

ONE FLEW OVER THE BRANDS' NEST: Rethinking destination brand

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ABSTRACT: This study identifies some of the difficulties faced when trying to get a holistic understanding of the tourist territorial brands. The title itself, inspired by the classic movie “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”, expresses the analytical attitude followed in this study. Both the complexity of the tourism phenomenon and the disciplinary fragmentation, and the juxtaposition of the different codes used to analyse this phenomenon invited the authors to fly over the research field, identifying some of the pieces of a puzzle which hasn’t made sense yet. Thus making the title of this article meaningful, this matter is approached with a certain detachment concerning the different scientific disciplines. By using secondary information, this study highlights the complexity of the concept “destination brand”, emphasising the aspects related to the territorial bond of the heritage attractions, trying to integrate the “Designation of Origin” and “World Heritage” labels in the set of factors underlying the concept of destination brands. **Keywords:** Branding, destination brand, territorial attachment, designation of origin, World Heritage.

RESUMEN: El presente estudio identifica algunas de las dificultades que se plantean en una comprensión holística de las marcas (territoriales) turísticas. Su propio título – inspirado en la clásica película “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” (Alguien Voló sobre el Nido del Cuco) – permite inferir sobre la actitud analítica presente en este estudio: ante la complejidad de los fenómenos del turismo, por un lado, y la fragmentación disciplinaria y la yuxtaposición de diferentes códigos de interpretación de esos fenómenos, por otro, los autores optan por sobrevolar el campo de investigación, identificando algunas piezas de un puzzle al que todavía falta dar sentido. Y haciendo justicia al título, estudian el tema con alejamiento frente a las distintas disciplinas científicas que actúan en ese dominio. Con recurso al tratamiento de información secundaria, este estudio pone de manifiesto la complejidad del concepto “marca de destino”, dando un especial destaque a los aspectos relacionados con el vínculo territorial de las atracciones del patrimonio, intentando integrar los rótulos de Denominación de Origen y de Patrimonio de la Humanidad en el arsenal de factores que participan en la definición de las mar-

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cas de destino. **Palabras clave:** marca, marca de destino, vínculo territorial, denominación de origen, Patrimonio de la Humanidad.

RESUMO: O presente estudo identifica algumas das dificuldades que se colocam a uma compreensão holística das marcas (territoriais) turísticas. O próprio título – inspirado no filme clássico “Voando sobre um ninho de Cucos” – permite inferir sobre a atitude analítica presente neste estudo: perante a complexidade dos fenómenos do turismo, por um lado, e a fragmentação disciplinar e justaposição de diferentes códigos de interpretação desses fenómenos, por outro, os autores optam por sobrevoar o campo de investigação, identificando algumas peças de um puzzle a que ainda falta dar sentido. E fazendo jus ao título, abordam o tema com distanciamento face às diferentes disciplinas científicas que actuam nesse campo. Com recurso ao tratamento de informação secundária, este estudo põe em relevo a complexidade do conceito “marca de destino”, enfatizando os aspectos relacionados com o vínculo territorial das atracções de património, e tentando integrar os rótulos de Denominação de Origem e de Património da Humanidade no arsenal de factores que participam na definição das marcas de destino. **Palavras chave:** marca, marca de destino, vínculo territorial, denominação de origem, Património da Humanidade.

INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt for a deeper understanding of the tourist territorial brand concept, particularly the destination brand concept. The authors rely on the assumption according to which, for a destination brand to be consistent and solid, it should be built “bottom up”, that is, from the complex symbiosis of the elements of existing tourist attractions in a given territory, which are generally assets of the communities that inhabit this land and give it meaning, and never the reverse way, “top down”, from a schema created by a group of saviours, sitting somewhere in a marketing department.

In order to demonstrate the validity of this assumption, the authors adopt the inductive method, proposed by the empiricists Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and Hume (Gil, 1999; Lakatos & Markoni, 1993, Severino, 2002). Using this method it is possible to reach general conclusions from a set of elementary premises. After a first stage of observation, analysis and classification of empirical data (we use only secondary data), a hypothesis is presented to solve the problem.

Our general hypothesis is that the mere transposition of branding concepts from the consumer products domain to the tourist destination domain creates some limitations, due to the insufficient understanding of the complexity of the destination concept, and these difficulties concern three interdependent issues: (a) the understanding of the very concept of tourist destination; (b) the implementation of strategies of destination branding; (c) the creation of adequate methods to assess the brand equity of destinations.

The concept of ‘destination brand’ is often misunderstood. This misunderstanding is less due to the term of “brand” or “branding” than it is due to the concept of destination itself. In fact, from the clients’ point of view, a destination can be a very large and imprecise ter-

ritory, that is not easy to define. If, in some cases, the destination can be seen as an entire continent, or at least significant parts of it (e.g., for Asian citizens Europe itself may be seen as a tourist destination), on other occasions the destination may be formed by a set of two or three countries (e.g., a week tour in the Baltic countries or a boat trip to the Danube capitals). In some other perspectives the single country or nation's geographic scale is the most suitable to express the concept of destination, but also the city or even some spots may be more easily associated with what one may consider as the tourist destination.

Despite the character of contingency and relativism concerning the geographic scale of destination, the majority of researchers who pontificate in this research field continue to assimilate the concept of tourist destination to the concept of country (in the sense of state or nation). This is why tourism researchers should be very careful when reading the annual reports of the "Country Brand Index", published by FutureBrand, or the "Nation Brand Index" and "City Brand Index", published by GfK Custom Research. In fact, if it is true that the brand equity (or positive image) of a destination must be measured in the minds of current and potential clients – and not in the minds of the staff of Destination Marketing Organizations – the question of relative character of geographical scale of every destination becomes very pertinent and it must be taken into account in the analysis of very relevant topics, such as destination awareness, prestige of tourist destinations, perceived quality of tourist destinations, etc.

