City Branding: a Rebirthing Process for the Cities in the Age of Globalisation through the Case Studies of London-U.K., Bilbao-Spain, Helsingør-Denmark

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another’s work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student’s Handbook.

February 2019
Thessaloniki - Greece
To the seven lights of my life,
Iliani, Nikolas, Dimitra, Stavros,
Marios, Elli, Pavlos... and my
beacon Giorgos.
Abstract

Globalisation is the current framework for the cities of the contemporary world. In this respect the competition among cities to attract tourists, new investors, new businesses, potential new residents, or simply offer a quality of life to their citizens is emerging as a demanding issue. This essay examines and presents the crucial role of city branding in this challenging new development.

The aim of this dissertation thesis is to present the understanding and approach of a holistic city branding by presenting evidence from the branding process of three European cities; London-UK, as a representative of large-scale cities, and Bilbao-Spain and Helsingør-Denmark, as examples of small-scale cities. This paper also states the critical role of commercial strategies to the city branding procedure and identifies the important contribution of the various forms of communication among the people involved in a branding process. Additionally, three common city branding techniques are presented verified by the three case studies of this paper. In all three examples of the essay the significant role of the co-operation of all the stakeholders is identified and underlined as a primary issue in order to overcome any possible pitfalls that may occur during a major project as city branding.

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I would also like to thank my family for helping me bringing this project in completion.

Keywords: City-Branding, Communication model, Branding techniques, City-Identity, City-Image.

Nikoletta Kapelioti
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Preface

This dissertation was written as part of the M.A. in Art Law and Arts Management at the International Hellenic University.

The aim of this essay has been to present some aspects of the theory and application of place / city branding through the critical examination of contributions and thoughts of many scholars on the field. This thesis approached the several disciplines involved in city branding and dealt with the existing results of cities that have already been practicing city branding strategy with extraordinary results. The main tool of the dissertation was the presentation of three European cities as representative examples of the results of the city branding procedure in a holistic approach. London, as a model example of a metropolis or large-scale city, was chosen to be briefly presented just to the point where its branding main elements were underlined and affected the other two cities of Bilbao, Spain and Helsingør, Denmark.

The theoretical approach of this paper has been based on four pillars which are the elements that this thesis is setting for any future attempts in branding a city or a place. The first pillar is the theoretical foundation of city branding based on several analyses and results of research of many scholars. The second crucial pillar presented here is the procedures and main techniques used for a successful city branding which leads to the third pillar, the significance of local communities and their invaluable cooperation with all the stakeholders involved. Last, but not least, the vital role of communication and its numerous expressions to the different sectors of a city or place are thoroughly presented. These four pillars, together with the Kavaratzis communication model, as a critical step of city branding, are underlined and exemplified by the case studies that are presented in the second part of this essay.
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Introduction

In a rather competitive setting, cities are under constant pressure to show their unique strategic advantage over other cities, conquering a high-profile position in the consciousness and choices of citizens, organisations, businesses and tourists. They have to stand as good choices either for developing entrepreneurial actions or for shaping cultural infrastructures and actions. They need to stand as a choice of permanent residence or recreational getaways. The aforementioned have as their central objective to achieve quality at a collective and individual level both in business and in well-being.

The new regime, resulting from the constant quest of urban environments to reinvent themselves, has given many different names to contemporary cities that are consciously and actively involved in the global scene of urban innovation and competitiveness. Some of them are called creative/smart cities, resilient cities, green cities, digital cities, sustainable cities, transnational cities.

This thesis examines the common ground behind all these names and their relevant features. A city which is smart and creative at the same time as it is green and sustainable or digital and has as its only target the improvement of the quality of life of their citizens, visitors and investors, is a city that has undergone a process called branding. City branding therefore will be the tool through which this essay shall try to show the new way contemporary cities are able to establish their position in the ongoing process of globalisation.

The essay will be divided in three parts. In the first part the connection of city branding with marketing strategies will be presented through an extensive literature survey. On top of that the first part will end with a more analytic approach of city branding and its most commonly used techniques. The second part will be the presentation of this thesis’ chosen case studies, these of Bilbao (Spain) and Helsingør (Denmark), as well as London (U.K.). The emphasis though, will be given to Bilbao and Helsingør as they are two of the most characteristic examples concerning the usage of marketing and branding techniques. London, on the other hand, will be briefly presented firstly, due to the fact that it acted as a major example for Bilbao and

Helsingør, as they both used, among others, common techniques with London. Secondly, because it is a metropolis, in other words a large-scale city, which encloses many practices of the branding of smaller areas to be gradually connected. This strategy actually divides a large area into smaller parts making it easier for the marketers to change them with the prospect of connecting them into a bigger renovated area later. A strategy like this can very well hold a leading role to the branding of smaller places, like Bilbao and Helsingør, eventually.

A city is a place where people live and work, usually in large numbers, gathering the main amount of political, commercial and economic activity of a country. A large-scale city, often a metropolis like London, is an urban environment with a population usually more than ten million people. A city like this is very important for international commerce, communications, and connections. A smaller city is again an urban environment with a population from 300.000 to 1.000.000 people. It has though the same characteristics as a large-scale city.

City branding involves many scientific fields such as political economy, sociology, anthropology, tourism, sciences, urban design and development, social and economic geography, cultural design and communication, web management, tourism destination, management etc. Branding is an amalgam of all these fields. Each one has something to offer and many known scientists from every field mentioned above, have been involved in the analysis of the rebirth of cities in the postmodern era of globalisation.

Ever since their establishment, cities are constantly changing. European cities, particularly, have offered many examples through the years and researchers coming from all the fields involved hadn’t manage to clarify all these various models, cities present, as multi-dimensional organisms that always have been. From the urban complex of the industrial revolution in the 19th century where cities gathered in their
centres all the core of industrial activities, to the spreading of activities in a wider range with the proliferation of motorways in the 20th century. With this change, cities present a linear development in terms of space and once again change their role and symbolisms. The diversity of the urban landscape and its constant transformations lead to the existence of many contrasts in the city. Contrasts and differences among each and every part of a city, constitute the most intriguing part of this multidimensional concept and character of urban environment.

Somewhere between the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st the modern mass society is born and takes the epicentre of the whole industrial communities to the concept of a more personalised activity. It is the end of industrialisation and the beginning of de-industrialisation especially for the Mediterranean countries. All the technological breakthroughs and developments, as well as the modernity itself left the Mediterranean cities, even though this was their place of origin, and went up to the West. After the age of industrialisation, the years of de-industrialisation for many cities, even mega-scale cities like London, is a period when they are re-establishing their values and abilities. The transitional period between the two eras created a crisis that needed to be managed. The management of this crisis was faced firstly from the cities of the West World and Western Europe, in particular, but in the post World War II period, and gradually through the shown experience of the Western cities it was spread all over the continent.

Cities renew the urban web of their centres, recycle industrial buildings or tobacco stores and shipyards. They also reuse through renovation activities their waterfronts, harbours and riparian zones. All these are going to be presented further below as they are the main elements of both case studies of this paper, Bilbao and Helsingør, as well as their paradigm, London.

Through the years of transition, cities are facing the competition with each other. They compete other entrepreneurial cities and claim their position in the business world by developing ways to attract international tourism. One of these ways is the integration of culture and history—as it happens to all case studies of this thesis—to the procedure of renovation and the embeddedness of tourism and culture.

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5 Ibid: p. 270-274.
with a main and unique purpose the rebirth and redevelopment of cities as new environments which they can stand as equal marketable products / brands in the era of global competitiveness\textsuperscript{7}.

A competitive city means also a sustainable city. In order to maintain their competitiveness and sustainability, cities, especially mega-scale ones that consider to have been acted as examples to smaller ones, adopted strategies to enhance the attractiveness of the city’s image with the hope that these strategies would reserve the city’s economic viability. This strategy is city branding\textsuperscript{8}.

The identity of a place is considered to be, together with the image of the city, one of the main targets of city marketing and branding\textsuperscript{9}. Details, even “small ones”, as a city’s image, come to enhance and raise a city’s profile in order the city to become a place where companies would want to act, tourists to visit and happy residents to continue to live in. Therefore, if cities wish to make the difference and compete other cities in a world of high competitiveness, they have to adopt creative solutions. Likewise, when a city wants to maintain or increase its attractiveness the major step it needs to make is to decide on which profile and image the city wishes to establish. Knowledge and innovation then become the targets and through the years we have many examples of cities, both European and beyond, that tried and successfully reached to this target creating a, one could tell, homogeneous but beautiful though not thrifty image\textsuperscript{10}.

