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A MARCA DE ISTAMBUL PARA OS JOGOS OLÍMPICOS DE 2020

THE PLACE BRANDING OF ISTANBUL FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES OF 2020

LA MARCA DE ESTAMBUL PARA LOS JUEGOS OLIMPICOS DE 2020

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RESUMO

Este ensaio se propõe a analisar uma das cidades candidatas a ser sede dos Jogos Olímpicos de 2020, Istambul. Nós trabalharemos com um aporte teórico de “*nation and place branding*” e como os esportes podem ser espécies de embaixadores de uma nação. Posteriormente, focaremos especificamente no caso de Istambul, Turquia. A situação política da Turquia e o papel de força de liderança do Oriente Médio estão conectados a todo um processo de acúmulo de poder por parte deste país. Os Jogos Olímpicos em Istambul são um ponto estratégico deste processo e veremos quais são as chances desta cidade em sediar o maior evento multi-esportivo do mundo.

Palavras-chave: Branding; Jogos Olímpicos; Processo de candidatura; Marketing Esportivo.

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ABSTRACT

This essay will examine one of the candidate cities of the 2020 Games, Istanbul. We are going to see the theoretical background of nation and place branding and how sports can be the ambassador of a nation. After, we will focus on Istanbul and Turkey. The political situation in Turkey and the role of the leading force in the Middle East is connected to a whole process for Turkey to gain power. The Olympic Games in Istanbul is a strategic point in this process and we are going to see what chances has Istanbul to host the greatest multi-sport event in the world.

Keywords: Branding; Olympic Games; Bidding Process; Sports Marketing.



LA MARCA DE ESTAMBUL PARA LOS JUEGOS OLÍMPICOS DE 2020

RESUMEN

Este ensayo se propone analizar una de las ciudades candidatas a ser sede de los Juegos Olímpicos de 2020, Estambul. Trabajaremos con un marco teórico de “*nation and place branding*” y cómo los deportes pueden ser una especie de embajadores de una nación. Posteriormente, nos centraremos específicamente en el caso de Estambul, Turquía. La situación política de la Turquía y el papel de la fuerza del liderazgo del Oriente Medio está conectado a un proceso de acumulación del poder por parte de este país. Los Juegos Olímpicos en Estambul son un punto estratégico de este proceso y vamos a ver cuáles son las posibilidades de esta ciudad para albergar el mayor evento multi-deportivo del mundo.

Palabras-clave: *Branding*; Juegos Olímpicos; Proceso de solicitud; Marketing Deportivo.



1 INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and capitalism where marketing has a significant role, even countries and cities need to promote themselves in order to gain a bigger piece in the global pie. Olympic Games, is the bigger sport and cultural event in the world and the impact on a host city can be so big, that can change its status in the global market. This essay will examine one of the candidate cities of the 2020 Games, Istanbul. We are going to see the theoretical background of nation and place branding and how sports can be the ambassador of a nation. After, we will focus on Istanbul and Turkey. The political situation in Turkey and the role of the leading force in the Middle East is connected to a whole process for Turkey to gain power. The Olympic Games in Istanbul is a strategic point in this process and we are going to see what chances has Istanbul to host the greatest multi-sport event in the world.

2 THE NATION/PLACE BRANDING

Someone might say that the term “nation/place branding” is a new term, made by the new perception for marketing, but the idea is probably very old. Anholt believes that “places have always been brands, in the truest sense of the word. Mentioning this fact invariably upsets people, yet countries have been branding themselves deliberately and systematically for centuries. The reputations of places have always been managed and occasionally invented by their leaders, who have often borrowed from others to augment their political skills: poets, orators, philosophers, film-makers, artists, writers.”(Anholt, 2003, p. 213) From this statement we can understand that the “image” of a place was always an important case for leaders and citizens of every country. The good “image” of a place it’s obviously something beneficial and every country wants to communicate its virtues and advantages. Of course, nowadays globalization made the concept of “nation branding” an “official” need and priority for every nation/place to gain a status and benefit from it in the global market.

According to Fan,



“nation branding refers to the application of branding and marketing communications technique to promote and manage a nation’s image. A nation brand can be defined as the total sum of all mental associations about a nation in the mind of international stakeholders” (Fan, 2008, p.5).

