

# Urban Life



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**Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology**

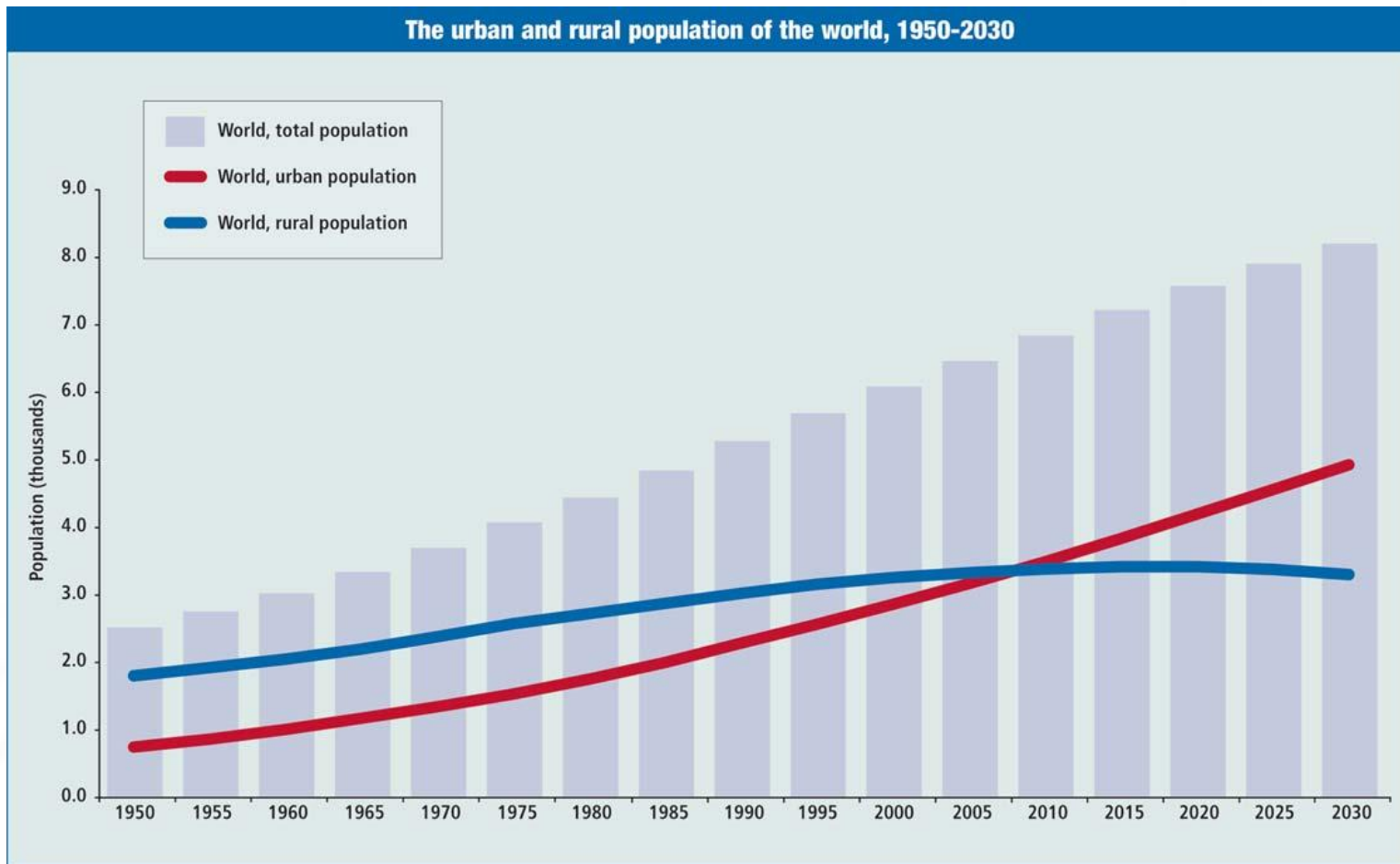
<https://www.oxfam.org/en/inequality-indonesia-millions-kept-poverty>

# Issues

- **1. Why Cities Matter?**
- **2. Seeing cities like an anthropologist:  
Cities, culture of poverty, housing program**
- **3. Urban life under Covid-19 pandemic**

