

“They Know Very Well What They Are Doing, But Still, They Are Doing It”

Turkish Cittaslow Towns of Gökçeada and Halfeti

Gökhan Gülbandilar

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LUCSUS

Lund University Centre for
Sustainability Studies



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Submitted May 13, 2015

Supervisor: Mine Islar, LUCSUS, Lund University

Abstract:

Today a majority of the world's population is living in urban areas and this trend is expected to continue in the foreseeable future. Globalization plays a key role in the expansion of urban areas as well as urban-related social, economic and environmental problems. Accelerating pace of life together with the globalization of the economy and culture has brought with it homogenization of lives and places as well as diverse sustainability problems. The concept of Cittaslow (Slow City), a spin-off network of towns from Slow Food Movement that was found in 1999, developed as an antidote to deal with the growing environmental, social and economic problems of cities by suggesting different ways of planning urban life, urban economy and urban ecology. This thesis focuses on the experiences of the Turkish towns of Gökçeada and Halfeti as the recent members of the Cittaslow network and addresses the internal dynamics and tensions that the movement possesses. Through fieldwork over a period of one month in Gökçeada and Halfeti, I generated data through conducting 47 semi-structured interviews, participant observation and 2 focus groups, as well as generating audio-visual materials to explore the real life implications of Cittaslow prescriptions. By utilizing the Lacanian psychoanalysis and the theories of followers of Lacan including Slavoj Žižek, Yannis Stavrakakis, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, I claim that what Cittaslow aims for does not happen in reality. Specifically, I argue that the comfort term 'sustainability', which is an empty signifier in itself, has been dominating the Cittaslow narrative as the master signifier/nodal point which quilts other signifiers of "local economy", "localness" and "tourism" around itself. These three signifiers acquire their meanings in relation to the master signifier of "sustainability" in these two towns. Thus, Cittaslow is infused with different meanings across different contexts, particularly in Gökçeada and Halfeti. In both cases, 'local economy', 'tourism' and 'localness' start to dominate sustainability concerns, which in turn cause more harm to the environment and societal relations.

Keywords: Cittaslow, Sustainability, Halfeti, Gökçeada, Master Signifier, Lacan

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1 Prologue

"The cities of the world are concentric, isomorphic, synchronic. Only one exists and you are always in the same one" (Baudrillard, 1990, p.85).

Today 54% of the world population lives in urban areas and the percentage is estimated to reach 66% by 2050 (United Nations, 2014). Cities continue to offer numerous job opportunities, better transportation and infrastructure facilities, better education alternatives for people. However, development of urban spaces and migration to these spaces have been giving rise to collateral problems across all cities in the world. Social segregation, urban poverty, urban water-energy challenges or unsustainable transportation facilities are among prevalent problems in urban spaces and most of the cities will continue to experience them.

Globalization plays a key role in urbanization and the increase of social, economic and environmental problems in urban spaces. The Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) reports that financial capital is essential for cities to survive in a global economy through investing in housing, infrastructure, transportation or recreational areas (UNCHS, 2001). Habitat II, hereby, arouses a competition between cities, which is hoped to result in development of sustainable cities through adopting integrated and participatory approaches. While development of sustainable cities seems over-optimistic, it is evident that "the globalization of urban natures, of which ecological imperialism is a key feature, means that we cannot abstract ecological questions from urban contexts or consider urban questions without reference to ecological processes" (Kipfer et. al., 2012, p.12).

Our global world, hitherto, has been conceptualized in different ways, such as *network society* (Castells, 2010), *post-industrial society* (Bell, 1999), *consumer society* (Veblen, 1994; Baudrillard, 1998; Bauman 2005), *McDonaldized society* (Ritzer, 2004) and *risk society* (Beck, 1992). However, the common ground all these conceptions share is the accelerating and unbridled pace of life rooted in globalization that obliterates local places and cultures. "Time is money" has become the salient motto of the modern subjects who bustle for their material gains. This acceleration coupled with globalization of economies and cultures have homogenized lives and places as well as sustainability problems. Therefore, the rearranging of urban life against the auspices of urbanizing humanity has become a prerequisite for achieving environmental and social sustainability (Davis, 2010).

Cittaslow (slow city) emerged as a reaction against the globalization-induced environmental, social and economic problems of the cities with the ultimate aim of realizing sustainable cities through reorganizing urban life, economy and ecology in the cities (Cittaslow, 2011). Initiated in Italy in 1999, the Cittaslow Network has become a growing trend of response to social, environmental and economic problems of the small towns by revitalizing local economy and promoting sustainable urban planning. Turkey, experiencing rapid increase of population, urbanization, industrialization and climate change, embraced the Cittaslow philosophy as a remedy to its urban problems and as a way of prioritizing sustainability. However, the Cittaslow philosophy operates through different parameters which are constructed with reference to different urban problems and how these problems are socially constructed and perceived in various contexts.

1.1 The Aim and the Scope of the Study

This thesis focuses on the Cittaslow town experiences in Turkey through the cases of Gökçeada and Halfeti in order to portray the operationalization of Cittaslow. I argue that, 'local economy', 'localness' and 'tourism' are the signifiers that fill in the meaning of the empty signifier of 'sustainability'¹ within the discourse of Cittaslow in the cases of Gökçeada and Halfeti. This thesis, seeks to expose these empty signifiers, including that of 'Cittaslow' itself by focusing on the cases of Gökçeada and Halfeti. As a promising urban development model, Cittaslow is largely constructed by the materialization of our fantasies through our actions (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.2). To demystify the symbolic equipment of Cittaslow (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.2), I employed the theories of Jacques Lacan and his followers, namely Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Slavoj Žižek and Yannis Stavrakakis. Consequently, I claim that Cittaslow, as a contested term, is an empty signifier itself which acts as a holder of meaning and contains many diverse as well as conflicting nuances at the same time in Gökçeada and Halfeti. The overall aim in this thesis is to provide a reflective/critical understanding on the implementation of Cittaslow and its efforts to realize sustainability, through different strategies in differing contexts.

1.2 Research Questions

This research is guided by the following research questions:

¹ Sustainability, an empty signifier, means "everything and nothing - comfort term - all things to all people" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.1).

Q1: How sustainability is envisioned, constituted and constructed in Cittaslow towns of Gökçeada and Halfeti?

Q2: Which dimensions of sustainability are emphasized in the Cittaslow projects in Gökçeada and Halfeti?

Q3: How sustainability is being fantasized in Cittaslow contexts of Gökçeada and Halfeti?

2 Exploring the Cittaslow

The Cittaslow Network owes its emergence to a philosophical tradition of slowness and Slow Food Movement. The idea of slowness, therefore, deserved to be examined in order to better grasp the backbone of Cittaslow.

2.1 Slowness as a Normative Philosophy

In his seminal work, *In Praise of Slow*, Carl Honoré (2004, p.24) mentions the invasion of human lives by fastness: "Urbanization, another feature of the industrial era, helped quicken the pace. Cities have always attracted energetic and dynamic people, but urban life itself acts as a giant particle accelerator. When people move to the city, they start to do everything faster". As the pace of life accelerated, slowness became associated with irrationality and loss of time, the modern subjects have increasingly felt themselves obliged to conform to the fast way of living the life. However, Honoré (2004, p.15) finds virtue in the slow life which "is not about doing everything at a snail's pace.... The slow philosophy can be summed up in a single word: balance. Be fast when it makes sense to be fast, and be slow when slowness is called for". He argues for the possibility of catching a balance between fastness and slowness particularly in today's fast world. Recognizing this slow alternative is vital because "[t]his roadrunner culture is taking a toll on everything from our health, diet and work to our communities, relationships and the environment" (Honoré, n.d.). Today, it is rare to experience the commensality or attend a dinner presided over by nostalgic grandparents; waxing tales that continue long after dessert is served. The increased pace of life has not only severe impacts on our bodily health and environment, but also on our social relationships with the people around us.

The slow philosophy is, then, an emergent result of growing dissatisfaction with the fast life introduced by modernity. "At its heart, slow living is a conscious attempt to change the current temporal order to one which offers *more* time, time to attend to everyday life" (Parkins & Craig,

2006, p.3). Hence, reclaiming and restructuring our temporality will render our worldly engagements more auspicious (Parkins, 2004).

Manuel Castells, similarly, has emphasized the loss of meaning in space and time by the advances in communication technologies starting in the end of 20th century. Time and space have disappeared and localities have become disembodied by the substitution of a new culture based on the space of flows and timeless time, which "transcends and includes the diversity of historically transmitted systems of representation: the culture of real virtuality where make-believe is belief in the making" (2010, p.406). New media technologies obliterated the boundaries between different time frames and dominated *space of flows* through providing an electronic link that connects people from diverse parts of the world, in opposition to *space of places* where human experiences and sensorial engagements are organized around the confines of locality (Castells, 2011, p.576). This is coupled with *timeless time* that is the compression of time in the modern world where a globalized culture is constituted by the melting of time scarcity and distinct characteristics of locality in the same pot. Therefore, space and time, as "the material foundations of human experience, have been transformed, as the space of flows dominates the space of places, and timeless time supersedes clock time of the industrial era" (Castells, 2010, p. 1).

For Parkins and Craig, slow living involves "the negotiation of different temporalities, deriving from a commitment to occupy time more attentively" (Parkins & Craig, 2006, p.3). Only through decelerating the pace of life and reclaiming our space of place as well as abolishing timeless time, can we re-appropriate our everyday life. Consequently, slow philosophy represents "a longing for a lost world of calm, stability and leisure that is almost constitutive of modernity [...] that become connected in social protest movements to the ideas of a decelerated post-or countermodernity" (Rosa, 2013, p.85). Some of the movements inspired by slow philosophy are "wellness revolution" (Kickbusch & Payne, 2003), "voluntary simplicity movement" (Alexander & Ussher, 2012), "slow media" (Barranquero-Carretero, 2013) and "slow tourism" (Timms & Conway, 2012). Among these, slow food movement constitutes the first and the biggest network developed by a group of activists in 1980s to defend regional traditions, good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life in general (Slow Food, 2015).

2.2 From Slow Philosophy to Slow Food Movement

"The destiny of nations depends on how they nourish themselves" (Brillat-Savarin, 1825)

The emergence of the Slow Food movement can be traced back to a demonstration in 1986 in Rome, initiated by Carlo Petrini who organized to protest the opening of a McDonalds near the Piazza di Spagna. The Slow Food Manifesto was signed in Paris in 1989 as its official onset (Slow Food, n.d.). Petrini (2001, p.69) presents the movement as advocating "the primacy of sensory experience and treats eyesight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste as so many instruments of discernment, self-defense and pleasure. The education of taste is the slow way to resist McDonaldization". Today, the Slow Food network has around 100.000 members in 150 countries all over the world and local chapters, called *conviva* (singular: *convivum*), unite members as autonomous groups that form the building blocks of the association (Slow Food, n.d.). Until 1990 there were *conviva* only in Italy which was later followed by Germany and Switzerland. More than 1300 *conviva* around the world today consist of members who share meals, visit local farmers, organize meetings and movie nights, attend educational taste courses and symposiums, bolster farmers' markets and underpin local and international campaigns (Slow Food, n.d.).