London, Madrid, Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, are some of the big cities in Europe which have been using this changing image strategy, some more successfully than others. All of them have certainly given us great consignment on the usage of marketing and branding techniques. There are of course other cities which belong into the sphere of small cities as Utrecht, Eindhoven, Groningen, Lyon, Helsingør, Bilbao and so many others, which constitute wonderful examples on how a city can promote its selected icon, to attract different target groups of people, highlighting multiple

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid: p. 270; Μούλιου, 2015: p. 74.
\textsuperscript{8} Μούλιου, op. cit.: p. 76.
\textsuperscript{10} Hospers, 2003: p. 262.
characteristics\textsuperscript{11}. Many examples as said before are marking the history of the subject. Mega-scale cities like Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam, London, in Europe, and globally, Toronto, New York, Beijing, are only some. There are of course smaller cities that are considered to be very successfully re-birthed such as Eindhoven, a Dutch city which managed to show spectacular renovations and has turned remarkably from a hard de-industrialised centre into a centre of sustainability and internationally competitive region. The same happened with another Dutch city, Groningen, that managed in a very short period of time to reverse the negativity around its image with the strategy of becoming a tourism destination investing in the fields of music and other arts, education, and business. Edinburgh, Scotland is another small-scale city example. A city strongly connected to the establishment of cultural festivals following a specific branding strategy\textsuperscript{12}.

Before proceeding into the presentation of London’s, Bilbao’s and Helsingør’s transformations, we will provide the theoretical framework and a critical examination of the literature in the management of a brand, the birth of branding strategies, as well as their instruments, tools and history.

\textsuperscript{11} Καραχάλης, op.cit.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.: p. 115.
CHAPTER 1: CITY BRANDING

From marketing to place branding

For several years now, marketing techniques are used to regenerate places. The philosophy of marketing is well adopted and adapted to transform places abandoned or decayed or even just to enhance their living, touristic, investment conditions for more than thirty years. Governments are employing marketing specialists more and more nowadays to materialise ground scale business plans with strategic goals to catch, adapted missions and visions about the places, regions or cities they need to transform\(^\text{13}\).

A reasonable question risen from all these would be why one employs marketing techniques to boost a city or a place? Why does one set strategic goals to meet in order to regenerate a region or an urban environment built and filled with buildings, constructions, organisations? In an attempt to give an answer to this question we will be traveling onto the 8\(^{th}\) century and to Leif Ericson and his newly discovered “green land”. Ericson on his quest to sought settlers for green land, promoted for a first time the deliberate projection of certain favourable images of the place with the purpose to attract firstly residents and then of course investors, customers, visitors etc\(^\text{14}\).

According to this, one can understand that the whole idea of promoting places is not a novelty but draws back in time. The new thing, is the way that planning agencies approach and apply the promotion of a place, as it is not just an instrument to them to help them solve a problem rising during the regeneration of a place but it is a new philosophy to actually manage the place\(^\text{15}\).

Through the years place marketing and branding have come to a form which is more promising for the future because it is more targeted and refined. This form is all about enhancing representation of places focusing on the image of a place and its distinctiveness than just advertising the place\(^\text{16}\).

\(^{13}\) Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2010: p.2.
\(^{14}\) Ibid.
\(^{15}\) Kavaratzis, 2008: p.32.
\(^{16}\) Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2010, op. cit.
Place marketing and city branding derive from marketing. It is more or less as if a business follows a procedure to promote a brand, a product and then to manage it. Branding a product means that you promise it to the masses while at the same time you are making it more desirable for certain target groups. A brand has, or should have, an identity, an image and, most importantly, needs to communicate a meaning. A brand’s identity is based on its intrinsic, inner value, which every brand carries no matter if it is new or an existing one. Accordingly, a brand’s image is the way a targeted group perceives the brand’s appearance. The communication ability of a brand, is its ability to attract the targeted group by certain means or tools or strategies.\footnote{Petrea et al., 2010: p. 126.}

As Philip Kotler states “marketing is a universal process that can be applied in order to develop and promote many entities as products, experiences, persons, ideas, services, places and more”. That leads to a general appreciation of marketing as the process, that indicates the above entities, in the form of activities, with final recipients a targeted group of a certain market by the creation and the distribution of products. This marketing process is actually an effective management practice with the purpose to create products of high value for a targeted group.\footnote{Ibid.}

As organisations use many strategies to create a brand and promote it to the customers, they also work on strategies to build recognition of the brand among its customers and to establish a strong relationship between the latter and their brands. This is a concept which more or less could be adopted from places due to its similarity to brands, according to more and more scholars and researchers.\footnote{Kavaratzis, 2009, p.27.}

The benefits of a commercial product are applying to places as long as the place or city has a promoter (either a local, a regional or a central government) and, of course, as long as it has its recipients meaning the residents, the investors, the tourists/visitors etc.\footnote{Petrea et al. op. cit.} Having a strong brand is a crucial advantage for a business. The same applies for a city. A strong brand is never a one single thing but a combination of several stupendous things. Uniqueness, a solid philosophy, audience awareness, and of
course, a clear message and a plainly targeted marketing as well as quality are just a few of a brand’s characteristics. These characteristics, if used properly, are adding a tremendous value to a brand. A value which is translated into benefits that are mentioned right below. A strong brand gives recognition and loyalty among the customers. It also adds credibility to its company/city and builds confidence among the customers. Furthermore, a strong brand means consistency for a business / city which leads in brand equity. Moreover, a brand is a very strong supporter of innovations as it can attract talents with the purpose to enhance it further\textsuperscript{21}.

Therefore, a branding philosophy can be used for managing a place as long as the methods and concepts used are adapted, prior to their use, under the needs of a specific place or city because each place has its own different needs and characteristics and specific conditions. Branding techniques of a product can be used to brand a place but only if the procedure and process are being altered and distinct from the form of branding products and turned to a form that applies to places\textsuperscript{22}.

This philosophy and its methodology of marketing techniques have been the main research targets by many academics of more than one field. They strongly believe that marketing principles are applicable to city environments. Marketing’s initial field is industrial goods and services. Kavaratzis, Ashworth and Voogd place the birth of place marketing theory to three specific developments in the marketing sector. These developments are a) the rise of marketing in Non-Profit Organisations, b) the development of Social Marketing and c) the development of Image Marketing. All three of them helped in the transferring of all the strict marketing knowledge in the field of industrial goods and services to the field of marketing places\textsuperscript{23}.

The growth of marketing in non-profit organisations has stopped marketing from being connected directly to financial-profit making. At the same time, social marketing, lead to different perspective on this field by helping individuals or specific groups to change their attitudes towards society to their best. The development of Image Marketing though is strongly connected to city branding as it is a notion already


\textsuperscript{22} Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2010 op. cit.: pp. 3-4.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
existing in the notion of place marketing and is based on the idea of the concept that an image, if well defined, can be marketed in a very good degree, whereas a product connected to a city does not seem very manageable. So, the administrators of every city or place concerned were glad to accept this new entry to marketing field and to implement it to their potential efforts\textsuperscript{24}.

\textit{Definition of a brand and the difference between city brands}

Although marketing experts have not reached to one single definition, they all agree that a brand is certainly not a name which is given to a product in order to identify it, nor it is a “catchy” slogan or a logo, even a memorable one. A brand encloses beliefs and attitudes which are connected to a product. In case of a city brand a city is this product which means that the brand holds memories, attitudes, stories as does a city\textsuperscript{25}.

However, the American Marketing Association gives a generally accepted definition of brand as “a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers”\textsuperscript{26}. An interesting selection of words, not sufficiently descriptive though as far as places are concerned. City brands are different from brands. According to Kavaratzis, there are complexities involving city branding which need to be approached with a very different way than brands. These complexities come from the stakeholders\textsuperscript{27} diversity, the different organisations involved in a city branding procedure and the diversity of the target groups\textsuperscript{28}.

\textsuperscript{24} Kavaratzis, 2008, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{25} Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005: pp.507-508.
\textsuperscript{27} A stakeholder is defined by Cambridge Dictionary as “a person such as an employee, customer, or citizen who is involved with an organisation, society, \textit{etc.} and therefore has responsibilities towards it and an interest in its success” (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus, 2018, \textit{viz.} Stakeholder. [Online] Available at: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/stakeholder [Accessed 28 12 2018]).
\textsuperscript{28} Kavaratzis, 2009, \textit{op. cit.}
It is useful to insist a little more on the clarification and a better understanding of the notion and nature of brands in order to move on to their connection and usefulness to place brand, thus city branding. People form critical liaison, crucial connections and significant relationships with brands. These connections, or else “mental associations”, according to Kavaratzis and Kalandides, turn the brands into sets of associations with values, benefits and attributes. This takes us to the most known definition of the brand which connects it clearly and smoothly to places. This definition sees a brand as a multidimensional construction with strategic, emotional, relational and functional characteristics which produces a genuine set of associations in people’s mind\textsuperscript{29}.

The selection and connection, of the above-mentioned attributes of the brand, due to their ability to add value to the initial and basic product or service, form a wilful and desirable process called branding\textsuperscript{30}.