# I. Why cities matter ?

**Rapid urbanization is one of the mega trends.**

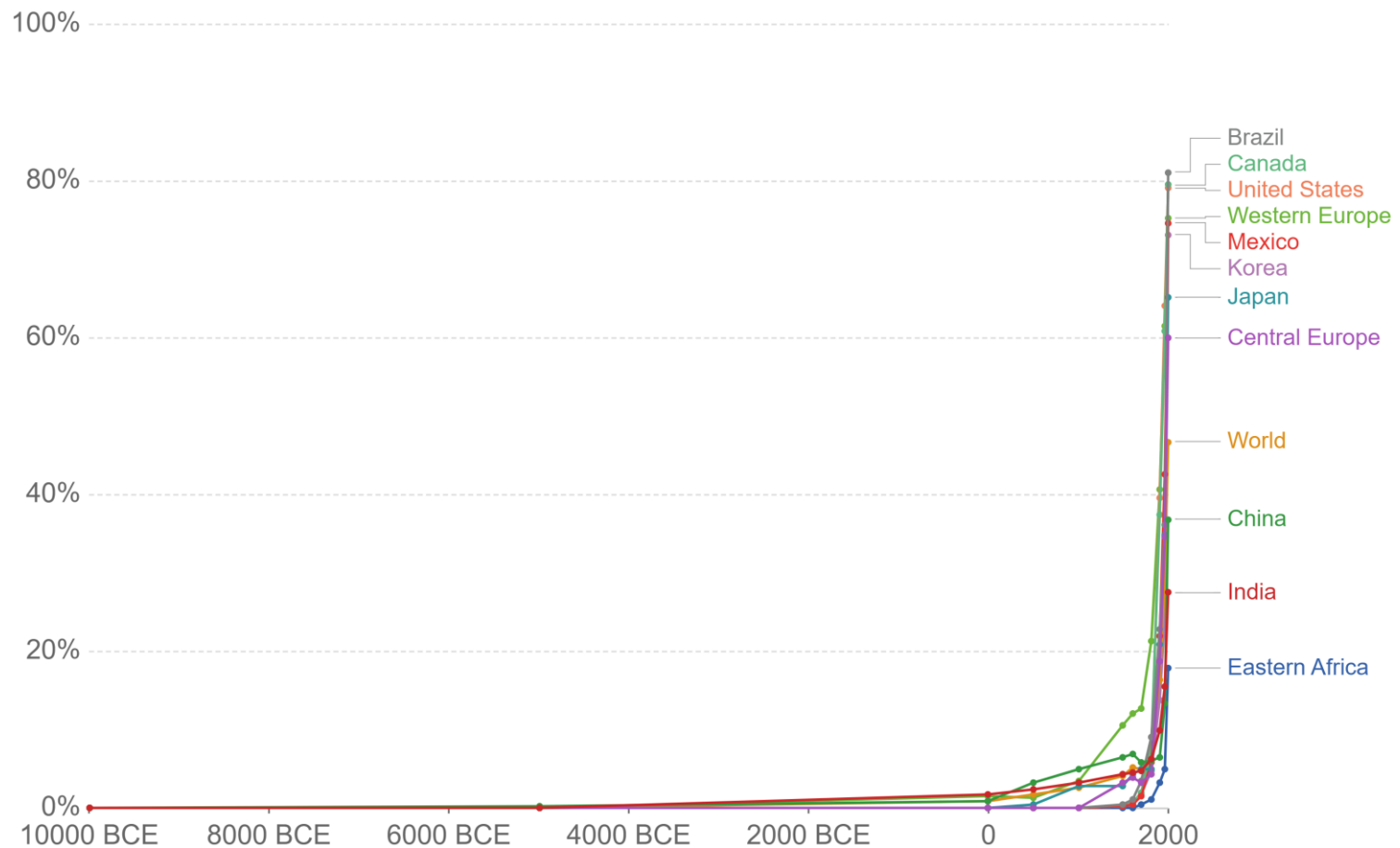


<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/WUP2005/2005wup.htm>

# The population living in urbanized area have increased significantly since the 19<sup>th</sup> Cen.

Share of the population living in urbanized areas, 10000 BCE to 2000

Our World  
in Data



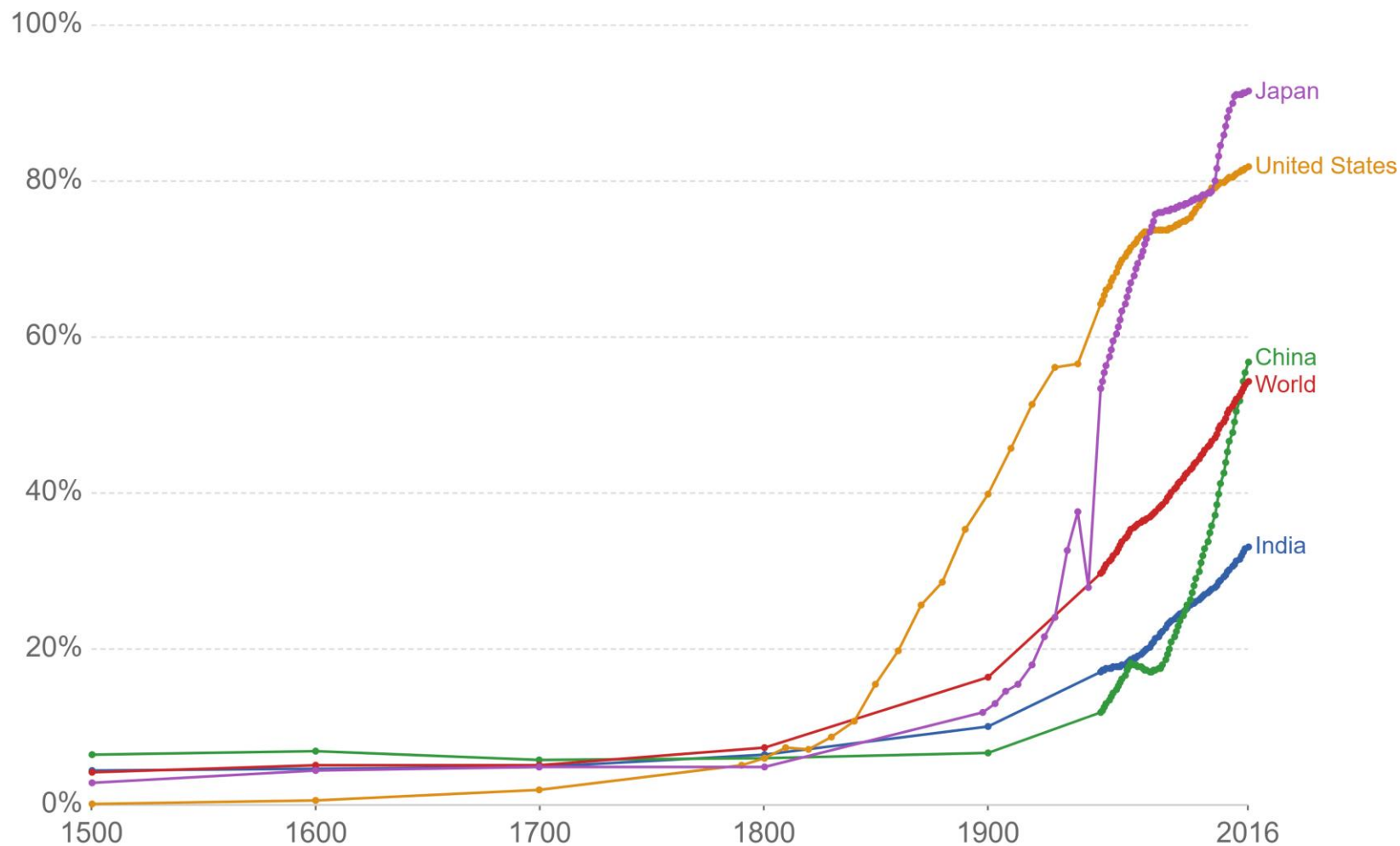
Source: HYDE 3.1 (2010)

OurWorldInData.org/urbanization • CC BY

# Urbanization over the past 500 years, 1500 to 2016

Share of the total population living in urban areas.

Our World  
in Data

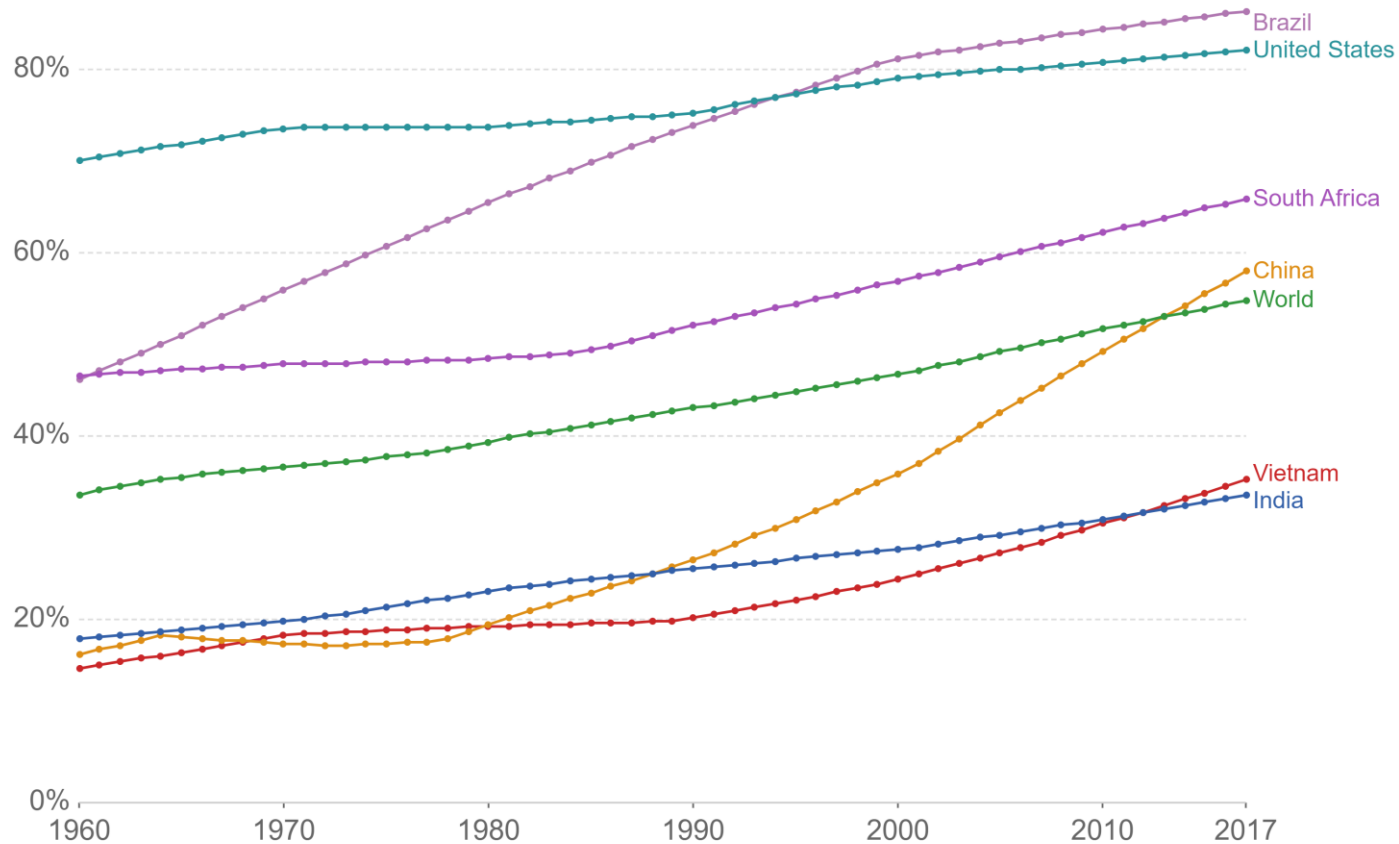


Source: OWID based on UN World Urbanization Prospects 2018 and historical sources (see Sources) [OurWorldInData.org/urbanization](https://OurWorldInData.org/urbanization) • CC BY  
Note: Urban areas are based on national definitions and may vary by country.

# Rapid urbanization in the last 50 years

Share of people living in urban areas, 1960 to 2017

Our World  
in Data



Source: UN World Urbanization Prospects (2018)

Note: Urban populations are defined based on the definition of urban areas by national statistical offices.

