

THE POLITICS OF THE OLYMPICS:
THE CASE OF THE SOCHI 2014 WINTER GAMES

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THE POLITICS OF THE OLYMPICS:
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The Politics of the Olympics: The Case of the Sochi 2014 Winter Games

This study aims to analyze the political aspects of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics that were held in the Russian Federation after many protests and controversies. The analysis of the Sochi case contributes to our understanding of the politics of the Olympics, the domestic politics of the host state, interstate contestations as well as continuities and changes in the modern Olympics and the Russian Federation. This thesis addresses the question of “Can the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics be considered politically a distinct case in the Olympics?”. It examines the Sochi Olympics through online news, non-governmental organization reports and opinion polls, and also tries to scrutinize Russia’s Olympic experience by looking at other Olympic host states’ experiences with the contribution of the news, reports and the academic literature on Olympic history. Particularly leading to the LGBT rights’ taking place in the Olympic Charter and host city contract, an ethnic group’s anti-Olympic campaign’s being cause celebre, new security dynamics were peculiar to the Sochi Olympics. Since commonalities in the Olympics such as politicization, experiences of Olympic constructions and legacies predominated, the Sochi Winter Olympics cannot be politically put into a distinct place in the Olympics but the achievements of group protests show the changing dynamics of politicization in the Olympics.

ÖZET

Olimpiyat Politikaları: Soçi 2014 Kış Olimpiyatları

Bu tez Rusya’da çok sayıda protesto ve tartışmanın ardından düzenlenen Soçi 2014 Kış Olimpiyatları’nın politik yönlerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Soçi Olimpiyatları’nın analizi, Olimpiyat politikalarını, evsahibi ülkenin iç politikalarını, bazı devletlerarası çekişmeleri, aynı zamanda Modern Olimpiyatlar ve Rusya Federasyonu’ndaki devamlılık ve değişimleri anlamaya katkı sağlayacaktır. Bu çalışma “Soçi 2014 Kış Olimpiyatları politik açıdan Olimpiyatlar içinde bağımsız bir vaka olarak değerlendirilebilir mi?” sorusunu internet haberleri, sivil toplum kuruluşlarının raporları ve kamuoyu araştırmaları üzerinden irdelemekte; ayrıca Rusya’nın Olimpik deneyimini, Olimpiyat tarihine ilişkin akademik kaynaklar, haberler ve raporların katkısıyla Olimpiyatlara evsahipliği yapan diğer ülkelerin deneyimleri üzerinden incelemektedir. Özellikle LGBT haklarının Olimpiyat İlkeleri ve evsahibi sözleşmesi arasında yer almasını sağlaması, Olimpiyat karşıtı kampanyalarda etnik bir grubun ilk defa geniş yankı yaratması, yeni güvenlik dinamikleri Soçi Olimpiyatları’nın Olimpiyatlara getirdiği ilkler arasında yer almaktadır. Politikleştirme, Olimpik inşaat sürecinin deneyimleri ve mirasları gibi Olimpiyatlarda devamlılık arzeden dinamikler Soçi Olimpiyatları’nda da ağır bastığından Soçi Olimpiyatları politik açıdan Olimpiyatlar içerisinde bağımsız bir vaka olarak değerlendirilemeyecektir, ancak grup protestolarının kazanımları politikleşmenin değişen dinamiklerini göstermektedir.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Sochi's Winter Olympic Games story started long before the bid for the 2014 Winter Olympics. Though Sochi applied to host the 1998 and 2002 Winter Games, those bids were rejected due to insufficient infrastructure (Müller, 2011:2095). Unlike the former bids, 12 billion US dollars were promised for the 2014 Winter Games (Müller, 2011:2095). But remarkably, there was no Olympic venue when Sochi was chosen as the host city, and significant infrastructural problems existed there.

Seven cities; namely, Salzburg of Austria, Jaca of Spain, PyeongChang of the Republic of Korea, Sofia of Bulgaria, Borjomi of Georgia, Almaty of Kazakhstan and Sochi of Russia applied to host the 2014 Winter Olympic Games (Sochi 2014, n.d.). On 22 June 2006 the Executive Board of International Olympic Committee (IOC) unanimously selected three of them as candidate cities (About Sochi 2014, n.d.). Following the elimination of Jaca, Almaty, Sofia and Borjomi, the next election was held between Salzburg, PyeongChang and Sochi (About Sochi 2014, n.d.). In the first round of the elections, Sochi received 34 votes whilst PyeongChang took 36 and Salzburg got 25 votes. On 4 July 2007, in the 119th IOC Session where the second round of elections was held, Sochi left PyeongChang (PyeongChang received 47 votes) behind and with 51 votes it was elected as the host city of the 22nd Winter Olympics (About Sochi 2014, n.d.).

According to the Olympic Charter, each candidate city must submit financial guarantees that are substantial for the IOC Executive Board. These guarantees may be offered by the state, national, regional or local public collectives, prospective host city or the third parties (Preus, 2010:258). Accordingly, in the bid process of the

2014 Winter Olympics, South Korea, Austria and the Russian Federation promised financial guarantees for their candidate cities and the organization of the Winter and Paralympic Games (IOC 2014 Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:12, 16, 20, 36, 50, 54, 58). For Sochi, it was indicated that any prospective deficiency would be afforded by the Federal Target Programme (FTP), a possible deficit for the Paralympic Games would be financialised by the Federal Government, and any financial deficit of the Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (OCOG) budget would be covered by the Russian government (IOC 2014 Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:12, 16, 20). It must be underlined that when the 2007 Evaluation Report of the IOC regarding the bid cities is examined, the results do not seem surprising. This report points out to a lack of details in the documentation of Salzburg, high-quality room numbers' being below the IOC requirements, and Salzburg's underestimating the resources that were necessary for the security operations (IOC 2014 Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:69, 70). Moreover, for Salzburg, in the "legal matters" section it was indicated that "All guarantees requested by the IOC were provided but not all of these fully meet IOC requirements." (IOC 2014 Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:32). In this report, positive statements were made about PyeongChang and Sochi's proposals and preparations. However, it is seen that Sochi proposed bigger OCOG budget ("a balanced revenue and expenditure budget of USD 1.517 billion") than PyeongChang (USD 1.257 billion) for the Winter and Paralympic Games (IOC 2014 Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:15, 53). Moreover, according to the research of Maenning and Vierhaus on the Olympic bids, population support, number of the residents

(minimum 2.5 million residents) and lack of sufficient structures are favorable for the IOC (2017:3086). Except the number of the residents, two other major factors could affect the success of the bid.

Public opinion researches show that the Sochi Olympics were strongly supported. In the research of the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) which was conducted with 1.600 participants from 46 regions in 2007, whilst overwhelming majority of the Russian population had positive feelings about the Sochi Olympics, only one percent of the participants disapproved the Olympics (Sochi's Victory: Russians Admire and Hope, 2007). Furthermore, campaigns¹ for votes by the candidate cities also affected the results.

Finally, the city of Sochi in the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation was elected as the host city of the 22nd Winter Olympics on 4 July 2007, in the 119th International Olympic Committee (IOC) Session (About Sochi 2014, n.d.). After the seven-year preparation process, the Olympic Winter Games were held in Sochi between 7 and 23 February 2014.

The Olympic Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) was formed in 1951. The Soviet Union officially joined the Olympics with the Helsinki 1952 Summer Games at the fifty sixth anniversary of the Modern Olympic Games, and the Soviet Union only hosted the Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics. The Olympics had a symbolic importance for the Russian Federation since it was the first time that the country hosted the Winter Olympic

¹ Craig Murray, former British ambassador to Uzbekistan indicated that Sochi won the election with the help of Gafur Rakhimov who is an Uzbek businessman and vice president of the Olympic Council of Asia (Leonard, 2014). US officials defend that Rakhimov is a mafia boss and leader of a drug cartel, and even his participation to the Sydney 2000 Olympics was banned (Leonard, 2014). Indeed, in his interview to *Rossiskaya Gazeta* Leonid Tyagachev, head of Russian National Olympic Committee, mentioned of Gafur Rakhimov's "purposeful work" ("tselenapravlennoy rabote") for Sochi's winning and conveyed his thanks to him (Zubko, 2007).

Games in its history, and it was also the first Olympics that was held after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Considering even the description of the 27th World University Summer Games as “the first high-profile multi-sport event in the history of modern Russia” demonstrates the significance of the Olympics for Russia (About Universiade, n.d.).

In the Olympic Games, 2.780 athletes from 88 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) (in addition to an independent participant) in 98 titles of 15 disciplines competed (Sochi 2014, n.d.). Whilst more than 1.1 million tickets were sold, the number of audience was over 4.1 billion, and the social media usage was the highest of any Games in Olympic history (Sochi 2014, n.d.). In following the Winter Games, the 11th Paralympic Winter Games² took place between 7 and 16 March 2014. Competitions in five sports with participation of 547 athletes from 45 countries were staged and watched by 2.1 billion television viewers (Sochi 2014, n. d.).

Not only sport and competitions were under the spotlights during the Sochi Olympics. The debates began when Sochi was elected as the host city for the 22nd Winter Games and continued even after the Games.³ The policies of the Russian Federation were harshly criticized both domestically and internationally when all eyes were on Russia during the Olympics. Sochi hosted many controversies, campaigns and protests as well as the Games themselves. Additionally, even the selection of Sochi as host city created discontent especially among the Circassian population because of the city’s past.

² The first Paralympic Winter Games were organized in Sweden in 1976 (Paralympics - History of the Movement, n. d.). Thanks to the agreement between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the Paralympic Games are held in the host cities of the Summer and Winter Games (Paralympics - History of the Movement, n. d.). Since the construction processes in Sochi were held together, a separate discussion for the organization of the Sochi Paralympic Games will not be included in this study.

³ Several examples for an overview of debates: (Bacchi, 2014), (Barbati, 2014), (Şamilkızı, 2013) and (Sochi 2014: Gay rights protests target Russia’s games, 2014).

The Olympic Games have always been x-ray mega-events that reflect the zeitgeist (i.e. spirit of time) and the dynamics of the host states. For this reason, analysis of the Olympics bring valuable contributions to political science as well. A study that questions political aspects of the controversial Sochi Olympics would help to better understand the politics of the Olympics and the Russian Federation. In literature, there are many valuable sources regarding the Sochi Olympics which analyzed specific aspects and issues. Bearing in mind that analysis of the relationship between politics and Olympic Games in the case of Sochi has not been exhausted, this thesis aims to examine the Olympic experience of Russia in a descriptive methodology. For this purpose, this study seeks to answer the question of “Can the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics be considered politically a distinct case in the Olympics?”, and benefits from online news, non-governmental organization reports, interviews released in news sources and official web page of Presidency of Russia, opinion polls, and books about the Olympics. The research has been made through mainly English and Turkish sources and very limitedly Russian sources.

This thesis consists of six main chapters including introduction and conclusion. In Chapter Two which is the literature review section, I focused on sources that are produced specifically on the Sochi Olympics. In literature, mainly the Russian government and President Putin’s use of the Olympics for political tools, and politicization at group level by organizing protests are pointed out. Moreover, examination of literature shows that commonalities in the Games like politicization, security syndromes come to the forefront in the Sochi case as well, and only change can be seen as Russian civil society’s new experiences and learning new methods.

In Chapter Three, I portrayed correlation of politics and Olympics through Olympic history and the Sochi Olympics. I argued that there has been always

politicization in the Olympics, and it was realized at the levels of state, group and/or at individual level. The Olympics are globally accepted as political tool and soft power⁴ mechanism. Therefore, regardless of their regime type or ideology, states are willing to host the Olympics. Moreover, throughout history states attempted to use the Games for their regional and international contestations, in this sense politicization at state level came to the fore. However, thanks to the IOC's efforts, politicization at state level, in respect to political rivalries and disputes, is nowadays rather symbolic. Examination of the Sochi Olympics through political statements, calls for boycott and acts like not attending the Opening Ceremony also demonstrates that politicization at all levels still exists but the boycott era in the Olympics ended, and attempts to use the Games for inter-state rivalries do not result with enforcements in politics of the Olympics as well as international politics.

I analyzed the Olympic construction process and economy of the Sochi Olympics in Chapter Four. Firstly, I described main characteristics and effects of the megaprojects and the Olympics to demonstrate common experiences. In the second part, I scrutinized Sochi's election, the construction experience and the economy of the Sochi Games. I pointed out that the dominant role of the state corporations in the Olympic economy, building an Olympic city from scratch, and the level of alleged corruption were incidental to the Sochi Olympics. However, with the main lines, the Sochi 2014 Olympics experienced general characteristics of the mega projects, and it cannot be considered as a distinct case in the Olympics in terms of its Olympic economy and construction experience as well.

⁴ According to Nye, whilst hard power is usage of "coercion and payment", soft power is usage of "attraction" to affect others' behaviour (Nye, 2009:160). Nye argues that smart strategy is combination of hard power and soft power (2009:160).

In Chapter Five, I examined campaigns and protests against the Sochi Olympics and politicization at group level. I portrayed the Circassian Campaign of “No Sochi 2014”, the LGBT campaigns, protest punk group Pussy Riot’s demonstrations, terrorist threats and security measures and their background. I indicated that even though the campaigns and protests cannot be successful locally, they may be effective even in changing the Olympic Charter, and the Olympics still provide a great opportunity for the acknowledgement of a case or debate. Particularly the achievements of the LGBT protests show that nowadays politicization at group level can be a change maker in the politics of the Olympics. Moreover, I indicated that Russia had to take extensive security measures to overcome international and local security threats. In this sense, it cannot be considered as a distinct case. However, some security measures for spectators and blocking activists’ participation with new methods may leave political legacy to the Olympics and mega sport events.

Thus, the case of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics was a hybrid case of the ongoing Olympic politics as well as the politics of Russia. Politicization was seen at all levels in the Sochi Olympics but their effects were distinctive. Whilst there were new dynamics that the Sochi Games brought to Olympic history, similar or common experiences with the previous Olympic Games were dominant.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the extensive literature of the Sochi Olympics, it is mainly⁵ argued that the Sochi Games were used as foreign and/or domestic political tools. Mostly, in literature the Russian government and President Putin are criticized for using the Olympics for political tools to manipulate domestic and international audience and to distract the public from significant problems.

In analysis of Russia's recent mega-sport events; the 2018 FIFA World Cup, the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, and the 27th Summer Universiade – Kazan 2013, Gorokhov argues that sport mega-events are used as a means to make a nation's power, strength, sport and political excellence worldwide known and to build national identities with the spillover effect of sporting nationalism (2015:267, 279, 280).

Burchell, O'Loughlin, Gillespie and McAvoy point out that whereas the Summer Olympics are used as an occasion to rebrand the whole nation, the Winter Olympics are usually regarded as tools for local and regional publicity, yet the Sochi Olympics is an exception within this framework (2015:421). Likewise, Ostapenko makes a critique of the Sochi Olympics through "nation-branding"⁶ and argues that the Sochi Olympics were an opportunity for the re-positioning Russia's image in a global context (2010:60).

⁵ Such as Orttung and Zhemukhov (2014), Alekseyeva (2014), Persson and Petersson (2014), Bogdanova (2014), Ostapenko (2010), Gorenburg (2014).

⁶ Simon Anholt's concept of "nation-branding" refers to the possibility of viewing places and nations as "brands" (Ostapenko, 2010:61).

Makarychev and Yatsyk also argue that the political purpose for hosting the Sochi Olympics was building submission and collective identity (2016:95). They define Putin's strategy as a sort of "jouissance"; a concept in Lacanianism that Slavoj Žižek reinterpreted as "implying normalization through imposed enjoyment and consumption of entertainment as an essential, if not central" (Makarychev and Yatsyk, 2016:95).

According to Stang, the Sochi Winter Olympics were a manifestation of the resurrection of Russia, a fact that symbolizes the Northern Caucasus' pacification and a legacy for the President Putin, and even the torch relay⁷ was assumed as an indicator of a "triumphal return to glory" (2014:4).

Gronskaya and Makarychev, who analyze the Sochi Olympics from a political-linguistic perspective, argue that "Putin's regime" substantially justifies itself via contractual relations with international institutions and main global investors. Whilst this shows that "Putin's sovereignty project is more instrumental than ideological", sovereignty is shared with the IOC (2014:42). They also point out that the Olympics may be regarded as a piece of the effort to present Russia as a "normalized actor" that can overcome security challenges, but whereas the Kremlin's arguments were internally inconsistent, there was a strong challenge from outside as well (Gronskaya and Makarychev, 2014:49).

Persson and Petersson state that "myths provide meaning and common frames of reference, underpin shared identities and serve to confer popular legitimacy to political leaders who deliver in accordance with the myths (della Sala 2010; Esch 2010; McDonald 2010).", and they discuss the Sochi Olympics through the concept

⁷ The Sochi 2014 Olympics torch relay was held between October 2013 and February 2014. The Olympic torch travelled 83 regions of the Russian Federation, the depths of the Lake Baikal, and even the international space station, 9 November 2013 was the first time of the Olympic torch's spacewalk (Sochi 2014 torch relay, n.d.).

of “political myth” (2014:194). According to them, the Sochi Games were a demonstration of Russia’s return as a great power and were a tool for uniting the country (Persson and Petersson, 2014:192, 199). For Petersson, even Sochi’s proximity to the North Caucasus Republics where insurgency problems have been existing since the 1990s may be seen as a restoration of “great power status” (Petersson, 2014). However, these efforts were exposed to “counter-uses” such as the campaign of “No Sochi 2014” as well, and many including the Circassian society brought “counter-mythmaking” to Russian politics (Persson and Petersson, 2014:201-204). Persson and Petersson’s work mainly focuses on two examples of “counter-uses”: “nosochi2014.com” which was created by the Circassian diaspora, and critiques on the polling process of the Olympic mascots (2014:201, 202, 203). Likewise, Hansen argues that mega-sport events like the Sochi Games bring space for creation of “counter-branding” as well as the “knowledge” to the marginalized groups, and the Circassian used the Sochi Olympics for promotion of the knowledge of their local history (2015:518).

