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Old Kids on the New Block: Engaging Civil Society in Tourism Degrowth

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ABSTRACT

Despite general support for economic growth, the benefit of continued expansion of tourism is being increasingly questioned in favor of more inclusive forms of tourism development. Degrowth can be politicized if public opinion becomes skeptical about tourism development. The slow city international network, which provides a transnational sphere for politicizing tourism degrowth, has connections to local slow cities to enable politicization at the regional and national level. The present study focused on the first slow city in Turkey, namely Seferihisar in the city of Izmir. It is an exploratory research with the qualitative research design based on semi-structured interviews. By adapting the domestic politicization model to tourism growth and drawing on the case of slow city of Seferihisar, this study shows how a mismatch between expectations and existing conditions can activate the public policy sphere, while the logics of distribution and identity can be articulated in line with the slow city cultural model.

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Keywords: Slow City; Civil Society; Tourism Degrowth; Politicization; Growth

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Introduction

Despite "an economic system obsessed with growth" (D'alisa, Demaria and Cattaneo 2013, p. 213), permissive consensus with regards to tourism growth is losing ground to constraining dissensus[1] of public opinion, which is demanding a brake on mass tourism in its current form. Permissive consensus indicates that the consent of public opinion with tourism growth is taken for granted by the elites who pioneer the growth process. Elites can be defined as "persons who, by virtue of their strategic locations in large or otherwise pivotal organizations and movements, are able to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially" (Higley, 2010, p.163). They "exert a decisive influence on the social processes that are characteristic of the social system" (Endruweit, 1984, p. 32). Fletcher (2011, p. 447) notes that the transnational capitalist class, national and international institutions such as national governments, the United Nations, and international aid agencies have been influential in the management of the global tourism industry. Such institutions that comprise political and economic elites have been influential in "orchestrating consent" and "disciplining dissent" on tourism growth, despite the fact that "a system predicated on continual growth" is inherently unsustainable (Fletcher, 2014, p. 338).

Constraining dissensus refers to the end of assumed consent with tourism growth. The decline in consensus and public support can be observed in grassroot-led social movements at major tourism destinations. Even the term "tourismphobia" has entered into public discourse to indicate the social unrest caused by tourism growth (Milano, Novelli and Cheer, 2019). Coldwell (2017) claimed in The Guardian, British Daily newspaper that " 'tourism-phobia' has become a feature of the summer" and "anti-tourism marches are spreading across Europe". Along with tourismphobia, over-tourism has become a topic of discussion "amongst academics, practitioners and social movements concerned with the detrimental use of urban, rural and coastal spaces, among others, for tourism purposes" (Milano et al., 2019). Thus, debates regarding tourism growth and degrowth have expanded to include various actors, and the degrowth debate has entered the public sphere as an expression of "grassroots opposition to neoliberal urban development" (Hughes, 2018, p. 2).

This study aims to contribute to the degrowth debate from the perspective of civil society engagement within the framework of domestic politicization. The study repositions the 'old kids' (namely civil society organizations) on the 'new block' of tourism degrowth. It aims to understand how degrowth can be introduced as a development strategy. More specifically, the study aims to gain more insight into the politicization of tourism degrowth, civil society engagement, and the processes and challenges involved in shifting growth-oriented mindsets towards degrowth. Here, the study follows Alejandro Colás (2002, p. 1) in taking civil society as the "social domain where modern collective political agency takes place" – a "voluntary, non-state, collective, social and political agency". Civil society is selected as the focus of the study due to the intermediary and mediating role of these semi-autonomous organizations and institutions between the individual and the state (Crick, 2004, p. 81). In this regard, the study takes into account a transnational collective agency, namely the Cittaslow or Slow City movement. The Cittaslow international organization defines

itself as the "international network of cities where living is good". The Cittaslow movement was initiated in 1999 by Paolo Saturnini, former Mayor of Greve in Chianti. The movement brought the issue of protecting the local communities against global pressures into mainstream politics. It is not tourism-oriented, but provides opportunities for tourism (Cittaslow International, 2016a). The case of Seferihisar in Izmir has been selected for analysis as the first Cittaslow in Turkey, which then triggered other such movements in the country.

Given the political nature of slow cities and the constraining role of public opinion, the study applies the domestic politicization model of Hooghe and Marks (2009) and insights of political consumerism of Stolle and Micheletti (2013) to tourism degrowth. While the domestic politicization model of Hooghe and Marks (2009) originally focused on the politicization of European integration at the national level, the present study applies the model to understanding the politicization of international tourism degrowth at the local level. Politicization of degrowth cannot be isolated from micro-politics and people's subjective experiences, since the everyday issues related to the well-being of "ordinary local people" have created the conditions for mobilizing public opinion (Cocola-Gant and Pardo, 2017 p.43). In order to understand the experiences of individuals, a qualitative research design is adopted. Data collection was based on interviews and supported by observations, as well as document and audio-visual analysis. By using interviews, the study provided insight from a variety of tourism stakeholders in this community that help to understand how socioeconomic transformation is perceived at the individual level.

