
Engaging with State Rescaling Theory in India and China

Lorraine Kennedy*¹

¹Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS) – CNRS : UMR8564, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) – 190-198 avenue de France - 75 244 Paris cedex 13, France

Abstract (in French and English)

Lorraine Kennedy: Engaging with State Rescaling Theory in India and China. The aim of this paper is to discuss recent trends in multi-level policy-making and governance in China and India in relation to state rescaling theory (Brenner et al. 2003; Brenner 2004). In particular it will examine the analytical distinction between 'rescaling' and 'decentralisation' in each national context. In India attempts at decentralisation in the 1990s did not lead to an effective devolution of power to municipal governments (Ruet, Tawa Lama-Rewal 2009, Sivaramakrishnan 2011) and current rescaling processes are largely unrelated. However, both the central and regional states are leveraging large cities as growth engines, through space-based policy instruments (Kennedy 2014). In contrast, in China, there has been a gradual yet significant decentralisation process underway since the partial introduction of market reforms in the late 1970s and local authorities are now expected to balance their budgets, promote local economic growth, and ensure social stability. In this context, growth strategies pursued by subnational political elites can be linked to this expanded policy space. Beyond these important differences, the paper reviews the small but growing body of literature on rescaling in Asian contexts.

Keywords: state spatial rescaling, state restructuring, subnational states, subnational policy, making, subnational political economy, China, India, scalar dynamics, economic development

*Speaker