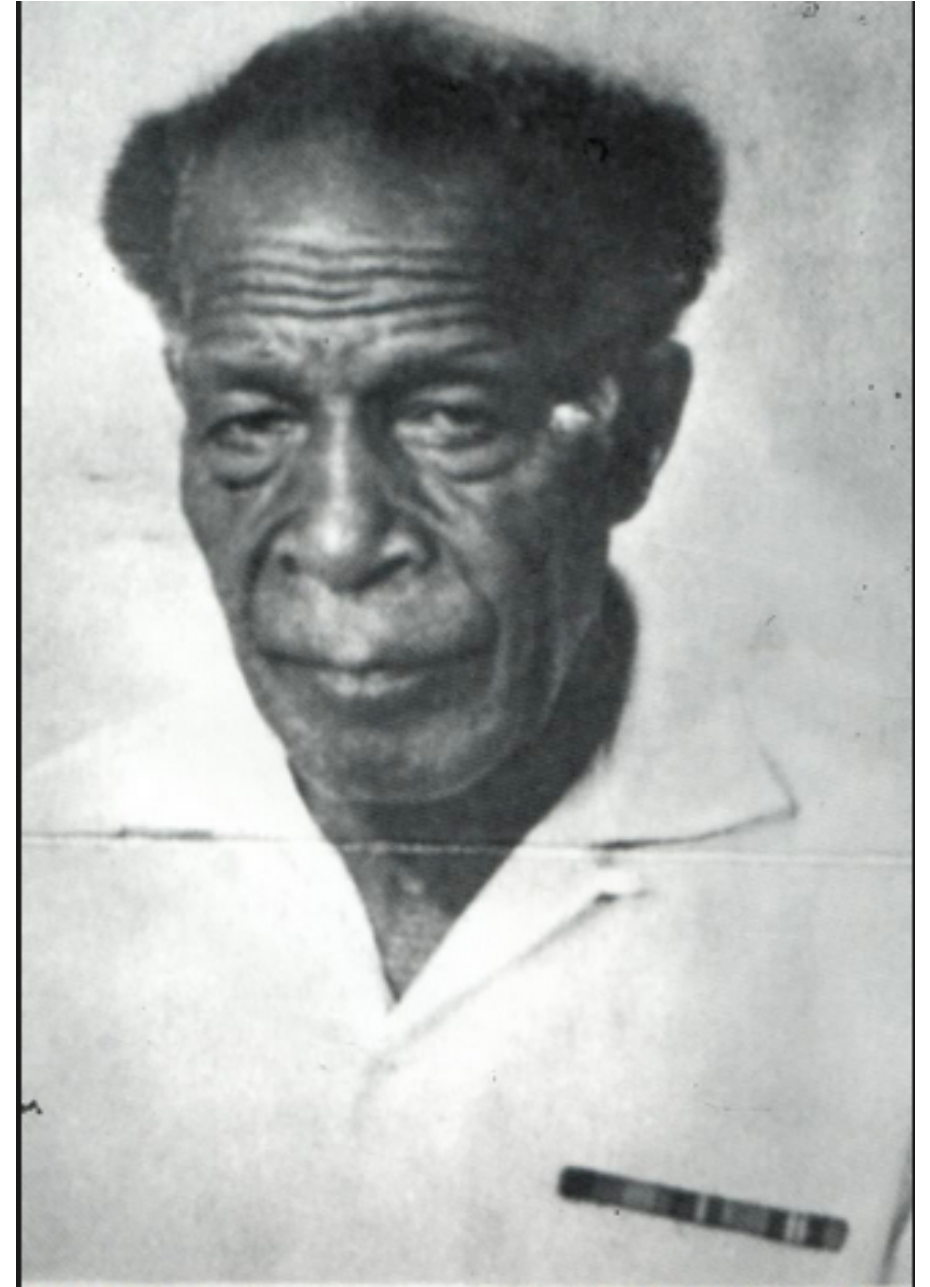


POLS 280:  
Politics of Development  
and Foreign Aid

Class 7:  
Geography

# Yali's question

- “Why is it that you white people developed so much cargo, but we black people had little cargo of our own?”



