

The Importance of Cultural and Gastronomic Tourism in Local Economic Development: Zile Sample¹

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ABSTRACT: More rational source distribution in Turkey recently has brought forward the principles of optimality in investment planning. Therefore, many rural areas have been negatively affected from this state. Accordingly, alternative tourism provides important opportunities for rural regions. People living in these regions have become to give importance to local tangible and intangible cultural assets, which are present around their environment and gastronomic products consisting of regional tastes. Zile District, Tokat Province in Turkey, could not receive sufficient share from state investments due to its location and therefore could not complete its economic development. This study expresses the elements regarding cultural and gastronomic tourism in Zile District and their contributions to regional economic development and indicates what should be done to get more effective benefits and to increase its positive contributions.

Keywords: Local development; gastronomy; cultural tourism

JEL Classifications: O12; R11

1. Introduction

In a World where globalisation spreads fast and borders are disappearing people are after different cultures and lifestyles (Çağlı, 2012). Because of this, they are interested in abstract cultural values and gastronomical tourism. Today tourism is one of the most important sectors both local and national economies. Cultural tourism in alternative tourism and gastronomical tourism is white hope for developing areas development (Briedenhann and Wickens, 2004; Williams and Shaw, 1995).

Cultural tourism means; travels to experience a place's, an area's history, culture or art for the purpose of participating that place's language society, culture and lifestyle (<http://www.travel-industry-dictionary.com/types-of-tourism.html>).

Gastronomy tourism (Gastro-Tourism) is travels for the sole purpose of tasting a place's dishes, desserts or drinks. Tourists who participate in such travels are called gastronomists (<http://www.travel-industry-dictionary.com/types-of-tourism.html>).

Healthy economies are not dependent to one sector, multidimensional economies. Tourism sector is an important vessel with its multiplier effect for economic development. With this way the employment in tourism sector and the income from the sector increases and creates refreshment in other sectors (Saxena et al., 2007; Williams and Shaw, 1995).

Tourism not only creates employment in service sector, but also encourages growth and development in agriculture, industry and other sectors. This is known as the multiplier effect within an

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economy. The multiplier effect is the amount circulation of the expenditures which the tourists make (Çağlı, 2012).

Underdeveloped areas are somehow more advantageous in alternative tourism branches. Firstly people coming from other areas mostly tend to prefer places away from crowded, industrialised places and calm places; hence giving the underdeveloped areas an advantage with their silent and protected nature (Williams and Shaw, 1995). Another reason for this motive to prefer is that the modern tourists search for unique and local tourism products (Çağlı, 2012).

In order for tourism to develop in an area; depends on the society's acceptance and efficient consume of local traditions and sources (Eadington and Redman, 1991; Gezici, 1998; Williams and Shaw, 1995).

The observation in developed countries such as England, USA, France; proves that in the case the tourism sector is planned successfully and methodically; underdeveloped areas could have important potential in socio-economic development (Gezici, 1998; Çağlı, 2012). This research will explain the possible action with the example of Zile on cultural and gastronomy tourism's effect on local development. The effects of these actions will also be explained with examples.

2. Cultural and Gastronomical Tourism's Effect on Local Economic Development

Culture; is the whole of a society's spiritual items, traditions, life styles and perceptions and art values. A society's culture will affect that society's past, behaviour in different times, rest, fun and other life styles. Culture tourism; is a tourism type where people travel in order to know cultural aspects of other places (Küçük, 2014).

