

# On the Differentiation of Strategic Spatial Planning Making Mechanisms in New Era: Between Melbourne and Tianjin

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**Abstract**—Strategic spatial planning, which is taken as an effective and competitive way for the governors of the city to improve the development and management level of a city, has been blooming in recent years all over the world. In the context of globalization and informatization, strategic spatial planning must transfer its focus on three different levels: global, regional and urban. Internal and external changes in environmental conditions lead to new advances in strategic planning both theoretically and practically. However, such advances or changes respond differently to cities on account of different dynamic mechanisms. This article aims at two cities of Tianjin in China and Melbourne in Australia, through a comparative study on strategic planning, to explore the differentiation of mechanisms in urban planning making. By comparison and exploration, the purpose of this article is to exhibit two different planning worlds between western and Chinese in a new way nowadays.

**Keywords**—Differentiation, Tianjin China, Melbourne Australia, strategic planning.

## I. INTRODUCTION

STRATEGY planning taken as an effective way to improve the city competitive force has attracted attention of countries all over the world. As the globalizing competition becomes more and more intensive, cities which are driven by the changes, have taken the role of the actual power, taking part in the world's competition. Nowadays cities, instead of countries have become focuses in the new era and the space carriers to implement strategic planning. Faced by the sophisticatedly changing competitive environment, city governors eye on three different levels to make strategic arrangement of the future development. Firstly, on the global level, in the background of globalization and informatization, on the one hand, based on the tendency of globalization, the world city-system has changed itself into multi-layer hieratical system of cities, which takes cities as its nodes. On the other hand, on the condition of informatization and in virtue of the highly developed network of information and transportation, information, labor, resource, and material resource circulate in the world market to realize the optimal allocation. In the process, the cities, which are taken as nodes of global network,

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have the chance to approximate these global resources, thus providing a new opportunity for development [1]. Secondly, on the regional level, cities can not develop without the support and coordination of the region that they are located in. Compelled by the force exerted by the world, the evolution of city function has been influenced by the restructure and the new work division of world, in the representation of the strengthening process of localized regional cooperation. As the result, city-region has turned into the spatial regional unit participating in the international competition of 21st century. In conclusion, the development of the city must be under the consideration of the regional environment to set the development goal and seek the advantages in the integration of the structure of industries and regional space, and coordination of strategy planning and making. Thirdly, on the city level, it is certain that the external environmental restraint factors play an important role in city development, but what is more decisive is the competitiveness of the city itself, which can be seen as another restraint factor internally. Thus, the strategy-making of the city development must base itself on development conditions and set the goal to improve the competitiveness and the extent of participation in economical globalization, aimed at seek the advantageous position in the new hierarchy of world cities. Based on the analyses above, the focus will be given on the conversion of viewpoints when urban strategic planning in different cultures is made on the background of globalization, and elaboration on the differences and similarities between China and western countries will be set forth later.

## II. ABOUT URBAN STRATEGIC PLANNING

As to what is urban strategic planning, there is no agreement on its definite conception between the eastern and western, because of numerous modes of making of the planning and the various goals. But as to the general features of the strategic planning, there are some standing points in common. American economist Hellmann set forth the conception of urban strategic planning for the first time in his book Economic Development Strategy, stating that the urban strategic planning characterizes itself with systematicness, far-sight, hierarchy and essentialness as its four features [2]. Chinese scholar Yang Baojun thinks being systematic, far-sighted, resistant and programmatic can be taken as its distinctive features [2]. In the combination of the viewpoints of both the Chinese and western scholars, the conclusion about the definition can be made that urban strategic planning is a systematic, far-sighted and essential scheme that is aimed at the competition and challenge that a city may

possibly face with, which is based on the transformation that take place in the inner or outer environment. It is essentially the representation of how the city governors decide on the dynamic mechanism of the development of the city.

