



# The Emerging Asian City: Concomitant Urbanities & Urbanisms

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The Asian urban landscape contains nearly half of the planet's inhabitants and more than half of its slum population living in some of its oldest and densest cities. It encompasses some of the world's oldest civilizations and colonizations, and today contains some of the world's fastest growing cities and economies. As such Asian cities create concomitant imagery – polarizations of poverty and wealth, blurred lines between formality and informality, and stark juxtapositions of ancient historic places with shimmering new skylines.

This book embraces the complexity and ambiguity of the Asian urban landscape, and surveys its bewildering array of multifarious urbanities and urbanisms. Twenty-four essays offer scholarly reflections and positions on the complex forces and issues shaping Asian cities today, looking at why Asian cities are different from the West and whether they are treading a different path to their futures. Their combined narrative – spanning from Turkey to Japan and Mongolia to Indonesia - is framed around three sections: *Traditions* reflects on indigenous urbanisms and historic places, *Tensions* reflects on the legacies of Asia's East–West dialectic through both colonialism and modernism and *Transformations* examines Asia's new emerging utopias and urban aspirations.

The book claims that the histories and destinies of cities across various parts of Asia are far too enmeshed to unpack or oversimplify. Avoiding the categorization of Asian cities exclusively by geographic location (south-east, Middle East), or the convenient tagging of the term *Asian* on selective regional parts of the continent, it takes a broad intellectual view of the Asian urban landscape as a 'both...and' phenomenon; as a series of diverse confluences – geographic, historic and political – extending from the deserts of the Persian Gulf region to the Pearl River Delta. Arguing for Asian cities to be taken seriously on their own terms, this book represents Asia – as a fount of extraordinary knowledge that can challenge our fundamental preconceptions of what cities are and ought to be.

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