The curiosity about other cultures made people to travel. The oldest organised travels were considered the Romans cultural tours to Nile (Kozak and Bahçe, 2009: 142). People attend to cultural tours to know about other cultures and feed their curiosity. In these travels tourists mostly aim to see or live historical artefacts, hand crafts, fairs, festivals, exhibitions, street fairs, national and international fairs, celebrations and traditions (Hazar, 2007). Cultural tourism came to forefront as a new touristic product within the international tourism sector as individuals know more about the historical and cultural values. Some countries in the World could be able to draw millions of intellectual tourists just because their writers' birthplace is there. The best example for this is Russia's St. Petersburg city. The infamous Hermitage Museum hosts the Tsar's exclusive art collections and is one of the biggest museums of the world. Apart from this, Dostoyevsky, Pushkin, Anna Akhmatova and Rimsky-Korsakov's houses are also used as museums (http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sankt_Peterburg). In different countries, festivals in different times; people are directed to travel and have fun while increasing the multiplier effect in these areas. The primary ones of these festivals are Rio Festival in Brazil, Venice Carnival in Italy, Love Parade in Germany. Although these festivals are cultural activities they are also a tourism destination came with the name of the country (<http://www.biliste.com/dunyanin-en-buyuk-10-festivali/>). Turkey is also a rare country where cultural tourism can be applied with the multifarious cultural values. The best proof of this is Turkey holds a place in UNESCO's World Heritage List with its 11 areas and 41 nominated areas (Küçük, 2014). On the Anatolian soil where different civilisations have been; Hittites, Sumerians, Lykens, Lydian, Phrygians, Ions, Romans, Byzantines, Seljuk, Ottomans and as the heir of Ottomans the Republic of Turkey have various cultural marks are present. Also within the cultural values; traditions, cuisine, history, music, paintings, religion, architectural structures and handicrafts present noteworthy (Emekli, 2005).

Today the tourism demand trends from sea, sand and sun through nature, history and cultural travels (Uçar et al., 2010). From this perspective people who reside in Turkey have prioritised their choices as hiking, fun, sports and cultural travels. According to Turkish Statistical Institute, to these activities 1.605.698 people in 2012, 533.976 people on the first period of 2013 and 677.115 people on the second period of 2013 have participated (Küçük, 2014).

As the basic aspect of gastronomy tourism, cuisine holds the property of art where culture and people's demands shape its form starting from the beginning of humanity. From the first periods of history, people could eat within the order and habits of the society that they live in. During the course of time, changes occurred in the food habits of people (Akman and Mete, 1998: 10).

From the beginning of the first period of history, all the civilisations and the societies which created these civilisations and public, have prepared in accordance with their soils and weather situations and increased the variety of their cuisine. Migration, war, wedding, border neighbourhood and development of trade roads have effected different cultures from each other and created their own culinary culture. The differences and the variety of nutrition habits, have directed people to enjoy and taste rather than feeding themselves. Because of this; new methods or dishes have emerged from the local and “foreign” nutritional aspects. Hence; the local culinary within countries and also local food came to forefoot (Delemen, 2001: 1; Sandıkçioğlu, 2007).

The gastronomy tourism on the world develops immensely and the financial values which the countries earn from local tourism increases in accordance. Because; even though tourists have different purposes, they all want to experience, cook, buy and taste local food and drinks (Kocaman, 2013).

Every cuisine in the World has a unique characteristic. Far East and Japanese culinary have always been a marketed tourism destination in every country (Akman and Mete, 1998: 11). Again in the World, some local foods are better known than their origins. For example, a very well-known cheese in lots of countries including Turkey; called parmesan cheese is made in Parma, Italy. Yet if it was to be asked the place of Parma, the answers could not be as clear as it should be.

In lots of places in the World gastronomy, has become a single touristic product from being a helping sector to tourism, holding important places in countries’ images. For example, in the gastronomy tours in Portugal; food education, wine presentation and tasting can be experienced (Kesici, 2012). Gastronomy tourism in Europe is concentrated mostly on Spain, Italy, Portugal, France and Ireland. Within the scope of this tourism, cheese producers are toured, truffles are picked, olive oil factories are toured, vineyards are travelled and vine harvesting activities can be participated. Wine tasting tours are organised, local food and drink festivals are prepared. In Mexico, Taiwan and Spain local people build pensions from their own savings hence creating accommodation and provide training about their local cuisine.

