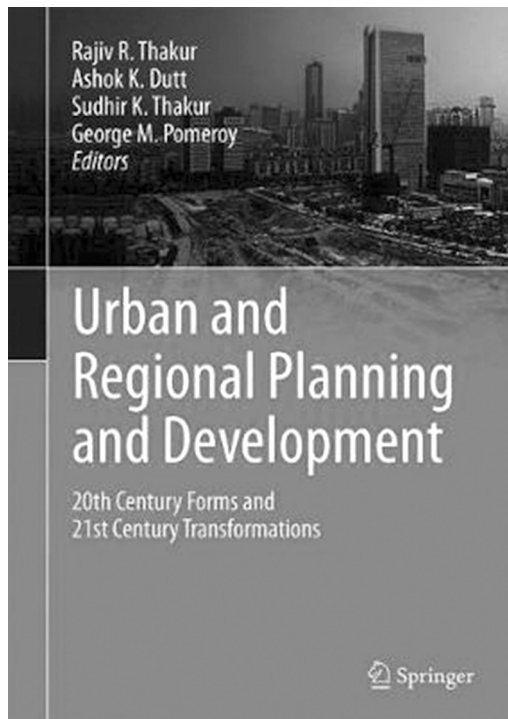


Book Review - 2

Urban and Regional Planning and Development

20th Century Forms and 21st Century Transformations. Edited by Rajiv R Thakur, Ashok K Dutt, Sudhir K Thakur, George M Pomeroy. Pages 546 + xiv, Published by Springer Nature Switzerland AG, ISBN 978-3-030-31775-1; ISBN 978-3-030-31776-8 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31776-8>



What factors affect planning dynamics globally and locally? A question often debated among academicians and professional engaged in planning and development across the world forms the central query of this book as indicated by the editors in the introductory chapter (p.3). The editors have succeeded to draw attention of the academicians and professionals of various disciplines around

the world to ponder over this intriguing question and to contribute relevant articles deliberating on one issue or the other through topics ranging from local level case studies to country level analysis. A common thread connects all these well readable articles, and the book, in totality, presents a comprehensive picture. This book of essays with multidisciplinary perspective should form parts of essential readings for all who are interested to understand the 20th century forms of urbanisation, regional planning and development process and the nature of transformation that are taking place in 21st century. The editors deserve high appreciation for accomplishing an important task.

Urban and regional planning is a tool for development. It encompasses a whole set of social and economic activities, aimed at guiding development process of an urban area or a region which is a dynamic space and now arguably is considered as a fundamental basis of economic and social life 'after mass production' (Storper, 1997). Territoriality, which evolves in an urban area or a region, subject to interactions and synergies of ecological, economic, and social processes, are scale dependent (Gibson et al, 2000). They change from the local to the regional, and global levels. Spatial scale analysis is thus

important to understand dynamics of urban and regional development. In this context, territorial approach and local level initiatives assume greater significance in development process. However, the term development itself is contested and depends on time and technology.

Second half of the 20th Century witnessed emphasis on planned development, globally. Social and economic betterment of people received high priority in planning process. Till mid 1970s, urban and regional planning was part of public demand side policies to create homogeneous national economic space and stabilise workforce through state interventions and public policies (Pinson, 2007). Achieving distributive justice and equity were important goals of development and urban areas were considered as growth centres to propel economic growth. Since 1980s world faced a crisis of development in social, and ecologic front as most of the planning targets were not achieved, more over environmental problems destroying capital resource base started cropping up. Globalisation and economic liberalisation introduced during mid 1990s added another dimension to development trajectory and initiated neoliberal reforms. The shift is from regulated growth to competition and market driven approach. While this has accelerated growth processes, it has also resulted in increasing privatisation of space, ex-situ decision making and with drawl of state. Development policy is now infused with new concepts like sustainable development, public participation, empowerment, ownership etc. Changes are well evident in concepts and practices. However, it is important to note that adapting to these new concepts also produce ‘incoherencies in development discourse

because some elements of these new ideas are incompatible with the rules of formation of development discourse’ (Ziai, 2014). There is also huge technological change resulting in weakening of territorial boundaries for providing services. Geographical shifts in economic power relations across all spatial scales from the local to global and increasing ex-situ decisions in resource use have impacted production of new urban and regional space altering traditional space relations.

This book contains 34 articles which have deliberated on various dimensions of urban and regional planning and development. Discussion covered 20th century forms, problems emerging out of the planned structure, their legacy and nature of transformation in 21st century and importance of internalising sustainability issue in planning process. The topics addressed in these articles are specifically related to change in state policy and neoliberal approach, participation, spatial planning, gap in development, emergence of service sector/ retailing, privatisation of space, urban planning to enforce state intervention for favouring masses, strategic urban planning instead of master plans, infrastructure development, ethics in planning and potential of history- heritage as resources to regenerate urbanism.

These articles are arranged under seven parts, namely Introduction (3 chapters), Planning Perspectives (5), Methods Matter (3), Planning Challenges (5), Urban Governance and Politics (9), National and Local Response to Urban Transformation (5), and Future: Sustainable Development (4). List of contributors includes 63 academicians and professionals hailing from 15 countries.

