Urbanization and Governance in China and India

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China and India Compared

Fast forward to the future—China’s urbanization in 2025

- 350 million will be added to China’s urban population by 2025—more than the population of today’s United States
- 1 billion people will live in China’s cities by 2030
- 221 Chinese cities will have one million+ people living in them—Europe has 35 today
- 5 billion square meters of road will be paved

Opportunity of India’s urbanization to 2030

- 5 times—the number by which GDP will have multiplied by 2030
- 590 million people will live in cities, twice the population of the United States today
- 230 million people will enter the working-age population
- 70 percent of net new employment could be generated in cities
- 91 million urban households will be middle class

Urbanization Levels in China and India: A View from the Census
Which is more “urbanized”? 

Settlement points with population estimates are used in GRUMP as a guide to reallocation of population from rural areas to urban extents defined by stable night-time lights. The level of detail available in the settlement points database varies by country. 

Note: National boundaries are derived from the population grids and thus may appear coarse.
3,894 Census Towns in India: Urban or Rural?

Pradhan (2013)
Defining “Urban” in China and India

• India: 147 out of 3,894 census towns are granted a urban status--the rest stays under rural administration.

• China: 7,237 rural places are granted an urban status (i.e. promoted to towns) between 1978 and 2010.
1. Informal Settlements: Guangzhou vs. Mumbai
Urban Villages, Guangzhou

- Former agricultural villages encircled by urban expansion
- Built on rural land collectively owned by villagers
- Majority of residents are migrants without local hukou
- The city of Guangzhou marked 139 urban villages to be redeveloped
Redeveloping Urban Villages

Shipai Village

Liede Village
Territorial Politics: Divide by *Hukou*

Villagers vs. Migrant tenants
Dharavi, Mumbai

“Many people will be inconvenienced and will have to make sacrifices if the city has to develop.”

--Chief Minister Deshmukh, 2005.

Associational Politics:
Housing activism led by NGOs

- Two classes of slum dwellers: regularized vs. un-regularized, divided by an arbitrary “cut-off date.”

- Indian Supreme Court ruled that the cut-off date should be extended from 1995 to 2000.
2. Land Acquisition: Singur vs. Wukan
Invoking Land Acquisition Act of 1894, the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) attempted to acquire land from peasants for Tata Motors.
Krishi Jomi Bachao (Committee to Save Farmland) was formed in 2006. CPI-M was defeated in 2011, and Mamata Banergee’s TCP (Trinomool Congress Party) won the state-level election.
Wukan protests

• Mobilization is based on territorial claims, i.e. collective ownership of land

• Targeting local officials

• Strategic use of media

• Both material and political demands, i.e. land and elections
• How do we understand the major shifts in urban governance that are happening in cities across the global South, which are deeply contested across places, territories, and scales.
Cities and Citizenship

• Urban restructuring in China and India has brought about new forms of inclusion and exclusion, and cities have become strategic sites for reformulating citizen rights.