

THE REDEFINITION OF THE CITY IN THE SLOW CITY MOVEMENT: THE EXAMPLE OF AKYAKA IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

Slow city is a way of life that cultural richness and quality of life are preserved and defended in the city's local scale. Also, it is an urban model which may prevent in the standardization of lifestyles to achieve environmentally-conscious and tourism-based local development. Thus, its purpose is to improve the quality of life in cities and it is opposed to the homogenization of cities. Contrary to the global, the forefront of locality is to support the local production and producers. The slow city movement, which is basically included the critique of rapid consumption in cities, is required to query with a critical perspective that the process of getting of the title and developments after this process for the accurately detected and implementation. In the context of this study is discussed as a case study of Akyaka in Turkey which is the slow city title in 2010. The situation before taking the title of a slow city, the process of getting the title and subsequent developments of the Akyaka will be analyzed with the critical bibliography method by the review of the literature, the visual and written media news. The processes of slow city and after the changes/improvements of Akyaka are discussed.

Key words: Environments, Slow Food, Slow City Movement (CittaSlow), Speed, Locality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities are organisms into their social, economic and cultural dynamics. Today, they are becoming undefined places that have lost cultural, local and environmental values rapidly under the rule of advancing technology, globalization processes and the capitalist system.

Countries that have disappeared the boundaries between the other ones with the globalization process and advancing technology form the cornerstones of the economic system with their big cities. This issue needs to emphasize clearly with its advantages and disadvantages that new concepts and formations are sitting instead of changing milestones in the transformation process. From now on, the examples are increasing such as city economies that are independent and cosmopolitan concepts. A change in the balance is considered as a transformation of globalization

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process such as power not coming from the country, coming from the city-owned. However in economy a structure, occurs outside of based on the industry or agricultural, based on the global information technology and accordingly cities transform to focusing on production/consumption spaces.

As a result of constant change and development of consumption patterns, cities become a part of these changes and transformations continuously. These structures that are forced to enter into the one distinct mold especially by the globalization process and constitute more places than all other economic and political activities, has been faced various problems such as the loss of local-cultural characteristics. All these city structures cause to perceive a single space, culture or center assessment of the planned formation of the world. However, each city's has own socio-cultural structure, historical process, residents, local amenities and activities. Combination of conventional production methods and unconscious consumption is emergency for today's world/cities. Communication types such as media convey the destruction by fast life and in parallel with excessive and faster consumption than ever seen.

Improving the quality of urban life and local properties taking place into urban spaces outside of global structures should be the priority targets. Precisely at this point on a global food brand, which is considered the world's largest cities in the main square in Rome, was born as a reaction to a shop that started as a continuation of slowfood Cittaslow movement occurred in the organization. Cittaslow refers to "Slow City" that consists of an Italian word Citta (city) and an English word Slow. Cittaslow is a city union born from Slow Food movement that prevents to standardize of the texture, calmness and life style of cities and eliminate the local characteristics by globalization (Miele, 2008; Radstrom, 2011). In this respect, the slow life aims to protect and remove the local. Increasing the access conditions to future generations what we have in world order and adopting the sensitive understanding to nature and environment are basic goals and principles.

2. THE MOVEMENT OF CREATING AN URBAN INITIATIVE: CITTASLOW

Environmental issues and correspondingly source problems are known at the top rates. The increase in imbalances between production and consumption reduces the constructs of self-sufficient city. At this point, a Japanese approach "Kaizen" can be given an example for evaluating all the world as a whole, further support of production and paving the way for the improvement of urban spaces. "Kaizen" means small but steady steps to progress. The main objectives of member cities in the Cittaslow movement are based on it. "Slow" is not a trend, contrary should be a philosophy. An effort must be permanent and meaningful identity which melting in pots of the changes' and transformations' state of being "slow" in developing world. The main goal of "Slow City Movement" is blending today's and tomorrow's opportunities by taking advantage of the prior cultural heritage and knowledge. In this goal, the city's air, water, soil cleaning, the food's local and organic and distinctive local architecture of the city are listed as being environmentally friendly. Especially in harmony with nature and eco-friendly systems is very important to use

without causing damage. The application to the urban fabric should be based on taking advantage of technology and keeping in mind the historical and ecological structure. Happy structures can be obtained by constructing more humane and livable spaces in slow cities unlike the chaotic and stress-installed metropolitan ones and own their own value and features.