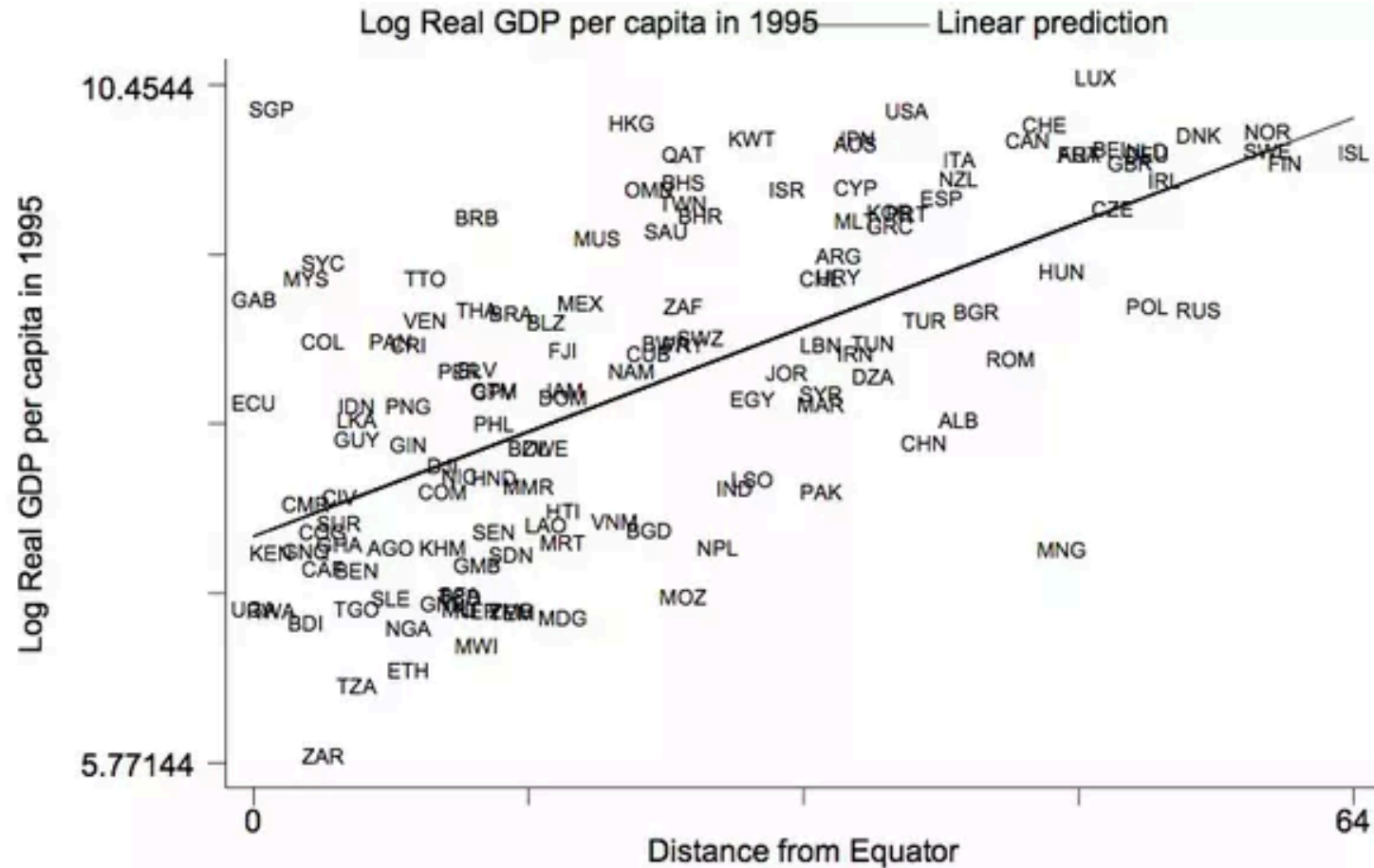
# Recap

- Development as progress:
  - Modernization theory
  - Neoliberalism