After this definition Fan is going deeper to the different perceptions of nation branding, for example how a country sees itself, how a country sees another country etc. but this is too theoretical to extent and we are going to keep in mind the general definition. Also, Anholt again, proposes the place branding hexagon. He divides place branding in six basic categories of communication, which form the hexagon. Those are Tourism, Export Brands, Foreign and Domestic Policy, Investment and Immigration, Culture and Heritage and People (Anholt, pg. 215).Anholt believes that those six factors define and form the place branding of a country/place. The whole image of a place depends on those factors that include the economic situation, the trade, the political situation and the politics, the relationships in the external environment, the culture and the people. In our case study following, we are going to use Anholt’s hexagon to understand the place branding of Istanbul and Turkey.

A term also that is similar to nation branding is “soft power” that in contrast to the “hard”power of military or economic assets, a feature which appeals to state crafters as better suited to the “public” or “popular” diplomacy requirements of nation-states in the contemporary context. The unprecedented expansion and decentralization of information systems means that national interests are broadcast to audiences at large, complicating or overriding the narrowcasting of traditional state-to-state diplomacy (Metzl, 1999; Leonard, 2002; De Gouveia, 2005 and Aronczyk, 2003, p.6) In our case again, we are going to see that Turkey in recent years try through “soft” and “hard” power sometimes to keep the leading role in the Middle East and the whole area of east Mediterranean Sea with many ways.

3 SPORT AS AN AMBASSADOR FOR NATION BRANDING

The significance of sport as a catalyst of country image perceptions has been underestimated in existing country-of-origin research and probably a good way to understand and appreciate it, is through nation and place branding. The global audience of sport, the sport market and all the things



that makes sport important for individuals and nations are making us realize the power to create nation's image. We read in Dinnie that

Brown, Chalip, Jago, and Mules, for example, state that it has been estimated that the exposure gained by Australia through hosting the 2000 Olympic Games accelerated Australia's marketing by ten years and will generate an additional AUS\$6.1bn in foreign exchange earnings between 1997 and 2004. The similarly beneficial way in which the hosting of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona helped Spain to reintegrate itself into the European community as an outward-looking. And he continues "country's sporting achievements can project an extremely powerful image upon which nations may partly construct a nation-brand. The New Zealand rugby team, for instance, represents a symbol of national pride that is recognised throughout much of the rest of the world. The Brazilian football team enjoys similar iconic status throughout the world. The important role of sport as a key facet of place branding can be expected to increase in prominence, driven largely by the blanket coverage of sport that is now delivered through satellite and digital media(Dinnie, 2003, p. 5).

In the case of Turkey now, we can see that in recent years the successes and the progress in sports is significant and Turkey is a serious player in the global sport society. Galatasaray, the football club from Istanbul won the 2000 UEFA cup competition defeating Arsenal in the final. In football again, the national team of Turkey won the third place in the 2002 World Cup. Also, the national team in basketball was 2nd in the FIBA World Championship of 2010 that hosted in Turkey. Istanbul also hosted the Champion's League final of 2005, the final of FIBA World Championship in 2010, the 2012 IAAF World Indoor Championships, and the 2011–12 Euroleague Final Four). The sport infrastructure in Istanbul is top class level in outdoor and indoor facilities. In football and basketball the investments in Turkey are huge. The big clubs are buying expensive players and they form competitive teams in a European level. In the marketing domain the number one sponsor of basketball's Euroleague is Turkish Airlines, one of the growing powers in international airlines. Last but not least, Istanbul Park is also hosting the annual Turkish Grand Prix in Formula 1 since 2005.

4 ISTANBUL THROUGH CENTURIES

Istanbul is definitely one of the most historical cities of all time. The geopolitical position at the junction of two continents, the harbor and the key position in the crossroad of the greatest



civilizations gave to the city this glorious historical background. In the 7th century B.C Megara tribe, which had escaped from Dorian attacks from Greece, established the first settlement - a city named Byzantium. The city was captured by Persians, Greeks and Romans became the capital of East Roman Empire (in 330 A.C.) and changed the name from Byzantium to Constantinople. It had a status of the capital city of two world empires in the Mediterranean Basin - The Byzantine (East Roman) and Ottoman - until the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923. In the meantime, when conquered by Ottomans in 1453, Constantinople finally became Istanbul (Zeynep, 1993).

