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## **Dynamics of Residents' Identity in the Krasnoyarsk Territory Settlements as a Basis For the Region's Brand (2010-2014)**

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*Processes of modernization and new industrialization of the country in the current financial and economic crisis are regionally differentiated. Absolute priority in these processes is given to regions with clearly marked and attractive brand. This brand is largely dependent on the settlement self-identity of the region's residents, and their emotional perception concerning the region's territory. Strictly speaking, the population can act both as a subject of the region branding and its object. In this paper, the region's residents are considered to be the branding subject. Therefore, the analysis of regional (settlement) self-identity for the population and concomitant factors plays an important role for the formation of the region's brand. The paper is based on the materials of representative study of the population of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, conducted in 2010, 2012 and 2014. The author examines the dynamics of the region's settlement self-identity and the correspondent changes in the region's brand. It was concluded that in the past five years, largely due to the strengthening of the regional settlement self-identity of the region's inhabitants, the brand of the Krasnoyarsk Territory became less amorphous and more polarized. In addition it was found that respondents with stronger complementary settlement self-identity tend to evaluate some aspects of the region's brand as positive, while the residents with weaker or absent settlement self-identification treat the same aspects as negative. In the end, strengthening of the region's brand and the positive elements' intensification help the economic, social and cultural region's competitiveness in the modern world.*

*Keywords: region's brand, self-identity in settlements, social and cultural identity, modernization.*

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*Research area: sociology.*

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### **Relevance of the topic and approaches to the study**

The territorial branding in the last decade has become the focus of a growing number of

publications in various fields of social sciences and humanities. It has been suggested (Kleiman, 2014. P. 58-63), that the beginning of this process falls at the early 2000s, when Simon Anholt,

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one of the world's leading experts in the field of branding, first used the term "place branding" (Anholt, 2009). At the present stage of Russian society development the problem of formation of regional brands is becoming more and more crucial. Often, these brands are used by regional elites not to attract private investment into the region, but much as a sort of a "magic wand", which can be used to "wheedle money" out of the central authorities additional grants or provide the government bodies with objective reasons to explain some of the region's shortcomings.

Coincidentally we cannot but agree with the fact that "regional differentiation of Russia has increased significantly in the course of its societal transformation". According to V.V. Markin, the collapse of the USSR, "sovereignization" of individual subjects of the Russian Federation, the destruction of inter-regional social and economic relations, strengthening of nationalistic tendencies have been significant factors of imbalances in the position of the Russian regions, their disintegration of all-Russian space (Markin, 2008. P. 230).

Therefore, we agree with the opinion of a number of political scientists who believe, for example, that "modern regional societies and elites find more profitable to quit the way of legal, administrative and political leveling between the very regional and national components of their identity, which was typical for ancient, imperial and especially the Soviet period of Russian history, and to wend the way of accentuation of these differences (Sukhanov, 2009). Moreover, N.A. Galaktionova makes the confident assertion that the 1990s experience of the country shows that the mobilization of the regional identity of the population can be used by political forces in different interests. In this situation of collapse in the hierarchy of social values and the lack of ideas, consolidating society, updated and focused on the region or city forms of identity, may be

accompanied by concealing self-identification with the "big" society (Galaktionova, 2012. P. 79-83). As M.A. Meleshkina rightly believes, political elites are turning to regional type of identity for various purposes. These are the increase of cultural and political integration of the region's population, political legitimization of regional government institutions both outside and within the region (Meleshkina, 1999. P. 126-137). What is more, the region's brand plays an important role in all these processes. The region's brand can be defined as "one of the determining factors of perception of the region, formed on the basis of clearly defined positive image of the territory ... aimed at building the region's ranking through the creation of competitive advantages; and also the region's brand is an asset of the regional economy" (Seliukov, Shalygina, Skachkov, Kurach 2011. P. 703).

In this case, one of the most essential elements of social and cultural self-identity of the population is the settlement identity. It expresses the relationship between the social subject and the place of residence (settlement, and in a broader sense, the territory where they live). Thereby this self-identification addresses an imperative element of the region's brand. Fundamental transformation processes taking place in Russia in recent decades have had a direct impact on the mass consciousness of society members, causing, among other consequences, the crisis of identity. Loss of the region's residents of their territorial self-identity leads to the damage to and even the destruction of the region's brand. We support the position of V.I. Pantin and V.V. Lapkin, according to whom the modern Russian society appears as a rather poorly integrated identification space, providing the individual with different ways of social and cultural self-identity (Pantin, Lapkin, 2004. P. 52). This issue has become the subject of many sociological studies, including