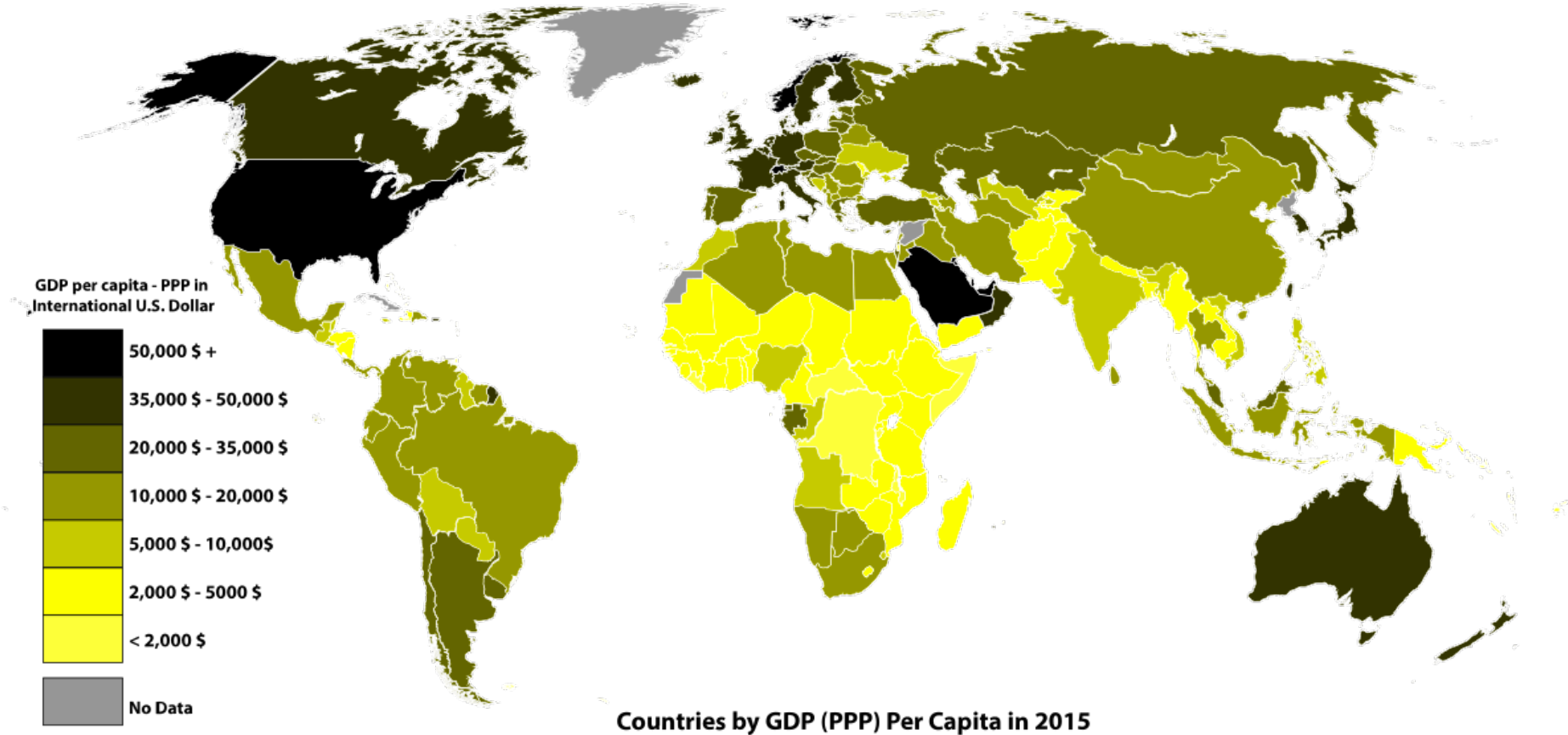


How do modernization  
and neoliberalism  
explain variation in  
development outcomes?