The movement aims to protect the taste that is getting lost in the accelerating global world. According to Petrini (2001, p.28), the ultimate goal of the movement is "to rescue eating establishments, dishes, and products from the flood of standardization". Standardization not only impacts the taste but also agricultural production techniques, soil, environment and even our dining habits. Therefore; the term 'slow' is coined "to represent qualities that are opposites of fast food - sustainable farming; artisanal production; fresh, local, seasonal produce; recipes handed down through generations and leisurely dining with family and friends" (Mayer & Knox, 2010, p.1552). Hence, slow food represents a lot more than the pleasure of eating.

The motto of the movement is *good, clean, and fair* food. The *goodness* of the food comes from its natural flavor and aroma, being not affected by unsustainable production practices while the *cleanness* represents the environmentally-friendly life cycle of the food production and consumption that regards ecosystem health, biodiversity and health of the producers and consumers (Slow Food, 1989). Additionally, *fairness* considers the rights and labor power of agricultural workers who are presented to receive adequate rewards, which is through the pursuit of balanced global economies, the practice of sympathy and solidarity and respect for cultural diversities and traditions (Slow Food,

1989). As Mayer and Knox (2004, p.324) mention, "Slow Food's emphasis on the way food is produced and consumed and its normative goal of promoting organic, seasonal, traditional, and distinctive food highlights characteristics such as high quality, asset specificity, sensitivity to local history and culture, as well as crafts orientation and sustainability". Through a connected understanding, the movement aims at bridging the societal, economic and environmental aspects of food production and consumption that are also matters of sustainable development.

There are several crucial programs and events initiated by the movement such as the International Slow Food Congress which was held in Venice and the inauguration of its own publishing house 'Slow Food Editore' (Slow Food, n.d.). Through several publications, the movement aims to disseminate agricultural, culinary and eco-gastronomic knowledge and provide basics of slow tourism.

In 1996, Slow Food initiated the international fair of *Salone del Gusto* in Turin, held once a year to nurture the development of artisanal and sustainable foods/products with small-scale producers. The first project presented in 1996 is *Ark of Taste*. "The Ark of Taste travels the world to collect small-scale quality productions that belong to the cultures, history and traditions of the entire planet: an extraordinary heritage of fruits, vegetables, animal breeds, cheeses, breads, sweets and cured meats..." (Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity, n.d.). There are currently 2431 products in the list of the project and the project is trying to rescue these local and craft products, which are about to extinct. The Swedish elderflower honey native to Skåne region and İzmir Tulum cheese peculiar to Aegean region of Turkey are among the products in the list, which are highly dependent on preservation of natural environment for survival.

In 2003, two crucial bodies were introduced within the scope of Slow Food movement. First, the University of Gastronomic Sciences was founded in cooperation with the Piedmont and Emilia-Romagna regions of Italy, with the goal of creating "an international research and education center for those working on renewing farming methods, protecting biodiversity, and building an organic relationship between gastronomy and agricultural science" (University of Gastronomic Sciences, 2012). Second, the Foundation for Biodiversity of Slow Food Movement launched the project of *Earth Market*, a worldwide community-run farmer's markets which respect the slow food philosophy (Earth Markets, n.d.). Through these, local economy is tried to be strengthened and relation between producer and consumer is established.

Slow Food Movement continues to collaborate with several projects, events and networks such as *Terra Madre*, *Slow Fish Network*, the Project of *Thousands Gardens in Africa* and *ESSEDRA (Environmentally Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of Rural Areas)*². Alongside of such projects, the movement gave rise to the development of the Cittaslow movement.

2.3 Emergence of Cittaslow

"Slow cities were not born as a conservation movement, but, rather, as a movement that in the wake of modernization and globalization asks itself about how to transfer „cities“ in a globalised world without making them lose their soul in that journey" (Paolo Saturnini cited in Miele, 2008, p.136).

In October 1999, mayor of Greve-in-Chianti, Paolo Saturnini, organized a founding meeting of the Cittaslow in Orvieto in collaboration with the mayors of Orvieto, Bra and Positano towns to discuss the desired characteristics of the slow cities. They decided to work towards:

"calmer and less-polluted physical environments, conserving local aesthetic traditions and fostering local crafts, produce and cuisine. They also pledged to use technology to create healthier environments, to make citizens aware of the value of more leisurely rhythms to life and to share their experience in seeking administrative solutions for better living. The goal is to foster the development of places that enjoy a robust vitality based on good food, healthy environments, sustainable economies and traditional rhythms of community life" (Mayer & Knox, 2010, p.1554).

Consequently, a Cittaslow Charter consisted of 72 articles (requirements of excellence) under 7 headings were created and signed by the mayors (See Appendix A). These headings are (1) Energy and Environmental Policy, (2) Infrastructure Policies, (3) Quality of Urban Life Policies, (4) Agricultural, Touristic, and Artisan Policies, (5) Policies for Hospitality, Awareness and Training, (6) Social Cohesion and (7) Partnerships.

The impact of Slow Food movement is most visible in the agricultural policies. Cittaslow aims to uphold the autochthonous production that is rooted in culture and tradition and "contributes to the identity of an area, maintaining its modes and mores and promoting preferential occasions and

² For further information, see www.slowfood.com

spaces for direct contacts between the consumers, renamed 'co-producers' by Slow Food, and the producers of quality products" (Miele, 2008, p.139). As an indication system, the charter allows the Cittaslow Committee to evaluate and certify the candidate towns.

The initial eligibility requirement for a town is to have its population be less than 50,000. The candidate cities must agree to accept the guidelines, fulfill at least the half of the criteria mentioned in the charter and promise to continue doing so (Cittaslow, n.d.). Cittaslow's target is to achieve a new development model that pays attention to environmental health and preservation of local cultures and traditions by assuring a particular identity for each city: "[...]there is no doubt that it [Cittaslow] will be more human, environmentally correct and sensible for the present and future generations; the project will respect small realities in a more and more global connected world" (Cittaslow, n.d.).

The candidate city is supposed to prepare an application dossier including geographical description of the town, its ecosystem, flora and fauna, socio-demographic structure, economic structure as well as ambitions and motivations for becoming a Cittaslow combined with an analysis of fulfilled criteria and future works. The application is evaluated by the national Cittaslow Scientific Committee in the country. In the past, all the applications were being submitted to the international headquarter of Cittaslow in Italy until the national networks were launched and the decision-making power has shifted to the national networks. This shift accentuates the internalization and decentralization of the movement (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.29). If the minimum criteria are evaluated to be possessed by the city, it is admitted to the international network and the town starts to make use of the logo of Cittaslow (See Figure 1) in the municipality documents, touristic brochures or signboards in the town.



Figure 1. The Official Logo of Cittaslow (www.Cittaslow.org)

Although local groups, NGOs and activists can collaborate with the municipalities in the projects of Cittaslow, municipalities are the key governance mechanisms in the application process to Cittaslow and the realization of the Cittaslow requirements. Cittaslow, therefore, begins life as "a top-down process, led by Cittaslow activists who work in concordance with the Town Council" (Pink, 2009, p.456). Thus, it is more formally organized and operates on a city policy level compared to Slow Food movement (Radstrom, 2011, p.94). However, achieving the Cittaslow status is not an end; rather, the memberships can be decertified as happened in the cases of previous Cittaslow towns of Jangheung and Shinan. Cittaslow towns are responsible for preparing annual reports to the International Assembly of Cittaslow network about the achievements and projects that their towns implemented or plan to implement in the immediate future. Furthermore, the internationally elected assembly consists of people from ten Cittaslow towns or national assemblies of the countries have a right to visit the towns without informing in advance and give decisions about the status of the town.

Milutinovic (2010) sees Cittaslow as an instrument for the locals to protect the unique characteristics of their town as well its environment, social life and local economy embedded in specific locality. Knox and Mayer (2013) also suggest that the emphasis on local economy by appropriating local assets is a great challenge to corporate-centered economic development models of world cities. Through this, Cittaslow renders the economic facet of sustainability possible. Promoting local economic activities such as a craft peculiar to a specific town, or cultivation of local autochthonous agricultural produce, is one of the ways posed by Cittaslow to challenge the dominant corporate-centered development models. Therefore, Cittaslow takes the advantage of local identity and sense of place for achieving a healthy development of the towns (Radstrom, 2011, p.105). The urban development model underpinned by Cittaslow rests upon the characteristics of alternative urban development agendas developed by David Imbroscio as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Cittaslow as an Alternative Urban Development Model (Imbroscio, 2003)

Comparing Corporate-Centered to Alternative Urban Development Agendas

Agendas	Corporate-centered/mainstream	Alternative
Characteristics	Homogenized Single imperative Inequitable Industrial Standardized Corporate Unsustainable Copied Low quality Replicable Insensitive to local history, culture Fast	Idiosyncratic/asset specific Multiple imperatives Equitable Craft Customized Grassroots Sustainable Authentic High quality Asset specific Sensitive to local history, culture Slow
Examples	Urban mega projects Smokestack chasing Industrial food systems	Community economic development Slow City Slow Food

The Cittaslow movement, however, is subjected to several criticisms. Tomlinson (2007, p.147) points out that "...Cittaslow, in promoting the development of small towns (of 50,000 inhabitants or less), represents the interests of a particular spatial-cultural constituency and a related localized form of capital. In a sense then, and without being unduly cynical, both movements [Slow Food and Cittaslow] could be seen as defending enclaves of interest, rather than offering plausible models for more general social transformation". The concept of Cittaslow is also open to manipulation. Since the acquisition of the status depends on the fulfillment of the half of the criteria, the town has an option to focus more on the criteria related with the economy and less on the environmental and social pillars. Thus, it carries the risk of being solely an economic tool for the survival of the towns while downplaying the environmental and social concerns. Furthermore, Ball (2015, p.575) stresses the relationship between Cittaslow and the intensity caused by the tourism: "...the town needs to be aware that the acquisition of this status carries the risk that the intensity with which the town is used by others may increase. At an early stage this may bring about a welcome increase in tourism. But over time it may also lead to the displacement of low-income residents and businesses as property prices increase and only new incoming middle class households can afford properties". The Cittaslow town also bears the risk of overpopulation, traffic jam, noise pollution, increase in the number of houses built due to becoming a touristic appeal. As a result, it can deviate from its primary aims.

2.3.1 Cittaslow Cases in the World

Today, Cittaslow Network has reached 192 member cities from 30 countries (Cittaslow, 2011). Each member town has its own regional peculiarities in terms of socio-economic and demographic structures, culture, traditions, environment and flora/fauna. Miele (2008) considers the Cittaslow towns as 'ordinary towns' which have their own visions of slowness and sustainability although they undertake common initiatives. To illustrate, while the population of Cittaslow Djúpavogshreppur is 504 (Statistics Iceland, 2015), the population of Cittaslow Seferihisar is 35.960 (TUIK, 2014). These two towns also differ from each other in terms of agricultural practices, flora and fauna as a result of different climatic zones that they inhabit. "While the towns in Cittaslow are pursuing a variety of different goals, what unites them, what they have in common, is a desire to protect the unique and distinctive aspects of their communities" (Beatley, 2004, p.335).

