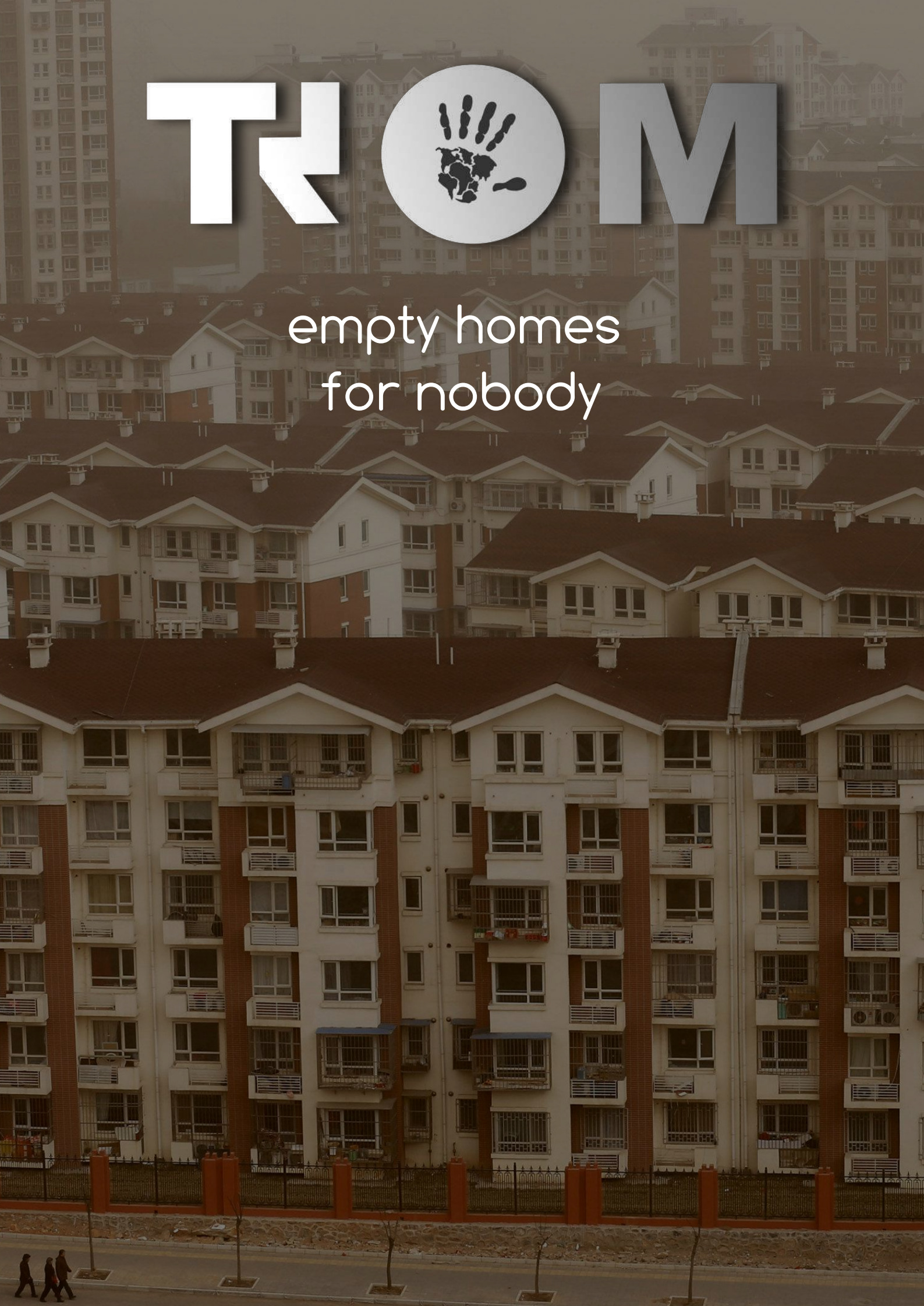

TROM
empty homes
for nobody

Author: Tio
Review: Ray
Proofread: Ray
Design: Tio
Year: 2013

Summary:

There are millions of homeless people and tens, if not hundreds, of millions of available apartments. There's more than enough for all, yet the game we play is damn obsolete, unfair and idiotic overall.

I live in a town with 3000 local residents and, each summer, around 50000 tourists visit the place. As a result, there are a lot of wasted resources here. You see, apart from the summer period (3-4 months), it's like a ghost town; thousands of apartments are empty.

I was thinking at one point, why aren't they giving these apartments for free to poor people, with the only condition attached that they take care of the apartments, and then kick them out when the tourists come? At least that...

