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THE RELATIONS BETWEEN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND NATION BRANDS: AN INVESTIGATION OF NATION BRANDING IN TURKEY

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PREFACE

In the last two decades, nation branding has become a discursive asset in politics due to the increasing significance of public opinion in countries' ability to compete in a globalised economic and political setting. Due to the multiplicity of incentives to brand nations, this subject matter has received extensive attention from both academics and practitioners. The first part of this Working Paper delineates the extant theoretical and academic debates on the relations between public diplomacy and nation brands, and sheds light on how nation brands are deployed to influence foreign public opinions. The second part delineates the stages of nation branding which illustrates the complexity of the nation branding process while drawing attention to the importance of economic, political, and cultural assets. The third part of this Paper focuses on the making of Brand Turkey as well as the recent projects and campaigns carried out in this scope. Dr. Tecmen's discussion reveals that there are both economic and political incentives to brand Turkey, and the diversity of the campaign carried out by the government illustrates their significance to formulating a unique, articulate, and competitive nation brand. More importantly, this study demonstrates that innovative approaches to diplomacy, particularly in terms of state-to-public communications, have become essential to ascertaining countries' distinctive characteristics derived from their national assets. This Working Paper partly derives from Dr. Tecmen's research for the CoHERE project, which is an EU-funded Horizon 2020 project titled "Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe".

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HORIZON 2020

“Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe” (CoHERE)



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RESEARCHERS EXPLORE WHAT MAKES US FEEL ‘EUROPEAN’

The things that make us feel European are coming under the spotlight in the research led by Newcastle University. Istanbul Bilgi University’s European Institute is a part of the consortium.

Investigators look at how heritage brings people from countries across the continent together as ‘European’ – and how it can drive them apart.

The €2.5 million Critical Heritages (CoHERE) project is the largest and most comprehensive study to date to explore the differences in how people, groups and institutions across Europe use the past to create a sense of belonging or non-belonging.

Museums: The three-year study, which began in April 2016, covers a broad range of topics including how museums present the past and how ‘non-official’ portrayals of the past such as historical re-enactments contribute to our cultural identity.

Music, Dance, Languages and Tourism: It looks at music and dance, as well as language and tourism. Researchers also investigate how politicians and the media use the past, and how these influence attitudes towards Islam, and minority groups across Europe.

Food Heritage: The project explores food as heritage. From traditional specialties that have protected designation of origin status such as Feta cheese or Melton Mowbray pork pies to differences in eating or cooking practices, the study investigates how different cuisines shape perceptions of the past and identity throughout Europe.

Participants

Istanbul Bilgi University European Institute: Funded by the European Union, the crosscutting study involves 12 partners across nine European countries, including the European Institute of

Istanbul Bilgi University led by Prof. Dr. Ayhan Kaya (Istanbul Bilgi University European Institute, Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence). The research team looks at heritage and identity across diverse European territories to see how different aspects of cultural heritage influence contemporary identities across Europe and if a coherent European identity really exists.

Policy Recommendations: The CoHERE project uncovers how different perspectives on heritage and cultural politics across Europe relate to each other. From this, the research team will develop a series of policy recommendations for ways in which these various perspectives may be used to promote greater cohesion.

Consortium members

1	Newcastle University (coordinator)	UK
2	Aarhus University	Denmark
3	University of Amsterdam	Netherlands
4	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens	Greece
5	Istanbul Bilgi University, European Institute	Turkey
6	University of Bologna	Italy
7	Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design	Denmark
8	Heriot-Watt University	UK
9	Latvian Academy of Culture	Latvia
10	European Network of Cultural Centres	Belgium
11	POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews	Poland
12	Tropenmuseum	Netherlands

Istanbul Bilgi University European Institute CoHERE Research Team

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CoHERE Work Package 2

“The use of the past in political discourse and the representation of Islam in European Museums”

Istanbul Bilgi University’s European Institute is the lead beneficiary for Work Package 2 (WP2) titled “The use of the past in political discourse and the representation of Islam in European Museums”. UNEW, and UVA are IBU’s partners in this WP. WP2 is led by Prof. Dr. Ayhan Kaya (team leader of IBU), with Chiara De Cesari (UVA), Wayne Modest (SNMW) and Chris Whitehead (UNEW).

WP2 investigates the use of past in political discourse and the representation of Islam in European museums investigates public/popular discourses and dominant understandings of a homogeneous ‘European heritage’ and the exclusion of groups such as minorities from a stronger inclusion into European society. It focuses on the position of ‘Others’ within or outwith European heritages and identities, attending particularly to the place and perception of Islam and to legacies of colonialism in contemporary European societies.

Aims and Objectives

WP2’s objectives are to critically review and theorise key concepts, such as ‘European heritages’, ‘European identity’ and ‘collective memory’ in relation to academic literature, museum and heritage practice, value cultures, politics and policy and EU structures and agendas. In this scope, Prof. Dr. Ayhan Kaya (IBU team leader) completed the report titled “Work Package 2: The use of past in political discourse and the representation of Islam in European Museums, The rise of populist extremism in Europe”. The report explored the relationship between the politics of fear and proliferating civilizational discourses of European heritage. The literature review focused on the cases of France’s The Front National, Germany’s Alternative für Deutschland, Greece’s LAOS, Golden Dawn and SYRIZA, Italy’s Five Star Movement, The Netherlands’ Party for Freedom, and Turkey’s Justice and Development Party. In doing so, Kaya explored the literature on the mobilisation of cultural discourses in the political use of fear. The report highlighted that populist politics deploys politics of fear by stigmatizing and securitizing migrants, deploying and perpetuating Islamophobia, and Euroscepticism, and using nativism as an exclusionary dis-

course rooted in the colonial past. As such, the ‘Other’ is often portrayed as a threat to the nationalist sentiments. This relates to the rise populism as a political style in Europe, which also exploits cultural heritage.

The other objective of the WP2 is to explore how and why relationships with and attitudes to the past inform identity positions, social orderings and moral values in Europe. In regard to this objective, Kaya found that populist political leaders often utilise the past, religion, culture, myths and memories in their rhetoric to attract the masses. In relation to these findings, in-depth interviews with 20 private individuals who identify with populist parties or movements, were carried out in 6 countries. The interviews explored the strategies that populist movements and political parties deploy in their communications with private citizens. The fieldwork also investigated individuals’ opinions on multiculturalism, immigration, globalisation and the European Union. The interviews were designed to not only explore the individuals’ views but also their awareness of the current conflicts and crisis the European countries are facing.

Preliminary findings for WP

Preliminary findings indicate that social, economic and financial difficulties lead to the escalation of fear and prejudice *vis-a-vis* the “others” who are ethno-culturally and religiously different. While there are various approaches to understanding the rise of populist movements and parties across Europe and elsewhere, leaders often use common strategies to communicate with their supporters. These include opposing present institutional arrangements, opposing a mandated political establishment and the political elite, taking on marginal positions, as well as polarising and personalising politics. As such, populist leaders emphasise a homogeneous national identity, and nativism, thereby producing a political discourse that attempts to isolate the “others”. The fieldwork study aimed to explore the effects of such discourse on private individuals who support populist movements or parties. The data from the fieldwork sheds light on the types of communication strategies that attract these individuals, while also exploring how platforms, such as social media, are utilised in reaching out to the public. In doing so, the fieldwork goes beyond national politics and investigate private individuals’ views on the EU and European heritage. The questions for the in-depth interviews also explored how citizens see the relations between national cultural heritage, and values, and those of Europe.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND NATION BRANDS: AN INVESTIGATION OF NATION BRANDING IN TURKEY

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Abstract

This paper investigates the theoretical relations between public diplomacy and nation branding while exploring the different approaches to branding. Based on an examination of the extant literature on the relations between these concepts, I explore the strategic importance of nation brand identities in gaining competitive advantage in economic and political fields. Through contextualising nation brands as public diplomacy instruments, I stress the importance of deploying soft power assets to create distinct and appealing identities. As such, I illustrate that nation branding is an economically-driven process which is also a response to the homogenising effects of globalisation. In turn, utilising nation branding as a strategic means of formulating a country's soft power assets is an essential to public diplomacy practices. In order to illustrate how these theoretical relations are realized in Turkey, I will then explore the making of Brand Turkey while situating it in the Justice and Development Party (JDP) government's public diplomacy efforts.

Biography

Ayşe Tecmen is a researcher for the EU-funded Horizon 2020 project titled "Critical Heritages" (CoHERE) at Istanbul Bilgi University's European Institute. She has a PhD in Politics from the University of Bristol. She graduated from Emory University in the USA with a BA degree in Political Science and received her MA degree in European Studies with High Honours from Istanbul Bilgi University. Her fields of interest include public diplomacy, nation branding, commercial nationalism, culture, identity formation, tourism and European identity.

Introduction

Nation branding is a global development that requires countries to take charge of their brand identity to survive international social, cultural, political and economic competition. It is a complex task of reduction. Nation brands embody the characteristics of a given country in a straightforward fashion, through visual, verbal and written cues created in the scope of a campaign. These cues are embedded with meanings and then conveyed to selected audiences. Nation branding is an opportunity to construct a powerful political and economic asset in international relations. It provides each country with the opportunity to (re)present itself through: 1) tourism promotion; 2) promotion of the country's culture and heritage; 3) export of domestic product brands (national brands); 4) people (individuals' interactions with people from the said country); 5) governance (stability of domestic and foreign policies); and 6) efforts to attract foreign investment and immigration. Nation brands can target both internal (domestic) and external (foreign) audiences (Volcic and Andrejevic 2011: 600), or exclusively external audiences, through the projection of outward images that conjure up certain ideas about the branded nation (Van Ham 2001).

