

Like a Phoenix from the Ashes

A portrayal of Rotterdam hosting Eurovision 2020



Own Photograph (April 26, 2020)

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LIKE A PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES

ABSTRACT

Over the past years, event tourism has developed into a widely covered field of study, with practical implications in event management and image building. However, little is known about how event tourism can shape and portray place image. Furthermore, research is lacking in this portrayal of image whilst a destination is preparing for an event, or when the event gets canceled. This thesis explores how the place image of Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to Eurovision 2020 as event tourism. By performing a qualitative content analysis on 45 news articles covering the Bidding, Preparation, and Cancellation stages of the event, this thesis aims to answer the following research question: “How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision Song Contest 2020, and how does this image shift in various stages of this coverage?”. With this question, this thesis aims to provide new insights into how these stages surrounding event tourism can shape and portray place image, to further develop and find connections in existing theory on the image of Rotterdam, and to provide an example for other cities and event planners in planning. The news articles portray Rotterdam as a city that is always finding ways to improve itself, by using what is lost to create something new. Many of these improvements are shown to be generated by feelings of inclusivity and connectedness, with Rotterdam and Rotterdammers using Eurovision to provide them with a celebration for all. During the various stages of coverage on Eurovision 2020, the portrayal of the image of Rotterdam gently shifts from a city full of confidence in the bidding stages, to a city preparing to create a successful event while improving its image during the preparations, and finally to a city that takes the Corona Crisis to show its resilience.

KEYWORDS: Event Tourism, Eurovision, Place Image, Rotterdam, Global Media

Preface

It is no secret that writing a Master's thesis can be a challenging process. It is a process of continuously reading, understanding, writing, and rewriting. With the Corona Crisis starting to dominate the news, and actually all of society, in March 2020, it seemed like all I had prepared to organize focus groups on how Rotterdam Zuid is portrayed in the promotional materials had vanished into nothing. However, not entirely without the help of Amanda, who has been my supervisor during these past few months and supporting me throughout the whole process, I still managed to keep working on my initial idea; how Eurovision 2020 can portray the place image of Rotterdam. While writing this thesis turned out to be more challenging than I initially suspected, it developed into a process in which learning to adapt to the current situation has been more necessary than ever before, a process of dedication and determination, and most of all, into a process of inspiration.

I would, therefore, like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Amanda Brandellero. Her professional guidance and structural feedback have been extremely helpful in the writing process, motivating me to keep improving my work, to stay focused, and above all, to continuously remind me not to push myself too much.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and brother, who welcomed me back into their home for a few months, when the walls of my 20m² student room Rotterdam felt like they came crashing down on me. Thank you for all the cups of coffee and tea, for the great kitchen in which I could actually do some cooking and baking to get my mind off of things, and for the ongoing support in my writing process.

Now, the journey of writing this thesis has come to an end. Even though this process has been a challenge, it has been a rewarding process, and I can finally say that I am proud of the outcome. I hope you'll enjoy reading this vibrant portrayal of Rotterdam's Eurovision, Rotterdam, and Rotterdamers, as much as I've enjoyed writing it.

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Introduction

In May 2020, the streets of Rotterdam should have been flooded with excited tourists, discovering the city while taking a break from the Eurovision madness. Unfortunately, these streets are now empty due to the current Corona Crisis. Preparations to host the event seem to have been all for nothing, as there is nothing left to be seen in the city that was going to host the international extravaganza. Over the past months, however, the city was buzzing with expectations of hosting the event. Much of it was captured in the local press, for instance by local newspaper AD Rotterdams Dagblad. Not just memories of what could have been, but a rich description of a city working hard to get what it wants. The newspaper shows how preparations for the event did turn out to be useful for the city, as the coverage about Eurovision 2020 shaped the image of Rotterdam in new ways, showing a glamorous and inclusive side of Rotterdam. Furthermore, the local newspaper covered stories about how the event and the city were affected by COVID-19. This thesis aims to illustrate how AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision Song Contest 2020, and how this image shifts in various stages of this coverage.

The image of Rotterdam will be discussed in relation to Eurovision Song Contest, through analyzing how event tourism can shape the image of a place. Since 2008, event tourism has been a booming field. However, Getz and Page (2016) found that many things are still underexplored. There seems to be a common consensus on events being able to build and portray the image of a place to a wide audience. Nevertheless, how exactly events contribute to this shaping of place image is still unknown (Getz & Page, 2016). Academic relevance of this thesis can, therefore, be found in this gap, aiming to explain how event tourism can portray place image by exploring the image of Rotterdam as portrayed in news articles covering event tourism. Additionally, this thesis will add to this by exploring how news articles portray place image in relation to various stages of event tourism, and through this show how bidding, preparations, and cancellation of Eurovision 2020 as event tourism portray place image.

Apart from adding new insights to the theory on event tourism portraying place image, this thesis also aims to further develop the theory on the image of Rotterdam. Until now, the image that has been portrayed in research is very inconsistent, with the image of the city explained in relation to industrial (Nientied, 2018), creative (van Aalst, 2005), multicultural (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006), and inclusive (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019) characteristics. This thesis aims to find similarities and relationships in these inconsistencies, and aims to explain how these, and new, images of Rotterdam are presented in news articles covering Eurovision

2020. In this thesis, the industrial image as presented by Nientied (2018) is shown to generate the creative (van Aalst, 2005), multicultural (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006), and inclusive (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019) images. This process of shaping place image, is for a large part created by globalization processes, facilitating transnational communication and travel (Hopper, 2007; Song et al., 2018) and thus making it easier to create new industries and an inclusive, multicultural society. Coverage on event tourism uses these images to shape the environment of Rotterdam's Eurovision, and shows how the city is using event tourism to improve the creative, multicultural, and inclusive aspects of the place image.

Furthermore, with the cancellation of the event due to COVID-19, this thesis aims to provide some first insights into how predicted mental health (Torales et al., 2020) and economic (Anderson et al., 2020) issues might generate a shift in how this image is portrayed. Because of this, this thesis also has societal relevance. The coverage of the cancellation shows how Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to the current Corona Crisis. One of the main images identified is the portrayal of a city that is resilient, looking forward to the future, and trying to make the best out of any situation. The city is portrayed to be swiftly changing from insecurities, not knowing what to do now Eurovision is canceled, to a determined mindset focused on helping the people by building a temporary care center. Other cities and event planners can use this resilient image as an example for their crisis planning, using what is lost to create something new. Furthermore, with the positive outlook, this thesis aims to bring a brighter perspective into the society that is affected by this pandemic, and shows the resilient image of Rotterdam as a reminder that also this crisis can be dealt with.

Finding out how Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to event tourism, and how this image shifts over time, will be done by answering the following research question: "How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision Song Contest 2020, and how does this image shift in various stages of this coverage?". To help with answering the research question, three-time frames have been identified to look into the shift of image: Bidding, Preparations, and Cancellation. The research will be done through a qualitative content analysis of 45 articles written by AD Rotterdams Dagblad between July 10, 2019, and April 16, 2020.

First, this thesis explains the concepts relevant for answering the research question. The theoretical review focuses on place identity and place image as a process. Furthermore, the image of Rotterdam that has been established by previous research will be explained, and this section shows how globalization is one of the main drivers behind the formation. Additionally, the theoretical review shows how event tourism can portray this place image, and explains how

Eurovision is an example of event tourism. Finally, the theoretical review explains how the cancellation of Eurovision 2020 might generate a shift in the portrayal of place image. In the methods section, the choice for doing a qualitative thematic analysis is clarified, the sampling process of the articles is described, and the process of analyzing is explained. Then in the results section, relevant themes and corresponding codes that were identified during the analysis are discussed. Here, the portrayals of the image of Rotterdam in relation to event tourism are explained in the three main themes: Rotterdam's Eurovision, the Image of Rotterdam as a Tourist Destination and as a Place to Live, and the Image of Rotterdammers. The relationships between the portrayals are connected to each other and the theory. Finally, in the conclusion, the research question is answered, and the limitations of this research and suggestions for the future are addressed.

Theoretical Review

To answer the research question, “How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision, and how does this image shift in various stages of the process?”, several concepts have to be explained. In this theoretical review, first the general image of Rotterdam that has been presented by previous literature will be discussed, so this image can guide the coding process. Then, a brief introduction of event tourism is given, with a specific focus on Eurovision as an example of event tourism. It provides insights into how this event can portray the image of a place, and how the cancellation of Eurovision due to COVID-19 might generate a shift in this portrayal of place image.

Image of Rotterdam

In existing literature, Rotterdam is presented as a city with a dynamic image. This section will explain this image as illustrated by previous research, to help identifying the image of Rotterdam that is presented in the news articles, and see whether this corresponds to the image that is already known. Before this image is illustrated, however, first the concept of place image is defined, to create a general understanding of the process behind the creation of the image of Rotterdam. Then, this section follows with an exploration of how Rotterdam has been presented in previous literature. Finally, globalization is explained as one of the main drivers behind the creation and portrayal of the place image of Rotterdam.

Space becoming Place

As this thesis aims to find how Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to Eurovision 2020, it is important to first clarify what place image actually is. First, an explanation of place is provided, to ensure that place in this thesis is used as an interactive concept, and to show how place identity can be formed. Then, it is explained how this place identity contributes to the image of a place, as a mental representation of a destination.

When defining place, it should be taken into account that a place is not just made up of the characteristics of a space. Creswell (2004) explains that a space with just these characteristics, can only be turned into a place when it is given a meaning. Meanings are created by interactions of space with a person. This person makes this space unique by the way this person is interacting with the space; by adding personal components such as furniture and decorations, or in bigger cases by creating buildings designed for interactions between

individuals. Meanings are given to a space through these interactions, creating place identities that are formed through the history of changing interactions (Creswell, 2004). Hauge (2007) also argues that place should be regarded as more than merely a physical environment, but adds a new layer of interaction. She explains how place should be seen from a different perspective, in which the environment is more dynamic. Social, cultural, and psychological meanings are all interconnected in the physical space that makes up a place, and these various dimensions are continuously interacting with each other (Hauge, 2007). So not only individuals shape a space into place, but these places also shape the behavior of the people within this place. Forming place identity is thus a process of interactions between the environment and the people in it.

These interactions within a place happen on various levels, resulting in a layered formation of place identity. These identities are, as explained by Straubhaar (2013), formed by interactions on local, regional, national, and transnational levels. The place identity, as seen before, is a result of people interacting with the environment they live in. Formation of this place identity is partly affected by the layered identities. On local, regional, and national levels, global media are interpreted from the corresponding perspectives. These perspectives shape the interpretation of global media, and thus the interaction with it. Interpretations of media, are however, dependent on the interactions between the various levels. Global media show local cultures, and local media are similarly portraying global processes. They use characteristics of the multiple layers of identity, to shape their communications (Straubhaar, 2013).

Media audiences, in turn, identify with what they are shown (Straubhaar, 2013). If, due to globalization and the increasing ease of distributing transnational communication, global media are shown more often than local media, audiences will likely take on a more global perspective. In turn, local media are interpreted from global perspectives. These preferences can change through times, shifting with what is shown on the media. By continuously changing the global media narratives, and shifting among the more dominant layers of identity, a hybrid form of identity is being built (Straubhaar, 2013). Place identity can thus be shaped through interactions with not only the local environment, but on a global scale as well. It is being built by the people living in the place, as well as their interactions with the world.

Place Image

How this identity of place then translates into an image, is visible in how this identity is perceived. Souiden, Ladhari, and Chiadmi (2017) explain that the image of a place is the construct of beliefs, feelings, and impressions of a destination. In the definition presented by Tasci, Gartner and Tamer Cavusgil (2007), these aspects of beliefs, feelings, and impressions

interact in the destination image as a system, all working together to create a multi layered image of a place. Another aspect of this system of interactions, is that the image is a mental representation of the place (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). This mental representation is based on the beliefs, feelings, and impressions people have towards a place, and thus forms the image of this place. Nations can try to shape these representations of local image to the world in objects such as tourist brochures, stamps, or money. These objects can be used to portraying small parts of the history that created meaning in the place, using them as prominent indicators of the local image to shape the visitor's view on the destination (Creswell, 2004).

Nevertheless, these images presented by local objects only shape a small part of the image of place. As these representations are partly shaped by impressions of a destination, images are thus shaped by the place itself, and consequently by the people living in and interacting with the place (Creswell, 2004; Hauge, 2007). Additionally, the image of a place can be built by more factors than these interactions between people and their environment. International media and events can also contribute to the image of a place (Souiden et al., 2017). A combination of these impacts from international media and events, can be seen in the emerging pop-culture (Lee & Bai, 2016). Television can be used as an opportunity for places to provide viewers with more elaborate impressions of the place, including new visualizations and feelings toward the destination. Lee & Bai (2016) found that international pop-starts with a strong media presence can connect their fans to their favorite destinations, creating a more positive image of the place as it is connected to the icon that fans like. So, apart from general interactions within a space shaping the image, as presented by Hauge (2007) and Straubhaar (2013), international media using pop-culture can also shape the image of a place. Yet, through international media and events surrounding pop-culture, these images still are subjected to the interpretations of the multiple levels of identity, as defined by Straubhaar (2013). How international media portray a place, is interpreted through the perceptions of a media audience. In the end, the image of a place is thus established by mental representations of a place identity, as interpreted by individuals their beliefs, feelings, and impressions toward a place.

Image of Rotterdam

Previous literature on Rotterdam cannot seem to find a consensus on the how the image of this city is developed, and it has painted a complex picture of the city. Most dominant are interpretations of Rotterdam as a port (Nientied, 2018), creative (van Aalst, 2005), and multicultural (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006) city. In more recent years, this image has shifted into one in which a sense of belonging is predominantly representing the city (Belabas &

Eshuis, 2019). These concepts can all be seen as parts of the place identity, working together to create a unique experience when visiting Rotterdam.

After World War II, Rotterdam had to be reconstructed completely. This led to the formation of a hybrid, urban identity (Nientied, 2018). The process of globalization greatly shapes this image of an urban identity, combining cosmopolitan citizens with a strong sense of local community. Nientied (2018) shows how this process is clearly visible in the recent history of Rotterdam. During the reconstruction period, the city center had to be rebuilt entirely. Because of this, the city lost its historical center, and turned it into a modern district. Furthermore, new port areas were constructed, making Rotterdam, at that time, the largest port in the world. With these changes, a new image of Rotterdam was constructed (Nientied, 2018). It created an image of roughness, of a port city with a rolled-up sleeves mentality. How proud Rotterdammers still are of this image, is clearly visible in the new city branding. In 2014, the slogan “Rotterdam Port World City” was replaced by “Rotterdam. Make It Happen”. The city wants to rebrand itself away from a port city, as Rotterdam wants to show it is more than that. Nevertheless, the previously mentioned images of roughness and the rolled-up sleeves mentality are still represented in the new branding. Apart from portraying Rotterdam as ‘International’ and ‘Entrepreneurial’, it is illustrated to be ‘Edgy’, again showing how the industrial port mentality has never really left the Rotterdammers (Nientied, 2018).

But, as the harbors are moving from the city center to more coastal areas, the industrial image of Rotterdam is gradually shifting away with it (Nientied, 2018). In 2005, van Aalst already argued for a creative city to become the successor of this industrial image. Because the industrial sector is moving away, Rotterdam needs to fill this old economy with a new one. As it is known for its flexibility and dynamic activities, the creative sector is able to give a positive impulse to the economy. Creative agencies can easily establish themselves in old industrial buildings, as is happening in the Van Nelle Factory, making Rotterdam a perfect breeding ground. Creative cities can promote this image through events, an increasing importance of the cultural sector, and a wide variety of other forms of entertainment. By doing so, Rotterdam is creating an attractive environment for new creative agencies. Consequently, apart from economic opportunity, housing creative companies will bring the city technological innovation and a large cultural diversity, which will show in the appearance of the city (van Aalst, 2005).

With the coming of creative industries, many new immigrants arrive in Rotterdam (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006). Next to the many jobs offered in the industrial port areas surrounding Rotterdam, the new immigrants are especially attracted to the flourishing Dance and R&B scene, which attracts artists operating in these genres. But Rotterdam has always been

a city of immigration (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006). In the past, Cape Verdean and Chinese families have settled in the city. Later, when migrant workers came to the Netherlands, many chose Rotterdam as their new home due to the availability of jobs. As these families stayed, they formed new communities in city. It resulted in a city that is open towards everyone, and is embracing immigrants bringing in new ideas and talent (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006).

