

## **Image of Chisinau in touristic albums and guides**

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Studying a city image presents an important part of urban research, because representations about the city basically underlie urban identities, the city image being correlated with its brand and urban milieu. Scientific sources in general provide no explicit definition of city image, referring generally to analysis of its aspects from different research positions. Thus, city image can be handled through a contextual aspect, a narrative one, or from perspective of the process of its formation and interpretation by different subjects. Local urban research dealt with analysis of the Chisinau city image in fiction, historical sources, and touristic offers. Our previous research dealt with urban identity features of Chisinau residents, including city images and representations of respondents it was based on. The aim of the present research is to study the city image formed as an image-building one in the touristic albums and guides issued during both Soviet and independence periods of Moldovan history. For this purpose, we selected several sources from the both periods and carried out their comparison according to the identified categories and their contents. One of the tasks comprised detection of Chisinau image nucleus and its periphery. Image nucleus presents some consistent recurrent characteristics, while periphery is formed from inconsistent representations, formed by a historic, political, or sociocultural context. For example, apparent are ideological differences, determined by political contexts, such as focus on development of industry, system of education, infrastructure etc. during the Soviet times. A special interest presents the category of culture (ethnic), which is important for the both periods – before and after 1991. In general research of Chisinau images is essential for formation of a tailored modern city image, as well as for estimation of its attractiveness for the residents as a resource for a sustainable development of the urban community and country as a whole.