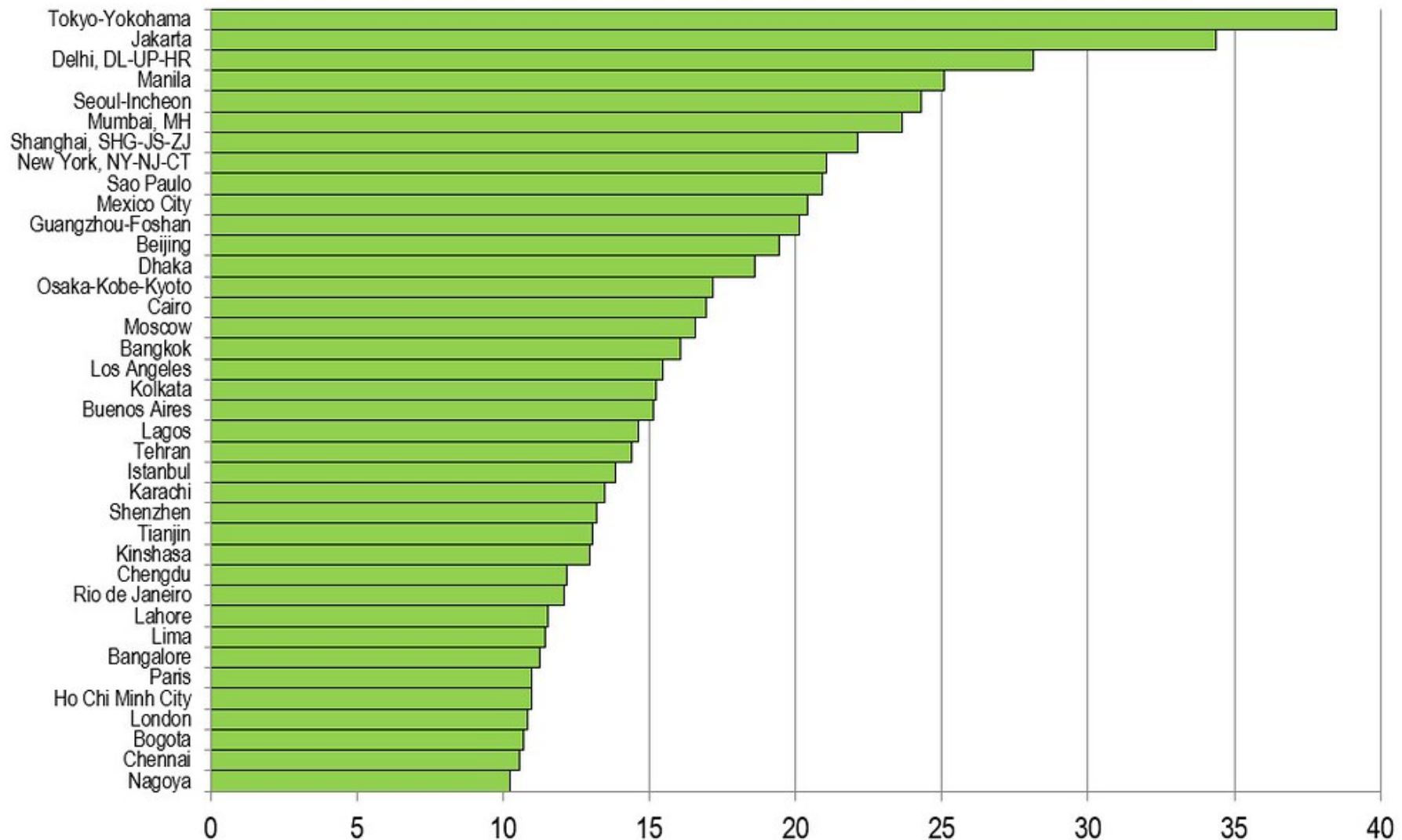
OurWorldInData.org/urbanization • CC BY

# How is it significant?

- **Urban population mostly increased in the cities in developing countries**

# The 38 Megacities (2019)

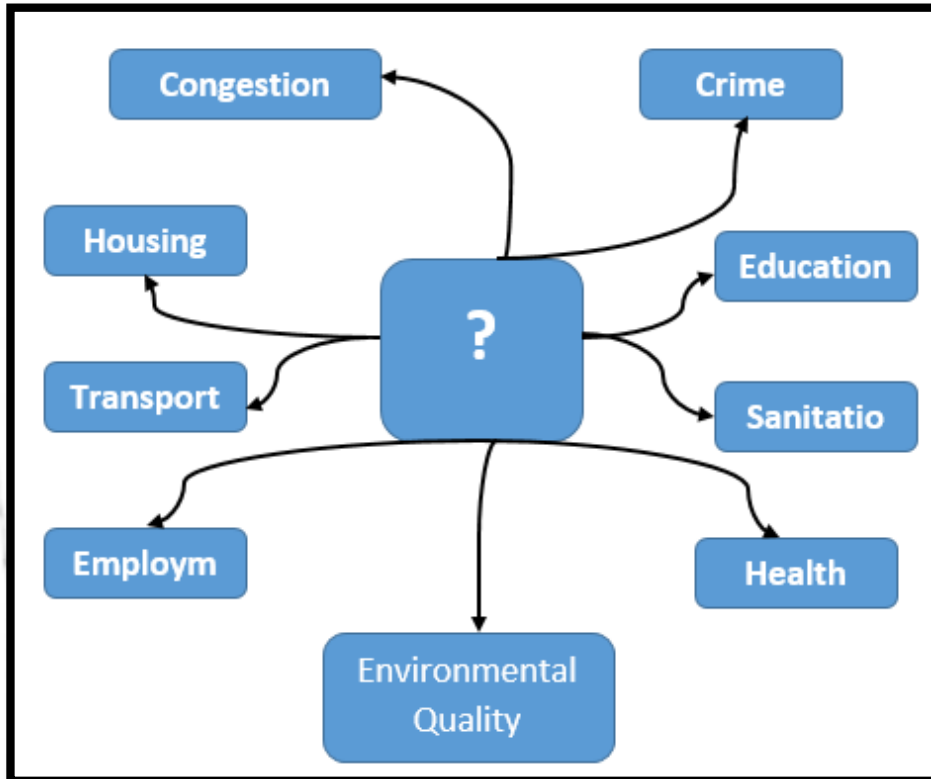
## URBAN AREAS WITH MORE THAN 10 MILLION POPULATION







# Several urban problems



<https://www.civildserviceindia.com/subject/General-Studies/notes/urbanization-their-problems-and-their-remedies.html>

<https://www.ierek.com/news/index.php/2017/10/25/urban-planning-issues-solutions/>

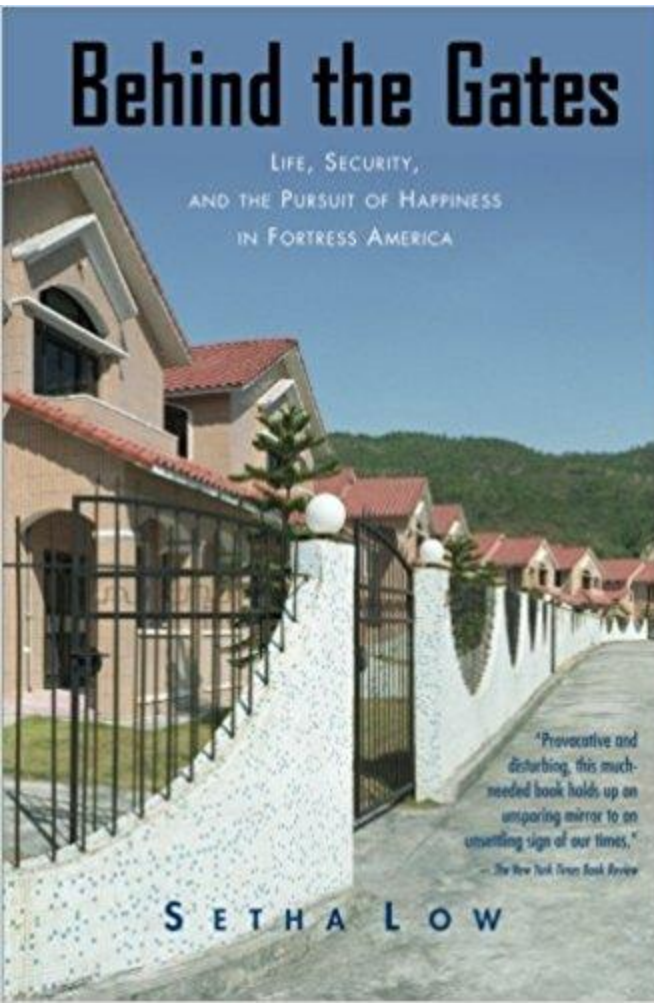


# Urban Inequality: Segregation



<https://theconversation.com/inequality-is-being-built-into-cities-segregated-playgrounds-are-just-the-start-115676>

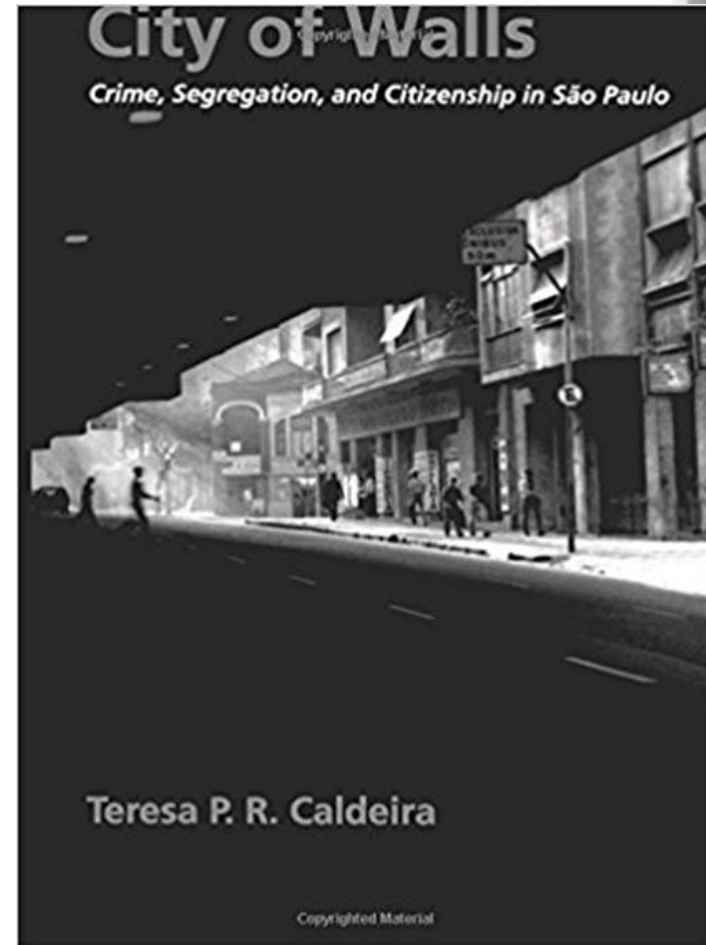
# Setha Low - Discourse of fear leads to gated communities



GETTY IMAGES

# Teresa Caldeira, *City of Walls*

- **The rich in Sao Paolo isolates themselves from others.**
- **The end of public space**
- **How can the rich totally exclude themselves from the poor?**