This process of branding is very enlightening as many more important characteristics derive from it that need to be taken into consideration. These characteristics are about the nature of the brand / product, the nature of its marketing and most importantly, the consumer’s behaviour towards it\textsuperscript{31}.

But how do cities connect with brands, and how brands and branding relate to cities, marketing goals and image? The most crucial part on branding procedure, and a step that holds the success of everything else, is the establishment of a strong relationship between the product / brand and the recipient / consumer. Consumers have needs, physical and psychological. These needs have to be fulfilled by the characteristics and values that brands enclose\textsuperscript{32}.

As brands have their own identity, positioning and image, cities adopt this two-way path and create their own values, qualities and feelings. Branding therefore is the way to communicate these values and feelings. So, a city, just like a brand, has to make known, has to communicate to its target groups its identity, the specific way the city itself wants to be known or received, its position in the global market concerning the

\textsuperscript{29} Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2015: p.1368.  
\textsuperscript{30} Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005 \textit{op. cit.}  
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{32} Kavaratzis, 2008, \textit{op. cit.}
reasons why the target groups would prefer this city instead of others. Then, of course, comes its image, which is the way the target groups perceive the city\textsuperscript{33}. Many researchers and scholars argue that place identity can’t exist without place image and vice versa\textsuperscript{34}.

\textit{Group segmentation – A valuable step}

The way that marketers of a city would approach and form these issues derives from managing techniques. As stated previously, the way that specific targeted groups perceive a places’ image, therefore a city’s image, characterises the management approach of this place\textsuperscript{35}.

When a city wants to be regenerated, it needs to create a new identity driven from its residents’ experiences in the city. This includes the type of actions and activities that give meaning to a city or a place, that give a specific character to this city, in other words, actions and activities that form a profound image. A city is equally, and, at the same time, a place where many people live, work and entertain. It is also a destination for tourists to visit, it could be a place of work opportunities for potential future residents, or businesses that might want to invest in. The city becomes a multifunctional organisation. An organisation which needs to create many and multiple brands to fulfil the desires and needs of many different target groups. It is the point where the most crucial activities should take place by everyone involved. These activities are everything that has to be done to achieve the segmentation of the market, by targeting and separating all the important needs of the city’s groups\textsuperscript{36}. A city is a multi-dimensional organism and it doesn’t mean the same thing to all of its citizens or people involved. Each one of the people operate in a city has other desires, needs or requirements from their city. Market segmentation is a very helpful instrument on that and plays a very important role in the correct targeting of the markets. For instance, the most important target groups in city branding are residents,

\textsuperscript{33} Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{34} Kavaratzis & Kalandides, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{35} Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Ibid}; Kotler, \textit{et al.}, 2008: p.128.
investors / businesses, tourists / visitors. Residents can be further segmented to internal residents, currently living in the city and external potential new ones. These sub-categories need different approaches from many different departments and experts. These categories for example might include students or potential workers. These target groups need other facilities and infrastructures to be innovated or regenerated.\footnote{Liouris & Deffner, 2005: p. 18.}

The same applies to the rest of the targeted groups. Tourists and visitors look for activities like shopping entertaining and of course sightseeing and cultural education. Actually, culture is something really important to all target groups, and that is why most, or all, of the cities that already have been using the branding procedure, have chosen culture as their main sector to invest to and use it as a facilitator to promote their image and identity. Finally, business / investors are interested more in business opportunities.\footnote{Ibid.} These groups apparently perceive the place differently and therefore communication of the city’s brand should be developed with many different ways.\footnote{Zenker & Braun, 2017: p. 274.}

To summarise, a brand is a heterogeneous combination of associations and not just one aspect of a city’s image and identity. As said before due to the fact that a city is a multidimensional organism which has various and different meanings to each and every one of its people, the first thing the authorities involved have to invest in is the creation of the city’s identity. Something that must come after the true realisation of this identity, though. And, most importantly, is something that needs to be done with the absolute participation of the audience in the city, citizens, investors, workers etc.

Consequently, the brand of a city according to Kavaratzis, is a system of creating different meanings, in the mind of audiences, which adds value to the city. This system is based on the way the various audiences of the city perceive and evaluate the city itself through communication. The branding of a city, therefore, is a framework of actions with their main purpose to take advantage of the
communication character of these actions. City branding facilitates the harmonisation of the city’s image with reality\(^\text{40}\).

**Communication - The beginning of the procedure of city branding**

The procedure of city branding begins with the realisation that all that matters is the formation of an image and how this is perceived and received by each individual’s mind through experiences and encounters with the city\(^\text{41}\). Once the above said realisation of the importance of the city’s image as the first step of the city branding procedure, is completed, the next step is the perception of it through the communication. It could be argued that the image of the city is a link which connects the real city and its perceptions.

Consequently, the image of the city is the one thing that has to be planned and managed, and this is the main reason why all experts talk about city branding and not city marketing. Traditional marketing would face many complications and difficulties in dealing with merely a marketing of a city, namely the identification of cities-products, the strict identification of city’s market, and the segmentation of place-consumer etc. A city, as previously said, is a multidimensional organism which can’t just take into account single aspects and be dealt with, merely as a business organisation. A city is a liveable and growing organism which constantly changes. Branding is the procedure acting under the routes of marketing but adapted though to the city’s constant living. It’s not a static procedure, quite the contrary, it is dynamic and goes on as long as a city changes its vision and itself\(^\text{42}\).

Everything that a city includes or consists of, all the actions that take place in the city or done by the city, form and transmit messages about the image of the city. All these interactions and interactivities or interventions take the form of functional and symbolic meaning at the same time and create or lead to other actions. This is


\(^{41}\) Kavaratzis, 2008, *op. cit.*: p. 36.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.
exactly the point which differentiates all the marketing measures from branding decisions and estimations\(^{43}\).

According to Kavaratzis and his city brand communication model, the image of a city can only be communicated through three specific forms of communication the Primary communication, the Secondary and Tertiary communication presented in the scheme below\(^{44}\).

**Scheme of the three forms of communication\(^{45}\):**

![Diagram of the three forms of communication]

The most important form of the three is Primary communication. It is divided in four other sectors which don’t have communication as their main goal. *Landscape Strategies* are related to actions or decisions that have to do with urban design,

\(^{43}\) *Ibid*: p. 41.
\(^{44}\) *Ibid*: p. 43.
architecture, parks and green spaces and in general public space. In this category art and cultural heritage planning are listed as well, due to their increasing usage around cities of the world that already have been branded as described in the introduction of this essay.

City’s Behaviour has to do with issues connected with the city’s vision, the financial incentives and strategies developed and provided by the city’s authorities. Of great importance are two elements under this category. One is the type of services provided by the city and their provisions’ effectiveness and the other is the type of events (cultural or anything else) and their frequency, organised by the city’s authorities. Of course, together with all these, of great significance are the opportunities offered and created by the city to its citizens and potential citizens concerning the opportunities to entertain, live, study, work etc.

Organisational / Administrative Structure is another very important field as it has to do with any action taken from the city’s governing structure and how this could be more effective and improved. This should and could be done only through citizens’ participation in the decision making by community development networks.

Infrastructural Projects have to do with the different infrastructure needed in the city. This could be the improvement of existing cultural centres, conference centre facilities or the creation of a better airport, or city hall, or improvement concerning the accessibility of monuments to the tourists etc.

The Secondary communication form is actually all the marketing tools and practices used in order to promote the city’s image, as advertising and public relations. The crucial point of this communication is that it needs to be in absolute harmonisation with the reality as this is perceived by the city’s audiences.

The Tertiary communication, called “word of mouth”, is the way people of the city communicate with each other sharing stories or ideas about their city, and the way the authorities or consultants, responsible for the branding of the city, can make them talk about the city. This type of communication is being extremely reinforced by the usage of social media. It will therefore be very useful if anybody working on a team responsible for the branding of a city, considers to develop an e-platform to make citizens to be involved.
City branding main techniques

City branding, more than anything else discussed so far, is about improving its citizens’ quality of life by achieving a competitive advantage of the city among others who compete for an increase in internal investment or tourism. Historical examples, have demonstrated that cultural implementation with tourism is being a strong tool of the field. Which leads us to the next important step of city branding. This of choosing upon the tools, techniques or instruments as differently presented in the literature. The most practical techniques used so far by cities to brand themselves are three and all of them have been used by the two case studies of this thesis following shortly⁴⁶.

The first one is widely known as “Personality Branding” or “Personality Association” and it is the case of the second case study of this thesis, the city of Helsingør Denmark, which has chosen to connect the city to the prince of Denmark Hamlet and therefore, Shakespeare. Cities and places connect themselves with an individual hoping they will find the unique identity they need. This will be done by achieving the implementation of the city’s character with unique qualities of the individual. There are many examples through the history of city branding and the artists, with whom cities have been connected to, come from various fields as visual arts, musicians, writers and so on. Some of the cities linked with artists are Barcelona with the architect Gaudi, Glasgow with Mackintosh, Figueres with Dali, Bath with Jane Austin and many others⁴⁷.