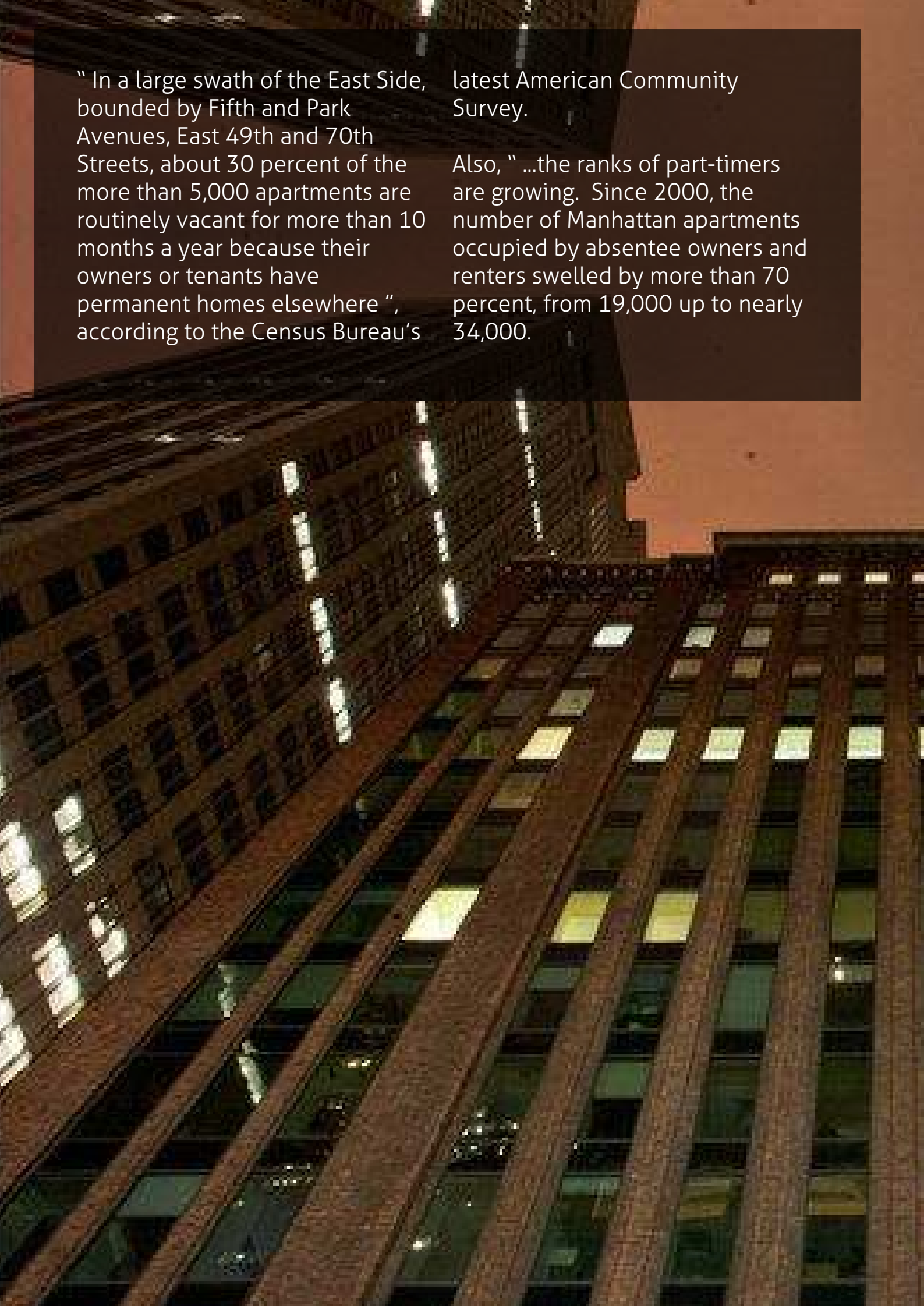
Now, here's the surprise. I wanted to rent an apartment for a half a year to a year period, and even more. Because we live in a system where everybody wants to make a buck, there are many companies that rent apartments, and I had to go to each of them.

I spent my entire day going from one company to another searching for an apartment to rent and, to my surprise, I found none.

You see, there are thousands of apartments that are available to rent, but companies prefer to rent them under only two or three week contracts for tourists, instead of renting it to me for one full year or more. That's because during the holiday season, the rent for a week is more expensive than the average cost for longer periods of time.

For them, it might be more profitable to rent apartments to tourists rather than residents, considering minimal maintenance costs. But isn't it a complete waste of resources to keep thousands of apartments empty for 8 months a year? It really makes you wonder what's the real purpose of this system we're living in.

