good place for the maladapted of any kind: freelancers, hipsters, eternal students, rockers, anarchists... Beyond clichés like clean air or green spaces, in Brasov you can feel the 1000-year history of a city that has always been cosmopolitan and a future that promises a beneficial modernism. That, with fewer sacrifices than in Bucharest. So it is the place where I can raise my child with as few compromises as possible and without the frustration of having made the wrong choice."

So, Braşov is "a good place for the maladapted of any kind", from which I conclude that it is a city where you adapt easily, and it is a city "so beautiful" where it is worth [...] raise the child". I have found, repeatedly, the emphasis on the qualities of Brasov in contrast to Bucharest, which makes me believe that, however, the city of Bucharest is a landmark. Dorin Alexandrescu (2014) has, in essence, the same quasi-universal conclusion as all of those with whom I interacted: "Brasov is such a beautiful city", complemented by the hope of a modern future in a cosmopolitan city: "in Brasov you feel on your shoulders the 1000-year history of a city that has always been cosmopolitan but also of a future that promises a beneficial modernism." This oppressive 1000-year history often produces "emblems of the city's identity (Chang & Teo, 2009), [and] is inclined to produce signs that are reinforced in spatially identified social practices and socio-economic activities, which in its terms Lefebvre (1974/1996) become representative spaces with symbolic values.' (Michelson & Paadam, 2016, pp. 143)

Zoso (2018), by his real name Vali Petcu, another blogger widely read and distributed online, concludes a material about Braşov in almost the same way: "*Braşov is a cool, quiet and beautiful city to live in, provided you have a place for work.*" This condition, "*to have a job*", is in fact a criticism of Braşov because, Zoso points out:

"Here [in terms of jobs – m.n.] it is terribly painful, because Braşov has two types of jobs: highly skilled professionals and salahori (low paid workers). We are looking for programmers, engineers, automatists, technicians and so on, plus people who do physical work (of any kind, from driver to concrete mixer to waiter). The in-between jobs, marketing, barista, copywriter, HR, anything else, are very few, because the companies are based in Bucharest (or abroad) and here they only have the execution.[...] The city is ok because life is cheap if you have a house and a car."

Zoso also makes some portraits of the people who live in Braşov and emphasizes the "civilizing" role of the city:

"There are three big groups of people here: Transylvanians, Moldovans and lazy people. The ethnic groups present in the city (Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Gypsies) mix in all these three groups, which are rather a label applied to a type of behavior. In general, Transylvanians are more settled, calmer, more orderly. [...] A relatively new category in the city are students whose parents did not send them to Bucharest. They appear in autumn and are easily recognizable by cars with PH, AG, BC, BZ, BR or GL numbers and tend to be civilized by spring. Not everyone, of course."

Zoso's observation about the places where a large number of students from Transilvania University come is correct. The information according to which "*most [students] come from the Moldovan area of Bacău, Neamţ or Vaslui, but also from Buzău, Vrancea, Dîmboviţa, Argeş and Prahova.*" being documented by official statistics and published in the media (Suciu, 2015). This aspect is also confirmed by the World Bank report (Cristea et al., 2017), which analyzes the area of student recruitment by Transilvania University of Braşov.

The travel blog *vacantevacante.com*, owned by a couple of traveling journalists, is not the only one that publishes from the title the conclusion that Brasov is "probably the most beautiful city in Romania" (Căluşer, 2015); and the journalist Cristina Bazavan (awarded with CSR Romanian Awards 2013 and Best Woman Blogger - Digital Divas 2013, former editor-in-chief of TABU and radio man in Europa FM, Radio Guerrilla or Radio 21) declares, from the title, on the personal blog *bazavan.ro* that "Brasov [is] probably the most beautiful city in Romania." (Bazavan, 2014)

Where does this recurring title come from, though? If anyone notices the striking resemblance to the slogan of Carlsberg beer, "PROBABLY the best beer in the world", she is right!

This is due to the fact that in December 2008, Braşov City Hall concluded a loan agreement³ with Carlsrom Beverage CO SRL, the importer of the Carlsberg brand, which makes available to economic agents in the city center "for use, free of charge, the umbrellas of terrace in the number necessary for the use of the terraces located by the economic agents in the Historical Center of the Municipality of Braşov ", the umbrellas on which the slogan " Brasov, probably the best city in the world "is easily distinguished.

³ <http://ziarero.antena3.ro/articol.php?id=1250540938>

These umbrellas, made available to traders since the summer of 2009, have been used for many years, some of which can still be found outside the historic center. After this partnership, the local public administration seems to have made another one, this time with the brewer Ursus, because almost all the shadows in the historic center have been replaced with some with the message "Braşov, the king of Romanian cities".

From the online analysis of the archives of the local press and of the content published on various occasions, it became clear to me that these are the only two moments in which the administration supported and communicated, voluntarily and in an organized manner, a message regarding the city of Braşov. No other action of the local administration or other local institutions (such as Transylvania University, for example) seems to have been meant to communicate a certain message about the city, about what it offers and about the opportunities to live in it.