Although nation brands have become discursive assets in international politics, it is an understudied field in academic research. As I discuss in this paper, the process of branding is very complex, and it requires extensive planning, resources, and access to communications networks. There are also various stakeholders that demonstrate diverse interests and motivations. Nonetheless, the process of nation branding is often presumed to be solely economically motivated. This stems from the explicitly-expressed economic incentives that guide nation brands, which include attracting investment and enhancing exports. This leads practitioners and academics alike to neglect the political incentives guiding the formulation nation brands.

Nation brands have become significant instruments of public diplomacy, especially due to the growing emphasis on preserving national differences to counter the effects of globalisation. To clarify, public diplomacy, as an instrument of foreign policy, is a vital means of reaching out to foreign publics and manage their opinions by relaying the "story" of a country. Soft power and nation brands are terms that consistently emerge in contemporary public diplomacy efforts because they are both rooted in managing a country's culture, heritage, and history. In doing so, the common objective is to construct an external image that will increase a country's appeal for foreign audiences.

This paper provides an in-depth overview of the extant literature on the theoretical possibilities to address the gap in the research on the political impetus on branding. In doing so, I first discuss the extant literature on public diplomacy highlighting the role of globalisation. I argue that public diplomacy, as an instrument of foreign policy, is a vital means of reaching out to foreign publics and manage their opinions by relaying the "story" of a country. Soft power and nation brands are terms that consistently emerge in contemporary public diplomacy efforts. I clarify that soft power is rooted in a country's culture, heritage, and history, and that it is public diplomacy efforts employ soft power by formulating nation brands that aim to increase a country's appeal for external audiences.

Second, I discuss the extant nation branding literature and explain the multiplicity of dimensions that aid in the formulation of the brand identity. I do not investigate the consumers' perspective or consumption of these formulations. Nonetheless, I argue that branding is a consumption-driven process which is multifaceted. In doing so, I briefly discuss corporate branding to complement my overview of the mechanics behind nation branding. This section discusses nation branding as the sum of all government efforts across the various branding dimensions. As such, it does not discuss city brands, which are micro-level representations of nation brands particularly in the context of culture and heritage, and tourism.

To complement the discussion on the theoretical approaches, the third part of this paper explores the making of Brand Turkey while situating it in the Justice and Development Party government's public diplomacy efforts. In doing so, this section illustrates the significance of nation brands to developing countries.¹

1. Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Theoretical Possibilities

1.1. Public Diplomacy: Managing Opinions

Traditional understandings of diplomacy refer to official relations between the governments of sovereign states. Recent approaches to diplomacy, on the other hand, have a narrower definition of such practices.

Diplomacy is an essentially political activity... Its chief purpose is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies without resort to force, propaganda, or law. It follows that diplomacy consists of communication between officials designed to promote foreign policy (Berridge 2010: 1).

The origins of public diplomacy can be traced to the United States of America in the 1960s. USA experienced both national and international turmoil due to the Vietnam War, Cuban missile crisis, the civil rights debate, assassination of John F. Kennedy, as well as student protests. Combined with the post-Cold War emphasis on public opinion and the effects of globalization, USA developed a new approach to diplomacy. Public diplomacy emerged as an auxiliary of traditional diplomacy efforts, which are state-to-state communications, as a way of addressing the gap between states and publics. Significantly, globalization has been accompanied by a proliferation of communications technologies, which softened the distinction between the national and the international. To clarify, the separation of national policies and international affairs became less apparent as individuals' access to information, and subsequently awareness, increased. This meant that in addition to other states, governments had to interact with foreign publics to influence their citizens.

Public diplomacy, situated within the broader foreign policy practice, is the theoretical home of nation branding. It is a means of managing the international environment (Cull 2009: 14), because it is "a country's effort to share a coherent and convincing account of its own story with the rest of the world", which partially relies on a country's soft power capacity (Kalin 2011: 8). It comprises of governments' official communications with external audiences to convey "its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies" (Tuch 1990: 3). Therefore, public diplomacy serves as "the public face' of traditional diplomacy" (Wang 2005: 91). Public diplomacy as a systematic and strategic task merges nation branding and political marketing because it requires the application of marketing practices in politics.

¹ Earlier versions of this paper have been presented in workshops and panels organised in the scope of the EU-funded Horizon 2020 project titled "Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe" (Co-HERE). Parts of this paper were presented in the following events: a) The Role of Geography in Turkey's Nation Brand" presented in Geography Matters: European Identities in Curricula and Heritage, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greece, 23/24 March 2017, b) "Popülizm: Aşırı Sağ, Ana Akım?" (Populism: Far-right or mainstream?), Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey, 27 December 2017, c) "Turkey as a 'Cradle of Civilization': Exploiting the Past to denote a Multicultural Present" presented in "Education and heritage in multicultural Europe", Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 9 March 2018.

Public diplomacy efforts are categorized as old/traditional or new public diplomacy. The emergence of new public diplomacy is a result of governments' changing approach to communication, as well as the developments in information technologies (Vickers 2004). In this sense, globalization has also been a factor in the development of new understandings of diplomacy because it amplified the role of public opinion in international relations. Traditional public diplomacy relies on the communication of ideologies, interests and information about the country through generalized messages that advance national interests. This is done to persuade foreign publics and manage their opinions by informing them about national ideologies (Melissen 2005b; Szondi 2008: 11). New public diplomacy, on the other hand, communicates the values of, and ideas about, a country, to fulfil wider aims of collaboration and attraction through segmented messages (Szondi 2008: 11-13.). The main difference between the two is the idea of soft power, which assumes that culture, political values and policies can be used to attract others to harvest their support. New public diplomacy and soft power both construct non-military power as an emerging source of strength. The relations between these two concepts are intricately woven by both scholars and practitioners/diplomats. Soft power is also a significant concept in diplomacy practices because in the post-9/11 world especially in "environments marked by high levels of intercultural tension and conflict, such as those in which we now find ourselves" (Hocking 2005: 28).

Public diplomacy refers to two-way communications situated in state-to-public information flows, including the feedback of the targeted public (Szondi 2008: 11; Cull: 2009: 14). Non-governmental organisations conduct public diplomacy through public-to-public communications (Nye 2008: 103). These are the inter-cultural communications between private individuals and/or groups, which fall outside the influence of the government because their interests may vary or deviate from that of the government. As I noted above, governments have access to state's financial resources, as well as communications networks which makes their efforts more efficiently communicated. To clarify, this does not mean that these efforts will have a positive impact merely because of the financial patronage. For these reasons, this paper focuses on state-to-(foreign) public communications, in other words, on communications with foreign publics, initiated by governments.

Through public diplomacy, governments *directly* reach out to foreign publics using targeted messages, which provide an opportunity to influence and shape foreign opinion (Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2012: 811, Melissen 2005a, 2005b; Szondi 2008; Cull 2009). Public diplomacy efforts are motivated by the promotion of political and economic interests through increasing the receptiveness of foreign publics (Szondi 2008: 11). This is a result of the diversification of the foundations of public diplomacy from "power politics and national security" to "political/military, economic, and societal/cultural" incentives (Rasmussen and Merkelsen 2012: 811-812). While public diplomacy pursues various national interests, it also seeks to create a positive reputation (Szondi 2008: 11), which is partly achieved through nation branding and the successful management of the brand identity. Given these points, public diplomacy is based on creating an appealing image in the mental maps of foreign publics. To that end,

[w]e live in a day and age in which image shapes reality. The image of a country and its policies, the choice of key words used in their analysis and the framework in which it is placed is more important than the objective reality of that country. The phrase "image is everything," frequently used in the fashion industry to attract individuals, is indeed applicable to societies, territories and countries as well (Kalm 2010: 17).

The rising importance of image and reputation also influences public diplomacy terminology. Contemporary practices focus on “soft power” and “nation branding” (Cull 2009). Soft power refers to the use of culture, political values and policies to indirectly shape other countries’ preferences and reach desired outcomes without the use of hard power, namely *coercion* and *intimidation* (Nye 1990, 2004, 2005, 2008). This definition also sets the stage for the employment of nation brands as public diplomacy instruments. Public diplomacy utilises the appeal of a country’s “culture, values and policies” and “tries to attract [foreign publics and other countries] by drawing attention to these potential resources [culture, political values, foreign policies] through broadcasting, subsidising cultural exports, arranging exchanges, and so forth” (Nye 2008: 95). In this context, public diplomacy aids governments in managing the country’s soft power (Noya 2005: 3). The latter occurs “through *persuading* the other party through *convincing* arguments and rational policies. Here, *credibility* and the *ability to persuade* constitute the main elements of soft power. An illustration of this shift is found in statements by Mikhail Margelov, the chairperson of the international affairs committee of Russia’s Federation Council, that declare his country needs to project “the image of a ‘good’ rather than a ‘strong’ Russia” as part of the ‘soft-power’ approach that is now so popular. To accomplish this, Russia must have a coordinated plan, one that will be ‘pro-active rather than defensive’” (Goble 2009 cited in Volcic and Andrejevic 2011: 599).

It is necessary to highlight that the term soft power can also be problematic because it predominantly focuses on soft power assets and their cultivation, rather than how/if it influences the target audiences (Roselle, Miskimmon, O’Loughlin: 2014). Branding and soft power are predicated on the idea that “there is a link between attractiveness and the ability to influence others in international relations” (Fan 2008: 147). However, the impact/influence of nation branding (more precisely the nation brand image), and soft power are difficult to measure. Both Simon Anholt’s Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index, and the Monocle’s Soft Power Survey aim to rank the impact of such assets. These are both attempts at quantifying the influence of soft power assets and the campaign deploying these assets. Nonetheless, these attempts fall short of identifying the specific asset(s) that create the said impact.