Yet, the diversity of Rotterdam is not openly used in its branding campaign. Belabas and Eshuis (2019) argue that this notion of multiculturalism is only shown in relation to the economic advantages it brings, arguing that the diversity of Rotterdammers generates a large international network, connecting companies and investors to the city. Furthermore, aspects of multiculturalism are usually referred to as ‘international’ and ‘cosmopolitan’, instead of ‘multicultural’ or ‘diverse’. This might show that diversity, in Rotterdam, is not as celebrated as Fortuin and van der Graaf (2006) have illustrated it to be. Nevertheless, new branding strategies, such as the “Make it Happen” campaign, do portray images of diversity, albeit in a more practical way (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019). Rotterdam presents itself as a city that is cosmopolitan and international. Furthermore, it is portrayed to be connecting people from various nationalities, cultures, and religions to the city, with a function of being a world port city. Diversity is a part of the city, that shows through the connectedness of people. It is this connection provides the people with a sense of belonging (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019).

In the end, it is the interactions of all these characteristics that form the image of Rotterdam, as they are all related to each other. The image was built on the foundation of Rotterdam’s history as a port city, and this mentality has never really left the residents (Nientied, 2018). Consequently, the establishment of a creative industry was affected by this rolled-up sleeves mentality, with Rotterdam trying to find solutions to shift away from the industrial image in an appropriate way (van Aalst, 2005). This increase in creative industries, as well as the international environment through the harbors, have led to a multicultural society (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006). Finally, this multiculturalism is not specifically portrayed, but has rather become an indispensable part of Rotterdam. It is especially the sense of belonging that shape the image of Rotterdam (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019). The international environment in the city shows a globalized place, in which people are interacting with the environment. Their sense of belonging makes interacting between the various layers of identity, as illustrated by Straubhaar (2013), an accessible process, resulting in a hybrid society showing diverse characteristics. How this can be seen in the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020, will be illustrated in this thesis.

Globalization Shaping and Portraying Image

The image as presented above, shows many characteristics that have been established are the result of an increasingly connected world, with interactions between locals shaping this international image of Rotterdam. As explained before, international media play a large role in the portrayal of place image, and with globalization as a major process in the world, these international media are increasingly becoming more accessible to a wider audience (Hopper, 2007). As this process is greatly influencing society, globalization is used as a foundation in the portrayal of Rotterdam in international event tourism. This part of the literature review will explain this process of globalization, and identify this process as one of the main drivers behind the formation of the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision.

Generally, globalization is defined as a set of processes influencing cultural, economic, political, and social developments on a global scale, due to the compression of space and time (Song, Li, & Cao, 2018). In other words, new technologies are making it possible to connect cultural, economic, political, and social processes on a global scale, all influencing each other due to these new, global interactions. Additionally, globalization is often said to homogenize cultures and affect the image of a place (Hopper, 2007). Due to the new communication and transportation technologies, global interactions are influencing the cultural, economic, political, and social processes within places. Through these global interactions, places will start to show increasing similarities (Hopper, 2007). With global media, new perspectives can be easily communicated around the world. Because many influential media companies are American, these greatly shape the image of a new global culture into a form of Americanization as homogenization (Nye, 2002 in Hopper, 2007). Still, Hopper (2007) does point out that many news sources are still nationalized products, thus limiting the actual influence the United States have over other countries. Furthermore, Hopper (2007) argues that this variety of media outlets is also available in the USA, and are therefore influencing the American perspectives. It should thus be taken into consideration that the process of Americanization is a process of cultures influencing each other, rather than that of one culture dominating over others.

As these various cultures are in constant interaction with each other, different forms of life are coming together into the global field (Robertson, 1995 in Hopper, 2007). This global field should then not be seen as one global culture. Instead, local cultures are interacting with more universal values, and through this process are combining into a globalized local culture, into a process of 'glocalization' (Robertson, 1995, in Hopper, 2007). Societies, in this case, are considering these global values, and reproduce these into particular contexts that are shaped by local influences. Local cultures are thus shaped through processes of interaction, creating a

network of local identities that consider universal values. In Rotterdam, these interactions do not only take place in the media, but are also locally formed due to the cultural diversity that is represented in the residents (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019).

Showing this global image of Rotterdam to a global audience, is also facilitated by the globalization processes (Song et al., 2018). As discussed earlier, places can try to shape representations of local image to the world through various objects and visualizations (Creswell, 2004). Additionally, international media and events can also contribute to the image of a place (Souiden et al., 2017). Globalization makes it easier for these portrayals of image to reach an international audience. Additionally, Song et al. (2018) show how globalization in the tourism industry can help in this portrayal of image. In the tourism field, globalization means that tourism providers can operate on a global scale, with transnational companies offering a global, collaborative system in the industry (Song et al., 2018). With new social media technologies, tourism providers can reach out to a global audience in the virtual space, helping to attract new visitors to the destination. As a result of this increased wish to travel, new global transportation systems emerge, creating improved accessibility for previously unreachable destinations. Consequently, governments are simplifying the process of international travel, so tourists can more easily travel internationally without having to navigate through difficult political procedures (Song et al., 2018). With this increased ease of traveling, either physically or virtually, places get a wider audience their image can be shown to.

Event tourism is known to even further improve and show these place images. Globalization brings the possibility for global media coverage and the increasing ease of physical travel, and can thus create new ways of hosting events that attract many new tourists (Getz & Page, 2016). Eurovision Song Contest is an international event that undoubtedly uses globalization processes. The event is broadcasted on a variety of global media. According to Baker (2008), hosting the event offers the opportunity for the host country to show itself to Europe. One way of showing the place image of the host destination, is by postcards; videos introducing the performing artist in the host location (Baker, 2008). For the viewer at home, these postcards provide a virtual way of experiencing the place. Without the processes of globalization, especially within communication technologies, this portrayal of destination image in Eurovision would not have been possible. In the case of Rotterdam, therefore, globalization not only shapes the place image, as explained by Hopper (2007), but also shows it to the world through objects and visualizations (Creswell, 2004), international media (Souiden et al., 2017), and (event) tourism (Baker, 2008; Getz & Page, 2016; Song et al., 2018). What event tourism is, and how it can show place image, is further explained in the next section.

Event Tourism

This section aims to further define event tourism, to show how this can be perceived by local communities. Additionally, how events previously have been used to portray the image of a place is explained, to illustrate some core concepts structuring the coding process. Then, Eurovision Song Contest is introduced as an example of event-tourism. Finally, how the cancellation of Eurovision 2020 might generate a shift in the portrayal of place image is discussed in this section of the theoretical review

Defining Event Tourism

Events can be used to boost the number of visitors coming to a place. When events are planned to attract new visitors, they can be separately identified as event tourism, as visitors are coming to a region specifically for this event. Event tourism is thus defined as “an applied field devoted to understanding and improving tourism through events” (Getz & Page, 2016, p. 595). While large events have great economic perspective and are a great tool in place marketing, there is much more to event tourism than this. Apart from attracting tourists, events have other functions in a community. For example, they can create new cultural developments for the host population and build and portray the identity of the host city. How exactly events are used in portraying place identity remains an underexplored field (Getz & Page, 2016), but research has been done on how local populations respond to event tourism portraying their place image.

Jackson (2008) researched how host communities perceive event tourism. He examined the social, economic, and environmental affects that event tourism has on the host destination, and how the local communities respond to these impacts. While Getz and Page (2016) focus on the understanding improving of tourism through events, Jackson (2008) explains that there is much more to it. The focus shifts from only benefits to the tourism industry, to general benefits for society as a whole. With event tourism, jobs are created, and tourist taxes generate indirect income from the event. Furthermore, locals perceive event tourism to be an investment in the destination, bringing new possibilities for entertainment and cultural happenings. However, with these benefits come social costs, such as increased real estate prices, crowding, and litter. When the benefits outweigh the perceived costs, host communities usually perceive event tourism in a positive light. It is therefore up to the event organization and the local municipality to make sure that these benefits outweigh the costs, so event tourism can improve the tourism industry, and help building identity and creating cultural growth (Jackson, 2008).

Event Tourism to Portray Place Image

As discussed before, place image should be seen as a multi-layered concept, with interactions between local, regional, national, and transnational environments shaping the mental representation of a place. These interactions form a hybrid image, that covers multiple characteristics of a place. This image can be portrayed through event tourism in multiple ways. Cultural industries, for example, make up one of the characteristics of place image that event tourism can develop. But, since Getz and Page (2016) argue that event tourism can help building identity, this should be visible in multiple parts of a local image, and not just in creative industries. For example, local pride can be portrayed as a different part of place image. Moreover, Getz and Page (2016) show how Whitson and Macintosh (1996) argue that events can demonstrate notions of modernity in the host community, illustrating that international events can be used to show new developments in communication and technology to the world. This building of image already happens during the preparations, and is not something that is only visible during the event itself. However, how event tourism actually portrays place image during the preparations and the event itself has not been explained yet (Getz & Page, 2016).

Whereas it is not clear how actual events portray local images, there is already more clarity on how bidding processes can shape and portray these. Bidding on events is explained to be a large part of event tourism, with the process being a competition to win the opportunity of hosting an event (Getz & Page, 2016). In a way, competing in these bidding processes already show multiple characteristics of place image. By portraying in how a destination is suited to host the event, the bidding process illustrates how its infrastructure, venues, and innovations can provide for a suitable event environment. Furthermore, by showing these characteristics, potential host destinations are creating destination images as event-cities. Generally, these locations are prepared to make huge investments in these sectors, to show how much they are willing to do to win the bidding competition and get the event (Getz & Page, 2016).

These preparations during the bidding process are often communicated by ambassadors who have a strong link with the potential host city (Lockstone-Binney, Whitelaw, Robertson, Junek, & Michael, 2014). With their extensive networks, these ambassadors try to convince the event organization to choose their city over the others participating in the bidding process. Because of their strong links to the potential host community, apart from just showing the characteristics that shape the appearance of host communities as event cities, ambassadors have the ability to show less quantifiable aspects of their place identity, such as feelings of community and ambition (Lockstone-Binney et al., 2014).

Next to the portrayal of place image during bidding processes, additional research has been done into how visitors of international events perceive place images. Herz, Arnegger and Mayer (2018) argued that visitors of the event have better perceptions of the host community after the event took place. Additionally, Herz et al. (2018) explain that not only the actual traveling to the event affects the perceived image of the host city, media exposure related to the event also has the ability to change these perceptions. Even though this perception is only more positive a few years after visiting the event, it does show a link between event tourism and place identity. This thesis delves deeper into this link, and aims to close the gap established in Getz and Page (2016) by identifying how AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays the place identity of Rotterdam in its coverage about Eurovision Song Contest 2020.

Eurovision as Event Tourism

One major event that is generating tourist flows, is the Eurovision Song Contest. This event is an international music competition with over 40 participating countries. Every participating country sends one performing artist, and the citizens of these countries can vote for their favorite act. The winning country hosts the contest the year after winning. Artists, crew members, and many fans will visit this host city, creating an enormous, international event (Herz, et al., 2018). As these people would not have visited the host city otherwise, and is thus generating new tourist flows, Eurovision Song Contest can be defined as event tourism.

Baker (2008) has another way of looking at events, and argues that the competition belongs to the international event culture, because it portrays music, language, and dance in live performances from various nations. Furthermore, Eurovision offers local cultures to be portrayed through hosting the event. As previously mentioned, the host city brings clear images of the place to live television in the postcards, so that an audience in all participating countries can experience the host city (Baker, 2008). Because of this, viewers get acquainted the artist, as well as touristic highlights from the host country from the comforts of their own homes. So, the event not only brings tourists to the host city, the host city can present itself virtually as well. Additionally, with these artists introducing themselves in a popular location of the host destination, these artists portray these images to their own fan groups. Lee and Bai (2016) explain that with global media, celebrities are used in creating awareness of destination images. Fans are greatly influenced by their idols, considering them to be credible sources of information. Celebrities can thus help improving destination images, by being portrayed in these places in positive ways (Lee & Bai, 2016). In the case of Eurovision, then, the artists visiting the host city to compete in the event will show the viewers, as well as their own fan

bases, the image of the destination. Because of this, Eurovision as event tourism does not only portray place image to the visitors and viewers at home, but also to a wider audience of fans who are closely following the participating artists.

Still, Baker (2008) argues that this portrayal of identity is mainly based on the expectations the audience has, instead of what a city is really like. The viewers connect what they see in the performances, to how they imagine a place to be, and it is up to the viewer to connect these performances to the portrayed image (Baker, 2008). This connects to the layered identities as explained by Straubhaar (2013). How the image is perceived, depends on the perspective of the viewer. These perspectives shape the interpretation of the portrayed image, and thus the interaction with it (Straubhaar, 2013). Nevertheless, with over 40 countries paying attention to one city, Eurovision still is a great opportunity to show the image of a place, even though this image is perceived through various perspectives.

Canceling Eurovision

With the current Corona Crisis, Marshall (2020) explains in *The New York Times* that events are being cancelled on a global scale. Eurovision Song Contest 2020 also is unable to escape from the virus, with decision to cancel the event being made in March 2020. Due to the virus, 2020 is the first edition since Eurovision started in 1956 that was cancelled (Marshall, 2020). To show why the event has to be cancelled, this section briefly illustrates the measures taken against the virus, showing why hosting events in these times is impossible. Furthermore, this section explains its consequences in the tourism industry, and illustrates spillover effects that are caused by global pandemics, to show the indirect impact the virus can have on society.

Due to COVID-19, global events, Eurovision 2020 included, have been cancelled or postponed (Marshall, 2020). These decisions had to be made, as the health risks caused by the virus are immense. Governments are trying to minimize death rates, but can consequently not prevent economic impact (Anderson, Heesterbeek, Klinkenberg, & Hollingsworth, 2020). To slow the spreading of the virus, many countries are using social distancing techniques, as well as quarantines and isolation of the infected. Vaccines are not likely to be available soon, so without these measures, the virus will be able to roam freely. Because of this, Anderson et al. (2020) explain that social gatherings, such as Eurovision 2020, cannot continue, and social distancing or even isolation measures must be applied to avoid further spreading of the virus.

Canceling events does not only happen when there is a pandemic. There is a lot of research to be found on the reasons for cancelling events, but the consequences of these cancellations are underexplored (Perić, & Vitezić, 2019). In their paper, Perić and Vitezić

(2019) looked into these consequences. They found that that the cancellation of events results in a decline in community spirit and pride, and a missed opportunity of recreation for the host community. Furthermore, local residents express concerns of a decline of the image of the host community. Locals saw the event as an opportunity to improve and promote this image through contact with the event visitors. Finally, Perić and Vitezić (2019) found that the cancellation of events brings additional expenses to the organization and connected businesses.

Gössling, Scott, & Hall (2020) have looked into these additional expenses that are expected to be caused by the current Corona crisis. Due to travel bans, global tourism has declined substantially. In event tourism alone, the combined economic impact of this decline is already predicted to be hundreds of billions of US dollars. This predication not only takes the direct event organization into consideration, but also the flight industry, retail, catering, and accommodation (Gössling et al., 2020). In Rotterdam, this would mean that multiple businesses will end up in financial discomfort due to the cancellation of Eurovision 2020, as Eurovision fans will not arrive in the airport, neither will they dine in local restaurants, or stay in hotels.

Apart from these economic impacts of the current Corona crisis, public health is affected as well. A lot of research has been done on the physical health problems caused by COVID-19. However, the virus is affecting more than just physical health. Torales, O'Higgins, Castaldelli-Maia and Ventriglio (2020) have looked into the impact COVID-19 might have on global mental health. Increased levels of stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, denial, and even cases of PTSD are discussed by Torales et al. (2020). How these issues are able to shape the general image of a place, however, is still unknown. The findings presented by Torales et al. (2020), combined with the concerns presented by Gössling et al. (2020) and Perić and Vitezić (2019) indicate that a shift in the portrayal of place image may be found. Because the people are explained to be one of the main drivers behind forming the image of cities (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019; Hauge, 2007; Hopper, 2007; Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006), the mental state of these people might also be shaping this image as portrayed in the media.

In the end, this thesis aims to find how the image of Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to event tourism, and how the cancellation of Eurovision 2020 might show a shift in this image. Even though the event has been cancelled, notions of the image of Rotterdam have been portrayed in AD Rotterdams Dagblad news articles. The newspaper covered stories about Eurovision during its various stages, from bidding up and until the cancellation of the event. Next to closing the gap on how event tourism actually can portray the image of a place (Getz & Page, 2016), this thesis will also show how this image shifts in news articles covering bidding, preparations, and cancellation stages of the event.

