

Research Article

Urban Tourism Promotion: What Makes the Difference

Ülke Evrim Uysal

Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki, Unioninkatu 37, P.O. Box 54, 00014, Finland

Abstract: Research on urban tourism promotion has recently gained a considerable importance. Urban tourism promotion plays a crucial role in raising the tourism profile of the city. Given the difference of cities, it is astonishing to discover that cities' tourism promotion materials repetitively use similar slogans, phrases and expressions. This study evaluates tourism promotion of two different cities, Helsinki and Istanbul, which rely on three common selling points: 'the city between the East and West', 'the city of tolerance' and 'city size'. The study examines tourism materials by using content analysis in order to identify how these categories are used and how they represent Helsinki and Istanbul.

Keywords: City marketing, content analysis, Helsinki, Istanbul, tourism promotion, urban tourism

INTRODUCTION

Urban tourism is an expanding industry. It has several economic and societal benefits to a city; it can help to generate income and provide employment as well as improve urban physical environment. No wonder that cities have started to develop tourism strategies to attract tourists. Such strategies play a crucial role in raising the tourism profile of cities. In some cities, tourism strategies significantly contribute urban economy. Cities such as Los Angeles (due to construction of successful image following the Summer Olympics in 1984), Barcelona (due to effective tourism strategies since the 1990s) and Bilbao (as a result of effective city branding since the 1990s) have become role models.

There are several case studies on tourism promotion such as Glasgow (Paddison, 1993), New York (Greenberg, 2003), York (Meethan, 1997), Helsinki (Bottà, 2008; Vanolo, 2008a, b), Rotterdam (Richards and Wilson, 2004), Berlin (Weiss-Sussex, 2006), Barcelona (Smith, 2005), Turin (Vanolo, 2008c) and Liverpool (Boland, 2008), Cape Town (Bickford-Smith, 2009). Case studies primarily focus on one city and its distinctive features. Such features range from abstract and general elements drawn from history, culture or architecture of cities.

Comparative research on tourism promotion is rather rare; four examples deserve mention. In their analysis on New York and Los Angeles, Gladstone and Fainstein (2001) discuss tourism development and its impacts on labour markets. They analyse how the benefits of tourism are distributed and patterns of employment and unionism. Ooi (2002) compares tourism strategies of Copenhagen and Singapore and focuses on tourism authorities. Ooi analyses the

contrast between tourism authorities concerning business relations, tourism management and public-private cooperation. Comparative perspectives of tourism promotion also include analysis of cities as competitors in a particular context (e.g., Nordic or Mediterranean). Van den Berg *et al.* (1995) compare eight destinations in Europe and analyse how these cities safeguard a position on the competitive tourist market. Vanolo (2008a) discusses how 'external images' of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa were created for tourism promotion. He analyses tourism materials, policy documents with market orientation and official portals of three cities. Among these four areas of study (labour, institutions, competition and marketing) this study adopts the fourth approach and focuses on analysis of tourism materials (Appendix).

In tourism marketing, several elements such as safety, cleanness, quality of services, culinary scenes and city symbols are repetitively used. Given the difference of cities, it is astonishing to find out that cities' tourism materials use similar expressions and phrases. Furthermore, slogans that are used for different cities are strikingly similar. Such similarities aroused my interest to conduct a comparative research on urban tourism to find out whether these same words used mean the same thing. At first glance, Helsinki and Istanbul look very different; both cities have different historical and cultural heritage. Nevertheless, they rely on three similar looking selling points in their tourism promotion: 'the city between the East and West', 'the city of tolerance' and 'sizes' of both cities. This study looks at how the cities of Helsinki and Istanbul represent themselves in their tourism promotion materials. The study begins by introducing data and methods. Next, urban tourism development in Helsinki and Istanbul is briefly discussed. Then the following

chapters explore, compare and critically evaluate three common selling points in both cities: “the city between the East and West”, “the city of tolerance” and “city size”.

DATA AND METHODS

The data in this study were collected through analysis of tourism materials (Appendix). Tourism materials have become valuable sources to understand how tourism promotion is formulated. They are powerful means of promotion designed to communicate with the tourists (Molina and Esteban, 2006; Jokela, 2011). 55 English language documents (28 from Helsinki and 27 from Istanbul) were analysed to find out how these selling points were used. The data consists of four types of documents: tourism brochures, tourism booklets, newsletters and tourism reports. Tourism brochures include mostly visual images, a few expressions and slogans whereas tourism booklets offer more comprehensive information about the city. Newsletters are periodicals that inform readers about the updated events and happenings in the city. Tourism reports mostly present tourism developments, trends, statistics, short-term and long-term goals but sometimes they include statements with strong marketing orientation.