The second technique is called “Flagship construction”. This technique is the one used by the other case study of this thesis, Bilbao. The city used a famous architect Frank Ghery to build the most impressive and dominant construction in the area, the Guggenheim Museum to give the city a character of a place which can equally compete in a new era of globalisation⁴⁸. The concept of flagship structures depends on

⁴⁶ Kavaratzis, 2008, op. cit.: p. 45.
how noticeable and notable will the construction be and of course on how glorious, illustrious and liveable the architect or designer is\textsuperscript{49}.

The third technique is “Events branding or hallmarking” and is strongly connected with cultural events organised by a city because of their ability to add value to the city’s image. The impact of these events, either cultural or commercial, or sports events, is not about the economical profits for the local community, but about how other people see the city and how the city sees or shapes itself. And this is the actual created desirable image of the city. It is widely known that the most famous and largest cultural festivals are organised by the biggest cities of the worlds. There are though many small-sized cities such as Helsingør in Denmark with its annual Shakespeare’s festival hosted at the medieval Kronborg Castle, which are known for their great success\textsuperscript{50}.

The importance of co-operation

Even if everything mentioned and all other aspects of city branding in its procedure, have been met, a matter of tremendously great significance needs to be met as well, in order everything to proceed smoothly and according to the plan. It could be presented more as a challenge than a necessity, but nowadays it certainly is a requirement. This matter is about making the city’s stakeholders want to support this branding process and leading them to the realisation that only if they work together and away from any personal ambition the result would be a successful one\textsuperscript{51}.

As it will be seen in the case studies bellow, London, Bilbao and Helsingør, all the goals set by a city in its branding procedure would not have been of success if their local authorities hadn’t worked in harmony with general government, private institutions and so many others\textsuperscript{52}. As defined above, a stakeholder is “a person such an employee, customer, or citizen who is involved with an organisation, society, etc. and

\textsuperscript{49} Ashworth, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid}; Karatzias & Lindqvist, 2019, p. 107.
\textsuperscript{51} Zenker & Braun, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{52} Berrada, 2018: pp. 227-228.
therefore has responsibilities towards it and an interest in its success”53. In case of city branding, as in any other case of a governed place, a city is characterised by many kinds of stakeholders in a variety of other fields of activity with many goals to achieve, many different personal interests to satisfy. There are not just governmental or several public institutions, there are local businesses as well as organisations, tourism agencies and of course each city’s or place’s political leaders who can very well influence any decision regarding the city. Among all these the most important role is played by the local community and all the people that live in this common place and interact together and of course are the immediate beneficiaries of the city’s change.

All the above mentioned are considered to be stakeholders and they should be harmonically involved and active to support all the procedure focusing on their city’s improvement and the communication of its new identity to the world. Community stakeholders’ engagement in the process of city branding is basic in achieving all a branding process is about, to create and influence the city’s new attributes, to define the new identity, to communicate it, to bring to life everything that the initial vision of the city’s changing plan has promised to the target audience of the city.

The importance of the co-operation throughout the branding procedure of all stakeholders and local community has been underlined by many scholars and branding literature. In this thesis, only a few will be briefly mentioned. Hudson et al. state that the community’s stakeholders are crucially significant parts in the process during all the stages and they continue by suggesting that any group or individual working on the branding project must interact and have a very close work with any community stakeholder, residents, businesses, government leaders etc.54 Hankinson has been very accurate by explaining that the base of an efficient place branding relies on the effectiveness of any relationship developed among all stakeholders55.

In addition, Baker connects the adoption of the new city’s image by the audience and all stakeholders to the degree of their support during the procedure56. In the same path Campelo states that the creation and sustainability of the new city

53 As above in 27 (p. 10).
55 Hankinson, 2004: p. 112.
brand, the strengthening of the city’s authenticity, the support of the new identity, resulting from the branding procedure, are strongly based on the local community, their interactions with the city’s various places and certainly on the establishment of strong relationships between the community, local businesses, leaders, governmental authorities\textsuperscript{57}. Furthermore, Kavaratzis gives priority to local communities meaning investors, businesses and residents and talks about “synergies” as strong co-operations between all the stakeholders in order to succeed in city branding and states that this actor of the development of strong co-operation among all the stakeholders together with the involvement of the citizens are the main factors and components of success\textsuperscript{58}.

\textit{City Branding in a period of Economic Crisis}

Cities all-over the world, nowadays, and in particular since 2009, are forced to face and overcome, not only the pressure of increased competition due to the globalisation, but also other even more difficult factors derived from an economic crisis. A crisis that has hit the world for a decade now and led many cities to undergo a reputation and image deterioration. In ages like this, it is necessary for a country to invest in a concrete plan of branding those of their cities or regions that present more signs of this deterioration\textsuperscript{59}.

Moreover, the poorest areas of a city, are considered to be the easiest parts to be renewed and renovated due to their previous marginalisation. They constitute a fertile ground for the birth of new ideas for cultural and artistic events to be envisioned and organised, and, therefore, for the creation of new markets\textsuperscript{60}.

Nevertheless, a branding procedure in a period of economic crisis could be considered to be unaffordable for many countries and their cities. Consequently, there are branding strategies which can be adopted to prevail a crisis. Branding in a period of economic downturn needs to focus more in boosting the moral upheaval of the

\textsuperscript{57} Campelo, 2017: p. 10; Berrada, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{58} Kavaratzis, 2008, p.35; Kavaratzis 2009, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{59} Vaxevanidou, 2017: p. 68.
\textsuperscript{60} Προσύλης, 2015: p. 97.
citizens. It must use the city's cultural heritage more than ever and organise events like free visits to the museums, or walks to historical sights and regions, in an attempt to remind to the citizens their origins and common history. Through the above practices the city will succeed to keep their spirit alive and their will to sustain and overcome the crisis. Nowadays though, technology has given to the marketers another affordable tool to mobilise the citizens of a city in hard times, this of internet and social media. It is actually already mentioned in the three forms of communication mentioned above\textsuperscript{61}.

An existing example of this is the \textit{Pluggy} platform. It is a European platform for social network which has been created to facilitate the constant process of transforming and restructuring as well as presenting and protecting cultural heritage. By using it, citizens would be creators and keepers and consumers of web based cultural activities. This platform and any other that hopefully would be created in the future, is built according to people's values, needs and aspirations, focusing on the development of shared identity and image. Its strong point is the interaction between the users which leads to the formation of new heritage communities, by allowing users to share their cultural heritage material\textsuperscript{62}.

Therefore, branding a city in an age of economic crisis, is not a forbidden and expensive procedure. On the contrary, it is a necessity as it can be adapted and embedded into more affordable ways and tools, and it can act as a promoter of unity between the citizens of a city and globally.

\textsuperscript{61} See above scheme, p. 15.
CHAPTER 2: CASE STUDIES

For the needs of this essay three cities have been chosen to be presented, London, Bilbao and Helsingør in order to highlight the significance of city branding. The important role city branding plays in changing the way the recipients, no matter in which group they belong to, receive a changed image of a city, becomes very clear when examining the case study of London and becomes even more apparent when investigating the cases of Bilbao and Helsingør. Even though London will be briefly presented, because it could be a case study of its own in another essay, its rebirth case acted as a prototype to these of Bilbao and Helsingør, due to the success of the segmentation strategy that London’s marketers decided to use. This strategy involves the separation of big areas into smaller ones with the purpose to connect them after the renovation is completed.\(^{63}\)

Bilbao has established its changed identity using, among others, a common technique with London, as previously said, this of emblematic constructions in an urban environment. Urban composition plays an important role in the creation of new urban landscapes.\(^{64}\)

For several years now, the rebirth of this built urban environment through impressive architectural construction has created new globalised landscapes. These landscapes are the results of the combination of cultural heritage of each place, with innovative ideas. Part of these ideas are the, so called, flagship projects, which they first appeared around 1980 and they established marketing processes as the main tool for urban rebirth. London and Bilbao, for their own different reasons each one of them, have used this flagship projects strategy. London, because an approach like this combines well in case of a metropolis, as it is. There, the demand of high-quality services never stops and what a better way to satisfy this than the construction and creation of symbolic, innovative and emblematic buildings.\(^{65}\)

On the other hand, Bilbao used successfully this tactic to harmonise beautifully its difficult geographic morphology and to turn this difficulty into a very good source of

\(^{63}\) Ibid.
\(^{64}\) Λάλου, 2012, op. cit.
income through tourism, strengthening Bilbao’s position in the new globalisation system which has the last few decades emerged\textsuperscript{65}.