Motivations behind the Cittaslow certification vary across the cities. Mayer and Knox, in their comparative analysis of Italian, German, and British towns, show that "the Italian towns place a

greater emphasis on improving environmental aspects such as waste management, eliminating light pollution, and local economic development through tourism. German towns, in contrast, emphasize the promotion of local products and produce, food and nutritional education, and the implementation of alternative energy systems. Differences also exist in how a city is motivated to become part of the movement" (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.30). The Cittaslow Ludlow in United Kingdom is focusing more on the farmers markets while Cittaslow Orvieto in Italy puts effort into the sustainable transportation system (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.31). Another epitome is the focus of German Cittaslow towns on the sustainable energy production and consumption (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.31).

Decrease in populations of small towns in Italy, due to the lack of job opportunities and local economic resources, resulted in an increasing emphasis on urban planning and amelioration of façade for providing a pleasant environment both for visitors and locals (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.31). Locals are taking active roles in planning, decision-making and implementation processes in the network. For example, in German Cittaslow Hersbruck and many other Italian towns, "local environmental protection groups have formed strong coalitions with farmers, city government, and small businesses to protect traditional pastureland and orchards" (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.33). In British Cittaslow Aylsham, the regional planning agency is undertaking this inspection role (Mayer & Knox, 2009, p.33). However, it is not possible for the towns to achieve sustainable urban development unless they articulate 72 requirements of being Cittaslow in their political agenda and locals internalize its philosophy at the same time.

Sarah Pink (2007), in her study of Aylsham town from an anthropological perspective, argues that Cittaslow has opened up a space where locals are empowered to base their decisions on their own bodily/sensory experiences. The sensory experiences of the locals prioritized over the technocratic approaches and visualizations of urban planners are an integral part and fulcrum of the Cittaslow project. This form of participation and activism, different from demonstrations and petitions, is called 'indirect activism' realized through various activities and projects of the Cittaslow (Pink, 2008a). Indirect activism enables local people to come together and form a community terrain with the potential for generation of social bonds, sustainability projects as well as make correct decisions about the future of their towns (Pink, 2008a, p.171). In her other study in Ludlow, Pink (2008b, p.98) coins the term 'sensory sustainability' that is "foregrounded by Cittaslow in several ways: through the sensory education projects of Slow Food; and Cittaslow membership criteria indicate concern for sensory elements of the urban environment (including sound and environmental pollution, planting "sweet-smelling" flowers, and architecture)". Thus, Cittaslow operates not only on the levels of

economy, society and environment but also through "people's sensory emplaced experience of socialities, foods, skilled practices and knowledge that in part serves to sustain their involvement" (Pink, 2008b, p.105).

Furthermore, Pink and Servan investigated the experiential dimension of urban experience in the Spanish town Lekeitio and concluded that both locals and the Mayor conceptualize the Cittaslow as a "way of being, experiencing and sensing" (2013, p.458). By adopting a multi-sensory methodology, they argue that historicity, topography and the geographic location are together the sources of the identity and uniqueness of their town (2013, p.459). Adjacent houses, absence of big supermarket chains, and proximity to the seaside are some constitutive elements of Lekeitio that shape the economy of the town, emphasizing its uniqueness and authenticity among other towns (Pink & Servon, 2013). Furthermore, Lekeitio has demonstrated how to pave the way to glocalization: through the intermingle of the global and the local to maintain local peculiarities and soar the quality of life (2015, p.1-4).

Semmens and Freeman, in their case study on Cittaslow towns in New Zealand, found that "Cittaslow only works for towns of particular type and style: Eurocentric, affluent communities that are already 'slow' and embrace sustainability culture, but these are scarce in New Zealand where planners are tackling extensive cultural and socio-economic divisions" (2012, p.372). The locals in the candidate towns consider Cittaslow as a top-down superfluous process which imposes excessive regulatory approach that undermines community support and hinders the effective functioning of Cittaslow (Semmens and Freeman, 2012, p.370). These concerns are also raised by local people from Falköping, the only Cittaslow town of Sweden and in Polish Cittaslow towns of Poland (Grzelak-Kostulska et. al., 2011, p.191). Local people who disapprove the Cittaslow status of Falköping started a campaign on Facebook named 'Ogilla [Dislike] Cittaslow Falköping]. Therefore, "by commodifying 'slow' space, Italian culture could become yet another feature of global culture and force a homogenized 'slow identity' on residents, particularly in countries like New Zealand where slow life is generally, if not explicitly, recognized and experienced" (Semmens and Freeman, 2012, p.370).

These cases show that the implementation of Cittaslow is not as ideal as it sounds. "Since the implementation of the Cittaslow concept involves changes in lifestyle, it will inevitably become a long-term and contested process. And although the concept is aimed at being based in the local community, it can be perceived as top-down, since it is directed by the local government" (Nilsson et. al., 2011, p.382). The application of a standardized philosophy in a variety of contexts containing

various cultures and different perceptions is a point that the Cittaslow philosophy has undermined in its implementation.

2.3.2 Turkey Meets with Cittaslow

"As a former staff in Gökçeada Municipality, I had a presentation in the fourth floor of Seferihisar Municipality Hall for the application to Cittaslow Network and I was late. I was climbing up stairs in a hurry with the projector in my hands. Someone stopped me and said "What you are doing is against the Cittaslow philosophy. Now you are in a hurry and you will be exhausted when you arrive on the room! Then you will have to take a rest for 10 minutes to set up the projector. No deal! Climb up stairs slowly and set up your projector straight away". He was right! This tells everything about Cittaslow: 'right deceleration'. Then, I realized that the guy that stopped me is the Head of the Cittaslow Turkey Network" (Interview #14, 15.02.2015).

This story told by the interviewee, a former member of the Cittaslow network in Gökçeada, implies the ambiguity of the term deceleration or slowness as a normative life-regulatory dimension. In our recent times, the slowness connotes a negative and pejorative meaning. Therefore, translation of Cittaslow into Turkish as *Sakin Şehir* (Tranquil City) rather than *Yavaş Şehir* (Slow City) is not a coincidence. In the Turkish context, 'yavaş şehir' signified backwardness, anti-industrialization, underdevelopment and laziness.

A Western town of Turkey, Seferihisar, was accepted as the first Cittaslow town of Turkey in 2009, which created a showcase for other candidate cities in the country; which are Akyaka, Gökçeada, Halfeti, Perşembe, Seferihisar, Taraklı, Vize, Yalvaç and Yenipazar as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Current Cittaslow Towns in Turkey. (<http://www.Cittaslow.org/map.php?lng=2>)

According to Article 26 of the International Cittaslow Charter, "[i]f within the National and/or Territorial area meet at least three member cities, a National or Territorial Organizational Structure is established, which is the reference for the Coordinating Committee, called National Branch" (Cittaslow, 2014, p.18). After Seferihisar was officially recognized as first Cittaslow in 2009, the number of Cittaslow towns reached to 4 by 2011 and National Network was launched. It is the executive body that consists of one national network representative per town and has the duties of electing the national coordinator. It organizes the association's activities by several projects, reports the progress of the towns to the International Coordinating Committee in Italy, arranges the budget, verifies the application of candidate towns and directs these applications to the International Coordinating Committee (Cittaslow, 2014, pp.18-19).

The studies conducted within a Turkish context have focused on Seferihisar mostly. Özgen found that locals in Seferihisar are satisfied with the implementation of Cittaslow in terms of quality of life, physical environment and economy (2012, p.145). Yurtseven and Kaya, in their quantitative research on the tourist profiles and their travel behaviors, found that these tourists can be categorized as the slow tourists who are educated, open to slow experiences/philosophy and enjoying eco-gastronomic and culinary assets of Seferihisar (2011, p.94). Seferihisar, after becoming a Cittaslow, began to experience rapid increase in population, alterations in social relations (for instance, a decrease in solidarity among locals, emergence of capitalistic and calculative mentality among people as well as increase in rent, traffic jam, noise pollution and prices in general (Sünnetçioğlu et. al., 2014). In particular, increase in housing prices and rents attracted investors from metropolitan cities to Seferihisar which eventually reduced the locals' purchasing power (Andarabi et. al., 2014, p.83).

Many studies on Turkish Cittaslow towns strive to determine possible candidate towns. Baldemir et. al (2013) conducted a quantitative research on 7 potential Cittaslow towns in Turkey to assess to what extent these towns are in line with the Cittaslow requirements and claimed that the town of Datça is the best potential candidate for Cittaslow. These recommended towns are located in the western coasts of Turkey, residing in different socio-economic and political context compared to the Anatolian towns in general. As Ekinçi mentions, "the candidate cities in the centre, but especially those in the east of Turkey, face financial shortages as regards covering the costs of purification facilities, systems for controlling pollution, and environmental management systems. They also lack the necessary qualified human resources to follow required procedures for Cittaslow membership" (2014, p.186). Moreover, both Sırım (2012) and Karabağ et al. (2012) consider Cittaslow as an economic opportunity for the local economy: "A major obstacle in towns' abilities to

benefit their tourism potential is their lack of a well-known and defined brands and also the lack of organizations in terms of branding and marketing management seems to be another important problem. In this sense, we could foresee and understand the advantages of Cittaslow movements in the process of becoming a good brand" (Karabağ et. al., 2012, p.72). Moreover, Keskin (2012, p.97) advocates Cittaslow's transformative power and the possibility of opening up the Anatolian towns to the world without compromising their peculiarities.

Ergüven (2011), in his study in Cittaslow Vize, discovered that there is a danger of turning into a pseudo-metropolitan city if the advertising and marketing perspectives dominate the local Cittaslow agenda. Despite the satisfaction of the locals, Hatipoglu (2014) also warns that if not carefully examined, the development of unsustainable tourism can hinder the long-term realization of Cittaslow ideals in Vize. In response, Öztürk and Güral (2014) suggested that the local people should be informed and educated about the hospitality and services in order to attract the visitors to the town and invigorate the local economy. In the case of Gökçeada, Kilic and Aydogan (2014, p.2228) stated that the label of Cittaslow mostly serves as attraction for tourism in Gökçeada, which has an abundance of alternative tourism potentials because of the wind surfing possibility in the town. As inferred, Cittaslow in the Turkish context is interpreted to be a mean to tourism development. Rather than focusing on achieving environmental and social sustainability, these cases neglect the inherent links of Cittaslow and sustainability and thereby the facets of local and autochthonous production, slow living, protection of local culture and environment, as well as social sustainability.

3 Methodology and Methods of the Study

3.1 Describing Study Sites

3.1.1 Gökçeada: The Single Island Cittaslow of the World

The island town of Gökçeada (Greek: Imvros, literally means 'windy'), located in the north of Aegean Sea, is the biggest island of Turkey as shown in Figure 3 . It is a district of Çanakkale Province with a mixed population of Greek and Turkish people, numbering 8644. The island, with 289.5 km² surface area, has a 29.5 km shoreline length and is surrounded by Çanakkale province on the East, Bozcaada (Greek: Tenedhos) and Lemnos Islands on the South, Semothrace Island and Thrace region on the North. Its altitude is 48 meters.



Figure 3. The Location of Çanakkale Province and Gökçeada town in Turkey. (Wikipedia, 2009)

"The island is formed of steep and broken volcanic aggregates and 77% of the total area of the island is mountains, 12% is steep and broken ground, and 11% is plain" (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, p.2). Throughout history, Gökçeada was governed by many civilizations such as Ancient Greeks, Anatolian Persians, Romans and Ottomans. It is still possible to see the remnants of these civilizations in Gökçeada.