For the Helsinki case, 25 (out of 28) documents were published by the City of Helsinki, which is the prominent tourism authority in Helsinki. Most of the documents used in this study were published between 2008 and 2011. In Istanbul, The Istanbul (2010) European Capital of Culture Agency, a combination of private-public partnerships, non-governmental organizations, professionals and academic units, was the main local tourism authority between 2007 and 2010. The agency was the main producer of brochures, booklets and newsletters. The agency's tourism documents (14 out of 27) were analysed. The Turkish Ministry of Tourism and Culture, a tourism authority on the national level, also publish promotional materials. The Ministry's tourism documents (eight out of 27) were analysed. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and other national bodies are less concerned with tourism promotion; their reports were considered as secondary data. The quotes are from tourism materials unless otherwise indicated.

To analyse the data, this study uses content analysis. Content analysis, a commonly used method in social sciences to analyse a wide range of textual data (Çukurçayır and Eroğlu, 2010; Krippendorff, 2004; Weber, 1990), has become popular among tourism researchers because of the increasing amount of electronic data, online texts and websites (Jenkins, 1999, 2003; Nickerson, 1995; Ooi, 2004; Ryan and Cave, 2005; Stepchenkova *et al.*, 2009). Texts on tourism promotion materials were grouped into fewer content categories. Words with similar meanings that refer to the same themes were categorized. The frequencies of certain words and phrases were

identified. Then the study explored the meanings of these words and phrases. Moreover other data include those from observation (the researcher acted as a tourist and participated in tourist activities).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

A tourist tale of two cities: Over the past decade, both Helsinki and Istanbul have enjoyed gradual developments in urban tourism. Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Helsinki (Hall *et al.*, 2009). City of Helsinki identified five major dimensions that facilitated this growth: accessibility (increasing number of airlines and cruise ships), investments in global internet-based tour operators, developments in traditional Finnish agencies specializing urban tourism, improvements in Helsinki's image and Helsinki's promotion in foreign media (City of Helsinki Tourism Statistics, 2010). Istanbul, one of the top ten tourist cities in the world, also enjoyed a steady increase of tourist arrivals between 2000 and 2010. There have been significant improvements in the hospitality industry. For instance, in 2007 there were 842 tourism facilities with about 99.000 beds. In 2010 there were 1.235 facilities with approximately 140.000 beds (Directorate of Culture and Tourism of Istanbul, 2011). Furthermore, the European Capital of Culture event in 2010 revitalized urban cultural life temporarily (over 3.000 activities in 2010) and permanently (e.g., new museums, urban regeneration and waterfront developments).

Helsinki and Istanbul have different tourism profiles due to differences in history, cultural heritage, climate and geography and city size. Table 1 compares the tourism industries in Helsinki and Istanbul. Istanbul, which is about 20 times more populated than Helsinki with seven times larger in size, attracts more tourists than Helsinki. Istanbul has busier international passenger traffic and more beds for tourists. The busiest months are different due to different climate conditions. The average length of stay remains short in both cities (6.1 in London, UK National Statistics, 2010). In Helsinki, there have been efforts to extend the duration of stay (it was 1.8 in 2002) (Bottà, 2008) but it still remains low in comparison to other leading destinations in Europe. Duration of stay in Helsinki is low also due to vast amount of cruise trips passengers who do not stay in hotels. Therefore, in terms of room occupancy rate, Istanbul surpasses Helsinki.

There are common features as well. Top three tourism markets are Germany, Russia and Great Britain. Helsinki and Istanbul both have UNESCO World Heritage Sites and they were European Capitals of Culture in 2000 (Helsinki) and 2010 (Istanbul). Furthermore, both cities serve as access points. Helsinki claims to be an access point to the Arctic landscape whereas Istanbul is a gateway to the south (Turkey's sun, sand and sea triangle). Helsinki is the leading

Table 1: Urban tourism in Helsinki and Istanbul (Facts about Helsinki 2011, Helsinki Tourism 2011, Turkish Statistical Institute 2011, Directorate of Culture and Tourism of Istanbul Tourism Statistics 2011)

| | Istanbul | Helsinki |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Founded in | 330 (Byzantium 667 B.C) | 1550 |
| Population | 13.120.596 (2010) | 588.195 (2010) |
| Area | 5.343 km ² | 715 km ² |
| Overnight stays | 10.1 million (2010) | 3.3 million (2011) |
| Airline passengers | 23.9 million (2010) | 14.9 million (2011) |
| Most busy months | July, August, October | August, July, June |
| The average length of stay (nights) | 2.3 (for foreign visitors) (2009) | 2.07 (for foreign visitors) (2010) |
| Room occupancy rate | 75% (2011) | 70% (2011) |
| Number of beds | 139.949 (2010) | 16.031 (2009) |
| Biggest markets | Germany, Great Britain, Russia | Russia, Germany, Great Britain |
| UNESCO world heritage site | Historical peninsula | Suomenlinna fortress |
| Number of museums | 63 (2009) | 71 (2009) |
| Recent mega-events | 2010 European capital of culture, 2011 European capital of sports | 2000 European capital of culture 2012 world capital of design |