The following section provides background information on the research context, Seferihisar, which is in Turkey. The conceptual framework is then discussed regarding the individuals and institutions of degrowth. The research design is outlined in the methods section, and the study results are given in the findings section.

1. The Research Context

Growth has been the key goal of tourism development strategies in Turkey. The special report on tourism prepared for the Tenth National Development Plan (2013-2018) claims that Turkey has benefitted from neo-liberal tourism planning policies since the 1980s. However, it also acknowledges the "contradictions" of this approach with spatial planning, protection, and sustainability (T.C. Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2014). Sekulova Sekulova, Kallis, Rodriguz-Labajos and Schneide (2013, p. 5) note, "many people find it taboo to discuss it [degrowth] openly, even while agreeing with many of the ideas behind it, not least the impossibility and unsustainability of eternal economic growth". Given such taboos, the politically contested notion of tourism degrowth has found a way into local political discourse in Turkey via a transnational civil movement – the slow movement.

In 2009, Seferihisar, a small Aegean coastal town in Izmir province, initiated a distinctive tourism development by joining an international network of slow cities. However, it has not been easy to discuss tourism degrowth in Turkey's public realm due to the powerful positive connotations of economic growth imaginaries. In the case

of Seferihisar, when explaining the slow city movement to the public at the beginning, the movement's opinion leaders, including the then mayor of the municipality, refrained from translating mot-a-mot the expression of slow city into Turkish. Instead of slow (yavaş) they preferred to use serene (sakin), due to the possible negative connotations of 'slowness' in public opinion (Şüyün, 2010). Indeed, slowness in terms of slow city's philosophy also incorporates serenity. The term yavaş (slow) is also used in Turkish scholarly literature, media coverage and public discourse (Akman, Akman and Karakuş, 2018; Çıtak-Koygun, 2017).
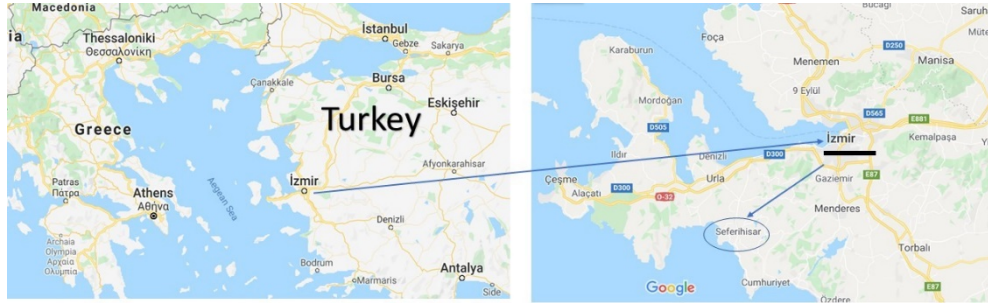
Figure 1: Location of the city of Izmir and the town of Seferihisar, Turkey
Source: Google Maps [Online] (n.d.). [Seferihisar, Izmir, Turkey].
Retrieved 2020, May 23, from https://www.google.com/maps/@38.4526425,26.6092087,9.21z.

Seferihisar is 386 km² and 47 km from İzmir city center. The proximity of Seferihisar and highway connection to İzmir also facilitate urbanites' access to the town, especially at weekends. In 2009, the population of Seferihisar was 28,603 (İzmir Valiliği, n. d.), which increased to 36,335 in 2015 and is expected to grow due to the attraction of the Cittaslow label (Yenihaber, n.d.). Seferihisar's 21 neighborhoods include some villages that were recategorized in 2012 as neighborhoods with the same name under Law No. 6360 on metropolitan municipalities. With the Law 6360, the variety and geographical coverage of metropolitan municipality responsibilities have been expanded (Şemşit, Uçar and Başaran, 2017). However, the neighborhoods are still commonly referred to as villages. Agriculture and tourism play a major role in the local economy.

Seferihisar is a significant case for the purposes of the study in that it is considered to bring Turkey a new narrative for development which presents an alternative to the dominant growth-oriented model. This model is novel in the sense that it is both international and local (Seferihisar Belediyesi, 2018; Hürriyet 2018). This drew public attention to new tourism discourses inspired by the slow city movement: that another way of living is possible to resist the global adaptational pressures that cause standardization and homogenization (Cittaslow Türkiye, 2019a). As of 2019, there are 72 requirements subdivided into seven macro areas to participate in the Cittaslow international network: energy and environmental policies; infrastructure policies; quality of urban life policies; agricultural, touristic and artisan policies; policies for hospitality, awareness and training; and social cohesion and partnerships (Cittaslow International, 2019b).

