Cittaslow Cities: Redefining Urban Life Through Local Values and Design Sevtap SARICA,*, Mehmet ÖZKARTAL

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ABSTRACT

In today's fast-paced world, the complexity and fast pace of life wears many people out. At this point, Cittaslow; namely, calm city dwellers, becomes a haven for those seeking peace. Slow cities attract attention not only with their harmony with nature, but also with their local culture, production and cuisine. In these unique cities, every moment is an experience, every corner offers a story. Slow cities develop important projects for the protection of nature. These projects are not limited to only environmentally friendly practices, but also encourage sustainable lifestyles. Effective use of local growth, waste management and energy saving are part of the parts that these cities are stored. While these cities benefit from the advantage of living in touch with nature, they also become a part of environmental awareness.

This article study continues to examine the role of comprehensive design in preserving and developing the original features of Cittaslow cities by taking a broad perspective within the scope of Cittaslow. Slow city, as a movement to develop a wide geography, prioritizes local, environmentally friendly practices and social solidarity. In this context, it will be evaluated how flexible and effective a tool design can be in emphasizing the systems and sustainability of Cittaslow cities. The article will focus on how design modules can support the unique characteristics of these cities and how they can encourage the participation of local communities; In addition, the potential of cities to provide sustainable contributions by integrating design in line with Slow City principles will be investigated. Meanwhile, the contributions of design to the clarification of Cittaslow and the permanence of these values in social memory will be discussed in detail.

Keywords: cittaslow, slow city, sustainability, design, slow food.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fast-paced life and consumer culture that has taken over the world in recent years has caused standardization, stress and loss of enjoyment of life. Cittaslow cities are settlements that emerged as a reaction to fast-paced life and consumer culture. These cities aim to minimize the damage done to the world by living a calm life, spending time with our loved ones and living more carefully, without rejecting the opportunities brought by technology.

Cittaslow cities aim to leave a healthier and more livable world for future generations by supporting natural and local production. At the same time, while preserving their urban identities and traditional values, they also aim to offer a calm life to both city residents and visitors by evaluating the opportunities offered by technology. Cittaslow cities attach importance to design-oriented projects and carry out studies that will highlight city values.



2. SUSTAİNABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CİTTASLOW CONCEPT

The Cittaslow concept, which can be translated into Turkish as "slow city", is a concept formed by combining the Italian word "citta" meaning city and the English word "slow" meaning slowness.

The reason for the emergence of the Cittaslow concept is to oppose the urbanization that is becoming more and more similar and uniform. Cities that do not have their own architectural, production and cuisine understanding and tend to consume quickly and live fast are increasing. Cittaslow is a reaction movement formed against this situation.

The act of settling, which ends with urbanization, arises from people's sheltering needs and develops in a historical process depending on economic, sociological, political, cultural and temporal conditions. Population, geography, culture, economy and political environments ensure that cities diversify and ensure that each city has its own unique character. This situation reveals the existence of branded cities; for example, cities such as New York, London and Istanbul stand out with their distinct characters. However, globalization threatens this originality by causing the disappearance of differences and uniformity in cities [1].

[2] describes globalization as "something we cannot be happy without; for some, the real source of unhappiness, but everyone's common thought is that globalization is both irreversible and affects us all equally; the fate of the world that cannot be escaped."

The elimination of time and space boundaries with rapid developments in technology, communication and transportation, the increase in the variety of accessible products and cultural interaction, as well as positive effects such as unbalanced income distribution, a sense of insecurity among individuals and environmental

damage caused by intensive production policies, also lead to negative developments such as environmental damage caused by intensive production policies [3]

Globalization causes the rapid development of cities and the elimination of local differences by causing services, goods and ideas to be easily distributed. This process enables the use of local values without losing them, allowing small cities to turn their local values into advantages and even to compete with standardized big cities. The Cittaslow movement embraces the idea of highlighting the local value of each region, encouraging people to stop racing against time and live slowly and without rushing, and encompasses various movements [4] Cittaslow movement has chosen as its symbol an orange snail carrying concrete buildings representing contemporary architecture on a historical castle, that is, containing elements from both the past and the present, moving calmly and slowly.