# Geographic distribution of development: distance from the Equator

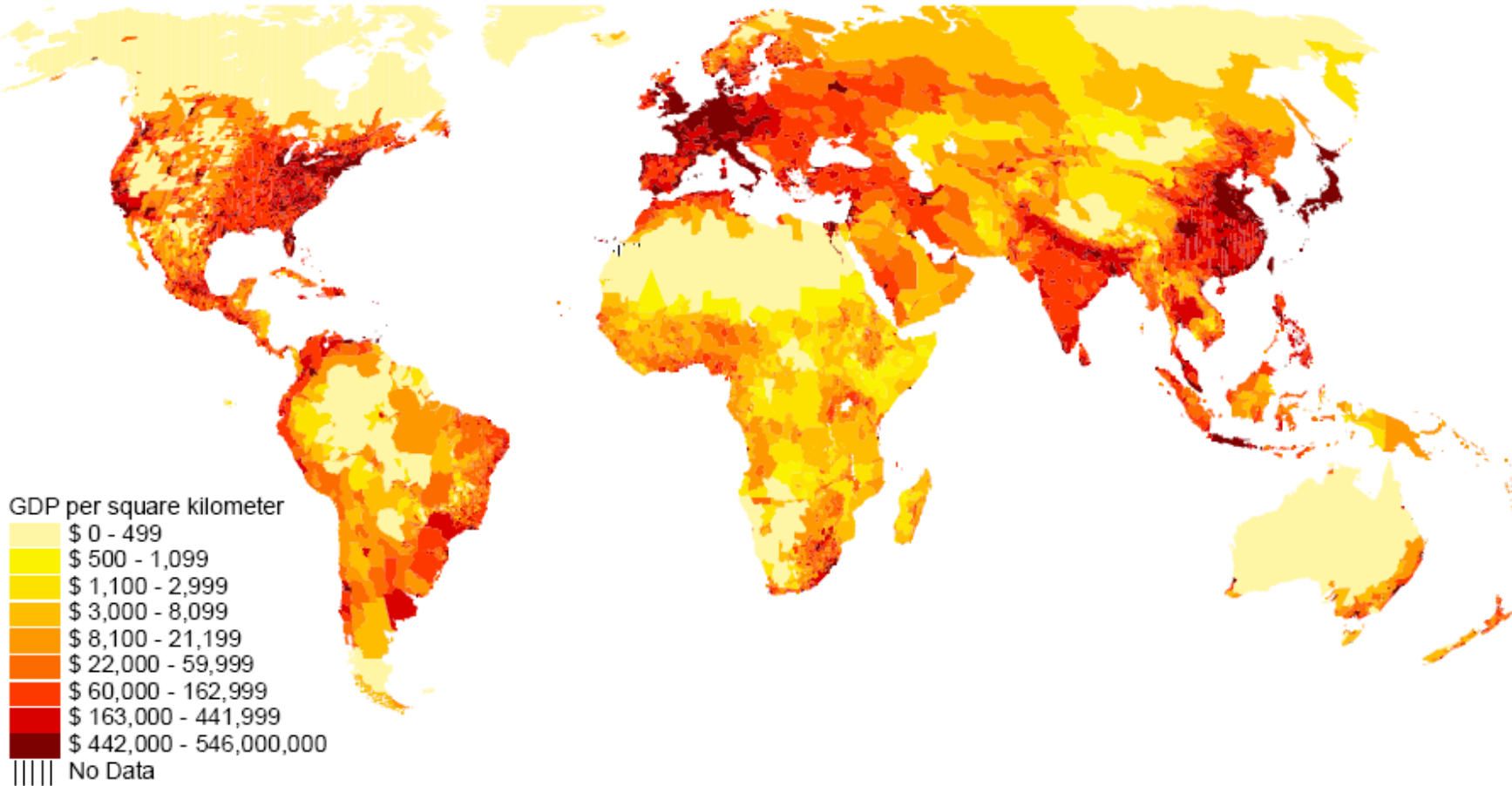


# Geographic distribution of development: economic development



# Geographic distribution of development: density of economic development

GDP Density



# Explanations of the association between geography and development

- Direct causal relationship
- Race
- Disease
- Access to trade
- Availability of domesticable animals and crops



# Direct causal relationship

- Hegel:
  - “In the extreme zones man cannot come to free movement; cold and heat are here too powerful to allow Spirit to build up a world for itself. Aristotle said long ago, ‘when pressing needs are satisfied, man turns to the general and more elevated.’ But in the extreme zones such pressure may be said never to cease, never to be warded off; men are constantly impelled to direct attention to nature, to the lowing rays of the sun, and the icy frost. The true theatre of history is therefore the *temperate zone*; or rather, its northern half, because the earth there presents itself in a continental form, and has a broad breast, as the Greeks say.”
    - Hegel, Georg. 1837. *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*.



# Direct causal relationship

- Jefferson:

- “I had even ascribed this to its cause, to that *warmth of their climate which unnerves and unmans both body and mind*. While on this subject I will give you my idea of the characters of the several states.