foreign and classical (from E. Durkheim and T. Parsons to A. Schutz, P. Bourdieu, J. Habermas, and others). Russian authors (Z.T. Golenkova, Ie.N. Danilova, L.M. Drobizheva, L.G. Ionin, P.M. Kozyreva, N.I. Lapin, Yu.A. Levada, V.M. Sukhanov, V.A. Iadov, I.G. Iakovenko, etc.) research the theoretical foundations of social and cultural self-identity and empirical analysis of its various aspects. Among the most important sociological works dedicated to the regional identity appearing in recent years, we should mention the publications of the Institute of Sociology RAS (Russian identity, 2005; Russian identity, 2008), G.S. Korepanov (Korepanov, 2009), the work of V.V. Markin (Markin, 2008), the analysis of Muscovites' identity (Ryzhova, 2008. Pp. 40-49), the analysis of the youth of Southern Russia (Avksentiev, Aksiumov, 2010), the analysis of the central regions of the country (Gel'man, Khopf, 2003), a number of thesis research (Sukhanov, 2009; Nazukina, 2009). Empirical and methodological works by culturologists from Siberian Federal University are also central for understanding the settlement self-identity as an aspect of social and cultural identities (optseva, Il'beikina 2012; Koptseva, 2012a; Koptseva, 2012b) and others. Nevertheless, the regional aspects of the relationship between branding territories and the settlement self-identity of population in modern Russia, in our view, remains understudied.

Meanwhile, an adequate account of the factors and mechanisms of social and cultural identification in the regional aspect is not only a prerequisite for the successful modernization of the modern Russian society, preserving its unity and social stability. In fact, the population in the region with all its social and cultural characteristics is one of the most important elements of the regional brand. An analysis of the regional (settlement) self-identity of the

population and factors generating it are chief for the study and formation of the region's brand, as well as for its use in the social, cultural, political and economic spheres of society.

This problem is especially acute in some regions of Siberia, which developed historically as specific culturally diverse communities.

### **Theoretical framework**

The article is based on the results of studies conducted in 2010–2014 in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. They used representative regional sample, in accordance with the standard program and methodology of “Socio-cultural portrait of the region” Center for the Study of Social and Cultural Change of The Institute of Philosophy RAS (Lapin, 2009. P. 15-40). The surveys were carried out in the form of formalized interview at respondents' homes, on the basis of a stratified, multi-stage, area, quota sample of various sex, age and level of education groups with randomly selected respondents. The representativeness of the sample was provided by keeping the reasonable proportion between different groups of the population, including people living in the settlements of different types (metropolitan areas, medium and small cities, rural settlements), various sex, age and level of education groups of the adult population of the Krasnoyarsk Territory.

1. In 2010 n = 1000 respondents, the survey was sponsored by RHF, project № 10-03-00001a “Characteristics of socio-cultural portrait of the Krasnoyarsk Territory”.

3. In 2012 n = 1300 respondents, the survey was sponsored by RHF, project № 11-03-00250a “Characteristics of forming the social structure and social capital in the Krasnoyarsk Territory”.

4. In 2014 r. n = 1000 respondents, the survey was sponsored by RHF, project № 13-03-00379a “The dynamics of socio-cultural processes in the East Siberian region in the

context of contemporary modernization of Russia (on the materials of sociological research in the Krasnoyarsk Territory)".

The authors asked the respondents a question: "To what extent do you feel your closeness or distance ("my" □ "alien") with such people (followed by listing different groups)?" Then the researchers used the respondents' answers as an indicator of self-identification; for an answer there was offered a five-point scale, with the question of their emotional attitude to their region. To analyze the factors affecting the process of self-identification the authors used the question: "What, in your experience, are the characteristics of your region, its attractive and unattractive features?". At the same time these mentioned characteristics acted as important elements of the region's brand.

### Results of the study

As it is widely known, the respondents' settlement self-identity is an important social and cultural characteristic of the region's inhabitants (Nemirovsky, 2011; Nemirovsky, Nemirovskaya, 2013. Pp. 14-16; Nemirovsky, Nemirovskaya, 2014. Pp. 13-18). Whereas self-identification of the majority of respondents in the Krasnoyarsk Territory with the residents of the settlements in which they live (villages, or rural and urban settlements) for the first two years did not change much (in 2010 – 61 %, in 2012 – 63 %), in 2014 this self-identification reached 74 %. The same can be said about the indicator of self-identification with the residents of the regional center (it grew respectively from 38 % to 43 % and 49 %), as well as the self-identification with all inhabitants of the Krasnoyarsk Territory (respectively 29 %, 35 %, 41 %) and the residents from the former Soviet republics (the indicator significantly increased from 25 % to 35 % and 41 %). There were observed similar processes in the mass consciousness of the Krasnoyarsk Territory regarding Moscow

(9 %, 9 % and 19 %). Nevertheless, the degree of the self-identity of inhabitants of the region with people in the region and in Russia as a whole remains quite low. The proportion of respondents identifying themselves with the population of Russia is even less (in 2010 – 22 %, in 2012 – 22 %, in 2014 – 27 %).