Moreover, every destination includes a set of tourist products that don't necessarily overlap (e.g., religious tourism, cultural tourism, golf, sun and sea, MICE, etc.) If, for instance, one asks a sample of experts or consumers to inform about the most prestigious destinations for: (a) golf, (b) surfing, and (c) mountain ski; there should be a high likelihood that the answers for these three tourist products (golf, skiing, and surfing) will not coincide at all, and there is also a high likelihood that the evoked destinations will not coincide with the geographical scales of country or city.

To test our hypothesis, through the inductive methodology, we discuss some relevant dimensions of the destination brand concept which must be taken into account by the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO), namely, (a) the strong attachment of destination brand to a given territory; (b) the vast plurality of stakeholders operating and interacting in the branding process, which means a very low level of control on the destination branding strategy by the DMO; (c) the existence of products with "Denomination of Origin" and the sites with different distinctive labels, such as World Heritage by UNESCO or other relevant designations. These are some of the most

evident elements that must be included in any strategy of destination branding, and usually are not considered in the literature of destination branding research.

The brand concept

A brand is a name, term or sign, or even a combination of those elements, used with the aim of identifying the goods and services of a salesperson or group of salespeople, giving them a different identity from their competitors (Kotler, 1997). Furthermore the brands activate beliefs and emotions and lead to certain behaviours (Kotler and Gertner, 2002).

One of the main functions of the brand is to assure the property rights of its owner. From this point of view the brand is clearly different from the patent and from the author's rights or copyright. These two are both ways of protecting the intellectual property and they aim to assure their owners exclusive rights over a certain period of time. The registration of the brand also gives its creator or entitled person exclusive rights. But unlike the patent and the author's rights, the rights of a brand never expire.

However, it is in the marketing context that the brands show their utmost value, not only for their owners, but also for their consumers. The main aim of the brand consists in creating an identification bond between the consumers and the products or services associated to that particular brand. As Kotler (1997) mentions, a strong and consolidated brand contains a promise of value which is sent to its consumers over and over again. This promise of value includes six dimensions: (1) its attributes, such as price and quality; (2) functional or emotional benefits, such as duration or status; (3) values, such as security and prestige; (4) the culture of a certain group; (5) the personality of a person or animal; (6) a type of consumer suitable for the product.

The revision of literature about brands emphasises the following advantages: reinforcement of the self-esteem, creation of images and strong perceptions, rise of importance and of knowledge, reinforcement of trust and loyalty, simplification of the decisions, activation of feelings and association with former experiences.

The brand equity

The brand equity is the additional value that a brand confers to a product or service. That additional value depends on the way the consumer thinks, feels and acts towards the brand, as well as on the prices, market share, and on the profit of a particular brand. The brand equity represents an important intangible asset of the organisation.

For Aaker (1991) a brand will be valuable to the consumer if it corresponds to his/her expectations. Those expectations can be related to tangible aspects, such as the performance of the product, or to intangible ones, such as the associations the consumer makes bearing the brand in mind, according to his/her beliefs (Zeitahml, 1998). Several authors mention the following benefits of the brand equity: more loyalty, less vulnerability to the business competitors and to the crisis, larger efficiency and efficacy of communication, possibility of licensing and broadening of the brands (Aaker, 1991; Chernatony & McDonald, 1998; Clarke, 2001; Keller, 1998; Kamakura & Russel, 2001; Lassar et al., 1995). The price politics are also strongly influenced by the brand equity and the following advantages are evident: possibility of higher profits, less elasticity to the increase of price, higher flexibility to the decrease of price, bigger cooperation and involvement of the resellers (Keller, 1998).

The longevity of the brands

The use of brands already has a long history. Although their constant presence is one of the features of our consumer society (Braudillard, 1995), the brands have been used to distinguish each product from the others for some centuries (Bassat, 1999). Formerly in Europe the manufacturers and craftsmen used to place a brand on their products, so that they could protect them and make their purchase easier. Therefore, a connection between the craftsmen and the goods was established.

Gradually the brand gained a higher strategic importance (Ward, 1998) and even turned out to be one of the main intangible assets of global organisations. As its strategic importance grew, the extent of the brands use was gradually expanded to new fields, including all types of services and goods.

Nowadays, in a globalised world which is strongly dominated by social and technological innovation, the vitality of some brands relies on their stability and longevity. Nowadays when almost everything is in permanent change, brands give the consumer a feeling of stability and constancy.

The stability given by the brand doesn't prevent producers from being creative as far as the managing of its visual identity is concerned (Kreutz & Fernandez, 2010). The stability of the brands is closely associated to their durability and longevity, according to Krishnan and Chakravarti (1993: 213): "If we used a time machine to travel to the groceries and drugstores back in 1923 and asked which were the most important soap, fruit in cans and bubble gums brands, the answers

would be the same as the ones given nowadays: Ivory, Del Monte and Wrigley’s. The names Campbell and Nabisco would be mentioned for soup and cookies; Kodak and Gillette would also be the most popular cameras and razors. And of course, the leader brand in drinks would be Coke.”

Table 1: “Identity card” of some Port Wine Brands

Brand	Founders	Country	Year
Warre	William Warre	Portugal	1729
Burmester	Henry Burmester e John Nash	United Kingdom	1730
Offley	William Offley	United Kingdom	1737
Taylor’s	Job Bearsley	United Kingdom	1744
Ferreira	Antónia Ferreira	Portugal	1751
Real C. ^a Velha	Grupo de produtores de vinhos	Portugal	1756
Sandeman	George Sandeman	United Kingdom	1790
Fonseca	Manoel Pedro Guimaraens	Portugal	1822
Cálem	António Alves Calem	Portugal	1859
Borges	António Borges e Francisco Borges	Portugal	1884

Source: original, based on the brands websites

In the present market it is possible to find product brands that appeared in the 18th century, whose origin is previous to the Industrial Revolution. And not surprisingly the brands that stand out in that old group are the ones that don’t depend on the technological progress, but on the bond with a certain territory. The Port Wine brands are a good example to illustrate this idea.

