MANAGING THE IMAGE OF CITIES IN THE “GLOBAL VILLAGE”
City Branding As An Opportunity Against Globalization

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Abstract
In this article the strong effect of forming a corporate identity in city branding is studied. It is emphasized that by strong identity and image acquisition cities distinguish by their unique branding elements rather than global city imposition that is carried out by globalization pressure. According to the opinions that perceive globalization as an absolute fact, cities like Istanbul have to articulate to this new system. In this way of thinking, it is inevitable to suffer in McLuhan’s “global village”. However creating strategies for powerful image and branding of a city can be a leading factor against global city imposition. Keeping up with the same method of creating a “corporate” identity, the image of the cities has to be managed by the symmetric communication with all the actors. By this way globalization can be used as an opportunity instead of threat.

Keywords: Globalization; corporate identity; communication strategies; city branding.

INTRODUCTION
Because of rapidly developing communication and transportation technologies globalization has an impression that the world is getting smaller and everyone will benefit from all sorts of contemporary opportunities any time they want. The effects of the development of communication technologies have been depicted as reuniting humanity within the “global village” theory of McLuhan. He also has stated that because of electronic media the whole world will be contracted into one united consciousness. McLuhan also asserts that electronic communication devices will spread culture in a way that the whole World will become a “global village” (assimilated in Figure 1) (Rigel et al, 2005).

Figure 1: Picture of İstanbul referring the “Global Village” theory
(Source: http://www.manzara.gen.tr/istanbul-resimleri/altin-boynuz-70282.html).
The positive association of this concept comes from its use in English as global (spheric)-isation, which is related to ‘integration’ process. Le Nouveau Petit Robert uses globalization in the same meaning as ‘universalization’. Universalization is defined as a doctrine “aiming to build united politics for humans” or “that embraces all humanity without considering the differences between humans” (Gürel, 1999). From a similar perspective, universalization can be perceived as increasing the possibility of benefiting from resources however, it is at the same time accepted as a result of a system in which conditions that enable unlimited use of resources.

However, in this study, globalization is not discussed as a concept that emerged due to the developments in communication and technology, but as a historical process that occurred because of economic and political developments. The proposed economic policies of neo-liberalism arising as the solution of the economic crisis in 1970’s, the economic borders that exist between nation-states would be lifted, countries’ markets would be opened to multinational companies and they would benefit from the natural sources without any limitations. At this point it is possible to assert that globalization is a new type of imperialism. Globalization is not a result of technical development; global capital and multinational companies help the development of technology to serve their needs and to increase their profit. And in this new process the cities that provide necessary services to the global capital gain an extra importance.

Articulating to this global system has many disadvantages for the cities like losing their unique identities, cultural heritage and like being uniformed. Becoming multinational corporations’ advertised city she has to be structured and decorated by their needs. To help to run the global economy the cities specializes mostly on strategic services.

Metropolitans that became global during the globalization process encompass certain elements of the world’s economy along with economical elements of a nation station. Thus, big cities now have to start to compete with each other in order to become a global city or to be transformed into a global city. Unfortunately as a result of such competition, social polarization and divergence have occurred in global cities and the urban populations had to suffer certain social consequences (Dinçer, 1999).

Below in this paper it is discussed that forming a strong brand image for a city established from corporate identity upper scale is recommended as a solution as an opportunity against global city imposition.

FACTORS THAT SHAPED TODAY’S WORLD

We need to clarify the factors that had an impact on the process, in other words define the main components that shaped today’s environment. Examining from this perspective, the incredible developments in technology and the almost indefinite number of communication methods that arose as a result of such technological developments are revealed as the main factors that shaped today’s world. According to this approach, fast improvements and developments in technology and communication constitute the core of globalization. Such developments naturally are reflected in all facades of life and economics, politics, social sciences and culture are all individually or commonly affected by such a change.

Until the transoceanic voyages commenced in the 15th Century and especially until the “Modernism” ideology emerged during the “Enlightenment Period”, which favored human mind and logic, the earth was defined according to the parts that have been discovered and was represented by the Western Europe. Europe was the financial and spiritual center of the world. In the 16th century, which is deemed as the starting point of one of the most important concepts of our age, “globalization” according to many social scientists, the world has been divided into two by “the individual” and the “other one” concepts and priority was again given to the Western Europe due to technological and scientific developments and the way such developments were expressed. Because the world did not tolerate any diversity, civilizations that have existed for thousands of years mainly in Asia and South America and also Africa regions were founded and vanished from history almost at the same time. The world had to become uniform otherwise it would collapse. The objective was to establish industrial capitalism based on production, which aimed only at
increasing profits and creating consumer societies based on this type of capitalism (Rigel et al, 2005).