In his examination, Wolfe argues that Russia was partially successful in using the Sochi Olympics as a soft power tool (Wolfe, 2016). According to Wolfe, “Russianness” was introduced both to the domestic and international community, and the Games turned into a “rallying point” for the Russian society and a matter of pride when negative criticism was made by the West (2016:481, 488). Similarly, Law focuses on the relation of sport and nationalism and its place specifically during the Sochi Games, and analyzes the expression of the national identity at the Sochi Games via three media tools (2014). According to Law, the Russian national identity was presented both to the Russian and the global spectator with the Sochi Olympics, whilst “a robust, modern nation” and a “strong state” was presented as Russia’s

image, this image was directly monitored by the Russian state (Law, 2014:3, 5, 6). Law states that Olympics are the sphere of soft power and they cannot be distinguished from the political interference of the states as the funder and organizer of the Games (2014:59, 60).

From a civil society perspective, Fors argues that the Sochi Olympics provide opportunities for the development of local civil society, particularly on environmental and housing issues that are linked with the Olympic preparations (Fors, 2009). According to Fors, protests and the civic participation are recent phenomenons of post-Soviet Russia and their growth is seen particularly after 2005, the year of the protest of pensioners (2009:5). In her thesis, protests related with the environment and housing rights and state's countering with several methods like "ersatz social movements" or "dummy organizations" as well as the official ways are examined (Fors, 2009:44). For Fors, civil society has strengthened itself and learned new methods to deal with the Russian state thanks to the Olympic Games (2009). Additionally, whilst she describes the 2014 Winter Olympics as "pet project of the regime", she points the involvement of the politics in the Games due to the "human interest" (Fors, 2009:7, 93). In a similar manner, Aron points out that interest groups use Olympics to announce their requests, the Sochi Games were not exception, but delicate matters and challenges were high in number and more remarkable (2014:1, 4).

As it is seen, mainly politicization by the Russian politicians and government for the purposes of "soft power", "national identity", "nation-branding" and "political myths" were pointed to in analyses of the Sochi 2014 Olympics that were made through academic sources. This may be argued as representing politicization at state and group level (ruling elite as a group), which refers to a continuity in

Olympics as well as Russia's long term purpose of being accepted as "great power" that has control over its all regions. According to the sources, the only change that the Sochi Olympics brought was the strengthening of Russian civil society and its learning of new methods. Several groups' "counter-uses" show the existence of politicization by other actors at group level and another continuity in the Games. Besides, as Aron indicated, though interest groups' use of the Games is a continuity, their number and repercussions show new dynamics.

To continue with sources that have different methodologies, Ekberg questions "Which events, statements and manifestations of a political character can be observed during the 12nd Olympic Winter Games in Sochi 2014?" and "How can those be understood?" (Ekberg, 2014:5). Ekberg makes "observation" through the media (mainly Swedish television) during the 17-day period of the Games, and discusses the Sochi Games with realist, liberal and constructivist theories of international relations (Ekberg, 2014). Additionally he makes a remark regarding the protests, symbolism and Sochi-related hijacking attempt that was held during the 17 days period. Ekberg argues that in interviews the media "provoked" Olympic athletes into giving critical statements, and more remarkably political controversies were less than being envisaged during the Games (Ekberg, 2014:2, 57, 58).

Afonasina scrutinizes the Sochi Games through the "international gay rights", discussions of "neoliberal governmentality" and "bio power" (2014). She conducts her research through news coverages of the Russian and the Western media to explore the "the negotiation of East-West identities" via human rights language and particularly gay rights (Afonasina, 2014:7). Though the domestic conditions of Russia regarding "gay rights" were examined and the "gay propaganda law" was criticized, the focus is not on them and the LGBT movement in Russia is not

examined deeply (Afonasina, 2014). Remarkably, whereas Afonasina states that the Sochi Winter Games were “characterized by overt and covert politicization and active debate”, she discusses the “indirect channels” that mostly rely on “symbolic gestures” such as wearing “gay culture” symbols instead of direct ones (2014:1, 2, 6, and 48).

Zhemukhov and Orttung point out that “the Munich syndrome”⁸ continued in the Sochi Olympics and the Games were held “in a time of hyper insecurity” (2014). Besides, according to Krulisova, “Caucasophobia” was considerably “gendered” with the rhetoric of “Black Widow”⁹ when security threats to the Sochi Olympics were analyzed (2015). Thus, continuity in the Olympics (the Munich syndrome), and Caucasophobia and the Black Widow problem in Russia have come to the front in the discussions of these two studies.

In his analyses of costs, outcomes and impacts of the Sochi Games, Müller argues that despite of high costs, the benefit was limitative in the “extreme form of regional policy” (2014:628, 629). He points out that there was not an extensive plan for the venues after the Games, comprehensive construction caused overcapacity in hotels and state loans for the financiers, consequently whilst domestic support for the Games was declined in time, the Olympics could not enhance Russia’s worldwide image (Müller, 2014:628, 629). Moreover, he indicates that the Sochi Games were “superlative Games” in every respect (2014:153). From Müller’s points, it may be argued that such a huge cost that is extremely higher than other host states’ in Olympics refers not a continuity in the Olympics but shows corruption and policy problems in Russia.

⁸ “The Munich syndrome” is a security syndrome which was revealed after the terrorist attack in the 1972 Munich Olympics. It will be discussed in Chapter 5.

⁹ The issue of “black widows” will be argued in Chapter 5, under sub-heading of “Terrorist Threats”.

Thus, there are many sources that bring valuable contributions to the academic literature on the Sochi Olympics. However, it is seen that the sources analyze only specific cases of the Sochi Games. In addition to them, an overall analysis of the Sochi Olympics within the context of the politics of the Olympics would contribute to our understanding of the politics of the Olympics, the domestic politics of the Russian Federation, signals of inter-state contestations, and changing global dynamics.

CHAPTER 3

POLITIC DEBATES AND THE SOCHI OLYMPICS

To comprehend politicization in the Sochi Olympics, it is essential to analyze the historical background and evolution of the politicization in the Olympics. For this reason, I scrutinized the correlation of politics and the Olympics, and argued that there has been always interacting correlation between politics and the modern Olympics, and states, groups and individuals have been political actors. Subsequently I indicated that attempts, acts or statements that can be interpreted as politicization on these levels are observed in the Sochi Olympics too, but thanks to the International Olympic Committee's efforts and enforcements, using the Olympic Games as political tool especially for inter-state contestations is not an effective option anymore.

3.1 Politics and Olympics

It is estimated that the Ancient Olympic Games were held between 776 BC until 393 AD (Welcome to the Ancient Olympic Games, n.d.). It might seem far-fetched but it would not be wrong to indicate that political aspects of the Olympic Games existed even in the first years of the Olympics. Alcibiades, who were supporting the chariot competitions might be defined as “the pioneering sponsors” of the Games (Gribble, 2012). Though their gains from sponsorship were quite a change from recent giant sponsors' economic gains or closeness of the corporations with the governments, it might be said that Alcibiades represent the ancient roots of political-economic aspect of the Games. Besides, the purpose of “being honored” of the Greek cities or the ancient sponsorship was maintained in the Olympic context. Influence of the Greek

Cold War, exclusion of the Spartans from the Olympic competitions by Eleans before the Games of 420, and the aim of “ending Spartans’ dominance” in the Olympics demonstrate that the political aspect and use of the Olympics for political purposes have always existed (Gribble, 2012:19). Similarly, the Olympics have returned from organizations which made for the honor of Zeus to competition arenas of the Greek city states (Seçilmiş, 2004).

The modern Olympic Games were born in 1896 with the Athens Olympics. However, this brought the re-start of the politicization of the Olympic Games as well. Whereas the Greek states attended the Olympics in spite of the continuing wars between them, this was not carried out in the modern context, and the Games were interrupted because of the two world wars (Seçilmiş, 2004). Not accepting the defeated states of the world wars to the Olympics shows the early signs of the politicization of the modern Olympic Games. Appendix A provides insight about politicization in the Olympics.

According to Houlihan and Guilianotti, there are two categories of activity for “utilization of the political opportunities” which are implemented by the modern Olympic Games (2012:703). These are “state versus state” and “social movements versus the state”, both of them still exist but whereas the former one was intense rather in mid-1970s, the latter has been enhancing (Houlihan and Guilianotti, 2012:703). Examination of the recent Games supports this argument. Besides, politicization in the Olympics is realized by individuals as well as by states and groups. The IOC’s stance regarding the politicization is certain. In the Olympic Charter, which is defined as “the codification of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, Rules and Bye-laws”, it is stated that “No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or

other areas.” (Olympic Charter, 2015:11, 93). In following subtitles the issue will be examined at state, group and individual levels.

3.1.1 At state level

It must be underlined that the Olympics were not hosted only by democratic and economically developed republics; imperial, monarchical, socialist or the Nazi regimes also hosted the Games, and there were many candidacies from such regimes. Regardless of the regime type or ideology, states’ desire and motivation to host the Olympics show that they are well accepted political tool to display host state’s strength, power and positive images.

As Orttung and Zhemukhov pointed out, whilst a distraction of the attention is created regarding the local problems, with a national purpose a “mass and elite loyalty” may be established through the Olympics (2014:175, 180). The research of Baade and Matheson points out that bidding by developing states rose threefold since 1988, and this shift evolved out of the willingness to show their progress to the global community (McBride, 2018). Like using Olympics as a sanction mechanism or golden opportunity to criticize politics of the host state, using the Games as a soft power tool for domestic and international audiences can also be construed as politicization. However, in this part, politicization is argued in the sense of using something for political disputes, opposition and rivalries rather than politicians’ (as states’ representatives) use of images or manipulations to effect the public and international audience.

Mostly states’ rivalries and disagreements came to the fore in the discussions of usage of the Games as a political tool. The main manifestation of the politicization on state level was boycotting the Olympics. At the same time, Olympics have been

used by states as “show of force” not only to the other states but also to some groups and to local people.

The prominent examples of the politicization of the Games at state level are: expulsion of the defeated states of the First World War from the Antwerp 1920 Summer Olympic Games, expulsion of Germany and Japan from the London 1948 Summer Olympic Games, Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon’s boycott due to the Suez Crisis, China’s withdrawal for 24 years due to the IOC’s recognition of “Taiwan”,¹⁰ Switzerland, the Netherlands and Spain’s withdrawal from the 1956 Melbourne and the Stockholm Summer Olympic Games to protest the Soviet invasion of Hungary, protest of the Taiwanese athletes on behalf of their state in the Rome 1960 Olympics (see Figure 1), North Korea and Indonesia’s expulsion from the Tokyo 1964 Summer Olympic Games in connection with the recognition of China, the Western bloc’s boycott of the Moscow 1980 Summer Games to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and counter-boycott of the Eastern bloc (which was called as “revenge boycott” by the IOC)¹¹ in the Los Angeles 1984 Summer Olympic Games. Examples show that politicization at state level increased significantly after the Second World War and beginning of the Cold War (i.e. tensions and rivalry between the Eastern and Western Blocs of states) period, and decreased in the post-Cold War era. Moreover, as it is seen in Figure 2 and Figure 3, harsh imagery regarding the boycotts could be used in media organs as well.

¹⁰ Whilst People’s Republic of China has “One China Principle”, Taiwan has been treated as a “local province that ceases to be a sovereign state.” (Yu, 2008). China intervenes Taiwan’s attempts of hosting major sport events due to the potential threat to “One China principle” and using the events for promoting “One China, one Taiwan” (Yu, 2008). Moreover, whilst Deng Xiaoping’s “One country, two systems” policy was implemented for the Games, namely “Olympic formula” or “Olympic model” was found in 1979 with the contribution of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Taiwan was allowed to participate in the Olympics “under the name of local government”, and it was officially called as “Chinese Taipei” in the Olympic context (Yu, 2008; and Ren, 2002).

¹¹ This term is indicated on the official website of the IOC under the section of “Olympic Games” (Los Angeles 1984, n.d.).



Figure 1 Protest of the Taiwanese athletes in the Rome 1960 Olympics
 Source: <http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2017/09/26/culture/7-game-changing-athlete-protests.html> (Photo: UPI) (Gilmore, 2017)

As seen from the examples, states used the Olympics to criticize politics of the other states, and even the ideologies in the Cold War environment affected the politicization process. Though the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was also included in the politicization process in many cases, it tried not to be involved in political disputes. For instance, during the Western bloc's boycott the IOC continued to support the Soviet Union in hosting the Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics with the idea that sport and politics must not be interlinked (Seçilmiş, 2014).



Figure 2 Newsweek Magazine cover regarding the 1980 Olympic boycott
 Source: <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/512621874975342592> (Olympic Boycott, 2014)

Figure 3 Time Magazine cover regarding the 1984 Olympic boycott
 Source: <http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,19840521,00.html> (Olympic turmoil, 1984)

Despite the IOC's efforts, politicization of the Olympics and boycotts at state level continued for a long time. Finally, the IOC indicated that boycotting states would not be able to participate in the Games, and this brought an end to the boycotts and exclusions after the Seoul 1988 Games (Seçilmiş, 2014).

Thus, politics in the Olympics at state level can be made for both national and international audiences, it reached a peak during the Cold War, and was mainly realized by boycotting other states. Thanks to the efforts of the IOC, the effect of the globalization and increasing role of the other actors, state boycotts ended and politicization at state level (in respect to political rivalries and disputes) significantly decreased. Nonetheless, states and politicians can still try to use Olympics as an enforcement mechanism by symbolic speeches and acts like not attending the opening ceremony of the Olympics. Calling for boycott of the Beijing 2008 Olympics due to China's politics on Sudan and internal politics and announcements of not attending the Opening Ceremony are the recent examples of this situation (Leibenluft, 2008).

3.1.2 At group level

Politicization in the Olympics at group level can be made by anti-Olympic groups, opposition groups that criticize the host state's policies (as in Figure 4), a group of Olympic athletes, ethnic groups, and a group of spectators that acts by the influence of the political environment both locally and internationally. By using violence with political purposes, terrorist and separatist groups' acts can also fall into this category. Group activities constitute substantial percentage of the Olympic protests and debates.

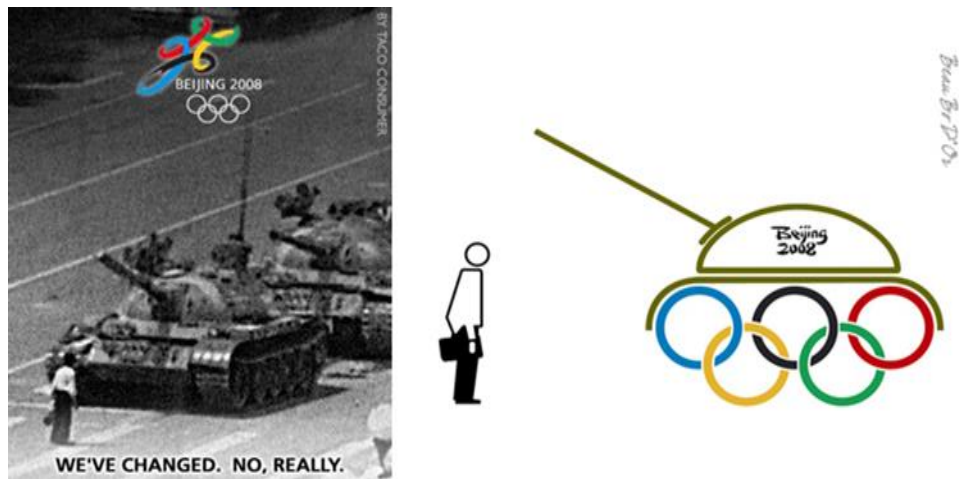


Figure 4 Protest poster with a reference to “Tank Man”
Source: http://www.waisel.com/america/China-What_to_Do.html (Smith, 2008)

The British athletes’ refusal to manifest the American flag in the London 1908 Summer Olympics may be considered as one of the oldest examples to protests at group level (see Appendix A). Irish protestors’ riding bicycles towards the British team to protest the British rule in the Northern Ireland during the Munich 1972 Summer Olympics, Ukrainian immigrants’ burning the Soviet flag during the Montreal 1976 Summer Olympics are other examples to politicization in the Olympics. One of the most important and heartbreaking examples for politicization at group level is the student protest on the eve of the Mexico 1968 Summer Games. Protests before the Mexico Games were held mainly to protest the government’s policies at the time of “the Mexican Dirty War” (An example is given in Figure 5.), and the main slogan in the protests was “We do not want Olympics, we want revolution!” (“No queremos olimpiadas, queremos revolución!”) (Tinoco, 2014). In one of the protests, a student protest on 2 October 1968 (ten days before the Opening Ceremony), harsh intervention of the police and military caused the deaths of dozens of the protestors.



Figure 5 Student protest in the Mexico 1968 Olympics
 Source: <https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/mexico-68/> (Photo: Acervo Comité)
 (Mullen and Trufelman, 2017)

Several examples of anti-Olympic organisations, groups and campaigns are given in Appendix B. It must be highlighted that as in the given examples, anti-Olympic groups mainly focus on the critique of the political economy of the host countries and discuss the negative impacts of hosting the Olympics on the country and residents. Politicization at group level has come to a critical degree that nowadays it shapes candidacy processes of the Olympics; and seven cities of the nine candidate cities' withdrawal from the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics shows its cruciality.

Thus, politicization at group level has a place in the modern Olympic Games since the first years, and it has increased especially after the 1960s with the effect of globalization and increasing role of the other actors and media. It may be put into practice by the Olympic teams, international groups and diaspora as well as local groups, and nowadays it is seen particularly in the anti-Olympic campaigns. Mainly domestic politics come to the fore at this level, but regardless of the welfare and democracy level of the host state, it was seen in almost all host states. In light of these facts, politicization at group level signals a continuity in the Olympics, but groups' dynamics and discussion may refer to a change.

3.1.3 At individual level

This sort of politicization is conducted by independent individuals, and it is seen that especially the Olympiads' protests can make an overwhelming impression. "The Black power salute"¹² which is given in Figure 6 and "silent protest" that was indicated in Figure 7 are the most prominent examples of Olympic protests at individual level.



