The Role of Urban Design on the Branding of Urban Space

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this research paper was to determine the role of urban space design on cities' competitiveness in the process of globalization. In the era of globalization and with the rush of investors to find attractive places for investment, cities are becoming the focal points for investors and the urban managers, who need to present a variety of attractions to draw financial capital and be able to compete with other cities. But, it seems these days, capital and time is wasted due to the lack of coherent theoretical foundations regarding the role of urban design professionals in making cities and urban spaces more attractive. This study explains and discusses the role of urban design in the process of making cities attractive in order to compete, by using a descriptive approach and by studying and reviewing relevant scientific resources and researches. The outcome of this study shows that today the relationship between urban design and urban economic conditions are reversed, and this phenomenon, based on the aims that have been mentioned in this article, has created a new model of urban space management in order to attract investors and develop urban growth.

Keywords: *Competitiveness, Marketing, Branding, Urban space.*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and development of technologies and the mobility of capital, a new division of labor is possible in the world so that economic activities are in search of places with lower expenses and more production capability. This issue has made the phenomenon of cities' competitiveness to be a fascinating subject for many scholars in various sciences. In these areas, in order for urban managers to create attractiveness and increase their cities' competitive strength, have taken steps toward entrepreneurialism that have resulted in city and urban space marketing.city marketing creates a brand for the city that introduces a new image of urban spaces to the people.In this process, and under the pressure and requirements of the market, the urban space in order to attract capital, becomes a commodity and its municipal managers see themselves as commercial managers of companies, who look at urban design as a tool to sell urban spaces. Ambiguity in the role of urban design to change people's conceptions of a city and urban space on behalf of managers and investors have created pressure on the urban designers to focus excessively on the formal aspects of projects. Previous studies have tried to examine the mechanisms of economic and financial methods

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in the field of urban economic and urban management of city competitiveness, and from their point of view the role of urban design was limited to strengthening city facades. On the other hand, urban design sciences also has not have the necessary impact on the subject of the city competitiveness because it has paid little attention to the root causes of this issue. Therefore, the main question of this study is what is the position and the role of urban design in this process and what is its relationship with other factors of the marketing process of urban spaces, and particularly with urban managers.In this study, initially the fundamentals of city marketing and then its effect on the branding of urban spaces were analyzed and then the role of urban design in this process. This study has strived to analyze methods that are used for physical qualities of places in the process of making the city attractive.

Globalization and cities' competition

The development of technologies and capital flow has made new labor divisions possible globally so that economic activities are in search of places with lower prices and more production abilities . "This process, along with reduced state aid to cities, has forced local politicians and administrators to take up the role of entrepreneurialism in the economic growth

of their cities.

Many urban planning agencies now work as economic development agencies so to attract reputable businesses for investment in their cities . This fundamental change in the political economical situations of cities in the production process and management of urban space has also had profound effects "(Schmidt & Nemeth, 2010, 454)." The result of this change in the distribution of economic power is the emergence of the "phenomenon of competition" among cities, which is an attractive subject for many scientists" (Kotler et al., 1993, 4)." It is noteworthy that currently competition between major cities on both sides of the economic hierarchy has increased; developed cities now compete financially in Europe and on an international level, and in the developing cities, competition for survival is essential "(Friedrichs and Dangschat , 1994,5). "The general consensus by urban planners and designers is that the positive benefits of competition in the form of entrepreneurialism for economic development could be won. So now the perspective of many cities, with the exertion of entrepreneurialism as a new approach has been adapted and modified" (hall & hubard 1998, 19).

"One of these factors which affect the competitiveness to attract investment and resources is the quality of urban space" (Knox,2005). "Hence, in the competition to attract investment, cities have attempted to spend to help commoditize the culture, with the aim of competitiveness of the city along with the use of features of art "(Jones, 2006, 6). "Furthermore, in discussions of cities' competitiveness, the literature shows that there is a great interest in this issue and in issues regarding the mechanisms and major development policies that cities have in their prospect. These policies include extension activities (e.g., the marketing of a city) or the research and infrastructure" (Budd, 1998, 663).

Marketing and place

"Marketing a place should be seen as a strategic process with a clear correlation with local economic development
and competitiveness of the city "(Metaxas, 2002, 2).