The first objective of the industrialization concepts, which emerged in the 17th century is to gain profit, raw materials and the most comprehensive mass of consumers that can be reached. It is inevitable for the technological innovations that emerged as a result of such a vision to have the same aims and targets (Rigel et al, 2005).

When the 20th century history is examined, it is evident that the for the World Leader position, which United Kingdom had abandoned between 1914-1945, USSR was the main determining force for the struggle between Germany and USA. The 1929 Economic Crisis, which occurred in between the two World Wars, could only overcome by the 2nd World War. After the war, the periphery countries all encountered and experienced independence movements. As a result of the Great Depression and the effect of USSR, after the 2nd World War, Keynesian Welfare State concept materialized in Western capitalist countries. This period continued until the economic crisis of 1970’s. With the neo-liberal policies that were put into effect to resolve this crisis, the deregulation process has started. Restrictions were imposed on social benefits earned by the working class as a result of the Keynesian Welfare State approach in the Western World (Yaylagül, 2010).

According to Manisalı (2000), we can summarize the effects of economic politics suggested by neo-liberalism as below:

a) The existing economical borders between nation states will disappear, local markets will be exposed to the entry of large corporations and companies functioning based on international capital will be able to benefit from natural resources in the world, without any limitation whatsoever.

b) Capital and technology, without facing any restrictions and limitations, will be utilized to increase the profits of capitalist within all markets of the World according to the requests and needs of those who are in possession of such capital and technology.

c) The industrial, financial, banking, technology and cultural politics to be implemented in the World will be determined by the prevailing Western multinational corporations. Multinational companies have started manufacturing the fundamental parts of their products at different locations in the World. These emerging multinational corporations are now dominating the world economy. Markets, production, capital and communication have now been globalized. Films, television shows, news agencies or fashion industry have all started producing and manufacturing common image, symbol and thought systems for the whole world (Yaylagül, 2010).

It is evident that these technological advances are mostly effective and conclusive in economics and all the economical instruments in the world are rapidly uniting and developing with an increasing speed to form the global village. Therefore, in doctrines that try to explain globalization based on economic integration, the universal integration of free movement of capital and production relations is the most important aspect.

Since the technological infrastructures necessitated by contemporary communication systems require a high amount of capital and extensive financial power, communication technologies are firstly owned and utilized by the states and secondly by financial investors. This is the main reason why Althusser refers to mass communication devices as “the ideological state apparatuses”. It is not a coincidence that the owners of technological advances are also the same people who are dominating the World. And the most important advances in technology appeared in the last quarter of the 20th century (Rigel, 2005).

CITY BRANDING IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

McLuhan’s “Global Village”, where by the communication technologies similar senses and perceptions shared by everyone, where the time and spatial notions are lost now became the “Global City”. The global cities which are in a competition and connected by satellites to each other, where ideology vanished due to post-industrialism are based on service sector activities now
have a more important mission than the nation-states. The world became united with the modern satellite communication and the developments in the capitalist production methods. Global city became an advertised city of the multinational corporations.

Today, the “global village” is dominated by these multinational companies, which are also dominating the world. These powerful corporations have an important effect on the lives of people around the world and at the same time they are capable of shaping thought structures, consumption habits and even politics in the world (Rigel, 2005). According to the first model of “world cities” created by Friedman, these cities will function as the decision headquarters for the global economy dominated by the top institutions of multinational corporations. However according to Sassen, global cities will specialize more on strategic services that help to run the World’s economy instead of being decision headquarters of multinational corporations. The main characteristic of global metropolitans is that they accommodate financial institutions that carry out and inspect the flow of funds, banks and insurance companies, communication-telecommunication, computer and data services, media, market research and advertising companies aimed at global markets (Öncü and Weyland, 2010).

According to global systems theory Knox et al., states that the global cities are the centers of transnational corporate headquarters, business services, international finance telecommunications and information processing, the bulk of current work focuses on the urban impress of economic globalization (Yeoh, 1999). Any field that benefits and develops from this interaction will first need a more comprehensive activity area and by trying to exceed such limitations, the classical spatial boundaries disappear. While spaces are expending and borders are disappearing, the time concept rapidly diminishes and possibility to reach and interfere with much wider locations within a shorter time arises.