destination of both domestic and foreign tourism in Finland (Vuoristo, 2002). In Turkey, Istanbul comes second after Antalya in terms of number of tourists (Euromonitor International (Strategy Research Centre), 2011). This simple statistical comparison shows differences between Helsinki and Istanbul as tourist cities. Despite these differences their tourism promotion strategies are surprisingly similar. The analysis of tourism materials identified that both cities are representing themselves by using three selling points: 'the city between the East and West', 'the city of tolerance' and 'city size'. These points are rather abstract and broad and can mean several things. In the following the use and meanings of these selling points are examined as categories in tourism promotion.

The city between the east and west: The first category was the use of the slogan 'the city between the East and West'. The use of East-West dichotomy in tourism promotion is not new; several cities such as Berlin, Singapore, Hong Kong and Dubai employed this slogan. Interestingly, content analysis identified that four dimensions play key roles in promoting 'the city between the East and West': location, history, architecture and culture.

Location: Firstly geographical locations of Helsinki and Istanbul deserve mention. Helsinki, one of the peripheral capitals of the EU, is approximately 200 km far from the border of Russia. Given the vicinity of Russia Helsinki is often regarded a way to the East (Cantell, 1999; Vanolo, 2008a). Istanbul is about 250 km from the EU border and serves as a crossing point from the West to the East. More credibility to Istanbul's claim as the city between the East and West gives the fact that Istanbul is the only city in the world that is located on both the European and Asian continents.

Tourism materials mention geographical location of Helsinki as an advantage for travelling. The city is introduced as a place where "Eastern exotica meet Scandinavian chic". Helsinki offers "easy access to Russia" with high-speed trains and "visa-free cruises". Furthermore, Helsinki-Vantaa Airport is positioning

itself as a European gateway to Asia (Airport Area Marketing Oy and City of Vantaa Aviapolis, 2011) (Appendix). The airport has several connecting flights to the Eastern destinations. Helsinki's proximity to Russia and its capacity to accommodate cruise ships make the city "a paradise for tax-free shoppers". Similarly, tourism materials in Istanbul emphasize the city's extraordinary geographical location which "brings east and west together" and "makes Asia and Europe joined together each day". There is often a detailed description of city's unique geography. Istanbul is introduced as a crossing point. References to a waterway or a bridge which "connects East and West" and "embraces two continents with one arm reaching out to Asia and the other to Europe" are repetitively used. Interestingly both cities represent themselves "unique" in terms of their geographical location. Tourism portals of Helsinki and Istanbul highlight their uniqueness: "Helsinki's location is unique among Northern European cities" and "Istanbul is among the special cities of the world with its position as a bridge between Europe and Asia".

History: A historical comparison between these cities is equally interesting. Helsinki is less than five centuries old and has been under the rule of two powers, Sweden and Russia until 1917. Istanbul has a longer and more complicated past but also was of two powers: The Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Istanbul was conquered by the Ottomans in 1453. It served as a capital of these empires for nearly 1600 years. Perhaps the only common point of these different tales is that both cities are in the crossroads of "the East and West".

Historical references are frequent and repetitive. Promotion materials often begin with the foundation of Helsinki by the Swedish King Gustav Vasa in 1550. City's "mixed" past is often emphasized on the first paragraphs. Helsinki is introduced as a city which experiences "a rich historical mix of rule from both the Swedish West and the Russian East". In fact the whole history of Helsinki is connected to this mixture. Expressions like "throughout its 450-year history, Helsinki has swung between the currents of Eastern and

Western influences” and “Eastern and Western influences from the past 460 years can be seen everywhere” foster the narratives of the city between East and West. However, Helsinki is represented more than only a mix of two worlds; “It has grown into a vibrant European capital with a character all its own”.

Historical references are more detailed and descriptive in the Istanbul case. Istanbul’s significance in history and international politics is often mentioned. The city served as capital to both “Western and Eastern empires”. It was “formed on the crossroads of the Eastern and Western civilizations” and played as an “intersection point of societies. A common slogan, which was also used in the official promotion movie of the city since 2005, Istanbul, is considered as the “capital of civilizations”. In tourism materials, the city’s past is simply divided into three periods: The Roman and Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empires which represent the “Western” presence, The Ottoman Empire which represents the “Eastern” legacy and The Republic of Turkey, which represents both East and West in the domain of a modern, democratic and secular state.