Furthermore, soft power is relative because “[t]he relevance of effectiveness of soft power depends on the perception of the target country audience on the host country; ultimately, they are the deciders of what is attractive to them and what is not” (Fan 2008: 150). Therefore, solely culture-driven branding efforts are often incomplete. The assets identified and deployed by states are not necessarily “attractive” to audiences because ‘power’ lies not in the hand of the party who possesses it, but in the response and reaction of the party who receives it” (ibid: 154). Furthermore, soft power is not necessarily non-coercive because it deploys a “*representational force*—a nonphysical but nevertheless coercive form of power that is exercised through language” (Bially Mattern 2005: 583). In turn, it is an extension of hard power because it assumes that representational practices, which states consider less coercive, can be employed to persuade audiences (Bilgin and Eliş 2008).

Soft power and nation branding are often linked because of “concepts are concerned with a nation’s influence on the world stage” (Fan 2008: 148). This may lead to the assumption that nation brands are based on soft power assets or that nation brands are soft power assets. This is not necessarily the case because nation branding is comprised of two stages: brand identity formulation, and brand image. Soft power is associated with the second stage in which the brand image is embedded in the audiences’ mental maps, subsequently shaping/reshaping international opinions regarding a country.

In addition, soft power is “rooted in a “value-based” definition of power”, which relies on the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political notions and policies (Nye 2004). Public diplomacy is comprised of understanding, informing and influencing the public, rather than relying on propaganda and advertising. Propaganda is the one-way communications of any actor (state or non-state) aimed at obtaining their goals through emotionally-charged tactics. Propaganda has become a pejorative term because it is a strictly one-way communication model in which the accuracy of the information is not validated. Advertising is associated with commercial products and services, and it refers to the promotional activities aimed at generating revenue. Both propaganda and advertising are manipulative practices. Public diplomacy, on the other hand, is a two-way communications process which aims to inform and persuade rather than manipulate.

In their public diplomacy efforts, governments utilise a strategic language of communication based on objective facts and truth to build or manage a country’s reputation. Nation branding, and soft power are similar in their objectives, as both seek to utilise culture and heritage to strengthen a nation’s role in the international political arena. In this sense, nation branding is a cross-cultural communication process concerning “the application of branding and marketing communications techniques to reshape the international opinion of a country” (Fan 2008:16).

Like public diplomacy, nation branding also follows a dual communication model, where exchanges between publics and states influence and shape practices. Equally important is the fact that governments who have a traditionally dominant role in pursuing economic and political objectives of countries tend to initiate both practices. While I stress the centrality of governments in both processes, new public diplomacy also relies on national and international intermediaries, which can be private, state and/or non-state actors (L’etang 2009: 610). This stems from the growing emphasis on network theory by governments and the interconnection between national and international actors as well as publics, non-state and state actors (ibid: 611-613). This view acknowledges the “public relations” aspect of diplomacy, which is embedded in the globalisation and internationalisation of political and economic affairs (Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2012).

1.2. Conceptualising the Relations between Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding

There are multiple theoretical conceptualisations of public diplomacy and nation branding across academic disciplines because nation branding terminology is often contested (Rasmussen and Merckelsen 2012: 812). This stems from the fact that while marketing and business scholars initially conducted nation branding, public diplomacy is studied by international relations scholars (Dinnie 2008: 8). Gyorgy Szondi (2008) identifies five distinct conceptualisations. The first envisions public diplomacy and nation branding as two distinct spheres of activity. It articulates nation branding as a one-way communication process, whereas public diplomacy is based on dual communication and dialogue. They differ in their goals, content, and active actors/agencies, while also following different strategies. The second view conceptualises public diplomacy as a branding *technique* (ibid: 19). Therefore, public diplomacy is the foreign policy dimension of nation branding. This view also discusses cultural diplomacy as a type of public diplomacy. The third approach views branding as a public diplomacy instrument. This concept is limited in academic studies, but it is widely utilised by governments. It situates nation branding within wider public diplomacy efforts to project a positive image of a nation/country, to improve and manage their reputation through formulating representations and managing their circulation. This approach assumes the primacy of the government in branding efforts in outward image projection, which makes it a widely-accepted theoretical conceptualisation. The fourth view asserts that nation branding, and public diplomacy are different spheres, but that they are conducted through

similar activities and that they “best work in tandem” (ibid: 26). These activities merge in their focus on culture, identity, image and values, as they both build relations between governments and publics. The fifth view asserts that because both spheres aim to create positive country images, and that they are identical (ibid: 30), which is the case in the United Kingdom.

Competitive Identity (CI), a term coined by Simon Anholt in 2007 to address the terminological confusion stemming from “nation branding”, is essential to this conceptualisation. CI aims to enhance a country’s competitiveness by synthesising brand management techniques with public diplomacy to boost foreign investment, tourism revenue, and increase exports. Nation branding, and public diplomacy form a country’s CI. Owing to the increased “collaboration and integration between embassies, cultural bodies and trade and tourist offices: modern diplomats see promoting trade, tourism, investment and culture as an important part of their job” (Anholt 2007: 713).

2. Nation Branding: Definition, Theory and Practice

2.1. *Origins and Dimensions of Nation Branding*

Simon Anholt coined the concepts of “nation brands” and “nation branding” in 1998 to position nations as competitive brands within international economics and politics (1998, 2004). Accordingly, “[a] brand is a product or service or organization, considered in combination with its name, its identity and its reputation [while] branding is the process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation” (Anholt 2007: 4). Peter Van Ham (2001: 3) asserts that nation brands and the process of branding are rooted in the fact that globalisation and the proliferation of digital technologies “have made each state more aware of itself, its image, its reputation, and its attitude – in short, its brand”. Therefore, globalisation reinforces national boundaries rather than dissolving them because globalised marketplaces require differentiation among actors. Politicians’ active brand management efforts reflect that “branding and commercial competition become the continuation of warfare by other means in an era of capitalist globalization” (Volcic and Andrejevic 2011: 599); hence, having a cohesive and strong brand identity provides a competitive advantage for countries. In effect, nation brands enable states to emphasise and reinforce their differences as a competitive advantage in countering the homogenising effects of globalisation (Porter 1998. n.pag.).

Nation branding assumes that because “every nation is different from all the other nations in the world, the demanding task nation branding imposes on itself is to identify the unique characteristics of a nation and to display them in a comprehensive way, without being reductive” (Widler 2007: 146-147). Thus, nation branding promotes “difference” and ‘in order for these nations to imagine themselves as unique, different, and globally competitive, they had first to be reimagined as if they were all the same’ (Aronczyk 2013: 33). Nation brands compete within the international political and economic “markets” through their images and reputations. Peter Van Ham also notes that this competition leads to the branding of nations while producing an “emotional dimension” to the products and/or services: given our postmodern setting, “the unbranded state has a difficult time attracting economic and political attention. Image and reputation are thus becoming essential parts of the state’s strategic equity” (2001: 2-3). Nation branding is a proactive effort and a practical necessity because the “alternative to ‘doing’ nation branding is not *not* doing nation branding: the alternative is allowing others to do it for you” (Anholt 2004: 2).

Nation branding is a complex and strategic process that embodies various political, economic and social practices. It is a reputation asset, which is both practical and necessary. Owing

to the significance of public diplomacy in foreign and international politics, “every country, city and region on earth must compete with every other for its share of the world’s commercial, political, social and cultural transactions in what is virtually a single market” (Anholt 2009: ix). Owing to the multiplicity of areas of competition, nation branding occurs through six dimensions, which are also known as “natural channels of communication”. These dimensions are: 1) tourism promotion, 2) people (individuals’ interactions with people from said country), 3) promotion of the country’s culture and heritage, 4) campaigns to attract foreign investment, and immigration 5) foreign and domestic policies (which need to be coherent and stable), and 6) export of domestic product brands (national brands) (Figure 1.).

TOURISM	Explores the level of interest in visiting a country and the appeal of natural and man-made tourist attractions
PEOPLE	Explores the population's reputation for competence, education, openness and friendliness and other qualities, as well as perceived levels of potential hostility and discrimination.
CULTURE	Reveals global perceptions of each nations heritage and appreciation for its contemporary culture, including film, music, art, sport and literature.
IMMIGRATION AND INVESTMENT	Looks to attract people to live, work or study in each country and reveals how people perceive a country social situation.
GOVERNANCE	Considers public opinion regarding the level of national government competency and fairness and describes individuals' beliefs about each country's government, as well as its perceived commitment to global issues such as democracy, justice, poverty and the environment.
EXPORTS	Examines respondent's image of products and services from each country and the extent to which consumers proactively seek or avoid products from each country -of- origin.

Figure 1. Dimensions of nation branding and their descriptions.

Source: GfK Roper Public Affairs and Media (2009: 2-3).

These dimensions are separate yet interlinked, as they utilise similar visual and verbal symbols. For instance, tourism brands often borrow from the culture and heritage dimension, this dynamic also applies to governance and investment dimensions. Furthermore, tourism, foreign direct investment attraction, and exports enhancement are also the primary economic objectives of nation branding, thus they are both dimensions/assets and objectives. This also links other dimensions that have similar objectives. The nation brand image constitutes

the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places. Images represent a simplification of a larger number of associations and pieces of information connected with a place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place (Kotler and Gertner 2002: 251).