\textit{London case study}

London, in the early 1970s faced the need to change things and urgently renovate and rebirth a previously prosperous area for over 1500 years, the Docklands. It used to be a centre of international trade until the end of 1960s, but after that the community started to decay. The area was poorly housed, it wasn’t properly connected to the rest of London, with small population and a very small number of local businesses. Overall it was an unattractive area for new residents and potential investors. With the foundation of London Docklands Development Corporation in 1981, an agency put in charge of the rebirthing operation, an effort has begun to coordinate and harmonise the interests of the wider society of the area and London in general with those of the local community. The result was the total transformation of the whole area spreading its success to other areas and neighbourhoods of London. New offices have been built, basic roads have been constructed together with public services. This resulted the inflow of new residents, and together with some boost from the government by offering motives and benefits to any business wanted to locate in the area, in a period of 20 years the Docklands were exactly as they used to be. A prosperous area of London hosting the international trade centre, Canary Warf, and so many other important buildings\textsuperscript{66} (fig. 1).

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.; Καραχάλης, op. cit.
London Docklands is a holistic effort of renovation and rebirth showing the good results a good managing and co-operation can bring and is very close to Bilbao holistic approach as it will be seen shortly. The cultural branding though is clearer, concerning London, in the area of South Bank with the renovation of the Bankside Power Station into one of the world’s most iconic galleries, Tate Modern (fig. 2). This building has transformed the whole area of South Bank and together with London Eye and Millennium Bridge have changed the entire image of the city. Something that was not easy considering London’s cultural multiplicities, with citizens coming from so many different origins, changing an image or establishing a unique identity could be a struggle\textsuperscript{67}.

Bilbao Case Study

Bilbao is the most characteristic case of the last few decades of cultural revitalisation. Located in the Gulf of Biscay, Bilbao, a small city of fourteenth century, was struggling to survive its industrial past. Bilbao was benefitted by its location and its iron deposits.

The small trading and fishing village that Bilbao was back at the medieval times, turned into a city, founded in 1300, which maintained its flourishing economy based on commercial and maritime activities for centuries.

Bilbao’s beneficiary location at the Riverside of Nervión River, at the end of its estuary, allowed the connection of the city with Atlantic Ocean making it a sea port with a natural inlet for mooring vessels.

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A brief history of Bilbao

For almost four centuries from 1452 to 1841 a special trading right authorised by the then Spanish King, turned Bilbao into a rich axis merging the mainland of Spain with other parts of Western Europe and America eventually. In addition, another very crucial factor of potential economic success was the fact that the whole flat area of Bilbao was very close to the iron mines of Miribilla.\footnote{Anon., 2018, \textit{viz. Bilbao Industrial - History.} [Online] Available at: \url{http://www.bilbaoturismo.net/BilbaoTurismo/en/history/bilbao-industrial_2} [Accessed 16 12 2018]; Plöger op. cit.}

Since 1875 Bilbao came to an era of development. Its port and trade activity together with the mines, located nearby, are the main factors that lead Bilbao to the route of economic success. At the same time the city became famous from its very important iron and steel industries completed by a large ship industry which allowed Bilbao to enter to the first major phase of the industrialisation era with great expectations.\footnote{Ibid.; Anon., 2018, \textit{viz. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.} [Online] Available at: \url{http://www.bilbaoturismo.net/BilbaoTurismo/en/guggenheim} [Accessed 30 12 2018].} To complete the scene the creation of the Bilbao railway company and the foundation of Banco de Bilbao at 1857 have to be mentioned here.\footnote{Plöger op. cit.}

The result was the increase of the population, to over 80,000 but Bilbao had more to show as by 1980 the population would be close to 500,000. An aftereffect of this sharp increase in population was that the current space was found to be inadequate, so new areas had to be urbanised. An area which eventually became a centre of shopping, office, administrative functions together with residential areas hosting the middle or upper-class households. These areas maintain their existence and roles until today.\footnote{Ibid.} Along the river, one could find mining, port and industrial activities which gradually went towards the sea engaging the whole area of the Left Bank of the Nervión river until late 1970s. This was something which actually designated the use and the kind of housing of the two banks of the river. The Left Bank ended by gathering all the industrial and port facilities and the result was the

\[\text{\footnotesize 72 Plöger op. cit.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize 73 Ibid.}\]
development of manufacturing and the transformation of this area by intense immigration into sectors of working-class communities along with all the industrial activity. On the other hand, the Right Bank was gradually developing, though in a slower rate, but for the middle-classes, mostly as summer residence area, to end up as a high-quality residential centre, up-market housing and tertiary activities.

Indisputably Bilbao, and all the Basque country underwent several gloomy and dark years starting from 1938 and Spanish Civil War (lasted until 1939), passing to the dictatorship of Franco from 1939 to 1975. Franco ended the jurisdiction of Basque Government on any matter and lead Bilbao region into a long post-war period. Surprisingly Bilbao managed to survive the dark period of political isolation and trouble and entered in a late second phase of industrialisation in the 1950s and 1960s as well as urban development. Capital investments had been intensified highlighting the city’s specialisation on heavy manufacturing, metal production etc. That turning point signalled and strengthened Bilbao’s role as one of the leading industrial cities in Spain and kept the path open for the central government to gain its autonomy when Franco’s regime collapsed in 1975. A fact which should be underlined and kept in one’s mind because Basque Government itself was the commissioner of several construction work in the upcoming regeneration of Bilbao as it will be discussed shortly.

Less developed Spanish regions fed Bilbao with immigrant workers so, in a period of 20 years the city experiences demographic expansion. The population increased from 216.000 that it was in 1950 to 410.000 in 1970. The Left Bank of the river rapidly occupied by tall block of flats in high density in an effort to fulfil the increasing demand on housing the workers. And suddenly, just after the collapse of Franco’s dictatorship, which actually acted as a protective shield for the Spanish

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76 Rodriguez et al.: p. 168.
77 Plöger op. cit.: p. 8.
79 Plöger op. cit.: p. 16.
economy, Bilbao as well as the whole Basque country followed the rest of the world to
the industrial and urban crisis that stroke the world economy after the oil crisis in
1973. The 20 years of intensive growth gave their place to another 20 years of decay.
Bilbao lost 47 percent of jobs in the field of manufacture\(^80\).

Factories were shutting down one after the other. Retirement together with
this shutting down effect of enterprises led to severe unemployment which intensified
the situation after the closing of the larger shipyard of the field, \textit{Euskalduna}. The other
ship construction company in Spain \textit{La Vala} located few kilometres away down the Left
River Bank, absorbed what had left of the \textit{Euskalduna}'s workers but at the same time
the company struggled to deal with its own decline\(^81\).

The return of many immigrants due to the deterioration of living conditions, to
their home origin, added many problems to the already existing ones, intensifying the
population decline\(^82\). The decay of Basque shipyard firms influenced Bilbao’s industrial
urban web. The city’s unemployment rates went from a 2 percent in 1975 to a 26
percent after a decade, to dramatically drop to a 16 percent by 1995\(^83\).

Together with all the above mentioned, Bilbao had to fight with an inevitable
environmental pollution. Nervión River was actually dying due to industrial waste and
household sewage that were drained into the river. Air and soil suffered the same
consequences\(^84\). There was a dramatic and obvious need for a change, a rethinking of
the economic foundation of the Bilbao’s area. The attempt of a regeneration of the
whole keystone of Bilbao was not to be postponed\(^85\).

\textit{Bilbao’s regeneration}

When the authorities finally were convinced that action had to be taken it was
already late 1980s. That means that everything took place in a very complex and

\(^{80}\) Rodriguez \textit{et al.} \textit{op. cit.}: p. 169.
\(^{81}\) Lus-Arana \textit{op. cit.}
\(^{82}\) Plöger \textit{op. cit.}: p. 12.
\(^{83}\) Lus-Arana, \textit{op. cit.}
\(^{84}\) Plöger \textit{op. cit.}: p. 14.
\(^{85}\) Lus-Arana, \textit{op. cit.}
particularly strange political as well as social environment\textsuperscript{86}. Spain joined the EU in 1986 and the authorities started a very ambitious programme to reverse all the negative facts that characterised Bilbao until then\textsuperscript{87}. They sum up the problematic areas and begun to focus on them. First of all, they had to face the high unemployment rate. Then, they had to deal with old industries that had become obsolete. Another crucial problem was that the city had a very busy riverport which suffered a huge traffic congestion. Among all these the authorities had to find a solution about the violence formed by extremist Basque separatists after so many years of dictatorship. To make the situation even worse the pollution and urban deterioration together with the existence of a very poor public transportation system completed an already negative image of a city\textsuperscript{88}.

The city needed a holistic approach. Bilbao, as the biggest and most industrialised city of the Basque country demanded a series of strategic plans in order to put the city in the global economic arena and restore its image to compete as an international player\textsuperscript{89}.

