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## **Slow Life in Slow Cities: A Guide to Global Urbanization**

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### *Abstract*

**Slow philosophy** is born in Italy to mitigate the negative effects of metropolitan gigantism. Network information technologies, the tumultuous development of mobility, the lurking of business and financial circuits have favored the speed of trade, ignoring social and environmental quality, as well as human relationships and the well-being of urban communities.

As a **new humanism**, the **Slow philosophy** seeks to give an integral response to the new needs of people and society, proposing a more integrated and authentic life system, greater attention to the territory and the environment linked to its history and the great natural cycles.

Movements such as **Slow Food** or associations of mayors such as **Cittaslow** have spread all over the world (including China), starting from Italy, a country that represents a reference to the global scale of beauty, culture, environment, agricultural crops and food.

In particular, the link between rural and urban offers new references to urban planning and architectural design. Just think of **Green Belt** projects or **Ecological Corridors** to bring the "nature in the city" or Green building and the eco-friendly skyscrapers. We can therefore affirm that in addition to the **landscape** and the **townscape**, the **Foodscape** is also to be considered, linking food and territory, culture and sociality, urban values and rural roots.

**To look at the future of urban development, we have to image at more urban models that are more articulated and distributed across the territory.** Migration flows to cities will remain in the future, so it is essential that they can be directed towards a polycentric system. In addition, even today's **endless urban peripheries may be reorganized into a mosaic of community neighborhoods**, ensuring that urban space organization can mitigate inequalities and potential conflicts.

More and more central is the **social and environmental sustainability of development**, something that has to do with the settlement structure and human relations.

The metropolis remains a major attraction pole where opportunities blend with creative dynamics and variety of events, where knowledge and financial resources are competitive advantages that are difficult to reproduce elsewhere. But the *Maxopoli* is also accumulating discomforts, fears, inequalities, it is the source of pollution and excessive consumption of primary resources.

The current trend is the concentration, the abandonment of poor areas with migratory flows that have never been recorded before. That is why **metropolitan areas need to reinvent more balanced settlement models**, which can protect the benefits and reduce the growing disadvantages that arise with congestion and hyper-urbanization.

The ideal city where you live well, and you live longer, has small to medium size, but an intense cultural and social life, a good relationship with nature and conviviality, is predominantly in the hills, has a historic core and is housed in a protected area or in a park. It attracts a reasonable tourist flow and has adequate receptiveness, especially innovative as eco-hotels and holiday homes. This is, in the final analysis, the identikit of **Cittaslow as it emerges from a special investigation carried out in collaboration with RUR and involved a sample of towns of all continents.**

These principles can be the reference paradigms also for dealing with the large metropolitan scale, intervening on:

- the mobility and digital infrastructures network in order to "force" the settlement system into polycentric systems, thereby promoting territorial polyarchy;

- promoting integrated urban-rural systems through the penetration of nature into towns and cities in the countryside;
- providing the metropolis of functions capable of developing sociality, conviviality community relations;
- configuring the metropolis inside them as functional and interconnected aggregates of small urban units (200-500,000 inhabitants maximum) where to organize social life.

A new urban development model is indispensable, to make production development more consistent with social welfare.

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