Method

This section explains the method of analysis used to find an answer to the research question: “How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision Song Contest 2020, and how does this image shift in various stages of this coverage?”. This method section argues for doing a qualitative thematic analysis, discusses the sampling process of the articles, and explains the process of analysis.

Qualitative Thematic Analysis

This section explains the method used to analyze the data. First, it argues for a qualitative approach to the data. Then, this section more specifically focuses on thematic content analysis as the preferred method of qualitative analysis.

Qualitative Methods

In order to get an in-depth understanding of how AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020, and how this image shifts over time, the content was analyzed qualitatively. One major advantage of this type of research, over quantitative research, is that the researcher can get more in-depth information on any topic. Qualitative research has an inductive nature, which lets the researcher generate theory from the research itself (Bryman, 2012). When researching a new phenomenon, such as images shifting with competing and preparing for, and canceling an event, there is no theory yet to be validated, as a qualitative approach would do. Furthermore, qualitative research is focused on words, instead of numbers (Bryman, 2012). Using language, instead of numbers, provides the opportunity to focus on multiple stories from different points of view, generating a nuanced portrayal of the image of Rotterdam. In qualitative research, however, it should be taken into account that the analysis is done through the perspective of the researcher. It leads to an understanding of the social world, through the eyes of a participant in this world (Bryman, 2012). Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas (2013) explain that this process of interpretations from the researcher is actually the process that creates meaning-making. These interpretations take into account that the data is analyzed through the perspective of other individuals in the social world, and thus cannot be classified into fixed groups. It is, according to Vaismoradi et al. (2013), due to these interpretations from the researcher, that research can offer nuanced views on a topic

The qualitative method chosen to analyze the data, is a thematic content analysis. 45 news articles from AD Rotterdams Dagblad have been selected to perform the qualitative content analysis. The following sections will first illustrate how the data to perform the analysis was collected. After explaining the sampling method, the process behind thematically analyzing this data set will be identified.

Sampling Method

This section first introduces the chosen data set, and explains why this source is relevant in the analysis. Then, this section shows the criteria used to find this relevant data, and it explains how the sampling process was performed.

Data source

This thesis uses newspaper articles to analyze how the place image of Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to Eurovision 2020 as event tourism. News articles are shaped by the perspectives of journalists, covering current events that frame social interactions (Altheide, 2000). Furthermore, newspaper archives provide a rich source of information, storing news stories with societal relevance through time. Through these archives, news articles with similar topics can be found, creating an accessible database for finding how these articles cover certain topics, and to structurally analyze if the way of covering such articles shifts over time (Bryman, 2012). Due to the wide availability of news articles covering Eurovision 2020, as a current event framing social interactions, and the option to look into how the interaction was framed through time, newspaper articles were chosen to provide the data in this thesis. Using these, it is possible to structurally analyze how the place image of Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to Eurovision 2020, and to see how this portrayed image shifts over time.

To do the analysis, 45 AD Rotterdams Dagblad articles were used to provide the data. Finding these articles was done with the use of Nexis Uni News, through the University Library. This database provides full-text newspaper articles, and updates these articles regularly (Nexis Uni, n.d.). For these reasons, and especially because of the comprehensible searching settings, this database was chosen to find the data set for the analysis. To keep the research feasible, one newspaper was selected to provide the final data set. As this thesis aims to find out how Rotterdam is illustrated in relation to Eurovision 2020, a local newspaper was chosen. Other newspapers have been considered during the process, but only the local newspaper AD Rotterdams Dagblad provided detailed descriptions of the city in its coverage about Eurovision 2020. Other newspapers, such as de Telegraaf, also discussed the event, but did not really relate

the event to the image of Rotterdam. Therefore, the local newspaper was chosen to provide the data used in the analysis.

AD Rotterdams Dagblad is, according to its parent company DPG media, a regional newspaper, valuing sports and entertainment. When trying to find information about the newspaper on their website, it redirects to a Wikipedia page for the national edition. Here, AD Rotterdams Dagblad is identified as a neutral newspaper, with no political or religious links. This makes AD a trustworthy newspaper that independently covers newsworthy happenings, among which the process behind organizing Eurovision 2020.

Sampling

The 45 articles have been chosen by a combination of purposive and random sampling. With purposive sampling, data can be selected based on a set of criteria, to identify the cases that are appropriate for answering the research question (Bryman, 2012). To keep the research feasible, a simple random sampling strategy was used on the data gathered. Using a simple random sample, all the previously identified articles had the same chance of being included in the final sample (Bryman, 2012). With the use of a random number generator, this final sample has been selected.

Initially, a purposive sampling strategy was performed. In this search, keywords were “Songfestival”, the common Dutch alternative for Eurovision, “Rotterdam”, and “2020” to find articles that discuss Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020. Then, a time limit was set. The starting date for the articles was July 10th, 2019, as this was the deadline for Dutch cities to hand in their bidbooks. On this date, the bidding process started, and articles started to focus on this competition by discussing the suitability of potential locations to host Eurovision 2020. The final article dates from April 16th, 2020; the event has been canceled due to the Coronavirus, and the articles had covered this cancellation and its consequences sufficiently to provide enough information on how Rotterdam is portrayed during this time of crisis. Finally, articles with less than 100 words were excluded due to the limited amount of information that these could give.

With these criteria, a data set of over 200 articles was found. While reading over all these articles, a new selection was made, based on whether the articles actually discussed the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision, and not just mentioned the event happening. Furthermore, articles about looking back to 2019, or looking forward to 2020 were excluded during this process of purposive sampling, as these articles did not provide enough information

about the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020, but rather discussed general developments.

After this process of purposive selection, 84 articles were left. As this still exceeds the suggested limit to use in a Master Thesis, a random selection was applied to these articles. In this random selection, a division was made between various time frames; bidding process, preparations, and after Corona. During the bidding, process only 10 articles were left after purposive sampling, 55 articles left after purposive sampling were written during the preparations, and the final 19 after COVID-19 entered the Netherlands. The random selection brought these numbers back to 5 bidding, 30 preparations, and 10 after Corona articles.

Operationalization and Analysis

This section explains how the data found during the sampling process, has been organized to make the analysis process more structured. Then this section illustrates how the thematic analysis on the data has been conducted.

With the previously illustrated selection of articles, the following research question can be answered: “How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020, and how does this image shift in various stages of the hosting process?”. To help with answering this research question, and focus on this shift in image various stages behind the process of hosting Eurovision 2020 have been identified: bidding, preparations, and cancellation. News articles were divided between these stages, with the bidding articles ranging from July 12, 2019, until August 31, 2019. The articles covered the preparations between August 31, 2019, and March 3, 2020. Finally, the (possibility of) cancellation was discussed in articles written between February 25, 2020, and April 16, 2020. During the selection of articles, an overlap appeared between the times of preparations and cancellation. This overlap is caused by the initial continuation of preparations after the first Corona cases were identified in the Netherlands. Depending on the main topic of articles, they were analyzed as part of either preparations or cancellation stage. Eventually, only the article that had an overlap between these stages that was included in the final sample was “Van Tattoo Bob naar Sekskabouter”. Even though it was written on March 3, 2020, the main objective of this article discussed the preparations of the event, and was therefore analyzed as such.

Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted to get results that consider the data as a whole. According to Bryman (2012), coding breaks down the data into smaller parts, giving these parts specific labels to identify them. A thematic analysis helped to organize these codes into larger themes, explaining patterns across the data. These themes, with their corresponding subthemes and codes, are then used to explain the data. Vaismoradi et al. (2013) explain that thematic analysis gives rich and detailed results that explain an entire data set through common threads. These threads can offer nuanced views of the data, explaining various relations between the several themes identified. (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Especially this creation of a nuanced view is needed to see how the portrayed image of Rotterdam shifts through time. As seen in the theoretical review, the measures following the pandemic can lead to a shift in mentality (Torales et al., 2020), that can consequently be visible in the articles analyzed as well. Therefore, it is important to look into the nuances, to establish whether this predicted shift in mentality also affects the portrayed image of Rotterdam.

The analysis was done with the help of ATLAS.ti. It is a program that helps to analyze large bodies of text, by guiding a systematic approach of coding. Codes can be linked to each other, and the relations can be managed by the program. Furthermore, quotations are linked to the codes, and can thus be easily found during the writing process (“What is ATLAS.ti?”, n.d.) Especially because of its uncomplicated way of structuring the data, ATLAS.ti was used to organize the coding process.

In the analysis, the concepts identified in the theoretical review have been used to formulate the codes and themes. While reading, and re-reading, the articles, special attention was paid to coverage about the image of Rotterdam, how the people interact with the city, and how Eurovision as event tourism portrays and shapes these images and interactions. Concepts from the theoretical review have been used to find correlations, relationships, and contrasts between the theory and news articles. Additionally, articles were analyzed in such a way as to fill the gaps presented in the theoretical review, by specifically focusing on a shift in the portrayals of the image of Rotterdam. Analyzing the articles was a process of continuously interpreting the data, to reduce the articles to pieces of information that make sense as a whole. Codes that fit together, were grouped into corresponding themes. These themes, then, were linked back to the raw data, as well as to the relevant theories that guided the coding process.

During the first two stages of analysis, which were focused on coding and initial interpretations, several patterns have appeared already. The codes were formulated in a way that corresponded to the concepts mentioned by the literature. For example, when an article

discussed how various cultural groups in Rotterdam were interacting with each other, this would be coded as ‘diversity’. After these first stages, codes irrelevant for the research were removed. The remaining codes that showed the first patterns were grouped into themes, and used as the foundation for the last stage of analysis. During this stage, codes and themes were related to each other and the theory. Codes that, for example, covered ‘diversity’ and ‘ambition’ were grouped in the theme discussing ‘Image of Rotterdammers’. A visual representation of the codes and themes can be found in Appendix 1. In this appendix, only the themes and codes used in the analysis are portrayed; the ones that were found to be unrelated to the topic, such as ‘Construction of Event Venue’ were left out to keep the overview as simple as possible.

While forming the analysis, three main themes relevant for answering the research question were formed: ‘Rotterdam’s Eurovision’, ‘Rotterdam’, and ‘Rotterdammers’. The first theme is mainly used as a foundation for the illustration of ‘Rotterdam’ and ‘Rotterdammers’. As the aim of this thesis is to find how Rotterdam is portrayed in relation to event tourism, how Rotterdam’s Eurovision as event tourism is portrayed by AD Rotterdams Dagblad was explained first. Then, the image of Rotterdam was discussed by first focusing on the image as a tourist destination, followed by the image of Rotterdam as a place to live. Finally, the analysis focused on how Rotterdammers are presented by the newspaper, as the people who greatly shape the image of the city. This division provided the analysis with three slightly different images of Rotterdam, which is also seen in the diversity of images as presented in the theoretical review. In the results section, these main themes are explained, to be related to each other and the theoretical review in the conclusion.

The shift of image has been discussed within the three major themes, by comparing articles from different time frames to each other. Here, the analysis used the codes to find contrasts, relationships, and explanations between the time frames. For example, articles written in the bidding process discussed how Eurovision is expected to bring opportunities, the preparations explained how these expectations are being put into practice and how these connect to the city of Rotterdam, and the cancellations showed the relationship between expectation and reality as a beacon for hope that Eurovision 2021 can and will develop these opportunities again.

In the analysis, more themes, subthemes, and codes are explained with the use of quotes from the articles. These quotes are initially presented in Dutch, and translations into English can be found in Appendix 2. AD Rotterdams Dagblad, as a local newspaper, uses certain phrases that cannot be fully translated into English without losing some of its meaning. Therefore, quotes are presented in Dutch to keep as close to the portrayed image as possible.

Results

During the bidding process, Rotterdam and Maastricht were trying to get to host Eurovision 2020. AD Rotterdams Dagblad focused on this competition, and illustrated how Rotterdam was trying to win the bid. Following up on the bidding articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad covered the preparation stages, in which the newspaper showed how the expectations of hosting Eurovision that were illustrated in the bidding process were met. When the Corona outbreak reached the Netherlands, articles switched from discussing the preparations to host Eurovision 2020, to questioning whether it would actually go through. These articles generally portrayed Rotterdam as a city of resilience. This analysis aims to connect these perspectives to each other, by illustrating how general characteristics of Rotterdam's Eurovision, Rotterdam, and Rotterdammers are portrayed. Furthermore, differences in these portrayals are illustrated to show how the image of Rotterdam shifts through the three stages.

Rotterdam's Eurovision

When discussing the image of Rotterdam, AD Rotterdams Dagblad often connects this image to characteristics of Eurovision. The event lays a foundation for how Rotterdam is represented. In the bidding process, the image of Rotterdam is used to show how the city is suited to host the event. Articles written during the preparations show how Rotterdam is making Eurovision an event a celebration for the locals. During the Corona Crisis, Eurovision is portrayed as an event that is used to give the Rotterdammers hope. This section focuses on how AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays Rotterdam's Eurovision, by illustrating it as a popular, inclusive extravaganza, and introduces ways in which the event can bring opportunities.

A Popular, Inclusive Extravaganza

Eurovision Song Contest is illustrated as an extraordinary event, filled with glitters and champagne. It is portrayed as an extravaganza, bringing 'eternal fame' to the city hosting it. If Rotterdam gets to host this event, there will be long lasting results for the image of the city, increasing its international recognition:

*“Eeuwige roem en jarenlange spin-off voor de winnende stad,
dankzij dit grootste liedjesfestijn ter wereld”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{1a}*

This quote shows one of the benefits Eurovision will bring to Rotterdam, and AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses it to emphasize on the importance for Rotterdam to win the bidding competition. As already explained in the theoretical review, hosting an international event will bring many new visitors into the host city (Herz et al., 2018). Additionally, Eurovision is portrayed as an incredibly popular event, that will be very beneficial to the place hosting the event. Here, the newspaper shows that the image of the host community is expected to be improved for years due to this popularity. In this case, AD Rotterdams Dagblad contradicts the theory presented by Herz et al. (2018), who argue that the impact on image will only last for a few years.

Apart from the immense popularity, the extravagant nature of the event is what makes it unique. As will be shown in various quotes throughout the analysis, this extravagant appearance is expected to shape the image of Rotterdam into a glamorous Eurovision paradise. During the bidding and preparations, these glamorous characteristics of Eurovision illustrate that Rotterdam can also be seen as a glamorous city. Even after the cancellation, AD Rotterdams Dagblad stays focused on the portrayal of glamour in the city, stressing the value of a large celebration. The newspaper expresses hope about the event being hosted in 2021, and is confident that this will result in an unforgettable celebration, for both the event and the city:

“We hopen dat het songfestival volgend jaar in een verhevigde vorm in Ahoy zal plaatsvinden en dit feest alsnog op een grootse wijze zal worden beleefd. In het jaar dat we vijftig jaar bestaan en onze nieuwbouw hebben geopend. Een historische, onvergetelijke happening”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 19, 2020)^{1b}

Here, AD Rotterdams Dagblad indicates that the event should be a grand celebration and expresses hope that this will happen in 2021. Furthermore, the newspaper connects this grand happening to the anniversary of event location Rotterdam Ahoy. Combining the extravagant nature of Eurovision with this anniversary, the newspaper portrays the event as one that will become a historical, unforgettable happening, in the city.

This extravagant celebration is also portrayed to be very inclusive. During the bidding stages, AD Rotterdams Dagblad already shows how locals feel about Eurovision, and that the event is seen as a celebration for everyone:

“Maar als een paal boven water staat dat het Songfestival een feest voor iedereen moet zijn, dus zowel voor de bezoekers als de Rotterdammers zelf. „Iedereen moet een prachtige tijd hebben.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 19, 2019)^{1c}

Locals see Eurovision as a unique opportunity to improve feelings of inclusivity and connectedness, which have been identified as important characteristics of the place image of

Rotterdam by Belabas and Eshuis (2019). In a similar way, the newspaper portrays Rotterdammers as a multicultural group of people, highly valuing acceptance between the different cultures. They feel that Eurovision will be an event that further exemplifies that, and uses this connection between the event and the city, to try to win the bid:

*“Het songfestival verbreedert, brengt mensen samen en verbindt culturen.
Het symboliseert bij uitstek een smeltkroes van culturen.
Inspireert mensen te zijn wie ze willen zijn.
Juist in een stad als Rotterdam is daar ruimte voor.”*
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{1d}

Here, Eurovision is identified as an event that brings people together. The articles show the expectation of Eurovision to be opportunity to increase inclusivity in Rotterdam. Both the event and the city seem to acknowledge the importance of inclusivity and connectedness. By working together, they can help each other improving even further.