2. Individuals and institutions for a degrowth society

We must abandon the goal of exponential growth, as that goal is promoted by nothing other than a quest for profits on the part of the owners of capital and has disastrous implications for the environment, and therefore for humanity (Latouche, 2009, p. 8)

Degrowth is not "in exact opposition to economic growth" (Martinez-Alier Pascual, Vivien and Zaccai, 2010, p. 1741, 1742), but rather it emphasizes the "re-examination of the dominant economic values of affluent societies" to "liberate societies from the growth imperative and open up space for a more critical approach to development and well-being" (D'alisa et al., 2013, p. 213). Economically, degrowth thinking urges a "democratic and redistributive downscaling of production and consumption to assure that society's throughput – resource use and waste – stays within safe ecosystem boundaries" (Joutsenvirta, 2016, p. 23). Politically, degrowth thinking promotes institutional transformations by democratically emphasizing ecological limits to the economy, and by increasing the power and role of bottom-up community-based initiatives in policy making (Joutsenvira, 2016, p. 23). Regarding tourism, demands for degrowth have been made visible through protests in some of the world's most popular destinations. Civil initiatives in Madrid, Venice, and Barcelona against the pressures of mass tourism on local livelihoods have become landmarks for the burgeoning tourism degrowth movement (Fletcher, Blanco-Romero, Blázquez-Salom and Murray, 2018)[2].

Does buying from small farmers or feeling responsible for the well-being of residents while visiting a place relate to the politics of degrowth? According to Carol Hanisch, the answer is yes because "the personal is political" (1969). That is, we can conceptualize politics as a generalized power and process rather than confining it to a specific arena. As Heywood puts it, politics is "at work in all social activities and in every corner of human existence" (2013, p. 9, 10). The politics of degrowth advocated by the Cittaslow movement transgresses national borders to create a global or transnational political community that comprises 262 cities in 30 countries as of June 2019 (Cittaslow International, 2019). The degrowth model promoted by Cittaslow is related to "protecting the quality of life integral to each city's sense of place, in an environmentally-sustaining way" (Radstrom, 2011, p. 92). This involves using technology to protect the quality of environment, urban characteristics, and local products; promoting dialog and communication between local producers and consumers; and improving quality of life for smaller communities with a population less than 50,000 (Cittaslow International, 2016b).

Grassroot activism in Cittaslow is, in part, a response to the increased democratic deficit by market- and growth-oriented neoliberal economic policies, which have prioritized the satisfaction of tourists over those of local residents (Cocola-Gant and Pardo, 2017). The expression of democratic deficit is used here to refer to "procedural aspects of democracy" in tourism planning and management, and it serves to highlight the gap between expectations and practices regarding democratic representation,

democratic accountability, and residents' participation in the decision-making process related to tourism (Letki, 2007). Cocola-Gant and Pardo (2017) notes that over-tourism accompanied with a "visitors first" approach damages the feelings of social equality in public opinion, it does this by creating unfavorable living conditions for residents such as tourism-induced gentrification and displacement, noise, pollution, housing problems, loss of public space, and mobility disruptions. Slow tourism can be considered in terms of a growing politicization and discontent of tourism growth not only by local communities, institutions but also tourists themselves.

Anheier (2007) claims that the civility mentioned in the name of the "civil" society should be pointed out to emphasize the moral aspect of it, regarding the respect for dignity. Boyd adds that "being civil is a way of generating moral respect and democratic equality" (2006, p. 875). In this regard, Anheier suggests the below-mentioned definition of global civil society:

Global civil society is the sphere of ideas, values, institutions, organizations, networks, and individuals that are based on civility, located between the family, the state, and the market and operating beyond the confines of national societies, polities, and economies (2007, p. 11).

Global civil actors are the "source of moral action" and "their break from conventional state-based politics" is "the strategic basis for radical political change" (Chandler, 2004, p.3). Pink remarks on three characteristics of the Cittaslow movement:

the transnational (nationally) networked movement; the legalized movement and its relationship with state and local government; the local face-to-face socialities and space claiming/place making practices of activists (2009, p. 453).

Cittaslow and Slow Food International networks are separate yet inter-connected organizations that cater to each other's principles. They propose a break from conventional state-based politics by moralizing and politicizing food and city. Thus, they aim to intervene in public discourse and suggest an alternative approach to everyday life (Pink, 2009). Global civil society is also important for the domestication of the international norms (Chandler, 2004, p. 3). In a similar vein, Latouche (2009, p. 8) emphasizes that "de-growth is conceivable only in a degrowth society, or in other words within the framework of a system that is based upon a different logic".

3. Research design

As discussed in the introduction, public opinion has become influential as a permissive or constraining force in the adoption of a tourism development model. In other words, the meanings that people attach to their tourism-related experiences matter. In this regard, the study used a qualitative research approach based upon semi-structured interviews, which were the favored way to collect data due to their strength at "tapping into the thought processes and narratives that people construct" (Devine,

2002, p. 199). At the beginning of each interview, participants were asked to talk about themselves and their relationship to Seferihisar, which situated their "attitudes and behavior in the context of their individual biography and wider social setting" (Devine, 2002, p. 199). The data collection was based on interviews and supported by observations and document analysis, and such data were used to revise the domestic politicization model of Hooghe and Marks (2009) in line with the experiences of Cittaslow in Seferihisar.

