

Transport and City Development: Understanding the Fundamentals

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Introduction:

This chapter is intended to provide a context to the subsequent contributions of the book. It alludes to the fact, notwithstanding the economic downturn at the time of writing, that in the last twenty years or so the world's economy has witnessed unprecedented growth and dramatic changes, the outcomes of which have been particularly magnified in the developing world. It argues that the world has reached an especially critical point in its development resulting from increased globalisation with many impressive advances made but also some potential dire consequences ahead, including alarming prospects of global warming as a result of climate change (Hansen, 2003 and Lankao, 2008) if the implications of our present circumstances are ignored and visions of sustainable development are not strategically and aggressively pursued at both the local and global scale.

The chapter seeks to place urban transport in the milieu of these developments, highlighting the new urban transportation landscapes in the making as a result of globalization forces whereby, increasingly, transport infrastructure investment is seen as providing links that offer competitive advantage rather than links that bind together adjacent, nearby communities, settlements and territories (Sandercock, 1998). The discussion examines the impact of the challenges posed by the 'New Regionalism agenda' (Schirm, 2002) on cities of the developing world and their transport systems in the context of world-wide trends of hyper-mobility where the premise that more travel at faster speeds covering longer distances underlie many transportation strategies at both local and global scales (Adams, 2008); and where the collapse of the integrated planning ideal has created new 'winners' and 'losers' (Sandercock, 1998; Graham and Marvin, 2001). These changes have been accompanied by urban infrastructure developments which have brought into the 'so called' developed world some characteristics more akin to those of the developing world (such as under-investment in infrastructure and growing disparities between the rich and the poor), and perhaps more noticeably, some developments in the developing world previously more associated with the developed world (such as new shopping malls, high rise residential buildings, elevated highways and fast train/metro projects).

While the discussion which ensues addresses concerns in developing countries in general, much reference is made to Asia in particular in light of its highly significant role in the development of the world economy and the dramatic rises in urbanisation and motorisation the continent has experienced in the last two decades.

Reference:

Dimitriou, H.T., (2011) "Transport and City Development: Understanding the Fundamentals" in *Urban Transport In The Developing World: A Handbook of Policy and Practice* Edited by Harry T. Dimitriou & Ralph Gakenheimer, 656 pp, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, United Kingdom

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