### III. THE RISING OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Under the background of the globalization and localization, multinational corporations and super-national organizations play an important role in the reconstruction of the global regions, thus undermining the power of nations and increasing the position of local governments, which instead of national governments become the main entities of making policies in control of cities' development [3]. This takes place in both China and Western countries, laying solid and extensive foundation of the rising of urban strategic planning. 1970s witnessed the transition of Western economic focus from manufacturing industry to service industry, and of the decentralization of development right from centralized national authorities to the local ones, which turned into the main role in the urban reconstruction. In parallel, in China, the reform and open policy had just been put into effect. From then on, Chinese economic system began to change from managed economy to market economy and from a rigid and stubborn state to an open and free one. The transformation in economic system resulted in administrative system changes and Chinese local governments, which before that had been strictly under control of national central authorities, won the essential right of management in the process and began to serve the local economic development in name of "*local development polity*" [4]. In order to break through more traditional restraints and strengthen the local need for development, and to improve urban competitive level, city governors began to take on making urban strategic planning as an effective measure to manage the city in new era [5]. It is demonstrated that it was in Singapore that made the first urban strategic planning, which marked the beginning of strategic planning in western countries and soon spread all over the world, gradually changing the mode of urban planning making [6]. Take the strategic spatial planning *Lyon 2010* for instance, an exploration of the cooperation mechanism between governments and civic organizations set out to emphasize the possibility of coordination in attempt of integrating the communicative planning into the making of strategic planning on macro-level, and it proved to be a great success [7]. However, urban strategic planning in China started relatively late in comparison of western countries. The conception of this new planning type was first introduced into China in early 1990s. It turned on the first attempt of urban strategic spatial planning in China made by Guangzhou municipal government and started a new era of Chinese urban planning. Since then, the first highly developing stage of strategic planning making had begun. In the later 10 years, there were tens of cities completing the making of strategic planning and keeping a well-developing situation all the time. The second highly developing stage has begun in recent years with the national economic focus region extending itself from the coastal north eastern of China to the inner land [8]. Because of the changing situation inside and outside of

China, there is a must for each city government to review the city development, specially the challenges and opportunities of the city. It is certain that the rising of urban strategic planning can satisfy these municipal governments. So far, researches on strategic planning have made great progress and the practice of strategic planning also gained great effect. In view of the different situations faced by the eastern and the western, and of the different developing history and culture, there are some distinctions between China and western countries when making urban strategic planning. Then focus will be given to the forming mechanisms of those differences.

### IV. THE INTRODUCTION OF TIANJIN CHINA AND MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA AND ABOUT THE URBAN STRATEGIC PLANNING OF EACH CITY

#### A. Tianjin China and Melbourne Australia

Tianjin, the third largest city in China, is located in North China Plain. Thanks to the advantageous site of being surrounded by the Bohai Sea, Tianjin possesses the largest port in north of China, which awards it as "*the third Economic Growing Core of China*". Tianjin has a long history of more than 600 years and rich culture. In the past 100 years of modern times, Tianjin served as one of the first opened trade ports and most important gateway of China, which laid the foundation of today's Tianjin with the combination of both Chinese and western culture, and with the integration of the ancient and modern times. Melbourne is the second largest city in the southeast of Australia, which is both an important harbor and well-known metropolis for the fittest living in the globe. It is considered to be the culture capital, which used to be the capital of Australia. As can be seen, although Tianjin and Melbourne are the two cities which lie in the south and north semi-sphere respectively, they have plenty of similarities in such conditions as geographical features, status of the country and human and culture environment. What's more, as used to be important trade ports that connected the world, their history is in accordance with that of the globe all the time. However, under the new conditions of the same world competition and their surroundings, the two municipal governments simultaneously put the city problems into the agenda of urban strategy planning to take active measures to answer and solve them, so they accomplished respectively the Study of *Tanjin Strategic Spatial Development Planning* in 2009 and the *Melbourne Strategy Planning 2030* in 2002. We can reveal the differences and similarities of strategic spatial planning making mechanisms in new era between Chinese and Western city by comparisons

#### B. The Study of Tanjin Strategic Spatial Development Planning and the Melbourne 2030 Strategy Planning

*Tanjin Strategic Spatial Development Planning* (*Tanjin Strategic Planning* for short) was completed in 2009. It has six chapters. The first chapter analyses the local surroundings and puts forward the general goals. The second chapter demonstrates the city planning history, the problems at present and a clear picture of development aims. The next parts from third chapter to six chapter focus on the spatial planning in the city strategic spatial planning, the development direction, the

transportation system and the ecology environment. While in 2002, Victoria State finished the *Melbourne Strategy Planning 2030* which aims to deal with the problems in 9 aspects on more compact city, better growth management, regional city network, more flourishing city, more livable city, more fair city, green city, more convenient transportation network, better planning and decision-making management. According to the comprehensive comparison of the two strategic planning above, we begin our study with their making modes, competitive systems, contents and implementation of management.