During the preparations for the event, this inclusive nature of Eurovision is mostly used to convince the Eurovision critics of the joy the event brings through its inclusivity:

*“We zien dat het leeuwendeel van de bevolking na afloop toch 'wauw, dat was cool' zegt. Omdat de hele stad in één bepaalde periode in het teken van het songfestival staat, met vlaggen, met kleurrijke bezoekers uit alle delen van de wereld, met feesten in publieksdorp Eurovillage.
Iedereen wordt in de sfeer ondergedompeld.”*
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, January 28, 2020)^{1e}

AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that the organization rarely has to convince critics of the joy the event brings, as they will be submerged in it anyway. Eurovision is portrayed as a colorful event with visitors from all over the world all celebrating together. The organization argues that there is no escaping this inclusive and connected atmosphere the event brings.

The notions of inclusivity and connectedness are further emphasized when Eurovision 2020 has been cancelled due to the Corona virus:

“Ons uitgangspunt is altijd het samenbrengen van artiesten, fans en delegaties van allerlei verschillende landen. Het unieke format van het songfestival als internationaal live-evenement houdt in dat er eigenlijk geen enkel realistisch alternatief te bedenken was.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 19, 2020)^{1f}

Articles explain that it is due to these characteristics, the presented alternatives are unsuited for the event. The measures that were identified in the theory section (Anderson et al., 2020), make the connection during the event impossible. As this connection is the foundation for a successful edition of Eurovision in Rotterdam, no alternatives were found to be sufficient.

An Event of Opportunity

The previous section has already shown that Eurovision can provide an opportunity for inclusivity and togetherness. However, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows more ways in which Eurovision Song Contest can be seen as an event that is providing opportunity. Next sections will show how Eurovision is portrayed as providing opportunities in the tourism industry, how it is portrayed as an opportunity to improve the event image, and how the event can portray the dynamic image of Rotterdam, which has been discussed in the theoretical review.

One way of Eurovision providing opportunity important to note here, however, is how it is portrayed to be a beacon of hope in times of crisis, providing opportunity by giving the people of Rotterdam something to look forward to:

“De fun, de sfeer is zó belangrijk. Mijn hoop en verwachting is dat we rond die tijd een vaccin hebben. Of groepsimmunitet. En het songfestival in Rotterdam toch een groots muzikaal volksfeest kan worden”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, April 16, 2020)^{2a}

Here, Eurovision is portrayed as providing opportunity in a way that not has been discussed in the theoretical review. Instead of focusing on more quantifiable ways of opportunity, this quote shows how Eurovision can be an opportunity to express hope for a vaccine. By expressing these feelings of hope, AD Rotterdams Dagblad indicates the importance of having an enjoyable atmosphere in the city. The newspaper shows how Eurovision can become a great celebration, that is giving Rotterdammers feelings of hope; dreams about returning to a society that can again express its values of connectedness. It is this hope that is distracting the people from the consequences of the cancellation. This contradicts the research by Perić and Vitezić (2019), who indicated that the cancellation of events may result in declined community spirit and pride, and a lost opportunity to promote the local image. AD Rotterdams Dagblad rather portrays a more positive outlook on the cancellation, by expressing that there will be another opportunity next year.

Image of Rotterdam

Next to discussing Rotterdam’s Eurovision, articles also show the image of Rotterdam that is shaping the environment of the event. This section shows that the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination is very different from the perspective that locals have. As discussed in the theoretical review, Eurovision is more likely to portray this expected tourist image, than the actual place identity (Baker, 2008). Therefore, first the image of Rotterdam as a tourist

destination is shown, to connect to what AD Rotterdams Dagblad expects Eurovision to show. Then general image that is portrayed by the newspaper will be discussed, to show how Rotterdam is perceived by the locals.

Rotterdam as Tourist Destination

The articles show that there is still much to improve about the tourist image of Rotterdam. First, the competitions between Rotterdam and Maastricht, and between Rotterdam and Amsterdam are identified. Subsequently, how the tourism industry already is established in Rotterdam is illustrated. During the bidding process, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that the city has already developed as a tourist destination, and indicates that because of this, it can easily beat Maastricht in the bidding competition. However, during the preparations, it is made clear that the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination is not fully developed yet, and that Eurovision can help improve this image. Before discussing these themes, however, it should be noted that articles written after COVID-19 arrived in the Netherlands, do not discuss the tourism industry at all. These articles focus more on Rotterdam, its relationship with Rotterdammers themselves, and how to keep this connection healthy in times of crisis.

Rotterdam Rivalry

In the discussion of Rotterdam as a tourist destination, AD Rotterdams Dagblad often focuses on its competition with other Dutch cities. During the bidding process, Rotterdam is often mentioned to compete with Maastricht, to compare the potential event environments. After Rotterdam was announced as the winner of this competition, this focus shifted towards the city's rivalry with Amsterdam, portraying how Eurovision can help Rotterdam becoming a tourist destination that is just as relevant as the Dutch capital.

During the bidding competition, the newspaper uses the competition between Rotterdam and Maastricht to illustrate in what ways Rotterdam can, and cannot, be seen as a tourist destination. In terms of tourist attractions, Maastricht is portrayed to be completely opposite of Rotterdam:

*“Natuurlijk is het pittoreske en bourgondisch ingestelde Maastricht prachtig! Fantastisch gelegen aan de voet van de Sint-Pietersberg. Bekend van André Rieu en het verdrag van Maastricht, en dichtbij het drielandpunt. Tja, dat is toch iets anders dan wij te bieden hebben.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{3a}*

Maastricht is illustrated as a picturesque city, with an emphasis on its European importance due to the 1992 Maastricht treaty and its connection with Germany and Belgium. AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses this portrayal to show that Rotterdam is in a competition to show itself as a tourist destination. Rotterdam does not have the picturesque appearance, or European importance that Maastricht can offer Eurovision. However, Rotterdam is portrayed to be an attractive destination for Eurovision in a different way:

“Onze Maasstad heeft een adembenemende skyline en unieke bouwwerken zoals de Erasmusbrug, de Markthal en de Euromast. Ook historische gebouwen zoals Hotel New York, het Witte Huis en het stadhuis. Onze rauwe internationale havendynamiek is overal voelbaar. De stad is in beweging, innoveert en inspireert. Rotterdam heeft het!”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{3b}

Here, the newspaper shows that Rotterdam is a worthy competitor to Maastricht. The bidding articles use this competition to illustrate the characteristics of the image of Rotterdam, that make it a tourist destination. With this competition of Rotterdam between Maastricht, the uniqueness of the city is portrayed in a way that shows how Rotterdam can be an excellent environment to host Eurovision 2020.

During the preparations to host Eurovision, this competition between Rotterdam and Maastricht is not addressed anymore. As Rotterdam won this competition, the rivalry between Rotterdam and Maastricht does not seem to be relevant anymore. In these articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shifts the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination, by addressing the rivalry between Rotterdam and Amsterdam. To tourists, Rotterdam is still a rather unknown destination. The newspaper also shows that tourists usually just stay in Amsterdam:

“Ik ben in het verleden héél vaak in Nederland geweest. [...] En al die keren ben ik Amsterdam niet uit geweest. Voor mij was Amsterdam Nederland, en vice versa. En ik ben de enige niet.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 17, 2019)^{3c}

The image shown here, is presented in an interview with William Lee Adams, a Eurovision blogger who recently visited the Netherlands. For tourists, there is not much more to the country than Amsterdam, and furthermore, they do not seem to try to look beyond the capital. Rotterdam, therefore, remains an unknown destination to most tourists.

When tourists are open to go to more places than Amsterdam, and they are considering visiting Rotterdam, they base their decisions on the first impression. And, according to Adams, as portrayed in AD Rotterdams Dagblad, this first impression is not great:

“Wat jullie je moeten realiseren: de gemiddelde toerist weet niks van Rotterdam. Ik wist er ook niks van. En mijn eerste indruk, toen ik 'Rotterdam 2020' ging googelen, was niet best. Akelig zelfs. Ik zat meteen midden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, de bombardementen, de nazi's.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 17, 2019)^{3d}

The article discussed his initial view of Rotterdam, and as the quote shows, it could use some improvement. Instead of the treasured processes of reconstruction following the bombings as seen by the locals, the tourist view of Rotterdam is still at war. Tourists see this history in a negative way, indicating that World War II has shaped the city as stuck in time.

Luckily, before getting to this image of a destroyed city, Adams argues that the average tourist does not actually know anything about Rotterdam. And this is where, according to the articles, lies an opportunity. AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how Lonely Planet addresses this opportunity:

“Even sloeg de wanhoop toe, maar gelukkig is daar de redder in nood: Lonely Planet. Die beveelt Nederland van harte aan als reisbestemming in 2020 én Rotterdam met zijn songfestival in het bijzonder.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 23, 2019)^{3e}

Rotterdam is recognized by Lonely Planet as a new travel destination. Especially with Eurovision coming up, the travel guide recommends a visit to Rotterdam.

In order to really benefit from this increase in tourism, however, AD Rotterdams Dagblad indicates that the city really needs to create a lasting image for the visitors. Right now, the newspaper explains that Amsterdam still attracts a larger number of tourists, and that Rotterdam should try to keep Eurovision visitors in the host city:

“Adams adviseert ons lawaai te gaan maken, véél lawaai. Anders missen we de boot en blijven al die partypeople volgend jaar mei in Mokum hangen. En blijven wij zitten met onze bitterballen.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 23, 2019)^{3f}

This quote shows that Eurovision blogger William Lee Adams, who has been interviewed by AD Rotterdams Dagblad, is concerned that many tourists will still visit Amsterdam during the event. In order to develop Rotterdam into a tourist paradise, the city should seize to the opportunity that Eurovision brings, and convince the visitors that Rotterdam is just as worthy of a visit as Amsterdam. AD Rotterdams Dagblad is confident that Eurovision will be able to help with that.

Ready for Eurovision

Even though the previous section has shown that Rotterdam is still portrayed to be relatively unknown as a tourist destination, AD Rotterdams Dagblad does show that the city already has a well-established tourism industry. During the bidding stages, the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination is mainly used to show the suitability for hosting Eurovision. During the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad aims to show the need to improve this image, and focuses on how Eurovision as an international event will be able to help with that.

Because Eurovision is a major, international event, many visitors will stay in Rotterdam during the event. AD Rotterdams Dagblad expects the tourists to not only visit the shows, but will also go out to see the city. How many people will visit the city during Eurovision, becomes clear when shows the amount of hotel rooms that have to be available in May is presented:

“Wat sowieso nodig is, zijn 3000 hotelkamers voor de artiesten en de organisatie. Maar in het kielzog daarvan komt er nog een enorme stroom publiek af op dit mega-evenement.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 19, 2019)^{4a}

The organization and the performing artists alone will already need 3000 hotel rooms. All these people will be staying in, and most likely also exploring, Rotterdam in May. During the bidding competition, AD Rotterdams Dagblad wants to show that the existing tourist industry in Rotterdam is suited to host an event as big as Eurovision Song Contest:

“Ook hebben we voldoende ruimte én voldoende hotelbedden. Rotterdam is goed bereikbaar via de weg, met het openbaar vervoer, via Schiphol en Rotterdam The Hague Airport en ook over het water.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{4b}

Here, Rotterdam is portrayed to have a sufficient amount of hotel rooms, as well as a smooth infrastructure. These aspects of the current tourism industry are used during the bidding process, to show that Rotterdam is well suited to host Eurovision 2020. Additionally, the newspaper shows how the hotel industry also started a collaboration to bring down the rates of the hotel rooms for the organization. Because of this, it is expected that Rotterdam will become even more attractive for the event:

“Manager Eveline van der Pluijm van Rotterdam Partners is blij dat Rotterdam hiermee een nog scherper aanbod kan doen en dankt de hotelbranche voor de soepele opstelling. ‘De samenwerking is uitstekend. We zien allemaal het grote belang hiervan in. We willen dat Songfestival heel erg graag’.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 25, 2019)^{4c}

Apart from just presenting that Rotterdam is able to meet the requirements set by the organization, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that the city is willing to go further. The newspaper is confident that the city can get anything done, by its close collaboration and shared goals. Through this, the newspaper shows that Rotterdam is willing to adapt to the current situation, portraying flexibility in achieving the desired goals.

In the preparation stages, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shifts this portrayal of Rotterdam being a fully developed tourist destination, to one that could still use Eurovision to improve this image. Mainly due to the enormous amount of people visiting the city, Eurovision will be a huge opportunity to improve the tourism industry, and to show the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination to a wider audience. This corresponds to the research by Getz and Page (2016), stating that events can be used to boost the number of visitors to the host destination. Eurovision tourists are portrayed to not know anything about the city, so it is expected to be easy to provide the fans with a great experience in the city, and thus use this event to create this boost in tourism. The newspaper does indicate that Rotterdam should provide this experience in a way that is pleasant for Eurovision fans:

*“En maak het de Songfestival-fans makkelijk, want die zijn lui.
Die willen een bord 'volg deze route voor een goed restaurant'.
En: ze zijn niet origineel. Ze willen zijn waar anderen zijn.
Weet je wat als een dolle werkt? Een paar fotogenieke plekken creëren.
Als de eersten daar foto's van posten, volgt de rest vanzelf.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 23, 2019)^{4d}*

Eurovision fans are said to be lazy. When participating in touristic activities, they greatly influence each other. So, if Rotterdam provides the fans with an easy experience, the photogenic hotspots created will soon develop into renown tourist attractions that are flooded with tourists. The base for these tourist attractions is already there, and it is up to the people from Rotterdam to show these:

*“Van de Euromast tot de Markthal, maar ook de stoere streetart in de Afrikaanderwijk, Tattoo Bob live, ontwerpster Susan Bijl, stilstaan bij Zadkine en selfies maken bij het spiegelpaleis van het Depot en die ondeugende sekskabouter. Reken maar dat de mondjes openvallen bij de deelnemers aan het Eurovisie Songfestival. Verrast worden door Rotterdam, aan de enthousiaste stadsgidsen ligt het niet.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 3, 2020)^{4e}*

In this quote, AD Rotterdams Dagblad identifies several touristic attractions the city already has to offer. Furthermore, it explains how these will be made attractive to Eurovision. As explained before, using Eurovision as an opportunity to improve tourism, certain photogenic places

should be put as an example. By showing these places to the organization and participants of the event, and making them as enthusiastic as the Rotterdammers guiding them, these touristic attractions are likely to gain popularity fast.

Rotterdam: A Place to Live

For the people living in Rotterdam, the history is seen to illustrate the city as a place of opportunity, instead of the grim, destructive image it has in regard to Rotterdam as a tourist destination. This section explains how AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays Rotterdam to be a city in which it is important to keep finding ways to improve. Furthermore, it shows how the newspaper embeds this search for opportunity in the history of Rotterdam. The city is identified as an international port city that shapes the no-nonsense mentality of the city. AD Rotterdams Dagblad also shows how this sober mentality can combine with the glamorous event city image that is portrayed. In the bidding articles, the newspaper shows Rotterdam as a global city, and connects this to the international atmosphere Eurovision is known for. During the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad pays attention to the development of this international atmosphere, by portraying Rotterdam as a city that is constantly finding new ways to evolve and improve. After the cancellation, this need for improvement is further emphasized, with the newspaper showing Rotterdam as a city of resilience.

To Rise, Like a Phoenix from the Ashes

This section shows how AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses the grim history of the city to show Rotterdam as a place that is resilient. The newspaper shows how the history shaped the city into one that is constantly rebuilding and improving itself. During the bidding stages, this history is not specifically presented in the articles. However, during the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad often focuses on the period of reconstruction to show that the history has shaped the city into the place it is today, and has thus shaped the image as portrayed during the bidding stages. Additionally, this resilience is illustrated as a characteristic of Rotterdam that is still incredibly visible in the present. The articles written during the preparations show that Rotterdam is a city always trying to find opportunities to improve. Furthermore, when the Corona Crisis started, the articles show that this resilience is an incredibly dominant trait, showing how Rotterdam is set to make the best out of the hardship created.