Many of the port wine brands maintain their bond not only to the place where they were created, but also to their founders’ families. On the other hand, although the global brands, associated to the multinational industries (some of them represented in table 2) appeared more recently, they have lost their familiar features, because they belong to enterprises whose capital is spread in different stock markets.

Table 2: “Identity card” of some of the brands that appeared up to the middle of the 20th century

Brand	Sector	Name of the founders	Country	Year
Bayer	Chemist	Friedrich Bayer e Johann Weskott	Germany	1863
Campari	Drinks	Gaspare Campari	Italy	1867
Nestlé	Children's food	Henri Nestlé	Switzerland	1867
Coca-Cola	Drinks	John Styth Pemberton	USA	1886
Kodak	Pictures	George Eastman	USA	1888
Aspirina	Chemist	Felix Hoffmann	Germany	1897
Cadillac	Cars	Antoine L. Lamothe du Cadillac	USA	1902
Harley-Davidson	Motorbikes	William Harley e Arthur Davidson	USA	1903
All Star	Shoes	Charles “Chuck” Taylor	USA	1908
Nívea	Beauty products	Oskar Tropolowitz	Germany	1911
Colgate	Hygiene	William Colgate	USA	1927
Lacoste	Clothes	René Lacoste	France	1927
Alka-Seltzer	Chemist	Hub Beardsley e Maurice Treneer	USA	1931
Lego	Toys	Ole Kirk Christiansen	Denmark	1932
Avon	Cosmetics	David McConnell	USA	1939
Ferrero	Food	Pietro Ferrero	Italy	1942

Source: original, based on the brands websites

The territoriality as an analytical dimension in the analysis of the brands

The use of the concept of brand in new fields, beyond the universe of common consuming goods, specially applied to tourism – namely the concepts of “country brand”, “city brand” or “destination brand” – demands a careful analysis of its application.

The strong territorial attachment of the wine brands, and of the brands ruled by the legislation of controlled origin, such as cheese and hams, among others, reveals an interesting dimension of the analyses of brands, which in our point of view is the key to the understanding of territorial brands. We refer to them not in the juridical sense, but in their bond to a certain territory. It is possible that the long-lasting brands vary between the ones which aren't associated to a certain territory (such as shampoo or razors brands) and the brands whose existence and success depend on the attractiveness of a certain region (such as the country brands, city brands and destination brands). Between these two extremes and with variable degrees of territorial attachment we can place all the other brands. There are global brands whose national connotation is stronger than others. Although McDonald's and Coke, for example, are examples of worldwide popularity, they have a stronger connotation with "Uncle Sam" and the "American way of life" than brands like Apple, Google or Amazon. Picture 1 is aimed to illustrate this idea.

When we compare brands of consumer goods with territorial brands we can notice the following main differences:

1. Juridical person who owns the brand's rights:

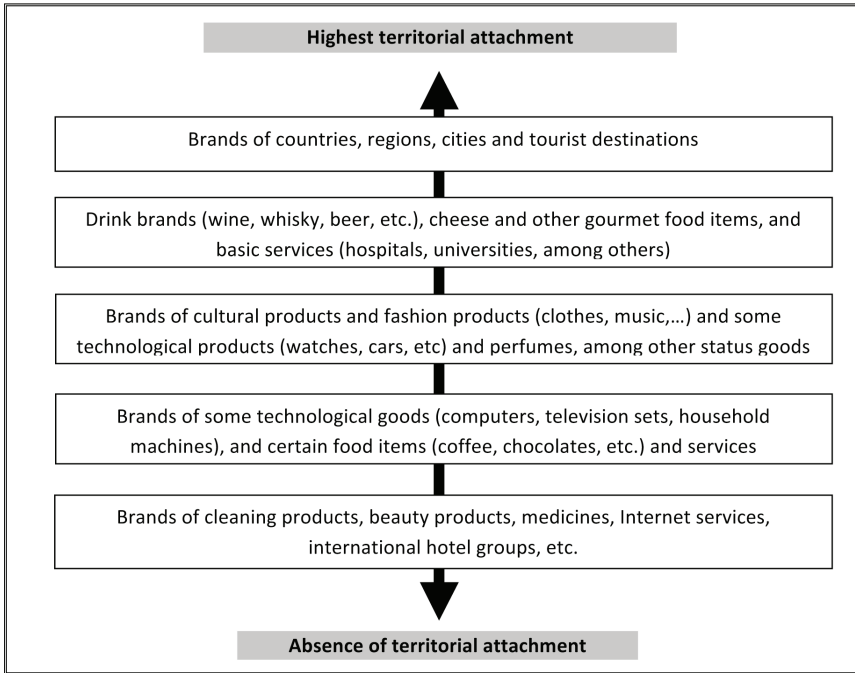
Each brand of a product or service has a legal owner, who is the juridical person. As far as territorial brands are concerned it is more difficult to identify who owns the brand's rights. In a certain country there are several entities that claim the brand as theirs. And from this point of view the territorial brand is a kind of "flag" of the country, more than a brand in its general sense.

2. Alienation of the brand:

The brands of products and services are intangible assets of the enterprises and they can be traded. Many commercial brands change their owners, but, most of the times this doesn't imply a change in the quality and characteristics of those brands. On the other hand, the territorial brands can't be traded, because they are attached to a certain territory and belong to the community who lives there.

3. Evaluation of brand equity:

The brands of products and services are one of the main intangible assets owned by the enterprises that strongly influence the value of shares in the stock markets. The measurement of brand equity by auditors doesn't make sense when we refer to territorial brands. This doesn't mean that a strong territorial brand doesn't enrich a country, city or region. It is known that the image of a country and its brand strongly affects the perception and success of the other brands associated to that territory.



Picture 1: Level of territorial attachment of brands - some examples

Rocha (2003) mentions that the studies about the effects of the “country of origin” or “made in” show that:

- a) The buyer associates the products he/she is going to buy to a certain country;
- b) The image the buyer has of a certain product, mainly of its quality, is intimately associated to the product’s country of origin;
- c) If the buyer has a negative feeling towards the country of origin of a certain product, he/she may refuse to buy it. If he/she has a good impression of the country, he/she is more likely to purchase that good.