As a result an interesting paradox appears. While the influence area of technology widens, the world relatively becomes smaller and this paradox is resulting in the appearance of the “global village” where the competition is fierce within the ever-diminishing world. In today’s world, competition does not only take place in between products or companies, but also exists between countries and cities. Therefore, cities that want to benefit from such competition should determine the characteristics that might help them to become “brands” and try to search for ways that will help the branding process. Branding does not only concern companies and products, but has a much wider effect area. Besides products and corporations, cities and even humans can become their own brands (Özdemir and Karaca, 2009). Ashworth and Voogd (1994) attribute the theoretical emergence of place marketing to three developments as the development of marketing in non-profit organizations, of social marketing and of image marketing (Kavaratzis, 2004).

According to Kotler et al., “the international branding endeavors” of cities mainly depend on economic reasons. In fact, trying to attract fixed capital investments and the capital in circulation (in areas such as transportation, tourism, cultural activities, etc.) through establishing international identities for cities has already become a major universal economical progress strategy. There is no fixed formula that will enable development of national and urban economies by reaching welfare and prosperity. However, required actions need to be taken in a systematic manner. The formula for such a development includes an evaluation mechanism that will ensure that the nation or the city in questions selects the most successful way to reach economic development or revival process amongst all the other ways alongside analyzing the starting conditions, main advantages and strong and weak points of such a nation or a city (Özdemir and Karaca, 2009).

According to İlğün and Asplund (2011), the marketing success of a city or a location depends on 5 major elements:

a) First element is the exclusiveness and superiority of such a location.

b) Second, the success depends on locality and variety and also the conflict between two trends; adaptability and standardization.

C) Third aspect is regions and locations to become responsible from their own marketing and branding efforts. Settlement units should be free and capable of forming the required strategies to survive in a competitive market.
d) Fourth element is the integration of information technologies into the marketing plans.
e) Fifth aspect is the management of communication process.

The ruthless pressure applied by the global economy regarding interconnected products and services is making it inevitable for cities to assure high standards and perfection. Setting up a strategic branding plan for cities consists of four main elements; cultural heritage, natural resources and environment, unique output and inherent skills. Every city can develop a strategy by using at least one of these elements (İlgünner and Asplund, 2011).

Branding appears to be one of the developments bringing marketing theory and practice closer to the nature and characteristics of places (Kavaratzis, 2004).

Hanna and Rowley listed the conditions that have necessitated branding for cities as below:
a) The increasing and expending power of international media
b) Decrease in the cost of international travel
c) Increase in the spending power of consumers
d) Increase in the similarity between services offered by cities
e) Increase in interest shown to different cultures

In order for a city to become an important brand, she has to have one distinctive quality. The city brand also includes the silhouette of the city, the experience of the inhabitants and their beliefs and behaviors (Özdemir and Karaca, 2009).

From that point of view, Istanbul has lots of distinctive qualities to become an important brand. But instead of using these qualities to make the city a brand city it is forced to be a global city (as shown in Figures 2,3,4) by the transnational companies and unfortunately loses it's uniqueness. Being a global city Istanbul may gain temporary advantages but in a long term she will be losing irreplaceable values.

Figure 2: Change of the Historical/Natural Silhouette of The Bosphorus in İstanbul by Global City İmposition (Source: http://efsaneperi.blogspot.com/2010/04/en-guzel-istanbul-fotograflari.html).

Figure 3: Change of the Historical/Natural Silhouette of The Bosphorus in İstanbul by Global City İmposition (Source: http://www.manzara.gen.tr/istanbul-resimleri/page/10).
According to Kavaratzis (2004), through perceptions and images the city’s image is formed not the city itself. Image is the result of various, different and often conflicting messages sent by the city and is formed in mind of each individual receiver of these messages separately. At this point we can claim that the solution lies in forming a corporate image as explained below. Here “corporate” identity is used as forming a strong image with the nation’s or city’s distinctive qualities that forms her image. However, what is of concern here is establishing strategic communication approach on a national level.

**Communication Factor**

According to Erdoğan (2011), national communication encompasses all sorts of communication that takes place within a nation. All such contact and communication is related to the political-economic unit called the nation since all such activities are carried out in order to perform the needs of people. A nation state refers to an organized social structure. This structure is shaped by relations both within itself and also relations to other outer structures. This social structure also shapes a certain political structure. The entity named as the nation constantly materially and cognitively reproduces itself. This reproduction takes place at three levels; reproduction of the material and cognitive structures through communication within corporate structures at the economical level, reproduction of the political systems through current political structures and reproduction of the cultural structures and system through the current cultural production. The reproduction manner and the political structure that is formed based on this reproduction will differ between nomadic societies and agrarian societies or societies living by the attainments from their invasions. Therefore, economical organization within societies explains how a society reproduces itself. Within this organization, human beings produce material products or services that are required for certain needs within the daily work flow and also shape the consciousness structure that legitimize such organization, work flow and the material life that is being produced. Such production manner and the relations within this structure only are possible through strong communication.