As a unique coastal city with the location on the trade routes, Istanbul was a strong political, administrative, trade, religious, scientific and cultural center and the most populated European and Middle-East city in the 17th century, with 800.000 inhabitants. During the Ottoman hegemony, the city gained a very lively urban society in which various social groups, as well as diverse activities, spaces and monumental buildings of different areas integrated. However, in the 19th century Istanbul was overthrown from its pedestal by some western European cities with flourishing industrialization and its decay was also influenced by the policies of incapable administrators and regression process of the Ottoman Empire. Istanbul's population continued to increase because of the immigration flow from the Balkans caused by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

After the transfer of national administration to Ankara, the situation slightly changed, but, after 1950s, the new economic policies influenced an impetus with a dramatic change in size, density and facilities due to the increasing activities of industrialization and international trade. Since 1990s Istanbul has become the host town of the international economic and political meetings such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (KEİ) meeting in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements-II (Habitat-II) in 1996, the 17th meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2004 (Stupar and Hamamcioglu, 2006, p.28).

Istanbul nowadays is a global modern city, the largest city in Turkey, forming the country's economic, cultural, and historical heart. With a population of 13.5 million, the city is at the center of the second-largest metropolitan area in Europe and among the world's largest cities by population within city limits. With a GDP of US\$182 billion in 2008, Istanbul ranked 34th among the world's urban areas and is responsible for 27 percent of Turkey's GDP, with 20 percent of the country's industrial labor force residing in the city (PrimewaterhouseCoopers, 2012). In the touristic domain,



seven million foreign visitors arrived in Istanbul in 2010, when it was named a European Capital of Culture, making the city the world's tenth-most popular tourist destination(Weiner, 2012). Apart from the sport competitions that we saw above significant cultural and music festivals are taking place in Istanbul (International Istanbul Film Festival and the Istanbul International Jazz Festival).

5 THE UNSUCCESSFUL BIDS

Istanbul has bided for the Olympic Games for four times. The idea for Istanbul to host Olympic Games started in the early eighties and officially Istanbul bided for four consecutive Olympic Games (2000-2012) with an unsuccessful result. The complicated political situation, the infrastructure and the inflation of this time were the main disadvantages of Istanbul in the bids. Although, in the 2004 bid Istanbul used a professional way to promote the city and as we can read in Erten “a private company was charged with finding out slogans and keywords for Istanbul’s bid. The company worked on the values of Istanbul and it suggested several keywords, such as capital for 3000 years, capital of three empires, city of tolerance, cultural diversity, coexistence of 26 ethnicities, mosaic of different religions...etc. The company made a SWOT analysis and out of this study, the main emphasis appeared as thegeographical advantages of Istanbul, instead of its sports infrastructure or sports culture or the experience of sports event Organizations (Erten, 2008, p. 185).

6 THE POLITICAL SITUATION

One of the main factors that Istanbul and Turkey in general has to deal with is the political situation. Although Turkey is a founding member of United Nations and NATO, the domestic problems with human rights and the minorities (Kurds, Armenians) and the foreign relations with Greece and Cyprus(1974 invasion in Cyprus) is the main reasons why Turkey cannot be accepted yet from European Union and become a member of the European community (Mardel, 2011).In the same direction with the hesitations of Europeans to accept Turkey is the failure of the consecutive bids of Istanbul to host the Olympic Games as we saw above.



Turkey's recent Europeanization process is characterized by a number of paradoxical features. Civil society organizations, notably business associations, have played a more active role as members of the pro-EU/pro-reform coalition as compared with the principal political parties. "Islamists" appear to have been transformed more radically than their "secularist" counterparts.....another paradox concerns the absence of a European-style social democratic party in Turkey which represents a major weakness especially in the context of democratization reforms and also given the fact that social democrats in Europe constitute a major source of support for Turkish membership (Onis, 2006, p. 23).