Figure 6 "The Black power salute" in the Mexico 1968 Summer Olympics

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/09/24/they-didnt-take-a-knee-the-black-power-protest-salute-that-shook-the-world-in-1968/?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-black-power-salute%3Ahomepage%2Ft&hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-black-power-salute%3Ahomepage%2Ft (Brown, 2017)

Afro-American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos won gold and bronze medal in the 200 meter race of the Mexico 1968 Olympics. During the medal ceremony, they stood with black socks, Smith wore a black scarf, and they lowered their heads and raised their black-gloved hands. Australian medalist Peter Norman also supported the protest and wore a badge written "Olympic Project for Human Rights" (Montague, 2012). The protest, the Black power salute, made a tremendous

¹² Afro-American athlete Jesse Owens' stance regarding the protest shows another point of view which focuses on the success as a way of activism. Owens rejected to boycott the Berlin 1936 Games, and won four gold medals. He indicated regarding the Black Salute: "This was the wrong battlefield. Their running performances would have done more to alleviate the problem." (Evans, 2017).

impact and put the spotlights on the discrimination against the black in the United States. However, the protest was condemned by the IOC, Smith and Carlos were banned from the Olympics, and an unofficial sanction was imposed on Norman, who could not compete in subsequent Games (Montague, 2012). This also showed that the IOC grants no quarter to any act and level of politicization in the Olympics.



Figure 7 Vera Caslavka's "silent protest" in the Mexico 1968 Olympics
Source: <https://www.rferl.org/a/vera-caslavska-obituary-gymnastics-olympics-dead-74/27957727.html> (Wesolowsky, 2016)

Another individual protest was made by Czech athlete Vera Caslavka in the Mexico 1968 Olympics. Caslavka won four gold and two silver medals, and whilst the Soviet national anthem was playing during the medal ceremony, as it is seen in Figure 7, she moved her head down to protest Soviet politics in Czechoslovakia. After the protest, her employment and international traveling were banned until the collapse of the Soviet Union (Wesolowsky, 2016).

Some athletes' refusal to compete under flag of what they called as "Red Hungary" during the 1956 Melbourne and Stockholm Summer Olympic Games can also be categorized as politicization at individual level. Additionally, some politicians' statements and calls for boycotts can also be put at this category if they are not on behalf of their state. As it is seen from the examples, although individual political acts can create awareness on the protested cases, they are not change makers in the state politics or the politics of the Olympics.

3.2 Politics and the Sochi Games

Analysis of the Sochi Olympics shows that politics had a ground at each level in the Sochi Games too. In the Sochi case, particularly politicization at group level reflects the internal affairs and dynamics of Russia. In this part of the thesis, mainly politicization of the Sochi Olympics at state and individual levels will be discussed. Politicization at group level and challenges of the Circassian, the LGBT, Pussy Riot and local terrorist groups will be examined in Chapter Five. Besides, it must be noted that anti-Olympic groups that emphasize negative economic effects of the Games protested the Sochi Olympics from the first days after the selection of Sochi as the host city until the Opening Ceremony. For instance, a protest was made by group of “No Olympic Games” in Moscow with the slogan of “Sochi wins, the people lose” on May 2007 (Schlindwein, 2007). Lastly a protest was made in Moscow on February 2014 with the slogan of "Sochi - a feast during the plague!" on the eve of the Opening Ceremony (V Moskve na aktsii protiv Olimpiady v Sochi zaderzhali aktivistov i zhurnalista, 2014).

In addition to Sochi’s former candidacies for the Olympics, Moscow’s candidacy for the 2012 Summer Olympics and hosting the 2018 FIFA World Cup demonstrate Russia’s desire to host the mega sport events for the sake of soft power aims. Even when the number of the television viewers is considered (almost one third of the world population), greatness of the impacts of the Olympics can be comprehended. By the Olympic Games, positive messages were presented to the international audience, and at the same time a sense of solidarity to create a new worldwide image was adopted in the Russian public. This sort of solidarity provided consolidation of the national proud as well as the legitimization of the regional planning and funneling money to the big construction projects in Sochi.

President Putin personally monitored the Sochi Olympics even at the stage of candidacy; his attendance to the 117th session of the IOC which the host city was announced, his visits of the Olympic facilities during preparations also show his personal involvement in the Olympics. The International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach, addressing to President Putin, stated that “I believe that without your personal participation, all this would be impossible. Thank you for your personal commitment to conducting and preparing these Olympic Games.” (Presentation of IOC members, 2014). Moreover, remarkably it was indicated that similar to the Peter the Great who introduced Saint-Petersburg as his personal project, President Putin presented Sochi as a “bridge to the West” (Rosenberg, 2014).

The slogan “new Russia” came to the fore in the Sochi Olympics. Even the IOC President Bach indicated in the Opening Speech of the Games: “These are the first ever Olympic Games organized in the new Russia”¹³ (Speech on the occasion of Opening Ceremony - 126th Session Sochi, 4 February 2014, 2014). Russia emphasized “new” and “great” aspects, yet it could not prevent counter-images like the Figure 8. Even, Russia Today said that imagery used in the Western media for boycott campaigns of the Sochi Games was like the imagery from the Cold War (In US, headlines write themselves: Cold War imagery resurrected in Sochi bashing, 2014). Moreover, it must be noted that the annexation of Crimea, after only several

¹³ Also, in his meeting with President Putin before the Opening Ceremony, Thomas Bach indicated that “We look forward to having wonderful Olympic Games in a new Russia.” (Meeting with President of International Olympic Committee Thomas Bach, 2014).

days following the Closing Ceremony of the Sochi Olympics, shadowed the positive legacy of the Olympics in the international context, and even it was argued that the Sochi Winter Olympics were “a calculated cover” for invasion (Laurson and Pieler, 2014).



Figure 8 Anti-Sochi Olympics headings in magazines

Source: <https://www.rt.com/news/olympic-boycott-art-1980-794/> (In US, headlines write themselves: Cold War imagery resurrected in Sochi bashing, 2014)

The absence of many political leaders, President of the United States of America Barack Obama, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom David Cameron, Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, Prime Minister of Belgium Elio di Rupo, President of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of Moldova Nikolay Timofti, in the Sochi Olympics were considered as a “symbolic boycott” (Gotev, 2014; Şamilkızı, 2013; and Bondy, 2014). Despite the fact that some indicated that the reason of absence was their schedules, some did not indicate any reason for nonparticipation and few criticized the idea of boycotting (Gotev, 2014; Şamilkızı, 2013; and Bondy, 2014). Even, some politicians explicitly expressed the reason of absence with political justifications. For instance, President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaite stated that she took the decision not to go to Sochi due to the human rights violations in Russia and Moscow’s attitudes to neighboring countries including Lithuania and Russia’s pressures on former Soviet countries (Şamilkızı, 2013).

Thomas Bach, head of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) defined these absences as “ostentatious gesture” and stated that “costs nothing, but makes international headlines.” (Bondy, 2014).

In particular, Georgia called for boycotting the Sochi Games. Though initially Georgia welcomed selection of Sochi as the host city, it withdrew its support after the 2008 military conflict between Russia and Georgia.¹⁴ On August 2008, the Georgian president, Mikhail Saakashvili called on the European Union and the United States to boycott the Sochi Olympics, and argued that decision of participation would be “moral choice” for developed countries (Harding, 2008). Besides, in 2013, non-governmental organizations launched a petition campaign, and with more than 1.500 signatures, they made a call to Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, Sports Minister Levan Kipiani and the president of Georgia’s National Olympic Committee Leri Khavelovi to boycott the Sochi Games (Petition calling on Georgia to boycott Sochi Olympics, 2013). Although boycott calls were from reactions to Russian politics towards Georgia, some specific cases like selection of Ivan Nichaev¹⁵ as torch-bearer also furthered boycott calls in Georgia. In addition, many calls for boycott were attributed to the 1864 events and forced migration of the Circassian people.¹⁶ However, in 2013, President of the Georgian National Olympic Committee Leri Khabelov said that politics and sport must be separate, and

¹⁴ After military intervention of Georgia, conflicts erupted on 7 August in South Ossetia which is a de facto independent state and frozen conflict zone. Russia and Abkhaz military units also involved in the conflict. According to the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG) which is established by the European Union, 412 people including 228 civilians on the Georgian side, 365 South Ossetians, and 67 servicemen on the Russian side lost their lives in five days conflict (European Union, 2009:5).

¹⁵ Ivan Nichaev is military pilot who was declared as “hero” by Russia for his services during the 2008 Georgia-Russia War. He was selected as torch carrier for the Sochi Olympics (Georgia weighing for and against participation in Sochi Olympics, 2013).

¹⁶ This topic will be analyzed in Chapter 5, under the title of “The Circassian Campaign of ‘No Sochi 2014’”.

confirmed the participation of Georgia in the Sochi Olympics (Georgia Confirms Participation in Sochi Olympics, 2013). In spite of its justifications, harsh criticisms and calls for boycott, Georgia's decision to participate in the Sochi Olympics demonstrates that current efforts to use the Olympics as a tool for political conflicts do not end up with achievements or enforcements, and such acts and statements are rather symbolic.

As for states, individual initiatives that were seen as political were criticized and prevented in the Sochi Olympics. For instance, in 2013, Russian artist Vasiliy Slonov organized a satiric exhibition of Olympic posters that portray Russia as a repressive state. The exhibition was closed by the authorities for unpermitted use of the Olympic symbols (Welcome to Sochi, Comrade!, 2013). Another example is Ukrainian skier Bogdana Matsotska's demand to wear a mourning band for those killed in clashes in Kiev.¹⁷ The IOC clarified that any political statement and protest including a black armband is not allowed in the Olympics, and Matsoske and her coach withdrew from the Games to protest violence in Kiev (Menezes, 2014).

Thus, politicisation at state, group and individual levels were carried out for a variety of reasons in the Sochi Olympics. Russia's local, regional and international politics and even historical cases were showed as the reason of boycott or protest. However, the idea that politics and Olympics must not be interlinked and the IOC's stance towards politicization of the Olympics sustained. The facts show that although the Olympics are tried to be used for interstate contestations and politicisation at state and individual levels still exist, at the present time they can bring very limited enforcements to the Olympics and the politics of the host state.

¹⁷ After the harsh intervention of the police and Special Forces to the anti-government protestors, 67 people lost their lives and 562 people were wounded between 18 and 20 February 2014 (Traynor, 2014).

CHAPTER 4

OLYMPIC CONSTRUCTIONS AND ECONOMY OF THE SOCHI GAMES

Constructions of the 22nd Olympic Winter Games and 11th Paralympic Winter Games were integrated under the road of “the Sochi 2014 planning” (IOC 2014 Evaluation Evaluation Commission Report XXII Olympic Winter Games in 2014, 2007:10). Although on several issues the construction experience of Sochi is particular, it contains many common characteristics with the construction experiences of the other host cities of the Games and mega events. Moreover, issues related with the constructions for the Sochi Games offer an insight into the bureaucracy and ongoing problems of the Russian Federation. Construction-related legacies of the Sochi Games would be better analyzed in the long run, yet even before the beginning of the Games they could be observed in Sochi. It might be said that construction legacies of the Sochi Games are not only physical, there are also economic and human costs. These costs developed out of particularly “alleged” corruption, escalation of costs, displacements and abuse of Sochi residents, Olympic workers and environment. Moreover, it cannot be denied that construction’s negative legacies, and construction-related controversies and protests also caused the “counter-mythmaking” in the Sochi Games and Russian politics.

In this chapter, I examined characteristics of the megaprojects, and common characteristics of the Olympic constructions and commonalities in the Games through online news and literature about the megaprojects. I argued that, as in other megaprojects, the Olympics are used as a tool for regional development, urban changes and cities’ promotion, they create a heavy burden and “white elephants” legacy, over budget, corruption and displacements during the construction process.

Then, I scrutinized the construction experience of Sochi through online news, reports of the foundations, and opinion polls. Moreover, I indicated sequence of events related with the Olympic constructions in Sochi in Appendix C. I asserted that state corporations' dominant role in the Olympic economy, building an Olympic city from scratch, and discussion of such a high level of corruption were peculiar to the Sochi Olympics. However, the Sochi Olympics faced with the common experiences of the mega projects, and this refers to continuity in the Olympics.

4.1 Megaprojects

Megaprojects¹⁸ are described as reflexive large-scale projects that are materialized over many years by the public and private initiatives at a cost of at least one billion dollars (Flyvbjerg, 2014). Though a more accurate term is “gigaproject” with a cost of one billion, the term of the “megaproject” is much more used (Flyvbjerg, 2014)¹⁹ and the Olympics are also described as “megaproject”.

Typical characteristics of megaprojects are: risks due to planning's timeliness, and complexity, peril of weak leadership, adverse interests, “uniqueness bias”, “lock-in” by not offering an alternative, principal-agent problems,²⁰ rent seeking and optimism bias, ignoring “black swans” (excessive incidents with negative results in large scale), and exceeding costs, retards, deficiency of utility because of misinformation (Flyvbjerg, 2014). Megaprojects are also described as

¹⁸ The origin of the word “mega” is from the Greek word “megas” that means “great, large, vast, big, high, tall; mightily, important” (Harper, n.d.). Moreover, in scientific language “mega” refers to “one million” (Harper, n.d.).

¹⁹ As another term, “tera project” refers to the project that costs more than one trillion dollars, and as Flyvbjerg argues we might enter to the “tera-era” in terms of the scale of the projects (2014).

²⁰ Principal agent problem stems from division of labor, asymmetrical knowledge and conflict of the interests between the principal and agent.

management and policy “Vietnams”²¹ since leaving the project is not possible (Flyvbjerg, 2014). “Bias toward large scale” can also exist in megaprojects because of “monumentalist states”, firms and institutions that have interests (Gellert and Lynch, 2003:22).

Megaprojects may be in types of infrastructure, extraction, production and consumption, or inclusive of all,²² and they leave material and social transformations (Gellert and Lynch, 2003:1, 16). Displacement can be “primary (direct)” and/or “secondary (indirect)”, and affect unwealthy members and minorities of society more (Gellert and Lynch, 2003:1, 16). Whilst primary displacement may be realized through “labor camp”, deliberate relocation or displacement, loss of the resource base in the area of the project because of flowage or/and structures; secondary displacement may be materialized by losing access to property and resource, unemployment after the project, psychosocial stress, becoming persistent of “urbanization as labor camps”, unsustainability of agriculture in relocation place because of soil erosion, and ethnic confrontation (Gellert and Lynch, 2003:1, 16). Lack/limitation of transparency and residents’ participation in decision-making processes regarding issues that affect housing is another characteristic of the mega projects (Fair Play for Housing Rights: Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights-Opportunities for the Olympic Movement and Others, 2007:38). Moreover, “cleaning operations” of the homeless and criminalization of them are also implemented for the sake of the mega-constructions (Fair Play for Housing Rights:

²¹ It is attributed to the Vietnam War that the United States involved in 1954 and could not leave until the peace agreement between the US and the North Vietnam in 1973.

²² Whilst infrastructure type includes construction of port, water and sewer system and railroads, consumption type contains building of facility for tourists, real estate development and theme park (Gellert and Lynch, 2003). In “the Sochi Project” all of these indicated constructions were held and these two types were combined.

Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights-Opportunities for the Olympic Movement and Others, 2007:38).

Human cost and poor conditions of workers are seen in many mega constructions. Use of child labor may also be seen as in the constructions of the 2010 New Delhi Commonwealth Games (Olimpiyat köyünün çocuk köleleri, 2010). However, in case of the child labor, “Red Card to Child Labor Campaign” of the International Labor Organization (ILO) was initiated and it was planned to include the 2020 Olympics too (Kılıç, 2013).

4.2 Olympic constructions

4.2.1 Developments and promotion of cities

Essex and Chalkley argue that there are four phases of the development of the Winter Olympics and urban changes intensified after the 1960s for both the Summer and Winter Olympics (2004). In the first phase, between 1924 and 1932, “infrastructural transformations” were minimum (2004:217).²³ In the second phase, between 1936 and 1960, “infrastructural demands” emerged; in the third phase, between 1964 and 1980, the Games started to be used as a tool for regional development (2004:219-220). In the fourth phase, between 1984 and 2002, “large scale transformations” were observed (2004:222). Yet characteristics of them might be seen after 2002 too. Similarly, Alexeyeva also argues that the Winter Games have been used as a tool of “urban revitalization” since the 1960s (2014:160).

²³ But remarkably in spite of minimum transformation, environmentalist protests could be held even in the first stage, and the opposition could affect infrastructure in the second stage (Essex and Chalkley, 2004:219, 220).

In the literature “urban gentrification” and “urban redevelopment” are associated with the Olympics. With the occasion of the Games, investments and infrastructure works are carried out in the host cities, and the Olympics are used to legitimize enormous level of investment. Physical impacts may be materialized through building new infrastructures, a renewed and modernized city image or permanent arrangements.²⁴

In the case of Barcelona, a former Olympic host city, “city promotion” cannot be explained only by financial or tourism purposes. Regeneration and promotion of Barcelona was to show the region’s “identity and distinctiveness in relation to Madrid” (Houlihan, 2008:135) and Catalonia’s achievements (Riding, 1992). Similarly, Montreal’s hosting was also linked to the debate regarding Canada’s future and expanding separatism in Quebec (Purdon, 2016). For the Sochi Olympics, several arguments were also linked to the uncertainties in the Caucasus and aim to give a security message through the Olympics.

According to the IOC, Olympic legacies may be seen before and after the Games, and these legacies can be classified under five categories: sporting, economic, social, environmental and urban legacies (Olympic legacy, 2013:9). Urban beautification and regeneration, new transport and sporting infrastructure are “tangible legacies”, and the Stockholm Olympic Stadium’s use for 100 years since 1912 is an example (Olympic legacy, 2013:9, 15). As the IOC pointed out, in addition to regenerating existing areas, the Games can be “catalyst” for the constructions (Olympic legacy, 2013:47). The IOC indicates in factsheets (that point out branding, sustainability and housing as construction legacies) that the Sydney 2000 Games contributed to the “Brand Australia”, Turin pulled away from its former

²⁴ Several sources to see Barcelona, Athens and Beijing examples as several of the most discussed cases in the literature: (Preus, 2010), (Gold and Gold, 2010), (Lenskyj, 2010), (Houlihan, 2008:135).