My neighbor has a really big house, which he only visits a few days a year to cut the grass and do a bit of maintenance. I am curious about why he's maintaining this house. At the same time, lots of poor people are struggling to survive on a day to day basis to pay their rents, while such houses just sit empty.

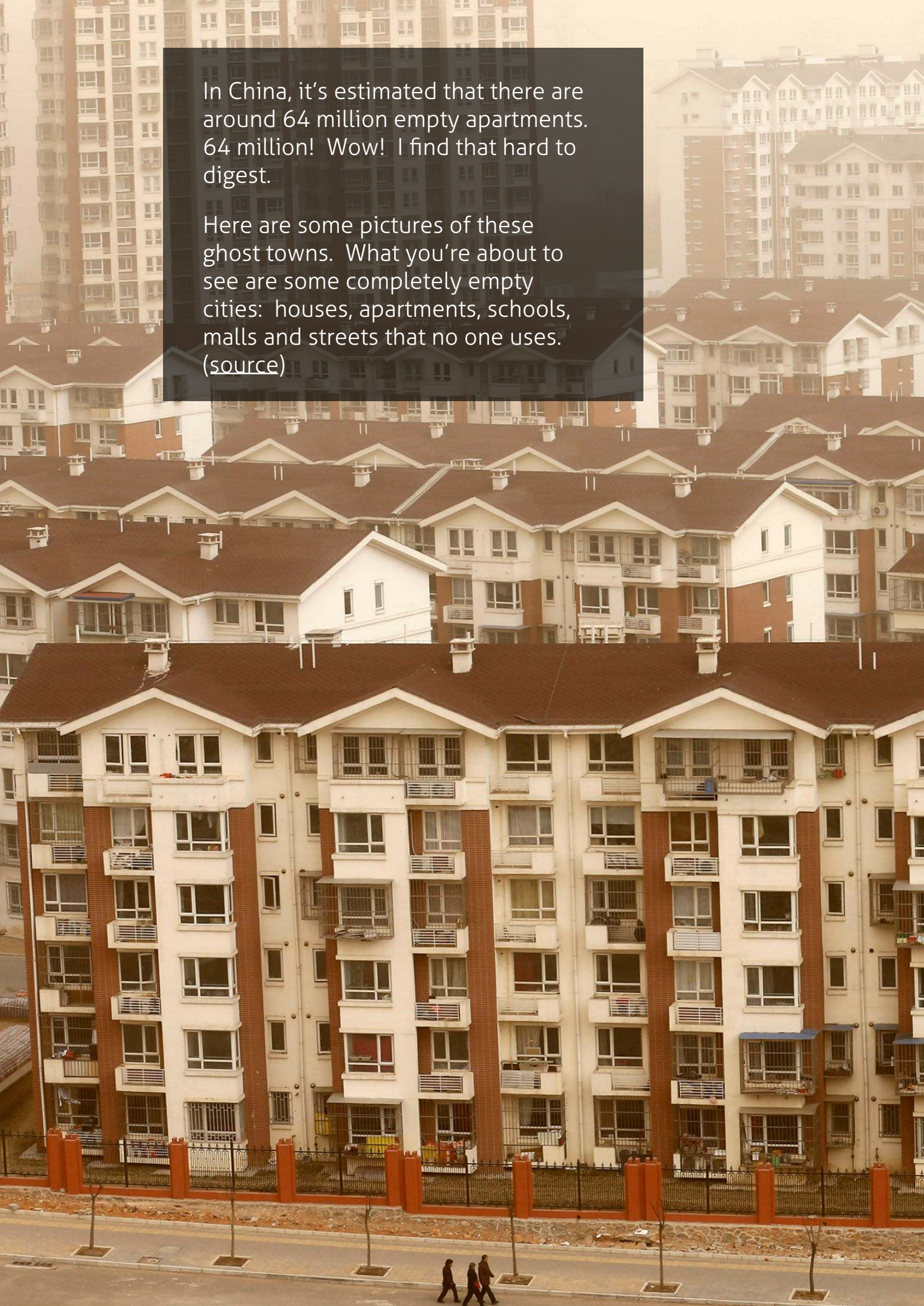


" In a large swath of the East Side, bounded by Fifth and Park Avenues, East 49th and 70th Streets, about 30 percent of the more than 5,000 apartments are routinely vacant for more than 10 months a year because their owners or tenants have permanent homes elsewhere ", according to the Census Bureau's latest American Community Survey.

Also, " ...the ranks of part-timers are growing. Since 2000, the number of Manhattan apartments occupied by absentee owners and renters swelled by more than 70 percent, from 19,000 up to nearly 34,000.