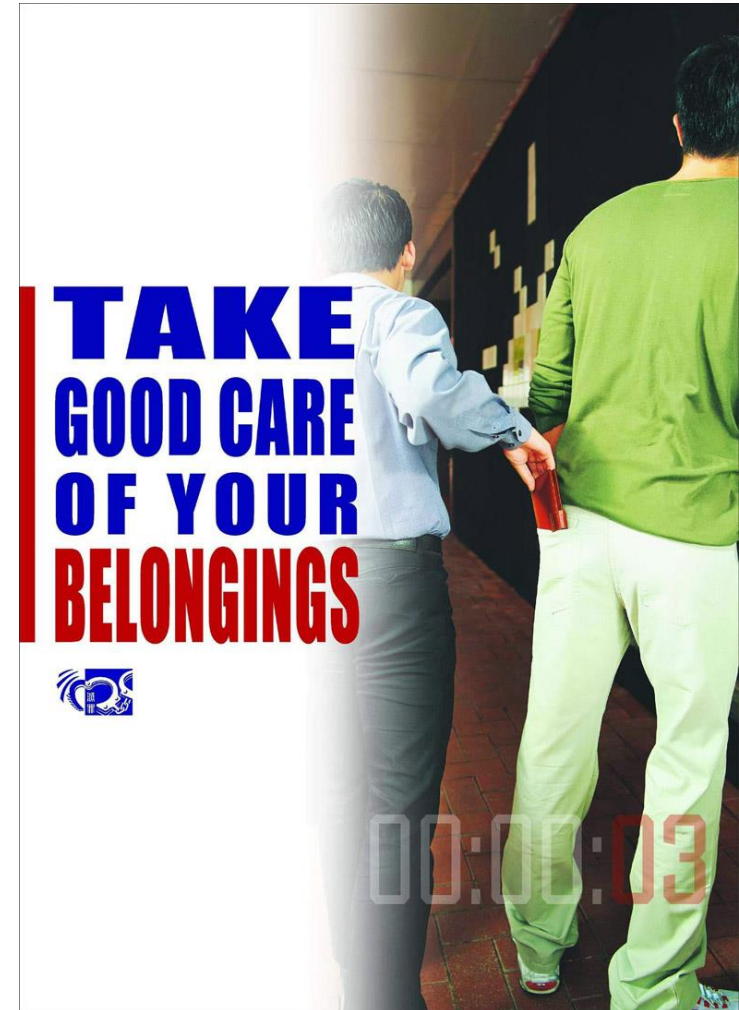
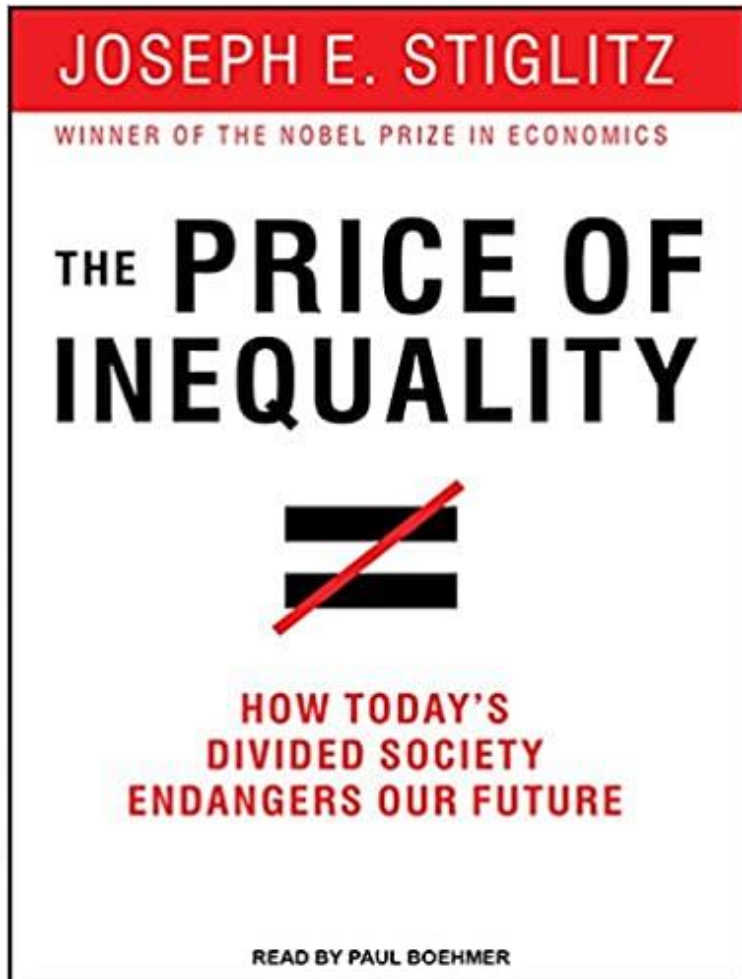
# Urban inequality a growing risk in Asia, warns World Bank



This file photo taken on August 17, 2017, shows people living in a settlement as the skyline of Manila's financial district is seen in the background. President Rodrigo Duterte's deadly drug war and armed Islamist rebellion pose "rising" risks to the Philippine economy, though it should continue to grow robustly in the short term, Moody's Investors Service said September 16, 2017. Noel Celis/AFP

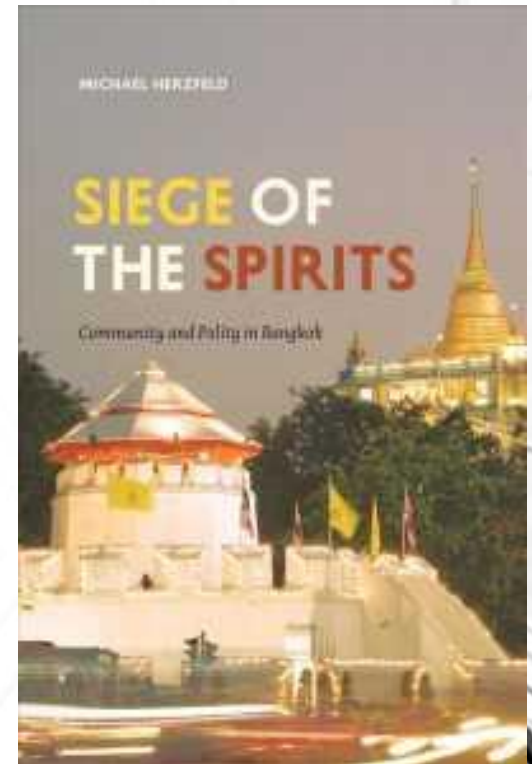
<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/10/03/1745201/urban-inequality-growing-risk-asia-warns-world-bank>

# Inequality affects all of us.



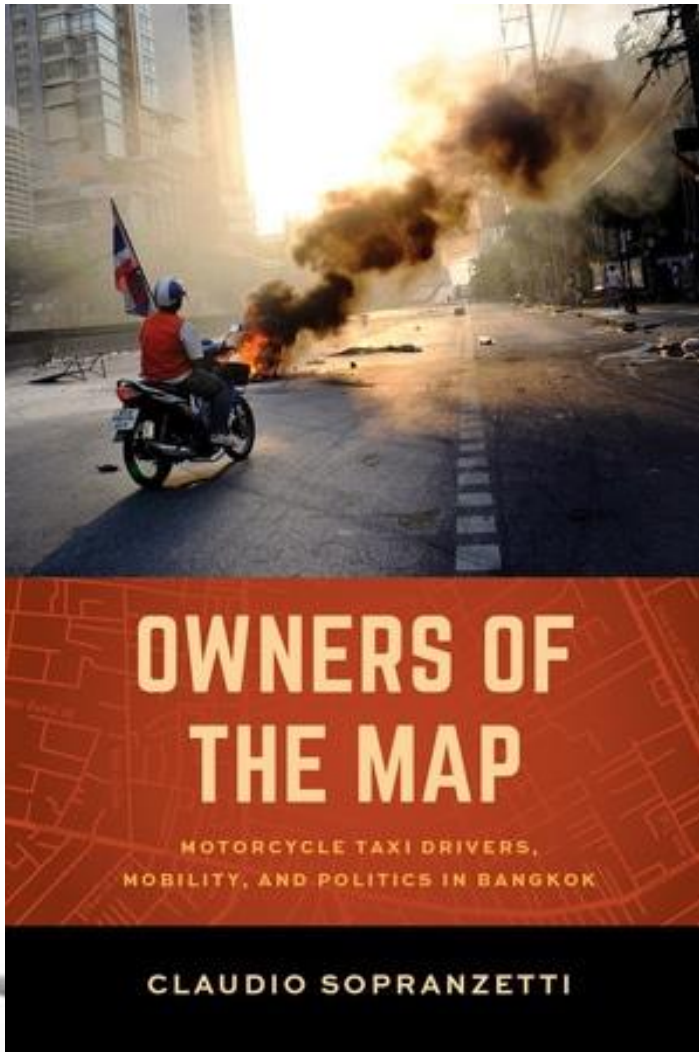
## II. Seeing cities like an anthropologist

- **Michael Herzfeld, 2016. *Siege of the Spirit: Community and Polity in Bangkok.***
- ***Pom Mahakan Community***





# Claudio Sopranzetti, 2017. *Owners of the Map: Motorcycle Taxi Drivers, Mobility, and Politics in Bangkok.*



# Anthropology came to cities quite late



Left: Bronislaw Malinowski; Right: Philippe Bourgois

รูปภาพ : <https://omnia.sas.upenn.edu/story/urban-ethnographer-gets-cornered>

# Urban anthropology

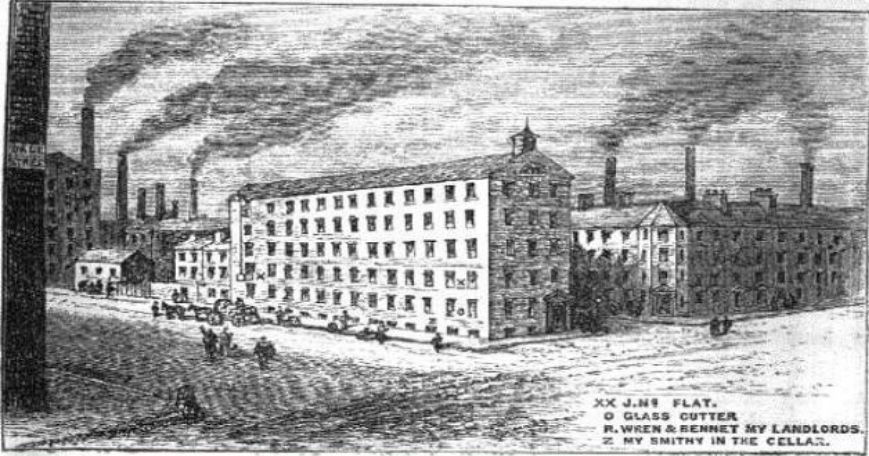
- Focusing on social life in the city
- How social life is structured by and experienced within urban contexts
- Ethnographic fieldwork
- Cross-cultural comparison
- “Anthropology draws on in-depth case studies to understand the social complexity of cities in particular contexts” (Jefte and Koning 2016:19)

