

Governing China in the 21st Century

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Since 1978, China's political and social systems have transformed significantly to accommodate the world's largest population and second largest economy. These changes have grown more complex and challenging as China deals with modernization, globalization, and informatization. The unique path of sociopolitical development of China hardly fits within any existing frame of reference. The number of scientific explorations of China's political and social development, as well as contributions to international literature from Chinese scholars living and researching in Mainland China, has been growing fast. This series publishes research by Chinese and international scholars on China's politics, diplomacy, public affairs, and social and economic issues for the international academic community.

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Lin Ye
Editor

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PREFACE

Urbanization is a complex phenomenon occupying a busy intersection of many policies: those on property rights, on land laws and markets, on social services, on residential status and welfare entitlements, on public finances and financial markets, and on environmental goals and controls.

Three transformations have shaping China's urbanization over the past three decades: economic, social, and environmental. Now these transformations are at crossroads, as China moves into a new phase of development based on:

- improving agricultural productivity;
- shifting output to higher-skill manufacturing and services;
- restoring equity, increasing consumption, and building a large international middle class;
- adopting greener production technology and consumption.

China's leadership recognizes that it can promote these aims through efficient, inclusive, and sustainable urbanization. Yet conferring these qualities on a country's urbanization path—making urbanization quick, kind, and clean—is not a simple task. It has been arduous even for Singapore, a city state of 5 million people and 700 square kilometers. It is far more challenging for hugely populous China, with its 10 million square kilometers.

Directed at scholars, students, policymakers, officials, and the general reader who wishes to understand urbanization in China, this edited volume consists of 11 chapters covering critical issues in urbanization from several

perspectives—economic, political, sociological, and environmental—by established researchers from greater China, the United States, Germany, and Sweden.

The volume is divided into four parts. The opening, introductory chapter details the urgency of the task at hand—the reasons that the policies driving urbanization during the last three decades will not support China’s next push to become an advanced urban economy—and offers a new approach to urbanization. Part I has three chapters, which deal with the agglomeration economies of city clusters in the regions of the Pearl River Delta and the Upper Yangtze River Delta, with a look into the new direction of China’s urbanization. Part II’s four chapters deal with disparities and urban ills (e.g., housing affordability) in metropolises, on one hand, but also examine the dynamism (e.g., creative energy) that metropolises have to offer in the field of urban redevelopment, city branding and city creativity. Part III includes three chapters that explore the political, economic, and cultural richness that metropolis and megalopolis can provide, delving into the nuts and bolts of governance and service delivery in metropolitan areas. They discuss China’s institutional setup, public participation and governance structure, which affect public service provisions and governing capacity.

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China, Mongolia, and South Korea

Chorching Goh

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