Slow City movement is created in the framework of saving us into the mold that the globalization forced us as a single type of person model and protecting the local values. (Eskicioğlu, 2009) For these purposes, cities have to set goals to achieve in 7 topics 59 main criterias and 3 specific conditions listed below and begin working in these areas (Web 1). These are the main 7 topics classified by criteria:

1. Environmental Policies
2. Infrastructural Policies
3. Activities for Increasing the Urban Quality Benefiting from the Technologies
4. Supporting Local Product and Production
5. Hospitality
6. Awareness
7. Supporting the Slow Food Activities and Projects.

Each city have its own internal dynamics and a structure of life. It is just a kind of machine that has melting the wheels inside and not capturing the interventions such as adding, editing etc. However, each settlement, ideally as part of a whole, in accordance with basic principles of CittaSlow movement provides;

- production is primarily local, but globally connected
- quality is maintained by feedback, ratings and reviews
- mechanisms for public reputation are the principal means of social control
- 'real costs' – social and environmental – guide people's consumption (Alexander, 2002).

All of these transformations are considered important in the realization of the public to embrace within the Cittaslow movement. Chaotic and complex states will breed as a result of any kind of discourse or activism secretive by the public. In this respect, Cittaslow is a movement to fed by a contemporary municipalize through a common platform for all activities in the public's conscious. In this movement an understanding should be based on the word of Hz. Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi. "Be patient, because how countryside laugh if not clouds cry? Do not be hasty. Accessed to purpose patiently, not in a hurry. Ordinary herbs grow within two months, but red rose grows in a year. Even food is cooking in pot slowly and subtle more delicious than simmering crazy." It must be associated with not slowness, laziness, weakness and inability, on the contrary, with calmness, production and use on-site. Due to base on human and humane life in basically, sustainability should be ensured by controlling every single step's tightly and constantly.

The location of cities surveyed in slow motion is also important. The factors that determine this location are;

- The city's local networks
- Trading links with the city/ turnover
- Daily lives of residents and way of life.

All these sub-factors come together, when considered as a whole, will reinforce the basic structure of the city by moving slowly existing studies.

These factors include "Slow City Movement" scale should be supported by a variety of inferences. In this way, life and philosophy are blended together. Production constitutes one of the main points of the moving-consumer relationship and the local-global balance should be determined by a variety of preliminary research. Life planning within the city-campus problematic, "slow" should be considered and should be adopted within the framework of the concept of living people. Things to propose and experiment with "local" concept underlining, priority should be listed principles to create Akyaka example.

3. A CRITICAL APPROACH TO SLOW CITY: AKYAKA EXAMPLE

Turkey met to this movement for the first time in November 2009 with the announcement of Seferihisar's being Cittaslow. In 2010, the town of Akyaka, Muğla started to increase with the number of members. Cittaslow movement for the implementation of the right may not be detected until after the title of the developments in the process of getting a critical need to inquire. One of the main criticisms of Cittaslow is that the criteria have not been carry for country's specific features. In this context local-cultural, social structure should be much stronger by adding country-specific criteria. Studies have been started to be carried out to determine what criteria would be for Turkey (Web 13). Akyaka was given the title of Cittaslow in 2010, Turkey examined as a case study both for contributing the determination of these criterias and the implementation its' local level perception and contribution to the city. The most significant features of Akyaka are being Special Environmental Protection Area and its biodiversity. Also wooden houses make Akyaka special that were designed the typical Muğla-Ula architecture by Nail Çakırhan and have traditional lines.