After the bombings during World War II, Rotterdam had to completely rebuild itself. These periods of reconstruction shaped the city into the diverse place it is today, as will be

discussed in following sections. The newspaper hopes that Eurovision will further reveal the history of Rotterdam, in the way it is perceived by locals:

“Want de 65ste editie van het Eurovisie Songfestival in mei 2020 wordt misschien wel het grootste feest dat ooit is gehouden in de rijke historie van de stad die na de oorlog zo fraai herrees, als een feniks uit zijn as, met de ene wederopbouw golf na de andere.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, December 30, 2019)^{5a}

This quote is written in an article about the connection of Eurovision to the history of Rotterdam. It illustrates how Eurovision can be used to show the history of Rotterdam, and use this to portray the resilience in the city. AD Rotterdams Dagblad illustrates how the history of the war framed the city, and that the Rotterdammers took this setback, and turned it into an opportunity. In the theoretical review, this mentality of rebuilding was also mentioned by Nientied (2018), explaining how an image of roughness, and of a port city with a rolled-up sleeves mentality was created out of the reconstructions. AD Rotterdams Dagblad here also addresses this, and shows how the city resurrected beautifully, like a phoenix from its ashes.

In other instances, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the resilience of the city is still an important characteristic. Apart from illustrating that the city can transform disaster into opportunity, Rotterdam is also shown to find opportunity to improve in smaller ways. As discussed before, Rotterdam is not a grand tourist destination yet. During the Eurovision weeks, the city will be flooded with tourists. As a result, the tourism industry has to deal with certain issues that arise, especially related to the scarcity of hotel rooms. To solve this issue, Rotterdam has come up with a plan to house multiple tourists; a pop-up hotel near the Maassilo, a venue housing multiple Eurovision afterparties. But apart from just solving this issue, Rotterdam is looking for opportunities beyond the tourism industry:

“Het pop-uphotel vormt op die manier een verbinding tussen het songfestival en Zuid. ‘Mensen die tot dusver geen kans hadden om hun talent te tonen, komen bij ons wel aan de bak’.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, January 11, 2020)^{5b}

By mentioning this pop-up hotel, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the city can be flexible around new issues, and will try to create a situation out of it that is agreeable to multiple parties. Apart from showing flexibility, the quote also shows the importance of including locals, and portrays Eurovision as a possibility to do so. It also addresses how the city of Rotterdam is using a solution for the tourism industry, to also solve the issues of inequalities between Noord and Zuid, that will be discussed later.

But not everyone in Rotterdam is convinced of the opportunities Eurovision will bring. By portraying multiple arguments, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how important the possibility for opportunity is to the locals. When an event is thought to have none, Rotterdammers will start to doubt its relevance:

“Weet u wat het is met dat Songfestival? Het kost ons miljoenen, het gaat ons geen enkele extra baan opleveren, alleen maar trammelang.”
Conclusie: hij mot het niet.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, September 4, 2019)^{5c}

Some locals indicate to AD Rotterdams Dagblad that they are afraid the event will only cause trouble, without gaining anything from it. If there is no opportunity to improve the city, locals are shown to question the event itself, and are unconvinced of the need to have such an extravagant celebration. On the other side of this argument are residents who do believe in the benefits brought by hosting Eurovision. These locals will do their best to convince the opposing group of the good things they expect:

“Ik pareer zijn bondige betoog met de stelling dat we er misschien ook tientallen miljoenen aan overhouden, dat Zuid een enorme sprong voorwaarts gaat maken, de banen tegen de plinten op zullen klotsen.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, September 4, 2019)^{5d}

Here, a resident explains to AD Rotterdams Dagblad that hosting the event will actually create benefits for the city, instead of portraying it as an economic burden. Eurovision is seen as an investment, as an opportunity to enhance multiple aspects of the city. In other articles, the event is also portrayed to be a guilty pleasure for many locals, that creates excitement and a great atmosphere around the city. Even though there are some arguments against hosting the event, AD Rotterdams Dagblad considers it to be a wonderful experience for everyone involved, and is seemingly writing the articles that portray the negative thoughts as a new way to convince these residents of the opportunity that Eurovision will bring. This corresponds to the theoretical review, explaining that locals will only consider event tourism to valuable, when the benefits outweigh the costs (Jackson, 2008).

The need to find opportunity is incredibly visible during times of crisis. Instead of dwelling on the current Corona Crisis, AD Rotterdams Dagblad illustrates the city to be fully focused on its goal to keep everything going as smoothly as possible. When it is still unsure whether the Coronavirus leads to a cancellation, Rotterdam is shown to be completely devoting its energy to finding alternatives for the event. However, none of the alternatives found seems to suffice for an event as grand as Eurovision:

“Officieel heet het dat er met verschillende scenario's rekening wordt gehouden, maar feitelijk zijn er maar twee opties. Volop dóórgaan met het organiseren van dit spektakelstuk in Rotterdam Ahoy - de lijn die op dit moment wordt gevolgd - of de voorbereidingen van dit alom aanbeden mega-evenement stopzetten en eventueel mikken op 2021”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 4, 2020)^{5e}

It shows that, even if the virus will develop further, but not in a way that is bad enough to cancel everything, it will still affect Eurovision. Rotterdam is willing to put everything aside to make the best out of the situation and is looking for alternatives, but due to the importance of a good atmosphere in the event, the only two options are either continuing, or postponing. and is already trying to find ways to host the event in 2021.

Later, when the decision to cancel Eurovision 2020 has been made, Rotterdam is still portrayed to continue solving the issues caused by COVID-19. AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the city is again ready to make the best out of a bad situation:

“De rampenplannen in de Rotterdamse regio draaien tijdens deze coronacrisis echter op volle toeren. Corona slaat hard toe en maakt het ongelooflijke waar.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 31, 2020)^{5f}

It shows that Rotterdam is set to continue finding alternatives, and AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows the perseverance and resilience fully being reflected in these times of crisis. Furthermore, the virus is portrayed to be the main driver behind this portrayal of resilience. Just like Rotterdam picked itself up after World War II, the city will overcome this new crisis as well, and arise from it stronger than before. This contradicts the research by Perić and Vitezić (2019), who indicated that cancellation of events may result in declined community spirit and pride. AD Rotterdams Dagblad rather portrays a more positive outlook on the cancellation, by expressing that the city is already trying to find ways to make the best out of the situation.

A Global City of Innovation and Inspiration

Another result of the history of reconstruction, is that Rotterdam developed itself into a global port city. As previously seen in the theoretical review, the city established itself as a major port city after the period of reconstruction (Nientied, 2018), attracting a large group of immigrants, creating an international atmosphere (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006). This image is still visible today. In the bidding articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses the international port dynamics to paint a picture of the environment around Eurovision, if they choose Rotterdam to be the winner of the bidding competition. During the preparations, the newspaper uses the

international image as a tourist attraction, and also provides a more nuanced view, indicating that this image can still be improved. In the Corona Crisis, the level of internationalization is identified in relation to the media, showing that Rotterdam is using global media as an example to deal with the crisis.

During the bidding process, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows the port characteristics of Rotterdam, to convince the organization of Eurovision that the city would be the perfect environment for this event. The newspaper uses the image of a port city, to illustrate how Rotterdam is a city of innovation and inspiration:

*“Onze rauwe internationale havendynamiek is overal voelbaar.
De stad is in beweging, innoveert en inspireert.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{6a}*

Additionally, the characteristics of a port city are used to give a sense of personality to the city. The newspaper shows how the harbors of Rotterdam gives the city its international atmosphere, telling a unique story:

*“Rotterdam is een wereldstad,
heel divers. Een havenstad met een bijzonder verhaal”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 19, 2019)^{6b}*

The Port of Rotterdam is portrayed as the fundament of this city of hard-working people, all trying to make the best out of any situation. It provides the basis of a true metropolis, in which the international atmosphere gives a home to many people coming from various backgrounds.

This international atmosphere is portrayed as a positive process of globalization. The theory section already illustrated this concept, and explained how globalization is a process of shared interactions with various cultures shaping each other. In the articles, Rotterdam is portrayed as an Americanized city, with tall buildings and an urban appearance:

*“Stad die de afgelopen 25 jaar enorm is veranderd.
Moderner, groter, hoger en vriendelijker. Urban. Welvarender. [...] De meest Amerikaanse van de Nederlandse steden.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, August 31, 2019)^{6c}*

With its neighboring areas being closely connected to the city, Rotterdam is portrayed as the center of this Americanized metropolitan space. This Americanization is portrayed to shape the appearance of the city that has changed a lot over the past years, with taller buildings creating a more modern skyline. However, Rotterdam may appear to be Americanized when quickly taking a look at its modern architecture, but, the specific concept of Americanization is not mentioned often. AD Rotterdams Dagblad rather portrays the city as an internationalized one,

with the port and the airport being the most important international access points. Furthermore, the multiculturalism that is represented in the Rotterdammers, and will be discussed in a later section, creates an international atmosphere in the city. This corresponds to the theory identified by Hopper (2007), seeing Americanization as a process of cultures influencing each other, rather than that of one culture dominating over others.

During the preparations, the newspaper does not really show how the image of Rotterdam as a port city affects its reputation as a global city. It is rather used as one of the general characteristics, portraying the port as a tourist destination:

“Alle deelnemende landen kunnen binnenkort tours boeken rond zes thema's zoals architectuur, kunst, innovatie en haven, maar ook Nederland.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 3, 2020)^{6d}

By mentioning the Port of Rotterdam as a location to visit in a tour, AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses it as a way to further illustrate Rotterdam as a tourist destination, rather than a global port city. In the theoretical review, it has already been discussed that multiculturalism is often used as a characteristic that is not openly celebrated, but rather a fixed part of the city (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019). Perhaps, this is also the case with the Port of Rotterdam. It is not something special anymore, but it is more an integrated part that forms the city's dynamic image.

Even though the newspaper shows the global port image to be an integrated part of Rotterdam, AD Rotterdams Dagblad also provides a more nuanced view on this global image during the preparation stages. In an interview with a visitor of a gay club in Rotterdam, the newspaper illustrates that there are still improvements to be made in this global image. Again, Eurovision is portrayed to bring opportunity in this aspect:

Rotterdam moet een wereldstad worden en ik hoop dat het Eurovisie Songfestival daaraan bijdraagt.
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, February 8, 2020)^{6e}

As someone who has visited many gay clubs over the world, this interviewee provides a more nuanced view of Rotterdam as a global city. By showing this, AD Rotterdams Dagblad acknowledges that not everyone is as convinced about the global image that has been portrayed during the bidding stages. Furthermore, the newspaper shows that becoming a global city is a process, instead of a fixed state. This quote does not diminish the previously mentioned aspects, but rather indicates that Rotterdam is not as global as it could become.

The extent to which Rotterdam is becoming global city, really shows itself during the times of uncertainty about the Corona virus. It has to be decided whether Eurovision would

continue, and this decision-making process partly guided by international media. Messages from other parts of the world created feelings of anxiety in Rotterdam:

“Angst is een slechte raadgever, maar als je ziet dat ze in China dankzij een hele trits draconische ingrepen de zaak nu eindelijk een beetje onder controle hebben, dan acht ik de kans klein dat Europa zo'n kunstje in luttele weken weet te klaren. Laten we hopen op een medisch mirakel: dat het venijnige virus als sneeuw voor de lentezon verdwijnt.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 4, 2020)^{6f}

This shows how, even though fear is a bad advisor, it does take over the decision-making process regarding Eurovision. Rotterdam is participating as a part of the world in this process, looking at other countries for examples, and in other cases also for possible consequences. Furthermore, even though the articles present feelings of hopefulness in Rotterdam, there is a general undertone that these feelings of hope are futile due to the impressions portrayed in international media. In this quote, the feelings of anxiety that have been presented to be caused by virus outbreaks are extremely visible. Whether these feelings will turn into long-lasting health problems, as was predicted by Torales et al. (2020), is yet to be seen.

Sober, but Glamorous

Even though COVID-19 is shown to be affecting the mentality of Rotterdam, overall the city is still illustrated as one full of confidence. As seen before, the virus is also providing the city with an opportunity, to show its deeply rooted resilience, and making the best out of this situation. In articles written before the crisis, Rotterdam is portrayed to be a dynamic city that has changed a lot over the past years. It is a city of innovation and inspiration, open to change. These characteristics will help shape the city into a true event city. With the portrayal of Rotterdam as an event city, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that, even though Rotterdam is a sober city, it can also be glamorous. During the bidding stages, this combination of soberness and glamour is shown to portray Rotterdam as a city capable of hosting the event. When the city is preparing to host the event, Eurovision is used as an event to further develop Rotterdam into a glamorous city, moving away from the sober image. In the cancellation articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays a more nuanced view towards this glamorous image, indicating that the city can be glamorous when possible, but will get back to its sober reality when necessary.

By showing some examples of previous events Rotterdam has hosted, AD Rotterdams Dagblad expresses confidence in winning the bid:

“Daarom wordt de strijd tussen de twee maassteden gewonnen door Rotterdam. Let the songs begin!”
(*AD Rotterdams Dagblad*, July 27, 2019)^{7a}

This quote concludes an article that discusses Rotterdam to be an event city, and that characteristics that shape this event image will lead to Rotterdam winning the bid. As Rotterdam Ahoy has already shown to be capable of hosting an international mega-event, the city has an infrastructure that is well suited to welcome many visitors, and the tourism industry is well prepared to host these visitors, *AD Rotterdams Dagblad* shows the confidence of Rotterdam. As the city is later shown to be the winner of the bidding competition, this confidence is portrayed to be a useful characteristic of the city.

On the other hand, Rotterdam is also portrayed to be a sober city, aiming to achieve higher levels of inclusivity and connectedness in an unremarkable way. The realistic and sober nature of Rotterdammers should also help convince the organization of Eurovision Song Contest to choose Rotterdam as the winning city:

“Ná concurrent Maastricht, die ook virtual reality-brillen in de strijd wierp om de delegatie het Songfestival-gevoel te geven, was het gisteren de spetterende Rotterdamse werkelijkheid die de omroepen moest verleiden om voor deze stad te kiezen.”
(*AD Rotterdams Dagblad*, July 19, 2019)^{7b}

This quote shows the confidence of the city, as they do not need flamboyant methods to convince the organization of its suitability. The newspaper argues that it is specifically this soberness that provides for the realistic outlook presented by Rotterdam, to convince the organization that Rotterdam should win the bidding competition, and host Eurovision 2020.

This soberness directly contrasts the popular, glamorous characteristics of Eurovision, that were previously identified:

“Ook als straks in mei 2020, in deze stad zonder franje, de glitters en champagne binnentrekken.”
(*AD Rotterdams Dagblad*, August 31, 2019)^{7c}

Even though this glamorous portrayal seems to be miles apart from the soberness in the city of Rotterdam, *AD Rotterdams Dagblad* is still welcoming the event appropriately in this down-to-earth city filled with realistic, but confident people. Maybe it will even be an opportunity for Rotterdam to get out of its comfort zone, and embrace Eurovision as a unique opportunity to add some glamour into the sober identity.

By getting the event, *AD Rotterdams Dagblad* portrays confidence during the preparation stages, and predicts that Eurovision 2020 will further develop Rotterdam into a

glamorous event-city. With the Eurovision village that is going to be situated on the Binnenrotte, popular sites near Blaak, such as the Markthal and the Central Library should prepare to meet their new neighbor. But not only during the Eurovision weeks. The event image that will be created then, is likely to stay:

“Rotterdam heeft het evenement binnengehaald, moet zich nu waarmaken en gaan bruisen als een echte dance- en gaystad. Misschien ontstaat er wel zo'n flow, dat de Dance Parade weer georganiseerd kan worden.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, August 31, 2019)^{7d}

Eurovision should be used as an opportunity to reinvent Rotterdam into an event city. The Bidding articles already started to show this transformation of Rotterdam, but now that the city is chosen to host Eurovision 2020, this transformation should really get a boost.

It does, however, seem that not everyone in the city is pleased with this transformation into an event city. AD Rotterdams Dagblad also shows how people working on the market on Blaak are disappointed by the event. They argue that the merchants are concerned that events will get prioritized over the market. With the Eurovision Village on the Binnenrotte, this fear is already becoming a reality. Merchants will have to find alternative places to stall their goods, as in May 2020, their marketplace will be occupied by the Eurovision Village.

