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The Chinese City



Synopsis

China's cities are home to 10 percent of the world's population today. They display unprecedented dynamism under the country's surging economic power. Their remarkable transformation builds on immense traditions, having lived through feudal dynasties, semicolonialism, and socialist commands. Studying them offers a lens into both the complex character of the changing city and the Chinese economy, society, and environment. This text is anchored in the spatial sciences to offer a comprehensive survey of the evolving urban landscape in China. It is divided into four parts, with 13 chapters that can be read together or as stand-alone material. Part I sets the context, describing the geographical setting, China's historical urban system, and traditional urban forms. Part II covers the urban system since 1949, the rural-urban divide and migration, and interactions with the global economy. Part III outlines the specific sectors of urban development, including economic restructuring, social-spatial transformation, urban infrastructure, and urban land and housing. Finally, part IV showcases urbanism through the lens of the urban environment, lifestyle and social change, and urban governance. The Chinese City offers a critical understanding of China's urbanization, exploring how the complexity of the Chinese city both conforms to and defies conventional urban theories and experience of cities elsewhere around the world. This comprehensive book contains a wealth of up-to-date statistical information, case studies, and suggested further reading to demonstrate the diversity of urban life in China.

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Customer Reviews

One of the most detailed and wide ranging analyses of Chinese Cities around, Weiping's book delves into the various forces shaping Chinese cities today, as well as how they will continue to be shaped in the future. Migration, infrastructure, environment and 'the state' are all covered with aplomb, including an analysis of how they got to be that way. It is quite functional as a textbook on the subject, and extraordinarily well supported with pages of references accompanying each chapter. If anything, a further discussion of the subject of Chinese 'ghost cities' would be interesting, and a greater examination of urban cultural mores. Still, a good book all in all, and well worth recommending if you happen to be interested in the subject - and a great springboard to even more in-depth and specific works.

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