If in certain articles published over time, Braşov is positioned as the city with the most advantageous cost of living⁴ in Romania, information validated by the largest database and comparative analysis about the cost of living (numbeo.com⁵), in other articles Braşov is described as "provincial" or even "ugly".

Ovidiu Eftimie, a journalist from Braşov and editor of Times New Roman, states from the title of the material published on his blog⁶ that "Braşov is a billion years old before it becomes a tourist city", evoking in the text the lack of professionalism and education of the inhabitants working in services and the disinterest of authorities in developing tools to help increase the quality of services and experiences in Braşov. The description of the people of Braşov is purely caricatured, with thick touches. Foolishness, arrogance and theft - these are the characteristics that Eftimie attributes to the people of Braşov, considering that here the worst qualities of those who settled in the city have combined, all these contributing, in the author's opinion, to a dysfunctional city which is developing well below its potential.

The local journalist Cornelius Popa, editor-in-chief of Gazeta Braşov, also analyzes in the article entitled "Braşov, probably ..." the theme of incoherent development, without head and tail, as if without any kind of vision of the city of Braşov⁷. The title is a clear reference to the message present for a while everywhere in the city center, "Braşov, probably the best city in the world", but the material that follows it unravels and demystifies point by point this slogan. The author accuses the authorities that they do not have on the agenda the maintenance and protection of nature, on the contrary, through their actions they destroy the main element generating the perception of "the most beautiful city". The medieval architecture that Braşov is proud of and which could be a strong point of attraction for tourists is not in the best condition, being a victim of both the passage of time and the disinterest of the administration or bureaucracy.

Cornelius Popa compares the situation of Braşov with that of Sibiu, where there is a constant interest in highlighting the history of the city, a comparison that I have

⁴ <http://www.businessmagazin.ro/actualitate/orasul-din-romania-unde-se-traieste-cel-mai-bine-bucuresti-doar-pe-locul-9-in-clasament-16176345>

⁵ <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Brasov>

⁶ <https://eftimie.net/brasovul-miliard-pana-ajunga-oras-turistic/>

⁷ <https://gazetabrasovului.ro/2018/05/03/brasovul-probabil>

encountered on other occasions. In fact, the main competitor of Braşov seems to be Sibiu, 2 of the 30 articles⁸ resulting in the first 3 pages of the online search being dedicated to the comparison between Sibiu and Braşov, the result of the debate being undecided; one for the comparison with the city of Cluj and 2 articles for the comparison with the city of Bucharest, against which it wins in a detached manner (in the opinion of the authors).

The central area of the city is considered the "brand of Braşov", a fact highlighted by the study conducted by fwdBV magazine, "The most admired brands - Braşov 2016"⁹, among which the Black Church (located next to the Modarom - Republicii - Piata Sfatului axis) is placed third in the top. In the same top, on the 10th place, is the brand "Tractorul Braşov", although the factory has not existed in the city for almost a decade. In the same top, on the 13th place was Steagul Roşu and on the 15th place Rulmentul - all these "local brands" being, in fact, long gone as a commercial activity or as a physical existence (of a factory). The explanation of the existence of these names, which represents a stage of strong industrialization of Braşov during the communist period, is given by Popescu (2017, p.117) who says that cities "owe their identity largely to one or more local companies. When a major employer moves its headquarters from the city, citizens often feel that a certain part of the city's soul is disappearing."

Kourtit et al., (2020, pp. 2-3, apud Hueffer, 1905) states that

"the soul of the city represents the invisible" superstructure "of a human settlement, in terms of products of the human spirit, such as the satisfaction or happiness of the residents, sense of community ("sense of belonging"), cultural characteristics, social capital (or negative, social conflict), political climate, local democracy, ethnic tension or segregation, feelings of security, common feelings of history or identity, etc."

In other words, the inhabitants kept in their memory these names, former important factories in Braşov, as symbolic elements of their identity, which give "the sense of community ("sense of belonging")" (Kourtit et al., 2020, p. 3).

4. Conclusions

It is interesting to note how a city that seems to have had a great potential to develop more complex associations, being, however, the city where the first Romanian school developed and which later offered the first printing house in Romania, the first grammar in Romanian (and many other "first" objects of culture), is associated almost exclusively with an (especially) extrinsic feature - that of the beauty of nature and, only centrally, with the beauty of the old city.