Apart from the town centre, there are 11 villages in the island. While 6229 people today are living in the centre of the town, 2415 people are residing in the villages. The main economic activity in the island is pension operating. There are no heavy industries and corporate firms in Gökçeada. Gökçeada acquired the status of Cittaslow in 2011 by the initiation of Prof. Rıdvan Yurtseven from the Department of Gastronomy of Çanakkale 18 Mart University.

According to General Directorate of Electric Power Resources Survey and Development Administration of Turkey, Gökçeada is one of the richest regions in Turkey in terms of wind energy potential (Yılmaz et. al., 2010). Additionally, it is the fourth island in the world in terms of the rich water resources (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, p.2). While the northern part has Thrace continental climate, the southern part of the island has Mediterranean climate with the potential of solar energy.

The deportation of Greek citizens from Turkish territories in 1964 represents a radical break for Gökçeada in its socio-economic structure, culture and tradition. Until 1964, Greeks dominated the population. After the Cyprus dispute in 1963, the Greek population in Gökçeada was pauperized as a result of broad-scale confiscation of the private lands, especially olive groves, (the main source of income for the Greek people) and myriad administrative decisions were made which precluded the commercial activities of the islanders (Yücel & Yıldız, 2014, p.153). Further, Turkification of the island commenced with the assimilation program accepted by the National Security Council of Turkey in 1964 (Oğur, 2012). Greek schools were closed by the Turkish state and approximately 300 Greek citizens were bereft of citizenship. Some Greek artisans were forced to stop practicing 'Turkish'

crafts. With the construction of the semi-open agriculture prison in Gökçeada, criminals and their families were placed there. The criminals, hanging around freely, started to vandalize the Greek shops, houses and their agricultural lands. In 1970, the name of Imvros was changed with Gökçeada.

312 people from 61 households from the Şahinkaya village in the Trabzon Province of the Black Sea region were brought to the island in July 1973 (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, pp.8-9) to achieve ethnic recomposition. In the early 80s, the state established two new villages for the migrants from Isparta, who were victimized by the flooding due to dam building (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, pp.8-9). Later, the state brought 2000 migrants more to the island from Milas town after their lands being damaged by foundation of a hydro-electric central. More recently, approximately 200 Bulgarian Turk and 150 Turkish people from Biga town were relocated in Gökçeada (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, pp.9-10). The state established 5 new villages for the newcomers. While there were 9456 Greek citizens in the island in 1893 (Bozbeyoglu & Onan, 2000, pp.9-10), this number rapidly decreased after 1960s and now there are nearly 200 Greek citizens living in the island.

3.1.2 Halfeti: The Single Cittaslow Town from Middle East Region

The town of Halfeti (Kurdish: Xalfeti), located in Southeastern Turkey, constitutes the Northwestern part of Şanlıurfa Province as pointed in Figure 4. 38.345 Turkish and Kurdish people live in the town. 24% of the population lives in the center while 76% lives in the villages. The town is located in parallel with the Euphrates River with a 35 km length of riverside. The region has a semi-Mediterranean micro-climate due to the effects of the river. The altitude of the town is 525 meters. The total surface area of Halfeti is 646 km². It is surrounded by Gaziantep Province on the west and Adiyaman Province on the north. Furthermore, it is roughly 120 km to Şanlıurfa and 70 km to the Syrian border.



Figure 4. The Location of Halfeti. (Eowyn, 2014)

The history of Halfeti goes back as far as 2.000 B.C and it hosted the civilizations of Hittites, Assyrians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Mongols and Ottomans in the past (Halfeti Municipality, 2015). Therefore, it hosts archeological sites, historical remnants (churches and mosques) as well as caves, palaces and castles as tourist attraction sites. The endemic plant of 'black rose' is only grown in Halfeti in Turkey. Although agriculture is no longer the main economic activity, more than half of the arable land is covered by pistachio, vineyards and olive trees in the town and only 2% of the agricultural land is suitable for the irrigated farming (Halfeti Municipality, 2015). The local economy is currently dependent on touristic activities in the region.

Construction of Birecik Dam in 2000, as the sub-project of Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), is the historic moment of Halfeti. It led to a massive increase in the water level of Euphrates and 80% of the town was submerged, together with the agricultural lands and villages alongside the river. The effect of inundation is shown in Photograph 1 below. "Many in Halfeti talk about the inundation and what was lost of the unique microclimate that existed along the banks of the Euphrates — people grew pomegranates, apricots, plums, pistachios, and other fruits and nuts" (Harris, 2012, p.30). In addition, many people were displaced and local economic activities changed.



Photograph 1. Halfeti before and after the inundation. (www.wowturkey.com)

Before inundation, the horticulture was one of the main economic activities of the locals in the town and it was mainly practiced on the fields near the river. "While 9 village settlements were fully affected, impoundment also had its partial effects in 3 more villages and a part of the town of Halfeti. The dam also affected farmlands of 31 more villages while leaving the settlements intact. This means that altogether 44 settlements were affected by the dam. The total number of people affected by this process was 30,003 (according to the 1997 Census) and 6,500 people from 850 households were subject to resettlement". (Acma, 2005, p.6). The state resettled people to a new area, 15 km away from the town which now constitutes the center of Halfeti. The presence of relatively better housing, education, infrastructure and health opportunities have attracted people

and consequently, most of the population chose to move there. Meanwhile, the old center became a tourist spot and showcase of the region, and the sunken city of Hafeti is now labeled as a 'hidden paradise'.

3.2 Qualitative Research Design and Case Study Approach

As a situated activity that is locating the researcher in the world being studied, this study adopts a qualitative research approach in exploring the operations of Cittaslow in Gökçeada and Halfeti. Through detailed interviewing and observation, qualitative research provided the opportunity to get closer to the perspective of the research participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.12). Qualitative research, particularly from a constructionist perspective, sees the facts as socially constructed, which is fundamental in understanding the social reality (Silverman, 2015, p.107). Thereby, social reality which is a social construction itself can only be understood in their own settings by making sense of social phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013) which otherwise would be reduced to numerical and manipulated data (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003a, p. 57). In accordance with this, I conducted two fieldwork studies. The first was in Gökçeada (15 days) and the second in Halfeti (15 days), in order to generate comprehensive data on the operations of Cittaslow in these two different contexts and make observations in their natural settings (Burgess, 2006, p.65). Moreover, I adopted a study method that "concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and close attention to the influence of its social, political and other context" (Stake, 2000, p.444). Instead of aiming for a comparative analysis, this case study looks at Cittaslow operations in different contexts, through which I aim to reveal out differing depictions of sustainability. As "[g]ood studies should be read as narratives in their entirety" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, 241), I do not aim for a generalization in the end.

3.3. Data Generation Methods

To begin with, my primary method for data generation was conducting semi-structured interviews including open-ended questions. This enabled my interviewees to express their ideas and feelings on the concept of Cittaslow and its operations in their towns freely, unlike closed questions. The questionnaire which is consisted of 30 questions for the locals is different from the questionnaire prepared specifically for the municipality and Cittaslow staff (see appendix B and C for the interview

questions³). I conducted 46 semi-structured interviews with the locals, municipality and Cittaslow staff in two towns between February and March, 2015, by adopting purposeful sampling and snowball sampling methods (see appendix D). Moreover, I conducted another interview with the Cittaslow Turkey Network Coordinator in Seferihisar town, which also gave me a chance to observe the first Cittaslow town of Turkey. I generated audio-records of my interviews with the officials and took notes while interviewing locals so that locals could feel more confident. The duration of the interviews was approximately 2-3 hours, depending on the knowledge and enthusiasm of the interviewees and all the interviews were conducted in places decided by the research participants.



Photo 2. Interviewing with the Representative of Cittaslow Halfeti in one of the float restaurants in the town (Gülbandılar, 2015)

Secondly, I conducted one focus group in Gökçeada and one in Halfeti in order to listen and observe the way the locals discuss about specific issues concerning Cittaslow (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003a, p.58). Different from the interviews, the focus groups gave me a chance to observe the production of knowledge in a dynamic way and identify points of agreements and disagreements of people.

³ 30 questions in the questionnaires were mainly initiators of the interviews which means that I did not fully adhere to them. The questions were always adjusted according to the background of my interviewees.



Photo 3. Focus Group in Gökçeada (Gülbandılar, 2015)

Lastly, participant observation was another strategy adopted to better understand the everyday life of people, their pace of lives and daily occupations. It is important to note that during the entire fieldwork period, I stayed in the houses of locals and spent my time as they did. In this way, I better understood the locals' life styles and rhythm of their lives that are important aspects of Cittaslow. I found my host family in Gökçeada via the website of Couchsurfing. In Halfeti, my access to the locals was provided by a PhD student in University of Zurich in the Department of Social Anthropology, who previously conducted an ethnographic field research there. These host families were 'gatekeepers' who facilitated my access to other people.

Furthermore, I generated visual data (photographs and video records) in the towns and gathered brochures and reports from the municipalities. I also analyzed the national and regional press news, documentaries about Halfeti and Gökçeada, related columns in the newspapers, news and reports published in the municipality websites.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations have utmost importance in conducting a qualitative research design (Creswell 2007; Scheyvens et al. 2003b). Informed consent, confidentiality and trust are the major components of this ethical attitude.

The study and its aims were made "predictable and explicable before the research itself is carried out at all" (Atkinson 2009, 21). Therefore, informed consent was the prerequisite in my

research. Taking the permission of the research participants before conducting interviews and focus groups served a guarantee that all the participants understood the purpose and nature of the research (Yin, 2010, p.46). Thus, I adopted an overt role through introducing myself and my research at the moment I got in the field.

Protection and confidentiality of the data I generated was another essential element guiding my research. Not sharing data with the participants at the moment of research and in future was important. Some interviewees (especially municipality staff and Cittaslow representatives) requested the finalized thesis to make use of it for future Cittaslow projects and I approved their request, which increased the confidentiality and trust among me and interviewees. Moreover, Yin mentions that "in nearly every study, participant anonymity, together with the use of pseudonyms, is the option of choice" (2010, p.264). Thus, I neither indicated real names nor created pseudonyms for the names of the interviewees as most of the participants did not want to be mentioned overtly. Additionally, I got permission from my research participants to use the photographs in the thesis.

3.5. Limitations

The limited time and resources always determine the scope and possibilities of your research. This determined the number of interviews I conducted as well as duration of my presence in the towns. This also constrained the cases I selected so that I could only visit three Cittaslow towns among 9 cases in Turkey. Moreover, some important people such as Mayor of Halfeti and Representative of Cittaslow Gökçeada were not in the town and not accessible via other means of communication during my fieldwork period, as I contacted them via emails but did not hear back.

4 Conceptual Framework

"Theory is exactly like a tool box. ... A theory has to be used, it has to work" (Deleuze, 2004, p.206).

4.1 Sign, Signifier, Signified, Empty (Floating) Signifier

The 'linguistic turn' in social sciences has been triggered by Ferdinand de Saussure with his groundbreaking work *Course in General Linguistic (2006)*. Through embracing a synchronic method, he questioned the 'value' in language instead of the changes in meaning (Joseph, 2004) and focused

on 'word' as the unit of analysis. The sign is composed of two parts, 'signifier' (the identity of the word as the any tangible element of sign whether written or spoken) and 'signified' (what the signifier means) among which exists an arbitrary relationship (Saussure, 2006, p.67). The relationality⁴ of the signs within the totality (signifying chain) is the criteria of differentiating signs from each other. Therefore, "[n]o sign is sufficient unto itself: it is, linguistically, by virtue of what it isn't" (Sturrock, 2003, p.39).