Turkey, because of Islam, the European perspective and the ethnic minorities form a complicated frame. Zubaida says that "a crucial feature of the Turkish political system is its pluralism: political parties alternate in government through elections, and Welfare is fully integrated into this system. This may account for the marginality of violent Islamist groups, as compared with the vigorous, armed opposition in Egypt and the revolutionary forces in Iran. The fact that Turkish parties are engaged in real electoral contests leads them to seek constituencies of support (Zubaida, 1996). And he continues mentioning one of the greatest stakeholders of Turkish politics "the army is the strongest symbol of the state-another association with Kemalism. Kemalist secularism, with its history of controlling religion, is a major factor making Islam in Turkey different from Islam elsewhere. These attitudes are attested to by strong popular support for the military's repressive policy towards the Kurdish insurgency" (Zubaida, 1996).

Mainstream modern political Islam, whether promoted by the Muslim Brothers in the Arab world, by Iranian revolutionaries, or by the main Islamist trends in Turkey, has explicitly accepted the science and technology of the West (while rejecting its cultural values) and implicitly adopted modern models of the state as centralized, bureaucratized nation-states (Zubaida, 1996). Turkey is trying to balance the image of being the protector of Islam in the Middle East and in the same time to maintain the European image. This is a process of great controversy inside Turkey and of course with consequences in the foreign affairs.



7 THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

After we analyzed the political situation, we saw the history and the characteristics of Istanbul we can use a marketing strategy to measure the advantages and the disadvantages to approach the basic notion of this essay, which is the potentials of Istanbul to host the Olympic Games. We can take Anholt's hexagon that we saw in the nation branding theory and see which parts of this hexagon are the strong, and which are the weak points of Istanbul.

- ✓ **Tourism:** Tourism recently is a growing industry in Turkey. Antalya in the south coast is one of the most popular summer destinations in the world. Istanbul now, as we saw above was tenth most popular destination in the world in the year 2010 and the number of tourists is growing every year because of the infrastructure and the promotion policy.
- ✓ **Export Brands:** This is not a strong point in Istanbul's and Turkey's branding because the country holds not a strong image for "made in Turkey" products.
- ✓ **Culture and Heritage:** This is the strongest card of Istanbul in the bid because as we saw above, is one of few global cities with such a rich and glorious cultural background.
- ✓ **People:** Istanbul being a global city with 26 ethnicities and many religions is the perfect example of diversity and multiculturalism. Citizens and the pluralism of them in identity and ethnicity, make Istanbul a good environment to welcome people from all over the world.
- ✓ **Investment and Immigration:** Turkey is one of the economic giants in Middle East and Istanbul specifically attracts many domestic and foreign investors because of the big market and the position of the city. Immigration is another basic characteristic of Istanbul and Turkey throughout history.



- ✓ **Foreign and Domestic Policy:** The most serious weak point of Turkey. We saw above that the complicated political situation, the Islam and minorities (Kurds, Armenians) and the Human Rights are the basic problems of Turkey to become a full member of E.U and in our case to host the Olympic Games.

8 CONCLUSIONS

The place branding is a new and of high importance strategy for every nation and city that wants to be competitive in the global market. In this essay, we examined the case of Istanbul and how after four unsuccessful bids can place itself to host the Olympic Games of 2020. Turkey is a growing economy and political power in the global map. Istanbul is the most important city of the country and the Olympic Games became the highest priority to gain global attention and strengthen the position of Turkey and the city. We saw that sports can be one of the best ambassadors of a nation and Turkey realized that soon. The cultural background, the heritage and the ethnical diversity defines Istanbul as one of the most historical and multi-cultural cities in the world.

On the other hand, the political situation of Turkey in general, the problems with Islam, minorities and neighbor countries are the main reasons why Europeans are hesitating to accept Turkey in the European Union. In our case, these are also the main reasons why I.O.C is skeptical to honor Istanbul with the Olympic Games although the great progress the recent years. In conclusion, Istanbul is a city with glorious history and with great potentials for the future. On the practical level the city is ready to host an event like the Olympic Games but the political problems makes the decision for I.O.C difficult and the branding of the city has a serious problem to overcome.



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