Turkey has a great potential on gastronomical tourism. Every area has its own unique dishes, desserts; local food can all be regarded as basic tourism values. Turkey’s potential on local gastronomical products is geographically tagged by Turkish Patent Institute in order to measure the potential tourist possibility (Çağlı, 2012). Among 178 patented geo-tags of Turkey, 124 of them are gastronomy assets. Besides, among 214 continued registration process of Turkey, 186 of them are gastronomy assets (TPI, 2014a; 2014b). This itself is a proof of how gastronomy is important within Turkey’s local culture. Local desserts and dishes occupy a great place within the scope of gastronomical tourism in Turkey.

Local food, desserts, beverages and other products are powerful and effective tools for an area to become a tourism destination. These kinds of unique local products will empower the areas image and develop rural tourism. The presence of such products would contribute to local and rural tourism development and hence create employment. They would also activate firstly food & beverage sector then other sectors and therefore positively affect employment and economy. Also; they would contribute to the marketing of the area and provide the protection of the areas cultural heritage (Çağlı, 2012).

3. Cultural and Gastronomical Tourism’s Value in Zile

Tokat province’s Zile district is also Anatolia’s rural and unique natural beauty. Evliya Çelebi once described Zile in his Itinerary (Seyahatname) as; “they call carpet and topiary zili. Since too many carpets and topiary’s are weaved here they call it Zile here. The architect of Zile Castle is Avanih from kaysers. Turks got it during Seljuk’s Kılıçarslan period. Although Timur has invaded the Zile Castle, he didn’t damage the city. Sultan Mehmet Han had taken over the city form Turkmens during the Ottoman period. The Zile Castle is a beautiful strong structure on top of a smooth rock on the northern part of Zile Sahara. It has twenty six towers and an iron door facing Qibla. There are three hundred houses, a mosque, wheat silo, water cistern in the castle, but lacks a bazaar and hamam. On the foothills of the Castle around three thousand earth sheltered homes and twenty one streets. Ulu Mosque, Little Minaret, Dutlu Pinar, Mumcu Omar, New Street, Debbağhane, Bazaar, Tekke, Paşa Kethüda are the most important ones among them. Ferruh Çavuş Palace, Murtaza Pasha Palace, Fazlı

Pasha Palace, Çavuşzade Mehmed Pasha Palace, Voyvoda Palace, Kadı Palace are some of the palaces in the city. It has around seventy mosques which are; Yukarı Kale Mosque, Ulu Mosque, Tabahane Mahallesi Mosque, Arnavud Mosque, Alaca Mescid Mosque, Zincirli Kuyu Mosque, Yeni Mahallesi Mosque are the most important ones. There are 24 prayer rooms in various streets. Darütedris (Private School) in Yedi Mosque has students and dersiams (teacher) but lacks darülhadis (a religious science academy). Also, there are twelve ebced (first organisation of Arabic letters which is a calculation system done by the number value of letters) reading schools are considerable. The three most important hamams are Pazaryeri Hamam, Tekke Hamam, Paşa Hamam. Also, there are about twenty palace hamam, two beautiful inns called Behram Aga Inn and Boyacı Hasan Aga Inn, about eight hundred stores in the bazaar, a bedesten (the central building of the commercial part of the town) with four doors exist. Since the water and weather in Zile is beautiful, it's a district which the public prefers to stay. All of the public is Turkish. The vineyards and gardens spread through the Tekke Village. The pears and grapes are famous" (Danışman, 1970).

Zile, as a district of Tokat has a great potential to pursue the development of alternative tourism types. So it's more important to direct to special interest tourism rather than mass tourism, so the areas development and welfare get better, cultural inventory would be created. Within this scope, there are lots of cultural activities and gastronomy products are present. The most important ones are evaluated in this research.