"The most common definition of marketing a city or location that can be offered is: "marketing a space plan for deals with the needs of target markets. This process is successful if the following two parameters are considered:

1. Residents and investors are satisfied with purchasing goods and services from that place.

2. Expectations of potential target markets (investors and visitors) are met " (Kotler and Asplund, 1999, 125).

"The goal of marketing the city is creating strategies to promote the entire area of the town or city for specific activities. In other words, the process of marketing the city is the response to those problems of a city that we want to solve" (Smyth, 1994)."Process components of marketing a city or urban space including the following:

1. production system = city (forces and internal dynamisms)

2. city image= manufacturing goods

3. product components = city character - economic activity - natural environment - services - recreation - culture - tourism ...

4. urban distinctive features = features that can make the competitive benefits of a city.

The most important issue is that the distinctive features of each city, in essence, is a "distinctive product" within them.Any thought of a city, more or less, is a complex set of different goods, so distinct that they each require a separate strategic process" (Metaxas, 2002, 12).

"So in marketing the urban space and city, the overall strategic development plan should be presented, in which special emphasis is on two factors, decisions and market expectations of target markets"(Needham and Dransfield, 1995, 278)."However, it should also be noted that although the market approach is somehow a common thought among experts, this notion should include strategies for different cities because every city is different with specific features for itself. Therefore, the common view in marketing has limited range and only includes original elements"(Smyth, 1994,15).

Urban image and marketing

"The important issue in marketing impact on creating a new concept of urban space, is the need to coordinate and combine the criteria set by the market, which is also due to its influence upon the total audience's image. The reality is that we face perceptions and impressions of the people of the city, so the marketing of the city does not only concern itself" (hubbard & hall, 1998)."Considering the fact that all the magnificent cities are in the perception and image of the people of the city, we can conclude that the actual image of the city needs to be planned "(Vermeulen, 2002, 10) and then to market all that is within the city, all that takes place in the city and all that happens in the city for creating messages"(Kavaratzis, 2008, 41). "So it might be thought that entrepreneurialism for city image by the extremes in advertising and display reaches its best to provide a new notion of urban space and the urban look . So image of the target city is marketing of activities of city"(Hubbard and Hall ,1998, 7). "Market performance depends a lot on city structure, communication and management of the image of the city. So, commercialization should not be more than acting smart as an important part of planning and representation" (firat & venkatesh, 1993, 246)." In marketing the city, one should keep in mind how people as customers encounter the city, how they feel about it and assess its physical and symbolic elemenst and ultimately how the final assessment of their city is done"(Kavaratzis, 2008, 52). Therefore, to achieve distinction, the symbol of total values and feelings in urban space should become a symbol of unity and oneness of urban space to achieve the same effect on the thought of addressee, so the same expression of thought intended to citizens through the atmosphere are created in the same city or urban space and the key element in the strategy is to be distinctive"(Hatch and Schultz, 2003, 1044).

Marketing and place brand ing

"A brand is a distinct product or service that is made distinct by the relative superiority of its position in competition with other goods or services and by it personality that includes a distinctive combination of functional features and symbolic values" (Hankinson and Cowking, 1993, 10). "Making a brand is a subtle process of selecting and integrating the unique characteristics of goods or services because they are assumed to be the foundation for services or products with added value (Knox and Bickerton 2003). "Brands can also be used for the regions and cities"(Balmer and Gray, 2003, 972)."Like a brand, cities satisfy the performance, symbolic and emotional needs so they are required to be coordinated into a single position. Branding is a good starting point for the marketing of a city as well as a proven framework for management of the city's image" (Kavaratzis, 2008, 39)."Considering that the main purpose is to market the image of the city, which needs to be planned, to be managed and marketed, so city branding is a theoretical and practical approach and is performed correctly" (Vermeulen, 2002)."Branding urban space brings it to the center of ideas and perceptions, its decisions are designed to shape urban space and its future. Brand management of urban space is an attempt to influence mental maps of citizens so that they are good for the present situation and future needs of a good place. Similar to the way trade goods are marketed, branding urban spaces are trying to use similar methods and the result of this is the creation of a new meaning and idea of urban space(Julier, 2005, 689). The above are tools for branding urban spaces and cities should be placed in a single process and in one physical expression to change the people's image of the city and its urban space.