The volume begins with introduction and overview, professional career and contribution of Prof. Franke James Costa and an overview of regional development and planning. In the introductory chapter of this book, Rajiv K. Thakur, Ashok K Dutt, Sudhir K Thakur and George M Pomeroy spelt out uniqueness of this edited volume and highlighted important points deliberated in each of the articles constituting each chapter. Prof. Costa's contribution in urban planning and geography has been well documented in chapter 2. His students, colleagues and admirers will be greatly benefitted by going through this chapter. The third chapter on 'Regional Development and Planning: An Overview' by Ashok K Dutt, Debnath Mookherjee, Rajiv R. Thakur, Brian Sommers and Jack Benhart is a detailed account of changing nature of regional planning and development and the research trends between 1990s and 2018. This article embodies the vast experience and scholarly articulation of Prof Ashok K Dutt and his colleagues to provide a comprehensive picture about development of the subject, recent trends, and future research agenda. Using 293 references this article traced past, present and future drivers of this interdisciplinary subject of urban and regional development and planning and importance of using geographer's 'integrative skills and strategies to explore many intricacies inherent in the development and planning phenomena as manifested in spatial context.' (p.36).

How do economic reforms and liberalisation work in urban and regional planning have been discussed in case of China and India. These two opening articles have addressed several issues associated with 20th century forms and 21st century transformations. In case of China, Zhang

Xueliang, Yichun Xie and Lixia Li bring out dramatic structural change from centralised planning to market oriented growth that has helped China to emerge as the second largest economy in the world. China followed multi-scale planning commensurate to nation, sub-nation and city to implement economic, social and cultural reforms and policies. However, restructuring of planning process is necessary to suit changing needs and to focus on multiple goal planning with people's participation and building consensus. In case of India, Swapna Banerjee-Guha discusses increasing fragmentation and private control of urban space, and dispossession of marginalised groups due to globalisation/economic liberalisation, and suggests following neoliberalism and neo-Gramscian approach to study the present trend of urbanisation in India. Legacy of apartheid in South Africa continued in urban planning even in 21st century as brought out by Brij Maharaj. Market driven approach has fragmented urban and regional space and there is a need for spatial planning linked to infrastructural development to overcome spatial disparities as traced by Aloysius Clemence Mosha in the context of Botswana. Carlos Morera Beita and Luis Fernando Sandoval Murillo discuss how does spatial planning gain importance in environmental conservation and computing of environmental services in Costa Rica. These five articles together bring out the nature of change in planning perspectives across five countries.

Measurement of spatial inequality is important for urban and regional planning. There are various attempts in this direction. In recent years with development of information technology, generation of big data has opened new dimension for spatial

data analysis. Three papers under the section of methodology deal with these issues. In the first paper, Ramiro Canelos Salazar, Monserrat Pallares-Barbera and Ana Vera adopted hierarchical cluster analysis methods to assess socioeconomic development of cities in Ecuador. The second paper by Ling Wu and William Wells used modified Knox close-pair method in analysing crime data of Houston, USA and the third paper by Xinyue Ye, Bing She, Wenwen Li, Sonali Kudva and Samuel Benya presented spatio-temporal analysis of social media data on shopping behaviour of people in USA. These papers are good methodological exercises providing important examples for such analysis in other parts of the world.

Five articles discuss planning challenges related to land use change, unplanned growth, slum improvement, women's public safety and socio-economic development of dalit population. Two case studies, one covering Dhaka city of Bangladesh by Bandhan Dutta Ayon, Md. Tanvir Hossain Shubho, Syed Rezwatul Islam and Ishrat Islam and the other one on Hyderabad metropolitan city, India by Shah Manzoor Alam and Kalpana Markandey highlight problems of land use change, unplanned growth and its impact on urban space use. There is institutional lacuna and problems due to changes in forms and governance. Coordinated action plans are required to address emerging problems in both the cities. Anika Kapoor and Baleshwar Thakur discuss importance of vulnerability assessment technique to grade slums in Delhi while planning for their development. These three articles addressed form of urban space and governance of development. Surya Kant's paper which examines state of socio-economic development of dalit (members of the lowest

castes) population also falls in the same category of urban development programmes. The article by Rituparna Bhattacharyya and Sanjoy Prasad is of different genre. It presents a case of individual's space for safe movement in the context of Nirbhaya incident (the gruesome rape and murder of a young girl) in New Delhi, India. Lack of physical safety of women in public space is an emerging challenge in urban India.