“industrial image” and became a new business and tourist destination thanks to the Turin 2006 Games, and Whistler Olympic Village’s temporary accommodations were sent to 156 elderly, low income and homeless residents as housing legacy (2013:7). It must be pointed out that due to the fact that the IOC aims to sustain attractiveness of hosting the Games by pointing to positive legacies, it may put emphasis on even -relatively- small positive legacies but not stress negative legacies. Housing legacy (which will be discussed in section of “Displacements and Olympic workers”) may be one of the best examples to this argument.

4.2.2 Economic burden and over budget

The IOC emphasizes increased economic activity, creation of new jobs and tourist booms after the Olympics (Olympic legacy, 2013:57). In the Olympic Charter, it is indicated that “to promote a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities and host countries.” is among the roles of the IOC (Factsheet: Legacies of the Games, 2013:1). However, the difference between the ideal and practice is seen in this situation too, because the positive legacy alters according to the conditions of the host cities and states, and the Games may bring negative economic legacies, economic burden, and only temporary and short-term job opportunities to the host states.

One of the most well-known examples of the negative outcomes is the Montreal 1976 Summer Games’ debt, which was paid for 30 years. Despite the fact that Jean Drapeau, the former mayor of Montreal, optimistically stated: “The Montreal Olympics can no more have a deficit, than a man can have a baby.”, the costs of the Montreal Games escalated in time, the debt from the Games was paid off in 2006, and even the Olympic stadium is called “the Big Owe” (Quebec’s Big Owe

stadium debt is over, 2006). Furthermore, the Greek government had to receive a big loan to finance infrastructure enterprises (Real, 2010:232). Indeed, it is still argued that hosting the Athens 2004 Summer Games increased Greece's ongoing financial problems.

In terms of exceeding the budget, Olympics differ from other mega projects since the cost overrun is substantially larger. Analysis of Flyvbjerg and Stewart on the Olympic bids and final cost reports the period between 1960 and 2013, indicates that average cost overrun is 179 percent in real terms and 324 percent in nominal terms and Olympics are the most risky mega projects for a nation and city (2012:3). Whilst in the Winter Games minimum cost overrun in real terms occurred in Vancouver (2010) by 17 percent, maximum overrun was made in Lake Placid (1980) by 321 percent cost overrun (Flyvbjerg and Stewart, 2012:10).

In terms of financial gains from the Olympics, the Los Angeles 1984 Summer Games is presented as a success story. However, it must be underlined that it is the only case that economic profit was attained (thanks to the role of the private sector and existing Olympic facilities) in Olympic history. Economically states lift the burden for the sake of hosting the Olympics, and even it is discussed that host states do not officially announce the real costs of the Olympics not to face public backlashes.

White elephants are symbols of economic burdens of mega events. The term "white elephant" is used for the large and iconic facilities that bring a huge cost of maintenance. The issue of "white elephants" is the primary negative legacy of mega projects. White elephants come to the forefront in Olympic criticisms and imageries such as Figure 9. Particularly lack of comprehensive planning for post-Olympic period creates the problem of "white elephants". Some Olympic host cities like

London tried to avoid from this through several methods such as constructing few permanent venues, but cities like Beijing, Athens, and Sarajevo had to face with the “white elephant syndrome” with millions of maintaining costs due to the failures for post-Olympics use, leaving or destroying Olympic venues (Blitz, 2012).



Figure 9 “White elephant” illustration of Simon Letch

Source: <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/the-winner-is-white-elephants-20120726-22uzf.html> (Irvine, 2012)

Another point that could be linked to the “white elephant syndrome” may be the concept of “gigantomania”. Thomas, Sullivan and Briant define “gigantomania” as the “creation of abnormally big works” and argue that whilst there was a “love of gigantomania” of the Soviet Union, it was represented in political, cultural and socio-economic areas of the Soviet Union (2013:164). Similarly, gigantic constructions are criticized in the Olympic debates of Sochi through both “gigantomania” and building giant infrastructures as a way of corruption. For instance, Müller describes Russia’s Olympic experience as “gigantomania”, he gives the example of the combined rail road link between Adler and Krasnaya Polyana, and says that it will not be used in full capacity even in high seasons of Sochi (Müller, 2014:4).

4.2.3 Corruption

Corruption, bribery and fraud play a significant role as one of the hot topics of sport megaprojects. In particular, the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) scandals were at the top of the agenda in 2015. As in the other sport megaprojects, corruption had a place in the Olympics as well. There occurred some questionable cases like the burning of the documents of Nagano's bid for the 1998 Winter Olympics.²⁵

In the most famous bribery scandal of Olympic history, it was revealed that the IOC members accepted bribes to vote for the selection of Salt Lake City, Utah of the United States for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Since the 1960s corruption in the bids has been a part of the Games, and "gift giving" and luxury honors were common practices in the selection process of the candidate cities (Dichter, 2016). Offering bribery to the members of the IOC as "vote-buying" for the election of the host city was practiced so many times, and a senior official in the IOC even stated that "bribes of up to a million dollars" might be demanded from the candidate cities (World Timeline: Olympics corruption scandal, 1999).

The investigations into the selection of Rio for the 2016 Summer Olympics proved that a bribe was given to the IOC members (Rio 2016 Olimpiyatları için oy satın alındığı iddiası, 2017). One of the harsh criticisms was made by a prominent member of the IOC, Dick Pound who criticized the IOC for "doing nothing" against the claims of corruption (IOC'ye kendi yetkilisinden yolsuzluk eleştirisi, 2017). After the Rio case, it was revealed that two billions dollars were given to the African delegates to support Tokyo for the 2020 Summer Olympics (Yorulmaz, 2019).

²⁵ Scandal was revealed after disclosure of the Olympic spending was demanded by the Japanese public; former vice secretary-general of the Nagano Olympic Bid Committee, Sumikazu Yamaguchi indicated that he instructed documents' burning (Macintyre, 1999).

4.2.4 Displacements and Olympic workers

As it is seen in other mega events, constructions for the Olympics also cause to displacements. Data indicates the seriousness of the Olympic evictions. Estimated number of the evicted or displaced people for the six Summer Olympics between 1988 and 2008 is more than two millions (Waldron and Maciel, 2016). For instance, 720.000 people were forced to leave their homes for the sake of the Seoul 1988 Olympics, and the number of the displaced and/or evicted people for the Beijing 2008 Summer Games is estimated at 1.5 million (Berg, 2011). Moreover, as made in many host cities, the homeless were evicted to the countryside from Moscow on the eve of the Moscow 1980 Olympics (Moscow authorities plan dedicated law for homeless to protect tourists from crime, 2018).

Legislative measures to catalyze the constructions, private property's expropriation and redevelopments were made in many host cities (as Seoul, Barcelona, Atlanta, Sydney, Athens, Beijing and London) (Fair Play for Housing Rights, 2007:217). Evictions of especially the Roma in Athens and implementation of “‘Re-Education through Labor’ measures” that targeted beggars, the mentally ill, homeless and other minorities in Beijing are striking cases (Fair Play for Housing Rights, 2007:217). Although these negative issues are much debated and known, they are still on the agenda. For the Rio 2016 Summer Games, 22.059 families had to resettle between 2009 and 2015, due to the deportation issue clashes between the residents and the police could be seen even in 2015, and as in Figure 10 resettlements were described as “exclusion” and protested (Douglas, 2015; and Watts, 2015).



Figure 10 Protest poster for the Rio 2016 Summer Olympics.
Poster defines the Rio 2016 Olympics as “Exclusion Games” due to displacements
Source: <http://www.anf.org.br/rio-2016-os-jogos-da-exclusao/> (Barroso, 2016)

Olympic workers is another group which is abused during the preparation process of the Olympics. Time limitation of the organization, lack of work safety measures, legal gaps and lack of enforcement (even if inspections exist), staying in the construction yard without making necessary payments, vulnerability of particularly immigrant workers who are not well informed regarding their rights, workers’ being forced to leave the city before the beginning of the Games further the victimization of Olympic workers. Due to the poor conditions, many workers went out on strike in host cities of the Olympics. For instance, in 2014, more than 2.500 workers went on strike in the Olympic construction site in Rio de Janeiro (Waldron, 2014).

4.3 City of Sochi and Olympic constructions

As it is seen in Figure 11, Sochi is located on the Black Sea coast and in Krasnodor Krai region of the Russian Federation, and in the south it is bordered by Georgia

(City of Sochi, n.d.).²⁶ Sochi was the tourism center and health resort of the Soviet Union, and after a period of stagnation, it was tried to be presented as a “brand” for the international tourism especially during the rule of President Putin.



Figure 11 Sochi and its neighboring cities

Source: <https://yandex.com.tr/maps/?ll=43.796021%2C43.659884&z=7>

In Russia’s “Gateway to the Future” concept, one of the objectives was “to transform Sochi into a year-round tourist destination by maximizing the large scale summer tourism infrastructure during the winter season” and “to implement Russia’s new philosophy of investing domestically for the future.” (IOC 2014 Evaluation, 2007:10). Many facts show that Sochi was a significant and unique place for these objectives.²⁷ Many national/local organizations and events which were organized in Sochi show that Russia aimed to create Sochi as a brand for international events.

²⁶ Sochi’s being too close to Abkhazia and the Northern Caucasia and security risks due to location have a significant place in debates regarding the Sochi Olympics.

²⁷ Some international events that Sochi hosted are: Formula 1 Russian Grand Prix (Agreement to host 9 October 2010, and seven years deal’s signing on October 14, 2010); Silk Way Rally (Saint Petersburg-Sochi), 2010; Silk Way Rally (Moscow-Sochi), 2011; The World Robot Olympiad (WRO) - November 21-23, 2014; International Tourism Trade Fair - January 2014, 2015; Winter International Festival of Arts – since 2007; The 9th World Choir Games - July 6-16, 2016; The Sochi International Tattoo Festival; Sochi International Film Festival (SIFF) – December 10-16, 2016; 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia 14 June-15 July, 2018 (Formula 1 in Russia, n.d.); (Organization Committee

The remarkable fact is Sochi's election for the Winter Olympics in spite of being the "Summer Capital of Russia" with a semitropical climate (Parker and Wilson, n.d.). The average temperature on February 2014 was 12 degree in daytime (Tunçdemir, 2014). Sochi had to drain swamps, store former year's snow and make 500 snowmaking machines to host the Games (Tunçdemir, 2014). Weather conditions created several frictions, safety hazards occurred and some training runs had to be cancelled due to melting snow (McPherson, 2014), and artificial measures caused more environmental damage. Due to these facts, the Sochi Winter Olympics were described as "the warmest Olympics" (Holthaus, 2014), and Sochi's election was criticized a lot.²⁸ Thus, Sochi may be argued as the pioneer city in terms of hosting the Games that need different weather conditions, but Beijing's selection for the 2022 Winter Olympics²⁹ also shows that weather condition is not a preventing criteria in the election of the host city.

What was new in the Sochi Games was the built of an Olympic city from scratch. For the first time a city that did not have any sport building necessary for the Olympics was elected as the host city. Olympic constructions took place in coastal

of the Silk Way Rally, 2017); (Resorts and Tourism-2015, n.d.); (Bashmet, n.d.); (Sochi 2016: On the way to new records, n.d.); (Sochi International Film Festival, n.d.); (Sochi, n.d.).

European Union-Russia Summit and Group of Eight (G8) Summit would also be held in Sochi on June 2014, however these organizations were cancelled with the relevant decisions in following of the annexation of Crimea.

²⁸ In the former Olympics artificial snow was used in lack of snow or to improve conditions, first use was in the Lake Placid 1980 Winter Games (Lake Placid 1980, n.d.). However, the host states of the former Winter Games were places that have snow seasons.

²⁹ In Beijing only several snowy days are seen annually, and average snow depth is 5 centimeter in two mountains next to Beijing (Yapay karla yapılacak, 2015). Though snow problem was indicated in the reports of the IOC, Beijing was elected as the host city. However, it must be emphasized that economic burden was debated a lot for the 2022 Olympics too, and people voted "No" to host the Olympics in referendums of Munich, Stockholm, Krakow and Graubünden (Pekin 2022 Kış Olimpiyat Oyunları oylamasını kazandı, 2015). Oslo (Norway), Kiev and Lviv (Ukraine) and Krakow (Poland) withdrew their bid and only candidates cities were Beijing and Almaty of Kazakhstan (Yapay karla yapılacak, 2015).

and mountain clusters of Sochi, and 11 new arenas³⁰ were built (All about the Sochi 2014 venues, 2014). Imereti Port, Road Adler-Krasnaya Polyana, Relief road of Sochi Kurortnyi Avenue, Adler CHP plant, Complex Mountain Carousel, Media Centre, Olympic Village, Azimut Hotel, Sochi International Airport, and International Olympic University were constructed (Olympic sites, n.d.).

In his interview with CNN, President Dmitry Medvedev talked about the development of the region and said that they tried to overcome “complicated infrastructure challenges” for a long period (Dmitry Medvedev's interview with CNN, 2014). He reminded the lack of a reliable sewage system, existence of the electricity problems and routine blackouts (Dmitry Medvedev's interview with CNN, 2014). Similarly, in the official website of the IOC (in the discussion of the legacies of the Winter Games in Sochi) it is indicated that in addition to sports venues’ building, improvements of telecommunication and transport infrastructures were also made both in the city and the region (Sochi boosted by Winter Games legacies, 2014). The IOC states that:

In total, more than 367km of roads and bridges, 200km of railway and 690km of utilities were built ahead of the Games, while 40 new hotels were also constructed and 15 were re-modelled, with a total capacity of 26.000 rooms. (Sochi boosted by Winter Games legacies, 2014)

By the Russian officials such a huge process of construction was presented as the main reason of the huge economic cost of the Sochi Olympics.

³⁰ Adler Arena, Ice Cube Curling Centre, Shayba Arena, Bolshoi Ice Dome, Iceberg Skating Palace, Fisht Olympic Stadium, RusSki Gorki Jumping Centre, Rosa Khutor Extreme Park, Laura Cross-Country Ski and Biathlon Centre, Rosa Khutor Alpine Centre, and Sanki Sliding Centre (All about the Sochi 2014 venues, 2014).

Whilst some constructions like Sochi seaport and Sochi Park were not finished when the Olympics started (Feb 9, n.d.), some constructions like partly repainted buildings (leaving rear front in disrepair) were “smoothed over the cracks” (Feb 9, n.d.).³¹ Besides, many delays in constructions were overcome with the contribution of foreign firms. Initially, it was stated that “Russia has necessary power to construct facilities with its own companies. There is no need for the foreign companies”, and foreign firms could not take even specification for the biddings (Alkışlar Soçi kahramanlarına: Olimpiyat kurtuldu, Putin ve Gref minnettar, n.d.). However, particularly at the end of 2012 when the construction progress was behind schedule, particularly Turkish firms started to take their place in the Olympic constructions (Alkışlar Soçi kahramanlarına: Olimpiyat kurtuldu, Putin ve Gref minnettar, n.d.). Turkish construction firms finished 700 square meters of construction –including unfinished works by other firms- in one and a half year (Soçi Olimpiyatları’nda ilk zafer Türklerin, 2013), and President Putin even rendered his thanks to the Turkish firms by indicating that Turkish construction firms “provided a serious contribution to the preparation of the Olympic Games” (Putin’den Türkiye’ye övgü, 2014).

4.4 Economy of the Sochi Games

Unlike the Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics, significant financial information on the Sochi Olympics is available. It is true that due to transparency problems and state

³¹ However, many construction problems in Sochi were pointed out by media tools. Especially in Twitter they were released with hashtag of “Sochiproblems” or in accounts with this title. According to the research of Hutchings, Gillespie, Yablokov, Lvov and Voss on social media platforms, issue of “organizational failures” was among three main topics about Russia, and it was the most debated issue particularly on Twitter on the Opening Day of the Sochi Games (2015).

corporations' unique characteristics covering all the bases is not possible, but costs and over budget of the projects are indicated one by one in several sources.

The report of the Anti-Corruption Foundation regarding the costs of the Sochi Olympics indicates that the per capita cost³² was three to five times higher than the other Olympics that strong economies hosted (Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014). Whilst private investors financed less than 4 percent of the costs, the state budget, state-owned companies and state-owned Vnesheconombank's loans financed the costs. Moreover, 76 percent of Vnesheconombank's loans (\$7.6 bn) were categorized as "bad loans", servicing loans were refused by the debtors, and losses will be compensated through the state budget (Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014). According to the report, the selection of contractors and builders through non-transparent ways resulted in corruption and the violation of law, some constructions were initiated without permission, many companies that signed contract were closely linked with the state officials, and more than 28 percent of the contractor firms had offshore shareholders (Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014). Whilst ultimately one sport event's cost was five to ten times higher than previous events of the Summer and Winter Games, in 6 sport venues the per seat cost was 1.6-2.6 times higher than other countries' similar venues', and some buildings³³ that were constructed with the Olympic budget were not even related to the Olympics (Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014).

³² Total cost is indicated as \$45.8 billion in this report but as mentioned in former pages, final cost is estimated around \$51 billion.

³³ Ten projects that are indicated in the report are: Presidential Residence Psekhako, three Spa Resorts for the Presidential Administration (Rus', Sochi, Primorkiy pavilion), Church, Sochi-park theme park, Elektronika Spa Resort for Prosecutors, Health Resort Degomys, Yuzhny Spa Resort, and Formula One Track (Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014:19).

The data shows the problems of excessive spending, transparency, infraction of rules and leaving the economic burden to the state in the economy of the Sochi Olympics. It cannot be denied that, they were the economic facts which were faced by all host states, but their extent differed according the economy and rule of states. It might be argued that in the Sochi Olympics, which costed more than 51 billion US dollars, these economic facts came to the fore more than in any other host state.

4.4.1 State's role and Olimpstroï

As Müller and Pickles pointed out, the central state has a strong role and provides “neopatrimonial forms of resource allocation” in mega events hosted by post-socialist countries (2015:121), and this was valid for the Sochi Olympics as well. There is a disagreement regarding the state's role in the funding of the Sochi Games. In several sources –as mentioned above - the state's funding is estimated at 96 percent, but the Russian officials argued that 60 percent of the costs were provided by the private sector and President Putin stated that only 100 billion rubble (of 214 billion rubble) was provided from the state budget (Navalrı raporu: "Soçi olimpiyatlarında kim, ne kadar yolsuzluk yaptı?", 2014). However, it must be underlined that funds from state-owned Sberbank and VTB Bank were not counted as state expense (Navalrı raporu: "Soçi olimpiyatlarında kim, ne kadar yolsuzluk yaptı?", 2014).