# What is a city?



# Manchester, UK

MANCHESTER WAS A LEADING INDUSTRIAL CITY



# Osaka, Japan



# Third World Cities



# Mesopotamian Civilization

## Is was a city?



- <https://www.ancient.eu/image/347/ruins-of-ur//>

*Urbanism as a  
Way of Life*

*by Louis Wirth*

*Irvington Pub*

- **Louis Wirth – *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (1938)**
- **1) Size of population**
- **2) Density**
- **3) Heterogeneity**

# City typologies (Ulf Hannerz, 1980)

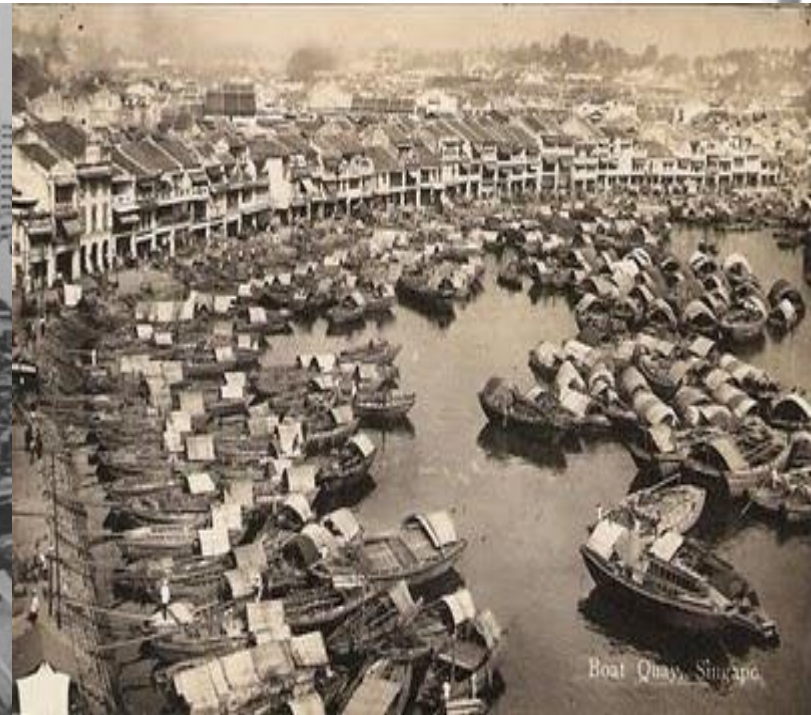
- **1. Courttown – ceremonial cities**



# Angkor Wat



## 2. Commercetown



**Singapore**

# 3. Coketown (Industrial city)



# Another way to classify cities

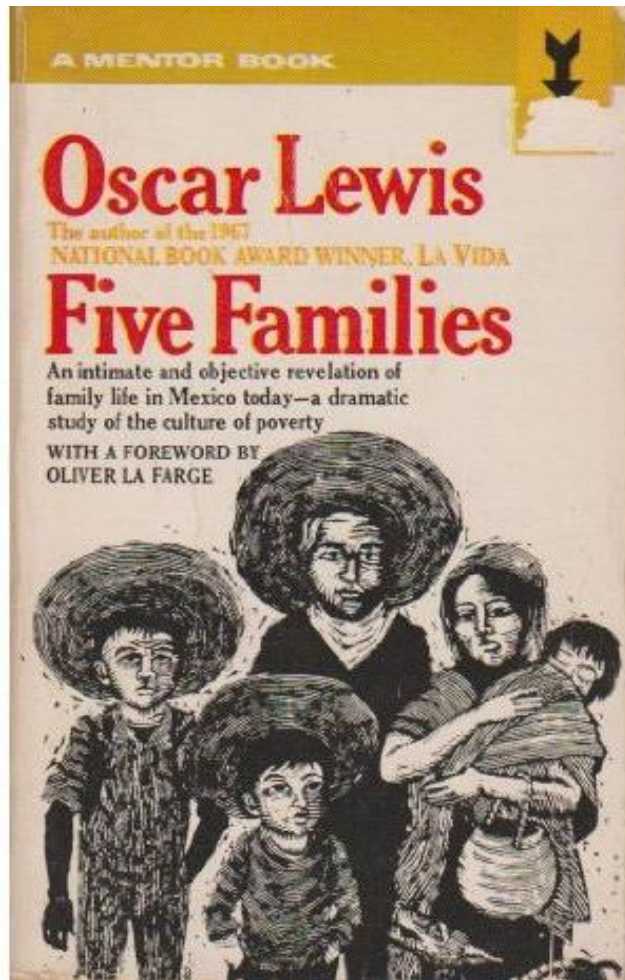
- **1. Pre-industrial City**
- **2. Industrial City**
- **3. Post-industrial city**



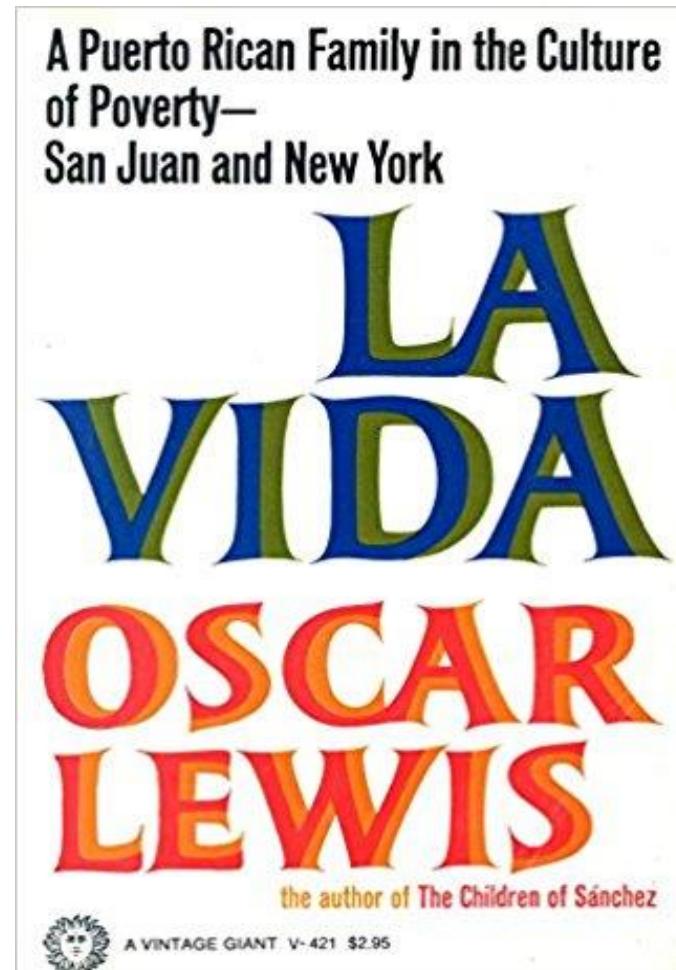
# Why are many people poor?

- **Personal behaviors: lazy, misbehavior**
- **Bad luck**
- **Low education, unskilled**
- **Structural Factors: Lack of available job**

# Oscar Lewis' *Culture of Poverty*



[https://thebusinesspath.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/515xhns50sl-\\_sl500\\_ss500\\_1.jpg](https://thebusinesspath.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/515xhns50sl-_sl500_ss500_1.jpg)



[https://images-na.ssl-images-amazon.com/images/I/51fIXNk%2BL1L\\_SX319\\_BO1,204,203,200\\_.jpg](https://images-na.ssl-images-amazon.com/images/I/51fIXNk%2BL1L_SX319_BO1,204,203,200_.jpg)

# Lewis' Culture of Poverty

- ***Culture of poverty* is the result of adaptation to their situation.**
- **Self-destructive behaviors**
- **It is reproduced and transferred to next generations.**
- **Sense of Hopelessness**

# **Policy implications**

- **“War on Poverty” Policy**
- **Poverty can be fixed by suggesting the poor to change their behaviors.**
- **Overlooking structural factors**

# Criticism

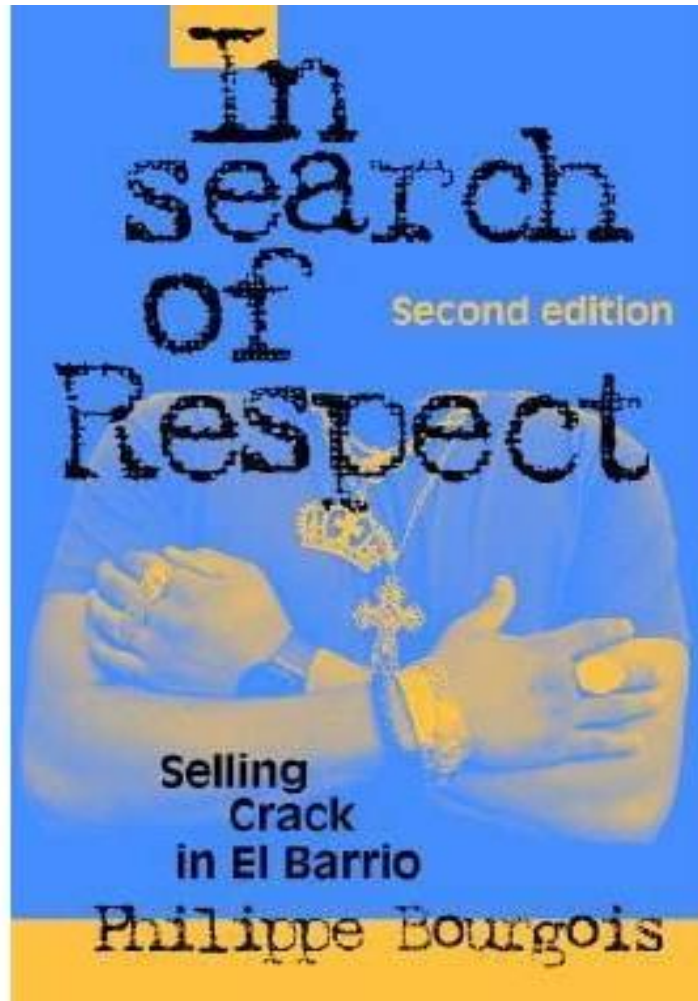
- **Reductionism, psychological explanation**
- **Structural conditions**
  - **Education**
  - **Social network**
  - **Job opportunity, job security**
  - **Insecure lives**