Even though the merchants are deeply unsatisfied about the emergence of a more dominant event culture, AD Rotterdams Dagblad is looking forward to host Eurovision 2020. Soon after winning the bid, the newspaper is portraying its expectations of the Village:

“Een Eurovision Village op de Binnenrotte, alle bouwkransen verlicht in de kleuren van de deelnemende landen, volop spontane muziekoptredens, feesten & partijen, love & peace. Woodstock aan de Maas, anno 2020. Een spektakelstuk dat elke Tourstart, marathon of Trap tegen het Groot Handelsgebouw doet verbleken.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, September 4, 2019)^{7e}

Winning the bid has transformed the imagination of hosting Eurovision 2020 in Rotterdam into a closer reality. The newspaper dreams about how the city will be portrayed during the event. In the quote, AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays Eurovision to be an extraordinary event that will bring out the best of the city. It captures the expected delightful atmosphere that will be felt throughout the city. Eurovision 2020 will be hosted by Rotterdam, and this opportunity for portraying the city is illustrated to be much more important than the concerns merchants have.

Articles written after the cancellation do show that the glamorous image of the city is only portrayed when it is appropriate. When something is considered to be more important, a

pandemic in this case, Rotterdam illustrated to be flexible enough to put this glamorous portrayal on hold:

*“Na het besluit dat het songfestival niet doorgaat, was dat in ons hoofd al snel een gepasseerd station. We beseften direct dat er belangrijkere zaken waren. Hoe belangrijk, dat zie je nu”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 31, 2020)^{7f}*

Whereas the merchants during the preparation stage were not considered to be a priority over portraying Rotterdam as a glamorous city, the current Corona Crisis is presented to be important enough. Because of this, the soberness of Rotterdam is brought back, indicating that there are more important matters to attend to. It shows that Rotterdam can be glamorous when the times allow, but will quickly return to a state of soberness when necessary.

Image of Rotterdammers

The diverse image of Rotterdam is illustrated to be mainly due to the people living in the city. They rebuilt it after the war, and continued improving Rotterdam over the following years. AD Rotterdams Dagblad Rotterdam not only considers people living in the city center to be important, the whole metropolitan area shapes the image of the city:

*“We zijn een stad van Rotterdammers, dat vooral. Als je de hele regio meerekent, zo'n anderhalf miljoen mensen. Zij maken deze stad.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, August 31, 2019)^{8a}*

This quote shows that Rotterdam is shaped the way it is, due to the people living in it. This section discusses how there are still issues of inequality in the city, and explains how locals are portrayed to be trying to limit these issues. Next, Rotterdam is presented as a city that is connecting people and cultures. Finally, this section shows how Rotterdammers are helping to make Eurovision a successful event, so they can present their city to the world in the way they want to. Again, this section shows how these images shift over time. In the bidding articles, a rather positive image on the residents is portrayed, showing they are looking forward to hosting an event that portrays their values of inclusivity and connectedness. During the preparations, the newspaper shows a more nuanced view towards these values, indicating that there is still a lot to improve before Rotterdammers will be fully accepting of diversity. Nevertheless, articles also show that Eurovision is used as an example to improve this acceptance of diversity. In the cancellation stages, articles emphasize on inclusivity and connectedness, showing that Rotterdammers are focused on limiting the consequences of the crisis by helping each other.

Opportunity in Inequality

In the bidding articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad does not show the issues of inequality that are presented during later stages. However, as Rotterdam was still trying to win the bid, it could be that the newspaper decided to show only the good parts of the city. In the preparation articles, it is clarified that there are issues of inequality to be solved. The ones finding solutions, are portrayed to be Rotterdammers themselves, as the city is still lacking in reaching the ones who need help. In the cancellation articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how Rotterdammers are dealing with the crisis, by helping each other and finding opportunities to rise up stronger.

As previously seen with the pop-up hotel, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows the less-fortunate residents using a solution for the enormous tourist flow, and turning it into an opportunity to build a network. The hotel is also used to address the inequality between Rotterdam Noord and Zuid, and is used as a way to connect Eurovision 2020 more to Rotterdam Zuid. The difference between Noord and Zuid is made apparent in more ways:

“Zuid staat nog best slecht bekend, maar de bewoners zijn juist heel trots op de wijk. Dat willen we laten zien. Direct over de Erasmusbrug, naast Katendrecht, met een metrohalte voor de deur, een toegankelijke en bereikbare plek. De wijk is divers in alle opzichten, een smeltkroes van culturen, jong en levendig en daarmee een uniek plek in Rotterdam.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, February 5, 2020)^{9a}

Zuid is portrayed as a neighborhood with a bad image. However, the people living there consider their area to be completely different from what this image shows. AD Rotterdams Dagblad that this part of Rotterdam should be celebrated for its diversity, and is portraying all the aspects that characterize Rotterdam. The residents want to show this pride to a wider audience, and with the Eurovision pop-up hotel, they will get this opportunity.

The lost connection between Noord and Zuid is not the only issue AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows. In every part of the city, there are issues of inequality, especially related to monetary issues. AD Rotterdams Dagblad illustrates how Rotterdam is trying to include all its residents, also the ones who are less privileged. They should all feel welcome in a large and international event such as Eurovision. Therefore, the event should be made accessible to all locals, even to those who do not have enough money to buy a ticket. Apart from organizing many smaller events during the weeks Eurovision is hosted, AD Rotterdams Dagblad also shows how Rotterdam is giving away tickets to the less fortunate residents in the city:

“3000 mensen met een krappe beurs kunnen, behalve een toegangsbewijs, rekenen op vervoer naar Ahoy én een hapje en een drankje. Met een vriend, kennis of familielid kunnen ze een middagje of avondje zorgeloos genieten.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, January 22, 2020)^{9b}

The articles show that the city cares about its residents, and wants to give back to them. Rotterdam is portrayed as a place that values leisure time, and considers it to be important for everyone to be able to enjoy it. However, the offer of free tickets later turns out to be undesired, when a large part of these tickets being given away to volunteers of the event. Articles illustrate that not all tickets available for minimum income residents were claimed. The newspaper shows how this might have something to do with the difficulty the city experiences when trying to reach these residents:

“Misschien laat de goedbedoelde actie van de gemeente ook iets anders zien. Dat de stad moeite heeft bewoners te bereiken die het minder hebben. Zijn zij inmiddels zo murw gebeukt door brieven en formulieren dat ze geen trek meer hebben in nog een procedure en toetsing, ook al is het voor gratis kaartjes?”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, January 25, 2020)^{9c}

Even though Rotterdam wants to help the residents, this quote shows that the city might be struggling with reaching them. Buried under many bureaucratic processes, the well-meaning offer end up being unused by the audience it was meant for. In the end, AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays Rotterdam to be a city that recognizes the importance of locals, but seems to be having problem with including them all.

Nevertheless, Rotterdam is still trying to limit these issues of inequality. Apart from giving out free tickets to less-fortunate residents, the city is acknowledging the hardship for many more citizens due to the Corona Crisis. To help this group, Rotterdam is trying to keep main aspects of the program in 2021, so the loss is only limited:

“Wat hem betreft blijven ook alle financiële afspraken staan. Indieners van een sprankelend idee voor een initiatief rond het Eurovisie-geweld in Ahoy, zoals het Jong Roffa Songfestival en Afri Opens Up, kregen subsidie om hun droom te verwezenlijken. Die deal blijft, zegt Moerman.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 20, 2020)^{9d}

To limit the impact of postponing the event to 2021, the organization as well as Rotterdam are focused on keeping all the deals made for the 2020 edition. By looking ahead and finding solutions for issues that might arise when preparing for Eurovision 2021, the city is turning away from feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, that have been presented in the theoretical review (Torales et al., 2020).

Additionally, the newspaper again shows the resilience of the city, by not dwelling on the issue, but trying to find new ways to turn it into an opportunity. For example, Rotterdam Ahoy, the venue that was supposed to be preparing for Eurovision, has been turned into a care center:

“Het is een enorme operatie, die gistermorgen begon. Een onwerkelijke operatie ook, want eigenlijk zouden rond deze tijd de podiumopbouwers voor het Eurovisie Songfestival beginnen. In plaats daarvan begint de bouw van een tijdelijk zorghotel in de hallen van Rotterdam Ahoy”

(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 31, 2020)^{9c}

Rebuilding the event venue into a temporary care center, to relieve the hospitals of the some of the burden they are carrying, again shows the resilience of the city, and especially the people in the city working to get the most out of the situation. Rotterdammers are given an issue to deal with, and instead of just figuring out how to solve this issue, they try to look for ways to shape the issue in an opportunity.

Understanding and Accepting

Even though the city still has a long way to go before it will reach the desired level of connectedness, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the city is trying to improve. In the bidding articles, the newspaper uses the current level of inclusivity in the city to connect the city to Eurovision. Then during the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how Eurovision is helping to improve connections and acceptance in the city. Finally, during the Corona Crisis, the newspaper shows how important these notions of connectedness and inclusivity are.

When Rotterdam is still competing in the bidding process, the newspaper uses the characteristics of Rotterdam as an international port city as the foundation of a city that is connecting people and cultures to each other. Notions of inclusivity and connectedness are often discussed in terms of diversity:

“Smeltkroes met meer dan 170 nationaliteiten, bijna de helft van de inwoners met buitenlandse roots. Wij leven naast en met elkaar, in een metropool waarin het in de politiek vaak over integratie en identiteit gaat.”

(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, August 31, 2019)^{10a}

This quote shows how the city aims to bring people and cultures together. Rotterdam is portrayed as a multicultural city, with the people all valuing each other. Their goal is to understand, and accept the many cultures that are connected in the city. Furthermore, the quote shows how Rotterdam is still working on improving these notions of inclusivity and

connectedness. As discussed in the theory, it is specifically this connectedness that is shaping Rotterdam the way it is (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019).

During the bidding process, this wish to improve is used to connect the city to Eurovision, and AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses this connection to show that the city is suited to host the event. This has already been illustrated earlier, in relation to Eurovision being portrayed as an inclusive extravaganza. In the articles written during the preparation stages, the newspaper shows how Eurovision is already helping towards improving inclusivity and connectedness. A school is inspired by the event, to work on its policies towards acceptance. In an interview with AD Rotterdams Dagblad, the school already argues that acceptance is an important step towards an inclusive society:

*“Of je nu een opa hebt uit Rotterdam, Casablanca of Ankara.
Of je christen, moslim, hindoe, boeddhist of atheïst bent.
Of je hetero, homo, bi of transgender bent.
Op de Hugo verdragen we verschillen, staan we open voor de ander.”*
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, December 14, 2019)^{10b}

The inclusive characteristics of Eurovision that have been discussed during times of bidding, now serve as an inspiration to improve on the notions of inclusivity and togetherness. Due to the event, the school from the example started to look for new ways, so it can further improve and make all of its students feel welcome.

The importance of inclusivity goes as far as using it to show that the alternatives found for hosting Eurovision 2020 are not good enough. Rotterdam is willing to put everything aside to make the best out of the situation and is looking for alternatives. But, due to the importance of inclusivity, the only two options are either continuing, or postponing. AD Rotterdams Dagblad also shows how it might not be desirable to continue, regardless of this inclusive atmosphere that is needed to create Eurovision into a glamorous event:

*“Was het nog wel gepast in deze tijd? Het songfestival is ooit bedacht,
65 jaar geleden, als een evenement dat verbindt, dat zorgt voor een
gemeenschappelijk feest. Maar als je vervolgens ziet wat er in
een paar dagen tijd in een sneltreinvaart over ons heen kwam.
Dan is het duidelijk dat dit besluit genomen ging worden.”*
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 19, 2020)^{10c}

This quote illustrates the characteristics of Eurovision, that are also represented in Rotterdammers. If the whole world is in crisis, the newspaper is questioning the appropriateness of hosting the event that is focused on connectedness, in a city greatly valuing inclusivity. Even if the organization is confident in the virus not developing into a global crisis, the times are not set to host a celebration this big.

Making Eurovision Happen

Before the crisis started, however, Rotterdammers were still fully focused on turning Eurovision 2020 into an incredible event. Already during the bidding process, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how enthusiastic the locals are about the possibility to host the event. Throughout all stages, the newspaper portrays Rotterdammers to be incredibly willing to show their city to the world, and thus help in organizing Eurovision.

In the bidding process, Rotterdammers are shown to be looking forward to hosting Eurovision. They are portrayed to really want to win the bidding competition, as the residents consider Eurovision to be an event that can show their city to the world. These feelings of enthusiasm are often discussed in the articles:

“Veel Rotterdammers staan te trappelen om hier een geweldig feest van te maken. Uit onderzoek blijkt dat bijna 9 op de 10 Rotterdammers dit wil. Wij willen historie schrijven, deze fantastische kans pakken.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 27, 2019)^{11a}

This quote shows how Rotterdammers expect the event to be an opportunity to show themselves, and the city they built. They want to do so in more ways than just the sober outlook that has been discussed earlier. During the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the people are also willing to help in making this portrayal a success. The newspaper shows how they are acting as tourism providers, by renting out their homes on Airbnb, and coming up with new ideas to house tourists such as the pop-up hotel near Maassilo. Furthermore, Rotterdammers will take on roles as city guides:

“Wij zijn trots op onze stad, hoe mooi is het om de leuke dingen aan anderen te laten zien? Die plaatjes gaan de hele wereld over, dat is heel mooi voor Rotterdam. We doen dat natuurlijk op onze eigen Rotterdamse manier, professioneel maar ook lekker onbevangen.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 3, 2020)^{11b}

It is due to their pride of Rotterdam, that the locals want to show their city to visitors. The best way to do so, is in their own way. With Rotterdammers showing the city during Eurovision, the whole world will not only see the visual appearance of the city, but also the mentality of the people in it. Connecting this to the research presented by Getz and Page (2016), Eurovision 2020 should be an excellent opportunity to show this pride as a part of the image of Rotterdam.

One of the other reasons why Rotterdammers want to help showing their city specifically during Eurovision, is because Rotterdammers consider Eurovision to be a celebration for everyone. It is seen as an event in which Rotterdammers can show and improve

their values for inclusivity and connectedness. Already during the bidding process, the importance of hosting the event is illustrated by the newspaper:

“Maar als een paal boven water staat dat het Songfestival een feest voor iedereen moet zijn, dus zowel voor de bezoekers als de Rotterdammers zelf. „Iedereen moet een prachtige tijd hebben.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, July 19, 2019)^{11c}

Locals see Eurovision as a unique opportunity to improve these feelings of inclusivity and connectedness. Rotterdammers are portrayed as a multicultural group of people, highly valuing acceptance between the different cultures. By presenting Eurovision to be an event that shares these values, the newspaper aims to connect the event to the city and its diversity.

This diversity of the Rotterdammers will be not only be visible when the event taking place, but also in the weeks before it. Rotterdammers are invited to come up with ideas, to make the city a lively place weeks before Eurovision 2020 will start:

“Niet alleen tijdens de finale op 16 mei in Ahoy, maar ook in de weken daarvoor moet de stad bruisen. Bijvoorbeeld door zélf iets te bedenken - liefst iets muzikaals - zoals een eigen talentenjacht in het buurthuis of op een centraal plein. ‘Het hoeft echt niet zo ingewikkeld te zijn’.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, October 5, 2019)^{11d}

During these weeks, it is up to the locals to create the celebrated Eurovision atmosphere. By asking the locals themselves to create the program, they will have the opportunity to show their identity to Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and the entire Eurovision audience.

It is this combination of pride, opportunity, and portrayal of diversity, that is bringing out the ambition of Rotterdammers, to make Eurovision a successful event, whenever it will be hosted. After cancellation, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that the organization is still planning to give the Rotterdammers a stage during the event in 2021:

“Wat hem betreft gaat er niets verloren. ‘We hebben contact met alle betrokkenen gehad. Iedereen is vol goede moed dat we er volgend jaar een fantastisch feest van maken. Zeker de mensen achter het Stadsprogramma. Iedereen is dubbel gemotiveerd’.”
(AD Rotterdams Dagblad, March 20, 2019)^{11e}

Everything Rotterdammers already have done to portray their city, will be used in next year’s edition of Eurovision. Locals will keep their opportunity to show the image of Rotterdam in 2021, together creating a program for the city that can show the diversity, ambition, and pride that Rotterdammers have portrayed in the months before Eurovision 2020 got canceled.