## V. THE COMPARISON OF THE TANJIN STRATEGY PLANNING AND THE MELBOURNE 2030

### A. *The Making Modes of the Strategy Planning, an Influence Exerted by the City Development System*

The technical process for the making mode of the strategy planning originates from the four categories, namely “problem oriented”, “target oriented”, “target interaction”, “induction of conditions” [9]. Such is the case of “problem oriented” with the Melbourne 2030 which begins with the forecast of a city 30 years later with the growth of population of one million, its future city life, and so on. Then the solutions to the problems in nine aspects, definitely adopted the “problem oriented”. In contrast, the Tanjin Strategy Plan describes the development objectives clearly in the first chapter on the construction of “*International Port City*”, “*North Economy Centre*” and “*Ecology City*”, and then makes plans in detail on how to accomplish them in the next chapters. As we can see, the making mode derives from “target oriented”. The following are the reasons for the difference in the constituting mode of the strategy planning of city between western and Chinese city.

Judging from the global economy situation, the urban economy system is restricted nothing more than by the two factors which are government and market [10]. Influenced by them, the city develops mainly in three ways which are government leading, market leading and mixed dominant. As Australia is a capitalist country in the West where the market economy serves as the main form, the urban development pattern has to be determined by market. The government simply plays a role in maintaining a relatively free and fair market environment instead of interfering with the economy development. So when it is left to allocate the public spatial resource in the course of the urban strategy planning, it need balance the benefits of all sides and it is relatively difficult to reach the agreement. Instead it advances the strategy of urban development from the angle of how to solve the urban problems. As we can see from the procedure of the urban strategy planning constitution of the Melbourne 2030, Such city problems as land shortage, transportation, employment, living, resources, environment, have become serious restriction factors which are affecting the city future development and later are converted into the official concerns of the government who makes efforts to seek the solutions that is then written in the urban strategy plan. While it is not the case with the city in China, it is the government that dominates the mode of the

urban development and has the privilege in the public resource allocation. Although the market economy system has been implementing for many years in China, the government still dominates the urban development in some way. With the economic system reform in China, the central powers were handed over to the local government that governs the city. So in China, the local government is able to centralize resources to formulate policies and guarantee the solution of the important issues on the urban development, and finally realize the expected strategy goals. For example, the Tanjin Strategy Plan suggested one target of being an international port city, which required the enlargement of the old harbor probably affecting the city area as the result. After a detailed analysis of the developing confliction between the old harbor district and city area, the planners tried to avoid the problematic section and choose a new location to construct a new harbor, there appeared the city pattern of two harbors in one city. It is nearly impossible for any municipal government in the western countries to solve the city problems in such a great scale to utilize the spatial resources, human and material as it is very common in China.

### B. *The Competitive Mechanisms in Strategy Planning: Decision on the City Strategic Resources*

Strategic planning means to promote the city competitiveness and the key to the competitive mode lies in the decision on the strategic resources [11]. The advantage of the city competition depends on the possession and effective utilization of the scarce resources. Due to the great changes that the modern scientific revolution made to the city form, the strategic elements in city development varies greatly from the natural and spatial resources at the very beginning until the capitals and technology last century, until the talent, knowledge, science and technology nowadays, which have been the core resources for the urban competition force at the information age. The economy globalization caused many new economic phenomena, which were followed by the upspring of such strategic locations as export processing zones, offshore banking centers and so on. In this way, the booming spatial resources have been converted into important factors in the strategic competition. The decision on the strategic resources varies according to the developing requirement from Chinese and Western city, which has been demonstrated clearly in comparison of the two urban strategic plans.