The way that Bilbao, and Basque authorities in general, worked together to solve the problems is remarkable and should be used as an example on how to confront future challenges. Of course, it was not something which appeared for the first time as it was based on regenerating processes used previously in many U.S. and U.K. cities\textsuperscript{90}. But it has been very well performed and executed by many administrative levels working together as it will be seen further below. The first step that all the tiers of Basque government, meaning city, regional, provincial and central, took to start the process, was to draft the Strategic Plan in the late 1980s. By 1991 the so called “The Strategic Plan for the Revitalisation of Metropolitan Bilbao” was agreed by all levels of authorities. The second very crucial step, was the establishment and foundation of two

\textsuperscript{86} Gonzalez, 2006: p. 842.
\textsuperscript{88} Plaza, 2007, \textit{viz. The Bilbao effect (Guggenheim Museum Bilbao)}. [Online] Available at: https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12681/1/MPRA_paper_12681.pdf [Accessed 06 12 2018].
\textsuperscript{89} Gonzalez, \textit{op. cit.}: p. 844.
\textsuperscript{90} Vicario & Martinez Monje, 2003: p. 2384.
development agencies. One in 1991 named “Bilbao Metrropolit-30” to facilitate the process of the city’s regeneration and make sure that all the objectives set by the Strategic Plan would be met. The other was founded in 1992 under the name of “Bilbao-Ria 2000” in order to observe the acts of regeneration in the chosen “opportunity areas” of the city. Its main purpose was to control and manage the revitalisation of the large-scale pieces of land previously occupied by industries and ports and antiquated infrastructure in general.\(^91\)

The fact that during the 1990s Barcelona hosted the Olympic Games, Sevilla hosted the International Expo and last, Madrid was recognised as the Cultural Capital of Europe played an important role as the experiences of these cities acted as great examples to Bilbao’s regeneration effort. All the three of these cities tried hard to involve citizens in their projects and made huge investments in a fundamental change of their industrial and port regions. Things that all apply to Bilbao as well.\(^92\) So, the next step was to proceed to a so called “Territorial Plan” in order to stop decline and work on the re-establishment of Bilbao as a key holder which connects Europe with the Atlantic axis.\(^93\)

The second agency “Bilbao-Ria 2000” proceeded to the territorial plan by separating the large-scale area at issue, in four smaller ones, the opportunity areas. The first is Abandoibarra (fig. 3) which hosts the new urban heart of Bilbao and the new investments including the most emblematic building of this regeneration project, the Guggenheim Museum (figs. 4, 5).

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\(^{91}\) Plöger op. cit.: pp. 17-18.
\(^{92}\) Ibid: p. 17.
The second, Zorrozaure, which was to be recreated in order to connect in the future with Abandoibarra. The third was Ametzola an area south from the central Bilbao, intended to act, with new infrastructural investments, as facilitator to the existing railway and last, Miribilla and Morro, intended to host the new housing facilities. This division proved to be very helpful to all the authorities involved. With
the help of “Bilbao Ria-2000”, which operated as a private sector company, all governmental levels managed to be equally involved and cooperate. Additionally, each and every one of these governmental tiers had to act separately in decision-making because of the complexity of the project and the many administrative levels. So, the local government was responsible for the urban planning, the provincial government was responsible for fiscal problems, central government authorities would be responsible for any problem concerning land ownership. In any case the most helpful thing was that Basque and Spanish government stakeholders equally shared the expenses.94

“Bilbao Ria-2000” and everyone involved had been very insightful though, as they acted under the new rules of international marketing which sees the global competition to be based on culture, tourism and knowledge.95 They have chosen the area of Abandoibarra to be transformed and enhanced with new emblematic constructions and flagship buildings as Guggenheim Museum. But as the Deputy Mayor of Bilbao said very accurately “good architecture is not enough anymore: to seduce we need names”. The Museum was designed by the famous architect Frank Gehry.96 Another famous architect was the architect of the master plan concerning the whole Abandoibarra, César Pelli who designed the highest building of Bilbao, the Torre Iberdrola which stands next to Guggenheim Museum.97 Norman Foster designed another very important project for the city’s regeneration procedure, the new metro stations with the first line given to public use in 1995 and the second a few years later giving the boost to a general renovation through the national railway companies by modernising their systems. Santiago Calatrava designed the extension of Bilbao’s airport and an important footbridge98. Japanese architect Arata Isozaki designed the twin towers in Bilbao, the two tallest residential buildings in the Basque area, to mention just a few of the famous architects that had been employed in order to make

95 Gonzalez, op. cit.: p. 847.
98 Plöger op. cit.: p. 22.
Bilbao to stand globally as a key reference in art, culture and modern architecture in an urban revitalisation process\textsuperscript{99}.

As already seen above, the approach has been a holistic one focusing on a multilevel regeneration. Adding to all the above an environmental clean-up system had been established and operating since its completion of the project in 2006. The project involved the cleaning of the contaminated soil by the industrial use, the cleaning of the heavily polluted river, and the installation of a new public water sanitation system\textsuperscript{100}. Above all these, no one can argue, stands the great emblem of Bilbao, the Guggenheim Museum by Frank O’ Ghery. Built on a former shipyard area at the Riverside of the Nervión River connects the old city centre of Bilbao by another O’ Ghery’s creation, a 75m bridge known for its modern form. This project undoubtedly was an “instant hit” and rightfully gained the characterisation of Bilbao’s landmark. It contributed the most to the population and employment problems and to Basque government tax coffers as well as it deposits around €27m in Basque economy each year. Although the construction costed $89m, estimations show that five years after its creation and opening, museum’s contribution and economic impact locally is c. €168m, as if it has added 4,415 jobs in the area\textsuperscript{101}. Ever since its opening, more than one million people visit the museum each year. In a period of global crisis, the Museum managed to create 907 new full-time jobs and sustains approximately 3,853 jobs\textsuperscript{102}.

The Museum has changed the general perception of Bilbao among the tourists and the residents of the city and has contributed to the quality of life in the inner-city area. Moreover, according to several studies on the economic development of the area at issue, the museum and the overall approach of the revitalisation of Bilbao, has contributed the last 15 years, to the creation of several new jobs in various other sectors, business services, real estate, construction and manufacturing due to Museum’s attraction of visitors\textsuperscript{103}.

\textsuperscript{99} Gonzalez, op. cit.: p. 847.
\textsuperscript{100} Plöger op. cit.: pp. 21-22.
\textsuperscript{101} Michael, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{103} Plaza, op. cit.; Plaza & Haarich, op. cit.
Guggenheim succeeded on becoming a symbol for the use of architecture and flagship buildings. It has contributed tremendously in the revitalisation of the city and managed to stand as a masterpiece and icon of our days. Although Guggenheim Museum project is only one of the 71 actions that a group of experts decided to take, everybody now acknowledges that through the years, this Museum was to be one of the most, if not the most crucial and symbolic action, of all for Bilbao’s regeneration and revitalisation of its economy and injured image\textsuperscript{104}.

\textit{Helsingør Case Study}

Helsingør is another very bright example of branding a city and, in particular, a small-scale city. It presents an additional factor of great importance though, concerning the approach the people involved decided to adopt towards the implementation of the city’s regeneration project. Helsingør’s regeneration is an extraordinary paradigm and verification of everything the first part of this research tried to present and analyse, about the connectedness between city branding and

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Ibid.}
marketing strategies\textsuperscript{105}. This chapter will present and briefly analyse Helsingør’s approach to city branding and point to certain things and methods taken from the wide field of business and marketing strategies that have been proven to be very targeted and oriented to the successful branding of this small but important city of Denmark\textsuperscript{106}.

It is of primary importance though to begin this reference to Helsingør with a brief history of the city and to put it in its geographical context as well. Subsequently this research will present the crucial elements that contributed the most to the success story of Helsingør’s branding. These elements are the creation of a cultural quarter under the name of Culture Harbour Kronborg, in the form of a joint venture which includes the four main cultural foundations of the city. These foundations are Kronborg Castle, Danish Maritime Museum, Culture Yard, which will be presented more thoroughly as the main stem of this joint venture, and Helsingør Harbour\textsuperscript{107}.

\textit{A brief History of Helsingør}

Helsingør is a Medieval city founded in the 1420s, by the Danish King of the age. It lies on the north-eastern area of Denmark and the northeast coast of Zealand. It is built on the narrowest part of the straight known as the Sound, very close and opposite the Swedish City of Helsingborg. For centuries the Sound strait was responsible for the prosperity of Helsingør due to the fact that all foreign ships passing through the strait, no matter their route or purpose, had to pay a toll. Apart from the apparent economic benefit tolls constituted for the area of Helsingør, there was another profound profitable situation for the city. Whenever a ship passed through the strait, as mentioned above, it had to stop and tax their load, then inevitably helped


\textsuperscript{106} Karatzias & Lindqvist, 2019: p. 120.

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Ibid.}
into the development and growth of trade which was a very important factor for the town back then\textsuperscript{108}.