The analysis of trends in the entire changeable set of indicators of the settlement social and cultural self-identity in the region leads to the conclusion that this self-identity has increased markedly. This indicates a growing unity of Russian society, in the region of Siberia, in particular. Apparently, certain well-known political events outside of Russia, as well as within it have contributed to such situation.

So, a positive trend is set: intra-regional settlement self-identity has significantly increased. However, in 2014 there were still some "problem areas", first identified in the research process of the settlement self-identity among the residents of the Krasnoyarsk Territory in 2010 and then in 2012 with a greater extent. These "problem areas" are:

First, poor self-identity with the inhabitants of any settlement in the region, except their own.

Second, high anti-identity against the population across Russia and especially with its capital – Moscow.

Third, even higher anti-identity against the residents of the former Soviet republics, Russian population and all the inhabitants of the earth, i.e. against people living in the wider areas of social space

Thus, in 2010 the population of the region via the social and cultural identity "formed" some settlement microgroups, revolving around a specific local place of their residence. It is logical to assume that each of these microgroups has its own definite image of the region, often mismatched with other ideas about the region's brand. This "microbrand", in fact, reflects the

ideas of the inhabitants of a certain part of the territory. In 2014, one can speak about some identity relationships (albeit relatively weak) between these groups. These relationships are to integrate them into the regional settlement community. As a result, there was a tendency of forming an amorphous internal regional brand.

The above data largely correspond to the respondents' answers to the question: "Among what people do you meet most understanding?". In 2010, two-thirds of the Krasnoyarsk Territory named the family. In 2012, the same answer was obtained from nearly one in nine of the respondents (86 %). In 2014, the figure was the same. Noticeably, in today's difficult situation, the family stands for a major psychological "shelter" from the problems and dangers of the world. However, the social distance of the respondents in relation to their friends changed, the share of respondents that they meet the highest understanding among friends more than doubled (in 2010 – 28 %, in 2012 – 65 %, in 2014 – 65 %). Evidently, in the last two years there were no changes in the value of this indicator, as well as of the previous one. From 2010 to 2012 the share of the respondents getting the greatest understanding at work increased 3.7 times (from 9 % to 35 %). Later, the proportion of persons answered similarly decreased to 25 %. If in 2010 social circles of the inhabitants of the region were comprised by neighbors (2 %) and coreligionists (2 %) only a little, two years later these figures grew substantially: 8 % and 5 %, and in 2014 they were respectively 6 % and 11 %. The latter figure can serve as an indicator of the proportion of actually churching residents in the region.

Thus, from 2010 to 2014 social and socio-psychological integration of the region's population with all its surroundings significantly increased. There is a gradual process of overcoming regional atomization of society, weakening social connections between people

in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. It is subsequently reflected in the formation of the internal regional brand and its "strengthening".

Some critical elements of the internal regional brand are expressed in the respondents' answers to the question about the general emotional attitude to their region. Most of the respondents chose the answer "as a whole I am satisfied, but I am not satisfied with many characteristics" (in 2010 – 46 %, in 2012 – 44 %, in 2014 – 35 %). There is a slight increase in the share of such response: "I am glad that I live here" (24 %, 22 %, 31 %, respectively). Indifference to the Krasnoyarsk Territory was expressed by 12 % people in 2010, 14 % – in 2012, 15 % – in 2014. The answers "I do not like to live here, but I got used and do not intend to leave", as well as "I would like to move to another region of Russia" were selected by about 6 % of respondents in the region each year. There is a slight upward trend in the proportion of the residents who expressed the intention to leave Russia: in 2010 – 4 %, in 2012 – 6 %, in 2014 – 7 %.