As one of the state center cities, Tianjin undertakes the important missions in the participation of the economic globalization competition and leading the regional economic integration development, so the decision on the strategic resources for city development has been of both international and regional strategic significance. This superiority from the strategic resources is particularly reflected in the harbor spatial resources. First of all, the state development strategy made by the national administration requires a shift on national level from simply export-oriented strategy years earlier to both domestic demand-oriented and export-oriented developing strategy. Tianjin is right at the point where the two strategies can be integrated and such advantage from its site demands

Tianjin as a connecting link. The harbors in Tianjin are engaged in both export and inland services, acting as spatial entities to implement the development strategies. Secondly, the harbor as a regional window open to foreign countries, is the natural channel through which the foreign capital comes into the country. With the course of deepening opening wider to the outside world in China, the combination of the domestic capital circulation and the international capital circulation means a great deal to a boost of the economy globalization in the area radiated by Tianjin harbor. Then, seen from the evolution history, the relation between the harbor and the city area has been an important part of the Tianjin city pattern. Recently with the fast development of *the Harbor City*, the conflicts between city area and harbor in space extension, traffic scheme and so on are getting more and more intensified, in that the compact spatial structure in Tianjin city lacks a larger developing well-organized framework. On this account, planners need to look at the harbor resources again, at last they adjusted the relation between the city and harbor by exploiting a new location to carry out *the Two-harbor Region Strategy* which on one hand decentralizes the spatial structure of the city, on the other hand highlights the status of *the Harbor City* to accelerate the economy growth. Taking into account all the city elements, both international and domestic, the conclusion can be drawn that it is inevitable for Tianjin that the harbor becomes the core resource in its strategic planning.

Melbourne 2030 borrows the long-time experience from *the Development Corridor* earlier and adds new ideas [12]. In order to solve the problem that the city would hold the population of growth by one million in following thirty years, the plan mainly applies following theories as *Urban Compact Development Theory*, *Urban growth Boundary Control* and some management on city suburbanization. All of them above focus on the strategy element, the land resources, which affect the future development of city. Some viewpoints are listed from the decision on the strategic resources. First, it has been mentioned that most cities in western countries are dominated by market and the municipal government plays a role in maintaining the free and open city environment, respecting the laws of market in resource allocation. What's more, the new economy phenomena add more uncertain factors to the unstableness of the market, which is getting more complicated and changeable. The government is not dominant in the market, so it is difficult for it to control the changing market of economy. In the end, the government chooses to provide the possible adjustment by increasing a margin of land for the uncertainty in the economy development. Second, Melbourne, which is a great livable metropolis in the world, enjoys the well-developed service facilities, cultural industry and innovative environment offering a better living status, attracting a great deal to the talents from the world. Judging from the growth of population in Melbourne, it is expected that immigrants will be in large proportion of the increasing population in thirty years. The key to the solution of enough accommodation for the population is to reserve and utilize the land efficiently in order to hold human resources. Third, as far as the division of labor in the world is concern, on the macrostructure level, the feature of the world

city system is dissymmetry between the core cities and peripheral ones. The core cities have finished the conversion from the manufacture industry to the service industry and are on top of the value chain of industry. To these cities, more efficient utilization of more land means more freedom for the industry and more value of the industry. From the above, it can be seen that land resource is the external form for the strategy resource in Melbourne 2030, which actually reflects how much the well-developed countries pay attention to the resource which changes from "*Hard Resource*" like natural resource, strategic locations, to "*Soft Resources*" like the innovation market, global talent resource, and high economy industry.

### C. The Developing Phase Differences between Cities Shown in the Strategy Plan

The planning contents between Tianjin strategy planning and Melbourne 2030 has both difference and intersection parts, which reveals the common and different problems in the internal and external environment of the two cities. Generally speaking, Tianjin strategy planning focuses on planning the material space, While Melbourne 2030 concentrates on the non-material elements such as society, human and culture, sustainable ecology and so on. Although there are some common concerns in their planning, the differences still exist in how to solve the problems and accomplish the aims, which occurs in the distribution of the space and the form of policy. One good example in case is that Tianjin strategy planning has made a careful study which begins with the detailed analysis of the ecology situation and ends in designing the land layout for ecology and has been executed as expected. In contrast, Melbourne 2030 describes the importance and value in detail for protection of ecology environment and has made the complete suggestions on implementation, but failed to make a clear picture of spatial planning. This difference will be discussed in the later chapter with the implementation management of the strategy planning. Now the analysis will be made on the differences about the contents for planning during the different development stages of city.