# **“How Urban Ethnography Counters Myths about the Poor” (Judith Goode, 2002)**

- **Ethnography**
- **Rehumanizing the poor, and going beyond blaming the victims**
- **Making senses of behaviors of the poor**

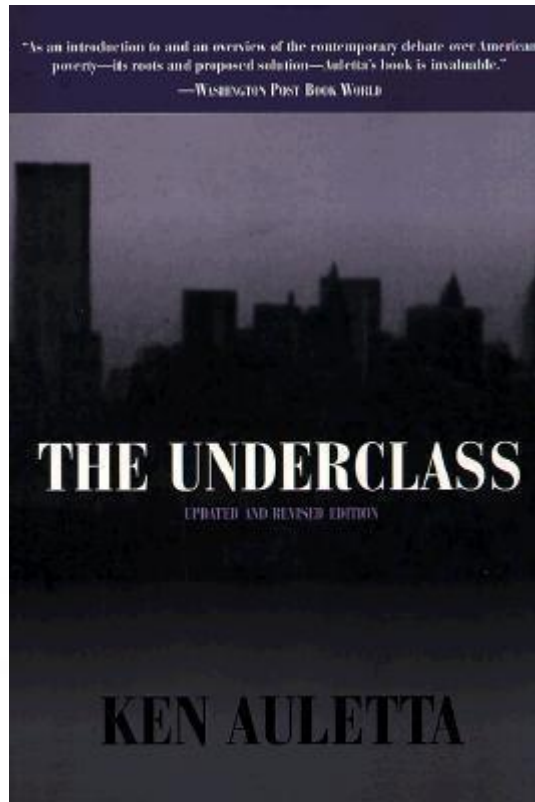
- 
- **Are the poor lazy?**
  - **Can the poor organize themselves?**
  - **Do the poor lack management skills?**

# Philippe Bourgois, 1995. *In Search of Respect : Selling Crack in El Barrio.*



<http://philippebourgois.net/www.philippebourgois.com/>

# Kenneth Auletta's *the Underclass* (1983) also dehumanizes the poor.



- **The urban poor cheat a welfare system**
- **Welfare dependency**
-

โกงเงินคนจนผ่านพีช  
ฟัน 3 ปี<sup>ม</sup> ปัก พม.ให้<sup>เป็นภาพ</sup>ออกจากราชการ



WWW.KOMCHADLUEK.NET



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คมชัดลึก

คม·ชัด·ลึก

**NEWS 1**

รอบวันทันเหตุการณ์  
(ช่วงที่ 2)

**NEWS 1**

WWW.NEWS1LIVE.COM

และสวัสดิการ  
Welfare

# อดีตปลัดพม. "พุดนิพัฒน์" ชดയാฆ่าตัวตาย หนีโกงเงินคนจน

NEWS **รอบวัน**

ทัน **เหตุการณ์**



NEWS1  
VDO



# Why have several housing projects for the poor failed in Thailand?



- The 16 years of “Ban Er A Thon Project” (บ้านเอื้ออาทร) (Low-cost public housing project)
- NHA can make only 286,000 units, only 50% of the original plan.
- NHA has a debt of 68,000 million bath (13\$Billions)

# Slum community (Informal settlement)



**Din Dang Project in Bangkok (1965)**



**Klong Teoy Project (1977)**



# Removing slum dwellers to high-rise buildings has succeeded in some countries

## Singapore



## Malaysia

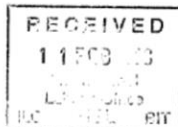


# Lessons from some countries in Asia

International Labour Office

## Shrinkage of urban slums in Asia and their employment aspects

Edited by  
Tatsuru Akimoto

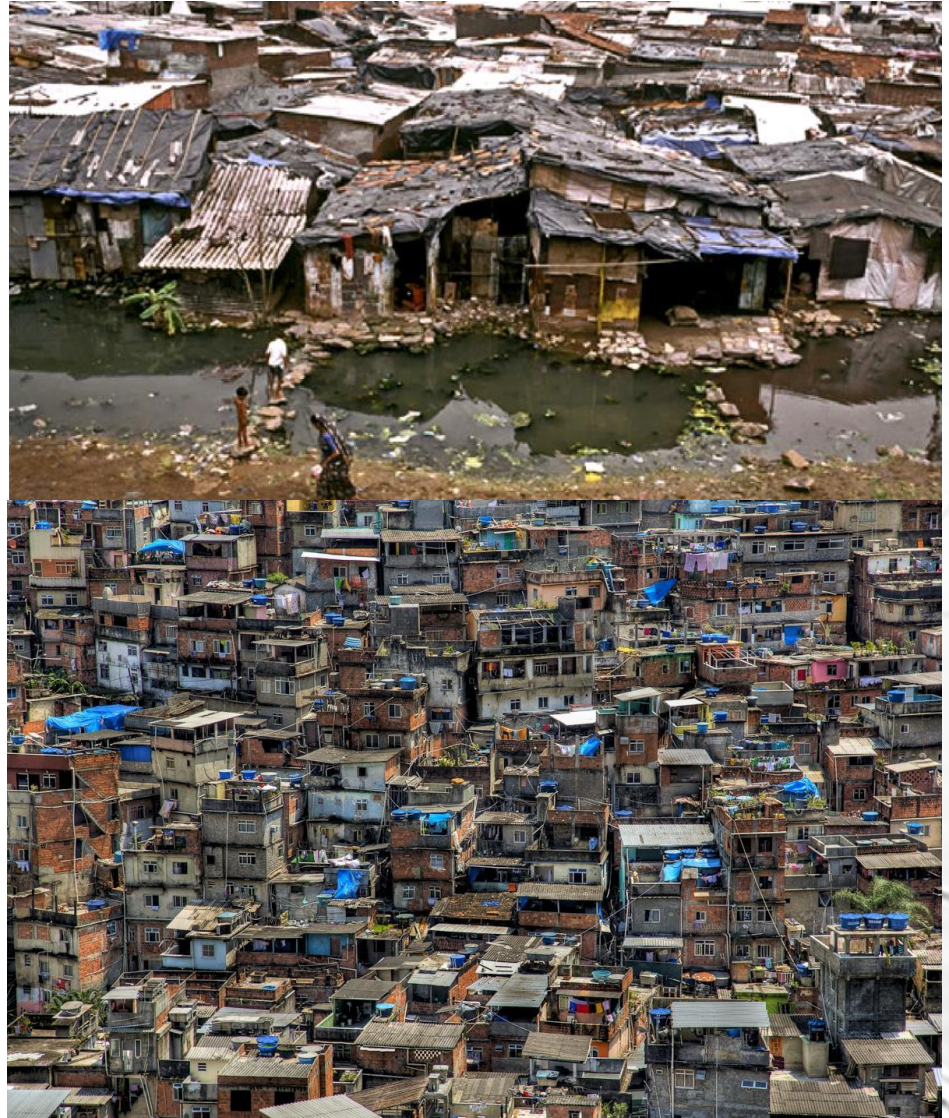
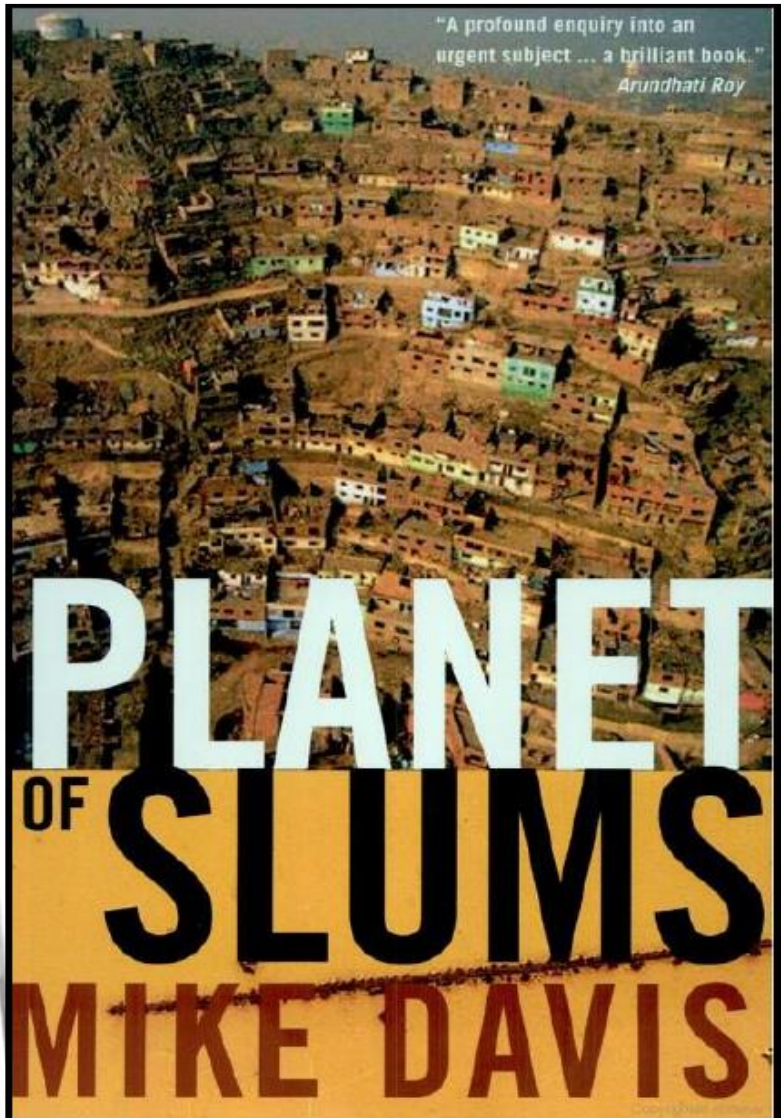


This publication is the output of an ILO/Japan Institute of Labour Project,  
"The Future of Slums and their Employment"

ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
Bangkok

Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia have succeeded in reducing amount of slum communities, **BUT** it has failed in several countries, such as Thailand, where the urban poor still work in the informal sector cannot.