Generally local administrations are responsible for the budget of the Olympics, and federal governments provide only some of the funds that would be used for the Olympic infrastructure, security and development, but it is unlikely that a federal government was the “driving force” of the Sochi Games (Orttung, 2014:5).

Olimpstroi, officially “the State Corporation for Construction of Olympic Venues and Sochi Development as Alpine Resort” is a state corporation³⁴ that was responsible from the Olympic constructions. It was established on November 2007 by a presidential decree (Foxall, 2014:6). Although initially it was indicated that Olimpstroy would report to the State Duma annually (the lower house of the Federal Assembly, the parliament of the Russian Federation), this was not implemented and it reported quarterly and directly to the President (Foxall, 2014:6; Blakkisrud and Fjærtøft, 2009:8). From 2007 to 2014 four managers of Olimpstroy (Semyon Vaynshtok, Viktor Kolodyazhny, Taymuraz Bolloyev, and Serge Gaplikov) were taken from the office, and each dismissal revealed criminal cases related with corruption, embezzling or exceeding official authority (Foxall, 2014:7).

4.4.2 Corruption debate

Corruption³⁵ is generally argued to be one of the chronic problems of Russia and the debate of corruption is seen in Sochi case too. With 51 billion US dollars of costs,

³⁴ With their unique characteristics state corporations have a significant place in the Russian economy. State corporations’ role in Sochi construction process points out ongoing role of the state in the Russian economy. “State corporation” term does not refer to only the companies that state owns, it is defined as “a specific form of ownership outlined in the Russian federal law on non-profit organizations” (Blakkisrud and Fjærtøft, 2009:2). Each state corporation is found by a specific law which defines its characteristics. Their supervisory board is appointed by state, compulsory supervision is not made to them and they are not dependent to the law on bankruptcy (Blakkisrud and Fjærtøft, 2009:2). They are not supposed to provide a surplus to the state, surplus is kept in themselves. The Deposit Insurance Agency, the Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs (Vneshekonombank), Rosnano, The Housing and Municipal Services Restructuring Fund (FSR ZhKKh), Rostekhnologii, Rosatom are other state corporations that were established during presidency of Vladimir Putin (Blakkisrud and Fjærtøft, 2009:5-10).

State corporations have an access to the state funds yet they are not obliged to issue “detailed annual reports” (Ortung, 2014:6). Accountability and transparency issues are questioned because of this fact. Navalny states that Olimpstroy “is even less transparent than companies in [Russia’s] state-owned sector” (Sochi Winter Olympics: activist alleges cost overruns and conflicts of interest, 2014).

³⁵ Russia is on the 119th rank by 29 score (among 168 countries) in Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index 2015 (Table of Results: Corruption Perceptions Index 2015, n.d.). Countries are scored from 0 (“highly corrupt”) to 100 (“very clean”) and Russia’s scores were 27-28-28 in 2014, 2013 and 2012 (Table of Results: Corruption Perceptions Index 2015, n.d.).

the Sochi Olympics still holds the record of the Olympics. When the cost of the Games that were organized in the recent years is examined (the London 2012 Olympics' cost was around 12 billion dollars, the Rio Summer Olympics and the PyeongChang Winter Olympics' cost was approximately 13 billion dollars), the level of cost can be comprehended.

The main reason of the escalation in the costs of the Sochi Olympics was discussed as the corruption and bribery. Opposition figures Boris Nemtsov (former deputy prime minister) and Leonid Martynyuk indicated in their reports, interviews and a press release: "According to the worldwide average for price increases, the cost of the Sochi Olympics should be \$24bn (double the \$12bn announced by Mr Putin). The rest – \$26bn – is embezzlement and kickbacks," (Luhn, 2013). Nemtstov and Martynyuk pointed out that, the cost of the road constructed between the mountain and coastal clusters of Olympic venues of Sochi was higher than NASA's Mars rover mission "Curiosity", President Putin's three old friends (Vladimir Yakunin, Arkady Rotenberg and Gennady Timchenko) held contracts worth 15 billion US dollars, Krasnador governor spent millions of dollars on a personal helicopter, and all of these "assertions" were released in international news sources (Luhn, 2013; and Seddon, 2014). Remarkably, a senior IOC member Gian Franco Kasper indicated that one-third of the expenditure was made due to corruption, and "contracts were given to a 'construction mafia' of businessmen closely linked to the Kremlin and President Vladimir Putin." (IOC official: Sochi rife with corruption, 2014).

The results of the Opinion Poll that was held on June 2013 by Levada Center show that most of the Russian public questions the spending for the Sochi Olympics. To the question of "What Is, In Your Opinion, the Explanation for the Fact That Russia Spent More on the Preparations for the Olympic Games Than Any Other

Country?”, 47 percent of the respondents gave the answer of “a high level of corruption: a significant part of the funds allocated to preparing the Games was squandered and stolen”, and 34 percent replied the question by “greed and dishonesty of the companies responsible for construction” (Opinion Poll, 2014:13). The question of “Are the Funds Allocated from the State Budget for the Olympic Games in Sochi Being Spent Effectively?” was replied as “ineffectively” by 35 percent of the respondents, “completely ineffectively” by 11 percent and “funds are simply being stolen” by 19 percent (Opinion Poll, 2014:14).

Though in several cases (such as the constructions of Fisht Olympic Stadium, Sanki Sliding Center and Media Centre) criminal charges and investigations took place, they were not submitted to the court or investigation results of several cases (as opened case to Ingeokom by the Investigative Division in Sochi) were not transmitted (The Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014:36, 37, 50, 70).

A significant fact about corruption is the different point of views of the public and officials. President Putin argued that there was not serious corruption in Sochi (Navalni raporu: "Soçi olimpiyatlarında kim, ne kadar yolsuzluk yaptı?", 2014), and officials argued that escalation of the costs stemmed from the enormous level of the constructions in “the biggest building site on the planet.” (in Putin’s terms) (Myers, 2014). Increasing prices, hidden costs and the difficulty of specifying the construction costs were also pointed out by the officials (Soçi olimpiyatı inşaat masrafları ikiye katlandı, 2011). In addition to them, unexpected events like floods and storms in Sochi also increased the cost.

Another critical issue related with corruption is state-sponsored doping in the Sochi Olympics. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) announced that doping was supported by the Russian state, and even that forgery on documents was made

by the Ministry of Sport during the Sochi Olympics (Rusya 2018 Kış Olimpiyat Oyunları'ndan 'doping gerekçesiyle' men edildi, 2017). After 17 months of investigations, it was revealed that more than 1.000 Russian athletes used doping between the years 2011 and 2015, and for the first time in Olympic history a National Olympic Committee was banned from the Games, and Russian athletes who did not use doping competed under the Olympic flag (Rusya 2018 Kış Olimpiyat Oyunları'ndan 'doping gerekçesiyle' men edildi, 2017).

4.4.3 “White elephants” in Sochi

Remarkably, the issue of “white elephant” is on the agenda of Sochi, too. Anatoly Pakhomov, Mayor of Sochi, indicated that “We were left with 100 facilities of post-Olympic legacy, but they are not facilities for the city, like ice palaces. They are infrastructure. And infrastructure, of course, doesn't bring in money, it costs to maintain” (Sochi's showcase Olympic venues draining city resources says mayor, 2015). Empty venues, abandoned and damaged venues, and rail line (that cost \$8.5 billion) that “barely” runs to the mountains (Sochi's showcase Olympic venues draining city resources says mayor, 2015; Arthur, 2015) are considered as “white elephants” of Sochi.

Shayba Arena is one of the rare Olympic constructions that were funded by private sector (Shayba arena, n.d.). Significantly, UGMK-Holding granted this hockey arena to Olimpstroy (Shayba arena, n.d.). When the issue is examined in “white elephant context” (whether it was for the sake of charity or giving responsibility of maintaining costs to the state) this fact is questionable. This arena was planned to be transported to another city, in addition to \$20 million, a million dollars would be spent to maintain and operate it (Shayba arena, n.d.).

4.4.4 Displacements of Sochi

As seen in the previous host cities of the Games, many people were evicted from their homes for the sake of the Sochi Games. Human Rights Watch indicates that around 2.000 families were resettled in Sochi (Russia's Olympian Abuses, 2013). In some cases notification for the evacuation was made a few hours ago, after the evacuations some of them could not receive fair compensation and what was worse some could not get any compensation (Berg, 2011; Russia's Olympian Abuses, 2013). According to Human Rights Watch, "transparent" repayment for losses was not provided either (West, 2014). Though officials argued that proper compensations were provided, it was valid for citizens who could "prove ownership" (Berg, 2011).

In 2008, residents of the Nizhneimeretinsky Bukhta wrote an open letter to appeal the forced evictions (Sochi Residents Speak Out Against Forced Evictions, 2008). However, despite their legal rights and official rules, many Sochi residents were wronged. Difficulties in legally taking property rights after privatization in post-Soviet era also resulted in being wronged of some residents (West, 2014). Human Rights Watch also notified the International Olympic Committee regarding Olympic constructions' devastations in Akhshtyr in 2009, the Sochi 2014 Organizing Committee defended that water supply problem was settled although it was not (Luhn, 2014). Furthermore, following the evictions the welfare level of the people declined due to the loss of agricultural lands and/or income, structural problems and the lack of a proper heating system in places where they were settled (West, 2014).

Many construction-related protests were held by residents of Sochi. On 6 December 2009, around 500 residents demonstrated against "threats of evictions", lack of official information regarding relocation conditions and offered compensations below the market value (Inhabitants threatened with with eviction in

Sochi Region stage a protest, 2009). In another demonstration, evicted residents protested the unfulfilled promises in 2011 (Evlerini kaybeden Soçi'liler eylem yaptı, 2011). Additionally, in his one-person protest, Andrey Martnov said that a public-affiliated real estate company cheated him with forged documents (Sochi Kış Olimpiyatları mağduru, 2013).

4.4.5 Olympic workers

Poor conditions in construction yards can be considered as one of the dark sides of the Sochi Olympics. According to the official statistics, 71 accidents occurred only between 2009 and 2011 (Snow in Sochi is tainted with workers' blood, 2014). Ambet Yuson, General Secretary of the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) indicated that more than 60 workers died in constructions of the Sochi Games (Snow in Sochi is tainted with workers' blood, 2014).³⁶ In front of the Russian Consulate General in Geneva, casualties and poor working conditions in Sochi were protested in 2014, and worries regarding the conditions of the 2017 Confederations Cup and the 2018 World Cup were also mentioned in the protest (Tudor, 2014).

A report by Human Rights Watch points out that a vast number of wages were not paid to the workers, some wages were not fully paid or postponed, identity documents (work permits and passports) were illegally held, employment contracts were not properly provided, terms of contracts were not respected, necessary time off was not provided to workers, laborers were forced to work excessive hours, houses that were provided by the employers were overcrowded, insufficient meals were

³⁶ When lack of fatal accident in constructions of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games (that was accepted as "the safest and most ethical Games ever") is considered, the level of poor conditions can be better seen (Tudor, 2014).

provided by the employers, and migrant workers who protested³⁷ against these abuses were expelled from Russia (Human Rights Watch, 2013:1). Human Rights Watch sent many letters to the necessary corporation and institutions, but some were not responded and some responses (as Olimpstoi's response) defended that proper inspections were made and there were few cases of abuse which were resolved (like not taking full wage) (Human Rights Watch, 2013:1).

Though migrant workers³⁸ were particularly aggrieved due to the expulsions and difficulty in their taking legal action, Russian workers were also abused, and Roman Kuznetsov who sewed his mouth to protest not being paid wages for two months is a symbolic example of the exploitation of the Russian workers (Russia: Sochi worker sews mouth shut in pay protest- video, 2013).

Discussion

Sochi, the tourism center and health resort of the Soviet Union was transformed (without any investment in health industry) into an international city. As pointed out in this chapter, Sochi's recreation was already aimed much before the bid process, and even if the 2014 Winter Games and Paralympic Games were not hosted, investments (though not in this "legitimized" enormous level) to the city would have been implemented. If the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics is considered as a matroshka it may seem as the biggest doll that contains other smaller dolls, but it would not be wrong to say that Sochi Project is the biggest doll and contains the Olympic Games within.

³⁷ Sequence of events in Appendix C may be checked to see examples.

³⁸ It must be added that many foreign workers tried to work after entering Russia with tourist visas and this facilitated abuses (especially made by subcontractors).

After the Games, a lot of effort was put for hosting many national and international events in Sochi. After the annexation of Crimea, Russia introduced a “patriotic holiday” in Crimea and gave an official permit for gambling (which was given to Sochi too). Due to these facts, expensive holiday costs in Sochi and distance, to what extent Sochi may keep “temporary tourist boom” in the post-Games period is questionable.

As pointed out in this part, many common points of mega events including Olympics were seen in Sochi too. Some debated issues in Russia such as lack of accountability, corruption and implementation of “fait accompli” may be seen in the construction experience in Sochi. Due to the limitations environmentalist issues were not indicated in this thesis, yet it might be said that many constructions were initiated and/or made without proper environment reports, and there were different point of views of Russian officials and the IOC, and the environmentalists regarding the environmentalist costs of the constructions.

The construction process of Sochi was much longer than officially seven years, and this process may be maintained by several make-ups. Several international events will take place in Sochi in following years, magnitudes of “white elephants” may not draw the attention due to this, but it is a fact that there are “white elephants” and they already cost a great deal and will continue to cost.

Occasionally, states hesitate to host the Olympics because of the economic costs. This may result from the global economic conditions (such as the period after the Great Depression of 1929) or costly Games like the Montreal Olympics. Sweden’s Stockholm, Poland’s Krakow, Ukraine’s Lviv, Switzerland’s St Moritz, Germany’s Munich withdrew their bids for the 2022 Winter Olympics (Gibson, 2014). Subsequently, Hamburg (Germany), Boston (The United States), Budapest

(Hungary) and Rome (Italy) withdrew from candidate status for the 2024 Summer Olympics (Bernardi, 2017). Lastly, bidding process of the 2026 Winter Olympics is argued as “the most serious bidding crisis” in the Olympic history (Grohmann, 2018). Calgary of Canada, Sion of Switzerland, Graz of Austria and Sapporo of Japan withdrew their bids, and remaining candidates Sweden and Italy still make an effort for local and governmental supports (Grohmann, 2018). Thus, in recent years the IOC faces with withdrawals of biddings, and it is a fact that huge cost of the Sochi Olympics was also a factor on this Olympic actuality.

State corporations’ role, creation of a city with semi-tropical climate for the Winter Olympics and the amount of expenses were particular to the Sochi case. Nevertheless, general characteristics of the other mega events and the Olympics in general, such as economic burden on state budget, unpredictable escalation of the costs, “white elephants”, accountability issue and displacements were dominant in the Sochi Olympics.

CHAPTER 5

THE SOCHI GAMES: PROTESTS AND CAMPAIGNS

In this part, I portrayed group protests and campaigns that were against the Sochi Olympics with specific motivations (rather than the economic ones); the Circassian Campaign of “No Sochi 2014”, the LGBT campaigns and protests of Pussy Riot. Lastly, I examined terrorist groups’ threats and Sochi’s experience in security. I argued that groups used the Olympics to announce their matters to the world, politicization in the Sochi Olympics at group level’s repercussions were much stronger than the other levels’, and change in the Olympic Charter after the protests is the best demonstration of this argument. In addition to that, the campaigns which were portrayed in this section were peculiar to the Sochi Olympics and they showed that the Olympics can be effectively used as magnifying glass to analyze the domestic politics of the host state.

5.1 The Circassian Campaign of “No Sochi 2014”

The Circassian are the indigenous people of the northern Caucasus. Now the majority of the Circassian live in different countries³⁹ due to their exile after the Russo-Circassian War and approval of “Regulations on the Settlement of the Black Sea Region” (General Information, n.d.). The year 2014 was the 150th anniversary of the defeat of the Circassian by the Russian Empire under the rule of Tsar Alexander II after a 101-year-long war (Zhemukhov, 2012). Sochi was “the last capital of independent Circassia” between 1861 and 1864, and the place where the last battles

³⁹ Today, the majority of the Circassian live in Turkey, Jordan, Syria and Israel. According to the 2010 census, the number of the Circassian population in Russia is 718.727, whilst estimated number in Turkey is between 2-3 million (Çerkesler, n.d.).

of the war were made (Zhemukhov, 2012). The Circassian were deported⁴⁰ from Sochi's ports to the Ottoman Empire, and Russian troops celebrated their victory in 1864. The number of those forced to leave Circassia is estimated to be more than one million five hundred thousand people under inhumane conditions and a humanitarian tragedy (1864-2014 Genocide Olympics, n.d.). Due to this historical background, the time and place of the Sochi Olympics were harshly criticized, and some Circassians even argued that the Sochi Olympics were “as sensitive as hosting a sporting competition on the grounds of the Nazi death camp Auschwitz” (Ferris-Rotman, 2010).

The Circassian sent a letter regarding the Circassian exile to the IOC before the election of the host city in 2007, and the IOC only indicated that they would launch a thorough investigation in the letter of response (Londra Olimpiyatlarında Soçi Protestosu, 2012). The Circassian Campaign of “No Sochi 2014”⁴¹ (Logo of the campaign and anti-mascot are in Figure 12 and Figure 13.) started when Sochi was elected as the host city.



Figure 12 Logo of the Circassian Campaign of “No Sochi 2014”

Source: <http://www.thesochiproject.org/en/chapters/always-restive/> (Hornstra and Bruggen, n.d.)

Figure 13 Aydan Çelik's anti-mascot for the Sochi 2014 Olympics

Source: <http://www.cerkes.org.tr/soci-olimpiyati-anti-maskot-yarismasi-sonuclandi> (Soçi Olimpiyatı Anti-Maskot Yarışması Sonuçlandı, 2012)

⁴⁰ It was named as “the Circassian Exile” or “the Great Circassian Immigration” as well.

