

# Kanishk Tharoor ~ The Rise And Fall Of Great World Cities: 5,700 Years Of Urbanisation - Mapped

[Urbanisation](#) is one of the defining processes of modern times, with more than half of the world's population now living in cities, and new mega-metropolises mushrooming in Asia, Latin America and Africa. But a comprehensive, digitised database of city populations through world history has been lacking, with the United Nations' dataset only extending as far back as 1950.

That was until recent research, [published in the journal Scientific Data](#), transcribed and geocoded nearly 6,000 years of data (from 3700BC to AD2000). The report produced a gargantuan resource for scholars hoping to better understand how and why cities rise and fall - and allowed blogger Max Galka to produce a striking visualisation on his site [Metrocosm](#).

Read more: <https://www.theguardian.com/rise-fall>