Interestingly different narratives of history were told in a similar way in tourism promotion. Both cities use history to represent the slogan “the city between the East and West” underlining two aspects: connecting two worlds and being unique. Helsinki’s historical journey was shaped by Sweden and Russia but the city has found its “own genuine character”. Similarly, Istanbul was “the centre of civilizations” representing “the East and West”. It is now a “unique” metropolis, enjoying both legacies as a contemporary city in “modern” Republic of Turkey. Istanbul has gained “a new character” as well.

Architecture: The third dimension is architecture. Although Helsinki has a short urban history and it is without medieval centre, it hosted Neoclassical, Jugend style, Modern and Postmodern architectural schools. Helsinki is often represented to be between Western and Eastern architectural models. The city centre was designed as a symbol for to demonstrate the imperial power Russia. The Senate Square, the symbol of city and a tourist site, represents Russian Empire’s vision of city planning (Hospers, 2011; Treib, 2009; Vanolo, 2008a). In addition to Russia’s neoclassical legacy, Jugend style sights can be found in the centre. Helsinki’s cityscape also has traces of functionalism (e.g., Alvar Aalto’s works). According to one commentator, Helsinki even had features of an Eastern European socialist city (Cantell, 1999). Istanbul also hosts a multiplicity of architectural schools. Due to its longer history Istanbul has become an architectural melting pot. Historically, the architecture of Istanbul benefited from ancient Greek, Byzantine, Genoese, Ottoman and Modern Turkish heritage. The historical

peninsula as an urban palimpsest reveals the city’s Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman architectural heritage (Simmel, 2002). In the 19th century, grandiose palaces, foreign embassies and new residential buildings were built in Neoclassical and later Art Nouveau styles.

In the Helsinki case, the cityscape is represented as a stage reflecting the architectural history of Helsinki. Such expressions as “the colourful layers of the past and the impact of different periods can be seen in the city’s architecture” and “the Byzantine-Russian architectural tradition is represented by Alexander M. Gornostajev’s Uspenski Cathedral, the largest orthodox church in Western Europe” underline how Helsinki is proud of its Eastern and Western architectural heritage. Helsinki has always been “a city of contrasts, where the architecture of the city reflects both the East and West”. This contrast is used as a colourful mix in Helsinki “where national Romantic gargoyles reach out to entire decorative Jugend style neighbourhoods overlooking modernist marvels”. No wonder that Helsinki’s cityscape was used as a simulacrum of Leningrad and Moscow in several American films at a time when it was not possible for Hollywood film makers to shoot original sites during the cold war (Cantell, 1999).

However, Eastern and Western influences on Istanbul’s cityscape often point out an abstract journey from the past to the present through an architectural synthesis and continuity. Expressions such as “from the massive fifth-century Theodosian walls that encircle the old city to the innovative elegance of D’Aronco’s Art Nouveau creations, Istanbul’s buildings represent a unique historical treasure”, “the glittering glories of its Byzantine churches were succeeded by the luminous domes of Sinan’s mosques”, “unique architectural heritage of centuries”, “Art Nouveau stands together with ancient heritage” and “a delightful mixture” indicate manifestation of Istanbul’s architectural heritage.

In summary, city authorities in Helsinki and Istanbul use architectural heritage to demonstrate Eastern and Western influences. Words like “synthesis”, “mixture”, “harmony” “blend” indicate togetherness of different architectural styles.

Culture: The fourth dimension, the culture is the most popular element in tourism materials. It is also the most comprehensive one including references to geography, history and architecture. Helsinki is described as “a cultural city that has found its own niche between East and West”, whose identity was formed by Eastern and Western cultural influences. The city is introduced as a meeting place and a synthesis of old and new through expressions like “the capital where Eastern and Western cultures meet” and “old traditions mix with the latest contemporary trends”. Helsinki is represented as “a unique and diverse city, where traditional Eastern exotica meets contemporary Scandinavian style” and

“culturally blended from East and West”. The words “uniqueness” and “mixture” are used to mention how “exotic” Helsinki is. It is an “ideal and exotic location, culturally between East and West”.

In the Istanbul case, cultural references are equally rich. The city benefits from two cultural entities. It “perpetuates culture in both the East and the West”. Furthermore, Istanbul has not only a “foot in each, celebrating the best of both cultures” but also it “nurtures both Western and Eastern cultures”. Hence, Istanbul is not only a simple intersection point but it also contributes to both Eastern and Western cultures. The city blends cultural differences of “two worlds”. Such notion of synthesis can be seen in phrases like the “melting point of Eastern and Western cultures into a beautiful harmony”, “an enchanting blend of Eastern and Western cultures” and “bringing Western and Eastern musicians for producing a single musical voice”.

Once more “uniqueness” and “synthesis” are mentioned. Although both cities have been influenced by the East and West, they have managed to create a unique identity. Helsinki is considered as a Western city with Eastern influences. It is represented as a cultural “frontier” of the Western world. However, Istanbul’s cultural position is rather ambiguous; the city is represented “in between Eastern and Western cultures”.