The prosperity of Helsingør lasted till the abolition of the tolls around 1800. Ever since then and until 1983 the city operated in the sphere of industrialisation with its shipyard as the main source of profits. The year of 1983, when the shipyard closed permanently, signals the beginning of Helsingør’s de-industrialisation and its entry into a crucial age of crisis in which the city’s citizens and the city itself seemed to have lost their identity\textsuperscript{109}.

\textit{Helsingør’s Regeneration}

In an effort to redefine the lost identity, the community of the city, decided to turn to the place marketing strategy. They decided to connect the powers of culture and tourism to change Helsingør’s image from an industrial shipyard place, or better still, de-industrialised place, in search of a new focal point, to a consistent cultural place with values like openness, responsibility, innovativeness, progressiveness and many more. Denmark had already established foundation and agencies to work on a project which should have been accomplished by the end of 1990s\textsuperscript{110}.

The aim was to create a brand image for the entire Denmark and for each smaller city that needed regeneration to attract tourists, based in elements that promoted the Danish lifestyle and nature, as cosiness, talent, freedom, design, oasis and more. It is clear now that Helsingør decided upon a fundamental change on their image according to the general idea of reimagining Danish places. That turned to be a co-ordinated marketing and brand procedure. One part of this project adopted from Denmark, which is a relatively small country, was based on the idea that smaller areas of a small country should firstly work on the definition and development of smaller attractions. Therefore, some places could very well focus on their entertainment facilities or the recreation of their parks or sport arenas etc., as it happened in Billund with Lego Park and Tivoli Park in Copenhagen, others to point on cultural events, or on


\textsuperscript{109} Karatzias & Lindqvist, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{110} Langer \textit{op. cit.}
festivals and special occasions as the famous Roskilde Festival which takes place every year in the beginning of the summer in Roskilde. Others, like Hillerød and Humlebaek, point to museums and architecture. A very known example is Louisiana Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Humlebaek. A small town between Copenhagen and Helsingør. Finally, other places could focus on their history especially when it’s connected with famous personages as is Hamlet for Helsingør\textsuperscript{111}. Helsingør is the home of Shakespeare’s Hamlet (the famous prince of Denmark) and every summer becomes the host of Shakespeare festival in Helsingør’s town centre making the city a pole of attractions to the broader area\textsuperscript{112}.

Helsingør, therefore, decided to follow this route and focus on a service-based strategy promoting the undoubtedly strong triangle of tourism - culture - art\textsuperscript{113}. The city focused on the creation of a cultural quarter which would be based on the unification of four very important institutions of the area, under the name of “Culture Harbour Kronborg”. These institutions are the very Helsingør Harbour itself, the Danish Maritime Museum, the Kronborg Castle and Culture Yard, as the basic element of this joint venture\textsuperscript{114}.

Culture Yard was chosen to be the focal point of this project because it comprises several usages. Apart from being the main library of the city it is a municipal space for concerts, it’s a theatre itself, it can host theatrical performances, events, exhibitions. Its location is very unique and graphic, in the old shipyard, connecting the past with modernity and innovation. A building of an extraordinary design made of glass and steel allowing visitors to admire the view towards Kronborg Castle (fig. 6) and the town, every day of the year regardless the weather\textsuperscript{115}. Helsingør is therefore another great paradigm of a city using “iconic architecture” buildings which means

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid: pp. 13-14.
\textsuperscript{113} Karatzias & Lindqvist, \textit{op. cit.}: p. 107.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid: p. 110.
that they have become brands for their city, as Bilbao, to boost residents’ feelings, to create new images, to attract more visitors or maintain residency and attract more\textsuperscript{116}.


The city of Helsingør used architecture as a tool to harmoniously mix medieval with contemporary world. By creating Culture Yard modern building, and putting it as a constituent element to Kronborg Castle, which today is declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Helsingør Harbour and Maritime Museum (fig. 7) place architecture exactly where it belongs\textsuperscript{117}.


\textsuperscript{116} Muratovski, 2012: p. 198; Karatzias & Lindqvist, \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{117} Karatzias & Lindqvist, \textit{op. cit.}
People of Helsingør, as well as people in every country and city in the world, have needs that they want to fulfil, aspirations to belong somewhere, and also an enormous desire to distinguish their identity. By using Culture Yard (figs. 8 and 9) as an iconic building and as a constituent element to all the rest, as discussed above, people of Helsingør ended up on having an environment with many usages but more crucially, an architectural environment where they can relate to emotionally and which absorbs them in a manner that it can become an integral part of their lives which is exactly what architecture should do for a successful city branding.

In the case of Helsingør though, right architectural decisions and well-designed cultural concepts were not the only factors of its success. Helsingør’s well branding is a result of a very well organised and shaped business plan. The implementation and execution of which was the outcome of close co-operation of many different stakeholders and managerial teams of the institutions. So, at the beginning of the 21st century, boosted by the ongoing development of branding all over Denmark, the administrators of municipality in Helsingør, conceived a city branding development project in the form of a business plan composed of mission, vision, goals, targets etc. This vision was combining first of all the reorganisation of a municipality which would be based on a new complete city management, built upon business organisation strategies away from the traditional functional separation of the sectors involved.

Under this spirit, they took advantage of the proximity, to the area at issue, of the famous and illustrious Louisiana Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art located only some kilometres away between Copenhagen and Helsingør, which was already a beacon for several art institutions around the world. The aim was to attract tourists, to maintain a constant flow of them but also to provide a unique scenery for citizens as well through the combination of Helsingør’s history and culture.

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118 Muratovski, op. cit.: p. 197.
119 Ibid.
120 Karatzias & Lindqvist, op. cit.: p. 119.
122 Ibid.
The target played an important role as it was very oriented and precise at focusing on the ability of the project to create a cultural compass where citizens and tourists would be able to enhance their knowledge, educate themselves, express their creativity, built and strengthen their identity and entertainment. A cultural lighthouse where people of all age, capacity or nationality, would be filled with life every hour of every day all year long. In order to achieve all the above the municipality directed the orientation of activities at the basic element of this cultural venture, the Culture Yard, delegating it to be responsible for the whole programming procedure and the organisation of events according to municipality’s targets and budget\textsuperscript{123}. This obviously meant the precise segmentation of the expenses, of course, the goals, strategies and obviously tasks, between the four cultural institutions that constitute this joint venture\textsuperscript{124}. Bearing in mind though that the administration level of each and every of these institutions was coming from different districts (Culture Yard and Helsingør Harbour are both municipal institutions whereas Maritime Museum is a private one and Kronborg Castle a national institution), one can assume that many difficulties, concerning the communication between all these institutions, could occur. The managing directors of all these institutions realised very early in the process that only a strict collaboration among all of them could lead to a harmonised relationship with stakeholders in Helsingør, a factor much needed for a regeneration based on culture and tourism\textsuperscript{125}.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid: p. 111.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid: p. 107.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid: p. 115.
The project was being very successful as some years after the opening Helsingør has to present a much greater income, as well as an increased budget to reuse on further development, more visitors during the year and so many other factors. The most important accomplishment though is that the project is perceived by the citizens in a very positive way and has an enormous positive impact in reframing and remodelling their attitude towards artistic productions and their high quality.\footnote{Ibid: p. 107.}
Conclusions

The analysis and presentation of the procedure of branding led to the estimation that there are obvious similarities between branding a product and branding a city / place. Though branding a place is a much more complex procedure than branding a simple product. Places and cities, in particular, have many different levels of managing procedures, many different administrative and managerial practices to control in order to get the desired effect. Cities include a vast variety of areas of interest that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to come up with a creation of one single identity. Moreover, a city needs to eliminate its potential symbols and choose just a few.

A brand embodies many attributes and beliefs that are its liaison with the products. In the same way, brands of a city or place are the forging associations between the city’s created brands and its recipients naming citizens, tourists, businesses, potential workers and residents.

In branding a product the starting point is to create a brand identity, then to work on a brand differentiation, ending up with the creation of brands personality, the so-called brand management. Converting it into city branding this essay has shown that brand differentiation is a city’s effort, through processes, to differentiate itself among other cities-competitors in the new competitive arena of an era of globalisation.

Branding though, is not only about creating many different brands / products in order to attract certain target groups, it is about targeting many different groups of markets. This is where the brand identity comes and forms the main attribute of the branding procedure of a city.

A city’s identity is being created through an initial branding procedure as the first crucial point with the purpose to attract many different target groups previously identified. The second most crucial step whereby the city will manage to maintain and sustain the changed identity, is the creation of a new image, exactly as a brand / product would have to establish. Bearing in mind that a brand identity is the way the owners—of this brand—want it to be perceived, the city’s identity is how its marketers
want the city’s recipients to perceive the city. Respectively, a city’s image is how the changed identity is actually perceived by its target groups.