Tourism is usually the “most visible” and the “the most competent marketing force” (Anholt 2005: n.pag, see also Anholt 2010). Due to the allocation of substantial public and private funding to the sector, countries deploy tourism as the main branding dimension (Simonin 2008: 23). “The touristic ‘idea’ of the nation creates a visual image of the country which can impact many other areas of the nation’s performance – foreign investors, for example, may well be influenced in their choice of country by tourism images” (Anholt 2005: n.pag). The ‘people’ dimension encompasses cross-cultural interactions building on the human capital of a country. In turn, ordinary citizens become brand ambassadors just like “diplomats, media stars and politicians” (ibid.). Brand ambassadors relay “the complexities and contradictions of a place to the global marketplace is its people” (ibid). Culture and heritage refers to the “intellectual capital of the nation’s heritage, history, culture and geography” all of which provides “richness, dignity, trust and respect abroad, and quality of life at home” (ibid). This dimension also adds value to the tourism aspect of branding. Investment and immigration refers to a country’s attractiveness for “talent, investment and business ventures” (Anholt 2005: n.pag). The foreign and domestic policy dimension, also known as the governance dimension, refers to performance and the acquired reputation of governments in foreign and domestic affairs (ibid.). It “incorporates perceived competency and honesty of government, respect for citizens’ rights and fair treatment, as well as global behaviour [...]” (GfK Roper Public Affairs and Media 2008: 1). This dimension affects the other dimensions, as it also relates to the incorporation of the nation brand into national policies, thus influencing the overall success of the brand. The export dimension refers to the enhancement of manufactured products and services’ sales abroad, which is “one of the most potent ways of building and sustaining national image” (ibid: 2-4). This dimension is associated with the “country of origin effect” (COO) principle in commercial product marketing, and “whether knowing where the product is made increases or decreases people’s likelihood of purchasing it [...]” (ibid: 1).

2.2. Mechanisms of Nation Branding: Coordination and Communication

Nation branding formulates images, which concern “immediate expressions”; and in the long-run, these expressions construct reputations through consistent performances, and reputations that are more enduring than images (Harrison-Walker 2011: 135-136). Images communicated through shorthands, which can be signals and texts, evolve into a nation brand’s reputation, thereby aiding in public diplomacy practices. The nation brand is then embedded in the consumers’ mental images as communicative objects. In other words, the images of a country are the short-term outcomes of nation branding, which produces the nation’s reputation in due time. Nation branding is the production of shorthands that assist in the straightforward identification of nations while increasing foreign publics’ familiarity with them (Widler 2007: 148). Shorthands include specific logos, colours, words, fonts, designs, services and many other easily identifiable and repetitively used components that constitute the brand. These shorthands are communicated to foreign publics through information sources, including satellite and real-time news, and the Internet, all of which coincide with key aspects of a modern technical environment used to institute new public diplomacy (Cull 2009: 14). These communications then construct a country’s reputation that describes the long-term results of experiences and perceptions of subjects (Cornelissen and Thorpe 2002: 175).

Branding practitioners first focus on the “input” stage, through which they aim to replace pre-existing negative stereotypes and events, which can contribute to a negative brand image. In formulating shorthands and establishing reputations, nation branding deploys generalizations

and/or stereotypes. “Most country images are in fact stereotypes: extreme simplifications of reality that are not necessarily accurate. They might be dated, based on exceptions rather than patterns, on impressions rather than facts, but nonetheless, pervasive” (Kotler and Gertner 2002: 251). “Stereotyping” in nation branding literature does not necessarily carry negative connotations. For example,

[m]any have long thought that the best tea is from China, the most intricate rugs are made in Persia, and the most intense spices are from India. People have often perceived Italians as stylish, Americans as industrious, and the French as artistic and appreciative of exquisite cuisine. Around the world, Southeast Asia is often associated with beautiful beaches, Afghanistan with harsh and treacherous landscapes, and Switzerland with breath-taking mountains. These perceptions are all aspects of the countries’ brands, since a major aspect of all brands is the imagery or associations that people hold about them (Augustine 2009: 1).

Nonetheless, while a nation brand can have a positive image in a certain field; it can have a negative image in another field. For instance, India’s global perceptions as an “exotic” country with historical sites, its rapid progress and a qualified work force in information technologies, are all positive associations, yet the country is also associated with poverty. In this sense, stereotypes that can be both beneficial and detrimental to nation brands are the starting points of nation brand development (Widler 2007: 148). In the “input” stage, stereotypes refer to positive generalizations that are created to increase familiarity with the brand. At this stage, the nation brand identity put forth by practitioners can create positive associations to replace negative connotations and stereotypes (Kotler and Gertner 2002). The circulation of positive associations presented in the form of shorthands, such as visual and verbal cues, requires commercial marketing and advertising techniques. These techniques include posters, videos, as well as printed materials, which enable the repetitive use of formulated shorthands. These visual and verbal cues are also employed in international branding at venues such as the Olympics or international expositions. These shorthands then aim to increase the visibility of a nation brand by raising awareness and instigating a sense of familiarity.

At the “output” stage, stereotypes can be positive or negative. Branding agents/practitioners deploy and amplify positive stereotypes and they aim to eradicate negative stereotypes at the “input” stage, which is a lengthy process (Dinnie 2008: 24). Some nation brands also incorporate negative stereotypes. For instance, South Africa, formulated the “South Africa, Alive with Possibility” slogan to acknowledge “its history of apartheid and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS” in order to highlight stress “the future, optimism and opportunities” (Simonin 2008: 31). While this illustrates that negative stereotypes/associations can be addressed in the “input” stage, brand identity formulation is a complex and systematic process of innovation and formulation, where the output stage is the perceptions of target audiences. In nation branding, target audiences can be individuals, civil societies and governments, which have their own political, social and cultural realities that influence their perceptions of the brand. This makes branding a “highly complex and politicized activity” that depends on various external factors (Marzano and Scott 2009: 247). To illustrate, Ming-Huei Hsieh (2002: 50) contends that “attitude, behaviour and lifestyle” of target markets influence the formulation of commercial brand identities. The same logic applies to nation brand images because they enforce the “idea” of a nation based on their “synthesis of impressions” within the cognitive processes (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2000: 56). Nation brands consist of enduring stereotypes with “cognitive, affective and norma-

tive dimensions”, so while stereotypes may not represent objective realities of the nations, they are “pervasive” (Loo and Davies 2006: 198).

As a result, nation brand identities communicate stereotypes and generalizations to target audiences in a systematised manner. Correspondingly, governments employ nation branding as both “a communications strategy and a practical initiative” to manage their image to further their position in global economic and political competition (Aronczyk 2008: 42). Therefore, the objective of nation branding is the establishment of a strong nation brand identity that conjures up a set of meaningful positive associations, which evoke a positive nation brand image leading to a higher nation brand value/equity. This brand equity is translated into the nation brand’s reputation. Following this, the nation brand can deploy its reputation to improve its commercial brands and its nation brand assets.

While proper brand management is the key to eradicating and replacing negative stereotypes with positive brand images (Gertner 2007: 4), in some cases, negative stereotypes can be rooted in a country’s geographic location. For example, the negative imagery attached to the Middle East, which relates to economic and political volatility, has the potential to ‘spill over’ onto neighbouring regions and inadvertently obstruct political and economic development (Cooper and Momani 2009). This negative imagery leads to a negative reputation for the region, as well as individual countries, which in turn influenced their brand identities and their *positions* in international politics. As opposed to reputation building, positioning is the act of formulating an image based on the organisation’s strengths to occupy a distinct place in the target market’s mind and a brand’s position is how it is perceived by the consumers (Harrison-Walker 2011: 135-137). A unique and distinct brand aids in establishing a stronger political and/or economic position (Dinnie 2004, 2008). This brings forth the importance of positioning the brand in contrast to its *competitors*. For instance, as nation brands, New Zealand and Scotland both compete with powerful neighbours, namely Australia and England (Dinnie 2008: 27). Both countries’ strategies focus on competitive positioning for their export products and as tourism destinations. In this sense, establishing and highlighting the key points of difference is the task of brand positioning (ibid: 52). Furthermore, “a position differs from image in that it implies a frame of reference, the reference point usually being the competition” (Aaker and Shansby 1982 quoted in Harrison-Walker 2011: 137). In another example, Turkey and Greece provide similar Mediterranean tourism products and services, but

Why do more tourists visit Greece than Turkey? The Turkish claim that they have longer coasts, unpopulated waters and superb archaeological sites to delight any visitor. Still, an overwhelmingly larger number of vacationers seeking sun and antiquities pick Greece instead of the neighbouring Mediterranean country. Turkey has tried to reposition the country and manage its troubled image. It has hired a public relations firm to promote the country worldwide as a major democracy, quite different from the image of a human rights violator spread several years ago by the movie ‘Midnight Express.’ Tourism is a pivotal industry to Turkey’s economy, and a large-scale international campaign has been implemented to get tourists to perceive the ‘Turkey’ brand as closer to Greece’s position (Kotler and Gertner 2002: 254).

Culture is a focal point in nation brand positioning because “we live in a branded world: brands infuse culture with meaning and branding profoundly influences contemporary society” (Schroeder et al. 2006: 124). As nation brands “exist as cultural, ideological, and sociological objects, then understanding brands requires tools developed to understand culture, ideology, and so-

ciety, in conjunction with more typical branding concepts, such as *brand equity*, *strategy*, and *value*” (ibid). Discussion of culture and heritage branding also warrants a discussion of cultural diplomacy. Culture is embedded with elements which convey information about a community’s way of life because it is comprised of manifestations of human intellectual achievements, such as arts, language, ideas, sports, food, as well as customs, values, rituals, religions, and behaviours (Rivera 2015: 8-9). Regions, countries, cities can embody and represent different cultures. Since cultures are diverse and personal, this is one of the main areas deployed in branding. Culture can also be used to exercise power over foreign audiences, and this practice is called cultural diplomacy. It utilises a country’s soft power assets to influence the views of the foreign publics. Cultural diplomacy has many uses, among others it demonstrates values, interests, address negative cultural presumptions, can reach the masses, foster communications among civil society (Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, 2005: 1-2). In other words, it is the communication of a country’s soft power assets in a systematised manner. Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy which accounts for the similarities in their objectives. Cultural diplomacy is often considered the backbone of public diplomacy because formal communications of culture are likely to increase the audiences’ receptiveness to being persuaded and influences by diplomacy efforts (Bound et al. 2007). Therefore, in the long-run, cultural communications are likely to impact both the nation brand image and the reputation of the country. An important distinction between cultural and public diplomacy is that while the former uses music, film, arts and art forms, literature to convey its messages, the latter uses a wide range of mediums. The culture and heritage dimension of nation branding, on the other hand, mainly utilises commercial culture which is marketable to the masses. These include popular culture, television shows, contemporary popular novels.

