

CALL FOR CHAPTER PROPOSALS
Coming of an age: Trends and Issues in Housing in Asian cities
Urmi Sengupta, Annapurna Shaw

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Introduction

For many countries in Asia, the future of housing is now. This future is closely linked to successful theoretical advancement and policy practice in housing studies. Well-provided housing is the bedrock of a community because of associated social and economic benefits. Housing and property have long been economic drivers leading many households to better lives, but also, collectively, improving the economic base of the country or the city.

For the past decade or so Asia has provided a fertile ground for new experiments in housing with surprising results in areas of housing privatization, subsidy regime and ownership structure. They have taken place within the context of dynamic demographic and economic shifts, serious reconfiguration in political and financial structure and changing aspirations. On the other hand, globalization has affected many Asian housing systems to different degrees and in various dimensions, which, in turn, has caused many countries to aggressively manage risks and alter strategies. These changes can be summarized by three broad trends: First, rapid regulatory and financial reforms coupled with the growing private sector in a productive and profitable role increasingly driving housing growth by providing greater choice and variety of housing. Second: the shrinking role of public housing in relative terms with only a limited number of state-owned enterprises that are profitable and competitive. This fits in with the overarching trend towards stronger governance with corporate ethos and ambitions exerting significant leverage over the allocation of resources in the economy as a whole; and third: attempts from low income communities to acquire land or regularize encroached land and build their own housing and related infrastructure as a co-operative or individually or with the help of NGOs and /or the state. These trends have produced a diversity of results with varying impacts on different economic groups in the city, its social milieu and land uses and they also vary within countries in the Asian region. Thus within the high income Asian countries, the middle income South-East Asian countries, China, India and the smaller and poorer countries of South Asia the housing efforts of the last decade show interesting similarities and contrasts. So

far, however, there is a lack of research on how these trends can be articulated on a pan-Asian scale and what it means for the future. As the population swells and housing demand grows, cities across Asia are treading a difficult balance of the rise and rise of the private sector, regulatory reforms and in tandem, in several countries, the rise or the continuing presence of state intervention and ambitions. In the last decade, the expectations of these governments to adopt progressive policies to deal with the social inequalities and market failures of the neoliberal model have been high. In some ways the ethos of the early decade of neoliberalism (the 1990s) and its pro-market ambitions have been, short-lived to give way to a unique governance condition with conceptual contradictions and tensions. Within this, the housing agenda of Asian countries is seeking a direction for the future.

Unfortunately, housing research in Asia has suffered from methodological weaknesses. The conceptual or empirical comparisons with housing markets in the West do not necessarily explain the emerging situation in Asia. For instance, the hybrid system of property rights and (il)legal regime prevalent in urban informality is far from what is witnessed in the Anglo-American system. Comparative studies across cities in Asia on the other hand, have celebrated variations while undermining commonalities that co-exist, such as in the underlying issues of poverty, economic growth, political (in)stability, governance, social mobilization and even media activism and their impact on housing. It also means housing is linked to that many variables and not simply the economy alone. In the real world conditions of frugal information, externalities and scale economies, the various housing reform models across cities and countries in Asia generate guidance that is uniquely context specific and yet generalisable. One of the objectives of the volume would be to highlight the latter so as to enable the development of both theory and policy.

So how do we articulate this interwoven state of being of both market and state working in tandem in the housing sector? Post 2000, housing has been a component of social, economic and cultural transformation, but this has not yet been studied in detail. The dearth of research on current trends and issues as well as estimations of future housing needs and development requires that researchers and practitioners in the field commit themselves to filling this void in the literature. The best way to approach this is to involve those scholars who have an interest in and whose work intersects with housing and urban development issues. Therefore, the proposed manuscript will be a collection of original essays critically evaluating and discussing various issues of housing development in different Asian countries, written by a variety of scholars who all bring their particular expertise to the topic.

What is needed first at this point is a critical accounting of the baseline situation that exists. It is then opportune and imperative to cast a fresh look at the future of housing in order to create a framework.

Production Details

The proposed length of the book is 9 chapters of 7,000-9,000 words authored by leading experts offering a critical in-depth discussion of key issues and concepts related to housing studies in the 21st Century in Asia.

Recommended Topics

The focus of this book will be on the current trends in housing provision. It is also marked by a certain degree of futurism. The scope of the book is loosely set not only to push the boundaries of creativity and analysis but also to capture distinctiveness in the choices and possibilities to set housing within a wide range of contexts. Topics to be discussed in this publication include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Successes and failures in housing market transformation
- Shaping and reshaping of housing market?
- Driving forces for housing transformation
- Housing reforms and their implications
- Public private partnerships in housing
- Institutional innovations and dynamics in housing provision
- Impact of governance and regime change in housing
- The role of housing in cultural preservation /transformation
- Housing the poor or how they house themselves
- Housing as a link between culture, community, and the larger society

The aim of the book is to capture a broad spectrum of empirical observation from countries across South and South East Asia including China. The collection embraces a comparative approach, allowing theory and practice to be put forward and tested for their applicability and

relevance to the understanding of the new situations. The collection is broad but never deviates from its central theme 'challenges and opportunities' in the Asian housing context.

Submission Procedure

Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit a chapter proposal by 16 February, 2014. The proposal should explain scope of the proposed chapter and its alignment with the theme for the book. The proposal should not be longer than 600 words. Chapter proposals should be accompanied by a brief biography for each of the chapter authors.

Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by March 30, 2014. Full chapters are expected to be submitted by July 30, 2014. All submitted chapters will be reviewed on a blind peer-review basis.

Potential Contributors

Scholars and practitioners working in housing and urban development in Asia.

Please send all inquires and submissions by email (attached word document) to:

Dr. Urmi Sengupta

Queen's University Belfast

Email: u.sengupta@qub.ac.uk

Prof. Annapurna Shaw

Indian Institute of Management Kolkata

Email: ashaw@iimcal.ac.in