One of the essential aspects of the internal regional brand is the public opinion about the quality of life in their region compared to their representation of how people live in the neighboring areas. In recent years, it has changed dramatically: in 2010 the answer "People live better in our region than in neighboring regions" was chosen by 10 % of respondents, in 2012 – by 11 %, in 2014 – by 20 %. There is a slight decrease in the percentage of those who chose an ambiguous answer "Compared to some regions, we have better living conditions, but compared to other regions our conditions are worse" (in 2010 – 62 %, in 2012 – 59 %, in 2014 – 58 %). At the same time there is no change in the proportion of the respondents who preferred the opposite position "In our region people live worse than in all neighboring regions". As it can be calculated, more than half of the residents of

the region continue to adhere to neutral position. Although it should be stressed that the share of negative assessments of the internal regional brand doubled.

In order to identify **factors** that influence the formation of the internal brand of the Krasnoyarsk Territory we should ask the following question: "What, in your experience, are the characteristics of your region, its attractive and unattractive features?"

One positive factor that prevails in the mass consciousness of the Krasnoyarsk Territory is "beautiful nature", this answer was supported in 2010 by 84 % of the respondents, in 2012 – by 82 %, in 2014 – by 79 %. The opinions that the Krasnoyarsk Territory" is "a region perspective for life" was shared in 2010 by 23 % of the respondents, in 2012 – by 18 %, in 2014 – by 21 %. There is a sharply increase in the proportion of respondents who stated that "heartful, kind people live in the region": from 18 % in 2010 to 23 % in 2012 and to 30 % in 2014. The number of respondents who think that there are a lot of opportunities for enterprising people also increased slightly.

Unattractive features of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, dominant in the mass consciousness of its inhabitants, despite certain ambiguities and changes in these representations in 2010-2014, retain the same hierarchy: 48 % named too severe climate as one of region's unattractive features, 24 % people expressed the view that "life here feels stalled", 20 % spoke about unfriendly people. These three answers are the most common. According to the information received, in 2014 the region, according to the respondents, enjoyed a bit more heartful and kind people, the prospects

for life and opportunities for self-realization of initiatives enhanced.

The correlation analysis showed that respondents with a stronger regional settlement self-identity are more likely to reveal the positive aspects of the regional brand, and the weaker self-identity, the more negative aspects are found.

### **Conclusions**

As one can see, from 2010 to 2014 there was strengthening of the internal regional settlement self-identity in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. By 2014, there was a tendency of forming an amorphous internal region's brand at the expense of some development in the internal regional settlement self-identity. At the same time in five years the internal region's brand of the Krasnoyarsk Territory in the mass consciousness of its population became not only more straightforward, but also polarized.

Among the factors contributing to the formation of the positive region's brand, according to respondents, "beautiful nature" is first and foremost. The fact of living in the region with "heartful and kind people" and "opportunities for initiative people" also bears some importance. The negative aspects of the region's brand did not change, namely they are "too severe climate", "the life here feels stalled", and "unfriendly people". Obviously, different groups of people see the same facts both as negative and as positive. To a large extent it depends on the formedness of their regional settlement self-identity. In this context, it is necessary to target the development of the regional identity to make it a means of improving the region's brand.

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## **Динамика поселенческой самоидентификации жителей Красноярского края как основа формирования бренда региона (2010-2014 гг.)**

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*Процессы модернизации и новой индустриализации страны в условиях современного финансово-экономического кризиса носят регионально-дифференцированный характер. Безусловный приоритет в этих процессах получают регионы с чётко выраженным, привлекательным брендом. Данный бренд в значительной степени зависит от поселенческой самоидентификации жителей региона, эмоционального восприятия ими своей территории. Строго говоря, население может выступать и субъектом брендинга региона, и его объектом. В данной статье жители региона рассматриваются как субъект брендинга территории. Поэтому анализ региональной (поселенческой) самоидентификации населения и её факторов играет важную роль для формирования бренда данного региона. В статье на материалах представительных исследований населения Красноярского края, проведённых в 2010, 2012 и 2014 гг., прослеживается динамика поселенческой самоидентификации его жителей и соответствующие изменения его бренда. Делается вывод, что за истекшие пять лет, во многом за счёт усиления региональной поселенческой самоидентификации его жителей, бренд Красноярского края стал менее аморфным и более поляризованным. Установлено, что респонденты с сильной комплиментарной поселенческой самоидентификацией склонны оценивать одни и те же черты регионального бренда как позитивные, со слабой или отсутствующей поселенческой самоидентификацией – как негативные. В конечном итоге укрепление регионального бренда и усиление в нём позитивных элементов способствуют повышению экономической и социокультурной конкурентоспособности региона в современных условиях.*

*Ключевые слова: бренд региона, поселенческая самоидентификация, социокультурная самоидентификация, модернизация.*

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*Научная специальность: 22.00.00 – социологические науки.*

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