# “Urbanization without industrialization”



Above: Kenya (<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/c9/89/80/c98980c02230789545f93973c1a1eb75.jpg>)

Below: Buenos Aires

- **Social housing in the form of high-rise buildings is not well suited to typical slum dwellers' occupations, such as street vendors.**



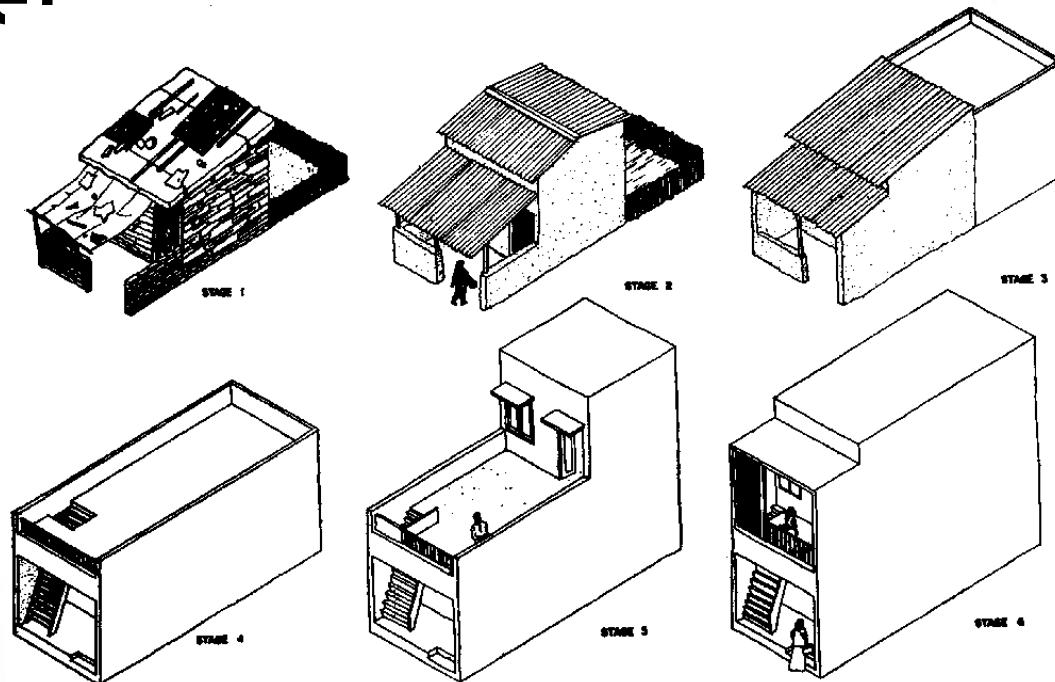
# Other problems of high-rise building social housing:

- Rooms are too small.
- High cost of maintenance
- Residents often sell their rooms to others.



# Resettling slum dwellers to relocation sites outside the city (late 1980s-1990s)

National Housing Authority (NHA) provided the infrastructure, and people build their own house in accordance with their income. (Sites and service)

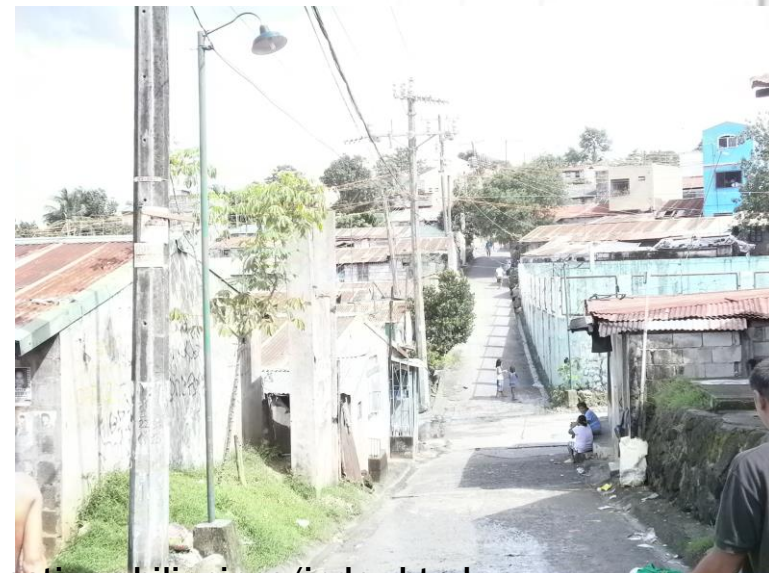


- **Government supported soft loans for the poor to build houses.**
- **However, such projects do not consider the negative impact of removing slum dwellers to distant relocation sites.**

- **Relocation sites have failed in many cases because they are generally located far away from the places where the urban poor can find jobs.**
- **Many original residents sell their plot to others.**



# Relocation sites in the Philippines with the same concept (Site and service)



- 
- **Low-cost public housing projects have failed because they do not understand the way of lives of urban poor.**

# **How anthropologists contribute to urban development projects.**

- **Bottom-up point of view**
- **In-depth study**
- **Concern whole aspects of social life**
- **Provide space for marginalized people**

# III. Urban life under the COVID - 19 Pandemic

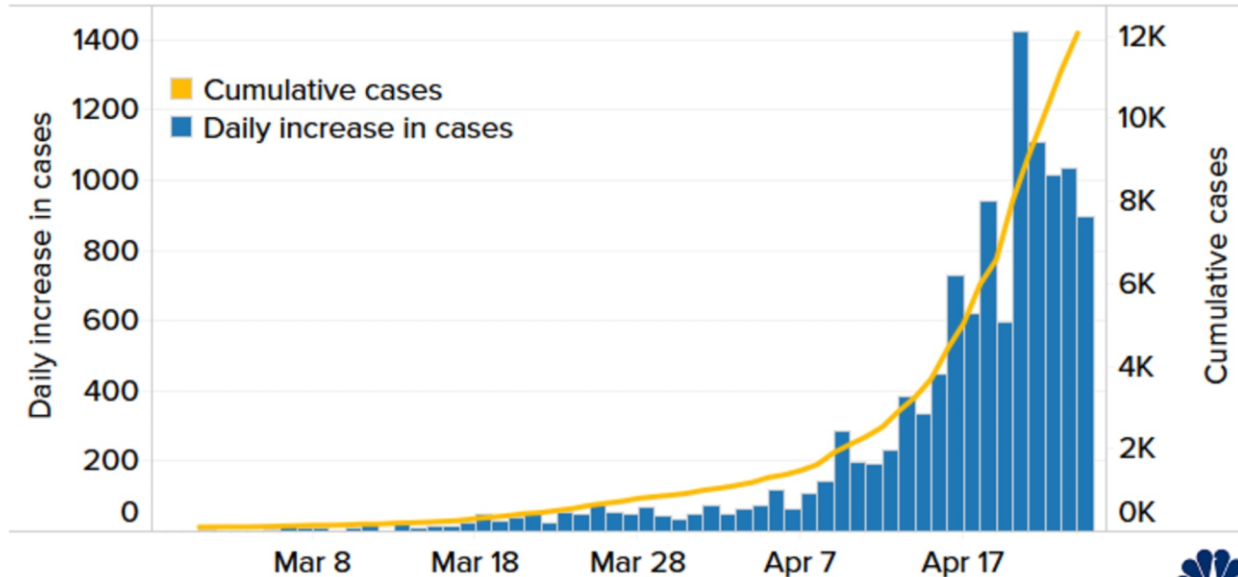


# Post-COVID-19 Scenarios

- **Is public space still necessary? Or people will retreat to their private space.**
- **If working from home is the new normal for many, crowded cities will become obsolete.**
- **Housing becomes infrastructure of care.**

# What do we learn from Singapore's second wave of COVID-19?

## Increase in coronavirus cases in Singapore



SOURCE: Johns Hopkins University, Singapore's Ministry of Health



<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/04/23/coronavirus-cases-spike-among-singapore-migrant-workers.html>