3.1. Zile's Grape Molasses (White Molasses)

The only White solid grape molasses in Turkey is produced in Zile (Figure 1). The uniqueness of Zile's Grape Molasses comes from its colour and it's produced with a grape called "narince" which has a thin shell and nice smell (Memiş and Şanlıer, 2010). Zile's Grape Molasses was granted a Geographical Tag Patent on 20.10.2006 with the attempts of Zile Commodity Exchange Market (TPI, 2006). Since 2010, Zile Commodity Exchange Market has received 3 million holograms of Zile's Grape molasses. 2760000 of them has sold to production companies (Table 1) (Zile Commodity Exchange Market Authorised Hologram Sales Records, 2014). The value added of Zile's grape molasses, its social share and activities are important aspects of Zile's local development. There are four production companies on an industry level. These companies can produce every month of the year with a method called pasteurisation. 100 people are employed in total of these companies (Records of Zile Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2014). The molasses produced by more traditional methods are mostly produced September-October which is called cutting grape season. These traditional molasses contribute greatly to the home economics. For example when the molasses are sold, the food, fuel, clothing for the winter can be bought; therefore creating circulation within the economy. The molasses produced in Zile can also be taken as a souvenir to friends, relatives and acquaintances as well as to newly known people while travelling from one city to another. This provides marketing for Zile and an introduction for the people who have never been to Zile. Therefore, on the packaging of Zile molasses, Zile Castle, Caesars infamous quote "Weni-Widi-Wici" are commonly used in order to contribute to the local tourism.

Figure 1: Zile's Grape Molasses



Figure 2: Zile Churchkhela



Table 1: Zile's Grape Molasses Geographical Tag Patent Sales

The Company's which bought Geographical Tag Patent from Zile Commodity Exchange Market	2011	2012	2013
Özkaleli A.Ş.	495.000	390.000	395.000

Source: Zile Commodity Exchange Market Authorised Hologram Sales Records, 2014.

3.2. Zile Churchkhela (Köme)

Zile Churchkhela (Köme) is a kind of food which has walnuts lined with a rope, surrounded with unfermented narinçe grape juice, wheat starch and flour (Figure 2). By Zile Chamber of Commerce and Industry has applied for the geographical tag patent with the reference number 2605/-Cgr dated 13.02.2014 to the Turkish Patent Institute. The process still continues (Records of Zile Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2014).

The production period of Zile Churchkhela (Köme) and Zile's Grape Molasses is September – October. The fabricated production process has not finished yet and there is one company which is working on this (Records of Zile Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2014). The walnut, unfermented grape juice and starch which Zile Churchkhela (Köme) consists of; support and effect agriculture and fruit production in Zile. With the production of Zile Churchkhela (Köme) the grapes and walnuts of Zile are valued and converted into more valuable food (1 kg of Zile Churchkhela (Köme) is sold in 25 TL). The preparation for the production of Zile Churchkhela (Köme) is another cultural activity for Zile. Some of the neighbours gather for preparing the unfermented grape juice, some of them line the walnuts to ropes, some of them set the fire etc. so people build stronger relations between each other (Memiş and Şanlıer, 2010). Also; since it can be used as a souvenir too, it plays a great role for the marketing of Zile.

3.3. Julius Caesar and “Weni-Widi-Wici”

Julius Caesar the Emperor of Rome comes from Syria to Anatolia and to Zile with his army. Pharnake meets with Julius Caesar and his army at Altağaç where his father had beaten Admiral Triarius (Altağaç could be the place 5 kms away from Zile near Yünlü Village). The battle was a very hard and bloody one. Even though Caesar's army have lost a lot, Pharnake the 2nd was hammered. Success was Caesar's. After a long and tiring trip, Caesar informs Rome about the success he earned within 5 hours from Zile. He then makes his men write his infamous quote to a cylindrical marble during the sacred ceremony on his behalf: “Weni-Widi - Wici- I came – I saw – I conquered” (Figure 3) (<http://www.zile.bel.tr/index.php/example-pages/tarihi-ve-cografi-yapisi>). This quote is a great importance for Zile's national and international marketing. Zile Municipality have taken Trade Mark Patent during the year 2012 (<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2012/04/15/-veni-vidi-wici-zileye-tescillendi>). Lots of companies (for example for a long period of time Marlboro have used it under its emblem but then stopped using it after the patent) have been using this quote as a slogan, was a conducted Zile to be recognised on an international level. With this, Zile castle and Zile was visited with lots of tourists from Turkey (Toyama, 2004).