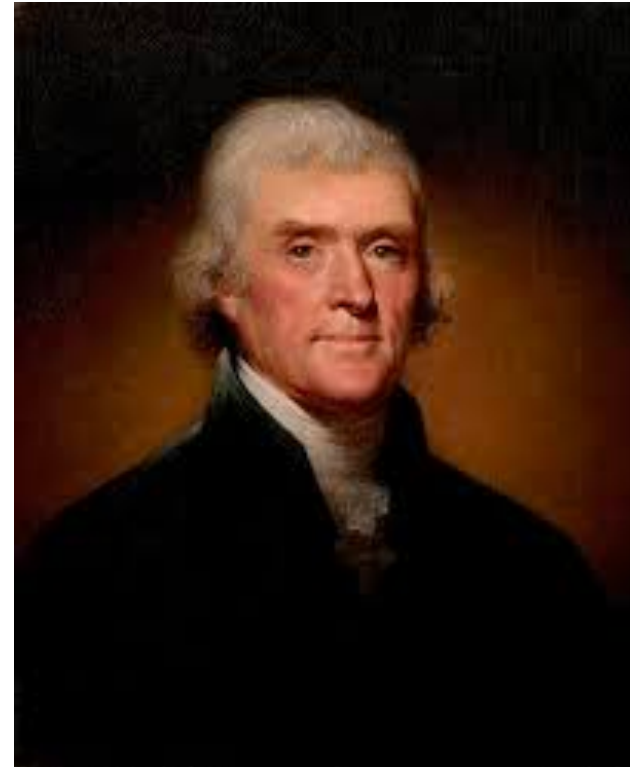
In the North they are

cool  
sober  
laborious  
persevering  
independent  
jealous of their own liberties, and just to those of others  
Interested  
chicaning  
superstitious and hypocritical in their religion.

In the South they are

fiery  
Voluptuary  
indolent  
unsteady  
independent  
zealous for their own liberties, but trampling on those of others  
generous  
candid.  
without attachment or pretentious to any religion but that of the heart.”

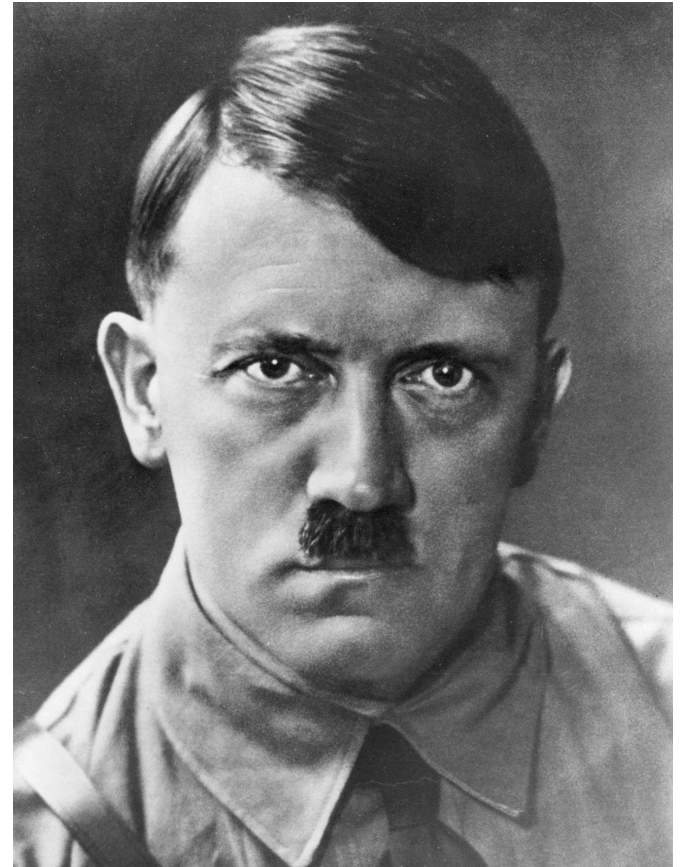
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1785. “Letter to Chastellux.” [PollEv.com/karolczuba247](https://www.poll-ev.com/karolczuba247)



# Race

- Hitler:
  - “We can see this hardship in early prehistory, above all in the northern part of the world, in those enormous ice deserts where only the meagrest existence was possible. Here, men were forced to fight for their existence, for things which were, in the smiling South, available without work, and in abundance. [...] All these gave the northern races the ability to go to the world and build states. [...] [N]othing helped the northern conquerors more against the lazy and rotten southern races than the refined strength of their race.”

- Hitler, Adolf. 1920. "Why We Are Antisemites."