However, the value of a sign is not fixed and has different meanings within different discursive structures. For instance, the concepts of 'multiculturalism', 'democracy' or 'sustainability' are significations with conflicting and contested meanings (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.3). This disaccord between the signifier and its signification is "the very condition of politics and political change" (Laclau, 2000, p.185). For instance, while liberal discourse invests the sign of 'freedom' with the meaning of 'free market economy', communist discourse views the same sign as signifying 'an ownership of one's own work'. Therefore, this fluidity of the meaning of a sign is what makes it an 'empty signifier' (floating signifier): "a signifier without a signified" (Laclau, 1996, p.36). The signifier, of course, cannot be thought without any signification but it can be "emptied of any one particular meaning and takes on a universal function of representing an entirety of ambiguous, fuzzy, related meanings" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.3). Therefore, the empty signifier, instead of signifying a phenomenon permanently, is articulating different points relationally and "becomes the privileged nodal point that binds these particular points into a discursive formation" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.3).

4.1.1 Sustainability as an Empty Signifier

What do we mean by sustainability has serious social, political, economic and environmental consequences. Its meaning has been contested throughout history and acquired different meanings in different discourses such as regional master development plans, national development reports, urban policy documents as well as financial reports of big industries.

One of the first attempts to define sustainability is Brundtland Commission's effort which integrated the sustainability into a developmentalist ideology: "humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). This definition paved the way

⁴ For instance, "red stoplight" is signifier and "to stop" is signified. What determines to stop when we see the red light while driving is its difference from other signs; its difference from yellow and green lights.

for the emergence of an understanding of 'sustainable development'. Through this, economic development and environmental preservation were understood to go hand in hand, and it instantly dominated the economic and political agendas of Western countries. This idea, further, emphasized that "economic development is essential to meet social goals of sustainable development" (Haughton, 1999, p.234). Hence, if there is no economic development, social equity and environmental protection were presented as impossible missions.

The Club of Rome, before Brundtland Commission, had defined 'sustainability' differently. By considering the sustainability with reference to ecological limits of the planet, it concluded that "the most probable result (of reaching the limits to growth) will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline in both population and industrial capacity" (Meadows et al., 1972, p.23). Ecological balance rather than economic development was prioritized by the Club of Rome. On the other hand, by bridging the sustainability with degrowth, Kallis claims that sustainable degrowth, as a multi-faceted political framework that can be socially transformative, advocates a socially sustainable reduction of society's throughput or metabolism (2011).

Additionally, there is a popular distinction of weak sustainability and strong sustainability. While the former prioritizes GDP for future generations (Solow, 1992), the latter emphasizes natural capital and its unique contribution to human well-being (Pelenc & Ballet, 2015, p.37).

As seen, the concept of sustainability contains fuzziness due to its tripartite pillars of economy, society and environment between which the concept oscillates. Recently, Hawkes attempts to incorporate 'culture' as the fourth dimension of sustainability (2001), which was always considered as the sub-branch of social pillar (Soini & Birkeland, 2014, p.214). As exemplified above, sustainability has acquired different meanings in different contexts and times. Therefore, its meaning is emptied and reinvested in accordance with the discourse in which it emerges.

4.2 Psychoanalytic Interventions of Jacques Lacan: Master Signifier

People use multiple adjectives or words in presenting and recounting themselves to others. For instance, two persons identifying their lifestyles as 'sustainable' may mean different things depending on how they invest its meaning. One can emphasize going vegan and recycling while the other can put forward green business. The meaning of sustainable lifestyle is achieved through including some elements while excluding some others. The label of sustainability, in this example, "conveys a wide ranging set of contestable rules and values grounded solely in themselves" and

Lacan calls this label "master signifier" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.16). For instance, sustainability is the master signifier of environmental discourses and as a master signifier, it plays the role of attaching together complex and ruffled alignments of narratives under one iconic and universal signifier, which in turn helps us to dispose and communicate our identifications with other people (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.16). However, the conflicting, contested and blurred nature of master signifier reveals the process of identification that is "constitutive of socio-political life" (Stavrakakis, 1999, p.30).

This master signifier which struggles to be invested in different ways by different discourses or subjects, becomes a 'nodal point', or in Lacanian terms 'point de capiton' within a particular discourse, such as green business discourse. Nodal point is a "button tie that pins narratives, or networks of signifiers, to both the individual subject and wider society, so as to order the world" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.16). "[T]he multitude of floating signifiers, of proto-ideological elements, is structured into a unified field through the intervention of a certain nodal point (the Lacanian point de capiton) which quilts them, stops their sliding and fixes their meaning" (Žižek, 1989, p.87). However, this nodal point "will be fundamentally unstable and open to all kinds of hegemonic rearticulations" (Laclau, 1989, p.xiv) because it is created by inclusion of certain elements as well as excluding others which threatens the fixity of the meaning. Therefore, what is signified is always "sliding under the signifier" (Stavrakakis, 2007a, p.6).

4.3 Psychoanalytic Interventions of Jacques Lacan: Desire caused by Lack

The subject, in Lacanian sense, always tries to fix the meaning of its identity, however, since the meanings of signs are always contested as mentioned above, it cannot reach a complete fullness. Lacan elucidates the efforts of this incomplete subject to reach fullness in three stages. In the first stage, the infant is in symbiosis with the mother and "is unaware of any distinct identity of its own separate from that of its principal care-giver" (Hardy, 2007, p.1786). In the second stage, the infant gets separated with the mother but still keeps the memory of this wholeness. Infant realizes that its own body is incongruent with the image of its mother's body and tries to replace the integrity of the reflection of its mother's body on its own reflections (Nobus, 1999). The subject identifies itself through his/her own image in the mirror, i.e. with reference to something outside itself, his/her own Other. This is called as 'fantastic'⁵ in the sense of fantastic wishes originating from sense of lack as a result of underdeveloped motor capacities of the infant. It is a mere fantasy because it is constituted

⁵ This is also called "moi" by Lacan.

at a certain period of life when we cannot constitute ourselves as an integral totality (Nobus, 1999). This representation blocks our vision to see what really we are which is reflected to us from others. This is what Lacan calls 'imaginary'.

In the second stage, the child identifies itself with a lack. This is called 'phallus' which represents the signifier in the language and it is introduced by the name of the father which enforces infant to learn language. The figure of father stands as an external power which infant cannot resist. Consequently, the infant is separated from its mother and articulated in the society. "To be whole is being nurtured and secure with Mum, to be separated is to be incomplete and lacking" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.26). The intervention of phallus, in other words father or language, signifies the entrance into a culture and society, that "separates us from our primordial state of original completeness with Mother" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.26). As subjects, we are sentenced to live with the desire of returning back to this seductive and tempting wholeness, which is an impossible mission once being articulated to the 'social' since this "desire is taken captive by language and its original nature is lost" (Dor, 1998, p.118). This is what Lacan calls 'symbolic'.

The desire for maternal wholeness forces us to fulfill it via several identifications such as political identity, religious identifications/symbols or cultural attachments (Stavrakakis, 2007b). "Subjectivity is characterized by uncertainty, anxiety, alienation, a desire for ontological security, originally that of the infant in relation to the mother. As such, desire to gain a sense of being, or a capacity to know, is inevitable" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.27). Stavrakakis clarifies the significance of the concept of lack in Lacanian theory as such:

"If lack is clearly central to the Lacanian conception of the subject, it is because subjectivity constitutes the space where a whole 'politics' of identification takes place. The idea of the subject as lack cannot be separated from the recognition of the fact that the subject is always attempting to compensate for this constitutive lack at the level of representation, through continuous identification acts. This lack necessitates the constitution of every identity through processes of identification with socially available objects such as political ideologies, patterns of consumption and social roles" (2007a, p.28).

As Gunder and Hillier assert, all these socially available objects (master signifiers of identifications) as empty signifiers contain various incompatible, complex and diverse statements and eventually inform us about how should we think, act or behave under a given condition (2009, p.28). The constructed social reality, in that sense, "is continuous with the field of desire. Desire and

reality are intimately connected... The nature of their link can only be revealed in fantasy ... When harmony is not present it has to be somehow introduced in order for our reality to be coherent. It has to be introduced through a fantasmatic social construction" (Stavrakakis, 1999, p.60).

4.4 Psychoanalytic Interventions of Jacques Lacan: 'Real' and Ideology

Lacan investigates the third order which lies beyond the language and which we can never know: the 'Real' (Sarup, 1993, p.26). Since the 'Real' resides outside of the imaginary and the symbolic, we are not able to comprehend, envision, symbolize or describe it so that at any time we deploy fantasies to palliate it (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.14). We and other objects reside in the Lacanian Real; however we cannot articulate ourselves to it as a result of the lack that is present in the symbolic (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.68), which leads to a failure in precisely defining the abstract concepts such as 'sustainability' or 'environmental quality'. For Laclau, this is the main cause of the presence of agonistic struggles between different groups and their constant efforts to define and impose abstract concepts on others (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.68).

As Stavrakakis mentions, "the Real is a lack in the symbolic that provokes the subject to produce an imaginary element to obscure what is lacking and to give some type of consistency to what cannot be signified within language" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.14). This imaginary element, i.e. fantasy, renders the social reality possible by covering up the void, the lack of the Real (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.14). In Lacan's own words, "the real supports the phantasy, the phantasy protects the real" (Lacan, 1998, p.41). Endeavoring to infuse this void via fantasies always results in failure due to the inadequate structure of the symbolic:

"It is the moment of this failure, the moment of our encounter with the real, that is revealed as the moment of the political [...] It is this traumatic moment of the political qua encounter with the real that initiates again and again a process of symbolisation, and initiates the ever-present hegemonic play between different symbolisations of this real. This play leads to the emergence of politics, to the political institution of a new social fantasy (or of many antagonistic fantasies engaged in a struggle for hegemony) in the place of the dislocated one, and so on and so forth" (Stavrakakis, 1999, pp.73-74).

Similarly, Žižek points out that "what emerges via distortions of the accurate representation of reality is the Real - that is, the trauma around which social reality is structured" (1999, p.79). We

always build up ideological fantasies to reach the Real and through this building up process the social reality comes to an existence. Thus, the Real represents a traumatic void out of which the ideology is constructed (Davidson, 2010, p.394). This constructed ideology with the help of fantasies has a specific purpose of masking "this inconsistency, the fact that 'Society does not exist', and thus to compensate us for the failed identification" (Žižek, 2003, p.373). What Lacan calls 'jouissance' (the enjoyment) is basically originated in these efforts to fill the void through fantasies with the help of a master signifier that blocks the slipping of free floating signification around the void (Evans, 2006, p.94). However, fixing the meaning through master signifier (through ideological project) limits the jouissance, which paves the way for rejection of and distancing from ideology for the sake of pure pursuit of jouissance (Davidson, 2010, pp.394-395). This is best clarified by Žižek's popular sentence: "they know that their idea of Freedom is masking a particular form of exploitation, but they still continue to follow this idea of Freedom" (Žižek, 2008, p.33). This is called by Žižek as 'cynical distance' which "limits a questioning of political failings that all know are present" (Davidson, 2010, p.395). Freedom is one example among others so "can we not replace "Freedom" with "Sustainability" and include within the reference to "exploitation" of an environmental component?" (Davidson, 2012, p.16).