Here lies the key role of strong communication; the two way concept which emphasizes communication exchange, reciprocity and mutual understanding. An expanded two-way concept includes organizational adjustment, adding counseling management and taking corrective action (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2000)

As Graham (2002) describes; everything a city consists of, everything that takes place in the city and is done by the city, communicates messages about the city’s image. The image is communicated through three distinct types of communication as primary, secondary, tertiary. Primary communication relates to the communicative effects of a city’s actions when communication is not the main action. Secondary communication is the formal intentional communication that most commonly takes place through indoor-outdoor advertising, public relations, graphic design etc. And tertiary communication is the type of communication, which is not controllable, composed by the media and the competitors (Kavaratzis, 2004).
According Baudrillard, “infrastructure” no longer defines development any more; today “superstructure” forms the basis of development. This model that exterminated the universal model approach enables each country to form its own model and enables everyone’s attempts to form a unique model, as long as it is not an imperialist model. According to Baudrillard who defined superstructure as the infrastructure, instead of economical infrastructures, superstructures are more unique and powerful in terms of values. Since they can avoid the universal economy, it becomes possible for countries with a strong cultural structure and background to get away from universal pressures by forming an unique model (Rigel et al, 2005).

**RELATION BETWEEN CORPORATE IDENTITY, IMAGE MAKING AND CORPORATE IMAGE IN CITY BRANDING AS AN OPPORTUNITY AGAINST GLOBALIZATION**

Okay (2003, 17-19) explains that, first examples of corporate identity can be found in crests and army uniforms of nobility, kings and cities. The reason behind this is the need for individuals to express themselves as a whole and with a common identity after individuals became socialized and started living together as communities. Such signs and marks aimed at keeping the bearers and holders together and to form a spiritual unity and ensure that such individuals reached their targets as a whole. The main objective was to prove loyalty to the identities, ideologies and reign such individuals belonged to. With production, trade and finally industrialization, corporations also needed to define themselves, have an identity and integrate.

Throughout history, new loyalties and senses of belonging were created, borders were drawn, ideas were developed and new work methods have been formed by the use of certain rituals, symbols and various visual expressions. During colonialism, certain nations formed national identities in order to establish some sort of a unity within the countries they had invaded. Formation of a national identity can be encountered in all newly founded states, when the rules were changing or when the invaded state accepted the colonial state. All such symbols, traditions, rituals
and myths created are the product of trying to prove a common identity and to create a certain unity and loyalty. Not only nations but cities can also have identities on their own. A good example can be Florence. The rulers and governors of Florence have hired artists, architects and writers and requested from them to paint a picture of Florence for it to be different/separated from Malta. This is an early example of identity formation works and can be deemed as an attempt to express the differences between cities (Okay, 2003, 17-19).

According to Roman Antonoff, no state, religion, army, political party or sports club would be able to be founded or have survived without a corporate identity. With developments and progress of trade, manufacture and industry, the concept of identity has also changed. It is possible to divide this revolution into periods as the traditional period (the period that lasted until the end of the First World War), branding technique period (in between the two World Wars), Design Period after the 2nd World War (which includes the period in which companies started international activities after 1950’s) and the Strategic Period (that is between the end of 1970’s until now). The corporate identity consisting of a corporate ideology, corporate design, corporate communication and corporate behavior reflects who the corporation is, what it does and how does it. Another important element that has an effect on corporate identity is the corporate culture. Corporate culture has an incomparable effect on the corporate identity (Okay, 2003, 19-39).

Balmer (2002) suggests that the elements that constitute a corporate identity are:
-Strategy (management vision, corporate strategy, product/services as well as corporate performance, corporate brand covenant, corporate ownership)
-Structure (relationships between parent company and subsidiaries, relations with alliance or franchise partners)
-Communication (total corporate communication, which encompasses primary, secondary and tertiary communication)
-Culture (the soft and subjective elements consisting of the mix of sub-cultures present within, but not always emanating from the organization) (Kavaratzis, 2004).

According to Olins, everything a corporation does is an expression of the corporate identity. Offices, factories and showroom buildings or other premises, all materials and methods that manifest the objectives and aims of a corporation from advertisements to manuals and to communication channels employed and the quality of such materials and methods should also express and manifest the corporate identity. The corporate design that materializes all off these methods is an aspect of the identity concept. According to Gregory and Wiechmann, common aim and objective of all corporations is to be distinctive and memorable. Within the extreme amount of advertising occurring as a result of the competitive business world today, at least half the competition is shaped based on this objective. When examined from an approach that has been accepted as effecting our perceptions and opinions about people from the times of Aristo until today, defined by ethos, which defines the charisma, physique and outfit of a person, pathos, which explains the behavior of people and logos which defines a logical framework, the relation between the corporate image and the image in people’s heads, in other words, the symbols that define the corporation and the corporate image will become clearer (Peltekoğlu, 2007).