Positioning is critical when competing nations offer similar products. For instance, European integration requires the need for “assertive branding” in European countries to further differentiate national assets (Van Ham 2001: 3). This also stems from the staging of a so-called “European culture” and “European identity” which assumes a shared identity that unites European countries. This stems from Europe’s shared experiences with Industrialisation, Enlightenment, World Wars. Most importantly, the emphasis on democracy, secularism, and values associated with modernity makes European countries similar to each other. As a result, European nation brands often attempt to break away from their competitors by positioning themselves against their competitors (Dinnie 2008: 18-19).

The “assertive branding” strategies in Europe also warrants a clarification on the rise of populist discourse in the light of increased competition within this region. As Ayhan Kaya (2016, 2017) asserts populist movements in Europe have become adept in using popular diplomacy instruments in communicating with their audience/supporters. The intense emphasis on culture, heritage and anti-globalisation is mirrored in the construction of nation brands. As I discussed above, nation brands are a response to globalisation and its homogenising effect on national identities. This is also a key element of populist political rhetoric. In this sense, nation branding and the instrumentalization of nation brands are comparable to populist communications strategy. This is particularly the case in Europe where the EU, economic and political integration, and the emphasis on an overarching European identity illustrate the need to portray a unique identity. In order to construct a unique nation brand identity; governments articulate national culture and heritage as being distinct from the European meta-identity. This then produces a distinguishing brand identity that is exclusive to the branded country. It establishes a competitive identity that appeals to both European non-nationals and non-European audiences. This nation brand identity is utilised as a pro-competitive instrument to attain an economic and political advantage.

Populist parties and movements approach the heritage dimension of national identities in similar manners. The main difference is that populist narratives of national identity are directed towards internal audiences, namely the public rather than foreign publics. In this sense, the reification of cultural boundaries drawing from history and heritage is present in both nation branding and populist discourses. Nonetheless, the latter formulates an antagonistic discourse which builds on the tensions between the self and the “other”. This is considerably different from the nation branding discourse because populist political rhetoric lacks discernible pro-competitive features.²

Furthermore, nation brand images can also be outside the control of the branding practitioners, because images evolve overtime to include the positive and the negative. These images also result from current events and societal factors, which are outside practitioners’ prerogative.

A country’s image results from its geography, history, proclamations, art and music, famous citizens and other features. The entertainment industry and the media play a particularly important role in shaping people’s perceptions of places, especially those viewed negatively. Not only are product categories such as perfumes, electronics, precision instruments, wines, cars and software strongly identified with certain places, but so also are societal ills such as Aids epidemics, political riots, civil rights violations, attacks on the environment, racial conflict, economic turmoil, poverty and violent crime. All these have been repeatedly and strongly associated with certain locales (Kotler and Gertner 2002: 251).

Populist parties and movements can also be considered as having a negative impact on the nation brand image as their antagonistic formulations of identity and reinterpretation of the past can contradict the official brand identity. To prevent such influences, nation branding should be managed as “*a component of national policy* [rather than] a ‘campaign’ that is separate from planning, governance or economic development” (Anholt 2008: 23). For instance, Spain is widely cited as case study because it builds on “what truly exists, and its branding efforts incorporate, absorb and embrace a wide variety of activities under one graphic identity to form and project a multifaceted yet coherent, interlocking and mutually supportive whole” (Dinnie 2008: 29). Spain’s recognition in nation branding literature stems from its coordinated approach to branding; simultaneously focusing on policy innovation, and brand planning and promotion. As Fiona Gilmore (2002: 282) argues, “Spain is a success story of active orchestrated repositioning by a country involving a national program using Joan Miro’s sun to symbolize the step change in the modernisation of Spain”. *Marca Espana*’s success as a modernisation programme is rooted in

the privatization and rapid global expansion of Spanish multinationals such as Telefonica in Latin America, the impact of hosting the Barcelona Olympics, the rebuilding of great cities like Bilbao with the Guggenheim Museum, the films of Almodóvar and even the prominence of actresses such as Penelope Cruz (ibid).

2 For a detailed analysis of the populist parties and movements in Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands Turkey, please see Kaya 2016 and 2017. In brief, Kaya argues that populist political rhetoric systematically uses national heritage and history to instrumentalise politics of fear to construct Islamophobic, migrant-phobic, and diversity-phobic discourses. He asserts that the common denominator among different populist parties is the articulation of a civilisational clash between Europe and Islam. For a detailed investigation of how populist discourse constructs a civilizational identity please see Kaya and Tecmen (2018).

Owing to its multiple objectives and varied possible outcomes, nation branding occurs through the coordination between a *network of policies*, rather than simply the promotion of the brand for economic and political purposes. Nation branding is not mere advertising, because it is about understanding the consumers' demands as well as competitive forces, and generating an image based on the factual offerings of the country which are incorporated into a long-term organisational vision (Yan 2003: 452).

Nation branding is a multifaceted process requiring initiatives and programmes that mobilise the Diaspora, enhance cooperation and coordination among key institutions/organisations, while ensuring that official communications are reasonably consistent (Dinnie 2009: 5). Britain's "Cool Britannia" campaign, initiated by Tony Blair in the 1990s, is an important example of the extensive coordination needed for successful nation brands. The "Cool Britannia" campaign attempted to renew Britain's nation brand identity and eradicate the country's image as "backward-looking and aloof" (Dinnie 2008: 30). However, this new brand identity was not fully communicated to British society, in part because it failed to integrate multiple stakeholders into the brand, and so "the perception arose of an exaggerated emphasis on the modern and cutting edge to the detriment of the traditional and established" (ibid.). In Britain, "the cool and the traditional" co-exist, which also accounts for the failure of this branding effort on the domestic front (Gilmore 2002: 284). The nation brand does not necessarily have to project a *homogeneous* "image"; it can build on multiplicity as long as it represents diverse stakeholders' interests. As Melissa Aronczyk (2013: 77) highlights "[t]he need to inspire such allegiance and affiliation in the brand identity reveals a critical dimension of the practice: as a form of communication, the media of the message are effectively the citizens themselves".

To ensure the integrity of the nation brand, it is essential to integrate and properly inform national stakeholders. This ensures that the nation brand image is an actual representation of national policies/programmes. The reputation of a country has little to do with its advertisements; it instead has to do with the positive attributes of the actual products. As individuals' experiences with the country are the most important factors in determining a country's brand image, the brand identity must be factual. This means that while nation brands frequently "embellish" existing assets/values, fabrication of false promises are detrimental to the brand (Gilmore 2002). For instance, Switzerland's stigmatisation for maintaining Jewish World War II dormant accounts acted as a catalyst for the establishment of a law in 2000 to promote its image abroad, and the foundation of Presence Switzerland to coordinate branding efforts (Dinnie 2008: 79-80). One of the strengths of the Brand Switzerland is that its emphasis on "discreet banking services" is legalised and regulated by the government (Gilmore 2002: 283). Countering these examples is Greece's 2012 tourism promotion video. It featured a flash mob event filmed on the banks of River Thames in London as a part of the "Greece Welcomes You" promotion campaign, but it was later taken down because it did not feature Greece and was therefore not deemed an accurate representation of the country (Greek Travel Pages 2012). Moreover, successful branding efforts require a comprehensive strategy to attain a state's key commercial objectives such as attracting tourists, investment and increasing exports (Dinnie 2009: 6). Nation branding can also have positive social and political outcomes, and "help restore international credibility, investor confidence; reverse international ratings downgrades; increase international political influence; stimulate stronger international partnerships and enhance nation building (by nourishing confidence, pride, harmony, ambition, national resolve)" (Temporal 2002 quoted in de Chernatony 2008: 17).

2.3. Nation Branding versus Commercial Product Branding

A nation brand does not offer “tangible product or service; instead, it represents and encompasses a wide variety of factors and associations” such as “place - geography, tourist attractions; natural resources, local products; people - race, ethnic groups; history; culture; language; political and economic systems; social institutions; infrastructure; famous persons (the face); picture or image” (Fan 2006: 4-5). It is rather “a useful summation of the intangible competitive assets of an organisation or a country: its vision, its genius, its distinctive character, its people, [and] its promise to the marketplace” (Anholt 2005: n.pag). As a result, nation branding receives attention from diverse academic fields, which results in multiple approaches to branding. Nadia Kaneva identifies three main approaches to nation branding. *Technical-economic approaches* take on a functionalist view of nation branding and look at it as a necessity to establish competitive advantage because of its perceived “economic competitive advantage” (Kaneva 2011: 121-122). *Political approaches* treat nation branding as a public diplomacy instrument, which aims to bring political competitive advantage in the international arena (ibid: 124-125). *Cultural approaches* focus on the national identity and culture-building processes that accompany nation branding (ibid: 127-128). As this approach looks inward, it does not address the competitive aspect of nation brands. Technical-economic, and political approaches are not mutually exclusive, which means that scholars can in fact take on different approaches depending on the case in question as well as the specific campaign that is being considered.