⁴¹ Campaigns were mainly made through website of “nosochi2014.com”, the website reopened after remaining closed for a long period because of being hacked.

The Circassians made protests in the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics (with the slogan of "No Olympics on stolen Native land!") and the London 2012 Summer Olympics (Hildebrandt, 2012). However, ideas and acts of the Circassian groups differed regarding their stance toward the Games. Zhemukhov states that:

Nationalists demand unconditional cancelation of the 2014 Olympics.

Sovereignists are against the Olympics but want to use them to spread information about the Circassian issue. Centrists offer their own World Circassian Games as an alternative to the Sochi Olympics, which they want to use to spread information as well. Culturalists want Circassian elements to be included in the Olympics and support them on that condition.

Accommodationists support the Olympics unconditionally and see them as an opportunity for development of the economy in the Circassian republics.

(2012)

It might be argued that whereas diaspora groups were pioneers in campaigns against the Sochi Olympics, and protests were made in different countries in front of the Russian Consulates and the European Parliament,⁴² local groups' focus was mainly on preserving their society and culture. The meeting of the Russian authorities and Circassians from different countries in 2013 shows that there were different viewpoints among the diaspora. More than 50 Circassians from Turkey, Jordan, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Palestine and Germany met the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dimitry Kozak and Mayor of Krasnodar Aleksandr Tkaçev, and indicated that they would have not stood against

⁴² Sources to see several examples; protests in Turkey, the United States of America and Belgium: (Çerkesler Soçi Olimpiyatlarını Protesto Etti, 2014), (21 x 21.00 Eylemi ABD'de de Gerçekleştirildi, 2013), (AP'nda Biraraya gelen Çerkeslerden 2014 Kış Olimpiyatlarına Tepki, 2012).

the Olympics on the condition that the Circassian had been introduced in the Games as “an ethnic component” of Russia (Koçyiğit, 2014). Moreover, Head of the World Circassian Association Hauti Sohrokov, and Muhdin Çermit, Former Vice Chairman of the World Circassian Association, deputy of Adygea Parliament who was appointed as deputy governor of Krasnador region indicated their support to the Sochi Olympics (Soçi-2014 Çerkesleri böldü, 2013).

It must be underlined that different stance of the Circassian who live in Russia might be shaped with the domestic politics, political and social pressures as well. It is argued that though there are disagreements regarding their reasons, it is a fact that Circassian activists and young people face pressures, proceedings, custody or explicit violence (Tashev, 2017). Asker Sokht, a Circassian community leader, was arrested with the charge of planning anti-Olympics protests in Sochi and creating outrage in society on February 2014 (Russia arrests Circassian leader for anti-Sochi protests, 2014). Furthermore, a group of Circassian activists organized protest called “action of silence” in the Nalchik of the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria. In the interviews Andzor Akhokhov indicated that, the Circassian organizations stated that they were not related with the protest, and printing houses in Nalchik did not accept to print posters for the protest (Bzegezheva, 2014). During the protest many activists were detained and Andzor Akhokhov, who was the organizer of the protest, even indicated that some protestors were beaten by the police and forced to accept some accusations, and his social media accounts were hacked after he was released (Bzegezheva, 2014). Circassian activists from different countries published a notice of support, and condemned the continued pressures on Akhokhov after the protest (Andzor Ahahov Yalnız Değildir! - Андзор Ахохов - ты не один!, 2014; Andzor Ahohov’a, Çerkes Aktivistlerden Uluslararası Destek, 2014).

The 1864 events in Sochi were recognized as “genocide”⁴³ only by the parliaments of Adygea (in 1996), Abkhazia (in 1997), Kabardino-Balkaria (in 1992) and lastly Georgia in 2011 (Zhemukhov, 2012). In addition to this, Bill Pascrell who was a New Jersey congressman, submitted a “Statement of Support for the Circassian People” to the Congress of the United States on 29 January 2014 (Statement of Support for Circassians to US Congress, n.d.). The Russian Federation was called to recognize what happened in 1864 as “genocide”, allowing the Circassian to return to their ancestral lands and ending “de facto quotas” in civil service (Olympics divide Sochi's Indigenous Circassians, 2014). However, calls remained unanswered in the long-established policy framework. In the political history of Russia, the closest statement to an apology was President Boris Yeltsin’s statement on 18 May 1994: “Circassian resistance to the tsarist forces (in the 19th century) was legitimate” (Georgia calls Circassian Killings Genocide, 2011). However, recognition has been never on the agenda of the Russian governments, and President Putin stated that the Circassian protests abroad were tool for campaign against global influence of Russia (Olympics divide Sochi's Indigenous Circassians, 2014). Thus, Circassian elements were not specifically included in the Opening Ceremony of the Sochi Olympics, torch relay and significant speeches like those in

⁴³ According to the 1948 “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide” that codifies the “genocide” and accepts it as a crime under international law, there must be “mental” and “physical element” to define a case as genocide. Physical element contains “killing members of the group”, “causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group”, “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”, “imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group”, “forcibly transferring children of the group to another group” (Genocide, n.d.). Mental element contains “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such” (Genocide, n.d.). The Convention states that disputes regarding the “intention” must be addressed to the International Court of Justice (When to refer to a situation as “genocide”, n.d.). Few cases, mass killings in Rwanda (1994) and Srebrenica of Bosnia (1995) were defined as “genocide” by international judicial bodies (When to refer to a situation as “genocide”, n.d.).

the Opening Ceremony or 119th IOC session, however a “Circassian House” that exhibits cultural elements was located in Sochi Olympic Park.

Protests by minority groups were held in many Olympic host states. For instance, the Beijing 2008 Olympics were labeled as “Genocide Olympics” by some sources due to China’s politics in Darfur.⁴⁴ In addition to that, China was harshly criticized due to its minority politics, and Tibetan, Uighurs protestors and demonstrators from Sudan, Burma and Zimbabwe protested in different countries outside of the Chinese embassies (Bingham, 2008). Besides, Aboriginal groups installed several Olympic protest campaigns against the Sydney 2000 Olympics to call international attention to the problem of racism and misguided policies of assimilations (Aborigines target Olympics, 2000). However, these campaigns did not bring the accusation of “genocide”, which was made by the local people of the host state of the Olympics with a reference to a historical case. In this respect, the Circassian Campaign is unique in the history of the Olympics.

Mainly, there were different point of views and practices among the local minority and diaspora groups of ethnic groups in the other Olympic cases as well. An example of this is the divergence in Aboriginal Canadians regarding the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. Whilst some groups preferred to be involved in preparations (including construction contracts) and to show their culture, some pursued the campaign of "No Olympics on Stolen Native Land." (Yanchyk, 2010).

Thus, though the Circassian protests and calls did not have a broad repercussion on the agenda of the politicians in general, international media gave

⁴⁴ In an opinion column of the Wall Street Journal which was published in 2007, political activist and United Nations goodwill ambassador Mia Farrow popularized the slogan of “Genocide Olympics” (Bond, 2007). Supplying arms and supporting the Sudanese government in spite of the atrocities of 2004 that resulted with 200.000 people’s death and more than 2.5 million people’s displacement were criticized in the campaigns (Bond, 2007).

wide coverage to the calls and the historical background of the Circassian exodus, and so the Circassian Case became much better known. Moreover, despite the fact that the IOC announced to conduct an investigation regarding the Circassian Case in Sochi, it did not give an official response or make a written statement, this also indicates the IOC's constant strategy to keep the Games away from the politics and maintain the Olympics.

5.2 The LGBT Campaigns

Debates on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights were triggered after a law's approval in Russia. The federal law "for the Purpose of Protecting Children from Information Advocating for a Denial of Traditional Family Values", which was called the "Gay Propaganda Law" was approved by the State Duma on 11 June 2013, and after the approval of the Federal House, it was signed by President Putin (Putin signs 'gay propaganda' ban and law criminalizing insult of religious feelings, 2013). The law bans distribution of information regarding "non-traditional relationships"⁴⁵ to minors via internet, media or advertisement. Violation leads to penalties, prison sentences and deportation for foreigners, and suspension of activities for the organizations (Putin signs 'gay propaganda' ban and law criminalizing insult of religious feelings, 2013).

Approval of the law relitigated the issue of violation of the LGBT rights,⁴⁶ and became one of the hot topics of the Sochi Olympics. A boycott was even offered.

⁴⁵ Whilst the "non-traditional" relationship was unofficially defined as "that cannot lead to the production of offspring", definition of propaganda left unclear (Gay rights in Russia: Facts and Myths, 2013).

⁴⁶ The local parliament of Moscow already banned the "gay demonstrations" in 2011 and 2012 and such demonstrations have been allowed to be held in St. Petersburg "under the guise of human rights demonstrations". In addition to these, the protests of the LGBT members may be countered by the members of right-wing and religious movements (Gay rights in Russia: Facts and Myths, 2013).

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) indicated that the law can encourage homophobia and Russia violated the European Convention Article 10 on human rights on freedom expression and Article 14 on prohibition of discrimination, and it ordered Russia to pay 43.000 Euros (Rankin, 2017).

Some protestors compared the Sochi Olympics with the Berlin 1936 Summer Olympics which was called as “the Nazi Games” and “the Hitler Games” as well, and argued that the IOC’s stance has not changed in time and violation the Olympic Charter was ignored on one occasion (Sturgess, 2014). Organization of All Out launched its campaign 200 days before the Opening Ceremony of the Sochi Olympics, gathered more than 322.000 signatures in the campaign, and sent those signatures to the IOC (Going All Out during the Sochi Olympics, n.d.). The IOC met the LGBT rights group members after receiving the biggest petition in its history, this meeting was also the first among Olympic history. On September 2013, “demonstration of solidarity and love” was made in more than 30 cities and 20 countries in different states (Going All Out during the Sochi Olympics, n.d.). An example to the demonstrations is given in Figure 14.



Figure 14 London protests against the LGBT politics of Russia (Photograph: Lefteris Pitarakis/AP)
Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2013/aug/28/sochi-winter-olympics-anti-gay-law>
(Team GB to go to Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics despite Russia's anti-gay law, 2013).

Furthermore, surveys on the Russian public opinion show that a huge majority of the Russian public approves the law. Pew Research Center’s survey that was held in 39 countries with 37.653 respondents in 2013 indicates that 74 percent of the Russian public thinks that homosexuality should not be accepted, homosexuality is more acceptable in the Western countries, and there is a global division on homosexuality (Global divide on homosexuality, 2013). Thus, it might be argued that difference of public opinions regarding this issue also shows the divergence between “the West” and Russia.

More than 150.000 members of the All Out called Olympic sponsors to take action against the law, and thus many non-governmental organizations, groups and corporations including Olympic sponsors like Google, Coca Cola, Protector & Gamble, McDonald's, AT&T stated their support to the Russian LGBT community and critiques to the law (Going All Out during the Sochi Olympics, n.d.; Google sends not-so-subtle message to Russia with Olympic rainbow logo, 2014). Google even published a rainbow "doodle" with a quotation from the Olympic Charter:

The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of a kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play. (Leslie and Tilley, 2014)

Another campaign addressed to Jacques Rogge who was the President of the IOC was initiated in Change.org, which is a petition website, and reached more than 175.000 signature. (International Olympic Committee (IOC): Strip Sochi of the 2014 Winter Games, n.d.)

Many Olympic athletes such as lesbian snowboarder Cheryl Maas showed solidarity before and during the Games.⁴⁷ However, regarding critiques and challenges President Putin indicated that the Games must be only about sports not politics (Russian LGBT activists arrested on first day of Sochi games, 2014).

⁴⁷ After a run Cheryl Maas pointed her rainbow and unicorn figured glove to cameras, and this gesture was accepted as "the first apparent televised statement of support for LGBT rights" in the Sochi Games (Ziller, 2014). Nevertheless, all rainbow figures in clothes and equipment of the Olympic athletes cannot be interpreted as a protest or sign of solidarity. For instance, German delegation's colorful uniforms in the Sochi Olympics were speculated as a "silent protest" to anti-propaganda law, but the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) rejected such speculations, and General Director of the DOCB Michael Vesper stated that "This is just a fashionable jacket." (Nichols, 2013). Similarly, rainbow-colored gloves of the Greek delegation were also submitted as "message of support" to the LGBT community (Olympic mix-up: 'Greece stands up for gay rights in Sochi with rainbow gloves?', 2014).

Furthermore, Minister of Sport Vitaly Mutko pointed out that gay athletes were not forbidden to come to Sochi but they would be “held accountable” if they made propaganda (Leslie and Tilley, 2014).⁴⁸

In Olympic history, the first Olympics Pride House for LGBT athletes was opened at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and there were Pride Houses at London 2012 and Rio 2016 as well. Though LGBT communities tried to open a Pride House, it was rejected and the Ministry of Justice banned the organization of a Pride House at the Sochi Winter Games (Ford, 2012). Following this decision, Russian Open Games, with the slogan of “The First LGBT Sport Open Games”, was planned by the Russian LGBT Sport Federation, and competitions in eight disciplines were held between 26 February and 2 March 2014 (Welcome to the website of Russian Open Games, n.d.).

Holding gay parades in Sochi was also planned, yet due to the presidential decree that prohibits public demonstrations in Olympic places, they could not be realized.⁴⁹ Besides, on the Opening Day of the Sochi Olympics, gay activists organized protests in Moscow and Saint Petersburg and 14 activists were detained (Russian LGBT activists arrested on first day of Sochi games, 2014). Moreover, transgender activist Vladimir Luxuria went to Shayba Arena with a rainbow colored-headress and the police hustled her off, and after holding banner saying “Gay is Okay” she was detained (Lally, 2014). Luxuria’s detention was compared with

⁴⁸ Indeed, it was realized during the Sochi Olympics. Canadian bobsledder Justin Kripps and his four teammates posted a video in their underwear and video became popular. Subsequently Kripps’ website was blocked with a warning that refers to the Russian legislation. (Canadian bobsledder’s website ‘censored’ in Russia, 2014).

⁴⁹ Moreover, in his interview to BBC, Mayor of Sochi Anatoliy Pakhomov indicated that homosexuality is not accepted in Caucasia and there are not gay people in Sochi. He also stated that homosexual people were welcome at the Sochi Olympics on condition that they respect the law and do not impose homosexuality (Sochi 2014: No gay people in city, says mayor, 2014).

detention of an Italian protestor, Vincenzo Francone⁵⁰ who protested anti-gay laws during the Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics (Lally, 2014).

The LGBT rights, foundation of the pride houses and organization of the gay parades were on the agenda in the former Olympic Games. However, with the Sochi Olympics the LGBT rights were brought to the official speeches in the Games and agenda of the IOC for the first time in Olympic history. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who attended the Opening Ceremony, stated that “Many professional athletes, gay and straight, are speaking out against prejudice. We must all raise our voices against attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex people. We must oppose the arrests, imprisonments and discriminatory restrictions they face.” (Russian LGBT activists arrested on first day of Sochi games, 2014).

At the end, a petition campaign “Principle 6” (with the ally of All Out, Olympians, Athlete Ally and GLAAD) which called for the Olympics not to be held by countries with discriminatory laws, succeeded and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that the Committee will make an anti-discriminatory contract as a part of the treaty that will be signed with the next host countries (Going All Out during the Sochi Olympics, n. d.; Homofobik Ülkeler Olimpiyatlara Ev Sahipliği Yapamayacak, 2014). Anti-discrimination clause based on Principle 6 was introduced to the host city contract on September 2014, and the IOC sent official information letters to bidders for the 2022 Winter Olympic Games⁵¹ (Gibson, 2014).

⁵⁰ As a gay activist Vincenzo Francone attempted to handcuff himself into a barrier in Red Square to protest the Soviet law that bans homosexuality, penalizes homosexuality of men with up to five years-prisonment and hospitalize of gay women in mental hospitals (Lally, 2014).

⁵¹ Moreover, the IOC announced new rules for transgender athletes after “IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism” that was held in 2015 (IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism, 2015). With these rules, condition of gender reassignment surgery was removed. It was announced that female-to-male athletes could compete in the male

One of the “Fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter”, Principle 6, was revised to read:

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Olympic Charter shall be secured without discrimination of any kind, such as race, color, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. (Olympic Charter, 2015)

Thus, in spite of the LGBT protests and international pressures the debated law was not repealed and restrictions remained. However, crucially protests created awareness regarding the LGBT rights in Russia. The revisions in the Olympic Charter and host city contracts are the most significant fruits of the LGBT community’s labor. What is certain that, thanks to the LGBT protests and the IOC’s stance after the Sochi Olympics, states that are willing to host the Olympics will think twice on their discriminatory politics and practices. Non-discrimination principle in host city contract may also bring legal amendments in the host states. If the revisions are implemented carefully, the Olympic Case may increase pressures on the host cities of the other mega sport events.

5.3 Pussy Riot Protests

Pussy Riot is a punk group that became famous with its anti-Putin protests, colorful dresses and balaclavas. The group had a place in the Sochi debates with a specific amnesty of the arrested members and performance in Sochi.

category without any restriction, and male-to-female athletes could compete under several conditions (IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism, 2015).

Pussy Riot was formed by members of group Voina⁵² (meaning “war” in Russian) in 2011. Voina was known for attention-grabbing protests such as painting a 60-metre penis on Liteyny Bridge of Saint Petersburg in front of the head office of the Federal Security Service in 2010, projecting a 120-foot-high skull-and-crossbones symbol onto the Russian White House in 2008, burning a police car on New Year’s Eve in 2011, filming group sex in the Moscow State Museum of Biology on the day before the presidential elections in 2008, releasing 3.000 cockroaches in the Moscow Tagansky courthouse to protest the trial of the artists of the “Forbidden Art” exhibition in 2010, the symbolic hanging two homosexuals and three Central Asian laborers in a store in 2008, and protest of “chicken in vagina”⁵³ in a supermarket in 2010 (Rutland, 2014; Sturdee, 2011; Nemtsova, 2012; and Walker, 2014).

Pussy Riot’s “Punk prayer” performance in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior⁵⁴ in 2012 became one of the most controversial cases in Russia and symbol of divergence between Russia and “the West”.⁵⁵ After the protest three members of the

⁵² Voina was defined as “an underground art group” or “art terrorist group” in different sources (Rutland, 2014; and Sturdee, 2011).

