

Chapter 16

AN EVALUATION ON THE EFFECTS OF OLYMPICS ON URBAN FUNCTIONS¹

Cengiz KAHRAMAN²

1. INTRODUCTION

Besides its contribution to global peace, The Olympic Games as the world's biggest sports organization also contribute various functions to the host country and help it develop faster than it could. When analyzed from the viewpoint of urban geography, Olympics, which have been organized every four years since 1896, except for the two world wars, have impacts on various urban aspects, such as transport, tourism, settlement geography along with the construction and restoration of sports facilities. Olympic Games to be held in the city and the country gained is a lucrative investment through this organization. As the best way to introduce a city and a country to the world, the Olympic Games are a good propaganda tool. (Kargün & Dalkılıç and others, 2015) Olympic Games are an important dynamic in the (re)formation of the cities and their infrastructures as was in the antiquity to which the Olympics date back. The present study attempts to analyze the historical development of the Olympic Games and how effective they are in the improvement of urban functions by considering the cities they have been organized in. The last part describes and evaluates Istanbul, a history and culture city, which has never hosted an Olympic organization yet but is among the most powerful candidates to the 2024 Olympic Games. The study also attempts to pinpoint some major problems (revealed according to the Olympics organization criteria) and to make some solution-oriented suggestions.

The Olympics dating back to antiquity has served a good means for the achievement of peace and to get different civilizations and cultures to know each other. As the world's greatest sports organization, it still maintains this function. From this viewpoint, The Olympic Games have turned into philosophy and have assumed the mission to strengthen the peace between countries. The realization

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² Dr, Istanbul University-Cerrahpasa, Faculty of Engineering, Department of Maritime Transportation Management Engineering, cengiz.kahraman@istanbul.edu.tr

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