5 Results and Discussion

5.1 The Lack of Certainty in terms of town's future: Revitalizing the economy through Tourism

"The tourism is always introduced as the detrimental development that will efface all the beauties in the island. While small Greek islands like Mykonos and Kos attract millions of tourists, the development of tourism is always characterized as a pillage for Gökçeada.... We want to make Gökçeada a shining star of North Aegean with its Cittaslow identity" (Aylı, 2014).

Cittaslow Turkey Network Coordinator explains the motives behind the adoption of Cittaslow framework in Turkish towns as follows:

"Cittaslow as a local urban development model, in the Turkish context, aims to direct the development of small towns towards a natural and sustainable path. The cities will develop in a kind of way.. as they are continuously developing right now. Seferihisar is developing... Halfeti and Gökçeada are developing... Cittaslow is a tool for these towns to dilute the

negative effects of their developments in a way that the development of the towns will affect the locals positively" (Interview #1, 10.03.2015).

This acquired status of Cittaslow is considered as a predetermined path for the development of the towns. Cittaslow, in this sense, is harnessed as a strategy to preclude the uncertainty in the development path of the towns. More specifically, it is used to revitalize local economy. The head of public relations department of Gökçeada Municipality mentioned that "Cittaslow is serious and acceptable advertisement etiquette in the global level. The economy of Gökçeada is totally dependent on tourism. These kinds of etiquettes foster the increase of tourism revenues by attracting high numbers of people to the town" (Interview #11, 12.02.2015).

The branding of the town via Cittaslow is expected to bring economic revenues to the towns. Cittaslow Representative of Halfeti claims that "Cittaslow is a development approach... we consider it like that... there is also something like slow tourism. There are a lot of slow phenomena and tourism is one of these... we are making a bid for appropriate tourism development in the town" (Interview #36, 01.01.2015).

Reliance on touristic activities stems from loss of agricultural lands in Halfeti after flooding and disappearance of agricultural activities in Gökçeada after deportation of Greek people from the island as the agriculture-concentrated population. "Before Halfeti submerged, the locals were practicing horticulture along riverside. From nuts to banana everything was produced here...We were both consuming these products and selling the rest in the bazaar. These old days... A lot of people migrated out of town due to this unfortunate event. Now we cultivate tourism here with those who did not leave!" (Interview #32, 02.03.2015). For Gökçeada, a Greek woman said that "in the past every piece of land was being cultivated by Greek people. Not only plains but also mountains and hills... Over time the agriculture ceased as the Greeks migrated. We were producing everything by ourselves... Then, the state appropriated our land and distributed to the newcomers. By this way, the agriculture disappeared in the island... Now, everybody is obsessed with tourism... It is the only income source of the islanders. " (Interview #18, 25.02.2015).

Being put as a 'sublime object' (Žižek, 1989), tourism partially fulfills the void or lack of economic backwardness of the Gökçeada and Halfeti at the expense of environment and societal relations. It is seen as a panacea for income-related problems led by these catastrophes. Almost every respondent considers the existing tourism as an antidote to the dead local economy. While in Gökçeada the first action taken by the municipality was to prepare a tourism leaflet about the local

foods, culture and history of the town, Halfeti municipality prepared billboards promulgating its acceptance into the Cittaslow network and opened a tourism office as seen in the photo 4.



Photo 4. Cittaslow Signboard in Halfeti (Gülbandılar, 2015)

It is crucial to remember that Cittaslow aims to protect autochthonous production, local crafts and architecture that are in harmony with the environment. However, Cittaslow was adopted at the cost of subordinating the local culture and the environment to the imperative of revitalization of the local economy which is perceived as a 'lack' both by the locals and stakeholders in Gökçeada and Halfeti. Broadly speaking, Cittaslow is grounded on a fantasy of rescuing the small towns from disappearance as these towns are facing the problem of outward migration to the metropolitan cities that provide better jobs, education and health opportunities. National Network coordinator of Turkey mentioned that:

"...small towns are rapidly disappearing. The population of the towns is declining. After a while, there will be no such a thing as small town if the way things stand does not change! People are migrating to bigger cities. People turn to be subcontracted workers in big cities and earn little there! All the income they earn is spent on the housing and food provision. If we don't reinvigorate the local economy and provide people new income earning opportunities, all the small towns like Gökçeada and Halfeti are doomed to disappear!" (Interview #1, 10.03.2015).

Thus, fostering any kind of local economic development is regarded as the only solution for the survival of these towns and this is envisioned through tourism. A man in Gökçeada said that "With the Cittaslow status, our island became popular... People wonder about how the being Cittaslow looks like in reality... People came here to see Cittaslow... 5 years before few people were visiting our island but now you cannot walk in the streets because of the crowd in the summer. As a matter of course, we started to earn much more money but only in summer period! There should be continuity! The income-earning should not be restricted to summer period only!" (Interview #19, 14.02.2015). Similar concerns were expressed by salesman in Halfeti: "Halfeti was like a nook. Nobody knew our town. But with the status of Cittaslow, we experienced an explosion of tourism! The municipality, I think, applied to Cittaslow network in order to attract people to our town and it succeeded! Now there are more job opportunities in the town and people started to earn more money compared to past." (Interview #42, 04.03.2015).

In Gökçeada, many respondents told me that if I come to the island in the summer to conduct interviews, nobody would help me because of their long working hours. A teacher in the high school said that "Gökçeada is Cittaslow only in winter. It evolves into a fast city in the summer" (Interview #8, 27.02.2015). Locals in Halfeti told me their experiences with the accelerating pace of life during the summer and weekends in the winter: "In winter and weekdays we live in the tranquil and slow town, but in summer the life here is much faster than Istanbul!" (Interview #27, 03.03.2015) as shown in the photo 5. During the fieldworks, I witnessed the accelerating pace of life when the tourist groups arrived to the town. The emergence of tourism in these towns brought with it the speedy everyday life at the expense of environmental and social aspects of sustainability, which will be discussed later in this section.



Photo 5. Crowd in the weekend in Halfeti (Gülbandılar, 2015)

Cittaslow provides the illusion of certainty about the town's unpredictable economic future (Stavrakakis, 1999), but still locals in Gökçeada and Halfeti feel insecure (void) about it since the rapid growth of unsustainable tourism practices is impairing the local environmental assets.

5.2 Selective Deployment of Localness to Foster the Tourism Activities

When I asked to people 'what would you want to do for your town if you are given a chance?', almost all respondents mentioned that urgent actions germane to preservation of local culture (for instance, culinary culture, architectural culture or traditional local festivals and rituals) have to be taken. In theory, Cittaslow aims to galvanize the peculiarity of local culture which is threatened by the accelerating globalization. However, since the motives behind this protection are shaped by economic concerns in Gökçeada and Halfeti, Cittaslow leaves exactly the opposite impact.

As the national coordinator of Cittaslow Turkey Network mentioned:

"In the next international Cittaslow meeting, we will suggest that every national network should determine its own criteria. Some criteria are not in accord with the Turkish culture

such as cycling. There is no point to construct bike path as people do not use bikes. Luckily the candidate towns are not supposed to fulfill all the criteria. For instance, we have weaknesses in the preservation of the traditional architectural style of the town but we are good at local food production. Halfeti, as an example, is very lucky in terms of its architectural assets but weak in local food production" (Interview #1, , 10.03.2015).

This flexibility in the application process renders the selective deployment of the particular environmental, social and cultural assets of the candidate towns. In Gökçeada, almost all respondents prioritized the protection of the existing Greek houses and restoration of the abandoned ones rather than sustainability challenges that the town is facing. The architecture working in the Municipality said: "You know... Visitors want to see Greek houses, Greek foods, Greek villages, their lifestyles and traditions. There is no any other tradition existing in the island. Turkish people here were forced to migrate to the island by the hand of state" (Interview #21, 16.02.2015). Greek culture functions as an income door that is articulated to the overarching purpose of economic revitalization.



Photo 6. The Greek Village of Zeytinli in Gökçeada (Gülbandılar, 2015)

The localness in Halfeti is predicated on exhibiting the existing architectural, natural and cultural assets of the town instead of emphasizing the protection of them. As a Cittaslow representative of Halfeti explained:

"Halfeti has a unique architectural style among other Cittaslow towns. There is no architectural deterioration in Halfeti. We have unique and classical village houses here. Today it is still possible to see the effects of past civilizations on the architectural style of Halfeti. Culinary culture is older than 1000 years in Halfeti. We also have natural beauties such as desert monitor which is endangered species living only in that region of Turkey. Halfeti is an important case for the International Cittaslow Network. Our presence as a Cittaslow town affects the image of Cittaslow positively worldwide" (Interview #36, 01.01.2015).



Photo 7. Traditional Houses of Halfeti (Gülbandılar, 2015)

Halfeti received Cittaslow status as a result of the possession of couple of uniqueness despite its challenging environmental problems. The process of certification of Cittaslow is problematic and should be problematized further as the failures in this certification system and inadequacies in the inspections also perpetuate existing environmental problems, divert focus from these problems and canalize the towns to focus solely on economic growth. This is likely to result in worse environmental catastrophes in these towns as a result of the articulation of 'localness' in such an economically oriented way.

5.3 What are Excluded?

5.3.1 Environmental Sustainability

Gökçeada and Halfeti are suffering from serious environmental problems. As Cittaslow respects local culture and environment, I expected to see something different from what I witnessed in these towns. In Gökçeada there were (1) ongoing building constructions that were not in harmony with the historical and local houses of Greeks, (2) imported, non-local and inorganic food sold in bazaars, (3) absence of recycling system and (4) only typical South-Eastern Anatolian foods in restaurants.



Photo 8. Unsustainable House Construction Near the Stream Bed (Gülbandılar, 2015)

This led me to ratiocinate the process of certification of the Cittaslow status in such a town. Even the mayor of Gökçeada questions it: "I do not know why International Cittaslow Committee crowned us with this status. Just look at the landscape and the environment! Do you see anything in parallel with the Cittaslow criteria? I afraid that they will withdraw our Cittaslow status that we obtained coincidentally" (Interview #22, 20.02.2015).

The issue of mass constructions has been one of the main concerns of the people in Gökçeada, a process accelerated by Cittaslow and led to a subsequent upsurge in land and house prices. The town also attracted many external investors that are building inauthentic structures. Interestingly the majority of the constructions are unlicensed. In the focus group in Gökçeada, a student in the department of gastronomy said:

"Normally majority of the land in the island is protected area as state mentions. However, everywhere is full of new constructions and these constructions are not in accord with the typical housing style of the island. Traditional houses in the island are made out of stones, not cement! However, in order to earn more money, investors prefer to build five or six-storey buildings rather than remain faithful to the local fabric of the island. As the time went by, we will not be able to see the sky just as we cannot see it right now in Istanbul!" (Interview #16, 19.02.2015).