Therefore there are no doubts concerning the high importance of the territorial brands, although it is not possible to quantify their value.

4. Managing autonomy

An organisation that owns the rights of a brand usually has autonomy to manage it. However, a destination management organization (DMO) has a reduced autonomy to manage its territorial brand. The DMO can only control the visual identity of the brand. Other dimensions like brand personality depend on the several agreements and possible consensus within the community.

So we are led to conclude that the territorial brands of a certain country, city or region create favourable or unfavourable image inputs to the managing of brands attached to a specific territory. In that sense, although their value cannot be quantified, the territorial brands are one of the most valuable intangible assets that can generate a symbolic background to all organisations that have positive connotations with the branded territory. But the management of territorial brands is shared by several stakeholders, which shows the collective nature of these brands.

THE SPECIFICITY OF THE DESTINATION BRANDS

In the current context of a strong international business competition, the destination brands are more and more valuable for tourism marketing strategies. A destination brand with a high prestige and good reputation is extremely important and valuable for all the economic agents that work on that location. Before visiting a certain destination, the tourist already has a defined idea in his/her mind about the quality of that place. The way a destination is categorised in the mind of a consumer - that is, its brand image - determines the probability of being chosen when he/she comes to choose a holiday destination.

However, according to many authors (Gold & Ward, 1994; Ward, 1998; Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009) the use of marketing techniques in the territorial management is relatively recent. In fact, these techniques appeared in the 1990s as a reaction to the competition that grew among countries, regions and cities. It was in this context that the territorial brands acquired a main strategic importance, achieving a significant economic value for the organisations.

Asworth and Voogd (1994:39) state that "there is nothing new in the fact that the territories are being promoted by those who are more likely to profit from their development. What is new, however, is the fact that the managing public entities are aware that they apply the marketing approaches not only as an additional tool to the solution of complex management problems, but even more as a philosophy of the territorial management."

The promotion of countries and cities has been put into practice since the 19th century (Ward, 1998). For example, the main attractions in the World Exhibitions are the national pavilions, which are created by the countries that take part in those exhibitions. In Expo 2000, in Hannover, each country was challenged to innovate in the architectural level. The investment made was around 13 million Euros. Bearing in mind the amount of money spent, there are certain governments that are sceptical about the benefits of this investment (Walvis, 2003). Although the economic effects of this kind of investments are hard to measure, an independent research estimated that the Dutch pavilion in Expo 2000 (which cost around 35 million Euros) created around

350 million Euros of potential receipts for the economy of Netherlands (Walvis, 2003).

The fact that the promotion of tourist destinations started long before the application of brand strategies to cities, countries and regions, leads us to formulate the following questions:

- e) Is the appearance of the territorial brands, as far as tourism is concerned, a turning point in the management and promotion of tourist destinations? Or is that only a new fashion, a kind of restyling of the terminology used by tourism marketing? These questions arise, because the management and tourist promotion of a certain destination is not under the exclusive control of the DMO. Actually it is the mix effect of many efforts made by several entities, some of which are capable and autonomous enough to promote their own products and services by themselves.
- f) Are the concepts “destination images” and “destination brand” really different or rather two similar ideas related to the same phenomenon?

Tasci and Kozak (2006) have asked some of the most famous university experts on this matter and the results they obtained (Table 3) confirm what we already thought: the setting of strategies of destination brands is actually a much more complex process than usually one can imagine. It is necessary to follow a long path and develop an empirical and conceptual work to really understand the phenomena related to the destination brands.

Difficulties related to the conceptualisation of the destination brand

From the previous analyses many questions arise. These questions can be summarised in three main topics, essential to the conceptualisation of destination brands:

- g) Difficulties in understanding the concept of destination brands itself;
- h) Difficulties in planning the strategies of destination brands;
- i) Difficulties in creating methods to assess brand equity of the destination brands.

As far as the first topic is concerned, we can notice, through the analysis of Table 3, there is a variety of points of view among the experts about the real concept of “destination brands”. Some say this concept is merely a “name or label” or “a word, a visual cliché, something confusing”. These obviously believe there is little importance in this concept. On the other extreme are the ones who state that this concept is the main entity which represents the smaller ones, which means that the destinations brands represent all the other brand categories in

a certain territory. Another way of conceiving the destination brand is to consider two perspectives of analysis: in the managers’ perspective the brand is the identity of a place whereas in the tourists’ perspective brand is the perceived value of this same place.

As far as the second topic is concerned (difficulties in planning the strategies of destination brands), the experts assume there are really great difficulties in setting strategies of tourist destination brands. The authors justify this with the intangible characteristic of tourist destination brands; the fact that there is a smaller evolution when compared to the brands of consumer goods; the fact that a tourist destination, seen as a territory, has multiple uses; their multidimensional features; the involvement of many stakeholders; as well as the fact that the managing of the destination brands isn’t under the control of a single entity.

Table 3: Brand *versus* destination image according to the experts

Country of the expert	Meaning of brand	Similarities/differences between image & brand	Destination brand versus product brand
Australia	Association with products/services.	Images shapes brand.	Destination brand uncontrollable.
Australia	A message about the destination.	Image is how brand is perceived.	Destination brand more complex and multidimensional.
Canada	A strong simplified image, a single image or slogan.	Image - more complex, maybe strong or weak; broader than brand. Brand - strong and simplified.	Consumer products brands implies multiple products.
France	More of a value than identity.	Similarity - perception, projection, representation. Difference: communication, advertising.	Similar in terms reliability, different in tangibility.
Israel	Brand of big and smaller entities at the same time.	Brand comes first, brand may have different images.	Main difference is geographical dispersion - brands have images.
New Zealand	A fad or new jargon for consultants. A tool to commoditize living spaces.	The brand is communicated and contains image. Image is received.	Brand includes culture.
New Zealand	Names, tag lines.	Brand is the production and promotion of an image. Image is what people have and may not reflect brand.	It is not possible to compare them.