As mentioned above, in the discussion about the individuals and institutions of a degrowth society, "the local face-to-face socialities" and "place-making practices of activists" are important aspects of the degrowth model offered by the Cittaslow movement (Pink 2009, p. 453). In this regard, the following two topics guided the interviews with locals and tourists: (i) the participant's emotional understanding of Cittaslow; (ii) their opinions regarding civil initiatives, and tourism growth and degrowth. The following three topics guided interviews with civil society organization representatives and the then mayor of the town: (i) conflicts in the existing tourism structure; (ii) the ability of civil initiatives to activate public opinion regarding the possibility of tourism degrowth; (iii) the capacity of civil society to activate the logics of economic redistribution and identity regarding tourism degrowth. After the pilot interviews had indicated that participants found it difficult to conceptualize the term "degrowth", the term was then used with a simplified definition. That is, that "degrowth is the downscaling of production and consumption for the sake of environmental sustainability, social justice and well-being" (Demaria, Schneider, Sekulova and Martinez-Alier, 2013, p. 209). To ensure that the suggested meaning of "degrowth" was now understood by the participants, the researcher asked if the term was clear and sought conformity in how they referred to the concept in interviews (Decrop, 2004).

I take the ontological position that "the world is socially and discursively constructed" (Marsh and Furlong, 2002, p. 27). That is, following Creswell (2007) on epistemology, I have tried to become as close as possible to the participants studied by spending time in Seferihisar, observing the behavior of people at its popular sites (such as the weekly local farmers' bazaar in Kaleiçi (the interior courtyard of the Roman castle in Sığacık neighborhood), and interacting with other visitors. This prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the research setting aimed to increase the credibility of the findings (Decrop, 2004, p.160).

In accordance with Hall's (2004) caution with regards to reflexivity in tourism, I acknowledge, as the researcher, the role of my pre-conceptions and subjective realities about what was important to explore (p. 149). My inspiration for this study comes from my previous experience of working in Seferihisar, trying to practice the philosophy of the slow in my life, and witnessing the nation-wide dissemination of the local development model proposed by the transnational Cittaslow movement. My previous experiences guided me to decide on the gatekeepers who would help me to reach relevant participants for the study.

Since there are more tourists in Seferihisar in the summer, the interviews took place between June-September 2018. The then mayor of the town and Seferihisar resident acted as a gatekeeper by recommending participants who would contribute to the

study, and by enabling the researcher to gain the trust of other participants for the interview.

The sampling was performed according to the participants' relevance in terms of the purpose of the study. It was thought that interviewing participants with different characteristics – tourists, locals (retired, working or business owners), civil society members (environmental and agricultural), the municipality (the then mayor) – would diversify the perspectives represented in the research, and thus would contribute to informant triangulation. A total of 17 people were interviewed: six from civil society organizations (CS1, CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5, CS6), three local business owners (LB1, LB2, LB3), four residents (I1, I2, I3, I4), three tourists (T1, T2, T3), and the then mayor of the town who is also the president of the national Cittaslow network in Turkey and vice-president of Cittaslow International. The sample size was determined according to the availability of additional information provided by a new participant concerning each group.

To ensure that participants felt comfortable and safe, the interviews took place in participants' natural social setting, the interview questions were given beforehand, and permission was asked to record each interview. Participants were provided with detailed information about the researcher and the research project if they so requested. In line with Braun and Clarke's (2013) warning that interviewing requires the researcher's focus, the interviews were not conducted in close succession. The interviews were audio recorded and notes taken when possible. Participants shared their viewpoints in their own words, while going into details in the way they liked. Consequently, each interview took its own course, lasting between 30 and 60 minutes. To increase the reliability of findings, interviews were transcribed, major perspectives in the data were identified using open coding, and codes were grouped into themes from the bottom up in collaboration with two researchers. The researchers used software for qualitative analysis (QSR Nvivo) in this process. For example, "working, earning money for oneself, or being able to lend money are important achievements enabled by the employment of women" (CS6) is coded for economic benefits and located under the theme of logic of redistribution. The findings of the study are provided below.

4. Findings

The field study focused on understanding how people relate to the degrowth model offered by the Cittaslow movement in the case of Seferihisar. The findings contributed to the discussion on the domestic politicization of degrowth in the following section.

4.1 Cittaslow and me: logics of identity and redistribution

The findings suggest that the logics of identity and redistribution have played a role in how people relate to the slow city in Seferihisar, and these are the logics that civil society can use as its bases for acting.

Logic of identity: identity for places and people

From the study it can be seen that the transnational Cittaslow movement provided a normative framework for the exploration and expression of local identity in Seferihisar. When asked about the motivation for participating in the Cittaslow international movement, the then mayor of the town explained the problems related to the growth-motivated development paradigm, and expressed that the development model offered by Cittaslow corresponded to the needs and capacities of Seferihisar.

Cities have started to look alike. If identities disappear, then histories disappear. However, there is a new wave of thought which prioritizes culture, history and local governments (The then mayor of the town).

Cittaslow is a philosophy…Don't expect to see beautiful houses or streets there. But this is a place which tries to establish life in line with the philosophy (CS3).

Cittaslow reinforced the expression of local identity by giving it a transnational label. As the quote below confirms, it is not only ideas but also place-making practices that give Seferihisar its identity as a slow city.