My interview with the marine biologist highlights other serious environmental concerns: "All the solid household wastes are discharged in the shoal. The sea is rapidly being polluted! Do you know where the hazardous waste storage area in the island is? Next to the salt lake! All the contamination is leaking to the lake without decomposing! I do not even want to mention basic infrastructure problems such as unsustainable sewage system in the island and planned bilge treatment plant next to the marine national park" (Interview #12, 18.02.2015).

Tourism has also impacted the environment hazardously in Halfeti. Since Halfeti is considered protected area by the state as in the case of Gökçeada, new constructions are strictly prohibited in the town in order to preserve the local architectural tradition as well as the flora and fauna. However, as it is being evolved into a 'touristic' town, the construction of the first five star hotel of Halfeti commenced and, ironically, the area of construction is just 5 meters away from the border of protected area as shown in the photo 9.



Photo 9. Ongoing Construction of Five-Stars Hotel in Halfeti (Gülbandılar, 2015)

Although everyone in the town is aware of and touched upon the fact that this hotel does not fit with the local architectural culture and effects the natural environment negatively, they are glad of the presence of it. A woman explained the necessity of five-star hotel for their town: "It is true that this hotel is totally unsightly! It is very different from our traditional houses. However, there are not enough traditional hostels in the town. In the summer, a lot of visitors cannot find a place to stay so that they came for one-day excursions. This hotel is obligatory for the town! We only earn money out of tourism. Visitors should find a place to stay and spend more money in the town!" (Interview #25, 01.03.2015).

Other environmental challenges in Halfeti are also threatening the ecosystem and living organisms. There is the discharging of the municipality sewage into Euphrates River, although it is forbidden according to inland water legislation of Turkey (Coskun, 2003). Halfeti experiences absence of sustainable solid waste recycling system, leakage of the fuel from boats to the river, water contamination due to the boat-restaurants as well as air pollution resulting from cars, boats and burning coals for the heating.



Photo 10. The Sewage of the restaurants (white shed in the photo is toilet of a restaurant) leaking to the river (Gülbandılar, 2015)

According to municipality staff and the Cittaslow representative, the municipality does not possess a sanctuary power to stop these activities, which is related to the latest law on metropolitan municipalities (Act No 6360), through which the authority of metropolitan cities expanded over the smaller municipalities in the name of enhancing coordination among local government units (Akıllı & Akıllı, 2014, p.682). After the law, Halfeti municipality started to be responsible only for managing the household wastes. Furthermore, the fact that the municipality of Halfeti is governed by Peoples' Democratic Party (one of the opposition parties in Turkey) and metropolitan municipality of Şanlıurfa is governed by Justice and Development Party (ruling party) creates political conflicts and constitutes the main reason for dissidences. An old man in Halfeti mentioned: "We are like a stepchild of Şanlıurfa Municipality. Since we voted for Peoples' Democratic Party, metropolitan municipality now neglects the needs of Halfeti" (Interview #33, 04.03.2015).

Almost all the Cittaslow towns in Europe has a long grassroots environmental activism led by the environmental activists or NGOs, which plays a key role as an external control mechanism for the actions taken by municipalities. However, the absence of such groups in Halfeti is an important issue

with respect to existing environmental problems. Interestingly, in Gökçeada, there is a NGO called 'Gökçeada Volunteers Association' which tries to force municipality and the stakeholders to take actions against the social and environmental problems of the island whereas the NGO is powerless to impact the politics. One of the members explained the situation as follows: "Many times we organized demonstrations, wrote informative reports about the impaired natural beauties of the island and sent to the municipality and relevant stakeholders. But we were accused of being blind environmentalists, anti-developmentalists and the servants of Greek Diaspora" (Interview #2, 23.02.2015). It is also worth mentioning that except for this architect, all members of this NGO refused to answer my questions with the postulation that "Gökçeada is not a Cittaslow city, only its status is Cittaslow. These questions don't apply to Gökçeada".

The environmental problems are perceived to increase as a result of touristic activities reinforced by being a Cittaslow town. According to a municipality worker in Halfeti:

"The existing tourism is not the desired tourism in Halfeti. We have here only 'garbage tourism'. Without any regulation and awareness raising activities, people of Halfeti met with the tourism. But in order to gain more money, those who have enough economic capital either open a boat- restaurant or buy a new boat. The tourism is revolving around these two activities. People are not aware of that all these boats and boat-restaurants will cause unrecoverable damages to the nature. Now they are earning money twice as much. However, people will realize, when they will not be able to earn money out of tourism, in the future that wrong tourism brings its own end! In order to avoid this, we need a tourism control desk" (Interview #40, 28.02.2015).

Tourism agendas and municipalities disguise environmental and social problems of the towns by presenting Gökçeada as an 'organic island', 'untouched/virgin island' and Halfeti as 'hidden paradise' or 'pearl of the East' under the icon of Cittaslow. Cittaslow employs "ideological fantasies as to what constitutes an enjoyable and satisfying city in order to hide the dysfunctions and unpredictabilities that are inevitable in all social spheres" in order to attract more people to the towns (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.55).

5.3.2 Social Equity and Social Sustainability

As predicted, not everyone gains and not everyone loses from this Cittaslow operation in Turkey. In both Gökçeada and Halfeti, it is a small group of people who benefits from this economic revitalization. In Gökçeada, pension-house owners and shop owners are economically elevated after the Cittaslow certification. It is owners of boats and boat-restaurants who get the biggest economic share among the locals in Halfeti. As Gunder and Hillier mentions, "The fantasy is a dream where all residents may attain empowerment, happiness and comfort in their enjoyment of good life if only a perceived lack can be overcome, be it one of economic competitiveness, social harmony, efficient mobility, or other identified general urban ailment or specific blight" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, pp.42-43). Economic benefits are; therefore, not equally distributed. On the other hand, tourism is concentrated in summer season in both towns so that the unequal economic gain is even not sustainable throughout the year. Thus, the fantasy of 'revitalizing the local economy' was deployed by the Halfeti and Gökçeada municipalities without stating for whose benefit (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, p.41).

The rapid increase in tourism activities and unequal distribution of the tourism revenues among the locals in Gökçeada and Halfeti have, in turn, altered the social relationships among locals. Since the main economic activity has been centered on tourism, the only income door for the locals is the incoming visitors to the town, which results in a slash of economic interests and competition among the locals. Almost all of the respondents complained about this issue. A woman in Gökçeada said that: "Rivalry among the shopkeepers got intensified. I was offering wine in small wineglasses to the customers in last summer. Other shopkeepers reported this to the municipality and I was fined! Some shopkeepers also reported my neighbor's soap shop to the municipality for it's not selling an organic soap. Everyone started to dig a pit for each other!" (Interview #7, 02.03.2015). Similar concerns were also expressed by the locals in Halfeti. Many respondents in Halfeti mentioned the weakening neighborhood ties as everybody started to pursue maximization of their economic interests. In the focus group that I conducted in Halfeti, an old woman who has a desperate longing of the old neighborhood relations in the town mentioned that: "When nobody knew Halfeti, in the past, we never went out of our neighbors' houses. We were eating together, going to the picnic... These kind of activities disappeared. Now everybody is working, working and working...I feel lucky now if I see my neighbors once a week!" (Interview #35, 03.03.2015).

6 Epilogue

This study pointed out the issues regarding the operation of Cittaslow in Gökçeada and Halfeti towns by interrogating the real life implications of Cittaslow prescriptions. It shows that the term 'sustainability', which is an empty signifier itself, has been dominating the Cittaslow narrative as the master signifier/nodal point which quilts other signifiers of 'local economy', 'localness' and 'tourism' around itself. These three quilted signifiers acquire their meanings in relation to the master signifier of 'sustainability' in these two towns. In other words, sustainability is also understood in relation to these three elements in these specific cases of Cittaslow. However, inclusion of these three elements came at the cost of excluding other signifiers of 'environmental sustainability' and 'social equity' from the narrative, and this exclusion, which ironically contradicts the principles of Cittaslow, is masked by the name of sustainability.

This study demonstrated that Cittaslow in Gökçeada and Halfeti is operating through the fantasy of achieving three pillars of sustainability. Thanks to the cynical acting out of the fantasy construct (Davidson, 2012) that the locals and municipality/Cittaslow staff continue to or want to believe in Cittaslow (majority of the respondents are complacent for living in a Cittaslow town), although they are well aware of the corrosive effects of the current economic activities and the rapid growth of tourism on the environment and social relations. The jouissance, which occurs in the efforts of Cittaslow to fill the 'lack' of certainty in terms of towns' future through fantasies of tourism and localness, leaves aside the environmental and social concerns of Cittaslow. This is what Žižek calls cynical distance which "limits a questioning of political failings that all know are present" (Davidson, 2010, p.395).

In my cases, these political failings correspond to the inefficient agricultural and husbandry policies of Turkey, current local governance structure that serves the scaling of economy beneficently as well as the current neoliberal agenda that fosters and prioritizes economic growth with limited regard to the environment. Under the preponderant economical interpretations of sustainability, Cittaslow forgets its role in serving the public good and turns into a mechanism which furthers the depletion of environment in Gökçeada and Halfeti. Further research can be the exploration of local sustainability discourse of Cittaslow from the vantage point of the 'post-politics' by utilizing the same theoretical orientations of Lacan and his followers. In this way, maybe, we should get one step closer to understand how can "we rearticulate sustainability's core concern, not as a mechanism for justification for more pro-market behaviors, but as a means to displace the economic imperative

from its throne of supremacy over that of social equity, cultural appreciation and the environment?" (Gunder & Hillier, 2009, pp.154-155).

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Cittaslow Requirements for Excellence (Cittaslow Charter, 2014)

A) Energy and Environmental Policy

- 1.1 Air quality conservation *
- 1.2 Water quality conservation *
- 1.3 Drinking water consumption of residents
- 1.4 Urban solid separate waste collection *
- 1.5 Industrial and domestic composting
- 1.6 Purification of sewage disposal *
- 1.7 Energy saving in buildings and public systems
- 1.8 Public energy production from renewable sources
- 1.9 Reduction of visual pollution, traffic noise
- 1.10 Reduction of public light pollution *
- 1.11 Electrical energy consumption of resident families
- 1.12 Conservation of biodiversity

B) Infrastructure Policies

- 2.1 Efficient cycle paths connected to public buildings
- 2.2 Length (in kilometers) of the urban cycle paths created over the total of kms of urban roads *
- 2.3 Bicycle parking in interchange zones
- 2.4 Planning of eco-mobility as an alternative to private cars *
- 2.5 Removal of architectural barriers *
- 2.6 Initiatives for family life and pregnant women *
- 2.7 Verified accessibility to medical services
- 2.8 "Sustainable" distribution of merchandise in urban centers
- 2.9 Percentage of residents that commutes daily to work in another town *

C) Quality of Urban Life Policies

- 3.1 Planning for urban resilience **
- 3.2 Interventions of recovery and increasing the value of civic centers (street furniture, tourist signs, aeriels, urban landscape mitigation conservation *
- 3.3 Recovery/creation of social green areas with productive plants and/or fruit trees **
- 3.4 Urban livableness (" house-work, nursery, company hours etc)