Figure 3: “Weni-Widi-Wici” written on column



Figure 4: Zile Fair



3.4. Zile Fair, Forty Hatim, Cherry and Village Festivals

When Ottoman fairs during 18th and 19th century, Zile Fair was one of the seven national fairs in Anatolia (Figure 4) (Girgeç, 2008). Zile fair today starts during the last half of September continues about 15 days. During this period the local enterprises sell food, clothing or other household items at the fair area. Also during Zile fair other cultural activities such as oil wrestling and javelin. There are lots of people living in other cities who come from Zile also participates in these activities.

Forty Hatim is a centuries-old tradition to read the whole of Koran after prayers in the morning for forty days. This religious ceremony is made in the Ulu Mosque, built in 1267 (Figure 5). The aim of this tradition is pray for the city's security and welfare. During the Forty Hatim, visitors come from surrounding cities (Figure 6). Visitors constitutes economic development in the city.

Figure 5: Ulu Mosque



Figure 6: Forty Hatim



Zile Cherry Festival is a cultural activity organised during June. Since it is the harvest time for the cherries of Zile gardens, it starts during June. Within the scope of festival local artists, aşıks (poet singers) give concerts. Collective circumcision festivities are organised by the municipality. Even though they do not reside in Zile, people go to Zile to participate to this festival and see their loved ones. This in turn adds economic value to the city. During spring and summer months village festivals are also organised in Zile. These festivals are mostly derived from people who had to leave their home city to work or to study. The festivals pass by with joy and entertainment. During these couple of days, food for winter is prepared, tomato sauces are prepared, bulgur wheat is boiled and cheese and jam are prepared (Figure 7). These activities contribute greatly to Zile economy.

Figure 7: Preparation of tomato paste



3.5. Old Zile Houses

Zile district is places where there are lots of Seljuk Period wooden houses are present (Figure 8). The Street called Amasya Street is the Street where these old houses still remain. In this Street, about 60 patented authentic houses are present (Figure 9) (Akın and Seçkin, 2012). The old houses in Zile are considered as cultural treasures. As a result of the restorations during previous years, one local cuisine restaurant, one boutique hotel, one house for handicapped people and souvenirs and one private property are opened as businesses. With the opening of these houses, which used to be property of formerly rich families who migrated to bigger cities or cement buildings left the houses to poorer families; the first signs of commerce and tourism have sparkled. On the houses where local cuisine is presented, dishes like kashkak - a dish of meat and wheat- (keşkek), stuffed grape leaves (yaprak dolması), kebab with eggplant (patlıcan tavaşı), pilaf with bulghur and lentil (mercimek pilavı), a dish of lentil, bulghur, green-leaved vegetable, walnut, tomato paste (bat), water pastry (su böreği), baklava can be found in the menus. Also have the chance to consume these difficult dishes. Again with this opportunity women gather for their social meetings, engagements, memorial services like organisations take place in these houses. So the social life gets livelier every day. Also people who want to get away from the boring and stressful life of big cities can spend couple of days as they do in Beypazarı or Safranbolu. Especially tourists coming from Amasya area increased tremendously. These tourists contribute greatly to the hotels of Zile and city shopkeepers.

Figure 8: Seljuk Period wooden houses



Figure 9: Old Zile Houses



4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this research, the methods to provide culture and gastronomical tourism's contribution to the local development and increase regional progress was explained with the example of Zile and the effects of these activities to the economic development were explained.

Lack of culture and gastronomy tourism in Zile along with other traditional money earning habits (such as agriculture, trade and craftsmanship) is a great disadvantage. Also; local people's lack of knowledge regarding alternative tourism possibilities and being oblivious to these alternatives can be regarded as boundaries for tourism to develop in the district.

Zile district's distance to metropolis, not getting enough share from the government investments have increased the attention towards cultural and gastronomical assets. As long as these cultural assets together with other sectors are efficiently marketed; economic growth will bring social and physical differences in the area.