[5] defined the concept of Cittaslow as a union of cities that tries to protect the local dynamics, social, economic and cultural structures of cities against the effects of globalization.

The Cittaslow movement is a part of the "slow movement" that started to develop after 1987. This slowness movement, which started with the slow food movement, has affected many areas such as slow life, slow travel and slow fashion.

It is clear that modern capitalism threatens natural life in an irreparable way and progresses at an unstoppable pace. Although the slowness movement tries to stop this situation, its aim is not to take life back to a period before the industrial revolution, but to better experience the positive aspects of the fast and modern world, to act slowly when it is necessary to be slow and to provide a better quality of life. The slow movement, unlike other movements developed against globalization, supports "virtuous globalization" of instead overthrowing



globalization and talks about a more humane and softened capitalist system [6]

Thanks to the advancement of technology, humanity has become able to access many innovations. Technological devices such as television, mobile phones and the internet, which have spread to every area, have eliminated the importance of distances and places. However, this situation can cause individuals to isolate themselves from their environment, focus on technology instead of communicating with people they share the same environment with, and even negatively affect family relationships. The fast lifestyle directs individuals to use the internet, live a time-focused life and consume fast food [7]

The essence of the Cittaslow movement is to get rid of the time obsession and enjoy every rare moment, to get away from the modern life that is set up to go to work and return home quickly, and to take time to communicate with people.

The Cittaslow movement first emerged in Italy. Paolo Saturnini, the mayor of Greve in Chianti, developed some ideas for the development, progress and quality of life of the city and aimed to spread these ideas throughout the country. He rejected the American city structure that came with globalization and carried out studies to protect Italy's unique architecture. Cittaslow was established with the agreement they signed by coming together with other mayors [8]

According to the Cittaslow philosophy, it is not slowness that makes life difficult; it is speed. If people can spend more time with their cats and their surroundings and communicate, they will be saved from both psychological and nutritional diseases. Slowing down life in a positive way allows them to have the time necessary to be in touch with the environment, live in nature and really enjoy what they experience.

Cittaslows are cities where people get rid of the pressure of hours and rush, create enough time for life, feed their souls, communicate comfortably with each other and create a social environment,

and avoid the mediocrity caused by globalization by emphasizing local and cultural production. In this way, a city life can be achieved where local development is supported, urban identity, historical and cultural heritage are protected, environmental resources are transferred to future generations in a healthier way and sustainability is aimed, damage to the environment is minimized in urban planning, air, water, soil and noise pollution is minimized, inequality in income distribution is eliminated and quality of life is increased, pedestrian and bicycle paths are denser in transportation, the use of renewable energy sources is encouraged, and healthy nutrition is supported by the value of the city's local dishes.

Nowadays, it is not possible for people to stay away from technology, and the Cittaslow philosophy does not reject this, but supports it. However, it aims to benefit from technology by protecting nature, not by harming the environment, ignoring sustainability, destroying culture, and homogenizing the city and people, as is the case in many cities.

Cittaslow supports solar energy that does not harm nature and low-cost sustainable agriculture instead of non-renewable energy sources that harm the environment. Instead of sunless and airless buildings such as shopping malls, it encourages public markets where neighborhood tradesmen, local producers and sellers, and natural products are located. The Cittaslow movement aims for people to slow down and return to nature and themselves, and creates more livable areas for the present and the future. While cities progress without falling behind the developments brought by the age, nature is supported by various criteria and environmental policies for the protection of slowness, sustainability, the natural culture and structure of cities [9]

The Cittaslow movement expresses a holistic protection that covers the past, the future, and the present. The aim is not only to protect the local



historical textures of cities but also to develop and preserve their historical, cultural, archaeological, social and economic values and carry them to the future [10]

The aim of the Cittaslow movement is not to break away from the modern world or to be confined to museums, but rather to establish a connection between the traditional and the modern by using and supporting technology. The internet will be used to spread the philosophy of Cittaslow and Buon vivere (good life) [11]

The Cittaslow movement aims to transform the local values, food, works of art and life specific to cities from being memories only remembered by the old into urban values that future generations will also recognize and experience. In addition, when the quality of life of cities is increased, cities with Cittaslow will become centers of attraction.

