

Basically, there's a major demographic event going on. And it may be that passing the 50 percent urban point is an economic tipping point. So the world now is a map of connectivity. It used to be that Paris and London and New York were the largest cities. What we have now is the end of the rise of the West. That's over. The aggregate numbers are overwhelming. So what's really going on? Well, villages of the world are emptying out. The question is, why? And here's the unromantic truth -- and the city air makes you free, they said in Renaissance Germany. So some people go to places like Shanghai but most go to the squatter cities where aesthetics rule. And these are not really a people oppressed by poverty. They're people getting out of poverty as fast as they can. They're the dominant builders and to a large extent, the dominant designers. They have home-brewed infrastructure and vibrant urban life. One-sixth of the GDP in India is coming out of Mumbai. They are constantly upgrading, and in a few cases, the government helps. Education is the main event that can happen in cities. What's going on in the street in Mumbai? Al Gore knows. It's basically everything. There's no unemployment in squatter cities. Everyone works. One-sixth of humanity is there. It's soon going to be more than that. So here's the first punch line: cities have defused the population bomb. And here's the second punch line. That's the news from downtown. Here it is in perspective. Stars have shined down on earth's life for billions of years. Now we're shining right back up. Thank you.