European west vs. mythical east or Christian west vs. Islamic east: For both cities, East-West dichotomy is repeated in various documents. In all four dimensions (location, history, architecture and culture) Helsinki and Istanbul are representing themselves as cities between the East and West. However, the comparison between Helsinki and Istanbul shows that “the city between the East and West” means different things in these cities. What is the East and what is the West in Helsinki and Istanbul? Helsinki’s East refers to Finland’s neighbour; “Slavic”, “Russian” and “Soviet” (Bottà, 2008). Tourism materials use this slogan as mythical revival of the past. “West”, on the other hand, clearly indicates Europe. Helsinki is described as a “modern European city” and considered as a “gateway” to the East. Helsinki is a “Western” frontier city that enjoys Eastern influences.

The representation of Istanbul is more ambiguous. East and West have religious meanings. The East implicitly refers to Islam whereas the West stands for Christianity. Geographical, historical, architectural and cultural references in tourism materials (Appendix) indicate that East-West dichotomy in Istanbul is interpreted in the religious sense. Firstly, Istanbul’s geographical location is represented as the “meeting point of Asia (Eastern and Islamic) and Europe (Western and Christian)”. Secondly, historical references also foster this dichotomy. Thirdly,

references on Istanbul’s architecture confirm how religion is central in tourism promotion. Byzantine Empire’s (also known as “Eastern” Roman Empire) architecture is represented as samples of “Western architecture” in Istanbul just because the empire once identified itself on the basis of Christian faith. Finally, cultural values of Christian minorities (e.g., Easter and Christmas) are considered as Istanbul’s “Western culture” although minorities such as Greeks and Armenians are historically “Eastern”.

The city of tolerance: Another common feature in the tourism promotion of Helsinki and Istanbul is “tolerance”. Early urban scholars such as Simmel (2002) and Wirth (1938) wrote on how urbanization resulted in more universalistic attitudes and tolerance among the urbanites. How can a city cherish the idea of tolerance? Before analyzing how tourism materials used the idea of tolerance, it is essential to distinguish between two contemporary approaches to tolerance. Richard Florida regards tolerance as one of the key features that boost urban economic development and innovations. Florida (2002) a city’s diversity and its level of tolerance create an ‘inviting’ environment; it encourages ‘creative’ and talented individuals to visit that particular place. For example a ‘tolerated’ homosexual population boosts urban economic growth. Tolerance and high level of diversity are analysed as indicators of urban development and technological success (Florida and Gates, 2001). Another narrative on tolerance is based on religion. It consists of behaving tolerantly towards members of religious communities, mutual recognition of everyone’s religious freedom and coexistence of different religious groups (Habermas, 2004). The next chapter discusses tourism promotion in Helsinki and Istanbul referring to tolerance either in the sense of diversity or in the sense of religion.

Helsinki welcomes lifestyles and multicultural diversity: “Helsinki is a tolerant, active and friendly city that welcomes all visitors” stated at the city’s official portal. How does Helsinki welcome the idea of tolerance? There are two issues that the City of Helsinki highlighted in its tourism promotion: lifestyles and multiculturalism.

Firstly, tourism materials consider tolerance to lifestyles as a significant element in marketing Helsinki. Such materials defined Helsinki as a city which has “deep-rooted urban lifestyle and vibrant cultural life”. There is a “good mix of styles to suit all tastes”. The Nordic Oddity campaign (Bottà, 2008) was a representation of Helsinki welcoming different lifestyles. The youth jargon is everywhere (“the coolest comic shop”, “cool haircut”, “trendy bars”, “sounds crazy”). Helsinki is a “crazy place where you can even swim naked”. Tourist materials also welcome GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) tourists.

Helsinki's official tourism portal states that "Helsinki has an open and active gay culture". The portal provides particular maps of attractions for GLBT tourists. Several brochures underline the location of gay clubs and "gay-lesbian friendly parks" (e.g., Karhupuisto) in Helsinki. A recent newsletter published in 2011 introduced Helsinki as "an attractive destination for GLBT tourists" and "a tolerant city" where "tourist experience is regardless of sexual orientation". Materials increasingly mention "alternative lifestyles". They introduce attractions in Helsinki not only for mainstream tourists but also for "Bohemian", "hippie", vegetarian and "vegan" and "backpacker" tourists. They address different lifestyles mentioning vegetarian and vegan restaurants, inexpensive accommodation, camping activities, second-hand shops, eco-friendly shopping and ecological festivals. Tolerance in the case of Helsinki also includes activities tolerated by the private landowners. 'Everyman's right' (a legal concept in Finland that allows a right to access the land and waterways and right to collect natural products no matter who owns the land) was referred to demonstrate free use of natural environments. In Finland, everyone can "walk, ski or cycle freely, stay or set up camp temporarily in the countryside pick wild berries, mushrooms and flowers, fish with a rod and line, row, sail, use a motorboat and swim in the countryside". Tourism materials often encourage tourists to "enjoy Finnish way of life in the nature" with a few restrictions.