3. CİTTASLOW'S SOURCE IDEA: SLOW FOOD UNDERSTANDING

Today, the fact that everything is changing rapidly gives the message that it is necessary to hurry to hold on to life. People are looking for new inventions and methods that will increase their speed. Fast food culture, which is thought to speed up eating, is a bad way of eating and is not hygienic. In this case, individuals who eat fast food lose their health.

Fast food culture, where meals are prepared, served and eaten in the shortest possible time, not only directs people to unhealthy nutrition but also causes the understanding of taste to become uniform. The Slow Food movement was developed as a reaction to this culture.

In addition to the importance it gives to food safety and organic farming, the Slow Food movement also focuses on the cultural and local identity of food, and in this respect, it differs from other food movements [12]

Generally speaking, the slow food movement contributes to the local economy by encouraging traditional food habits and local production that value local values, and also aims to protect both the local culture and the local environment by rejecting the production of genetically modified foods and agricultural practices that pollute water and soil.

The slow food movement aims to rediscover and highlight traditional local recipes, offer local diversity and freshness, raise public awareness about proper agriculture and production, support local producers and strengthen the local economy, and ensure environmental, social and cultural sustainability.

The slow food movement also includes the protection of food culture and the support of local producers, so that local producers can develop themselves and support each other, contributing to regional development. In this way, a selfsufficient and sustainable city structure is built [13] Thanks to the slow food movement, benefits such as fresh food produced from local ingredients, the continuation of local recipes and cooking methods, controlled flow of information where individuals are aware of what they eat, promotion of the city, and preventing transportation costs by providing food locally are provided. The slow food concept is an understanding that provides obtaining and consuming seasonal and fresh food that fast food culture cannot provide, reviving and transferring recipes based on local culture, and socializing by experiencing a slower and more enjoyable meal experience.

4. PHILOSOPHY OF SLOWNESS

The dictionary meaning of the concept of slowness is "not fast, dignified, gentle" [14] However, in the changing world, concepts such as speed and slowness are also finding new meanings. In the global world, the concept of speed is more entertaining and attractive. Being slow finds negative meanings such as falling behind, being lazy, missing out on life. On the



contrary, being fast actually causes missing out on life and not being able to realize the pleasure of the moment.

The passion for speed that has emerged as a result of globalization has also brought about effects such as the weakening of local economies, the loss of cultural values, and the forgetting of local crafts.

With the developing technology, people who have become faster, reach faster, eat faster, in short, live faster, spend their lives working, shopping, and watching television. Nowadays, smartphones and social media have been added to this tempo. While looking at screens, people are immersed in an unreal world, lose the concept of time, and miss out on many beauties that flow calmly around us. In addition, the speed of globalization causes loss of culture and the disappearance of locality.

"There is a secret relationship between slowness and remembering, speed and forgetting. Let's imagine the most ordinary situation: A man is walking down the street. Suddenly he wants to remember something, but the memory is distant. At that moment, he slows down his walk on his own" [15]

The slow movement does not aim to do everything slowly without meaning to, but to enjoy the moment without rushing and with the necessary speed and pleasure.

With slowness, it is possible to enjoy life more and increase the quality of life by getting into the right tempo of life, not missing important parts of life, reducing options and spending time on quality and necessary things.

The concept of "slowness" in the slow food movement is the correct and conscious management of time, not consuming food just to fill the stomach, but ensuring that the food carries its own culture and story. The preparation, cooking, tasting of food, and the time spent at the table enable individuals to socialize [16]

The philosophy of slowness is an understanding that opposes the passion for consumption and speed brought about by globalization and industrialization, and advocates for economic, social and cultural developments while preserving local values and without compromising originality. The slow movement, which is based on sustainability, protects the environment, natural resources and biodiversity while also embracing local values.

No matter how much people hurry, their basic needs will remain the same. Fast life causes people to believe that they need more things, but deprives them of more things. People who can slow down as needed will also enjoy life more.

The Cittaslow movement, which is based on slowing down in every aspect of life, has adopted the philosophy of being slow while living, producing, consuming, eating, traveling, working and listening to music, taking part in the actions taken and enjoying the experiences.