In this context, it is easy to understand why the only visible element with which Braşov identifies is beauty, this being highlighted especially in the center. The rest of the

⁸ <http://mogazice.ro/sibiu-brasov-cineva-care-locuit-ambele-orase>, <https://cemerita.ro/brasov-nu-e-cel-mai-frumos-oras-din-romania/>, <http://www.cluj.travel/vezi-romania-este-brasovul-cel-mai-frumos-oras-din-tara/>

⁹ <http://fwdbv.ro/topul-complet-al-celor-mai-admirate-branduri-si-personalitati-ale-brasovului/>

information, which could become an image vector of Braşov and through which the communication elements about the city could be diversified, remains conjunctural, at the discretion of the individual actors, be they people (bloggers, journalists, citizens “commentators” on the internet) or institutions (media or companies). Thus, the public image of the city of Braşov remains doomed to chance, in close connection with punctual events or personal feelings of those who communicate in the public space; all this communication of events or experiences being both positive and negative.

References

- Alexandrescu, D. (2014). *Ce-am învățat în 10 ani de Braşov* [What I learned in 10 years from Brasov]. Retrieved from <http://www.dorinalalexandrescu.ro/blog/ce-am-Invatat-in-10-ani-de-brasov/>
- Bazavan, C. (2014). *FIFI & THE CITY: Brasovul. Probabil cel mai frumos oras din Romania* [FIFI & THE CITY: Brasov. Probably the most beautiful city in Romania]. Retrieved from <http://bazavan.ro/2014/09/fifi-the-city-brasovul-probabil-cel-mai-frumos-oras-din-romania/>
- Andraş, C. (2008). *Geografiile simbolice* [Symbolic geographies]. Iaşi: Institutul European.
- Căluşer, M. (2015). *Braşov, probabil cel mai frumos oraş din România* [Brasov. Probably the most beautiful city in Romania]. Retrieved from <https://vacantevacante.com/am-fost-acolo/sa-le-aratam-romania/brasov-probabil-cel-mai-frumos-oras-din-romania/>
- Cristea, M. (2018). *Studiu Banca Mondială: De ce vor o treime din români să se mute la Braşov* [World Bank Study: Why do a third of Romanians want to move to Brasov]. Retrieved from https://adevarul.ro/locale/brasov/studiu-banca-mondiala-vor-otreime-romani-mute-brasov-1_5b597bfbdf52022f75a6928b/index.html
- Cristea M., Mare C., Moldovan C., China Farole T., Vinţan A., Park J., Garrett K. P., Ionescu-Heroiu M., (2017). *Oraşe Magnet – Migraţie şi navetism în România* [Magnet Cities - Migration and commuting in Romania]. Bucureşti: Banca Internaţională pentru Reconstrucţie şi Dezvoltare / Banca Mondială.
- Jasz, B. (2018). Mental map of the city: elements of visual argumentation and creativity in modern city planning. *Creativity Studies*, Volume 11 Issue 2, pp. 284 – 293.
- Kourtit K., Nijkamp P. and Hårsman Wahlström M. (2020). How to make cities the home of people – a ‘soul and body’ analysis of urban attractiveness. *Land Use Policy*, In Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.104734>
- Michelson A., Paadam K. (2016). Destination branding and reconstructing symbolic capital of urban heritage: A spatially informed observational analysis in medieval towns. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management* 5, 141–153.
- Mihăilescu, V. (2015). *Apologia pîrleazului* [Stile apology]. Iaşi: Polirom.
- Petcu, V. (2018). *Vrei să te muţi la Braşov în 2018? Iată situaţia din teritoriu!* [Do you want to move to Braşov in 2018? Here is the situation in the territory!]. Retrieved from <https://zoso.ro/brasov-2018/>
- Pocock, D. (1972). City of the mind: A review of mental maps of urban areas. *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 88:2, 115-124.

- Popescu, R.I. (2007). Rolul strategiei de brand în promovarea și dezvoltarea oraşelor [The role of brand strategy in promoting and developing cities]. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, 20, 115-136.
- Quercia D., Aiello L. M., Schifanella R. (2017). Mapping towards a Good City Life. *Journal of Urban Design and Mental Health*, 3, 3.
- Rose-Redwood, R.S. (2008). From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City. *Social & Cultural Geography*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp 431-452.
- Rusu, M. S. (2020). Political patterning of urban namescapes and post-socialist toponymic change: A quantitative analysis of three Romanian cities. *Cities*, Vol. 103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102773>
- Suciu, S. (2015). *Învăţământul universitar are 75 de ani de tradiţie la Braşov. Universitatea Transilvania are acum 18 facultăţi și peste 20.000 de studenţi* [University education has a 75-year tradition in Brasov. Transylvania University now has 18 faculties and over 20,000 students]. Retrieved from http://adevarul.ro/locale/brasov/Invatamantul-universitar-75de-ani-traditie-brasov-universitatea-transilvania-18-facultatisi-20000-studenti-1_54ffe3e2448e03c0fd71f071/index.html
- Vivant, E. (2018). Experiencing research-creation in urban studies. Lessons from an inquiry on the making of public space. *Cities*, Vol.77, pp. 60–66.
- Yanushkevich I. (2014). Semiotics of social memory in urban space: the case of Volgograd (Stalingrad), (IJCRSEE) *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education*, Vol. 2, No.1, pp. 43-50.