One cannot be Cittaslow just by saying it. You have to implement projects (I4).
The adoption of a network-like institutional structure for Cittaslow Turkey and a local development model for Seferihisar exemplifies institutional isomorphism (Beckert, 2010). Isomorphism enabled the diffusion of ideas and practices about proper ways of being a slow city, the ideal of which is "good living by slowing down and rediscovering our identity, our territory and our local culture", which also brings "enduring economic benefits" (Cittaslow International, 2016a).

Cittaslow created new ideal way of life such as living healthy, sustainable, tidy, peaceful and slow. A tourist said "Cittaslow means being local and healthy because I can get healthy food from the local bazaar here" (T1). A resident noted "Cittaslow means being sustainable because it protects the town'svalues and shares them with future generations" (I3). A local shop owner declared "We are now a Cittaslow; we must be tidier; the streets, the parks must be tidier" (LB1). A resident said "Cittaslow means being slow and peaceful, because the population is not young" (I4). Another participant criticized the notion of slowness "people are too slow to work here" (LB2). The logic of identity has been challenged by the everyday tensions created by increasing migration to Seferihisar.

A slow city for me – means being peaceful. Well, it was. When I moved here, living was easy.

Now, everybody wants to live here. Going to the market, finding car parking, or a house for rent– these have become stressful (I2):

Logic of redistribution

The findings suggest that the alternative way of redistribution of sources offered by the Cittaslow development model has created greater polarization in attitudes towards the model. The agricultural heritage of Seferihisar has been successfully connected with tourism. Some houses in Kaleiçi (Sığacık) have been transformed into small hotels. The villages have benefited from agricultural and rural development cooperatives. These initiatives have created public support for the model.

At the start of the Cittaslow movement in Seferihisar, we explained to residents that if they protect their houses [the traditional houses in Kaleiçi and continue to live there, we will support the restoration and transforming of some rooms for tourist-use. But if they sell their houses to hotels or other businesses, they will lose their properties and the opportunity to earn income from it (The then mayor of the town).

The case of Seferihisar has been inclusive regarding women's engagement with the economy.

I am grateful for the opportunity of the local bazaar. Our products have become valuable. And people coming from the city can have fresh vegetables. It is good for them too (CS4).

Working and earning money themselves are important for women (CS5). This is also related to the logic of identity.

Seed swap festivals are held at Seferihisar where ancient seeds are exchanged for free, and new local agricultural products are produced. For example, Ulamış village produces special Karakılçık bread made from a wheat the seed of which was discovered during a Seferihisar seed swap festival. The production of this ancient seed was supported by the municipality, which gave the farmers the seeds and guaranteed purchase if they produced it. The logic of distribution worked in this case.

At the beginning, the people said why should we slow down, we have to speed up our growth. But when they saw the contribution of Cittaslow to tourism and agriculture, the feelings of ownership towards the slow city replaced the initial concerns (The present mayor of the town, as stated in Gözlem Gazetesi, 2019).

However, this logic of economic redistribution has not completely worked for local people in Seferihisar.

Like an umbrella, Cittaslow protects some businesses. But businesses outside this 'protective umbrella' are disadvantaged" (LB3).

In particular, shop owners in Teos Marina, Sığacık felt the municipality's initiatives had disadvantaged them.

The shops in the Marina are empty. The tourists know Kaleiçi and go there. There is a lack of promotion for Marina. There is discrimination against the marina (LB1).

The municipality only focuses on local products. There is no project for us. I will not vote for them (LB2).

4.2 Cittaslow and its discontents: emerging dissensus

The study tells us that public dissent with the slow city model is emerging due to the impact of growth on the daily life of people.

The population is increasing, new houses are being built. Seferihisar would have grown anyway, but the label has accelerated it (I4).

The turning point is the label. What I mean is, if you put a label on something, it starts to be consumed rapidly (CS2).

Some participants claimed that the rationale of slow city movement could not be sustained.

Look at the aims stated at the beginning of the process, they don't correspond to reality now. Seferihisar is growing. What will happen next? It is not going to be a Cittaslow (CS2).

I think that those criteria are not being continuously met (CS3).

Restrictions would not work. You cannot prohibit local people from selling their property to newcomers. The only way is societal transformation, which starts from childhood (LB2).

When asked for their suggestions, participants commented on the necessity for changing mind-sets of consumers and local people, and they remarked on the role of civil initiatives in achieving that (CS1, CS2, CS5).

4.3 Civil initiatives and tourism

The findings of the study tell us that civil society facilitates change by activating the logics of identity and redistribution. The international civil society of Cittaslow places adaptational pressures on local institutions by offering new opportunities (for example, the label creates a tourist attraction) and new constraints (for example, if the population of a slow city grows to 50,000 it loses the label). This is related to the logic of redistribution. New institutions of redistribution have also been built: the renewable energy cooperative, as well as agricultural and rural development cooperatives. Civil initiatives can activate the emotional space between an individual and the city, or the public space between an individual and the market, by creating new understandings in favor of downscaling.

Volunteers at civil organizations can explain to people why they should care about their environment, while connecting their arguments to the very existence of the local people (I2).