5. SCOPE OF CİTTASLOW

The International Cittaslow Charter (UCT), which binds every member country that has joined the Cittaslow union, has determined the symbol of the movement as an orange snail and its slogan as "International network of cities where life is easy" [17]

Cities with a population of less than 50,000 and meeting at least 50% of the criteria determined by the international center can become members of the Cittaslow union, and these cities can use the orange snail symbol [13]

In order to promote a city that wants to become a member of the Cittaslow network, municipalities that prepare a Citta Slow application letter that includes its history, geography, population, and reasons for wanting to become a member of the Union can apply to the union [17]

In cities where the application letter is accepted and the right for preliminary evaluation is granted, it should be ensured that the public is informed about the Cittaslow philosophy. Because in order to become a member of the



Cittaslow union, local people need to be informed about this issue, participate in Cittaslow and support this philosophy [16]

Cities that want to become a member of the Cittaslow union must meet at least 50% of the criteria determined by the Cittaslow union in two separate groups: mandatory and perspective.

6. THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND CITTASLOW AS A SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION IDEA

[18] define sustainability as an ancient concept, although it is perceived as a popular term.

Many ancient civilizations such as the Ancient Chinese Civilization, Native Americans, and Central Asian Turks have adopted living respectfully and in harmony with nature as a duty without ever using the concept of sustainability. According to [19] industrialization gained serious importance after World War II, unlimited and unplanned consumption occurred in order to increase development standards for more goods and services, and the continuation of this consumption poses a significant danger to the transfer of the environment and resources to future generations.

addition to industrialization. rapid urbanization and excessive consumption occur due to the intense migration from rural settlements to cities. Economic developments have led to the development of an understanding that ignores the environment. This view, which perceives the world mechanically and uses resources as if they will never run out, and consumes them unconsciously in order to benefit more from them, causes serious damage to the environment. Today's economic policies are of a nature that can lead to serious risks for future generations [20]

With industrialization and excessive population growth, unconscious consumption of resources and the damage to the environment have become unstoppable and this situation has reached a universal dimension. Various solutions have emerged to prevent these serious problems, create global awareness and transfer resources to future generations in a usable form. One of these solutions is the understanding of making the use of environmental resources and development "sustainable" [21]

Although the concept of sustainability is accepted as a positive concept in most societies, there are also many uncertainties. In addition to uncertainty, development can be considered sustainable if it occurs without risking the values that future generations will need.

If we make a general definition, sustainability is the transfer of the diversity and irreversible natural resources of the ecosystem to the next generations and the reduction of the negative damage of the human community on nature to a level that will not exceed the tolerance of the ecosystem.

According to [22] sustainability is the effort to continue living not in spite of everything, but by taking everything into consideration.

The essence of the sustainability concept is to eliminate all human behaviors that are harmful to the ecosystem and to ensure that the thoughts behind these behaviors are more compatible with the ecosystem.

Designing and producing sustainable products is a difficult process for the industry as it requires complex, interdisciplinary approaches and solutions. The sustainable production process, which is evaluated from environmental, social and economic perspectives, aims to minimize the negative impact of the product on public health, welfare and the environment throughout its economic life from the acquisition of raw materials until it becomes waste after consumption.

The most important initiative in the context of all these approaches is to educate the consumer about sustainability. Conscious consumers prefer sustainable and less harmful products and put pressure on manufacturers for sustainable



production. In addition, the consumer's attitude also affects the product life cycle and contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions.

If today's needs can be met without risking the needs of the future, then sustainable development has been achieved.

[23] says that the sustainability of a city can be evaluated with five items. These are;

- energy and air quality,
- water, material and waste,
- land, green space and biodiversity,
- transportation,
- livability, human comfort and comfort.

The promotion of a city that has become a slow city will also be global and the city's touristic potential will increase and provide new economic development. However, if a city that has become a slow city receives too many tourists, the city's population will increase and a situation that contradicts the philosophy of slowness may arise. Therefore, the city needs to adopt an economic understanding that is not only focused on tourism, but also replaces the used resources with new ones and is in harmony with the environment.

