

# Reinier de Graaf ~ The Smart City Blinds Us To The Possibility Of Political Action



Urbanisation was supposed to be the world's quick ticket to prosperity. The average urban dweller (on paper) represents five times the economy of the rural dweller. If a rural nation becomes urban in the space of a decade, its economy – at least in theory – doubles every two years. That statistic, however, can hardly conceal the more grim reality. Over the last few decades we have seen that the spectacular growth of cities by no means entails greater and more widely shared prosperity.

What we refer to as “megacities” are mostly cities with the common feature that their development is outpaced by their growth. A lot of these cities exist in a state of almost permanent crisis, where “urbanisation” (literally: the step towards the urbane) has come to signify the exact opposite. In the absence of even the most basic infrastructure and provisions, many of its inhabitants find a decent urban life beyond their reach.

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