The study was structured in two phases. In the first step; Akyaka cittaslow state before taking the title, title-making process and review of the literature relating to developments in the post, were analyzed by the method of critical bibliografy over the news in the visual and written media. In the second stage; analysis of the data by going to the region in line with the results of observations were made.

3.1. Location and physical properties of Akyaka

Akyaka, located in the north-eastern corner of the Gulf of Gökova, is a fertile plain between Kadın and Akçapınar River Branches. At the same time it has a specific geography with isolated bays opened to the Gulf of Gökova. It is in a natural protected area next to the Statute of the Special Environmental Protection with these features and hosted the variety of life. One of the two rivers in determining position of geography, Kadınlar River Branch constitutes a natural aquarium for diving with its under water plant population and high flow rate. Akçapınar, other stream, creates a long coastline between the sea. Alternative extreme sports are also popular such as kona between two streams, kite-skiing, paragliding double, motorized water sports (Bilgi, 2013; Sungur, 2013). Akyaka's vision is respect for nature, protecting of architectural structure, strong infrastructure service, sustainable and alternative

tourism-oriented, acting together in unity and solidarity of people (Web 2) (Figure 1).



Figure 1: An overview of Akyaka

Nail Çakırhan is the only person without architectural education took the Aga Khan award. Çakırhan took this award in 1983 by designing a house for himself based on a traditional Ula style resident between 1970 and 1972. Home has been considered worthy of a successful example of local architecture. (Ekinci, 2011; Bilgi, 2013 ve Sungur, 2013) The jury of the Aga Khan commented that this Akyaka House brings a great exclusiveness by its pure and elegant design going beyond the simple occurrence, noting the extraordinary harmony with nature and the usage of a multi-purpose indoor atmosphere (Er, 2011). Being a universal model to ground by preserving the context of the local architectural features of the house and after the use of residential development scheme almost turned into a town planning and present Akyaka architecture identity was born (Ekinci, 2011).

3.2. Akyaka: was a slow city?

The first stage; analysis are made by a method of critical bibliography. Accordingly, Akyaka is a successful example of slow cities in terms of the slow city criterias with the above mentioned features. Not just only being a slow city, also the conversion and development process are important. It causes the discussion "What is the Akyaka's member of Cittaslow? What brought or leads? Simpson, wrote in "The future of Turkey's environmental legacy", 2011, praised Akyaka's natural and architectural beauty after telling that they decided to live here and stood out the destruction of the environment. He made suggestions about still being able to recover the environment. After writing this article, but in the meantime, everythings go from bad to worse.

The most important criticism on this issue is the process of transformation to a fast city after being a slow city. The other significant criticisms do not constitute the city

council by public and a functionless extension of the municipality (Web 3, Web 6). Habitants protested the municipality in 2012 to fill trash and debris in valley for making a way (Figure 2) (Web 3, Web 4). At the same time in 2013, they opposed to a town planning law, allows tall buildings, for concretion (Figure 3) (Web 5, Web 14).



Figure 2: Garbage action in Akyaka (Web 4)



Figure 3: A signature campaign "Do not let Akyaka Being Concrete" (Web 14)

On the other hand, on 7-8 November 2010, the "Cittaslow Akyaka, Slow City Symposium" was a successful study to reach the online study summaries. (Web 6, Web 7) As a result of the symposium, meeting was held on 21 October 2011 about the projects of "A Slow City Case Study of Akyaka and Local Participation" and "Pedestrian-friendly Traffic Regulations in Slow City, Akyaka" (Web 8, Web 9). It

is aimed to be decided together for the traffic regulation through participation. In this respect the study is being carried out and presented to the municipality but the results were not applied. Project coordinator stated "when the project was started, Akyaka inhabitants think that they are willing to be a slow city. But there is no belief during the project and then he thinks that Akyaka is not ready yet to this process". (Web 9) The municipality of Akyaka has started to application to UNESCO for the protection of the biological diversity of Akyaka through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the tension of all these positive and negative developments. The mayor mentioned to aim to protect the architecture, nature, history, bird species, sea and biological diversity of Akyaka as a world heritage and be transferred to future generations in the information meeting against some of the concerns with the Metropolitan law. (Web 10, Web 11, Web 12).