It is thought that in the well-developed western countries, the work for the state urban planning may be completed mainly in six phases which focus respectively on the material space planning, economy development planning, environment protection planning, social fairness, ecology construction planning, culture-oriented character planning. The planning contents improve gradually with the development of cities in the different stages [13]. It is generally acknowledged that the urban planning in China falls behind two to three stages with the Western countries, being in between the stage of the material space planning and environment protection planning. Seen from the patterns of Tianjin strategy planning and Melbourne 2030, the contents differences between China and Western city planning can be demonstrated clearly. According to the *Economy Growth Stage Theory* on the division of six stages in the region development by Rostow W.W, the economy in China at present is in between the preparation for taking-off stage and taking-off stage during which China needs to prepare such conditions as the accumulation of capital, the

establishment of a dominant industry, and the regulations to maintain safety for the taking-off of economy. But the perspective for the strategy planning requires the development plan of economy for next stage made by combining the new environment, which is required to study how to upgrade urban industry and how to guide the reasonable development for the city spatial structure by restructuring the industry location under the condition of the globalization and informatization. "two ports and two cities" is the best model for the spatial strategy suggests in Tianjin strategy planning which caters for this stage. In comparison, Melbourne 2030 exhibits the features of the city in a higher development stage of economy. With the growth of the city industry, the product supply has met the needs of society and the basic requirements for clothing, food, housing and so on. More attention has been paid to the improvement for the environment and quality related to culture, ecology, society service, etc in cities, which belongs to non-material aspects. The highlights of the strategy planning are shifting to the domains in ecology, human and culture and sustainable fields. In this way, the obvious distinction comes into being between Chinese and western cities in the planning contents of material and non-material aspects.

#### *D.The Implementation and Management with Different Executive Systems*

The strategy planning is generally organized and implemented by government. Because of the differences in planning systems between China and Western countries, the ways to the implementation and management are quite different after the plans are completed. Here begins with the introduction to the administrative systems in planning of China and Australia respectively. In China, the administration of urban and rural planning is implemented by the competent authorities at all levels which is in charge of organization of drafting, examination and approval, implementation, supervision, and the management of qualification. The legal urban and rural planning authority includes *City System Planning*, the *Comprehensive Planning of City*, *Detailed Planning*, *Township Planning* and *Village Planning* constituting a complete planning system ran by the authority in China. Australia is a federal state where the administration of government has three levels which are federal government, state government and local government. The administrative rights owned by local government come from the state government which governs its administrative region and does not interfere with the administration out of the region. The decision-making power for the urban planning is possessed by the state government and the function of the local government is limited [14]. In China, the *Strategy Planning*, which is out of official urban planning system, does not serve as a law. Instead, it serves to make a research on the strategy planning of spatial development, and on the visions of such strategy issues such as the city orientation, city layout, before the revision of the comprehensive planning of city. So the method for the strategy planning provides the strong continuity which plays an important role in influencing the comprehensive planning [15]. While the contents in the comprehensive planning have the

characters of "a stronger spatial color" and "a lighter color of public policy" [16]. Compared with the strategy planning in China, the local strategy planning in Australia is actually the planning policy made by government as a macroscopic guide for the detailed planning and construction [17], which leads to the lighter spatial color and the stronger color of the public policy. That is the right reason why there is difference on the common issues mentioned in the previous chapter. In fact, the difference in the planning contents of the two strategy plans does show the different natures of the strategy planning between China and Western countries, which indicate that the essence of Chinese strategy planning is *Strategy Study* and that of Australia is a *Public Policy*.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study and comparison with the making mode, the competitive mechanism, the contents and the implementation and management of the strategy planning between Tianjin strategy planning and Melbourne 2030 shows the different characters at present as following:

- 1) Both the market and the government exist in the city development and which is stronger in function determines the pattern of the organization for the strategy planning.
- 2) The strategy resources are the key factors in promoting the competitive competence in the strategy planning and the new economy phenomena can cause the variation of them.
- 3) The strategy planning should be established on the development stage of city and the changing phases need the adjustment of planning, so the reasonable decisions should be based on the situation of city.
- 4) The nature of the urban strategy planning is strategy study in China and that of Western countries is public policy.

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