⁵³ During the Sochi protest, Sochi residents criticized Pussy Riot and tried to give chicken to group members with a reference to this protest (Pussy Riot Gets Whipped in Sochi, 2014).

⁵⁴ Cathedral of Christ the Savior was constructed in 1883 in memory of victory against Napoleon, later it was pulled down during the Stalin era. It was reconstructed in 1997 and became the symbol of rebirth of the Orthodox Church (Yapici, 2016:182).

⁵⁵ Officers and residents’ reactions to Pussy Riot and press during the intervention to the Sochi protest are remarkable. Statements such as “This is not America here”, “These scumbags are interfering with the Olympics. You know what normal people are doing right now? They are at the stadium!”, “We love our country and we are against this chaos” show the difference of opinion regarding the Pussy Riot (Pussy Riot Gets Whipped in Sochi, 2014).

Opinion polls show that the Russian public disapproves acts of Pussy Riot. For instance, in the research of Levada Analytical Center, 2012-2013 Russian Public Opinion, 41 percent of the 1.600 respondents answered the question of “What was essentially Pussy Riot’s gig at Moscow’s Christ the Savior Cathedral?” with “simple hooliganism” and 19 percent of participants responded with “A focused outburst against the Orthodoxy and the Church” (Russian Public Opinion 2012-2013, 2013:122).

group Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich were sentenced to two years prison under the charge of “hooliganism motivated by religious hatred”. On October 2012, Samutsevich was released on probation (Pussy Riot Trial: Russian Denounces West’s Criticism, 2012; Pussy Riot: The story so far, 2013). The trial was criticized as a violation of human rights and the right of expression, and balaclavas became a symbol of solidarity. However, Russian officials said that “foreign criticism” was made by political motivations and there were components of a “clash of civilizations” (Pussy Riot Trial: Russian Denounces West’s Criticism, 2012; Pussy Riot: The story so far, 2013).

The group’s members, Maria Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova⁵⁶ were released with amnesty on 23 December 2013. This amnesty was announced for the prisoners who were sentenced to a maximum of five years, minors, the handicapped within the first and the second groups, the pregnant, women over the age of 55, men over the age of 60, mothers of the minor, those affected from the Chernobyl disaster, military men and the policemen (Putin’den Hodorkovski'ye af, 2013). The amnesty was announced on the Constitution’s 20th anniversary, and approximately seventy thousand prisoners including 28 Greenpeace activists and two journalists who were arrested during an environmentalist protest on an oil platform benefited from the Amnesty (Rusya Greenpeace eylemcilerini affediyor, 2013). Besides, former oligarch and opponent Mikhail Khodorkovsky who was imprisoned on the charge of fraud and tax evasion was also amnestied with a specific bylaw due to the “humanitarian reasons” (his mother’s cancer was given as a reason) (Putin’den

⁵⁶ On February 2014, six member of the group wrote an open letter and announced that Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova must not be expressed as the members of Pussy Riot since they abandoned group’s ideals and aims (Pussy Riot whipped at Sochi Games by Cossacks, 2014).

Hodorkovski'ye af, 2013). It was argued that these amnesties were the “pre-Olympic amnesty” or “Olympic amnesty” and a public relations campaign.

After three members of the group including Maria Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova arrived to Sochi, they were detained on the charge of theft. Three days later they were released and said that they were interrogated by the police and the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB) (Oliphant, 2014).

On 19 February 2014 Pussy Riot released a video “Putin will teach you how to love the Motherland” (Putin nauchit tebya lyubit' rodinu) on YouTube. The first part of the song contains critiques of the Sochi Olympics:

\$50 billion and a rainbow ray / Rodnina and Kabayeva will pass you the torch / They'll teach you to submit and cry in the camps Fireworks for the bosses. / Hail, Duce! Sochi is blocked, / Olympus is under surveillance / Special forces, weapons, crowds of cops / FSB — argument, Interior Ministry — Argument / On [state-owned] Channel 1 — applause / Putin will teach you to love the Motherland. (Putin nauchit tebya lyubit' rodinu, 2014)

Pussy Riot's music video was not seen as an Olympic criticism by some, it was regarded only as a part of the critiques of Putin's rule and Russian politics, however it obviously contains an anti-Olympic message as well. As seen in the lyrics, the song criticizes overspending for the Olympics, selection of the torchbearers,⁵⁷ excessive security in the Sochi Olympics and use of the Games as a

⁵⁷ Irina Rodnina is figure skater and Olympic gold medalist. She was elected to the State Duma from the United Russia Party (Party of President Putin) in 2008. Her sharing a photo of USA President and Mrs. Obama with banana on Twitter sparked racism debate in 2013 (Walker, 2013).

Alina Kabayeva is rhythmic gymnast and Olympic gold-medalist. She was also elected to the Parliament from the United Russia Party in 2011. Since the divorce of President Putin in 2013, it was rumored that Kabayeva was secret girlfriend of Putin and even they have two children (Russian Olympic Gold Medalist Kabaeva Requests Early State Duma Departure, 2014).

tool for loyalty of the public and sport-nationalism. On the video, Olympic rings and Olympic mascots are also seen (see Figure 15), and this was criticized by the IOC. The IOC Spokesman Mark Adams indicated that “That is what we have always said... We urge people and ask that the Olympics is not used as a platform for people to express political views” (IOC against use of Olympic rings in Pussy Riot video, 2014).

During the video shoot on 19 February 2014, Cossacks⁵⁸ intervened among members of the group with whips and pepper spray (see Figure 16). Regarding the incident, IOC Spokesman Mark Adams announced that the IOC demanded “more details” but there was not any doubt that “the Olympic Charter was being respected” (Wolken, 2014).



Figure 15 Pussy Riot’s protest in Sochi

Source: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/pussy-riot-post-new-anti-putin-olympics-video-from-sochi-62712> (Photograph: AP) (Pussy Riot post new anti-Putin Olympics video from Sochi, 2014)

Figure 16 Intervention to the protest of Pussy Riot in Sochi

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/feb/19/pussy-riot-attacked-whips-cossack-milita-sochi-winter-olympics> (Photograph: Morry Gash/A) (Walker, 2014)

⁵⁸ Officially, Cossacks were not police officers but they were employed to support security in the Sochi Olympics. In their interview to Vice News, Pussy Riot members indicate that due to the media attention, especially after their internment in Sochi, security officers do not intervene them as a state tactic, and the Cossacks intervene to their protests (Pussy Riot Gets Whipped in Sochi, 2014).

Interpreting details in Olympiads' dress and sport equipment with symbolism was made for Pussy Riot as well. Russian Olympic athlete Alexey Sobolev's snowboard (with a woman who wears balaclava and carries a knife), that is indicated in Figure 17, was described as a gesture of support to Pussy Riot, but the designer stated that figure was inspired by old EC horror comics not the band (Dillman, 2014).



Figure 17 Olympic athlete Alexey Sobolev's debated snowboard
Source: <http://articles.latimes.com/2014/feb/07/sports/la-sp-on-pussy-riot-snowboard> (Photo: Sergey Ilnitsky / EPA) (Dillman, 2014)

Music was used as a political criticism in the protests during the former games. For instance, musicians and celebrities organized an alternative opening ceremony to protest politics of the Brazilian government and overspending for the Rio 2016 Summer Olympics (Phillips, 2016). Another example is the creation of Olympic protest song with the tunes of national or royal anthems and ballads such as "God Save the Queen" (British), "Waltzing Matilda" (Australian) and "Advance Australia Fair" (Australian) (Isaacs, 2000). However, there is not seen a salient protest of a music band as Pussy Riot's in the Olympic literature.

The amnesty issue came onto the agenda in several Olympics. For instance, pre-Olympic amnesty was demanded for the homeless who were jailed due to drinking in public, public intoxication and similar offenses, before the Salt Lake

2002 Winter Games (Urbani, 2001). Another demand for amnesty was made for political prisoners before the Beijing 2008 Summer Games (Dan, 2008), however an amnesty which can be argued as a “pre-Olympic” or “Olympic” amnesty was not made by the host states. Whether the general amnesty (including two members of Pussy Riot) in Russia on the eve of the Olympics can be accepted as an “Olympic amnesty” and a specific case in Olympic history in this respect is questionable. Because, since 1994, adaptation of the Russian constitution, 19 amnesties were proclaimed (Putin agrees to mull over major amnesty timed for presidential election, 2017). The biggest amnesty was proclaimed in the 55th anniversary of Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, and 877.000 people benefited of amnesty. Lastly, an amnesty was proclaimed in 2015, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Soviet Victory against the Nazi Germany; whilst 400.000 people benefited, 231.000 prisoners were released from jail (Putin agrees to mull over major amnesty timed for presidential election, 2017). Thus, it is a fact that Greenpeace activists and Pussy Riot members’ ongoing imprisonment during the Olympics would create more outcry and there would be more symbolic protests to show solidarity with them. However, when the amnesty politics of Russia is reviewed, to consider the amnesty which was approved on December 2013 as “pre-Olympic” or “Olympic amnesty” seems questionable. Moreover, the IOC’s reaction to the intervention to the Pussy Riot protests and Olympic rings’ use indicates the IOC’s point of view that defends the Olympics should not be politicized.

5.4 Terrorist Threats

Security has been always an important issue in the Olympics but especially after the attacks on the 1972 Munich Games and Atlanta Games, security measures of the

Games were extended. In addition to the escalation of global terrorism⁵⁹ and attacks like 9/11 and 7/7,⁶⁰ attacks by local terrorist groups in many states resulted in increase in the security measures. The legacy of host countries' extreme security measures is a controversial issue even for the most democratic states; criticism of security measures and legacies of "hard power" from the London Olympics is example to this (Burchell, O'Loughlin, Gillespie, and McAvoy, 2015:426).

In 1972, the terrorist group "Black September" entered in the living quarters of the athletes and attacked the Israeli athletes who participated in the Munich Games (Münih katliamının 40. yılı, 2012). After killing two, terrorists took nine athletes hostage and demanded the release of the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails in return for the hostages. Unfortunately, after an unsuccessful rescue operation, all the hostages and a police officer were killed. Remarkably, whereas the rest of the competitions were not cancelled due to this event with the idea of not politicizing the Games, the head of the International Olympic Committee Avery Brundage brought his famous –but also broadly criticized– statement as "The Games must go on!" (But many athletes preferred to not compete and withdrew from the Games after the attack) (Münih katliamının 40. yılı, 2012), and fear of attack in the Games began to be defined as "Munich syndrome". A similar statement to Brundage's was issued by the American President Bill Clinton after the bombing in the Centennial Olympic Park of Atlanta, Georgia of the United States in 1996. After the bombing attack of Eric Robert Rudolph, two people were killed and around 200 were injured (1996: Bomb rocks Atlanta Olympics, 2003). Moreover, due to a heart attack Melih

⁵⁹ There is not an agreed definition of terrorism but generally accepted meaning is using violence and terror for political purposes.

⁶⁰ The September 11 attacks (the 9/11) were carried out by terrorist organization Al-Qaeda in the United States in 2001, and the 7/7 terrorist attacks were carried out by suicide bombers on 7 July 2005 in London.

Uzunyol who was working for the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) also lost his life after the event (Atlanta Olimpiyatları Bombacısının Olası Ortakları Aranıyor - 2003-06-01, 2003).

As one of the most important mega-events, the Olympics are seen as a tool to deepen the effect of the attacks by terrorist groups, especially in states that face separatism and local terrorist groups. The Basque separatist group ETA and GRAPO's attempt to ruin the Barcelona 1992 Summer Games are examples to this. Moreover, host states are not targeted only during the Games. Even during the bid process and after the announcement of the IOC, host cities can be targeted. For instance, in 2005 several terrorist attacks were carried out in London after the day of the announcement of London's selection as the next host city of the Games by the IOC. The attacks caused 50 people's death and hundreds of injuries, and the Olympic celebrations were cancelled (Zabcı and Ekinçi, 2005).

Since Russia was both the host place of a mega-event that might be targeted by terrorists and extremists and the country has faced many terrorist attacks in its history,⁶¹ Sochi Games was a test case for the Russian Federation in terms of securitization. Sochi's closeness to the Republic of Chechnya, the Republic of Dagestan, the Republic of Ingushetia, and Abkhazia;⁶² ongoing military operations in Chechnya (whilst the case was called an "anti-terror 'operation' in Chechnya" by Russian authorities, it was generally known as "the Second Russian-Chechen

⁶¹ In Global Terrorism Index 2014, Russia was ranked as the eleventh country with the score of 6.76 out of ten (Global Terrorism Index, 2014).

⁶² Abkhazia is legally part of Georgia, it declared de-facto independence that was recognized only by four states including Russia, and Georgia does not have control on it.

War”)⁶³ and counterinsurgency operations in Ingushetia;⁶⁴ and the attacks in Volgograd, in a train station and trolley bus that killed more than 30 people furthered the concerns about the Olympic security (Smith-Spark and Shoichet, 2014). Even Georgia sent a letter to the IOC in 2008, and called for the Olympics to move to another city due to security concerns, but the IOC rejected this call (Zhemukhov and Orttung, 2014:18).

Remarkably, by splitting the Southern Federal District, the North Caucasus Federal District was founded on January 2010, and six of the seven North Caucasus republics and Stavropol Krai were included in the new district (Medvedev Creates New North Caucasus Federal District, 2010). This was also considered as a symbolic act of separating Sochi as an Olympic city from the other regions (Górecki, 2014:9). Whilst military operations continued, attempted attacks during the Sochi Olympics were eliminated. In 2012, the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB) announced that terror plans and weapons that target Olympic Games were discovered in Abkhazia, and Eldar Magatov, the leader of an armed group that made preparations for an attack was killed in 2014 (Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics: Not just Games, 2014; Dağıstan'da operasyon, 2014).

Despite its closeness to former conflict zones, Sochi is one of the safest cities in Russia. According to Global Terrorism Database only four incidents out of the 2.158 in Russia's history occurred in Sochi, however, as an Olympic city Sochi was

⁶³ After the collapse of the Soviet Union Chechnya declared independence from the Russian Federation. Clashes started after Russian troops' intervention in Chechnya to end independence movement and continued until 1994 (it was called as “the First Russian-Chechen War” as well), and due to the Chechen rebels' apartment bombings military operations restarted in 1999, and on April 2009 Russian authorities announced end of “anti-terror operation” (Chechnya Fast Facts, 2018).

⁶⁴ Ingushetia was one of the safe havens of insurgents in Russia, where security problems and human rights violations existed. After the escalation of insurgent attacks on officials, servicemen and state buildings, “Special preventative operation” was held between 2007 and 2008 (“As If They Fell From the Sky” Counterinsurgency, Rights Violations, and Rampant Impunity in Ingushetia, 2008).

also targeted (Global Terrorism Index, 2009-2017). Attacks were made in 2008 and 2010 (after Sochi was announced as the Olympic city), journalists, media, business, tourists, private citizens and their properties were targeted in bombing attacks, explosions, and incursions (Global Terrorism Index, 2009-2017).

A video that contains threats regarding the Olympics was released by Vilayat Dagestan, terrorist group that claimed responsibility for the Volgograd attacks as well (Nimmo, 2014). Whereas there were direct threats to President Putin and the prospective tourists who would go to Sochi for the Olympics, it was stated that:

If you hold the Olympics you will receive a present from us. It will be for all the Muslim blood that is shed every day around the world, be it in Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, all around the world. This will be our revenge. (Nimmo, 2014)

Additionally, Doku Umarov⁶⁵ who was the head of the Caucasus Emirate, militant Jihadist organization which has claimed responsibility for many terrorist attacks including the 2010 Moscow Metro Bombings and the 2011 Moscow Airport attack in Russia, called the Games "satanic dances on the bones of our ancestors", and also made threats of attacks during the Sochi Olympics (Flintoff, 2014). In addition to this, Russia was alarmed with the possible attacks by "Black Widows" who make suicide bombings in "revenge" for their family members or husbands "killed by security forces". Since using "Black Widows" was a tactic that was used by Umarov as well, the issue had an importance for the security of Russia (Hacıoğlu, 2014).

⁶⁵ Doku Umarov, who was called as "Russia's Usame bin Laden" as well, became the leader of the separatist Chechenians in 2006, and his death was announced on March 2014 (Rusya'nın 'bir numaralı düşmanı' öldürüldü, 2014).

Besides, telephone terrorism, i.e. hoax bomb calls, which was a chronic problem⁶⁶ of Russia increased in Sochi after its selection as host city, and some were sentenced to imprisonment (Zhemukhov and Orttung, 2014:22).

In 2010, President Medvedev signed a decree “On Providing Security During The Twenty-Second Winter Olympic Games and Eleventh Paralympic Games of 2014 in Sochi” (Zhemukhov and Orttung, 2014:17). On August 2013, President Putin signed “on the special use of increased security measures in the period of the hosting of the 22nd Olympic and the 11th Paralympic Games 2014 in Sochi”, and nonlocal transportation to the Olympic areas without accreditation was banned for the period between 7 January and 21 March (Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics: Not just Games, 2014:19). On August 2013, making protests was banned in Sochi in the period between 7 February and 21 March, but on December 2013 it was revised and making protest in “protest zones”⁶⁷ was allowed (Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics: Not just Games, 2014:19).

The example of the control of the airspace for a long time also show the extension of security measures. For instance, whilst the flight restrictions were held for one month for the London 2012 Games, the restrictions were imposed for three months for the Sochi Olympics (Markedonov, 2014). Additionally, despite the political disagreements, the cooperation between Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom and “European partners” regarding security was held, and this also show the importance given to the security of the Olympics in global terms (Markedonov, 2014).

⁶⁶ More than 450.000 people were evacuated across Russia due to 1.000 anonymous telephone threats that were recorded between 9/11 and September 2017. The damage of hoax bomb calls is estimated one billion rubles (Russian lawmakers crack down on ‘telephone terrorism’, 2017).

⁶⁷ “Protest zones” were created in 2008 Beijing Olympics as well (Markedonov, 2014).