Conclusion

To answer the question “How does AD Rotterdams Dagblad portray the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision Song Contest 2020, and how does this image shift in various stages of this coverage?”, 45 articles from the newspaper have been analyzed. To focus on this shift of portrayal, articles were divided among three time frames; bidding, preparations, and cancellation. By conducting a thematic analysis, the portrayed image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020 was illustrated in a coherent story guided by the interpretations of the researcher. With this research, this thesis aimed to close theoretical gaps in the portrayal of place image in event tourism, as presented by Getz and Page (2016), and to find relationships in the previously inconsistent image of Rotterdam (van Aalst, 2005; Belabas & Eshuis, 2019; Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006; Nientied, 2018). A societal relevance can be found in relation to the current Corona Crisis, in which the portrayal of Rotterdam in the news articles can be used as an example for other cities and event planners. They can use the resilient image as an example for their crisis planning, using what is lost to create something new.

In the theoretical review, main concepts were discussed to guide the analysis. The image of Rotterdam was discussed first by explaining theories on place image and globalization, and illustrating previous research on the image of Rotterdam. Then, event tourism was explained, with a specific focus on Eurovision Song Contest as event tourism, and how the cancellation of such a major event due to a pandemic can generate a shift in image.

During the analysis, these theories were used to guide the coding process. Articles from the various stages discussed themes similar to or in contrast with the theory. Overall, the articles covered similar topics, albeit in slightly different ways. During the preparations, AD Rotterdams Dagblad generally shows how the expectations presented in the bidding phases are being met. Bigger differences in the portrayal of the image of Rotterdam can be found in articles discussing the cancellation of Eurovision 2020, with the newspaper contrasting or strengthening certain characteristics presented during earlier stages. The differences between these stages and how these relate to the theoretical review are discussed within three main themes: Rotterdam’s Eurovision, Image of Rotterdam, and Image of Rotterdammers.

The first theme illustrated is Rotterdam’s Eurovision. AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays Eurovision as an extravagant event, that is incredibly popular to an international audience, and is thus bringing benefits into the city for years after the event has finished. Especially during the bidding process, the newspaper focuses on these benefits that are brought by the popularity of the event. But, this portrayal is contradicting the theory presented by Herz et al. (2018), arguing that the impact on image will only last for a few years. It could be that the newspaper is

acting as an ambassador for Eurovision, instead of an ambassador for the city as has been discussed by Lockstone-Binney et al. (2014), by convincing Rotterdammers that the benefits will outweigh the costs, as is needed for a positive view on the event (Jackson, 2008).

The bidding articles already connect Eurovision to Rotterdam by mentioning the importance of inclusivity and connectedness for the event. During the preparations stage, it is specifically this inclusivity that AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows to connect the event to Rotterdam. Articles written in these times rarely focus on the popularity of the event anymore, but rather show how the inclusivity and connectedness are the new ways of convincing locals of the benefits Eurovision will bring. The portrayed image of Rotterdam's Eurovision shifts from it being an event that will bring benefits into the city due to its popularity, to an event that is a celebration for everyone. AD Rotterdams Dagblad is helping to create a party atmosphere in which everyone feels included. This image of inclusion connects to the theory of Belabas and Eshuis (2019), explaining how the place image of Rotterdam is mainly shown through the connection of people, giving them a sense of belonging in this city with many characteristics. For this reason, it makes sense to portray Eurovision as a celebration for all, as Rotterdam is portrayed as a city that values these notions of inclusivity and connectedness. How Rotterdam's Eurovision should be a celebration for all is further emphasized with the cancellation. During this stage, AD Rotterdams Dagblad is looking forward to hosting the event in 2021, showing how it will become an unforgettable celebration of people. The newspaper quit using features of Eurovision to try to convince Rotterdammers of its benefits, and shifts the portrayal of the event towards a beacon of hope. This contradicts the research by Perić and Vitezić (2019), who indicated that the cancellation of events may result in declined community spirit and pride, a missed opportunity of recreation for the host community, and a lost opportunity to promote the local image. AD Rotterdams Dagblad rather portrays a more positive outlook on the cancellation, by expressing that there will be another opportunity next year.

After portraying Eurovision as a big, extravagant event that focuses on inclusivity and connectedness, and provides a beacon for hope in times of crisis, these characteristics are used to portray the image of Rotterdam. AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the city can be seen as a tourist destination, and how Eurovision can help to improve that. Secondly, the newspaper shows the image of Rotterdam as a place to live.

The main struggle the city is experiencing regarding the image of Rotterdam as a tourist destination, is how it is competing with other cities. During the bidding stage, the current tourism industry of Rotterdam is identified and compared to the tourist image of Maastricht. In this stage, the newspaper expresses confidence in the tourist image of Rotterdam, using the

current industry to differentiate Rotterdam from other cities. Again, the newspaper seems to take over the role of ambassador, as discussed by Lockstone-Binney et al. (2014), trying to convince the organization of Rotterdam's suitability by illustrating how the tourism industry is already well-developed and more unique than what Maastricht has to offer. During the preparations, however, AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays the tourism industry with less confidence than during the bidding. After explaining that Rotterdam is an unknown destination due to the popularity of Amsterdam, or that potential visitors have a bad first impression due to many grim pictures of World War II, the newspaper shows that there is still a lot to gain. Articles shift towards showing how Eurovision is a way to easily improve this industry, which connects to the theory by Getz and Page (2016), explaining how events can be used to boost the number of visitors. Tourist attractions are already portrayed to be well-developed, and the newspaper shows that it is now up to the Rotterdammers to bring the tourist perspective closer to the local perspective. Articles written in relation to the cancellation, do not discuss this tourism industry at all. These articles focus more on Rotterdam, its relationship with Rotterdammers themselves, and how to keep this connection healthy in times of crisis. Perhaps this is because it is still too early to find how the current crisis actually affects the tourism industry. As seen in the theoretical review, the combined economic impact of the decline in event tourism is predicted to be hundreds of billions of US dollars (Gössling et al., 2020). However, it is yet to be seen if this prediction is correct. It could be that AD Rotterdams Dagblad is waiting for more clarity in the matter, before addressing how the Corona Crisis is affecting Rotterdam as a tourist destination.

The image that portrays Rotterdam as a place to live, is more positive than that of Rotterdam as a tourist destination. AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows the grim history in relation to opportunity. Repeatedly, the articles show how Rotterdam is a city that is continuously overcoming issues, and is finding ways to keep rising like a phoenix from the ashes. The reason for this resilience is illustrated in the bidding articles, in which AD Rotterdams Dagblad uses the history of the city to show that Rotterdam has become a global city of innovation and inspiration. Aspects of globalization are visible in the city, especially when AD Rotterdams Dagblad is using the international port of Rotterdam, as presented by Nientied (2018), to illustrate the environment that will shape Eurovision. The image of resilience in the portrayal of Rotterdam is derived from this global port image, with articles explaining that innovation and inspiration are important characteristics for a city always trying to improve itself. During the preparations, this importance of improvement further portrayed in relation to Eurovision, and locals are shown to only consider the event to be valuable when it brings opportunity into the

city. In the theoretical review, this also been discussed by Jackson (2008), explaining how locals will only consider event tourism to valuable when the benefits outweigh the costs. AD Rotterdams Dagblad illustrates this by explaining how Rotterdam is trying to find opportunity in more ways than just solving issues regarding the tourism industry, and shows that Eurovision will provide inspiration for new opportunities. This importance of opportunity is even more emphasized during the Corona Crisis, when the newspaper shows how the virus is creating opportunities for the city to rise up stronger than before. Even though AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows that the city is affected by the global news surrounding the virus, which is spreading feelings of anxiety similar to what has been discussed by Torales et al. (2020), the newspaper is generally covering stories that show resilience and perseverance, and is thus going against the presented theory. The city may be influenced by the global layers presented by Straubhaar (2013), with global media shaping the way Rotterdam is making decisions during the crisis, but local interpretations are still guiding the overall mentality. Other aspects of Rotterdam, that have not been discussed in the theoretical review, but have been presented in the analysis, are notions of confidence and soberness in the city. In the articles, these characteristics are portrayed to be incredibly important for the city, as these convinced the organization of Eurovision to choose Rotterdam as the host destination. The creative aspects as mentioned by van Aalst (2005), are not really represented in the articles by AD Rotterdams Dagblad. However, the newspaper does show that Eurovision will be an opportunity to increase the creative industries, especially by creating an example for a lively event atmosphere.

The final main theme identified is the portrayal of Rotterdammers. The residents are portrayed as a multicultural group, corresponding to the theory by Fortuin and van der Graaf (2006). However, just as presented in the theory by Belabas and Eshuis (2019), this multiculturalism is presented in more practical ways, with the newspaper discussing notions of general diversity and acceptance. In the bidding articles, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows how the residents are looking forward to hosting an event that can portray their feelings of inclusivity and connectedness to the world. These articles portray a glamorous image of Rotterdammers, and are not focusing on the issues of inequality that are portrayed in the preparation articles. This again corresponds to the idea of the newspaper as an ambassador, to help convince the organization of Rotterdam's suitability for hosting Eurovision 2020 (Lockstone-Binney et al., 2014). People of Rotterdam are shown to value each other, and all the various cultures in the city. During the preparations, the residents are still shown to be a diverse group of people valuing acceptance. However, the newspaper aims to bring some nuance into this image, by identifying issues of inequality between the residents. Nevertheless, AD

Rotterdams Dagblad still keeps a positive outlook on this, and the newspaper shows how Rotterdammers are trying to solve these issues by looking for opportunities themselves. Just like articles discussing the image of Rotterdam, AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays locals to see Eurovision as an event that is bringing these opportunities to the people. In the bidding process these opportunities are highlighted, and the preparation articles show how these opportunities are being put to use by Rotterdammers. Finally, the cancellation articles are showing how Rotterdammers are continuing to find new opportunities, which contradicts theories on the consequences of canceling events. In the theoretical review, it was discussed that a pandemic is likely to cause mental health issues (Torales et al., 2020), and that the cancellation of events has many more issues, among which a declined community spirit (Perić, & Vitezić, 2019). In any case, the crisis has brought back the feelings of resilience to Rotterdammers, who are aiming to overcome this crisis and will rise up in the best way possible.

In the end, the three main themes are all related to each other. Rotterdam's Eurovision is portrayed as an event that will show and improve the characteristics of Rotterdam and Rotterdammers. AD Rotterdams Dagblad portrays the image of Rotterdam in relation to Rotterdam's Eurovision by focusing on how the event is bringing an extravagant celebration that is meant for everyone into the city. It shifts from a portrayal of Eurovision bringing benefits into the city in the bidding stage, into the event becoming a celebration to all during the preparations, and finally to a portrayal of Rotterdam's Eurovision as a beacon of hope in times of crisis. When illustrating Rotterdam as a tourist destination, AD Rotterdams Dagblad shows in the bidding competition that the city is an attractive destination, but during the preparations, the newspaper indicates that the tourism industry could still be improved. Here, Eurovision is used as a way to improve this industry. As a place to live, Rotterdam is portrayed to be a city that uses its sober characteristics to build an incredibly glamorous event image. Furthermore, it is presented as a global city of innovation and inspiration, that uses the city's history to shape current notions of resilience and inclusivity. The bidding articles illustrate this history, and during the preparations, this history is used to show how Rotterdam is using Eurovision to portray and improve the resilient mentality that is deeply rooted in the city's mentality. In the cancellation articles, this importance of resilience is further exemplified, with AD Rotterdams Dagblad using the Corona Crisis to show how the city is preparing to come out of the crisis stronger than ever. Finally, Rotterdam is presented as a city that exists due to the Rotterdammers, who will also search for opportunities themselves when they notice their city falls short on this. Finding opportunity, by both the city and the people, is mainly done in relation to finding new ways in improving inclusivity and connectedness. Which opportunities

can be found are highlighted in the bidding stages, the preparation articles show how Rotterdammers are using these opportunities, and the cancellation articles show how the people are still trying to find new ways to improve and help each other in times of crisis.

In conclusion, Rotterdam is portrayed as a city with an incredibly diverse image that is mainly shaped through its history forming the image of resilience, and through globalization processes creating an international environment focused on inclusivity and togetherness. During the various stages, the portrayal of the image of Rotterdam gently shifts from a city full of confidence in the bidding stages, to a city creating the event while improving its own image during the preparations, and finally to a city that takes the Corona Crisis to show its resilience. The main image that is portrayed by AD Rotterdams Dagblad, is the image of Rotterdam as a resilient city that greatly values connections between its residents. This resilience can be found in every other characteristic that has been discussed and is presented in the way how Rotterdam is always trying to find opportunity. In the news articles, the industrial (Nientied, 2018), multicultural (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006), and inclusive (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019) images that were discussed in the theoretical review all connect into this image of resilience, with these images used as characteristics that are shaping the resilient image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision 2020. In this portrayal, event tourism is considered to bring many advantages, and Eurovision is generally shown to improve and portray the feelings of inclusivity and connectedness that are represented in the image of Rotterdam.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future research

This thesis explained how event tourism can portray the image of the place, as identified as a gap in the academic field by Getz and Page (2016). However, it provides no new information how this image is portrayed during the actual event. With newspaper articles focusing on bidding, preparations, and cancellation of Eurovision 2020, this thesis only shows a limited view on the image of Rotterdam in relation to these stages of event tourism. In this sense, this thesis has shown how newspaper articles can portray the image of a place in relation to several stages surrounding event tourism, and therefore identifies some new insights connected to the theory presented by Getz and Page (2016), but it does not close the gap on how event tourism by itself can portray the image of a place.

Furthermore, by identifying how Rotterdam is presented in relation to Eurovision during the Corona Crisis, this thesis has provided a more nuanced view on the theories about crises and cancellation of events affecting place image (Gössling et al., 2020; Perić & Vitezić, 2019;

Torales et al., 2020). However, the data set used to identify this shift in image, is only limited. As this thesis was written while the pandemic was affecting society with the strict measures, the outcome of this crisis is not known yet. Consequently, the portrayal of the image of Rotterdam might still be affected in later stages of the crisis. For example, economic consequences of the cancellation, as discussed by Gössling et al. (2020), have not been discussed in an in-depth manner in the news articles. Perhaps it is still too early to consider the economic consequences from a canceled opportunity in event tourism, as not all losses are known yet. Future research could look into these economic consequences, and also review how the mental health issues are possibly affecting the portrayal of Rotterdam.

Finally, using the portrayal of place image in newspaper articles only shows limited views on this image. The writers and interviewees who created the coverage greatly shaped this image, as it is their views illustrated in the articles. For this reason, the initial research plan for this thesis was to organize focus group interviews, so Rotterdammers could discuss the image presented by Eurovision 2020 themselves, and argue about how this relates to their own perception of image. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, organizing focus groups to find a local perception on how event tourism shows the image of Rotterdam had turned into an incredibly impractical research method. Future research, therefore, could look into how Rotterdammers perceive the image of Rotterdam in relation to Eurovision. The news articles used in this thesis already indicated various optional target groups to structure following research. For example, the Surinamese community expressed that they do not always feel represented in the image of Rotterdam. It would be interesting to see how they would use Eurovision as an opportunity to portray themselves, especially considering the many smaller events hosted around the city. Focus groups can open a discussion on this issue, and use these local insights to show a wider audience how Eurovision as international event tourism, can or cannot be beneficial to help this seemingly neglected community find its place in the image of Rotterdam. Perhaps, because diversity is rather seen as just another characteristic of the city (Belabas & Eshuis, 2019) than in the celebrated sense as discussed by Fortuin and van der Graaf (2006), minority groups might feel underrepresented in this image. A research like this thus provides a great societal relevance, by giving a voice to the people who feel neglected in the image of Rotterdam, and by finding solutions in event tourism and how it can help improve this portrayal of image in a more inclusive manner.