The Cittaslow membership of Akyaka is an expected result while evaluating with the projects about Akyaka's biodiversity, geographic location and architectural features through the above-mentioned studies. However, Cittaslow membership of Akyaka cannot provide a self-regulatory mechanism. Fast city converts to a slow city by losing the function of city council, not taking into account the wishes of people by the municipality and an excessive increase in tourism after Cittaslow membership. On the other hand, applying to UNESCO and the studies are encouraging.

The results given above observations in Akyaka were made in August 2014. On the same date, and coincided with summer holidays observation reveals how much negative impact that tourism in the city life. Users all the empty spaces to slow city makes them prefer to come by car parking and traffic problems transformed noise resort uninhabitable (Figure 4). At this point, the user must be informed about the short-term slow city is also the region with the introduction of a special vehicle control inputs and outputs can be presented as a precaution.



Figure 4: Private vehicle use

Another problematic; after receiving the Cittaslow title is that it has opened a branch in the region of large supermarket chains in the global tourist attraction in that (Figure 5). Opening of branches of the supermarket chain is a network of member of the local manufacturer's development is intended to create a negative attitude. In addition, instead of supermarket products to increase the energy consumption of

consumer products come from their centers. As soon as it is necessary to take measures in this regard.



Figure 5: This global supermarket chains against local production

Natural vegetation cover in the region is the best-preserved architectural features. In addition, local architecture preserved, two-storey houses many architectural features intact and damage to the hostel spatial value is converted into cafes. This favorable situation and the awareness of the people of the region are promising. The managers and of the same consciousness seems important to gain short-term experience to users. These positive circumstances and people in the region are promising level of consciousness on the issue. The managers and of the same consciousness seems important to gain short-term experience to users.

4. CONCLUSION

Cittaslow is a process, not a result. Cities should have a philosophy that is more important to be aiming in continues development for human life rather than to fulfill all of CittaSlow's criterias. Because human life is in constant development and change. In this context, CittaSlow is a "quality journey" for city members. Slow cities have so important issues such as supporting local production and resources, increasing the slow life and sustainability, avoiding homogenization and reducing the materialist culture. Increase in traditional handcrafts, orientation to local producers and rise of tourism can be evaluated as advantages and disadvantages according to economic dynamics. Slow cities' consumption meta can be observed by reviving as a result of all economic activities, increasing of awareness and becoming a popular tourist destination.

Akyaka's slow city membership should be evaluated as a whole at every single change and flow. It should provide a better quality of life throughout the evaluation of the positive and negative aspects of the region, local people and the country. Just in charge of one person or local government is the wrong attitude if being a situation

of "good" does not occur or slow city quickly converts into "fast" city. These actors are;

- * Seen as a means of profit – Akyaka
- * Brandization of slow urban concept corrupting
- * Remains silent to misleading practices for their own interests
- * Users with the mentality of "The snake, which touched to me, thumbs up thousands"

But getting the title of slow city and ensuring the continuity are seen as important steps despite all faults and criticisms. Also applying to UNESCO will contribute to the resolution of issues quickly. Also gaining experience in Akyaka is an example for other slow city candidates in our country. Thus an increase in the number of slow cities in our country contributes to urbanity in terms of social, economic, cultural, spatial, ecological and so on and cities that have high quality life.

Enough knowledge and understanding for the improvement of sustainable development and local tourism and local production are one of the priority issues. Also they are expected to improve in the scale of Turkey's Slow City Movement. Component and knowledge that come from history, supported by new technological applications, are expected to articulation to this movement. The factors such as food security, development of local markets, environmental compliance, orderly and safe traffic flow, energy saving planning can be listed at the first-stage and separate themselves from other metropolitan cities. At this point, a situation occurs such as these Slow City spaces' connecting to global without any need of metropolis. A separate economic, law and management mechanism system within the progressive process are the most stunning developments for these small spaces. This development is not valid for most of the governments, but will have the opportunity in the future.

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