Secondly, the City of Helsinki uses multiculturalism to attract tourists. This strategy has a background. Helsinki is the capital of one of 'the most homogeneous' country in the EU; however there is an increasing rate of migration to Helsinki. In the early 1990s, only about 5.000 foreigners resided in Helsinki (1% of the population); in 2000 the number rose to about 25.000 residents of foreign background (5% of the population) (Heikkilä and Peltonen, 2002, Vanolo, 2008a). In 2009, there were 38.654 foreign nationals (6.7% of the population) in Helsinki and 58.405 inhabitants (10.1% of the population) had a foreign background (City of Helsinki Urban Facts Helsinki Region Trends, 2010). Helsinki was selected as the European Capital of Culture in 2000 which lead to the preparation of multicultural agenda that set multiculturalism as a common goal for the city (Peltonen, 2005). There were expectations to develop Helsinki as a "tolerant, safe, attractive and service-minded city" for which multiculturalism and immigrants' skills are a key success factor (City of Helsinki, Helsinki's International Strategy, 2008). Such developments paved the way for multiculturalism to become a significant element in tourism materials. Tourism materials include significant amount of references to Helsinki's multicultural vision such as

introducing cultural centres where "multicultural diversity is celebrated" in Finland. The materials also introduce international culinary scenes, ethnic shopping and multicultural festivals or districts like Kaisaniemi where it is possible to enjoy multicultural music, art, theatre and food.

Istanbul:

Promoting religious tolerance: In the case of Istanbul tolerance is not associated with lifestyles, but rather to Istanbul's multi-religious past. Istanbul has a multi-religious history. The city was the capital of the Roman Empire (330-395), the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire (395-1204 and 1261-1453), the Latin Empire (Armies of IV. Crusade established a short lived state, 1204-1261) and the Ottoman Empire (1453-1922). The empires identified themselves on the basis of Orthodox, Catholic and Islamic faiths. Two ecumenical leaders of Christian Orthodoxy (The Patriarch of Constantinople) and The Caliph (Ottoman Sultans bore this title since the early 16th century) resided in Istanbul for centuries. Even the short lived Latin Empire was the most prominent Catholic rule in the East. During the Ottoman times, each religious community had specific rights, including the right to reside in particular neighbourhoods, having their own religious places and representative bodies, laws, taxation, guilds and even dress codes, which is called the Ottoman millet system (Inalcik, 1997). The system was based on a mutual contract between the non-Muslim communities and the state which granted religious freedom and cultural autonomy for non-Muslims (Ortaylı, 1999). Consequently different religious groups lived together in Istanbul for centuries.

Istanbul's religious heritage is evident on the cityscape as well. The historical Peninsula, the Beyoğlu district and both banks of the Bosphorus are decorated with numerous mosques, churches and synagogues. City officials in Istanbul extensively used this multi-religious background and religious landscape in tourism promotion.

Firstly, Istanbul's role as a religious city (although Istanbul is not a city to pilgrimage) is underlined. Istanbul is represented as the "meeting point of faiths", "capital of divine tolerance" and "capital of religions in the very centre of the ancient world". Istanbul's ancient significance is mentioned in order to attract the attention of the reader. Secondly, Istanbul is not only an intersection point but also a host of "tolerance". Istanbul "embraces religions with tolerance on the crossroads of two continents". The city has the ability to "combine identities on the crossroads of cultures", "collect different voices and create a peaceful synthesis". Particularly, the notion of "synthesis" is represented as a significant element of religious tolerance. Peaceful synthesis of different faiths are not contradicting but feeding each other. The city is represented as a "glorious opera scene where churches

Table 2: Tolerance and tourism promotion

| City of tolerance | Helsinki | Istanbul |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Narratives | Multicultural diversity | Religious diversity |
| Focus | Lifestyles, individual liberties | Peaceful coexistence |
| Form of tolerance | Individual | Collective |
| Goal | Creative city | Political |

and mosques create a unique sound scape”. Religious tolerance also includes togetherness and solidarity in Istanbul where “the sounds of prayers rising from minarets never surpasses the sound of church bells, mosques, churches and synagogues stand side by side”. The city is “one of the few places in the world where you can see churches, synagogues and mosques built within a short distance of each other”.

Tolerance for lifestyles or religions: Both Istanbul and Helsinki introduce “tolerance” as a selling point. However, the interpretation of tolerance is different. Table 2 summarizes various aspects of tolerance: narratives (theoretical framework and research on tolerance), focus (how tourism materials use the idea of tolerance), form of tolerance (how tolerance is interpreted) and goals (why the idea of tolerance is used in tourism promotion).