Due to the economic motivations behind nation branding, it is often associated with corporate branding practices. This leads to debates on whether nation branding is simply a marketing process mirroring corporate branding, or a more intricate process of creating a national brand identity that builds on the cultural, social, economic and political elements of a nation (Hanna and Rowley 2008; Gertner 2011; Kaneva 2011: 121). The difference is that the latter transcends the predominantly economic and demand-related aspects of the former, thereby competing on a political level (Gertner 2011: 91).

There are differences between nation and product brands. Nonetheless, nation branding is directly rooted in the “country of origin effect” (COO), which is primarily associated with commercial brand marketing. COO refers to “the power of an explicit or implicit Geographical Indication to add appeal to products and services, to create a price premium for them, and to stimulate customer loyalty towards them” (Anholt 2005: n.pag). The COO enables lesser known commercial brands or new market entrants to draw on the reputation associated with their country of origin to establish a competitive economic advantage. For instance, newcomers in “Japanese electronics, German engineering, French luxury goods and Italian fashion” (Anholt 2005: n.pag) enjoy positive reputations. In turn, commercial national brands that comprise the exports dimension of nation brands utilise COO. To clarify, “national brands” *are not* “nation brands”. A national brand refers to a commercial brand originating from a country and is available nationally as a distinct product whereas; a nation brand relates to the target audiences’ perceptions of a country or a nation (Dinnie 2008: 15). The latter is defined as “*the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences*” (ibid). Well-known commercial national brands, including flagship companies, also evoke certain ideas about their COO, and the nation brand. For instance, “Hermes scarves and Beaujolais Nouveau evoke the French art de vivre, BMWs and Mercedes-Benzes drive with German efficiency and reliability” and “Microsoft and McDonald’s are among the most visible US diplomats, just as Nokia is Finland’s envoy to the world” (Van Ham 2001: 2).

National airlines, such as British Airways, American Airlines, Singapore Airlines, are among the most important commercial brands because while they are affiliated with a given country, their services can be sold anywhere. Also, an airline “can carry a nation’s name and values around the world” (Hurn and Tomalin 2013: 231). COO’s effects on target audiences are not limited to commercial brands. They also influence

the world’s acceptance of the country’s people (whether as employees, investors, immigrants, politicians or media stars), of its sporting and cultural endeavours, of its political and diplomatic relations with other countries, of its tourism and heritage attractions, of its investment offerings, of its media and other intellectual and creative productions (Anholt 2005: n.pag).

Due to the prominence of COO in nation branding, there is an on-going debate about whether the nation is a “product” or a more “complicated entity”, which cannot and should not be reduced to a simple compilation of its social, cultural and political characteristics. The disagreements about nation branding stem from the supposed reduction of nations to products, which results from assuming that nations are holistic, and territorially bound entities, which enable them to be branded like “corporate” products. Hlynur Gudjonsson (2005) identifies three approaches to the relations between nation brands/branding and corporate brands/branding. Absolutists claim that nations are “products” because they reinvent themselves to compete; thus, mechanics of corporate branding apply to nation branding (ibid: 283-284). Reformists assert that nations are holistic entities, and, unlike corporate products, branding cannot alter national images and reputations (ibid: 284). The moderate approach is common among political scientists, as this approach differentiates between nation brand identity and national identity and contend that while a nation cannot be branded like a product, the tools and mechanisms behind product branding can add value to the nation through contributing to its brand image and reputation (ibid: 284-285). To clarify, national identity is the “collective understanding by a nation’s people of the features presumed to be central and relatively permanent, and that distinguish the nation from other nations” (Albert and Whetten 1985 cited in Fan 2010: 3). A nation brand cannot fully represent national identity because it cannot fully represent the plurality of actors and their often-competing interests (Aronczyk 2013: 81). The nation brand identity, in contrast, is comprised of the representations formulated by nation branding practitioners and the reputation associated with the brand (Fan 2010: 100-101). Therefore, while the nation brand identity does not reflect national identity, it can deploy select aspects of national identity to make the brand more visible and identifiable to external audiences.

The moderate approach also situates branding practices as an aid in building a stronger state reputation thus being aligned with the definition of public diplomacy. It also asserts the government-driven nature of nation branding, because the “nation itself as a body is not an active player” in branding since individuals’ views of the nation are not “monotonic” (Gudjonsson 2005: 284-285). As I noted above, while views of the individuals are not monotonic, ideally national brand image formulation is not a top-down process because there are multiple interests and stakeholders whose associations and interests influence the brand. Therefore, the management of the brand image needs to employ a strategy that incorporates these interests and participants. Governments are thus active branding agents that pursue prosperity and power.

The main objection to nation branding and nation brands stem from the fact that a nation is not a project and as such, national image is bound to the social concept of the nation. None-

theless, a nation brand is “a compound of contemporary and historical associations that have relevance for marketing” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2000: 56).

3. Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding in Turkey

As I discussed above, the stages of nation branding have been identified by scholars and practitioners. However, nation brand identities are case-specific. This stems from the fact that each country has unique assets that they deploy in formulating its brand identity. Furthermore, countries have different foreign policy strategies that informs governments about the publics which are prioritised in public diplomacy efforts. The combination of these two factors, makes each case unique. In this section, I will discuss the recent developments in Turkish foreign policy, and nation branding while referring to the theoretical discussions above.

3.1. *Turkish Foreign Policy and Brand Turkey*

As a secular and Islamic, modern and traditional, Turkey embodies many paradoxes. Beginning with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey on 29 October 1923, Turkish political leaders have systematically tried to distance the country from its Ottoman past, by eliminating its Ottoman heritage and Islamic characteristics from outward promotion. This was accompanied by the reformulation of a national identity devoid of Ottoman and Islamic representations. In an attempt to distance Turkey from the Ottoman Empire, then dubbed the “sick man of Europe”, political leaders followed a Western model of modernisation in reforming the nation’s political, social and economic structures; emphasising on democracy and laicite (Çırakman 2002: 1). In foreign policy, this was also accompanied by moderate isolationism from the Middle Eastern region to solidify Turkey’s allegiances to the West (Kanat 2014: 66).

As Turkey’s volatile politics, economics, and socio-cultural conflicts were to be omitted from its outward image, presenting the country as the cradle of civilisation became the country’s promotional strategy. Consequently, Turkey’s image did not show a modernised and Westernised Turkey but rather presented its history, and the country as a synthesis of ancient and modern civilisations. This new narrative traced the settlements that has a positive impact on Western civilisation throughout Anatolia. Therefore, this became a marketing strategy that complemented the Westernisation discourse dominant in national politics. As such, presenting Turkey as a cradle of civilisation was a strategic effort to reinforce Turkey’s Western credentials through the use of the past.

From the 2000s onward, the JDP under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan reintroduced Turkey’s Ottoman culture and heritage to the country’s domestic and foreign policies and discourse, accompanied by an emphasis on Islam. This had also happened in 1950s, 1980s and 1990s, but those instances of reconnection with the nation’s Ottoman past were set aside due to domestic political and economic instability. In the mid-2000s, however, Turkey experienced a weakening of the European Union (EU) “anchor” as it reconnected with its Middle Eastern neighbours and revitalised cultural and religious (Islamic) ties. The post-2005 period was marked by the loss of momentum in EU harmonisation efforts due to “reform fatigue” in Turkey, and “enlargement fatigue” in the EU (Öniş 2008). While EU public remained a significant part of Turkish public diplomacy, the publics of Middle Eastern and Arab countries became a part of such efforts.

Against this backdrop, the JDP’s regional policy aimed to reconnect with Turkey’s neighbouring regions. This has been dubbed “neo-Ottomanism”, a pejorative term used to articulate

Turkey's foreign policy strategy, particularly its revitalised ties with the Middle Eastern region and the Arab world (Fuller 2008; Murinson 2009). The reconnection with the region through revitalising the Turkey's Ottoman heritage contradicted the previous and persistent attempts to distance from the Middle East. In the late-2000s, this was deemed a "shift of axis", which describes a shift in Turkish foreign policy orientation and alliances from the West to the Middle East. This shift was based on the idea that revitalising ties with the Middle East on grounds of common religion and heritage contradicts Turkey's modernisation, thus calling its Western alliances into question. This strategic move within the purview of JDP's "zero problems with neighbours" policy approach, which aims to improve bilateral relations with neighbouring countries to strengthen regional ties and promote stability.

This foreign policy approach coincided with the developments in public diplomacy communications. From the early-2000s onwards, "image" became "a popular discursive weapon and a political catchphrase in the public debate on Turkey and the main political actors" (Kemming 2009: ii-iii). This was a result of a global "shift in political paradigms from the modern world of geopolitics and power to the postmodern world of images and influence" (Van Ham 2002: 252 quoted in Gilboa 2008: 67). As the JDP government articulated Turkey as a strong, and proactive actor in the region and in international relations, branding Turkey emerged as a salient means of increasing Turkey's economic and political visibility and appeal. In turn, "Turkey's best chance to increase its reputation in the world is "to be the bridge between Europe and Asia, between Islam and other religions" while making itself "indispensable" to others through "policies, cultural relations, exports, its diaspora and its behaviour in the international arena", and by ensuring that people in other countries feel "glad that Turkey exists" (Anholt quoted in Ceran 2011).