As par of identity logics, one participant mentioned that "we should change our attitude to growth by valuing small scale production and agricultural jobs" (CS2), while another emphasized that "civil society institutions can bridge the people with new development paradigm" (CS3).
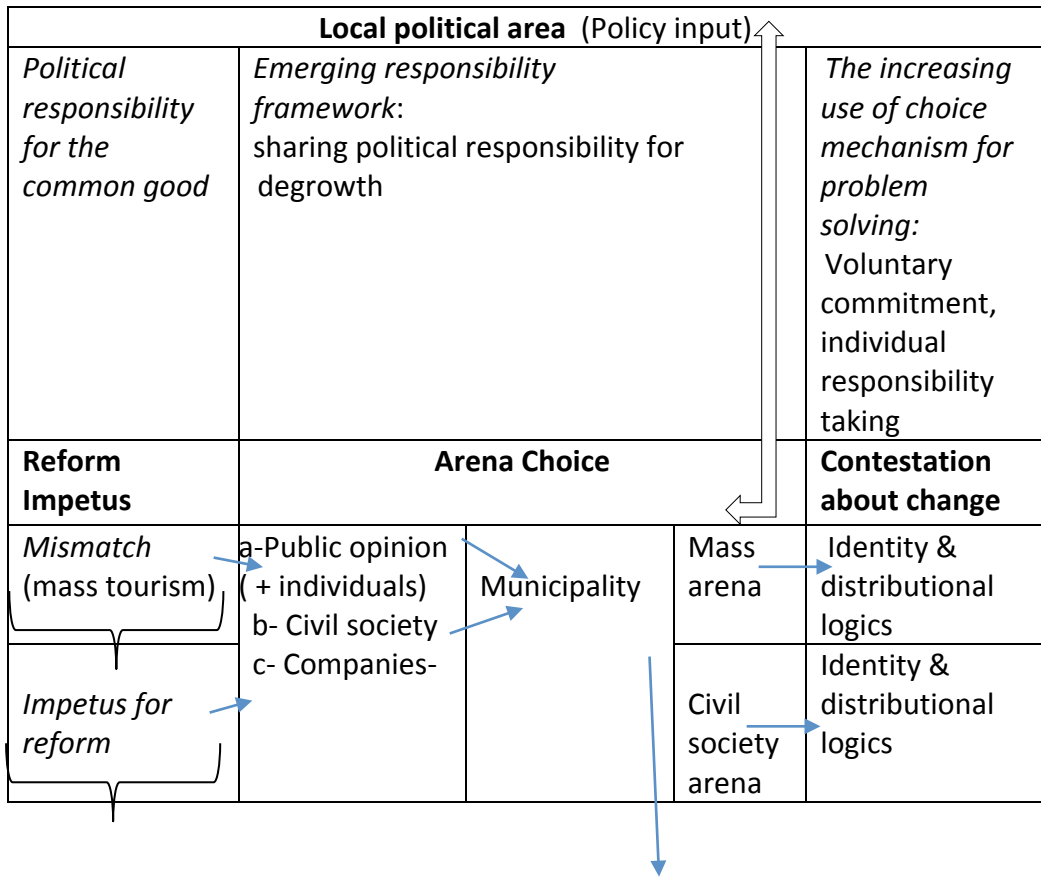

4. Discussion: Politicization of tourism degrowth

This part discusses how tourism degrowth can be introduced as a development strategy, how it is politicized, and the role of civil society in this process. The discussion combines the results of the field study with the domestic politicization model of Hooghe and Marks (2009). Seferihisar's local development model politicizes tourism degrowth by drawing on the transnational Cittaslow movement's cultural and economic model. This politicization is also local because of Seferihisar's demonstration of a new model that restructures social and economic relations, reforms the normative and functional aspects of the existing institutional context, and changes the routes of power accumulation.

Domestic politicization model puts emphasis on understanding the ways in which identity is mobilized. It foresees a multi-level governance approach because "the functional need for human co-operation rarely coincides with the territorial scope of [local]community" (Hooghe & Marks, 2009, p. 2). Cittaslow extends the need for human cooperation for degrowth from local to transnational level and vice versa. In this regard, Cittaslow politicization is a multi-level process in which local and transnational Cittaslow identities impact on the mobilization of public opinion together. The model emphasizes the role of conflicts in engaging "communal identities" (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 2). Besides, the model in Figure 2 highlights the emerging framework of political responsibility by empowering individuals, thus public opinion, civil society and companies. According to Stolle and Micheletti (2013), individual citizens have consumption power. They are not only citizens, they are citizen-consumers. Thus, the authors draw attention to the role of political consumerism in shaping degrowth policies (see: Stolle and Micheletti (2013) for a discussion of organic food activism in terms of political consumerism).