(Continued)

(cont.)

New Zealand	A specific image in promotion for market segments.	Brand is articulation of the image.	A destination is a multi-use location.
Slovenia	Managers' perspective: identity-related. Tourists' perspective: equity	Image is in the mind of the tourists. The managers try to build brand identity.	Destination brand is complex, many stakeholders.
Spain	A word, a visual cliché, a confusing slogan.	Invariably confused and fused together. Image - a picture or feeling of consumer. Brand - personality felt by the destination.	Destinations have multiple personalities even before branding, more complex and more uncontrollable.
Switzerland	Image + promotion + logo + CD.	Image - mental figure of the demand side. Brand - materialization of the image. Mutual influence.	Minimal differences, fewer destination brands due to costs and size of destinations.
United Kingdom	Successful destinations.	Image is more abstract version of harder brand.	Depends on destinations.
United Kingdom	Name + image.	Image - developed over time and settled. Brand - contemporary and short.	Difficult and uncontrollable and multifaceted for destinations.
USA	Expectation of value from. Overriding entity as proxy for the smaller parts.	Image - multifaceted, could be many images. Brand - a single entity.	Destination brand difficult and not clear if it is doable.
USA	A clear image.	Closely-related.	Similar goals, but different strategies & tactics.
USA	New and difficult. Brand - logo + identity + positioning + essence + culture + image + communication.	Branding creates image. Both need communication. Brand controllable, but not image.	Branding in consumer products is far advanced.
USA	Loyalty, good name, consistency, stability, uniqueness, objective positive image.	Blurry, image is subjective connotation, part of destination branding.	Difficult for destinations due to intangibility.
USA	Distinctiveness, favourable images, marketing programs	Image is sub-concept and core substance of brand	Destination brand has more contact points, intangible.
USA	A mental picture, mood/emotion.	All interface into one mental image or map.	Destinations evoke more visuals; consumer products evoke more function/solutions.

Source: adapted from Tasci e Kozak (2006)

However, the more serious difficulties in the managing of destination brands concern the third issue: how to create an appropriate methodology for monitoring destination brands. To clarify this problem we must consider the two main systems which monitor destination brands, namely the Nation Brand Index (NBI), created by Anholt-GfK Roper (which also produces a City Brand Index), and the Country Brand Index (CBI), developed by FutureBrand in partnership with BBC News. Obviously what matters is not the results but the methodologies used.

The NBI is an annual barometer in which 20 thousand citizens from 20 different countries take part: South Africa, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, South Korea, Egypt, United States of America, France, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden and Turkey. In each country around one thousand people are enquired. Each enquired person receives a list of fifty countries and is asked to evaluate each of them in the following items: people, goods, government, culture, education, tourist attractions and lifestyle. One of the most doubtful aspects of the methodology used in this index is the choice of the countries included in target list of studied countries. Besides that, there are small countries which appear on this list, such as Estonia or Lithuania, but the same list doesn't include countries such as Portugal, Greece or Morocco. In the same vein, Scotland appears on the list in the same place as the United Kingdom, as if it were an independent country. So this is a study conceived for commercial purposes and therefore its methodology conditions the results.

The CBI has a relative advantage over the NBI, because it neither limits the nationality of enquired people, nor confines the scope of their responses by providing them with a list of countries to be evaluated. However, the sample is the gathering of opinions of 35 experts connected to international consulting enterprises (mainly specialised in branding) and 1500 enquired people, whose opinion is obtained through phone calls or through the Internet. Each enquired person can freely name among all the countries in the planet the ones which, according to their point of view, have the best performance in 8 categories, mainly: geography, attractions, facilities, veracity, government, culture, economy and ethos. As can be seen in Table 4, the CBI takes 29 dimensions to be evaluated, creating for each of them a "top 10" ranking.

When comparing the methodology of these two systems we can conclude that the NBI is more consistent in terms of the sample (20 thousand enquired people, although restricted to 20 countries) than CBI (35 experts and 1500 anonymous citizens). But the latter has a clear advantage over the former in terms of the data collecting methodology, because it doesn't determine *a priori* the countries to be evaluated.

**Table 4: Dimensions used for “top ten rankings”
in the Country Brand Index**

Authenticity	Families	Political freedom
Advanced technology	Fine dining	Quality products
Art and Culture	Friendly locals	Resort & lodging options
Beach	History	Rest & relaxation
Conferences	Ideal for business	Rising star
Desire to visit / visit again	Most like to live in	Safety
Ease of travel	Natural beauty	Shopping
Easiest to do business in	New country for business	Standard of living
Environmentalism	Nightlife	Value for money
Extend a business trip	Outdoor activities & sports	

Source: Country Brand Index (FutureBrand, 2009)

Bearing in mind that both systems are clearly commercial, we can't expect them to be highly rigorous. But because there are no academic studies on this matter, the results from these rankings are taken too seriously by the ones who need empirical information about complex phenomena such as tourist destination brands.

However, the major problem which arises from these two studies is the confusion established between two brand concepts: country brands versus tourist destination brands. In their reports the authors of CBI and NBI consider these two concepts almost synonyms. Due to the extreme difficulties to create an empirical monitoring methodology of destination brands, the promoters of those studies are prone to consider that the two concepts are similar.

So, in both studies there is a basic contradiction: their aim is to be useful for the tourism industry, but they ignore the fact that in tourism it often happens that the country brands aren't the same as the destination brands. Although there is an obvious relationship between these two concepts (the country brand influences the image of the destination brand), that relationship is much more complex than we may think. As an example we can use two famous tourist products: golf

and snow. The snow destinations are almost never the same as the golf destinations. And both the golf and snow destinations don't coincide with a country's territory. So, to understand the relationship between the geographic configuration of the countries and of the tourist destinations we have to take into consideration that each tourist destination has its own specificities and it depends on such various factors as the specific mix of tourist products and attractions; the nationality of the tourists; the familiarity of the tourists with the countries; the size of the country where the destination is situated, among others.