Owing to the diversification of Turkey's foreign policy objectives, and the proactivism in the Middle Eastern region, public diplomacy recently became dominant in the discourse of the JDP. As Presidential spokesperson İbrahim Kalın noted, public diplomacy is "a country's effort to share a coherent and convincing account of its own story with the rest of the world" (2011: 8). In the Turkish case, the "story" is constructed as having both a Western and an Eastern dimension. The Eastern dimension of Turkey's "story" relies on its Islamic, cultural and historical experiences rooted in its Ottoman heritage, and geographical proximity to the East. In this sense, the JDP government utilises what Turkey was (the heir to the Ottoman Empire) and what Turkey can ideally become (a modern state that seeks to balance its historical and contemporary cultures). The Western dimension is rooted in the modernisation efforts in the early years of the Republic, institution of democracy, the state structure, and the legal frameworks.

As public diplomacy is the overarching theoretical home of nation branding, the latter assumes a cultural dimension, because it is a "unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all its target audiences" (Dinnie 2008: 15). Nonetheless, nation brand images do not always accurately reflect the realities of a country. This is often the case for developing countries, as well as any other country during intense periods of reformation, which can be political, economic or cultural. This leads to outdated brand images, which do not mirror the rapidly changing reality, which is both internally and externally-driven (Szondi 2007: 9).

This has been the case for Turkey, because its external image was formulated to serve as an asset in earning its Western credentials. As a result, this image did not present the reality of Turkey. In the Turkish context, there has always been concerns over the "say-do gap". This refers to the differences between the pledges highlighted in public diplomacy efforts via the brand identity, and the realities of the country. It is commonly discussed in terms of United States' pub-

lic diplomacy efforts and the loss of international credibility when the nation brand image is inconsistent or conflicting with the realities (Snyder 2013, Cevik 2016). The term “reality” in this context refers to the positive as well as negative developments on the domestic front. As I noted in the previous section, brand identities need to be authentic because foreign publics’ experiences with the brand need to be genuine.

During the JDP period, both public diplomacy and nation branding became discursive assets in Turkey’s foreign relations, particularly in its bid for EU membership and its objective to become a more influential regional and global power through addressing regional sensitivities. The reconnection with the Middle East has been accompanied on the domestic front by a growing emphasis on Islam, which has become a fault line in the religious-secular divide in Turkey.

To that end, to carry out communications with external audiences, in 2010 the Office of the Prime Minister founded the Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD). According to the Circular Order No. 2010/3 founding the OPD (2010),

besides the official diplomacy actual attention has been drawn onto public diplomacy, which became an instrument of affecting and directing international public opinion and also it was mentioned that in today’s world where the advances in information and communication technologies over and above the coercions and opportunities on the international stage required close collaboration, fast adjudication and vigorous coordination between the government agencies who received assignments.

OPD is the main government agency responsible for carrying out public diplomacy efforts. The statement above also illustrates that the JDP government takes on a moderate approach to branding. More specifically, they combine technology and communications channels with public diplomacy to illustrate the need for a nation brand. In addition to the OPD, there are various government agencies, such as Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) as well as several Ministries, most prominently Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and Ministry of Economy that carry out nation branding efforts in a decentralised manner.

Nation branding strategies are constructed in a centralised manner, and there are a limited number of strategy documents. However, these strategies, which I overview in the next section, are guidelines for the overarching themes presented in Brand Turkey. They do not provide any detail about the implementation and communications phases. Instead, relevant agencies draft their own micro-strategies. For instance, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, is the main government agency in charge of Turkey’s culture and heritage, and tourism brands. It has published various strategy and action plans on both culture and tourism, including a “Tourism Strategy of Turkey for 2023” (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2007), which constitutes the main strategy for Turkey’s tourism brand.

3.2. Strategising Brand Turkey

In 2007, then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced Turkey’s Strategic Vision 2023 (Vision 2023). Vision 2023 is an on-going programme initiated by the Turkish Asian Centre for Strategic Studies (TASAM), a non-governmental think tank coordinated by and carried out under the auspices of the Presidency of the Turkish Republic. The Vision identifies Turkey’s objectives to be achieved by 2023, which will be the 100th anniversary of the Republic. These objectives are centred on six macro themes: international relations, international security, domestic politics, economy, education, science and technology, and culture.

In line with Vision 2023's anticipation of EU membership, Turkey's desire to increase its political and economic credibility in the West and becoming a member of the EU are still the driving forces behind the majority of nation branding efforts. The Vision deploys a technical-economic approach branding, mainly identifying revenue generation through tourism, exports, and trade as the main objectives. Branding efforts targeted to Middle Eastern audiences are conducted through bilateral cultural cooperation agreements that emphasise common cultural and religious (Islamic) heritage. Diplomatic missions, Turkish Embassies, Consulates, Honorary Consulates and Turkish Culture and Tourism Information Attachés in foreign countries are also vital actors in forming bilateral relations. They function as contact points for foreign institutions, while collaborating with foreign governments and civil society actors to maintain promotional activities relating to Turkey. Regional multilateral agreements emphasising regional cultural cooperation complement these agreements. The need for such cooperative structures results from Turkey's multi-dimensional foreign policies on regional and international levels. In addition, export of culture to the Middle East has been central to Turkey's public diplomacy efforts because

[i]n addition to selling cars, refrigerators, foodstuffs and construction services to its neighbours, Turkey is also exporting culture, ideas and values. Turkish TV programmes have become regular viewing across the Middle East, with the final episode of 'Noor' [*Gumus*], the most popular soap opera, reportedly attracting an audience of 85 million in the Arab world. (Barysch 2010: 6).

"[O]wing to its cultural, historical and geographical proximity", Turkey has also become a preferred tourist destination for the Arab world (Mengü 2012: 103).

In contrast to the branding efforts directed toward the Middle East, efforts that address Europe/the EU and European audiences are structured in the government's public diplomacy strategies. While every project is unique in its conception, the underlying messages are well-defined in Turkey's European Union Communication Strategy (EUCS- SGEUA: 2010), which details the two-way strategy to inform the European public about Turkey, and vice versa, to advance Turkey's bid for EU membership. The EUCS governed the efforts between 2010 and 2014. It also anticipated the creation of a nation brand for Turkey (2010: 8) as a means of communicating with external/foreign audiences. This was the first mention of Brand Turkey as an official communications instrument.

The messages defined in the EUCS (SGEUA 2010: 6) formulate Turkey as an *economic and security-related contributor*, owing to its growing economy, the Customs Union (CU) agreement, Turkey's involvement in the European Security and Defence Policy, and the fact that it constitutes a bridge between the Middle East and Europe. The EUCS also constructs Turkey's *culture and heritage* as contributions to the EU. It emphasises Turkey's "influential role" within the Alliance of Civilizations, thus deploying Turkey's relations with the "East" as a positive attribute. In doing so, the EUCS articulates Turkey as a "secular and modern" country following "a cradle of civilisation and *religion*" discourse, which depicts Turkey's common values with the EU. An important aspect of Turkey's culture and heritage-related contributions is the formulation of Turkey as an "Intercultural Bridge" and a model for peaceful coexistence. This constructs Turkey as a hybrid with modern and traditional elements. It deploys Turkey's cultural and religious ties to the Islamic world as a contribution to the EU's global image. Thus, "Turkey's hybrid identity as both Western/European and Islamic/Asian" is a political asset that "orientates Turkey simultaneously towards the West and towards the Middle East and Asia" (Rumelili

2011: 241). In complementing Vision 2023's technical-economic approach to branding, this strategy takes on a political approach, thereby diversifying the JDP government's approaches to nation branding.

3.3. *Branding Campaigns in Turkey before 2014*³

Up until 2014, which initiated a new global approach to branding Turkey, there has been two comprehensive government-supported branding projects in Turkey. The first one, called "TU@KIYE", took multiple dimensions of nation branding into account. However, it was abandoned at an early stage. The second is an on-going project titled "TURQUALITY", which focuses on exports and is aligned with Turkey's Vision 2023.

TU@KIYE was the first systematic and structured attempt to formulate Brand Turkey. The MoCT initiated the project in 2002, where it was supported by branding experts, volunteers as well as commerce and tourism organisations. The project's objectives were to increase Turkey's respectability and its economic share in the world economy. The Promotion Council, established as a part of the project, identified the components of Brand Turkey as follows: tourism, Istanbul, foreign trade, foreign capital, culture and art, popular culture, fashion/folklore, and European integration (Kemming 2006: 122-124). This project differs from the other branding projects in Turkey because it had a multidimensional approach to nation branding. This project has since been abandoned, and there has not been any official explanation as to why it was not implemented. Since then branding projects have been streamlined to focus on one or two dimensions of nation branding.

The TURQUALITY project commenced on 23 November 2004 in order to establish "10 brands in 10 years" (Official Website of the TURQUALITY Project). The project was established by the TURQUALITY Working Group, comprised of the Turkish Ministry of Economy, Turkish Exporters Assembly, Exporters Unions and representatives from the private sector. Its main objective is to act as a catalyst for increasing familiarity with Turkish commercial brands by enhancing their perceived authenticity, quality, modernity, and novelty. As a commercial branding project, it aims to strengthen Turkish products' reputation to evoke ideas about their country-of-origin, and the nation brand. The main objective of this project is to establish commercial brand names that will function as ambassadors for Brand Turkey. The project offers corporate, financial, and operational support for branding Turkish products. TURQUALITY consists of two complementary activities/programmes. The Brand Programme (*Marka Programi*) aims to develop a "quality manual and accreditation scheme", which defines the quality standards that applicant commercial brands need to meet to become a part of the program and to use the TURQUALITY logo. The Support Programme (*Destek Programi*) identifies "benchmarks" from international "best practices" and utilises them to transform companies' management and administrative structures as well as their production processes. The project's pilot sectors were textile and ready-wear, though it was extended to include fast-moving consumer goods, such as items sold in chain stores and supermarkets, as well as durable consumer goods, such as washing machines, refrigerators, furniture, jewellery, automotive, and industrial machine automation sectors.