There are nine articles deliberating on Urban Governance and Politics. Three stages of urban planning like rise of functionality, attempts to build state led planned cities, and decomposition of society model discussed by Marta Alonso in the context of Tres Cantos, Spain drawing parallelism to Chandigarh, India provide important lessons for urban governance. Bikramaditya K Choudhury and Diganta Das, while conceptualising urban governance, raise the issue of segregation of urban space associated with recent initiatives of state for urban rejuvenation programmes and further marginalisation of marginal people. Wanasilpa Peeapun examines public participation in common comprehensive plan of Amphawa district in Thailand and suggests that there is a need for more participatory technique to effectively integrate participation and comprehensive plan. Autonomous functioning of urban local bodies, espoused in the 74 constitutional amendments in India is severely handicapped under centralised political system as observed by Gopa Samant drawing lessons from four cities, namely, Burdwan, Durgapur, Balurghat and Kalimpong of West Bengal, India. Gentrification used to be considered an important step in urban planning. However, Samuel Thompson and Keya Willis' paper identifies several negative impacts of

gentrification during the period of urban renewal and slum clearance in USA and suggests for policy intervention to address those problems. Jose R. Diaz-Garayua and Carlos J. Guilbe-Lopez's paper suggest that neoliberal approaches have altered the prevailing comprehensive planning process in the island nation of Puerto Rico. Institutional style and functioning have been challenged in favour of public participation, which is emerging as a movement even to confront colonial rule. Colombian experience of city planning brought out by Luis Sanchez-Ayala in case of the city of Bogota indicates that challenges of urban planning in the face of segregation and social conflicts at different spatial scales is to enforce state intervention in favour of masses and restrict market centred private operators. Debjani Ghosh, Ajith Kaliyath and Anil Kumar Roy have brought out that although there is a growing need for knowledge and skill in the changed circumstances planners are often not in decision making process. This has restricted job opportunities for urban planners and effective implementation of strategic planning. Although hierarchy and power relations play important roles in government set up and professionals often compromise their value system to satisfy their clients, recent success of Bangladesh Institute of Planners to influence government decisions and facilitate public debate on area planning of Dhaka has sent positive signals among professionals and larger society as has been reported in the paper of Shakil Akther and Ishrat Islam.

Issues of national and local response to urban transformation have been deliberated through five articles covering topics like public debt, tourism, brewing history, return

migration and refugee. Lessons are drawn from India, USA, Poland and Turkey. Public debts of states of India are often discussed at the national and state levels. There are spatial and temporal variations of debt across India. Sudhir K Thakur's article addresses several questions related to financial liability of the states and tries to predict debt scenario in different time points. It is a significant contribution in economic geographic analysis. Rajrani Kalra examines the subject of tourism geography and its development in India. Tourism has a high potential for regional and local economic development. It is an emerging field of study with high potentials. Appropriate policy initiatives showcasing history, heritage and social change can regenerate economy and catalyse new urbanism as has been demonstrated by Neil Reid, Jay D Gatrell and Matthew Lehnert in their paper examining a small neighbourhood in Cincinnati, USA. Migrants play important role in urban transformation, specially, in cultural and behavioural traits and generating market opportunities. Weronika A Kusek deals with this issue in case of return migrants in parts of Poland. Ranu Basu and Pelin Asci discuss one of the burning issues of global concern- space of refuge drawing examples from Istanbul and Kolkata. Cities in the global south host majority of displaced persons, who are not homogeneous groups and face placelessness and problem of citizenship. The authors argue that this issue warrants due consideration in 21st century urban planning.

The last section of this book discusses sustainable development as the future. It consists of four articles. Christopher Cusack and Julie Elwell discuss state of major and satellite cities in east Africa. The authors argue

that as majority of population are now living in urban areas, sustainability issues should be addressed through master plans of cities. Transport system is an important component of sustainable urban development and David H Kaplan discusses about this issue in his paper. Rana P B Singh and Saresh Kumar examine India's effort to develop holy-heritage sites and scope of developing heritage sites as part of sustainable development drawing examples from Ayodhya city. It is argued that public-private-partnership may be evolved to plan for development of heritage sites by according proper budgetary allocation and necessary autonomy to plan for development. Megan McNamee and George M. Pomeroy in their paper discuss stake holders' perception towards preservation activities of historic sites under central and state programmes covering communities and municipal officials of Pennsylvania, USA. Although responses are positive, there are challenges in the matter of institutional capacity including human resources, finance and policy.

The editors have accomplished a great job and have done the discipline a great service by bringing together such a powerful collection of writings and by organising them so meaningfully. The book certainly adds to the existing body of literatures in

the subject of urban and regional planning and development. It will benefit students, scholars, and professionals. Our expectations grew high. We do hope that the editors will undertake such initiatives in future focusing on critical change and contradictions in development theory and its reflection on urban and regional space formation.

References

- Gibson, C. C., Ostram, E, Ahn T. K. (2000). The concept of scale and the human dimension of global change: A survey. *Ecological Economics*, 32 (1) 217-239
- Pinson G. (2007). Urban and regional planning. In *Encyclopaedia of Governance*, Vol 2, pp 1005-1007 (uploaded by the author on 17 November, 2014)
- Storper M, (1997). *The regional World: Territorial development in a global economy*. The Guilford Press, New York
- Ziai A. (2014). Progressing towards incoherence: Development discourse since the 1980s. momentum Quarterly. *Journal for Societal Progress*, 3 (1): 1-14.

Srikumar Chattopadhyay

ICSSR National Fellow

National Centre for Earth Science Studies

Thiruvananthapuram