The different geographical scales of tourist destinations

Every destination includes a set of tourist products that don't necessarily overlap (e.g., religious tourism, cultural tourism, golf, sun and sea, MICE, etc.). If, for example, one asks a sample of experts or consumers to inform about the most prestigious destinations for: (a) golf, (b) surfing, and (c) mountain ski; there should be a high likelihood that the answers for these three tourist products (golf, skiing, and surfing) will not coincide at all, and there is also a high likelihood that the evoked destination will not coincide with the geographical scales of country or of city.

Moreover, there are tourist destinations which embrace vast territories and go far beyond the national frontiers (for example the Mediterranean or Caribbean cruise destinations) and other destinations which are confined within a specific country.

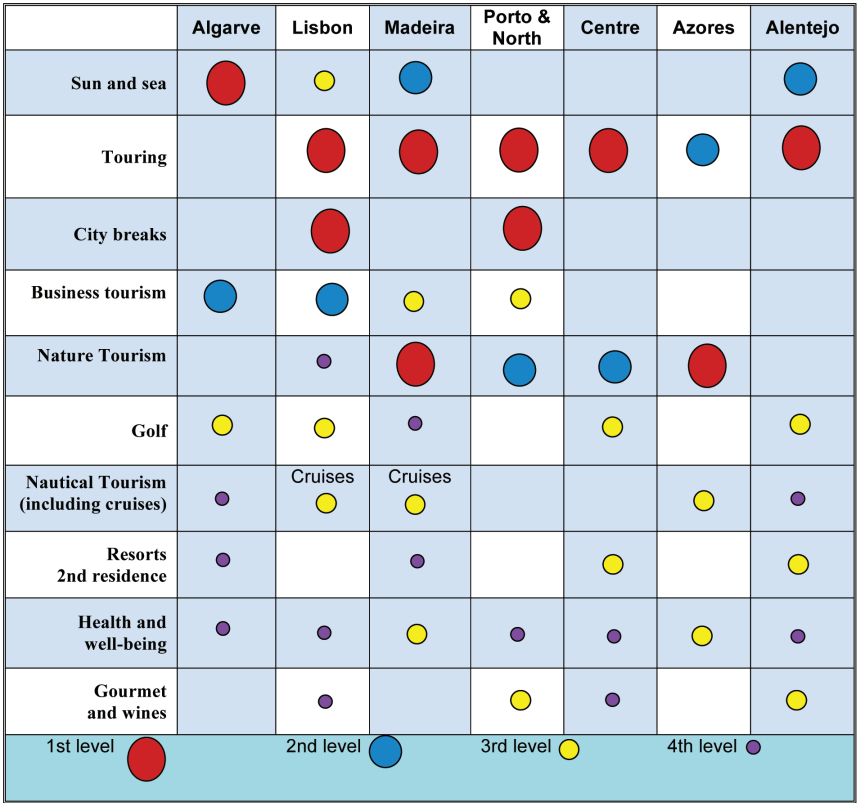
It makes sense to conceptualise tourist destinations according to taxonomies which include different geographical scales. We suggest the following differentiation into five levels:

- Transnational destinations (e.g. Scandinavia, Caribbean region, etc.);
- National destinations (when a destination coincides with the country);
- Regional destinations (e.g. Azores Islands, Algarve, national parks, etc.);
- City destinations (e.g. New York, Paris, London, Berlin, etc.);
- Micro-destinations like a district or a tourist resort (e.g. Club Med, Disney, etc.).

Besides that, in the same geographic level, the specific mix of tourist products that exist in the same destination (see the example of picture 2) is a major factor for the categorising and perception of the brand.

Therefore, in the study of the destination brands we have to take into account the nature and structure of the offer (diversity of products and territorial scales) and also the characteristics of the consumers: the

longer the distance between the country of origin and the destination, the wider the perception of the destinations. The opposite is also true. In other words, the tourists who live closer make a zoom into the territory whereas the long-distance tourists tend to act as globetrotters.



Source: PENT (2005)

Picture 2: Tourist destinations of regional level
The Portuguese example

We can't assimilate destinations to countries (if, for an European citizen, Florida and Colorado are distinct tourist destinations, for a North-American this distinction is even greater) and we must consider the differentiation of motivations (Dias, 2009), which make tourists see a certain place according to the products they consume. For example, Brazil for a nostalgic German who visits the city of Blumenau, in the state of Santa Catarina, is not the same Brazil as for the tourist who loves the coconut water and searches for the lovely beaches of the Northeast.

THE ANCHORAGE OF THE DESTINATION BRANDS IN THE TERRITORY AND IN THE HERITAGE

The destination brand is defined by López Vilchez (2001) as a “group of distinctive signs used in the promotion of the heritage as a tourist resource. It shows, in advertising terms, the qualities of a certain destination that make it different from its competitors. The heritage is an identity tool and its uniqueness contributes to the creation of a destination brand... We can conclude that the brand image is a main element for the products of the cultural tourism...” (144).

Two relevant analytical dimensions of the destination brand are hence emphasised: the commoditisation of the heritage and the territorial attachment of the destination brands.

The commoditisation of the heritage

A new conception of heritage arises as a cultural commodity for mass or elitist consumers and as a promoter of wealth. It is a matter of introducing a “new cultural product” in the leisure market. From the point of view of economy, the offer is justified by the demand itself, but as a sociological fact it is the result of several social changes in the tourism markets. On the other hand, the commoditisation of the heritage is part of the new options for beach destinations, in a time when, besides resting, tourists want to learn about culture, landscape, gourmet and artistic traditions.

Cosmelli (1997) identifies four types of attractiveness of the tourist destinations: global, inner, external and compared.

