

# **The Social and Political Dimensions of Urban Planning of Poor neighborhoods**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis concentrates on the socio-political dimensions of the sharp differences between rich and poor neighborhoods in the cities everywhere in the world. The major question is: why the neighborhoods of the poor suffer so much from the lack of services, while the rich enjoy well-served neighborhoods with wide and nice streets, gardens and nice commercial stores, luxurious restaurants and modern hotels? The poor suffer from crowdedness, and several physiological and social deceases, while the rich neighborhoods are in a comfortable situation.

The main hypothesis of the study is that the differences between the neighborhoods are related to the balance of power in the society. Those who own are powerful: they rule and write down the laws that reflect their interests, while the poor are unable and employed to toil for an income far below what they deserve. This appeared to be true for ancient civilizations such as the Greek and the Roman, and for socio-economic systems such as feudalism and laissez-faire economy.

Methodologically, the research depends upon the historical and the analytical approaches. History-wise, the research outlines the historical development of the cities in the ancient times as an entrance to the present

times. It is evident the poor classes have been the most hardworking, but the most suffering, or the least rewarded. The poor have been living until now, except in few countries, in poverty stricken neighborhoods, or in slums that don't suit human survival.

From historical development, and from what is seen now, power means the ability to write and enforce laws according to the wishes of the stronger. The poor people of the poor neighborhoods could not improve their conditions and the conditions of their neighborhoods until they started to get together and pose a real challenge to the dominating traditional authorities in the society whether political, religious, social or economic forces. That is, once the poor started to be a recognized force they started to have their rights materialized. That is why democracy is considered a system to provide some justice to those who have suffered. The poor are a considerable force in the elections, and they know how to attract nominees in return of services.

It is good to depend on moral and ethical principles to achieve justice, and provide the poor neighborhoods with the necessary services, but if that doesn't work, as it happened to be through history, the poor should have the awareness that leads them mutual cooperation for the sake of their families.