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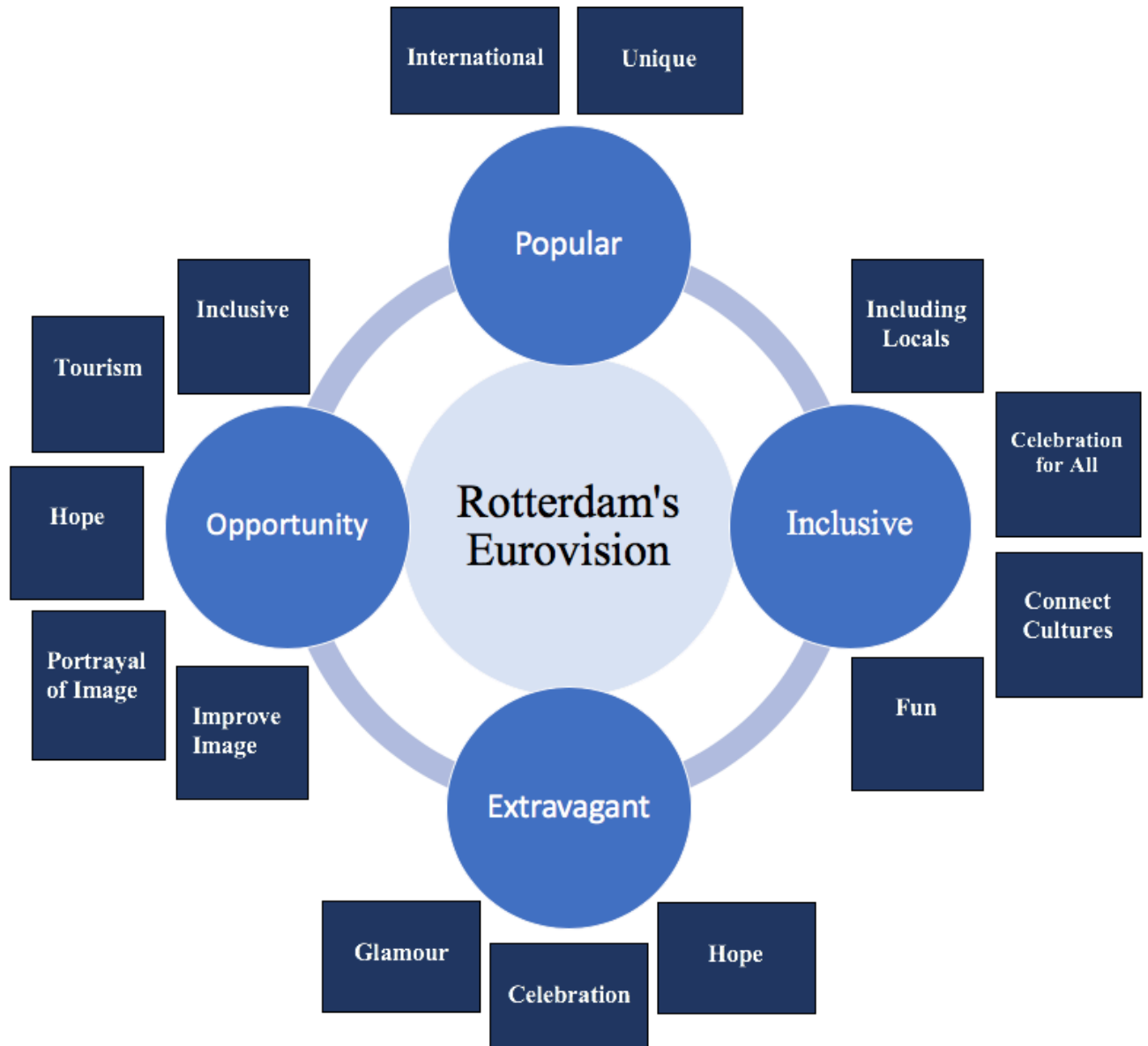
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Appendix 1. Visualization of Codes

This appendix provides a visualization of the main themes, subthemes, and an example of the codes. For sake of clarity, subcodes have not been included in these visualizations, as the explanations of codes can be found in the results section.

Rotterdam's Eurovision



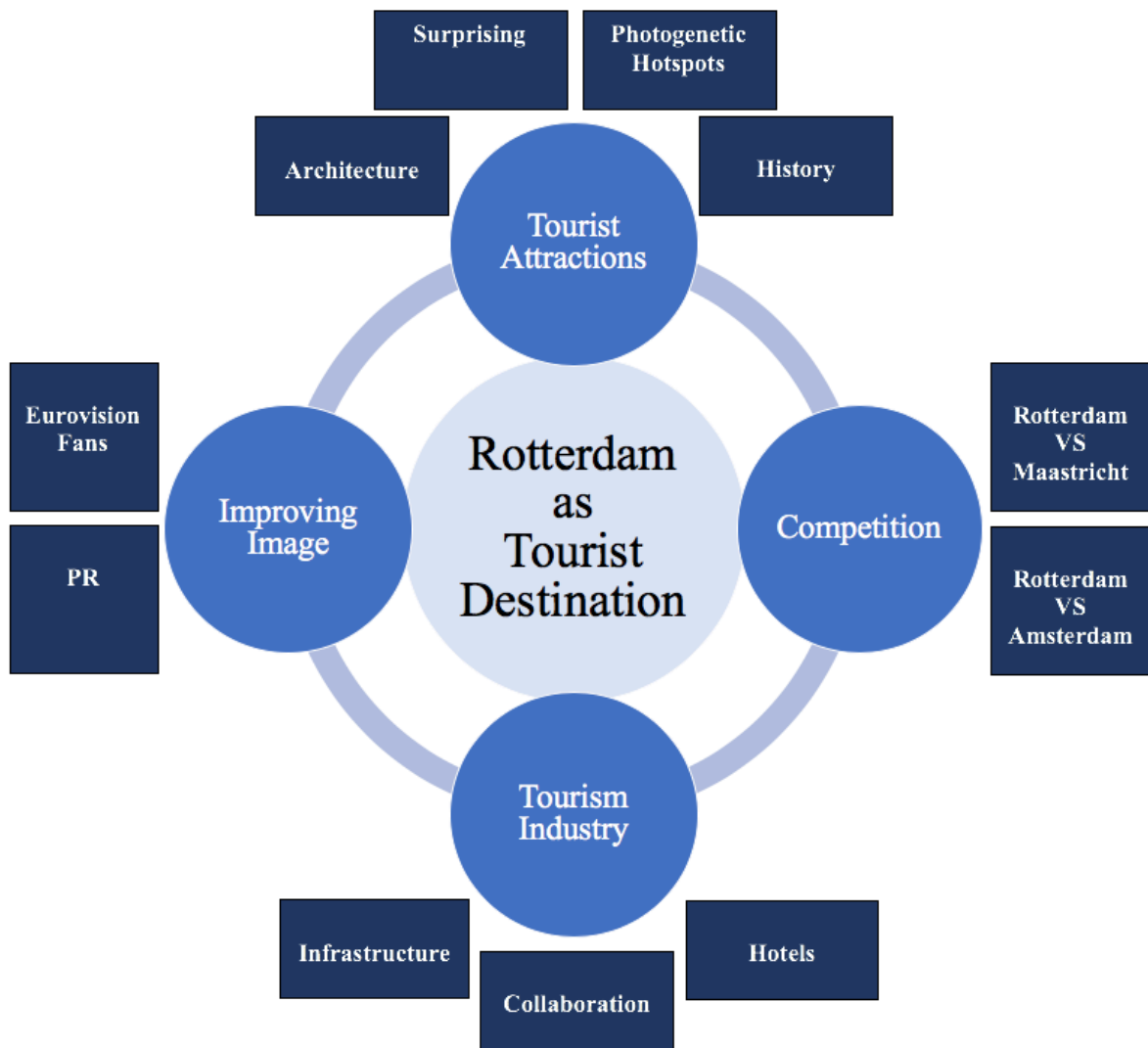




Image of Rotterdammers



Appendix 2. Translations of Quotes

1: A Popular, Inclusive Extravaganza

- a. “Eternal fame and ongoing spin-off for the winning city, thanks to the biggest Song festival in the world”
- b. “We are hoping to organize the event next year in Ahoy, in an elevated way. The celebration will be like never experienced before. Next year, Ahoy will also celebrate its 50th birthday, and our renovations will be opened. Eurovision will be a historical, unforgettable happening”
- c. “But the most important thing is that Eurovision should be a celebration for everyone, so for the visitors as well as the Rotterdammers themselves. Everyone should have a wonderful time.”
- d. “Eurovision Song Contest relates, brings people together, and connects cultures. It symbolizes a melting pot of cultures. The event inspires people to be who they want to be. Especially a city like Rotterdam reflects that.”
- e. “We notice that the biggest part of the residents considers Eurovision to be a cool event. The city will be completely submerged in the event, with flags, colorful visitors from all around the world, parties in Eurovillage. Everyone will be included in the atmosphere.”
- f. “We always wanted Eurovision to be an event that is connecting artists, fans, and delegations from various countries. This unique, international live event can thus have no realistic alternative”

2: An Event of Opportunity

- a. “The fun and the atmosphere are incredibly important. I hope, and expect that there will be a vaccine next year. Or group immunity. And that Eurovision will still become a grand musical celebration of people.”

3: Rotterdam Rivalry

- a. “The picturesque and animated nature of Maastricht obviously is beautiful! It is situated at the foot of the Sint-Pietersberg. Known for Andre Rieu and the Maastricht Treaty and the Three Border Region. Well, it is something different from what we can offer.”
- b. “Our city on River Maas has a breath-taking skyline, and unique architecture such as the Erasmusbrug, the Markthal, and the Euromast. But it also has, historical buildings such as

Hotel New York, het Witte Huis, and the City Hall. Our raw, international port dynamics are sensible throughout the city. Rotterdam is moving forward, innovative and inspiring. Rotterdam has got it all!”

- c. “I’ve visited the Netherlands many times. [...] But I’ve never left Amsterdam. To me, Amsterdam was the Netherlands, and the other way around. And I am not the only one.”
- d. “What you should realize, is that the average tourist doesn’t know anything about Rotterdam. And neither did I. My first impression when I Googled Rotterdam 2020 was not great. Grim, even. I was sent back into the middle of WWII, the bombings, the nazis.”
- e. “I started to get desperate for a minute, but luckily Lonely Planet arrived as our savior. It recommends the Netherlands as travel destination, and specifically shines a light on Rotterdam hosting Eurovision”
- f. “Adams advises us to make noise. A lot of noise. Otherwise, we will miss the boat, and all the party people will stay in Amsterdam. And we will be stuck with our bitterballen”

4: Ready for Eurovision

- a. “We need 3000 hotel rooms for the artists and the organization. But additionally, there will be a group of people visiting the city, as the audience of this mega-event.”
- b. “We also have sufficient space and sufficient hotel beds. Rotterdam is easily accessible by road, public transport, Schiphol and Rotterdam The Hague Airport, and also by water.”
- c. “Manager Eveline van der Pluijm of Rotterdam Partners is pleased that Rotterdam can make a better offer with this, and thanks the hotel industry for the smooth setup. With this collaboration, we are all seeing the bigger picture. We really want to host Eurovision’.”
- d. “Provide an effortless experience for Eurovision fans, because they are lazy. They want to have a sign that says “Follow this way for a good restaurant”. And, they are not original. They want to be where the others are. It is advisable to create photogenic spots. When the first post pictures, the others will follow suit”
- e. “Euromast to the Markthal, but also the trough street art in the Afrikaanderwijk, Tattoo Bob live, designer Susan Bijl, Zadkine and taking selfies at the mirror palace of the Depot, and that naughty sex gnome. You can be sure that Eurovision Song Contest participants will be surprised by Rotterdam, thanks to the enthusiastic city guides.”

5: To Rise, like a Phoenix from the Ashes

- a. “The 65th edition of Eurovision in May 2020 might become the biggest party that has ever been given in the rich history of the city, which after the war, resurrected beautifully, like a phoenix from its ashes”
- b. “The pop-up hotel will be a connection between Eurovision and Rotterdam Zuid. ‘People who previously were unable to show their talents, will be able to do so here.’”
- c. “Do you know what the issue is with Eurovision? It will cost us millions, but not gain us any jobs, just more problems. Conclusion: he does not want it”
- d. “I interrupt his argument, by saying that we might also gain millions, that Zuid will make a huge leap forward, and there will be an abundance of jobs.”
- e. Officially, we have to consider many alternatives. But in reality, there are only two possible options. Fully continuing the preparations for this extravagant event in Rotterdam Ahoy, what we are doing right now, or pausing the preparations for this adored mega-event, and shoot for 2021”
- f. “The crisis plans in Rotterdam are being handled to full capacity. Corona is hitting us hard, but it’s making the impossible possible.”

6: Global City of Inspiration and Innovation

- a. “Our raw, international port dynamics are sensible throughout the city”
- b. “Rotterdam is a global city, very diverse. A port city with a unique story”
- c. “A city that has transformed over the past 25 years. More modern, bigger, taller, and friendlier. Urban. Prosperous. [...] The most Americanized of Dutch cities”
- d. “All participating countries can soon start booking tours around six themes, such as architecture, arts, innovation and the Port of Rotterdam, but also the Netherlands”
- e. “Rotterdam is supposed to become a global city, I hope that Eurovision will improve that”
- f. “Fear is a bad advisor, but if you look at China, where thanks to a whole series of draconian interventions they are finally having a bit of control over the matter, I think there is little chance that Europe will be able to do such a trick in a few weeks. Let’s hope for a medical miracle, that makes this nasty virus disappear like snow before the sun ”

7: Sober but Glamorous

- a. “That is why the battle between the two cities on River Maas will be won by Rotterdam. Let the songs begin!”
- b. “After the rivaling city, Maastricht, which used virtual reality glasses to create the Eurovision feeling, it was up to the dashing Rotterdam reality to persuade the organization to choose this city”
- c. “Also when in May 2020, the glitters and champagne will enter this down-to-earth city”
- d. “Rotterdam managed to get the event, and now it should live up to its expectations. It has to become a real dance- and gay friendly city. Maybe a new flow arises, and the Dance Parade can take off again”
- e. “A Eurovision Village on the Binnenrotte, all the cranes lighted up in the colors of participating countries, spontaneous musical performances everywhere. Parties and celebrations, love and peace. Woodstock at the River Maas, 2020. An Extravaganza that diminishes every start of Tour de France, marathon, or staircase in front of the Groot Handelsgebouw”
- f. “After it was decided that Eurovision cannot continue, this disappointment soon left us. We realized that there were more pressing matters. How pressing, is visible now”

8: Image of Rotterdammers

- a. “We are a city, especially of Rotterdammers. Including the neighboring areas, around one and a half million people. They create this city.”

9: Opportunity in Inequality

- a. “Zuid still has a bad reputation, but its residents are very proud of their neighborhood. They want to show this. Passing the Erasmusbrug, next to Katendrecht, with a metrostation, an accessible place. The neighborhood is diverse in every sense. It is a melting pot of cultures, young, lively, and because of that a unique place in Rotterdam”
- b. “Approximately 3000 residents with a tight budget can, apart from tickets to the shows, count on transportation, and something to eat and drink. Together with someone close to them, they can enjoy a carefree night out. It is great that Rotterdam managed to do this”

- c. “Maybe the well-meant gesture also shows something else. That the city might have some difficulty in reaching the less fortunate residents. Have they been so bamboozled by letters and forms, that another procedure for free tickets has gotten too much?”
- d. “As far as he is concerned, all financial agreements will also remain. Submitters of ideas for an initiative for Eurovision in Ahoy, such as the Jong Roffa Songfestival and Afri Opens Up, received a grant to realize their dream. Those deals will remain, Moerman says.”
- e. “It is an unbelievable process, because we would actually start with building the stage to host Eurovision. Instead, now we are starting to build a temporary care center in Rotterdam Ahoy”

10: Understanding and Accepting

- a. “Melting Pot with over 170 nationalities, almost half of its inhabitants with foreign roots. Living next to, and with each other, in a metropolis with politics focused on integration and identity”
- b. “If you have a grandfather from Rotterdam, Casablanca, or Ankara. Or if you are Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or Atheist, straight, gay, bisexual, or trans. In this school, we accept and are open to differences”
- c. “Is hosting the events still appropriate during these times? Eurovision once started, 65 years ago, as an event that connects, that provides for a shared celebration. But then you see what came over us in a few days at a rapid pace. Then it is clear that this decision was going to be made.”

11. Making Eurovision Happen

- a. “Many Rotterdammers cannot wait to turn Eurovision into a great celebration. Research shows that almost 9 in 10 Rotterdammers want to turn Eurovision into a great party. We want to make history, to seize this wonderful opportunity”
- b. “We are proud of our city, how great would it be to show the nice things to others? Those pictures go all over the world, which is very good for Rotterdam. Of course we will do this in our own Rotterdam way, professionally but also with a relaxed feeling.”
- c. “But the most important thing is that Eurovision should be a celebration for everyone, so for the visitors as well as the Rotterdammers themselves. Everyone should have a wonderful time.”

- d. “The city should shine, not only during the finals on May 16, but also in the weeks before. The locals can come up with ideas, preferably something to do with music, like a talent show in a community center. It doesn’t have to be anything complicated”
- e. “Nothing is lost. We are in touch with all stakeholders. Everyone is convinced that next year, we will host Eurovision and we will create an incredible celebration of it. Especially the people working on the city program. Everyone is exceptionally motivated”