Primarily, awareness towards gastronomy and culture tourism, a database regarding these areas should be established. The major starting point is the belief of Zile residents to culture and gastronomy tourism.

In order to benefit actively from geographical tag patent owner Zile's grape molasses (white molasses) and Zile churchkhela (köme) income;

- Vineyards in Zile can be rehabilitated and grape efficiency can be increased
- Walnut agriculture can be encouraged and necessary raw material needed for Zile churchkhela (köme) can be supplied from the district, therefore contribute to the economic development.
- A cooperative can be established to evaluate grape and grape products therefore sales problem can be solved.
- A cold storage depot can solve the protection problem.
- For the products with grapes (such as Zile grape molasses and Zile churchkhela) efficient marketing, agriculture campaigns can be organised by Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In order to increase the contribution of Historical Zile houses to Zile economy;

- The contribution of historical Zile houses to the commercial and social life can be established by an association founded by the help of School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Municipality, District Governorate and other non-governmental organisations.
- Restoration activities should be accelerated, alley renovations, front renovations of the houses in protected areas can be finished.
- The houses which their restorations have finished can be used as boutique hotel, restaurants for local cuisine and other establishments.
- The alleys which are within the protected areas can be closed to traffic and organised with nostalgic pavements, phaetons, special lightning.
- In the restored historical houses branches of Zile's successful enterprises can be encouraged to work. For example, a grape molasses museum for Zile's Grape Molasses, production of Zile Roasted Chickpeas with the guests, ask for the girl in marriage ceremonies, engagement ceremonies, henna day ceremonies, circumcision ceremonies can be symbolically acted and therefore the guests can experience the traditions. Also in some houses handcrafts of women can be exhibited and sold. Another house can be used for memorial services and people who need a place for their religious ceremony can use that particular house.
- Some houses can be named after infamous artists from Zile and work as live museums. For example Mustafa Necati Sepetçioğlu Museum, Cahit Koççoban Art House. Hence people who have contributed Zile's artistic and cultural life can live ever after. The ones who are still alive can go to those houses and exhibit their art. The museum houses for the ones who have passed away can be opened to business via the association. Some governmental institutions present in the district such as the civil registry office can be transferred to these houses so the alleys stay alive with them.
- The new enterprises which were given business licence by the Municipality; can be encouraged to cover their offices with wood. Awareness on historical house tourism can be established by encouraging the business and governmental tables to be made on wood.

In order to Increase the Contribution of Zile Fair, Village Festivals and Other Cultural Celebrations on District's Economy:

- An association can be engaged to organize the village festivals, Zile Fair, Cherry Fair and so forth and internalization of the said ceremonies can be achieved through celebrations at the beginning with tour buses or treks.
- Tourists can be given the chance to harvest and boil grapes in Zile's Grape Molasses Festival in harvest season.
- A sister city can be adopted in Italy, in line with district's links with Julius Ceaser and trademarked quote "Weni, widi, wici". To further commercialize the quote's usage in the district, an inaction of the battle in the same land it has taken place when Ceaser was engaged can be done and more publicity can be achieved through invitation to celebrities and domestic and foreign media.
- Further advertisement on national and international level for sustaining the participation in the fairs and festivals can be adopted.
- Conferences and various panels can be formed to draw media attention.

- Local craftsman should be given priority in festivals and fairs as their participation would be more likely in the following years once they are convinced of its economic benefits.
- Foods, crafts and souvenirs particular to the district should be produced and sold in appropriate places. The dissemination of this should target primarily women, as it is more likely to achieve economic revival within the district. Women can produce and sell homemade pasta, baklava, grape molasses, tomato paste, various jams and grape leaves in brine. Over production can be solved by cooperatives, which would purchase the supply and sell it to foreign markets or domestic institutions and organizations to help keep the production going to sustain economic growth. For example the oversupply of food can be recovered by selling it to cafeterias, ensuring at the same time continuous production and motivation.
- Festivals, fairs and so forth and the tourists visiting them should be accompanied by informed guides and effective transportation should be provided for the various touristic areas.

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