The state that is formed as a result of corporate identity activities forms the “image” of the corporation, company or organization. Especially today corporate image is the reason why certain corporations are preferred however; such an image cannot be founded before a corporate identity is formed (Okay, 2003).

Peltekoğlu (2007), states that sometimes the concept of identity and image are interchangeable used and new meaningful content is added to such concepts. However, this is a terminological mistake and both these terms have different meanings. According to Crissy “image is the cumulative stimulating effect a corporation, shop, brand or product has on a person or a group”. Since values, experiences, backgrounds and needs of everyone are different, the same image does not get formed in everyone’s heads. Such differences also cause differences in interactive human processes such as perception, thinking and feeling (Dörtok, 2004). Johanssen’
defines image as “the total of all attitudes, information, experience, wishes, feelings, etc. that are related to a certain visual sight”. In terms of a spiritual ‘pre-programing’, images help various sorts of information and promotion materials that form the image forming factors of a corporation to be conducted and communicated (Okay, 2003).

Pellekőğlu (2007) explains that, identity can be defined in general as how a corporation is perceived as physically and image can be defined as how a corporation is perceived mentally. There is an inevitable interaction between these two concepts because one of them is how the corporation defines and expresses itself and the other one is how the corporation is perceived in the minds of people. According to Jefkins, the image of a corporation depends on the situation and the conditions the individuals interact with the corporation whereas a corporate identity will remain the same for everyone. Main objective of corporate identity studies and works is to form a good, positive image in people’s minds. The corporate culture that incorporates all rules adopted by the corporation and the corporate strategy will define the character and the identity of the corporation as a way of defining itself. This identity will become visible through the corporate communication strategy, corporate behavior and visual identity signs and will shape the picture. In other words, will shape the image people have about that corporation in their minds. Obviously, the corporate behavior and communication strategies will shape the corporate image by affecting the mental picture and visual signs will also have an impact on the image as the element that materializes and visualizes such identity.

As Rainisto states “place brands resemble corporate umbrella brands and can benefit the value of a place’s image”. Although it is still very few occasions to reference the relevance of corporate branding to city marketing Balmer and Gray (2003) states that corporate level brands can also be applied to countries, regions and cities (Kavaratzis, 2004).

Balmer and Gray (2003) summarizes common characteristics of corporate branding and city marketing which supports the suggestion that understanding city brands is provided by corporate brands and their management as; both corporate brands and city brands have multidisciplinary roots (Ashworth and Woold, 1990), both address multiple groups of stakeholders (Kotler et al, 1999; Ashworth, 2001), both have a high level of intangibility and complexity, both need to take into account social responsibility (Ave, 1994), and for Dematteis (1994) both deal with multiple identities (Kavaratzis, 2004).

According to Regenthal, corporate image is the effect of the corporate identity on the employees, target groups and the public and encompasses four major elements: idea about the corporation, the publicity, prestige and the comparability of the corporation with its competitors. Like Nagai also mentions, it is necessary to create a successful corporate image instead of creating detailed ad campaigns and new images for each product (Okay, 2003).

This opinion completely corresponds to the concept of managing city branding through corporate image that is being explained in this study. Just like companies that have to compete and establish strategies in order to survive against the economic powers held by multinational companies as a result of the globalization process, countries also need to identify and define specific and unique strategies for themselves. Therefore, this study aims to adopt the methods utilized for establishing corporate identities while forming national identities. Just like Baudrillard’s assumption of superstructures becoming the infrastructures, this study underlines that forming of a national corporate identity on an upper scale will positively affect the images of cities on the lower scale. The identity that is formed as a result of studies to establish an integrated corporate identity such as corporate ideologies, corporate design, corporate behavior and corporate communication also reveals the corporate image. The application of such a process at a national and urban level will help to shape the ‘corporate city image’ concept.

According to Pelsmecker, the importance of corporate identity is emphasized since the solution, which will be tailored for different target audiences in order to resolve integration problems that have occurred due to globalization amongst other reasons, lies again in identity and branding studies that will ensure consistent and steady communication structures. At this point communication should be managed by a two-way symmetrical model. This model utilizes research
and dialog in order to manage conflict, improve mutual understanding and set up good relations with the public and according to this model, both the organization and the public can be persuaded however, both sides might have to change their attitude (Grunig, 2005).

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