The *global attractiveness* of a certain tourist destination is the global potential that the country possesses to attract a visitor. It is the result of the reciprocal interaction of all types of attractions which exist in a specific tourist destination.

The *inner attractiveness* includes the tourism product, its innovation, the local facilities, the quality offered, the service, the tourist recreation, the culture, the environment, the safety, the accessibility, the hospitality of the community, the residents' attitude towards the tourists and the tourism markets.

The *external attractiveness* has to do with the geographic position of a destination and not with its inner features. The fact that a holiday destination is situated in a worldwide known tourist place contributes to its attractiveness, no matter the inner attractiveness of that destination. For example, the fact that Tavira is in the Algarve makes it attractive for someone who is looking for sun and food experiences. According to Marques (2008), the statistics of the World Tourism

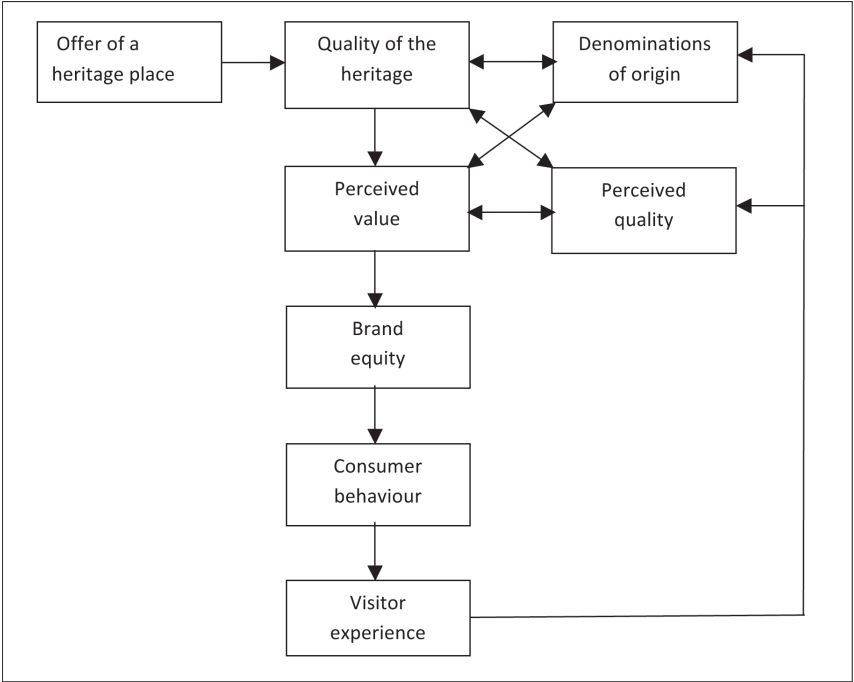
Organization (WTO) show that the famous destinations keep growing in the number of tourists who visit them. But the external attractiveness also depends on other factors that can either work together or separately: the weather, the propensity for natural disasters, as well as the existence of peace or war may influence a certain region in a positive or negative way.

Compared attractiveness: All the aspects of the tourism offer, including all features of inner attractiveness, are major factors for the compared attractiveness, except for the cases in which the historical and monuments singularities of the destination make it unique. Factors such as the product innovation, the safety, the accessibility, the information, the image and the price are items to bear in mind when the aim is to have a comparative advantage. We also have to consider the exchange tax, and the differences in the cost of living between the country of origin and the destination. However, the price is a major comparative factor, because the tourist seeks lower prices, but he/she doesn't want to have less quality. As Cosmelli states (1997), only the upper-class tourists, which aren't even 6% of the potential clients, are willing to value the quality over the price. For most tourists the price is decisive. Therefore, as it is said by Ferrario (1998: 28) "it is very difficult for a destination to aim to attract 6% of the clients and to forget the 94% of the others. In this context the tourist searching for quality is the one who wants to pay the fair price for a certain service.

The territorial attachment of heritage and destination brands

According to Haesbaert (2005) the territory, besides including a merely political dimension, also concerns the economic and cultural relationships, because it is intimately connected to the use people make of the land, the way they organise themselves in the space and the meaning it conveys for them. On this particular matter Haesbaert (2005: 6776) quotes Sack (1986), who states that "the territory, as a power component, isn't just a way to create and maintain the order. It is also a strategy to create and maintain a great part of the geographical context, through which we experience the world and give it a meaning."

In those strategies of geographic control we include the denominations of origin, for example the French *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*, the Spanish *Denominación de Origen*, the Italian *Denominazione di Origine Controllata*, the Portuguese *Denominação de Origem Controlada*, among other similar ones. Picture 3 is an illustration of such strategies.



Picture 3: The heritage in the place branding

This denomination system is mainly used to certify wines, cheese, butter, and other products. It is given to products produced in geographically limited regions, which fit a certain group of rules, registered in a particular legislation.

The controlled denominations of origin are part of the system of tourist territorial brands, together with the several tourist routes (e.g., cultural, wine, religious, ecotourism and cinema routes) and with the environmental brands: parks and natural sites.

Several “environmental labels” and “cultural labels” attributed by international certifying entities are also part of the diverse tourist territorial brands. In this field the “Blue flag” (symbol of an unpolluted beach) and the denomination of World Heritage, attributed by UNESCO stand out. All these brand systems certify the quality of the tourist attraction existing in a given territory.

Denomination of origin in Tourism

We live in a time in which everything possesses a “quality stamp”. The companies try to obtain a certification of quality, they also try to get a quality label for their products and, whenever possible, a denomination of origin. According to Amirou (2000: 26) “the denomination

of origin label attributed to a product is a common practice of commercial regularization. But due to the association between territory and product, the label is equivalent to the heritage acclaim.”

The *Protected Designation of Origin* and the *Protected Geographic Status* have a reduced value as a guarantee of quality. They are mainly valued by the people who are responsible for the management of the protected goods. Even so, the number of products protected by law, especially the ones with a *Protected Designation of Origin* (PDO) and with a *Protected Geographic Status*, has grown in a short period of time since the nineties until now and nowadays they are over one hundred.