3 Note that international events and projects, such as the Olympics, expositions, the Eurovision Song Contest and the European Capital of Culture are a part of Brand Turkey. These are nation branding opportunities that use the visibility and the established target audience of such mega events. These can also add momentum to nation branding efforts. Some examples from Turkey include; Istanbul 2010: Capital of Culture, and Antalya EXPO 2016.

The project, which is an accreditation system to enhance the visibility and the quality of Turkish commercial brands, is also a “brand” itself, as accredited companies use the TUR-QUALITY logo to indicate the high quality of the goods. In doing so, this project also bolsters competition on the national level to increase commercial export products’ quality. It is a micro-branding project and an accreditation system, where the attachment of its logo to exports increases the perceived quality Turkish products.

3.4. Branding Campaigns after 2014

3.4.1. “Home of” Tourism Campaign

Tourism branding has always been central to Turkey’s outward image projection. This not exclusive to Turkey and “most countries only brand themselves intentionally for tourism purposes. This explains why tourism branding tends to be mistaken for nation branding” (Simonin 2008: 23). While saliency of nation branding dimensions depends on the country’s assets, tourism has received extensive attention from the Turkish state owing to its centrality to revenue generation, economic development, and image projections abroad.

Before 2014, tourism promotion has a strategy but not an overarching campaign. This meant there were diverse slogans and visuals for Turkey’s tourism destinations. In addition, as there was a consumer-based economic approach to tourism, these slogans and visuals were further diversified depending on the country and/or region Turkey was being promoted in. This was partially because tourism’s strategic political potential was not recognized, and it was overshadowed by the sector’s economic potential. While Turkey’s first and only tourism campaign was announced in 2014, the tourism logo was created by the Turkish company Dream Design Factory (dDf), and it was unveiled in 2000 as a part of the Turkish Democratic Left Party’s tourism promotion strategy. The logo is centred on a red tulip, which symbolises Turkey’s Ottoman heritage. Since then, it has been used in tourism promotion materials, both printed and digitized.

In January 2014, Turkey’s new tourism campaign titled “Home of” was instituted by the MoCT and implemented by the I Mean It advertising agency. This was a new form of promotion, constructed as a nation branding campaign rather than a tourism promotion project. As opposed to the previous years’ segmented promotion strategies, the “Home of” campaign introduced a streamlined approach to nation branding that was not restricted to tourism promotion. Using print media, digital media outlets, and outdoors, it aimed to relay “the dynamism and the potential of Turkey”, a notion that has since become central to the construction of Brand Turkey, even becoming a part of the Turkey’s exports brand slogan (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2015: 2). In turn, the tourism brand constructed through these visuals portrays a cohesive and consistent image worldwide. This stems from the fact that this is not merely a campaign, not a project. While projects are limited in terms of their audience and time frame, this campaign eradicates the audience-based approach, and establishes long-term goals rather than yearly promotional materials.

As stated on the Official Website of the “Home of” project (2018),

Over the last 12 thousand years, Turkey has been home to dozens of civilizations, a unique quality in the history of mankind. As the agency of record of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, our job was to increase global awareness of that fact.

We created a structure in which every commercial opens with a fun fact, followed by stunning scenes of Turkey. All advertisements end with a call to action to visit Turkey. Combined with an authentic yet upbeat tune, the 15-commercials were translated into many different languages.

From popular destinations like Cappadocia and Ephesus to local culinary traditions such as Turkish Coffee and baklava, we portrayed 11 different values Turkey has to offer.⁴

An import innovation of the “Home of” campaign is that has been using digital media extensively and when it commenced in 2015 it was promoted as a campaign that provides the Turkish public as well as visitors with an active role in formulating Brand Turkey.

The application, named “Turkey: Home”, was developed by I Mean It Creative, and allows for the generation of posters that are linked to social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter. This entails the formulation of posters through the campaign’s mobile device application. The application enables users to upload any picture that they associate with Turkey, add their own “Home of” slogan, and share it on digital platforms. Through this it incorporates the Turkish public into the tourism promotion process by giving them the opportunity to select elements of Turkey, Turkish culture, and destinations to be used in promotional posters. Therefore, in 2014 the Ministry of Culture and Tourism did not formulate the nation’s promotional materials, but rather created a platform for the Turkish public, as well as audiences to participate in the process. As Vision 2013 anticipates, this campaign has been a strategic move to position Turkey as a “home” of various civilisations, religions and values.

Nation branding projects, such as the “Home of” campaign/system, aim to attract tourists (increase tourism revenue), gain foreign direct investment, and increase exports by raising awareness and creating familiarity with Turkey in general, rather than with Turkey as merely a tourism destination. In fact, as the Turkish public formulates these slogans, this campaign activates the public as brand ambassadors, therefore it also relies on their perception of what Turkey is. While the project is comprised of tourism promotion videos, advertisements, as well as posters, which are conventional tourism and nation branding instruments, the digital device application is essential to the crowd-sourced nature of Brand Turkey. Significantly, the diversification of communications methods is also an extension of globalisation’s impact on Turkish public diplomacy efforts. It also signals the diversification of the elements presented in the nation brand identity. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism still determines the official tourism brand strategy, and the I Mean It Agency implements and communicated this strategy but personalised posters enable this campaign to combine the people, culture and heritage, as well as tourism dimensions of nation branding.

3.4.2. “Turkey: Discover the Potential” Export Enhancement Campaign

Complementing the “Home of” campaign, branding was further developed to enhance Turkish exports. On 28 September 2014, during the meeting of the Turkish Exporters Assembly in Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced Turkey’s new export brand logo. The logo, “Turkey: discover the potential” replaced the nondescript “Made in Turkey” logo. While the previous logo employed the country-of-origin effect by declaring the product’s origin, the new logo is a statement about Turkey, rather than the specific product. As such, the current exports logo is composed of 8 design motifs used in traditional Turkish carpets, art, and architecture, in order to symbolise progress, synergy, world, meeting points, West and the East, innovation, unity and harmony (Turkish Exporters Assembly 2015: 13). In terms of communications mediums, this campaign uses short promotional videos, posters, and social media accounts. Most importantly, as this is an exports campaign goods and services accompanied by this logo are the main communicative objects. As I noted in regard to the TURQUALITY project, the exports dimension of

⁴ The “Home of” campaign complements Turkey’s official tourism portal administered by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (<http://www.goturkeytourism.com/>).

branding is about increasing the visibility, and innovativeness of various sectors through high quality goods.

While unveiling the logo, Erdoğan stated “Discover the Potential; this is not a brand. *Turkey is the brand itself*”, supported by the statement that “[f]rom now on, Turkey and Turkish products will better be introduced with the logo and slogan ‘Discover the potential’ [...] These are all symbols of a new Turkey, a new strong Turkey having global aims. These are the symbols of Turkey’s self-confidence” (Official Website of the JDP 2014). According to Turkish Exporters Assembly Turkey’s potential relies on its ability to bring about change due to its diverse civilizational history.

“We become masters of change as a result of the remarkable history that our country has. Melting pot of civilizations and home to entrepreneurial and cultural innovation, Turkey has created companies that thrive to change. With adaptability, empathy and a practical attitude, Turkish companies export to over 200 countries worldwide. Warm relations with customers and partners build reliable long-term relationships that hold firm in times of rapid change” (2015: 6).

While the “Home of” campaign and this exports campaign operate on different dimensions, they converge in terms of their emphasis on the history and cultural heritage as the source of Turkey’s potential. This also implies that there is a presumed ability to accommodate different cultures as well as different consumer-demands, thus this slogan is another way of calling the consumers to discover Turkey. In this sense, the “Discover the potential” slogan is also an extension of the Vision 2023’s objective to brand a “promise” or an intangible idea about Turkey’s potential.

Conclusion

Public diplomacy and nation branding are interlinked as they are responses to globalisation and developments in digital communications. Both are vital to differentiating a country/nation from its competitors. Conceptualising nation branding as a public diplomacy instrument is closely linked to globalisation and the growing emphasis on distinguishing nation-states from each other. This stems from the technological advances of the 21st century, mainly the proliferation of information sources, which caused foreign policy to be extended from state-to-state interactions to state-to-public communications, which rely on the utilization of nation brands and soft power.

Nation branding is a public diplomacy instrument because it constitutes an integral part of the state-to-public communication aspect of national images and representations. Following this communications model, the process of branding is the key element of image and reputation building. This process is situated within the wider public diplomacy framework, which relies on the positioning of nation-states against one another to influence the opinions of foreign publics. Nation branding is one of the many instruments in shaping public opinion, rather than a policy field that aims to construct it. Furthermore, nation branding, and public diplomacy both rely on the production and circulation of positive brand images, which conjure up an idea of a nation. These concepts are interlinked because of their dependence on representations and imagery. Brand image formulation, reputation building, and positioning all connect nation brand identities to public diplomacy efforts. Public diplomacy is a normative means of positioning or repositioning a country, and nation branding is an instrument in this positioning.

The significance of nation branding has become apparent in the Turkish case. JDP’s foreign policy strategy has introduced the Middle Eastern publics as audiences in public diplomacy

efforts. Culture, heritage, history and religion are the shared characteristics that are used to create familiarity between Middle Eastern audiences and Brand Turkey. Communications with European audiences, on the other hand, are mainly strategized in line with Turkey's potential EU membership. Nonetheless, nation branding campaigns, namely the "Home of" and "Discover the potential" campaigns are not audience-specific. Rather than aiming to appeal to a specific target audience, both campaigns use Turkey's potential rooted in its history. In turn, they deploy the East/West dichotomy to the Brand's favour by situating Turkey in a unique historical and geographical crossroads, which then translates into its potential.

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