- 3.5 Requalification and reuse of marginal areas *
- 3.6 Use of ict in the development of interactive services for citizens and tourists *
- 3.7 Service desk for sustainable architecture (bioarchitecture etc) *
- 3.8 Cable network city (fiber optics, wireless) *
- 3.9 Monitoring and reduction of pollutants (noise, electrical systems etc) *
- 3.10 Development of telecommuting
- 3.11 Promotion of private sustainable urban planning
- 3.12 Promotion of social infrastructure (time based currency, free cycling projects etc)
- 3.13 Promotion of public sustainable urban planning *
- 3.14 Recovery/creation of productive green areas with productive plants and/or of fruit within the urban perimeter **
- 3.15 Creation of spaces for the commercialization of local products *
- 3.16 Protection /increasing value of workshops- creation of natural shopping centers *
- 3.17 Meter cubes of cement (net infrastructures) in green urban areas

D) Agricultural, Touristic and Artisan Policies

- 4.1 Development of agro-ecology **
- 4.2 Protection of handmade and labeled artisan production, (certified, museums of culture, etc) *
- 4.3 Increasing the value of working techniques and traditional crafts *
- 4.4 Increasing the value of rural areas (greater accessibility to resident services) *
- 4.5 Use of local products, if possible organic, in communal public restaurants (school canteens etc) *
- 4.6 Education of flavors and promoting the use of local products, if possible organic in the catering industry and private consumption *
- 4.7 Conservation and increasing the value of local cultural events *
- 4.8 Additional hotel capacity (beds/residents per year) *
- 4.9 Prohibiting the use of GMO in agriculture
- 4.10 New ideas for enforcing plans concerning land settlements previously used for agriculture

E) Policies for Hospitality, Awareness and Training

- 5.1 Good welcome (training of people in charge, signs, suitable infrastructure and hours) *
- 5.2 Increasing awareness of operators and traders (transparency of offers and practiced prices, clear visibility of tariffs) *
- 5.3 Availability of “slow” itineraries (printed, web etc)

- 5.4 Adoption of active techniques suitable for launching bottom-up processes in the more important administrative decisions
- 5.5 Permanent training of trainers and /or administrators and employees on Cittaslow slow themes**
- 5.6 Health education (battle against obesity, diabetes etc)
- 5.7 Systematic and permanence information for the citizens regarding the meaning of Cittaslow (even pre-emptively on adherence) *
- 5.8 Active presence of associations operating with the administration on Cittaslow themes
- 5.9 Support for Cittaslow campaigns *
- 5.10 Insertion/use of Cittaslow logo on headed paper and website *

F) Social Cohesion

- 6.1 Minorities discriminated
- 6.2 Enclave / neighbors
- 6.3 Integration of disable people
- 6.4 Children care
- 6.5 Youth condition
- 6.6 Poverty
- 6.7 Community association
- 6.8 Multicultural integration
- 6.9 Political participation
- 6.10 Public housing
- 6.11 The existence of youth activity areas, and a youth center

7) Partnerships

- 7.1 Support for Cittaslow campaigns and activity
- 7.2 Collaboration with other organizations promoting natural and traditional food
- 7.3 Support for twinning projects and cooperation for the development of developing countries covering also the spread philosophies of Cittaslow

*** = Obligatory requirements**

**** = Perspective requirements**

8.2 Appendix B: Interview Questions for Locals

Surname, Name: (not mandatory and anonymous)

Gender

Age

Place of Birth

Current Job

Years of Residence in the Town

1. What does come to your mind when I say 'Cittaslow'?
2. What kind of differences did you observe in your town before and after acquiring the status of Cittaslow?
3. In your opinion, what are the features of Cittaslow town? Is your town more tranquil compared to the past?
4. Does the municipality carry out projects that are directed to the locals and artisans? If yes, what kind of projects are they? Are you satisfied with these projects?
5. What are the positive effects of living in a Cittaslow town in terms of the environment?
6. What kind of changes do you observe with respect to nature and environment in your town?
7. Are you opposed to the municipality's environmental projects? Do you think that there are some drawbacks? According to you, what can be done in terms of environment?
8. Do you know any other Cittaslow towns in Turkey?
9. Do you think that the municipality takes your advice while making a decision on social issues and environment?
10. How often does the municipality organize a public participation meetings? Do you attend these meetings? Do you think that your participation is important for the town?
11. How would you evaluate your economic situation for the past six years?
12. Have you observed differences in your town over the past ten years?
13. Do you think that the municipality fulfills the requirements of a Cittaslow?
14. Do you do household waste sorting? Did you receive any help from the municipality for this?
15. In your opinion, why did the municipality apply to the Cittaslow Network?
16. For the locals, what are the advantages and disadvantages of acquiring the Cittaslow status?
17. How would you evaluate the quality of your life for the past six years?
18. After acquiring the Cittaslow status, do you think that the job opportunities have increased in your town? If yes, does this affect inward and outward migration patterns?
19. Did the social and neighborly relations change in your town after becoming a Cittaslow town?
20. Do you think that your town has become popular in the past six years? If yes, what is your opinion this?
21. What was the first action that the municipality took after acquiring the Cittaslow status?

22. What do you think about the agriculture and fishery in the town? Did you see any improvements in agriculture and fishery after acquiring the Cittaslow status?
23. Do you export any locally-produced goods to other cities or countries? Do you receive help from municipality in those activities?
24. Do you consider tourism as significant for your town? Did you observe an increase in the number of tourists in recent years? If yes, what are the reasons of this increase? Do you think that Cittaslow has an effect on this increase?
25. If you were a Head of Cittaslow Network, what would you do for your town?
26. Did you observe an increase in the numbers of houses in your town? If yes, what are the reasons according to you?
27. Did Cittaslow affect the population of your town?
28. Did the house prices increase or decrease in the past six years? What are the causes of this?
29. Do you shop from local food bazaars? Why?
30. Is there a common place/building for the locals to come together?

8.3 Appendix C: Interview Questions for Municipality and Cittaslow Staff

Surname, Name: (not mandatory and anonymous)

Gender

Age

Place of Birth

Current Job

Years of Residence in the Town

1. What does Cittaslow make sense for you?
2. What were the motivations of the municipality in applying to Cittaslow Network?
3. How do you evaluate the application process? Did you face with any problems in application process? If yes, how did you handle with these problems?
4. Before deciding to apply to the Network, did you arrange a public participation meeting to inform the citizens?
5. What do you think about the viewpoints of the locals towards Cittaslow? Are the locals happy with living in a Cittaslow town?
6. Do you collaborate with the national or international development agencies? If yes, what kind of projects you are carrying out together?
7. What kind of environmental projects did you carry out before and after acquiring the status of Cittaslow?
8. Do you regularly carry out measurements regarding the water and air quality in the town?
9. Is there an effective household waste recycling system within the body of municipality? Did you give an information with respect to recycling to the locals?
10. What are the future projects with respect to environmental health and quality in the town?
11. What are the most important deficit regarding the environment in the town? How can this deficit be tackled?
12. How do you evaluate the existing infrastructure quality of your town? Did you carry out projects that aim to increase the infrastructural facilities?
13. Did you consider to construct bike paths in your town? How the bike path are related with Cittaslow in your opinion?
14. How do you evaluate the public transport system of your town? Is it sustainable?
15. Do you think that the infrastructure of your town is convenient for the disabled citizens? Did you carry out any project to increase the mobility of disabled citizens?
16. How do you evaluate the green areas in the town? Did you make any improvements after becoming Cittaslow?
17. Do you have specific projects related with the marketing of local products? What are the significance of marketing local products for the town and the locals?

18. Do you carry out projects in collaboration with the artisans?
19. Are there free public internet network, public library and computer lab in the town?
20. Is there a tourist office in the town?
21. Are you carrying out projects to protect the traditional hand-made products? What are the importance of these products for your town? What is the current situation of traditional crafts in Turkey? What kind of crafts are still existing in your town?
22. Do you promote organic foods in school canteens and cafeterias?
23. Do you think that the Cittaslow has affected the hotel capacity in the town?
34. What kind of collaborations are you initiating with the locals in terms of hospitality and awareness? What is the significance of hospitality and awareness-raising for Cittaslow?
35. What are your projects regarding the social harmony? Are they enough? What are the importance of these projects for Cittaslow?
36. Is there an active Slow Food Network in your town? In your opinion, what is the relationship between Slow Food and Cittaslow?
27. Are you in collaboration with other Cittaslow towns in Turkey? If yes, How do you collaborate with other towns and what are the benefits of this collaboration?
28. Do you have a separate budget for Cittaslow?
29. Do you take stock of the local products? Do you have projects to protect the cultural activities of the town?
30. Is there a common place/building for the locals to come together?
31. Do you collaborate with the schools? If yes, how?

8.4 Appendix D: List of Interviewees

<i>Interview No</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Town</i>
1	35	Man	Cittaslow Turkey Network Coordinator	Seferihisar
2	51	Woman	Architect	Gökçeada
3	45	Woman	Organic Soap Producer	Gökçeada
4	49	Man	Food Engineer	Gökçeada
5	76	Man	Wine Producer	Gökçeada
6	20	Woman	Bachelor Student	Gökçeada
7	40	Woman	Cafe Owner/Jam Producer	Gökçeada
8	29	Man	Literature Teacher	Gökçeada
9	41	Man	Patisserie Owner	Gökçeada
10	32	Woman	Saleswoman in Organic Food Store	Gökçeada
11	30	Man	Public Relations Manager in Municipality	Gökçeada
12	38	Woman	Marine Biologist	Gökçeada
13	55	Woman	Retired	Gökçeada
14	57	Man	Retired/Cttaslow Committee Member	Gökçeada
15	45	Man	Restaurant Owner	Gökçeada
16	23	Man	Bachelor Student in the Department of Gastronomy	Gökçeada
17	40	Man	Cafe Owner	Gökçeada
18	71	Woman	Unemployed	Gökçeada
19	34	Man	Salesman in Wine/Olive Oil Shop	Gökçeada
20	28	Woman	Urban Planner in Municipality	Gökçeada
21	32	Woman	Architecture in Municipality	Gökçeada
22	43	Man	Mayor of Gökçeada	Gökçeada
23	23	Woman	Bachelor Student	Gökçeada
24	26	Man	Solider	Gökçeada
25	30	Woman	Housekeeper in Hotel	Halfeti
26	12	Man	Student	Halfeti
27	61	Man	Hostel Owner	Halfeti
28	64	Man	Unemployed	Halfeti
29	36	Man	Teahouse Owner	Halfeti
30	48	Man	Former Mukhtar	Halfeti
31	36	Woman	Small Shop Owner	Halfeti
32	63	Woman	Unemployed	Halfeti
33	68	Man	Retired	Halfeti
34	78	Man	Farmer	Halfeti
35	65	Woman	Unemployed	Halfeti
36	31	Man	Representative of Cittaslow Halfeti	Halfeti
37	25	Woman	Teacher	Halfeti
38	26	Man	Chef of Cittaslow Halfeti Convivium	Halfeti
39	35	Woman	Small Shop Owner	Halfeti
40	33	Man	Construction Worker in Municipality	Halfeti
41	49	Man	Public Service Worker (Cleaner)	Halfeti
42	24	Man	Salesman in Grocery Shop	Halfeti
43	42	Man	Deputy Mayor of Halfeti	Halfeti
44	50	Man	Vice-President of Halfeti	Halfeti
45	34	Man	Cockleboat Owner	Halfeti
46	35	Man	Kiosk Owner	Halfeti
47	57	Woman	Unemployed	Halfeti