Some of the security measures in Sochi were: “spectator passes” that were given by the FSB to foreign visitors (they were called as “Olympic visa” as well); monitoring internet traffic of visitors, journalists and Sochi residents by SORM, the FSB’s surveillance system; monitoring by reconnaissance robots, sonar systems, drones and high-speed patrol boats; guarding the Olympic areas by 100.000 security personnel who were supervised by the FSB, 40.000 policemen, 30.000 armed forces troops, 10.000 additional troops who were overseen by military team "Operations Group Sochi" for Olympic Cluster; securitization of the Russia-Georgia border by the 58th Army; checkpoints, x-ray machines and metal detectors in restricted zones and controlled zones (Traywick, 2013).

The only event that occurred during the Sochi Olympics was an attempt of hijacking that occurred in the Opening Day of the Games. Ukrainian air pirate Artem Kozlov attempted to divert Kharkov-İstanbul plane to Sochi, with an operation the plane was landed to İstanbul and air-pirate was neutralized, Kozlov stated that he aimed to release prisoners in Ukraine and Russia (Akın, 2014).

One of the factors that differentiates Russia’s Olympic experience was deploying Cossacks for security. As a paramilitary group, Cossacks’ relationship with Russian tsars can be defined as “unstable”; sometimes they were known with rebellions and harshly punished, sometimes they were known as “tsar’s henchmen” (Aslamshoyeva, 2014). They fought against the Bolsheviks during the Revolution and they were punished due to their opposition, however after the fall of the Soviet Union Cossack pride and culture were revived in Russia (Aslamshoyeva, 2014). According to the New York Times, one thousand Cossacks were deployed to expel illegal Olympic workers in Sochi, and the Governor of the Krasnodar region told the local police: "What you cannot do, a Cossack can" (Aslamshoyeva, 2014). Moreover,

using violence during their duty, overriding their authority and escalating xenophobia are the main criticisms of the Cossacks (Cossacks on horseback enlisted to guard World Cup in Russia, 2018). Despite such criticisms, it seems that deploying Cossacks as security units is ongoing policy in Russia, and as it was done for the Olympics, hiring 200 Cossacks during the 2018 FIFA World Cup also shows this continuing policy.

Thus, despite the concerns, Russia succeeded in providing a secure organization without any case related with the security in Sochi. Sochi was elected as host city when counterinsurgency operations were conducting in its neighbor cities. Moreover, due to the terrorist threats for the Sochi Olympics (including local terrorist groups' threats like Vilayat Dagestan's threat with an emphasis on the 1864 events in Sochi), alarm of "Black Widows", and the threat of global terrorism extensive security measures were imposed. When the Munich syndrome in the Olympics and Russia's local security dynamics are considered, the Sochi Olympics cannot be comprehended as a distinct case in terms of security experience.

Applying to security measures like checking the spectator passes by the Intelligence Agency, monitoring internet traffic, using a group that has historical roots like the Cossacks for security, and changing territorial division were specific to the Sochi Olympics. Employing the Cossacks for the security of the 2018 FIFA World Cup shows that it can be an example for the other sport mega events as well.

Particularly use of spectator passes must be underlined in political context. Having ticket was not enough to be a spectator in the Sochi Olympics, there was obligation of online registration to pass in airport or distribution center (Kramer, 2014). Moreover, wearing identification badges were also compulsory (Kramer, 2014). Nikolai Levshits who was official member of opposition party and a prisoner

rights activist indicated that his application for pass was rejected as many antigovernment activists' (Kramer, 2014). Moreover, under "Fan ID program" spectators were obliged to carry fan badges in the 2018 World Cup that was held in Russia, and this also shows that it is already a part of mega sport event strategy of Russia. With such systems, activists, opposition groups and any person who is seen as unwelcome can be kept away from the mega sport events and even arbitrary treatments can be implemented by justifying this with the security reasons. For this reason, it can be seen as a potential political legacy that must be observed carefully.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In the closing ceremony of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, President of the IOC Thomas Bach said that "Russia delivered all what it had promised.", and "We all have enjoyed exceptional conditions in these Olympic Winter Games." (Winter Olympics 2014: IOC president Thomas Bach hails Sochi success as Russia delivers promise of 'excellence', 2014).

Through the Olympic Games, the Russian Federation aimed to give the message of "new, powerful and modern Russia" to domestic and international audiences. As with all host states, the Sochi Olympics were a tool of soft power for Russia. Furthermore, Russia followed its recent mega sport event strategy, and preferred Sochi as the host city where a campaign of branding was conducted.

Critiques of Russia started when Sochi was elected as the host city in 2007. Initially, the historical background of the city, climate, absence of sport facilities and location were criticized. Thereafter, groups and politicians called for a boycott by pointing to Russia's internal politics and human right abuses as reasons. Media's increased power and the divergence between "the West" and Russia furthered the controversies. However, looking at Olympic history shows that the Olympics have always been controversial, and there have been many problems in preparations, human rights abuses, debates, protests, corruption which were smoothed over the cracks. Moreover, the Olympic Games have always been politicized at state, group and individual levels, the Sochi case was not different in this sense. Nevertheless, analysis of the Sochi Olympics indicates that nowadays politicization in the Olympics at state level in terms of using the Games as a tool for interstate

contestations is rather symbolic, but politicization on particularly group level can be change maker. Moreover, many examples from the Sochi Olympics indicate that the IOC's efforts to prevent politicization of the Games continue.

State corporations' role in the Olympic economy, hosting the Winter Olympics in subtropical climate, and the sizable amount of money spent were specific to Russia. Moreover, corruption issue was so controversial due to the record-breaking costs before the Games. In addition to that, corruption on doping during the Sochi Olympics was revealed after the Games, and for the first time a state was banned from the Games due to a doping scandal. Even though costs on infrastructures were indicated as the reason, total cost, 51 billion US dollars, triggered more anti-Olympic campaigns and withdrawal of more bids in domino effect.

The "No Sochi 2014" Campaign of the Circassian community, the LGBT campaigns, and Pussy Riot protests, terrorist threats were examples of the politicization at group level. Though their cases were different, comparing the Sochi Olympics with the 1936 Berlin Olympics in the discussions of the Pussy Riot, the LGBT and Circassian protests was remarkable. For the first time an anti-Olympic campaign by an ethnic group, the campaign that was conducted by the Circassian, grew into a "cause celebre", and a historical case became globally known with the occasion of the Olympics. However, the biggest "cause celebre" in the Sochi debates was the "gay propaganda law" and LGBT groups' campaigns. Campaigns did not change Russian politics, but a statement for the LGBT rights was put into the Olympic Charter and host city contract was reformed. These reforms can affect the other sport mega events' politics since they shape mainstream perceptions as well. These achievements show that nowadays politicization at group level can be

prospering tool for change in the politics of the Olympics and even in the main sport mega events.

Though there have been musical protests in Olympic history, there was not a case like the group of “Pussy Riot” and protest during the Games. Moreover, the amnesty that was proclaimed few months before the Olympics was argued as “Olympic amnesty” or “pre-Olympic amnesty”, but since suing out is a political phenomenon of the Russian politics, assuming correlation is questionable.

Local terrorist group Vilayat Dagestan threatened to attack the Games, and emphasized the 1864 events in Sochi. Despite the security issue in the Caucasus, threats and plans of attack, several cases like the issue of “Black Widows”, and telephone terrorism (i.e. fake announcements), the Olympics were held safely. Due to the fact that in the Sochi Olympics security measures were increased to overcome local and global security threats, there was continuation of the Munich syndrome and extensive measures. Nevertheless, new practices on spectator passes (called also as “Olympic visa”) may leave a political legacy to the Olympics and even to other mega events. By giving justification to security, “dissidents” of the host state can be excluded from the Games. Moreover, using a similar system in the 2018 World Cup in Moscow also shows that it can be implemented in the main mega sport events. In addition, in Olympic history there is not a group that has historical roots like the Cossacks who were deployed for the security of the Games, employment of such assistive groups can also establish a precedent.

Thus, undoubtedly each Olympic case is not one and the same. However, the Sochi Winter Olympics were described as “the most controversial Games”, mostly differences were discoursed, and especially by the Western media the Sochi Olympics were introduced as if it was a very distinct case in the Olympics. Looking

at the Sochi case from a different perspective and focusing on the similarities was the main objective of the thesis. The analysis show that, with the main lines, the common experiences of the Olympics were dominant in the Sochi Olympics and distinctness was rather on the achievements and potential of politicization at group level. For this reason, the Sochi Olympics cannot be considered as politically a distinct case within the context of the Olympics.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY OF THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES AND MAIN EVENTS⁶⁸

1896 Athens Summer Olympic Games

1900 Paris Summer Olympic Games

1904 Saint-Louis Summer Olympic Games

1908 London Summer Olympic Games

Partial-judges scandal occurred.

The British rejected to manifest the American flag.

1912 Stockholm Summer Olympic Games

1916 Olympics were not held due to the First World War.

1920 Antwerp Summer Olympic Games

Budapest would be host city but since defeated states of the First World War (Germany, Turkey, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria) were excluded from the Olympics, host city was switched.

1924 Paris Summer Olympic Games

Chamonix Winter Olympic Games

1928 Amsterdam Summer Olympic Games

St. Moritz Winter Olympic Games

1932 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games

Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games

⁶⁸ This sequence of events was compiled from: (Boykoff, 2015), (Griffiths, 2016), (Heijmans, 2015); (Olympic Games, n.d.), (Politics and the Olympics, 2011), (Shaw, 2008:255, 277), (Seçilmiş, 2004); (Seoul 1988, n.d.), (St. Moritz 1948, n.d.), (Movement to Boycott the Berlin Olympics of 1936, n.d.), (Toohey and Veal, 2007:90, 97, 98, 101, 102, 104, 108, 109, 265, 268), (Wesolowsky, 2016); (1920 Olympic Games – Antwerp, n.d.).

1936 Berlin Summer Olympic Games

Also called as "The Nazi Games".

Despite of boycott campaigns, the Games were held in Berlin, and forty-nine countries participated in, which means more participators than the previous Games.

Garmich - Partenkirchen Winter Olympic Games

1940 Berlin was elected as the host city but Olympics were not held due to the Second World War.

1944 Olympics were not held due to the Second World War.

1948 London Summer Olympic Games

As the defeated states of the Second World War Germany and Japan were excluded from the Games.

St. Moritz Winter Olympic Games

Named as "Games of Renewal".

1952 Helsinki Summer Olympic Games

Return of the Soviets to the Games after 40 years.

With the effect of the Cold War tension, athletes of the Eastern Bloc stayed separately from the other athletes.

Oslo Winter Olympic Games

1956 Melbourne and Stockholm Summer Olympic Games

Due to the Suez Crisis, Egypt called for expulsion of the "aggressors" from the Olympics, later Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon boycotted the Games.

Since the IOC recognized Taiwan, China withdrew from the Games and did not participate in until 1980.

Team of Switzerland, the Netherlands and Spain withdrew to protest Soviet invasion of Hungary, the Swiss team withdrew but later reconsidered its decision.

An open fight between Soviet and Hungarian athletes during water-polo game occurred because of the political tension in following of the Hungarian Revolution. Some athletes rejected to compete under flag of what they called as "Red Hungary".

Cortina D'ampezzo Winter Olympic Games

1960 Rome Summer Olympic Games

Squaw Valley Winter Olympic Games

1964 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games

Related with China's recognition, North Korea and Indonesia were excluded from the Games.

Because of its apartheid policies the IOC suspended South Africa from the Games.

Innsbruck Winter Olympic Games

1968 Mexico City Summer Olympic Games

More than 100 people lost their lives during the Olympic protests.

The IOC suspended South Africa and North Korea from the Games.

Rhodesia's entrance to Mexico was not allowed.

During medal ceremony, black athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos made "Black Power Salute" to protest discriminatory policies in the United States.

Vera Caslavskaya made the "silent protest" to expostulate the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Grenoble Winter Olympic Games

1972 Munich Summer Olympic Games

Terrorist group, Black September kidnapped Israeli athletes and killed 11 people.

Teams of Israel, Egypt, Philippines and Algeria withdrew from the Games.

During road cycling competition, Irish protestors rode bicycles into the British team to protest British rule in Northern Ireland.

Rhodesia's invitation was cancelled.

Sapporo Winter Olympic Games

1976 Montreal Summer Olympic Games

African countries called for expelling New Zealand that had sporting links with the Apartheid regime of South Africa. When the IOC supported its participation, 30 Middle Eastern and African states boycotted the Olympics.

Ukrainian immigrants protested against the Soviet team and burnt the Soviet flag that was in flagpole.

The IOC suspended Rhodesia's participation.

Since it was not allowed to compete under the name of "Taiwan", Taiwan boycotted the 1976 and 1980 Olympics (Naming issue was solved in 1979 by "the Nagoya Resolution" which names its team as "the Chinese Taipei" and it competed in 1984 Olympic Games).

1976 Innsbruck Winter Olympic Games

Initially Denver, Colorado was selected as the host city, but the Games were moved to Innsbruck after the initiatives of the anti-Olympic activists.

1980 Moscow Summer Olympic Games

Under the US leadership Western Countries boycotted the Games to protest Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games

1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games

Countries in the Eastern Bloc boycotted the Games in return of the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games.

Sarajevo Winter Olympic Games

1988 Seoul Summer Olympic Games

North Korea, Cuba, Ethiopia and Nicaragua boycotted the Games.

The IOC announced that boycotting states will not be able to compete in the Olympics.

A terrorist group, The Japanese Red Army threatened to ruin the Olympics.

Calgary Winter Olympic Games

1992 Barcelona Summer Olympic Games

The Basque separatist group ETA and GRAPO attempted to ruin the Games and made attacks.

Albertville Winter Olympic Games

1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympic Games

1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games

Two people lost their lives because of a bombing attack.

1998 Nagano Winter Olympic Games

2000 Sydney Summer Olympic Games

The IOC suspended participation of Afghanistan.

2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games

The most known bribery scandal in Olympic history was released before the Games.

2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games

2006 Turin Winter Olympic Games

2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games

A boycott was called due to support of China to the government of Sudan.

2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games

2012 London Summer Olympic Games

2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games

The IOC suspended India's participation.

2016 Rio Summer Olympic Games

Many protests were held especially by critique of the economic burden of the Games and some clashes in "favelas" occurred.

2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games

2020 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games

2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games

2024 Paris Summer Olympic Games

2028 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games

APPENDIX B

ANTI-OLYMPIC GROUPS AND CAMPAIGNS⁶⁹

1992 The "No Olympics Amsterdam" Campaign

1996, 2008 The Campaign of anti-Olympic group of "Bread Not Circuses" against bid of Vancouver and, Toronto's bids for the 1996 and the 2008 Olympic Games)

2000 The "Nolympic Group" in Berlin

2004 The "No London 2012" Campaign against London's bid.

"The Counter Olympics Network (CON)" against the London 2012 Summer Olympics which they called as "Corporate Games"

2006 The "No Sochi 2014" Campaign

2012 New York - Hell's Kitchen Group, and the Clinton Special District Coalition "Hangorin no Kai", "Supporters for the Park Residents around the National Olympic Stadium", "Planetary No Olympics Network", "Café Lavandería", "Irregular Rhythm Asylum" against Tokyo's 2016 and 2020 Olympic bids.

2014 The "Principle 6" Campaign before the Sochi Games.

2015 "NOlympia" Campaign in Hamburg, the "No Boston Olympics" Campaign against bid for the 2024 Summer Games

2017 The "Nolympics" media campaign of The Momentum Mozgalam (Movement) against bid of Budapest for the 2024 Summer Olympics and Paralympic Games.

⁶⁹ This sequence of events was compiled from: (Bull, 2016), (Gultekin, 2013), (Spike, 2017), (What is Principle 6?, n.d.), (2024 Olympics: Hamburg says "No" to hosting Games, 2015).

APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS RELATED TO THE OLYMPIC
CONSTRUCTIONS IN SOCHI⁷⁰

8 June 2006 “Approval of the Government Decree no. 357 “Federal Special-Purpose Program for Development of Sochi as a Mountain Climate Resort (2006-2014)”

18 February 2007 The IOC evaluation commission’s Sochi visiting “First” (on appearance) opening of the Sochi Airport

4 July 2007 The 119th Session of the IOC

Sochi’s election as the host city of the 12nd Winter Olympics

8 November 2007 - 17 April 2008 Presidency of Semyon Vaynshtok in Olimpstoi

17 April 2008 - 6 June 2009 Presidency of Viktor Kolodyazhny in Olimpstoi

6 June 2009 - 31 January 2011 Presidency of Taymuraz Bolloyev in Olimpstoi

6 December 2009 Protest of hundreds of Sochi citizens against evictions

14 December and June 2009 Storms damaged Imereti Port

2010 Second and the “official” opening of the Sochi Airport

July 2010 Collapse of a railroad tunnel

August 2010 Opening of a criminal case against Vladimir Leshevski

5 October 2010 Demonstration of 50 Uzbek workers for unpaid wages

Many workers’ being deported after demonstration

December 2010 11 workers ceased working

31 January 2011 Sergey Gaplikov’s presidency in Olimpstoi began

⁷⁰ This sequence of events was compiled from: (Sochi 2014, n.d.), (The Anti-Corruption Foundation, 2014:6, 36, 46, 63, 68, 70, 73, 75, 76, 88), (Human Rights Watch, 2013:7, 28, 44, 45), (Dump near the village Ahshtyr, n.d.; Rus çevreciden olimpiyatlara karşı açlık grevi, 2014), (Inhabitants threatened with evictions in Sochi stage a protest, 2009), (Evlerini kaybeden Soçi’liler eylem yaptı, 2011).

December 2011 11 Serbian workers stopped working as protest of unpaid wages

October 2011 Protests of evicted Sochi citizens

22 June 2012 Opening of a criminal case regarding peculation of funds of Olimpstroï

February 2013 Putin's inspection of the Russian Hills Olympic springboards and criticizing Ahmed Bilalov

24 March 2013 Storm in Sochi

16 September 2013 Akhshtyr villagers' protest

September 2013 Flood in the Sochi Airport

October 2013 A Russian worker's "sewing mouth" protest

October 2013 Demolishing of sea wall for the third time

6-23 February 2014 The Sochi Winter Games

18 February 2014 Hunger strike of environmentalist Jewgeni Witischko

7-16 March 2014 The Sochi Paralympic Games

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