Florida’s narratives on creative city are not unknown in Helsinki. Several reports on Helsinki’s economic growth and international strategy (The Economic Map of Urban Europe, 2007; City of Helsinki, Helsinki’s International Strategy, 2008; The State of Helsinki Region, 2009; City of Helsinki, Urban Facts Helsinki Region Trends, 2010) used terms drawn from his approach to tolerance and diversity. Creativity has been emphasized as an urban policy to make the metropolitan area more attractive (City of Helsinki, Helsinki’s International Strategy, 2008; Kepsu and Vaattovaara, 2008; Vanolo, 2008b). City of Helsinki used Florida’s works in order to introduce Helsinki as a “tolerant” “gay friendly” city that “welcomes different lifestyles”. Helsinki tourism materials (Appendix) mention multicultural diversity with a focus on lifestyles and individual liberties. Tolerance was interpreted on the ‘individual’ level to achieve the goal of creative city.

Nonetheless, religious diversity is the main narrative in promoting Istanbul. Tourism promotion interprets multiculturalism in the domain of religion. Unlike Helsinki, Istanbul’s tourism materials focus on coexistence of different religions; they rely on ‘collective’ forms of tolerance. Tourism promotion in Istanbul is motivated by political concerns and Turkey’s foreign policy, particularly Turkey’s accession to the EU. The European Capital of Culture Event in 2010 was a fine opportunity to demonstrate that Istanbul is a valuable asset of European culture (Appendix).

City size: humble Helsinki vs. pompous Istanbul: How does the size of a city play a role in tourism?

Comparing Helsinki and Istanbul may answer this question as the sizes of both cities are used to boost tourism. In this chapter, the focus is how Helsinki and Istanbul tourism materials use city size in tourism promotion. Helsinki’s size and population are often mentioned favourably in tourism materials. Helsinki is introduced as a “pocket-sized metropolis”, “mini-metropolis” and “manageable city”. The benefits of the small size are proximity, a problem-free city and liveability.

Firstly, the phrase “walking distance” is frequently used. Helsinki allows tourists to explore it easily “on foot”. For those who visit Helsinki for a short time period such as attendants of conferences, “proximity of everything” in Helsinki offers a good time management of visits. Because “most sights are situated within a convenient walking distance of the city centre”, a tourist can see “a lot in a short time period”. Secondly, being small in size helps to overcome some problems of metropolitan areas. Traffic is one example: “traffic in Helsinki is still relatively uncongested, allowing you to stroll peacefully even through the city centre”, “traffic in the Helsinki region is smooth and traffic jams are rare”, “travel time from the city centre to the outskirts is a half hour at most, even during the rush hour”. Brochures often remind the tourists that Helsinki is different from the rest of the metropolises in Europe; “unlike other European big cities, traffic is never jammed in Helsinki.” Finally, Helsinki’s quiet, peaceful and liveable (often supported by the liveability index) environment is repetitively used. Helsinki is a city “where one can walk in peace”. Tourism brochures used expressions like “tiny little kiosk”, “tiny Thai restaurant”, “small intimate cafe”, “small bars in Kallio”, “tiny establishment” and “unique tiny boutiques” to underline Helsinki’s leisure activities.

Nevertheless tourism materials always underlined Helsinki’s “urban” features. Helsinki is maybe “pocket-sized”; but it is a metropolis. Tourism advertising in Helsinki relies on this dual nature; on the one hand, Helsinki is represented as a metropolis, offering top quality urban good and services, on the other hand the city has the “cosy atmosphere” of small city of half a million people residents.

It is quite the opposite in the Istanbul case. Throughout the history (between the 4th and the 7th, the 11th and 12th centuries and finally in the 17th century) Istanbul has been the largest city in the world. Istanbul was simply known as the Polis (city) until the Turkish conquest (Ortaylı, 2004). Today it is among one of the largest cities in the world. The city’s vast size, population and historical legacy are occasionally used in tourism promotion. There are four categories to represent Istanbul’s largeness: its historical significance, never ending options, landscape and landmarks. Firstly, Istanbul’s vast size, its historical significance and golden ages are often mentioned.

Table 3: The use of phrases in tourism materials

| Categories | Helsinki | Istanbul |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Area | Tidy, accessible, small, walking distance | Glorious, large, huge, vast, big |
| Urban | Pocket-sized metropolis, mini-metropolis, peaceful, manageable | World-class city, world-city, world metropolis, capital of culture |
| Landmarks and sights | Small, little, tiny, humble, peaceful, quiet | Magnificent, huge, stunning, glorious, massive, grand, elegant |
| Daily life | Tidy, ordered, intimate, uncongested, convenient | Chaotic, calls for discovery, adventurous |

Istanbul is introduced as “one of the most glorious cities in the world”, “one of the largest cities in the world”, “splendid city”, “a city with a scale of a country” and “huge modern metropolis”. It is considered as “the most inspiring city in the world”, “world metropolis” and a “world class cultural centre”. The city’s historical significance is always mentioned with expressions such as “glorious past”, “once ruled lands on three continents”, “crucial role in shaping history”, “the capital of three empires”, “unique cities of the world in terms of cultural wealth” and “great capital of culture and civilization”.