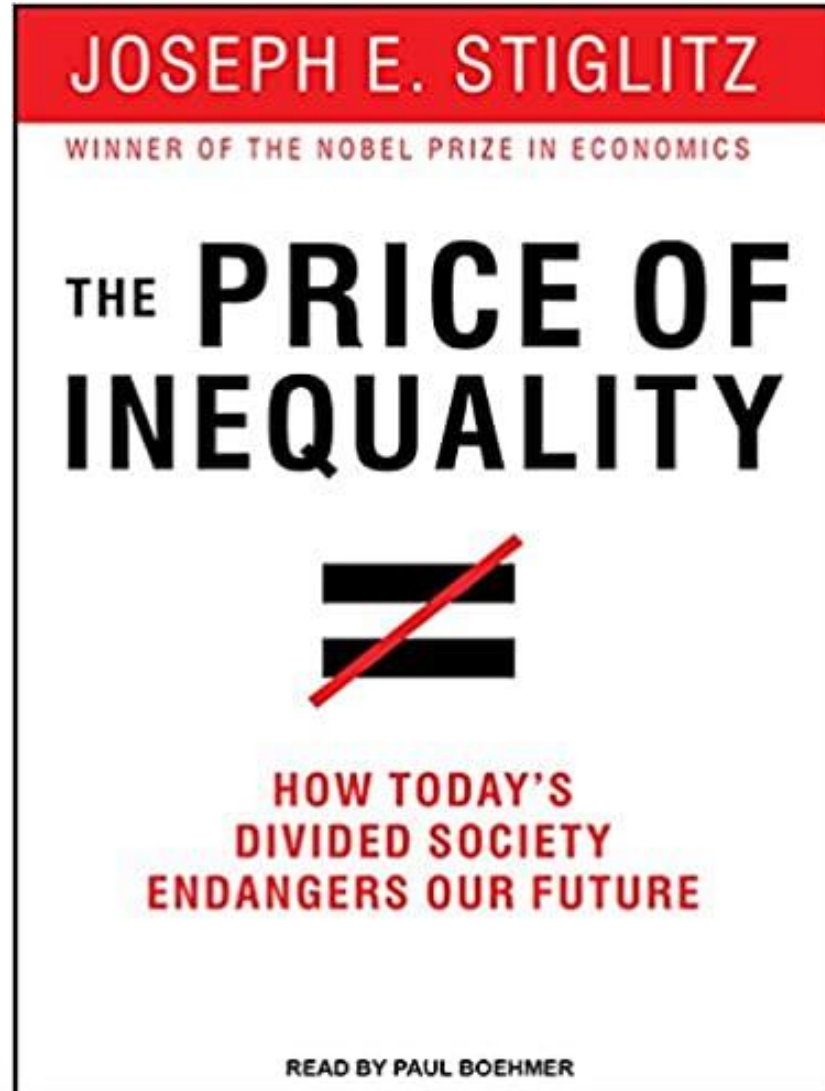
# Singapore's migrant workers are suffering the brunt of the country's coronavirus outbreak

By [Jessie Yeung](#), [Joshua Berlinger](#), Sandi Sidhu, Manisha Tank and Isaac Yee, CNN  
Updated 0213 GMT (1013 HKT) April 25, 2020

- <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/04/24/asia/singapore-coronavirus-foreign-workers-intl-hnk/index.html>



# Inequality affects all of us.



# Increasing Xenophobia ?

## Coronavirus: Student from Singapore hurt in Oxford Street attack

3 March 2020



Coronavirus pandemic



"I was attacked because of the colour of my skin"

A student from Singapore has said he was beaten up by a group of men who told him: "I don't want your coronavirus in my country."

# COVID-19 worsens inequality

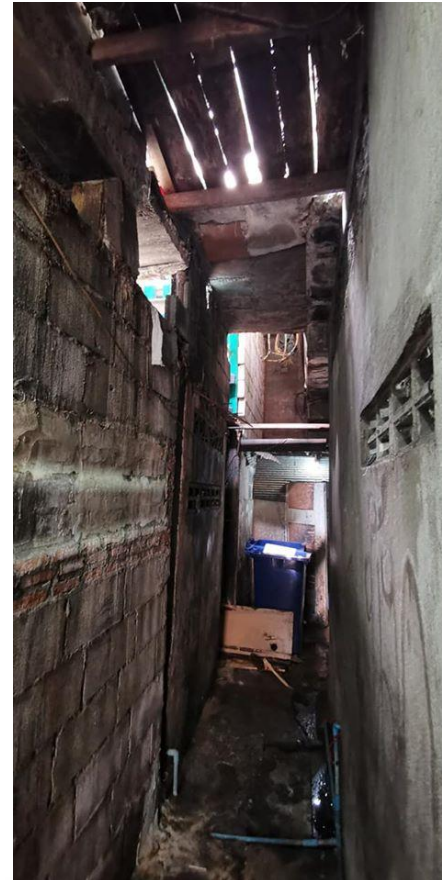
- Most of urban poor cannot work from poor.



**Most of urban poor work in the informal sector and do not have social insurance.**



# Urban poor's house cannot be a place for self-quarantine.



# **Digital Divide along with generational divide**

- **“Where can I apply for an email account? Is it at district office?”**
- **“I haven't register for 5,000 bath assistance program, because I came from the province. I don't know much about Bangkok. I don't know where I can register. I don't know the bus number which I can take to go to register”.**

# Please discuss about 5,000-Bath cash relief program

- **“No-one-left-Behind Program”**
- **Ministry of Finance underestimates the severe impacts of lockdown on socioeconomic aspects.**



# BMA delivered 20,000 young plant to low-income people.



กทม. แจก 20,000 ต้นกล้า ฝึกสวนครัว-ชุดปลูก  
DIY ให้คนตกงาน-รายได้น้อย ช่วงโควิด

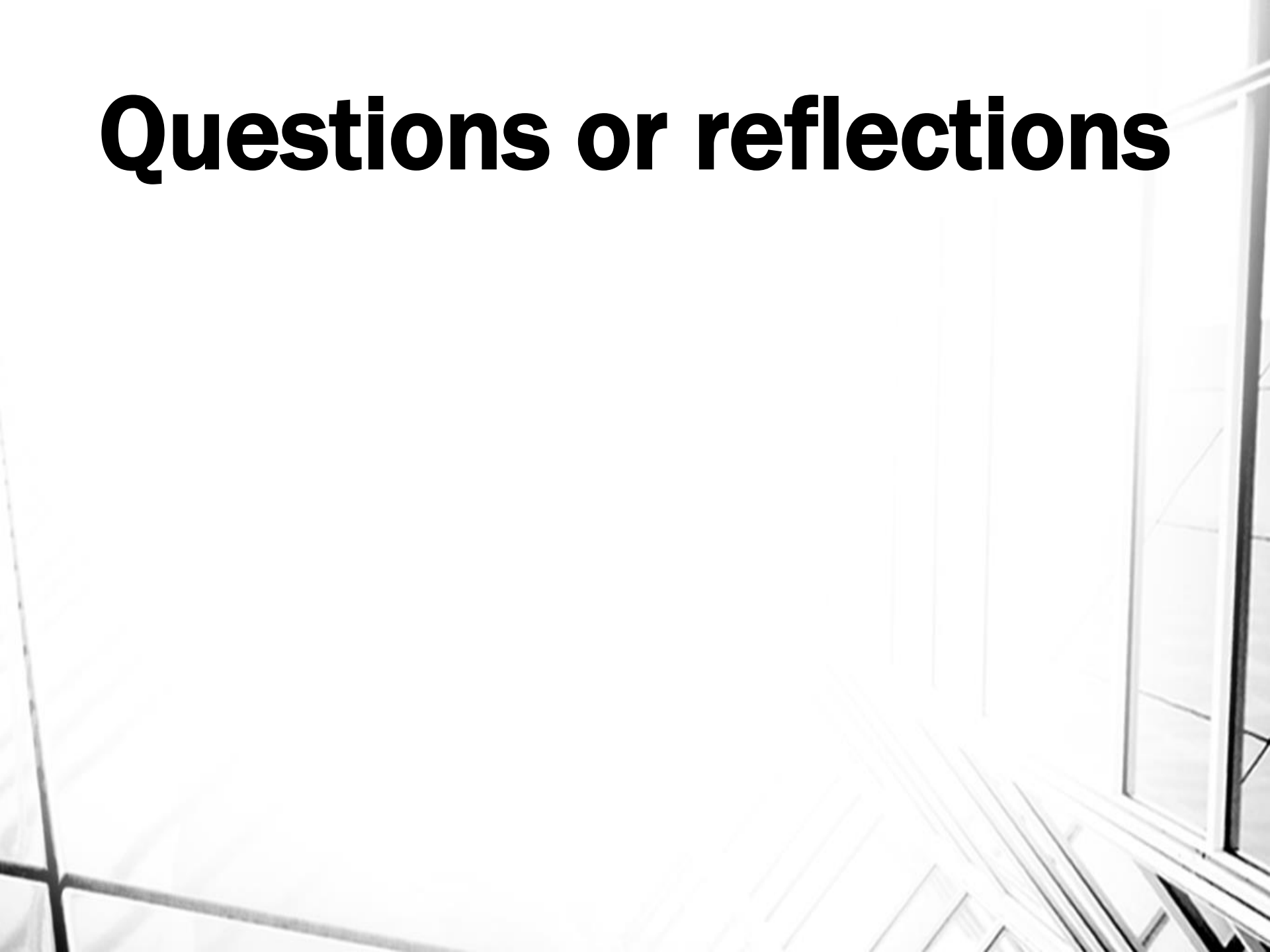
Tips & Tricks สารพันเกร็ดน่ารู้



# Jobless Thais Queue for Free Food Amid COVID-19 Pandemic



# Questions or reflections



# Suggested Reading

- Goode, Judith. 2002 “How Urban Ethnography Counters Myths about the Poor”. In *Urban Life*, George Gmelch and Walter P Zenner (eds.) pp 279-295.
- Jaffe, R., & De Koning, A. (2015). *Introducing urban anthropology*. Routledge. Pp1-19.
- Lewis, Oscar. 2002 [1966]. “The Culture of Poverty”. In *Urban Life*, George Gmelch and Walter P Zenner (eds.) pp” 269-278.
- Wirth, Louis. 2002 [1938]. “Urban as a way of Life”. In *Urban Life*, George Gmelch and Walter P Zenner (eds.) Pp. 65-82.
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