Among all of the 845,000 apartments and houses in Manhattan, 102,000 were identified as vacant in the 2005-9 American Community Survey. Of those, about 33,000 — or about 1 in every 25 Manhattan homes — had an owner or renter who lived there less than two months of the year. "(source)

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Such things happen all around the world.



In China, it's estimated that there are around 64 million empty apartments. 64 million! Wow! I find that hard to digest.

Here are some pictures of these ghost towns. What you're about to see are some completely empty cities: houses, apartments, schools, malls and streets that no one uses. (source)

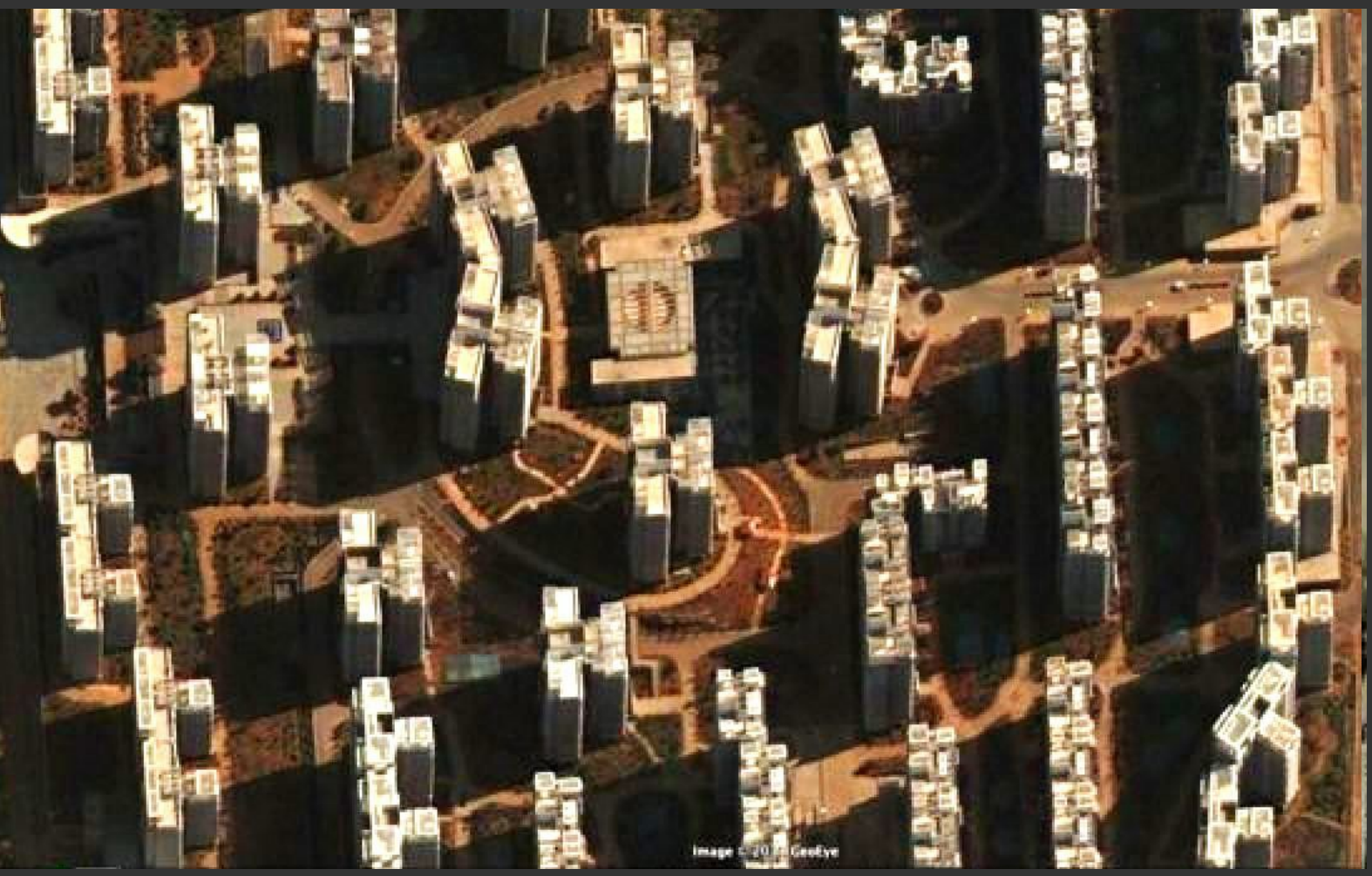


Image © 20 GeoEye

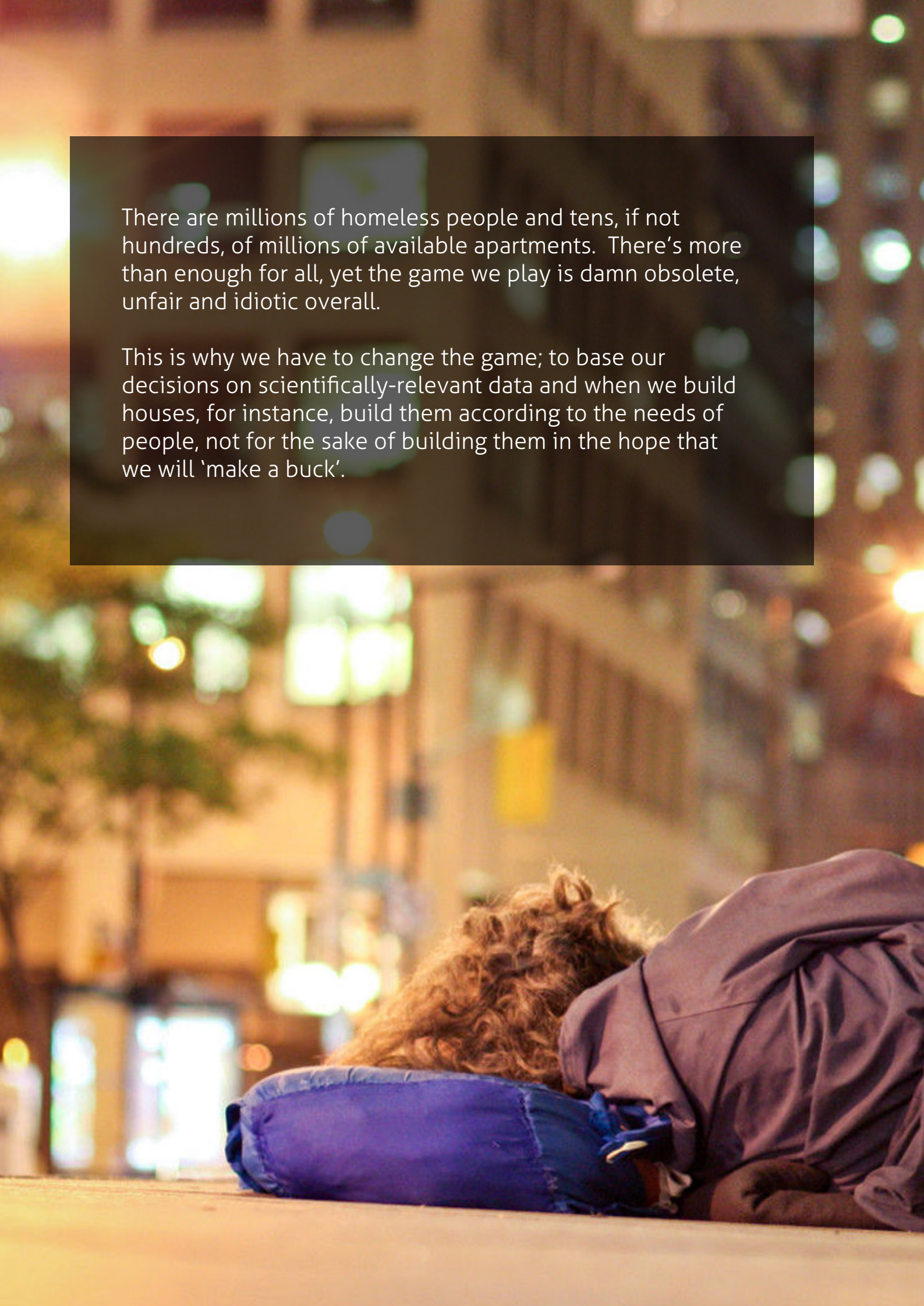
Image © 2013 GeoEye

I highly recommend this 15 minutes documentary about these cities to see even more 'social stupidity'.

This is part two. Revisiting the city after 2 years to see if anything has changed. Let me make it short, nothing has changed. But the documentary is still interesting for the details it presents.

What is China's response to this situation?

Well, it plans to build even more - around 20 new cities a year, for the next 20 years.



There are millions of homeless people and tens, if not hundreds, of millions of available apartments. There's more than enough for all, yet the game we play is damn obsolete, unfair and idiotic overall.

This is why we have to change the game; to base our decisions on scientifically-relevant data and when we build houses, for instance, build them according to the needs of people, not for the sake of building them in the hope that we will 'make a buck'.

WWW.TROMSITE.COM

---

support us ♡