

Call for Papers

International Seminar Series

The 'Southern Tilt' in the Urban: Embedded Wisdom and Cultural Specificity as Pathways to Planning

Co-organised by the Institute of Public Policy (NLSIU, Bangalore)
and URBAM (EAFIT University, Medellín)

The Institute of Public Policy (NLSIU, Bangalore) and URBAM (EAFIT University, Medellín) invite papers from urban scholars and planners working on global South. Selected papers may be presented in either of the seminars: Medellín, Colombia or Bangalore, India.

Dates

Medellin, Colombia on August 22-23, 2019,

Bangalore, India on February 13-14, 2020.

Context

The proposed seminars in Colombia and India seek to evolve planning approaches and methods to shape city futures in geographies that promise to be the future of urbanization. As cities in the global South experience unprecedented urbanization, planning for, and managing these processes appears ineffective as evidenced by high levels of poverty and inequality, and the near breakdown of urban services and amenities in these cities. The

ineffectiveness of city planning and urban management is pegged in part to planning being 'borrowed' and 'imposed' by knowledge systems – developed to manage urbanization experienced by the global North in 20th century - through complex processes of colonialism and globalisation (Friedmann, 1993; Watson, 2009; Batra, 2009; Gupta and Sharma, 2006; Mahadevia and Joshi, 2009).

In contrast, the 21st century, responses to 'new' urban forms such as mega cities and city-regions encompassing large land areas, gated communities, sprawls, edge cities, peri-urban and the 'rurban', characteristic of the southern cities are absent or few in-between. It is this context that led to a call for 'reinventing planning' such that it contextualizes the 21st century urban (Framer, et.al, 2008). Building context specificity requires, one, an acknowledgement of the transition from an "Euclidian world order of stable entities" to the emergence of the "non-Euclidian world of many space-time geographies" (Friedmann, 1993) and two, factoring in global concerns of climate change, natural resource depletion and food insecurity, in turn, necessitating the need to build resilient cities.

The proposed seminar series focus on the urban planning processes and methods by foregrounding the varying contexts of the global South juxtaposed with historical trajectories of these geographies. The seminars encourage scholarly debates and action research that privileges embedded wisdom and posits socio-cultural specificity as the 'ordinary'. While an easier and accepted method is to contextualize existing and emerging planning methods developed in the North to 'suit' the South, the seminars push for a radical departure that is 'inward' looking. These will explore alternative (to those developed in the Global North) locally rooted knowledge systems as possible conduits to evolving planning methods that address general and specific conditions of 'new forms'. These include informality and access to services and housing, increasing socio-ecological vulnerability, inadequate and outdated statutory frameworks underpinning fragmented and fractured governance processes and systems. Embracing the argument that historically, cities have been centres of culture and the crucibles for the advance of civilisations (Perlman 1990), the two seminars will foreground historical and contingent geographies of cities to debate the intersectionality between planning and new urban forms and their challenges.

Invitation:

The seminars encourage papers on the following themes, although not restricted to these:

1. Planning for and governing mega-cities and city-regions: In 2014, there were 28 mega-cities worldwide of which sixteen are in Asia, four in Latin America, three each in Africa and Europe, and two in Northern America. Yet, conventional planning is limited to the city as against the emerging city-region. The city-regions, in effect, are “missing planning hierarchies”. This track invites papers that focus on identifying and establishing city-region and plan for these by foregrounding the symbiotic relationship between the city and its region.
2. Social urbanism: Demand-drive, participatory, and integrated physical intervention strategies in informal sectors of Medellín (Colombia), were used to tackle the huge social debt that the formal city had accumulated after years of neglect. Referred to as social urbanism strategies, the results of these efforts inspire similar initiatives elsewhere. This track invites papers that reflect upon the successes, failures and future challenges of social urbanism strategies.
3. Informality, demand for access to services and housing: Planning theory is undergoing a transition with a focus on informality and associated rights, The recognition of rights in informal contexts is hugely different (Davy and Pellissery 2013), and are often neglected in planning models. This track invites papers that aims to address and incorporate informality in planning approaches.
4. Resilience, planning and governance: While evolving planning methodologies for cities of the South, an added complexity is that of enhancing resilience. This track invites papers that marry the objectives of resilience and context-specificity in planning and governing the Southern cities.
5. Statutory frameworks and Planning laws: Planning cannot be separated from the question of property and legal frameworks that govern the land (Davy 2012; Pellissery, Davy and Jacobs 2017). Planning laws in the global South are reflective/ continuation of the colonial times. While this is found to be stifling for the challenges of the global South, a range of statutory innovations are unfolding in response. This

track invites papers on these innovations and their ability to shape the planning process.

Seminar Dates:

This seminar series will be organized in Medellin, Colombia on August 22-23, 2019, and in Bangalore, India on February 13-14, 2020.

Application procedure:

Extended abstracts (500 – 750 words) indicating the title of the paper, the key argument and the nature of empirical evidence may be sent to one of the below on or before 1st April 2019. The abstract should clearly indicate at which location the paper is aimed to be presented.

Emails: usfseminar@nls.ac.in and urbam@eafit.edu.co

Important Submission Dates:

Submission of Abstract/ extended Abstract (500 – 750 words): 5th April, 2019.

Announcement of accepted abstracts: 5th May, 2019

Full Papers (6000 words): 1st August 2019 for Medellin, Columbia

1st December, 2019 for Bangalore, India

Selected papers will be published in one of the edited volumes derived from the Seminar Series.

The authors must specify where (Colombia or India) they would like to present their papers, in case of being selected.

Support Available

The seminar series in Medellin and Colombia are being organised with support from the Urban Studies Foundation. While there are no funds to support travel, the organisers will provide local accommodation and hospitality at the conference venue. The organisers will also facilitate visa processes.

References

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