Urbanizing China

A reflective dialogue

11.S945, MW9:30-11:00 Professor: Jinhua Zhao, TA: Liyan Xu
Chongqing, one of the fastest-growing and biggest cities on earth, with a population of 29 million. The old buildings under the high-rises are destined for demolition in the near future.

Photograph removed due to copyright restrictions.
Visitors from the countryside amid a giant project under construction in Chongqing. In southwestern China, away from the coast, it is the engine of China’s inland economic development.
Minxin Jiayuan is a flagship low-income housing project in Chongqing. Vast sums of money will be needed to pay for schooling, health care and retirement programs for the now landless farmers.

Li Rui, 60, scavenged his former village for building materials in Liaocheng. Mr. Li was a farmer until three years ago, when the local government razed his village for an urban development zone.

A rural migrant in a garment factory on the outskirts of Chongqing. Skeptics say the government’s headlong rush to urbanize is driven by a vision of modernity that has failed elsewhere.

Why do we care about China?
China vs. US

GDP, $trn at current prices and market exchange rates

Long Term Assumptions
Annual Average %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP Growth</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation (GDP Deflator)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan Appreciation against the Dollar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

China Overtakes US in 2018


Source: The Economist Dec 27th, 2011
China vs. US
Measured by 21 different indicators: manufacturing output, exports and fixed investment.

Map showing U.S. and China superimposed and map of population densities removed due to copyright restrictions.
Map showing U.S. and China superimposed and map of population densities removed due to copyright restrictions.
Courtesy of NASA Earth Observatory/NOAA NGDC. Satellite image is in the public domain.

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Map removed due to copyright restrictions.
Map removed due to copyright restrictions.
Policy Transfers

• Singapore → Shanghai
  – Car industry
  – City state vs. city in a region

• Shanghai → Beijing?
  – Bidding vs. lottery
  – Control use vs. control ownership

• China → West?
  – Local context vs. generic human nature

Borrowing from the west

Experimenting within

Exporting knowledge?
Poor People vs. Poor Country?

1.3 Billion Poor People in Middle Income Countries
As a researcher...

A dynamic system vs. a static system
Why do we care about China?

- Intellectual curiosity
- Altruism
- Interconnected world (abstract / tangible)
- Exporter of knowledge?
  - Technology implementation
  - Policy transfer
  - New phenomena and new experience
Immense
Rapid
Out of Sync
Urbanization Rate in China

1980

- Urban: 190m
- Rural: 863m

2011

- Urban: 690m
- Rural: 656m

2040

- Urban: ~1,000m
- Rural: ~500m

Natural Growth

1980

\[ \text{Urban: 1.05 Billion (18\%)} \]

\[ \text{Rural: 0.86 Billion} \]

2011

\[ \text{Urban: 1.35 Billion (51\%)} \]

\[ \text{Rural: 0.66 Billion} \]

2040

\[ \text{Urban: 1.5 Billion (67\%)} \]

\[ \text{Rural: 0.5 Billion} \]

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Urbanization Prospects, the 2009 Revision. New York 2010
Rebuild all American cities in 30 years

- infrastructure
- services
- institutions
- ...
Photograph of bicyclists in Beijing streets removed due to copyright restrictions.

Photograph courtesy of ding_zhou on Flickr.
Photograph of smog-clouded sky removed due to copyright restrictions.
Immense
Rapid
Out of Sync
Class 1: Multiple Interpretations
Urbanization Out of Sync
Multiple Interpretations

Built environment
Administration
Economy
Welfare
Lifestyle
Political
Cultural
Multiple Interpretations

“Noosphere”
Sphere of Human Thoughts
both at the top and at the bottom
Multiple Interpretations

Spatiality

De-spatialization

Other interpretations?

migrants going back to hometown
Tensions
Tensions

People vs. land
Economy vs. environment
Financing vs. urban form
Locals vs. migrants
Tensions

Examples from the syllabus
Next 30 years vs. past 30 years
Percentage of urbanized population in 2009


World map removed due to copyright restrictions. Refer to: [http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/](http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/)
Urbanization Rate in China

1980
Urban 190m
Rural 863m
Urbanization Rate: 18%

2011
Urban 690m
Rural 656m
Urbanization Rate: 51%
Natural Growth ~350m

2040
Urban ~1,000m
Rural ~500m
Urbanization Rate: 67%
Natural Growth ~350m

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Urbanization Prospects, the 2009 Revision. New York 2010
Next 30 years vs. past 30 years

- changing nature of the challenges
- responses in urban governance
# China’s transition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status quo</th>
<th>Direction / Ideal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production</strong></td>
<td><strong>Consumption</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure centered</strong></td>
<td><strong>People centered</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Large scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Small scale</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competitive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cooperative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top down</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is China an Outlier?

Didn’t NYC grow as fast in late 19th century?
Chinese Going to Town

2011: 1.35 billion; 51.3% in urban areas

Image by MIT OpenCourseWare.
Connections

CNY 2 trillion high speed rail ... urban agglomeration ... spatial structure transformation ... real estate development ... urban and regional relationship ... governance
What difference does rapid urbanization make?

E.g. we need to discuss affordable housing with or without rapid urbanization?