Garcia and Simón (2001) state that the people who deliver the products consider that the above mentioned labels are a symbol of quality and originality. They value these elements for commercial proposals. The consumers value mainly the trust in the product and in the company which sells it, although they consider that the PDO status attributed to a product informs that the product and the used technology are controlled and certified by an independent entity. The comparative advantages between products with or without a denomination have been analysed (Garcia and Simón; 2001; Sánchez-Arjona et al., 2001). Garcia and Simón (2001) presented studies which proved that the combination of the perceived quality together with the PDO label is a comparative advantage, which means that when consumers perceive the quality of two products as equivalent, they prefer the one with PDO label. However, the authors also stated that the impacts vary according to the type of products and according to the regions.

The quality and originality of tourist destinations are also intimately related to the growing interest in gourmet and local products. According to several authors (Albert and Munoz, 1996; Cristóvão, 1998; Sánchez and Pérez, 2001; Tibério and Cristóvão, 2001), the rise of the demand for this kind of products is due to the growing generalisation of the critics towards the model of productive agriculture, to the awareness of the growing demand for original products, with a history and identity of their own. Those products are healthier and they contribute to the development of the rural areas.

According to the same studies, the symbolic aspects related to the choice of a certain tourist destination are crucial to create a quality profile of the products as well as for their purchase (Sánchez and Pérez, 2001; Tibério and Cristóvão, 2001). There is a belief that whatever belongs to the rural areas is good!

As it has been stated by several researchers, one of the characteristics of the global brands is the influence that the country of origin has on the perception of the consumer. The perception of the origin of a brand can increase or reduce its value (Garcia and Simón, 2001; Sánchez-Arjona et al., 2001). Nobody ignores the value of the Swiss

watches or of the German cars. Each country is the target of common perceptions and stereotyped images which lead to the phenomenon of Unique Selling Proposition. For example, France is associated with luxury and quality of life, Italy with style, design and sensuality, Germany is synonym of quality and credibility. The origin of a product is a powerful element of the brand equity, which leads certain companies to brighten up their products so that they are easily sold. In what concerns the tourism products, particularly the heritage, it is obvious that there are target destinations we all recognise as quality destinations. Therefore, any association to that site has an advantage over less competitive sites. If someone promotes a house as located "50 km far from Provence" the name of the place will sell the house itself.

The world heritage as a brand

When we analyse tourist destinations from the marketing point of view, we can say that the label "World Heritage" attributed by UNESCO can and must be seen as a brand in the true meaning of the word (although its main aim is the preservation of the heritage). It is a brand with a strong positive influence in the inner attractiveness, compared attractiveness and in the global attractiveness of a tourist destination.

In general, the "labelling" of the heritage is intimately related to tourism. The public and private institutions that deal with tourism use the label of World Heritage to raise the public awareness and confer credibility and prestige to certain places and monuments. According to Marquis (2008), this label confers to a destination an élan of credibility and interest. It is implied that if UNESCO considers that a specific place deserves that distinction, then the place becomes a certified site or, as Amirou (2008) said, it becomes a "sacralised" place. The production of these "sacred places", such as natural, cultural or natural heritage sites, recognised with the label of UNESCO's World Heritage, shows an attempt to create unique, uncommon spaces (Amirou, 2000: 34). In fact, the World Heritage denomination appeared to "sacralise" or certify the existing heritage. Slowly this denomination started to have derivations: Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage (tangible and intangible) and Cultural Landscape, a concept that gathers the monumental and the natural.

The concept of intangible cultural heritage refers to a new type of heritage which encloses the spiritual actions of mankind. They are "mindcraft", an equivalent of the "handcraft" (Amirou, 2000).

The UNESCO's world heritage label establishes the criteria according to which a heritage object has to be preserved from the human harmful actions. UNESCO can contribute financially to that preservation and revival, which otherwise wouldn't often be possible. Besides that, this denomination brings other benefits for the native commu-

nity, such as the revival of traditions and popular culture, reinforcement of self-esteem, maintenance and preservation of identity, as well as tourist attractiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study is a first approach to some aspects of the tourist territorial brands which tend to be ignored and are even generally ignored in most of the studies about place branding. In order to turn the complex concept of the tourist territorial brand into a more understandable one, it is necessary to make efforts of integration, gathering the contributions of several scientific subjects which study tourism promotion.

It is therefore necessary to integrate different analytical perspectives and create enclosing models which tune the different scientific disciplines and academic traditions. Marketing researchers approach the matter of destination brands based on the analysis grids borrowed from the concepts created in the field of branding of consumer products. Sometimes those grids don't consider the uniqueness and complexity of tourism, as a very specific sector. The monitoring of the countries' brands (e.g., Nation Brand Index and Country Brand Index) gives adequate outputs to assess the brand equity of destination brands, only in the cases when country coincides with a tourist destination. In general, although the country brand influences the destination brands that exist in that country, there is sometimes a huge difference between these two realities.

Two extremely relevant aspects to understand the place branding, especially the destination branding, are the territoriality of the natural and cultural heritage, as well as the legitimating and certificating systems through which the heritage assets acquire distinctiveness (e.g., the designation of origin labels or the World Heritage status). In the globalising era, tourism values even more what is genuine, authentic, the heritage from each community, that distinguishes it from the other communities. In this sense, the labels strongly attached to a given territory (such as the denomination of origin, the national heritage, the World Heritage, etc.) must be integrated in the strategies of the tourist destination branding. Actually, from the promotional point of view, both brand and heritage have the same goal: to obtain comparative advantages through the differentiation as a counterpoint to drive forces of uniformity and globalisation.

To advance our knowledge concerning the destination branding processes an interdisciplinary approach is necessary, with contributions from Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Marketing and Tourism Sciences. Such a holistic approach will allow an important evolution in the correct analysis and global understanding of such deep and complex phenomena as the destination brand and its interface with the heritage, which anchors almost all tourist attractions of a specific destination.

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