A MANIFESTO for the JUST CITY

volume 3

Edited by Roberto Rocco & Caroline Newton

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the Centre for Just City

Colophon

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This book is based on a online workshop and lecture series that took place over four days in October 2022. Representatives from 106 universities worldwide participated in the discussion. 315 students from 63 different academic institutions submitted 82 manifestos for publication.

This activity is supported by the
Delft Design for Values Institute (DDfV) the TU Delft platform discussing values in design and engineering.
https://www.delftdesignforvalues.nl

This is the third Call for a Manifesto for the Just City organised by TU Delft and partners. The results of the two first calls for a Manifesto were published by the TU Delft OPEN Publishing and are available at: **https://books.open.tudelft.nl/**

Published by the TU Delft Open Publishing 2023

The Delft University of Technology
Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment/ Centre for the Just City
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Edited by: Roberto Rocco & Caroline Newton
Cover and graphic design by: Roberto Rocco & Divya Agarwal
Manifestos graphic arrangement: Divya Agarwal

DOI: https://doi.org/10.59490/mg.79

ISBN/EAN: 978-94-6366-746-3

Keywords: Just City, Spatial Justice, Hope & Care, Spatial Planning.

DEDICATED TO PURSUING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH THE LENS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, THE CENTRE FOR THE JUST CITY VALUES ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, DIVERSE THOUGHT, AND COMMITTED ACTION.

HTTPS://JUST-CITY.ORG

The Centre for the Just City was set up at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at the Delft University of Technology in response to the pressing challenges of rampant social inequalities affecting the cohesion and the sustainability of cities and communities. Recognising the vital need to address these issues, the Centre emerged as a platform for research, education, and outreach activities for the creation of just cities. Since its inception, the Centre has been at the forefront of bridging theory and practice, fostering collaborations, and influencing policies and actions that contribute to making cities equitable, sustainable, and inclusive.

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Potential of rural landscape as the new sustainable low-density settlement approach

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The population decline in rural areas (Marré, 2020) which has occurred in the last fifty years due to migration from rural to urban areas, brings along problems in the built, natural, and social environments in both rural and urban areas. In a situation where the climate change, we have come to is much more felt, it is pointed out that the necessity of ensuring the rural-urban balance under the title of 'Sustainable Cities and Communities', one of the development goals defined by the United Nations (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2022), while carrying out planning studies in developed and developing countries.

It has an important potential for the contribution of rural areas to the economy, balancing the migration tendency, the continuity of agricultural production, and the protection of the environment and natural resources. While determining the conservation (of natural and cultural values) strategy and principles, it is necessary to follow the contemporary approaches in the world and to determine the rural cultural landscapes in a way that preserves the original characteristics. It is possible to mention that the cultural landscape as a heritage includes technical, scientific, and practical knowledge about human-nature relations, is the reflection of social structures and functional organisations that have changed and transformed from the past to the present, and is living and dynamic systems that include cultural, spiritual, and natural features that contribute to the continuation of bio-cultural diversity. The character of the landscape thus reflects the values of the people who have shaped it, and who continue to live in it (Taylor & Lennon, 2011). In the rural landscape, the natural environment, physical and social structure, and the spatial environment that reflect all the structure, are intertwined. This unity constitutes the heritage itself as a value. The vernacular architectural structure, which reflects the spirit of the place in a rural settlement, can be considered as one of the most important features of the rural landscape, since the natural environment and vegetation are in and together with the settlement, since it contains the space and production systems that ensure the continuity of the economic structure, due to the existence of production and consumption habits that develop according to the ecosystem in which the settlement is located, since daily life is lived

in a sustainable structure with local values and facts of the ecosystem and since it is located in a way that preserves the integrity and originality of the tangible and intangible values specific to the place (Baturayoglu Yoney, Ayataç, & Kevseroglu, 2021).