Secondly, Istanbul is represented as a city with never ending options. It is a “world within the world”. “The endless varieties and innumerable options” provide a “huge wealth to explore”. There is “too much to see in Istanbul”, it is impossible to cover everything at once. The city is large enough to discover something new in each visit. Thirdly, Istanbul’s landscape is described with grandiose expressions. Istanbul has “stunning views”, “a glorious, unrivalled physical legacy” “with Golden Horn, one of the best natural harbours in the world”. Bosphorus is illustrated as a “natural treasure” flowing across the city. Finally, Istanbul’s landmarks are portrayed in the same manner. Expressions such as “world’s greatest suspension bridges”, “supremely elegant Imperial Mosques”, “The Imperial Fatih Mosque has vast size and great complex”, “magnificent Dolmabahçe palace”, “Hagia Sophia, unquestionable one of the finest building of all time” “Topkapi palace: a grand design”, “The Blue Mosque, the magnificent work of Turkish art and the crowning glory of the city” glorify the city with pride.

Table 3 summarizes the expressions used to refer to the “city size” in tourism materials. The use of phrases concerning city size was analysed in four categories (area, urban, landmarks and sights and daily life) in order to understand how city size is used as a selling point. In Helsinki, metropolitan area is defined by the use of ‘humble’ phrases underlining smallness and accessibility. Slogans like “pocket-sized metropolis”, “mini-metropolis” and “manageable city” also foster the representations of a small size city. Tourism materials (Appendix) defined landmarks and sights and daily life in the same way by introducing secondary elements such as tidiness, peacefulness and order to draw a small city profile. However in the Istanbul case, pretentious phrases are commonly used. Istanbul’s area, landmarks and sights are introduced with pompous expressions like “magnificent, huge,

grand and glorious”. The city is defined as a “world city” “world-class city or metropolis”. Unlike Helsinki, daily life in Istanbul is not “tidy” and “ordered” but rather “chaotic” and “adventurous”.

Despite radical differences in expressions, promotion materials end up on the same point: city size is used as a selling point to boost tourism. A small, manageable city offers “intimate” tourist ambiance for tourists who come from crowded and busy metropolises. Conversely, but not necessarily in contradiction, Istanbul as huge metropolis, offers endless options. Descriptions on city area, urban features, landmarks and sights are followed by phrases explaining why city size is an advantage. In terms of daily life, this “advantage” in Helsinki derives from tidiness, order and intimacy whereas Istanbul relies on chaotic and adventurous tourist experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study compares tourism promotion in Helsinki and Istanbul. Both cities use three selling points to attract tourists: ‘the city between the East and West’, ‘the city of tolerance’ and ‘city size’. Firstly, in promoting Helsinki and Istanbul as a ‘city between the East and West’, geographical location, history, architecture and culture have different meanings. In Helsinki, East refers to the Slavic, Russian and Soviet legacy and West to Scandinavia, Northern Europe, and the EU; or Europe and Western industrialized world in a broader sense. In the Istanbul case, both East and West have ‘religious’ meanings, East representing Islam and West standing for Christianity. Secondly, both Helsinki and Istanbul have adopted ‘tolerance’ as a selling point; however, tourism materials include different narratives of tolerance. In Helsinki, tolerance consists of individual lifestyles, liberties and multicultural diversity whereas in Istanbul tolerance is interpreted in religious sense. Finally, in both cities ‘city size’ is introduced as an advantage and again in different meanings. For Helsinki it is the smallness and for Istanbul it is the vast city size that creates an advantage for visitors. In all these common categories, both cities emphasize their strengths by presenting themselves unique and original.

Previous research on tourism promotion showed how similar words and phrases also travel from one city to another. Research findings of this study indicate that repetitively used words and phrases or even clichés can be of vital importance in tourism

promotion. In case studies without a comparative perspective, the logic behind using such common words may go unnoticed. However this study, by comparing two peripheral cities in Europe, Helsinki and Istanbul, showed that the same slogans, expressions and phrases that are used in promotion materials mean different things. Because they are not necessarily simple catchy phrases or empty slogans; but they reflect city's identity and reveal historical and societal realities behind them. In doing so, the study also underlines an alternative strategy to cities' lust for uniqueness. Instead of employing only local features in city marketing, 'universal' concepts can be effectively used in order to build an image of a 'locality'.

APPENDIX

Helsinki:

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