Asia’s rich and poor

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Asia’s inequality

- Growth with equity
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- Asia’s inequality has increased over the past decades or so in 15 of the 21 countries
Gini coefficient

- 0 means perfect equality, 1 is perfect inequality
- China: 0.41 in 1993, 0.47 in 2004
- Brazil: 0.57
Differences in measurement

- Latin America are based on income those in Asia are mainly based on expenditure.
- The income coefficient is typically a fifth higher than that based on expenditure.
- If so, China’s income coefficient will become $0.47 \times 1.2 = 0.56$, almost the same as Brazil.
Main cause of inequality in China

- the differing fortunes of rural and urban households
- widening gap between those with and without skills
Poverty if falling

- poverty: the number of people living on less than $1 a day
- China: 28% (poor vs. total population ratio) in 1993 to 11% in 2004
Does rising inequality matter so long as poverty is falling?
高淑媛 (2006), “日本統治台灣初期之米價騰貴問題”

米價上升，時「地方紳商頻頻向總督府陳情」…「米價日昂一日，貧民殊甚吃苦也」…建議「出示米價，嚴禁出港」 (嘉義城, 1896.4)

「出示嚴禁外運台灣米粟，並將每上粟10石定為金15大圓」 (嘉義城, 1897.3)

地方紳商為何如此關心米價與貧民?