Branding the urban space

"A place needs to be differentiated through unique brand identity if it wants to be, first, recognized as existing, secondly, perceived in the minds of customers as possessing qualities superior to those of competitors, and thirdly, consumed in a manner equal with the objectives of the place. We can accept places as brandable products if their intrinsic and distinctive characteristics are useable as products for commercialization" (Kavaratzis, 2008, 58).Such initiatives for urban space branding is implementing leading projects that intervene in specific areas of the city based on branding objectives and are being manifested by the project, for example, the watershed complex in Bristol, the Birmingham International Centre the and Theatre Village of Newcastle, UK. (Smyth, 1994, 89) .

"The limitation of using the methodology of urban space branding to create a new identity is known. The subject of multiplicity of identities is an example that refers to the fact that the brand concept may be desirable for some people, but at the same time may be undesirable for others. But, is one urban space able to address the distinct needs and expectations of visitors, investors and residents alike?" (Kavaratzis, 2008, 136). " Fundamentally, the urban area or places' characteristics

are not similar to a single product. In fact, they are a collection of identities and activities in which their total identity is not the sum of a simple algebraic component, and is contrary to the branding processes of a common commercial product"(Bennett and savani , 2003, 72).

Urban Design and Branding Urban Space

"In the globalization process, public spaces also undergo similar major changes in form, usage, and management" (Marcuse and van Kempen:2005)."Urban space with excellent physical characteristics is an important element in urban attractions. In addition, the physical environment plays an important role in city marketing by affecting urban concepts with its physical features, which is what branding is trying to achieve. In order to present an image of a diverse and international city, which is what branding is looking for, we must use the physical form of public spaces and buildings that the citizens and tourists are facing and using "(OECD, 2007, 51). "Therefore, we must use attractive urban design and architecture for branding a city. The use of architecture and urban design for city branding is sometimes called "hard-branding", and has become an important feature in place marketing for branding a city"(OECD, 2007, 35). "However, today, from the point-of-view of the logic of city competitiveness, it can be concluded that urban space is a commodity for sale. Therefore, in these conditions, if an urban designer plays a role to create an image of the city and urban space that result in the sell of the city, then he is faced with the degradation of his profession. Urban design may lose its interactive nature and social effect in contradiction between economic programs (exchange of goods and services) and social programs (collective identity)."We must be careful that the role of urban design is to add knowledge to the links between public perceptions and policies, and the urban designer can offer the perception of what will happen in the future"(Holden and Iveson, 2003, 57)."Thus, in connection with the promotional role of municipal officials to place their city on the international map as a distinctive place for investment, urban marketing city must be done and the urban designer plays a major role in this regard. In other words, many cities are trying to change their industrial image to a cleaner city image and urban design holds a pivotal role in helping city officials to reproduce this image" (Madanipour, 2006,180). Urban design, in the format of leading projects, acts as a platform for the emergence of all goals of city marketing and transfers city branding messages. The assessments of people and investors regarding city branding are performed from these projects; therefore, providing the urban space with specific identity, and yet consistent with international competitive conditions must be considered. "What is certain is that today metropolitan cities have a strong relationship with attracting high levels of services and new ways of using urban design. Based on this type of development, the creation of prestige and symbolic urban landscapes such as buildings and open spaces in cities are dramatically more visible. By using urban design

we can establish monuments, symbols, signs and images in the urban spaces of the city that are able to strengthen the city fabric and therefore to attract high-level activities of the service sectors." Urban design is able to comply with the market's taste or through guiding design creativities to control the market taste. In recent decades the novel use of urban design for development goals are involved by maintaining urban spaces in cities" (Knox, 2005)."City managers and designer can create and present new forms of urban spaces to give them strength. In fact, the restless nature of modern capital has forced them to be such" (Ericksona and Robertsa, 1997, 58).

RESULTS
Successful urban space branding cases

The most important initiatives in the areas of architectural and urban design for city marketing are flagship projects, which has led to the establishment of a new image of investment capability between their own audiences.