This thesis has highlighted promotion strategy as the most critical point of the branding procedure, concerning a city after the determination of its identity and image. This strategy starts with the communication of the changed identity and image, following the communication model of Kavaratzis. The Primary communication, which includes all infrastructure, architectural constructions, museums, the urban web in general as well as the behavioural habits of residents and other groups. The Secondary communication is everything that includes advertising, public relations etc. Finally, the Tertiary communication is another very important step of the branding process because it is based on what is nowadays called “a word of mouth” communication. An extremely crucial tool due to the uprising of the social media, to allow the residents of a city to be involved by expressing their opinion on potential branding techniques and possible results, spreading their unique stories about their city, letting the marketers know what they really think, believe and feel about their city.

There are currently three main techniques that are commonly used by urban designers and marketers of a city, which together with the models of the three types of communication, were the tools, among other techniques and strategies, used in the three case studies of this paper. These techniques are “personality branding”, “flagship construction” and “event branding”.

After the research and study of London’s branding history, as well as Bilbao’s and Helsingør’s, the inference of this thesis is that in practice the three techniques at issue, if well managed, cannot only lead to the increase of attention to a place and therefore to its recognition, but to the creation of new attributes and liaisons between the place and its residents, tourists, investors etc. Attributes that will prove to be beneficial to the place’s economic and social development.

On the other hand, the essay has given emphasis to the great importance of the absolute co-operation between all levels of stakeholders, private or public, local or central in accomplishing this unique procedure of regenerating a city. The rebirth and renovation of a place is the only way to bring to life a deteriorated city or a despondent region. However, it is wise to remember that cities are not homogeneous entities, therefore inhabitants of a city differ in many ways, and their way of perceiving
an image is undoubtedly different as well. A branding technique needs to be highly targeted and thoroughly studied by the marketer according to each city’s different characteristics and needs.

A city is a multitasking living organism and branding a city, is a procedure that never ends. It is changing as the city changes with the years. It will never be static. Once it starts it will always be offering its involvement in every enhancing activity, in every attempt to improve the quality of life of the residents.

This research is not an exhaustive one, since the field of city branding is a vast one and much ink is yet to be shed and many things remain to be studied. This essay tried to present the intriguing complexity of city branding highlighting the fact that the city, as a liveable organism, poses specific and great challenges which cannot be addressed with the methodology of a product brand. Although all the techniques presented in this essay have been successfully used, with great examples the three case studies, more research has to be performed in the future in terms of the sustainability and the feasibility of the undertaking of such projects.

In the future, perhaps, it is even better if each city tries to focus more in one level of branding and not in a holistic and an overall approach. The global experience of the last decades proved that the hierarchy of cities is constantly changing and no city has simultaneously succeeded in all fields. Therefore, cities need to choose the field on which they want to be more successful and competitive, in an effort to survive in the continuous process of globalisation. The formation of a city or place brand, up until now, seems to be the same no matter if it is about a tourist destination or a residential and business area. Perhaps in the future new and different techniques will be created for different targeted areas.

After studying and dealing with all the case studies of this thesis, as well as the whole research on the issue of city branding, we could attempt to argue that there are several cities of the same range, with mostly Bilbao and Helsingør, especially in Greece, that could be benefited by the experience of these case studies. Indicatively we can mention a few like Katerini, a city of central Macedonia near Thessaloniki with a population of c. 58.000 people and an ideal location between mt. Olympos, Pieria mountains, and Thermaikos Gulf. Another one could be the city of Kavala in northern Greece and its significantly important seaport of eastern Macedonia. The city of Kavala
is already undergoing a branding procedure concerning its Central Square and Old Town but it could very well take as an example the city of Helsingør and its transformation of its port under the development and exploitation of the city's culture. Kavala has nothing to be jealous of this culture. Quite the contrary, its history and culture overflow and are more than enough to form a concrete base upon which a branding procedure could be established\textsuperscript{127}.

Moreover, Serres, another city with great history and culture in central Macedonia with a population of c. 60.000 people and a very active university community, could be benefited by a branding procedure, under the strategy of market segmentation, branding each target market separately\textsuperscript{128}. Moving further down in Greece we could refer to many other cities, in Peloponnese, for example, the city of Kalamata with its great traditional Greek product of olives and olive oil, as well as the city of Nafplio with its great history as the capital of Greece back in 1828 and its traditional settlement and port, constitute ideal conditions for a branding attempt\textsuperscript{129}. Ioannina, a city of Epirus in Western Greece could be another possible city branding target as it is also a university city\textsuperscript{130}.

The most challenging case though, would be the city of Thessaloniki. The co-capital of Greece, in the northern area of the country, is a 'vessel' of an enormous amount of ancient and byzantine history, and constitutes a uniquely fertile ground for a branding approach. Thessaloniki managed to be the Cultural Capital of Europe for the year of 1997, and has already undergone some stages of the branding process for the planning of this event. The only negative point during the procedure, very educative

\textsuperscript{127} Βικιπαίδεια, 2019, \textit{viz.} Κατερίνη. [Online] Available at: https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B7 [Accessed 07 02 2019].

\textsuperscript{128} Βικιπαίδεια, 2019, \textit{viz.} Σέρρες. [Online] Available at: https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A3%CE%AD%CF%81%CF%81%CE%B5%CF%82 [Accessed 07 02 2019].

\textsuperscript{129} Βικιπαίδεια, 2019, \textit{viz.} Καλαμάτα. [Online] Available at: https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%AC%CF%84%CE%B1 [Accessed 07 02 2019]; Βικιπαίδεια, 2019, \textit{viz.} Ναύπλιο. [Online] Available at: https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9D%CE%B1%CF%8D%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF [Accessed 07 02 2019].

\textsuperscript{130} Βικιπαίδεια, 2019, \textit{viz.} Ιωάννινα. [Online] Available at: https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%99%CF%89%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B1 [Accessed 07 02 2019].
though, was that despite the active support from the central government, many organisational difficulties over-clouded all the decision-making processes due to frequent changes of members of the personnel involved and of the board. Additionally, there was lack of co-operation between the authorities and stakeholders, and the citizens were not properly informed or not always engaged\textsuperscript{131}.

With the examples of Bilbao and Helsing\o r in mind, Thessaloniki has great potential to be the next paradigm of a well-executed city branding plan. Its uncountable treasure of history and culture which can be sensed everywhere in the city, with the combination of its location in the Gulf of Thermaikos and its significant port, on the slopes of Kedrinos Lofos (hill) and surrounded by a suburban forest on the north and east etc., offer the city enormous amount of qualifications for being an attractive destination for tourists, new business and a wonderful place of residence for the citizens. Having being taught from the past, Thessaloniki should opt for a total co-operation and harmonious coordination between the authorities and stakeholders that will be involved and responsible in the case of a new branding attempt.

Additionally, the city needs to allow the citizens to participate in any branding process by creating and establishing an electronic platform similar to \textit{Pluggy}, or through specific questionnaires, and express feelings, ideas, histories, expectations and anything that someone might desire for their city. Of course, there are several individual sectors that should be taken into consideration such as location for potential new businesses, development of new possible industrial activity and so on, but Thessaloniki’s location is ideal even for this holistic approach as it has an already configured industrial area at Sindos, away from the city’s urban web. The most crucial factor of Thessaloniki though is its culture and history as said before. Thessaloniki has an already established image and identity with all the known sites that it owns, as its many roman and byzantine monuments \textit{e.g.} Rotonda, the Old City Walls, the church of Agios Dimitrios, the temple of Prophitis Elias, the bath facilities of Upper City (Ano Poli), the arch of Galerius to name just a few\textsuperscript{132}.

This existing image and identity of the city though can be managed even further to promote the uncountable possibilities of Thessaloniki. Fortunately, there

\textsuperscript{131} Asprogerakas, \textit{et al.}, 2007, pp: 3-6.
\textsuperscript{132} Lantitsou \textit{et al.}, 2017: pp. 1206-1210.
currently, are numerous remarkable efforts by several scientific groups of people who are trying to create a thematic brand of the city which will act as an attractor to the world and anyone who might want to learn more on its history and any other aspect of Thessaloniki.

The most characteristic and recent example is the foundation of an organisation named “Byzantine Thessaloniki” in November of 2018. It is the collaboration of Thessaloniki’s Trade Association with the Aristotle University of the city and the Sacred Metropolis of Thessaloniki. Their main target is the promotion of the historical past of the city in order to be exploited for future touristic development. Through the continuous organisation of events, “Byzantine Thessaloniki”, focuses on further development of many other forms of tourism as religious, educational etc.133

Actions like this, together with the techniques presented with this thesis can be acted as a beacon to motivate several other smaller pillars of Thessaloniki as the Jewish or Armenian communities to create their branding strategies and act as smaller teams of the branding procedure in a general and wider one, that of Thessaloniki. All these could be a subject for future further research.

One thing in this process is indisputable; City Branding has come to change the way all people perceive places in an overall view and, by its human-centred approach has put in priority the enhancement of the life quality of every person involved with the aim to build a more prosperous and sustainable future.

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