7. DESIGN FOR CITTASLOW CITIES

The slow city movement is preferred because cities can realize which areas they are special in and develop strategies that are suitable for these features, they reach a different position than all other cities in the world as an effective advertising tool in the promotion of the city, and there is a control mechanism that will help them within the scope of economic, environmental and social sustainability [24]

It can be said that the slow city movement is a local development model for the economy of cities. A local development where local production and local crafts are at the forefront, local producers and local markets are supported, and economic sustainability is ensured is aimed. The protection of the local environment and its

sustainable transfer to future generations also contributes to the local development of the city. A city being a slow city does not mean that the city is slow and lagging behind in terms of development. Slow cities do not completely reject globalization, they reject the standardization imposed by globalization and the damage done to local and natural values, they use

the advantages of technological developments in a way that both keeps up with the age and protects its environment and natural values.

Many design studies have been prepared for Cittaslow cities in the world in local, national and international contexts. Some of these designs are designed only for the local texture and unique features of the city they are designed for the people living in that city or visiting that city to experience. Some of the studies are designs that have features that can be used in all cittaslows in general, regarding the concept of cittaslow.

"The Blurry Postcard" (Figure 1) prepared by the Italian designer team consisting of Andrea Zanino, Andrea Raia, Ettore Colombo, Massimiliano Corradini and Giorgio Schirripa is a good example of graphic design prepared for cittaslows.

These postcards, which are a summary of the philosophy of slow travel, explain that when traveling fast, the moment cannot be enjoyed and many details cannot be noticed. This design has managed to draw people's attention to how living fast affects our lives with an entertaining language.



Figure 1: The Blurry Postcard



Cittaslow organizations, which are the common meeting points of all cittaslow cities in the world, where cittaslow meetings are held, new cittaslows are determined, and where cittaslow city municipalities share their projects, collect cittaslow projects every year and even organize project competitions.

Every city that has become a cittaslow makes its cities more livable, slower, and calmer places by making projects in line with the criteria.

There are many more studies carried out by cittaslow municipalities and archived by the Cittaslow Union every year. In fact, various project competitions are organized by the Cittaslow Union every year, and well-designed projects are rewarded. The Cittaslow Union is developing every day, and the protection and revalorization of traditional values through design is increasing.

Designing for a cittaslow city should foresee the city's cittaslow value, highlighting the district's local and traditional values, and preparing sustainable designs that benefit the promotion of the city and local development while benefiting from the opportunities of technology. The contributions that designs can provide to urban development should not be ignored. In this process, the historical, social, cultural and geographical values of the city should be examined, the points that support the criteria of being a cittaslow should be determined in the light of the city's own values, and design suggestions should be presented in line with the information determined.

CONCLUSIONS

The Cittaslow movement aims to increase the quality of life of individuals and societies by offering an approach that reflects the essence of the philosophy of slow living. This movement encourages living at a balanced pace, appreciating the value of time, enjoying the moment, and not falling behind an ordinary

tempo. A city being a cittaslow does not mean that the city is backward or underdeveloped; on the contrary, this concept adopts the preservation of local culture, traditions, and natural resources as a priority.

Rather than completely rejecting the phenomenon of globalization, Cittaslow cities stand against the standardization brought by this process and practices that harm local values. In this context, they meet the needs of the modern world by intelligently integrating technological advances and make efforts to protect the natural environment and local characteristics. Thus, the concept of sustainability becomes a part of not only the present but also an ancient lifestyle from the past.

The success of the projects to be carried out in Cittaslow cities is based on the cooperation of three main actors: municipalities, the public, and designers. It is of great importance for municipalities to develop projects that are suitable for local needs in cooperation with designers. These projects need to be shared with the public through effective communication and raise public awareness. In addition, the active participation of the public in these projects plays a critical role in the adoption of the cittaslow philosophy. Local people should actively participate in this process by understanding the importance of having a say in the future of their own city.

As a result, cittaslow cities aim to create a sustainable culture of life at the meeting point of locality and design. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary for all stakeholders to work in cooperation and solidarity in order to preserve local values and carry them into the future. The cittaslow philosophy is not only a lifestyle, but also an important step taken in the construction of a better future.

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