Large scale flagship urban regeneration projects have been a favoured tool for economic growth and city boosterism by civic leaders for more than two decades . "Flagships can come in the form of convention centres, stadiums, luxury shopping malls, themed districts, iconic structures, waterfronts, aquariums, museums, and high-end hotels or urban spases. Their target audiences tend to be outsiders: investors, tourists or potential high-income residents, rather than existing urban residents. Partly because of this, they play a central role in city marketing or re-branding campaigns; many serve as the new iconic image of the city. A flagship development's role in this re-imaging is to serve as the iconic image or landmark that is saleable and marketable; flagships such as Baltimore's Inner Harbour have become the new symbols of a dynamic, vibrant post-industrial city.They aim to be symbols of success that cast an image of innovation and creativity in the midst of a revitalised and restructured city" (Doucet, 2007, 9). Successful examples are cited below:

"Frank Gehry's *Guggenheim Museum* in Bilbao. The investments in the building of the Museum have generated huge success in changing the image of Bilbao"(Jansson and Power, 2006,18).

"*The Millennium Dome* project in London is one of the best-known projects using architecture to celebrate an event in the history of a city and a nation. Greenwich (the site of the Dome) The event and building was to symbolize a dynamic and modern Britain and put London firmly at the centre of the global frenzy surrounding the millennium.Indeed the architect of the Dome project, Richard Rogers,had a similar experience from the building of the Pompidou Centre in Paris "(Jansson and Power, 2006, 25).

"*Potsdamer Platz* in Berlin owes his new image and success as an urban entertainment destination to the presence and actions of DaimlerChrysler and Sony, who, in turn, can profit from the particularity of the place, its privileged location,historical importance, and experiential quality" (Hoeger, 2007, 2).

"*The Hyatt Regency Hotel* is located in Birmingham across Broad Street from the International Convention Centre.The impact of the hotel on the International Convention Centre was to reinforce its credibility in the market, thus reinforcing its flagship function. The Hyatt has had a positive role as a flagship in attracting further investment in its wake in the Broad Street area and in the hotel sector. It has added to the image of Birmingham as a vital city, second only to London. In other words, it has added to the efforts to reposition the area and city as having service international orientation. The Copthorne Hotel, another glass design, is located close to Paradise Forum at the other end of Centenary Square, which is the main public space between the ICC and Hyatt and the city centre" (Smyth, 1994,159)

Fig. 1: Main view of Guggenheim Museum
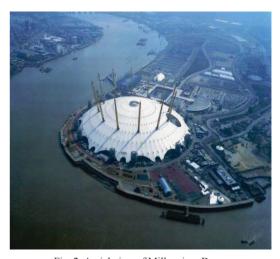(Source: www.guggenheim-bilbao)

Fig. 2: Aerial view of Millennium Dome
(Source: wwp.millennium-dome.com/dome/)

Fig. 3: Aerial view of Potsdamer Platz
(Source: www.aviewoncities.com/berlin/potsdamerplatz.htm)

Fig. 4: Aerial view across Centenary Square to the Hyatt, International Convention Centre, National Indoor Arena and Brindley Place in Birmingham (Source: Smyth, 1994, 110)

CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization and in the framework of city competitiveness, city managers see themselves as managing directors of commercial companies that must use the role of the market to raise funds for urban development. In order to market the city, urban managers must present a new image, which is what branding is trying to achieve, so that physical form of urban spaces and buildings became attractive for investors and tourists (Table1). Branding the urban space by urban design is causing the establishment of a new identity of citizen public culture with regard to economic and commercial needs. In the framework of this new identity and in the line of globalization, global taste can be satisfied by ignorance of local identity. Also, it can be used as an opportunity for presenting a new local identity. In this respect, only those branded urban spaces are successful that are designed differently and are able to create a new identity that links the goals of commercial company brands and public cultural interests. In this case, branding an urban space is a win-win strategy based on this indication that establishing a good quality urban space requires the balanced involvement of all the stockholders in the designing process and during the life of the project, even it could potentially benefit from it and have attachment. In other words, to have lively urban spaces, the involvement of both social and cultural expectations and economic growth must be guaranteed.

Table 1: The situation of urban design in urban space branding

	Stages of process	concept	responsible
1	Globalization and competitiveness of Cities	Exploring competitive advantages of cities in national and transnational levels	Urban managers
2	City marketing	Presenting city potentials and attractions to investors and tourists	Urban managers and urban designers
3	Urban spaces branding	Implementing new and distinctive image of urban spaces to investors and tourists	Urban designers and urban managers
4	Flagship projects	Designing urban spaces with distinctive character	Urban designers

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