Latouche (2009, p. 30) states that "the de-growth project inevitably means giving politics new foundations". This is in line with the findings of the study. The study shows that there is a mismatch between the results and expectations of the existing growth-oriented tourism model, and this is creating public discontent (see: Figure 2). Responding public needs and caring for the public good is the task and responsibility of government which refers to *political responsibility* (Stolle and Micheletti, 2013, p. 2). According to the domestic politicization model, the mismatch creates an impetus for change and political actors try to carefully convince public opinion (mass arena) and interest groups (civil society arena) while politicizing the need for change (Hooghe and

Marks, 2009). The domestic politicization model for a slow city (Figure 2) exhibits that the mismatch between the prevalence of growth oriented development model and the public discontent with the growth model create the reform impetus; the local actors take such discontent as an input for their policies by carrying growth and degrowth debate to mass arena and civil society arena. The new framework of *political responsibility* deriving from degrowth movement aims to engage citizens in the political process. The citizens are expected to "take daily responsibility in their public and private engagements" (Stolle and Micheletti, 2013, p. 2). Such transformations in citizen attitudes, according to the domestic politicization model, involve both identity and distributional logics (Hooghe and Marks, 2009).

Local political area (Policy input)			
Political responsibility for the common good	*Emerging responsibility framework*: sharing political responsibility for degrowth		*The increasing use of choice mechanism for problem solving:* Voluntary commitment, individual responsibility taking
Reform Impetus	**Arena Choice**		**Contestation about change**
Mismatch (mass tourism)	a-Public opinion (+ individuals) b- Civil society c- Companies-	Municipality	Mass arena	Identity & distributional logics
Impetus for reform			Civil society arena	Identity & distributional logics

Issue creation	Arena behaviour	Conflict Structure
In line with the Cittaslow model and pertinent to micro-level everyday lives of people	-Creation of new institutions (local small producers' cooperatives and agricultural production and rural development cooperatives, Doğa Okulu [Nature School], the Association for Supporting Slow Life etc.) –New interinstitutional collaborations with existing institutions - Diversifying actor involvement in public politics (promoting activities of the city council, engaging children in governance etc.) -Organization of competitions, seminars etc. to increase awareness	-Varying degrees of conflict over use of resources and allocation of benefits in a slow city -from micro face-to-face level to macro level conflicts

Figure 2: A model of domestic politicization for a slow city
Source: Adapted from Hooghe and Marks (2009, p. 9) in line with the findings of the study and by the insights from Stolle and Micheletti (2013).

Upon its membership, Seferihisar Municipality initiated many small and large projects of various sizes in the macro areas determined by the Cittaslow International Network. For example, in the area of energy and environment policies, to satisfy the town's energy needs unilaterally and protect the environment the municipality made investments in renewable energy sources (such as a biogas facility, biological waste treatment plant, and solar energy). In 2018, the Cooperative for Renewable Energy was established, one of the partners of which is the municipality itself. Seferihisar residents can become members of the Cooperative, which expresses that "it aims to engage residents in the economy; give them a voice in terms of energy; and expand the capital base to the grassroots" (Seyeko, 2019). Other initiatives include the restoration of Sığacık Castle and its surroundings; the restoration of houses within the castle walls with view to providing small-scale tourist accommodation; the opening farmers' bazaars featuring only local produce; the opening of Women's Labour Houses where women can produce and sell products such as various kinds of jam or handmade clothes; the opening of a civil volunteer platform for the city to incorporate "the slow philosophy in to social structures" (Günlü-Küçükaltan and Pirnar, 2016, p. 4) approach; the founding of rural and agricultural development cooperatives in several neighborhoods and the opening of a website for direct selling from producers to consumers; and organizing protests to raise awareness regarding global warming and sea pollution due to fish farms (Hürriyet, 2017; Hürriyet 2018).

In Seferihisar, it was the municipality that had to initiate and drive the town's Cittaslow transformation and degrowth reforms. While a municipality has both a public and political identity, Seferihisar's mayor strongly emphasized the former – that the slow movement was not a party-political project and did not belong to any political party. Indeed, cities with different political party positions either have or are trying to earn the slow city label in Turkey (field note taken during an interview with the then mayor). The process of politicizing started by making the slow city politically neutral by focusing on its technical and humanitarian aspects. Metin (2014) notes that Cittaslow is not a

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magic wand for political success; it did not ensure the re-election of political parties at local elections in Turkey.

Issue creation

To enter the Cittaslow model into mass politics, the opinion leaders of the Cittaslow movement in Seferihisar created issues which are pertinent to people's everyday lives. In this process, the Municipality has been the main actor. However civil society actors emerged over time, such as the Association for Supporting Slow Life which was established in 2011 and Seferihisar Doğa Okulu [Nature School] in 2013 (Doğa Derneği, 2018). These issues were projects related to major working areas of the Cittaslow movement such as environment and energy, quality of life, and agricultural, touristic and artisan policies.

Arena choice

The opinion leaders had to make an arena choice to introduce these issue packages. The politicization process first started with the arena of public opinion. Opinion leaders held meetings with local people in informal settings such as coffeehouses (note from the interview with the then mayor of the town). Some issue packages were politicized in the arena of civil society by engaging the rural development, agricultural production cooperatives, Doğa Okulu [Nature School], or other civil initiatives. The municipality shared the responsibility for degrowth with the civil society.