As a solution to the problems created the idea of low-density settlement model that is in contact with the rural area by dense urbanisation in cities. This statement is about new settlement approach for rural areas those have cultural landscape values due to the potential in rural settlements can be thought of as. At this point it is important to understand how the natural environment is shaped and used by people and the social, cultural, historical, and economic structure of that region should be considered. Socio-cultural and economic data are the values that make a settlement unique to that place, which has affected the physical condition of the settlements as a reflection of knowledge, experience, and cultures in relation to the nature and society. In the light of these data, the potential emerges for people to produce their own housing or to improve and use an existing structure in order to obtain the right to shelter. Especially after the pandemic, it has been better understood that the right to housing does not only include a closed space but is also related to the right to open public space. With the difficulties experienced by middle and low-income individuals, especially in countries experiencing economic contraction, it is expected that people will seek alternative solutions for the right to housing, which is one of the basic human rights. In a system where the "old" is devalued and the "new" produced by the developer+bank is presented as the only alternative, we are on the verge of a period in which it becomes impossible to obtain the right to housing, one of the most basic human rights.

Migration from rural to urban has also led to the shaping of education and health services in cities. Getting a good education and quality healthcare has become difficult in rural areas today. To move from the city to the countryside, solutions should be offered in order to provide important urban and social services in rural areas on a micro scale with a holistic approach. As it is stated by Yona Friedman, "Urban condensation is a systemic disease, a syndrome of obesity. Dispersion is necessary because if the city loosens up, nature will slip back in. There is no reason

for agriculture to be pushed outside of cities. It can become a form of urban occupation, which would enable cities to gain greater autonomy" (Friedman, 2022). The approach should be about new understanding of design of a settlement that prioritises cultural and environmental values, is largely self-sufficient in terms of energy and food resources both during production and living is produced and used with a sustainable and accessible governance approach, and focuses on all living things, including humans, in accordance with the UN's SDGs and its goals (ICOMOS, 2017). Instead of the dense and compact urbanisation model, a sustainable, ecological and low-density urbanisation model with the cultural and natural values of the rural area should be in consideration.

Social and rural development-oriented projects should be developed in order to carry out economy-based solutions. The use of housing areas on the periphery of urban areas for a housing production method similar to the cooperative models implemented in Turkey in the 1950s, where cultural heritage values are identified as the focal area, and the existing ones are repaired and used instead of reproduced, can play a facilitating role in ensuring spatial justice. Opportunities should be created that include existing local values and at the same time generate income. The potential of the products produced in the past regarding the production landscape and the products produced by traditional methods should be investigated. Cooperation should be established to develop products that will make economic development sustainable. The possibilities of clustering and cooperatives should be evaluated on a local scale.

The value arising from the coexistence of the cultural and natural landscape in the settled areas in the rural cultural landscapes creates a potential for a new settlement concept with low density and living together with the natural environment in the rural landscape. In urban settlements with high building density, the built environment and hard surfaces in the urban texture cover the natural environment, creating an artificial living environment. In addition, life in this built environment has a negative effect on climate change due to the amount of carbon emissions it produces. When the threats arising from high-density settlements are evaluated, the development of urban settlements in low-density rural areas emerges as an alternative approach, as well as systematically increa-

sing the ratio of natural surfaces in existing urban settlements within the city.

The planned realisation of housing settlements in rural settlements with low construction and high rural density also provides an important opportunity for new urban life forms to be developed against climate change. It is possible to reveal the potential in these areas by explaining the cultural heritage values and the relationship of intangible heritage with urban morphological formation by morphological reading of cultural landscape areas in rural settlements where life continues. In this way, it will be possible to present low-density rural settlements as a new settlement model with a cultural landscape perspective, as an alternative to the dense urban settlement approach consisting of hard surfaces that increase the negative effects of climate change. There is also a new understanding of social life defined by this idea, which can be put forward as a new settlement approach. It is expected that the communities living in the physical spaces produced with this understanding will be sensitive to the physical and social environment, living in an environment where everyone can find and use their spatial rights equally, and protecting the cultural heritage of all peoples as an added value of social life. In this way, while the heritage will be preserved, the values that make up the urban memory will be kept alive, and the social and economic-based development and spatial justice will be achieved.

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