Exacerbate, change the nature, provide opportunity, no difference?
Cases and Connections

| 1 | Preface | • Urbanization Out of Sync  
|    |        | • Is China an Outliner?  
|    |        | • Fundamentals: Hukou and Migration |

| 2 | Land & Money | • Land Use and Public Finance Institutions  
|    |        | • Quota Market in Chongqing: De-spatialize Land Transfer  
|    |        | • Brownfield in Beijing: How Cities Recycle Industrial Land?  
|    |        | • Public Finance Innovations in Nanchang  
|    |        | • Real Estate Development Process |

| 3 | Hardware | • Managing Car Ownership  
|    |        | • Urban Infrastructure  
|    |        | • Dispersion of Urban Agglomeration through High Speed Rail  
|    |        | • Costs of Air Pollution: Human Health Damage  
|    |        | • Progress in Energy Efficiency: Technology, Policy and Market  
|    |        | • Financing Urban Access: Transportation, Urban Form and Land Grabbing  
|    |        | • Untangling Complex Urban Issues through Emerging Big Data |

| 4 | Software | • Drifting and getting stuck: Migrants in Chinese cities  
|    |        | • Urbanization vs. Citizenization: Migrants in Wangjingxi Market  
|    |        | • Spatial Justice in Affordable Housing Design in Ningbo  
|    |        | • Preserving Beijing’s Spatial Tradition in Rapid Urban Development  
|    |        | • Aging Society: Offering Care to the Elderly in the Confucius Society  
|    |        | • Forging Greater Xi’an: New Regional Strategies |
MIT as a Big Kindergarten

Mitchel Resnick
NPR’s On Point with Tom Ashbrook

Future of Newspaper
Jeff Bezos buying Washington Post
A Reflective Dialogue
Programming of a Class

- Jinhua opens the topic (10 min)
- Guests present the case (15 min)
- **Dialogue** (30 min): Jinhua challenges the guests and students participate in the debates
- Guests reflect on the discussion (10 min)
- Jinhua concludes (5 min)
- Students write in-class idea notes (10 min, details below)
On the idea notes

• In class; email or paper
• What does the talk \textit{inspire} you to think? Either as a practitioner, a researcher, or a citizen
• How does this particular talk \textit{connect} to other topics?
• Any \textit{personal} experience related to the discussion today?
• Did the dialogue today \textit{change} any of your prior notions about China? How so?
• What if you were the \textit{presenter} today? Anything you would do differently?
• On data, method and \textit{research design}: anything you’ve learned?
• Ideas for your team project?

\textit{Liyan and I will synthesize and report back!}
Speakers

15 guests from MIT, Tufts, Harvard, Columbia, Stanford, Tongji and Tsinghua

Jinhua: critical commentator that provides a coherent story line and 2~3 generic logic.
## Students’ Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options of class registration</th>
<th>12 Credits</th>
<th>6 Credits</th>
<th>Listener</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class participation 40% =</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27% (in class idea notes) + 13% (discussion)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature synthesis 20%</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Team project 40%</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Idea: not graded</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Proposal: 10%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>c) Draft report: 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>d) Final report: 20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Listeners are welcome on one condition: to attend at least 70% of the classes and submit in-class idea notes.
Literature Synthesis

- Holes in the structure
  - Education
  - Law and rule of law
  - Property right
  - ...
Literature Synthesis

- Pairing of students
- Flip sides of the same issue
Full of contradictions

- E.g. Environment
- Biggest renewable energy
- Biggest polluter
China Hype and China Bashing

• GDP: 9.5% per year for 30 years
• Urbanize 370m people without slum
• Raise hundreds of millions of people from poor
• Million miles of road, billions of square feet of housing
• Biggest CO₂ emitter
• Severe pollutions
• Political reform
• Inequality
  – urban – rural; east – west; within city
  – from one extreme to another extreme
Team project

- Student Pairs
- Project idea and ppt (not graded)
- Project proposal and ppt (10%)
- Project draft report and ppt (10%)
- Project final report (20%)
# Team project deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Proposal</th>
<th>Project Report (Draft and Final)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Title</strong></td>
<td><strong>Project Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highlights</strong></td>
<td><strong>Highlights</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract (250 words)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Abstract (250 words)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key words</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key words</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Objectives / Research questions</td>
<td>2. Objectives / Research questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Literature Review</td>
<td>2. Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Methodology</td>
<td>3. Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Data</td>
<td>1. Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Expected results</td>
<td>4. Analysis results and interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Expected impact and policy implications</td>
<td>5. Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. References</td>
<td>1. Summary of research findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Impact and Policy Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Limitation and future research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. References</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please use [mendeley](https://www.mendeley.com) or [zotero](https://www.zotero.org) for references. Follow the [APA](https://apastyle.org) style. I’ll provide two examples papers for you to learn about the formatting.
Team project

Both draft and final reports are COMPLETE documentation of your projects.

- **Draft**: the best you can do **before** my comments
- **Final**: the best you can do **after** my comments
Recommended Books

• Weiping Wu and Piper Gaubatz (2013) The Chinese Cities
• Thomas Campanella (2011) The Concrete Dragon: China's Urban Revolution and What It Means For The World
• John Friedmann (2006) China's Urban Transition
Logistics

- MW 9:30-11:00;
- Videotaping of all classes
Next class

Is China an Outlier? China’s Urbanization in the Historical and International Contexts

Liyan Xu

In Class Idea Notes

• Please write ...
Concluding Remarks I

• Design of the course
  • Top-down and bottom up
  • Cases vs. theories
  • Content and format
  • Findings and research methods
• Students, Guest, Liyan and Jinhua
Concluding Remarks II

- Urbanizing China vs. China’s Urbanization
- Urbanizing China as a Conscious Action
Concluding Remarks III

- Typical pitfalls
  - Attribute everything to urbanization
  - Over generalize
Complex
Contradictory
Constantly-changing
Urbanizing China

A reflective dialogue

11. S945, MW 9:30-11:00 Professor: Jinhua Zhao, TA: Liyan Xu
Fall 2013

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