Interdependence and collaborations

Issue linkages created interdependence and collaboration, the latter being top-down pressure. Because Kaleiçi (where the bazaar is held) is a very popular tourism spot, there is a potential conflict for space between the hotels, cafés, and stallholders there. However:

We tell them that you should share the space fairly. These tourists come here for the local bazaar. If there wasn't a producers' bazaar, you wouldn't get many tourists – and producers should respect the cafés and hotels because tourists staying there buy from you (The then mayor of the town).

Contestations about change

The Cittaslow model in Seferihisar has been successful in reviving agriculture and tourism, and engaging small-scale producers in the development process. The change brought about the new model of (de)growth, and creates contestations in public opinion and civil society arenas. Increased commercial transactions and income, as well as the increasing mobility of capital and people to Seferihisar, raise the logic of redistribution regarding the new model of development. In the case of Seferihisar, the logic of redistribution created a polarized attitude towards the model regarding the new development paradigm' winners and losers. The growth triggered by the

attraction of the Cittaslow label also stirred debate regarding the sustainability of the new model, as Seferihisar risks losing its label if its population reaches 50,000.

Civil society involvement

"Ideas are not just 'out there' things", degrowth-oriented ideas "need to be developed, deployed, repeated, proselytized, spread, and so on, and none of this is without cost" (Blyth, 2002, p. 304). The development of civil society for degrowth requires "the combination of ideological, organizational, and material investments" (Chesters, 2004, p. 324). Ekinci (2014) notes the costly process of achieving and maintaining the Cittaslow label, which necessitates an adequacy of financial- and human-resources, and a continuity of efforts regarding the sustainability of standards. The findings show that the transnational civil society organization, the Cittaslow movement, enabled the development of local civil society organizations in Seferihisar.

By representing interest groups, civil society contributes to the politicization of redistribution, and by acting as an intermediary it contributes to the diffusion and internalization of norms. The findings also tell us that strengthening the logic of identity is important for the model's sustainability - because if the existence of the model is only based on the logic of redistribution, it can be challenged each time a conflict of interest arises (as illustrated by the case of Kaleiçi and Marina in the findings above). Therefore, supporting economic rationale with a cultural model becomes necessary. Persuading people to become "slow", for example persuading them to care for traditional crafts and fair, good, and clean food, refers to "a cognitive process that involves changing attitudes ..., it is a mechanism through which social learning may occur, thus leading to interest redefinition and identity change" (Checkel, 1999: p.549). In addition, the findings suggest that for a culture to adapt a degrowth model, everyday interactions matter. Transition would take place due to everyday social, economic and cultural encounters, such as being able to buy fresh food at Seferihisar farmers' bazaar, or not being able to park due to over-tourism in the town.

Conclusion

Acceptance of tourism degrowth strengthens whenever there is an increasingly visible mismatch between the previously promised benefits of mass tourism and its current, unsustainable form, particularly the harmful effects of irresponsible growth on the environment, local traditions, and social relations. Civil society can engage tourism degrowth by following two logics: redistribution and identity, with the former giving results in the shorter term than the latter. It is gain-oriented: the logic of identity relates to the identities of place and people.
The domestic politicization of the transnational degrowth model of the Cittaslow movement involves a policy learning process between a transnational political area and local area. The present study applies the domestic politicization model of Hooghe and Marks (2009) to tourism degrowth, and adapts it according to the findings of the case

study. In this part, the main elements of the domestic politicization process are explained and the details of the model are discussed. In the local political arena, the mismatch between expectations and practices creates tensions which result in the need for change. Martinez-Alier claims that "the current crisis opens up opportunities for new institutions and social habits" (2003, p. 1103). The model argues that the need for change can be accommodated by identity logic or redistributional logic, with the latter referring to the redistribution of income and costs. It is related to an economic and socio-ecological transition and establishment of institutions of redistribution (Martinez- Alier, 2003). Supporting local producers is an example of the logic of redistribution. Cittaslow aims to sustain the local identity of a place, "place-sustaining" is an example of the logic of identity as the identity of place as well as people (Radstrom, 2001, p. 102)

The process of politicizing starts by making a slow city politically neutral by focusing on its technical and humanitarian aspects. The logic of redistribution, as the case of Seferihisar indicates, creates greater polarization in attitudes towards the new development model. The impact of identity logic on the acceptance and politicization process remains limited. Strengthening the logic of identity is important for the model's sustainability, because if the model's existence is only based on the logic of redistribution, it can be challenged whenever there is a conflict of interest. Therefore, cultivating interdependency among various issues and collaboration among various actors contributes to the movement's sustainability.

Public consent with the Cittaslow movement's degrowth model is shifting towards dissent due to Seferihisar's growth. In the town, tourism degrowth has become both personal and political as the lives of residents fall under the influence of an increasing influx of tourists, and the impact of tourism on daily life influences their attitudes in local elections.

The study is novel in its adaptation of the domestic politicization model for tourism degrowth. The geographical focus of the study is limited to one case: the first slow city in Turkey. Future research on candidate or recent slow cities, or cities in different countries, could provide new insights with regards to the domestic politicization of tourism degrowth and civil society engagement.

Acknowledgement

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