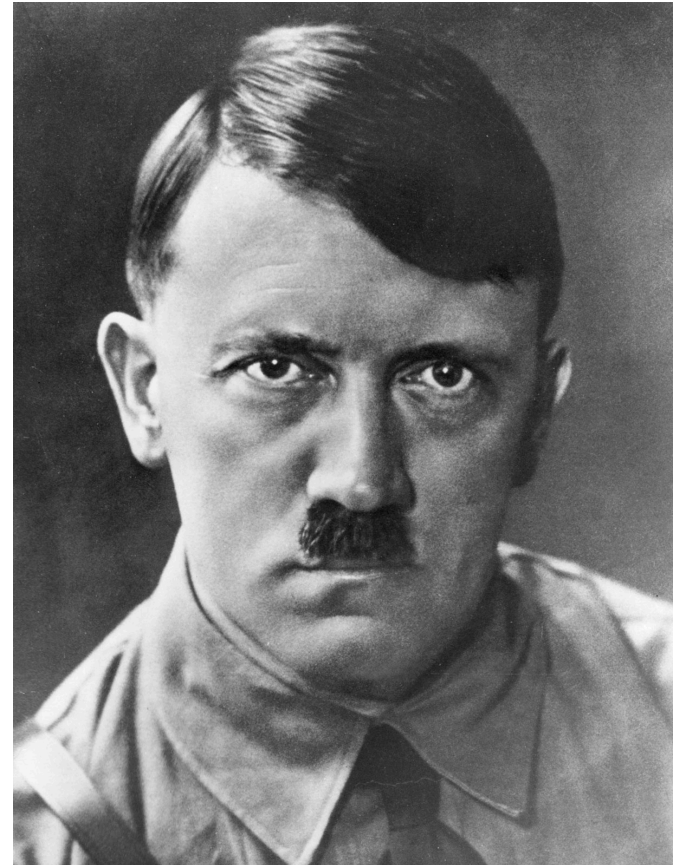


# Race

- ~~Hitler:~~

- ~~“We can see this hardship in early prehistory, above all in the northern part of the world, in those enormous ice deserts where only the meagrest existence was possible. Here, men were forced to fight for their existence, for things which were, in the smiling South, available without work, and in abundance. [...] All these gave the northern races the ability to go to the world and build states. [...] [N]othing helped the northern conquerors more against the lazy and rotten southern races than the refined strength of their race.”~~

• ~~Hitler, Adolf. 1920. "Why We Are Antisemites."~~



# PSA

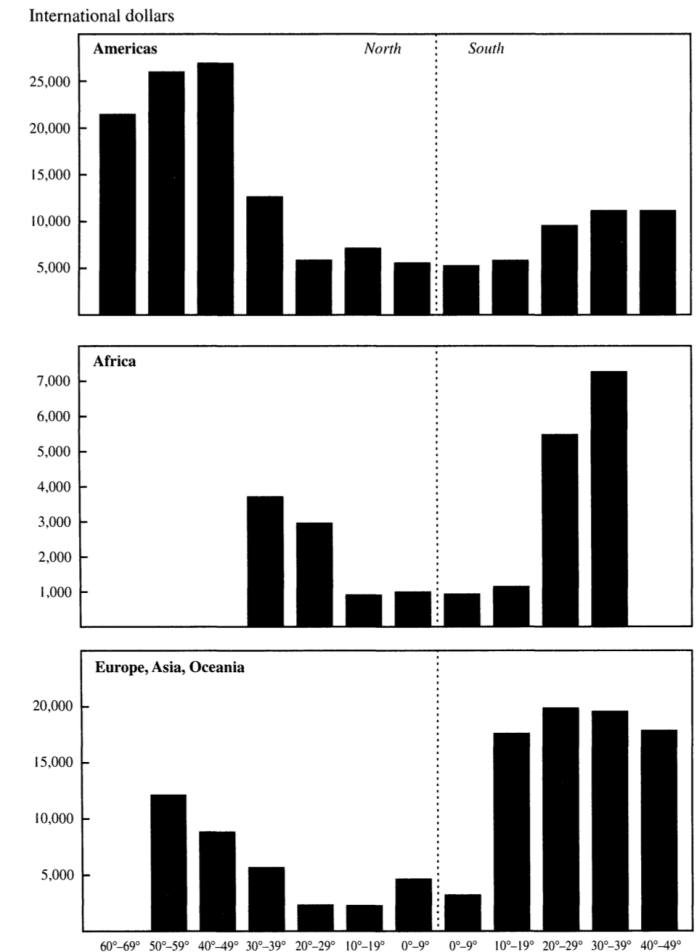
- Race is a social construct that has no predictive power

What factors really explain the relationship between geography and development?  
Is this relationship causal?

# Geography and development: evidence from Africa

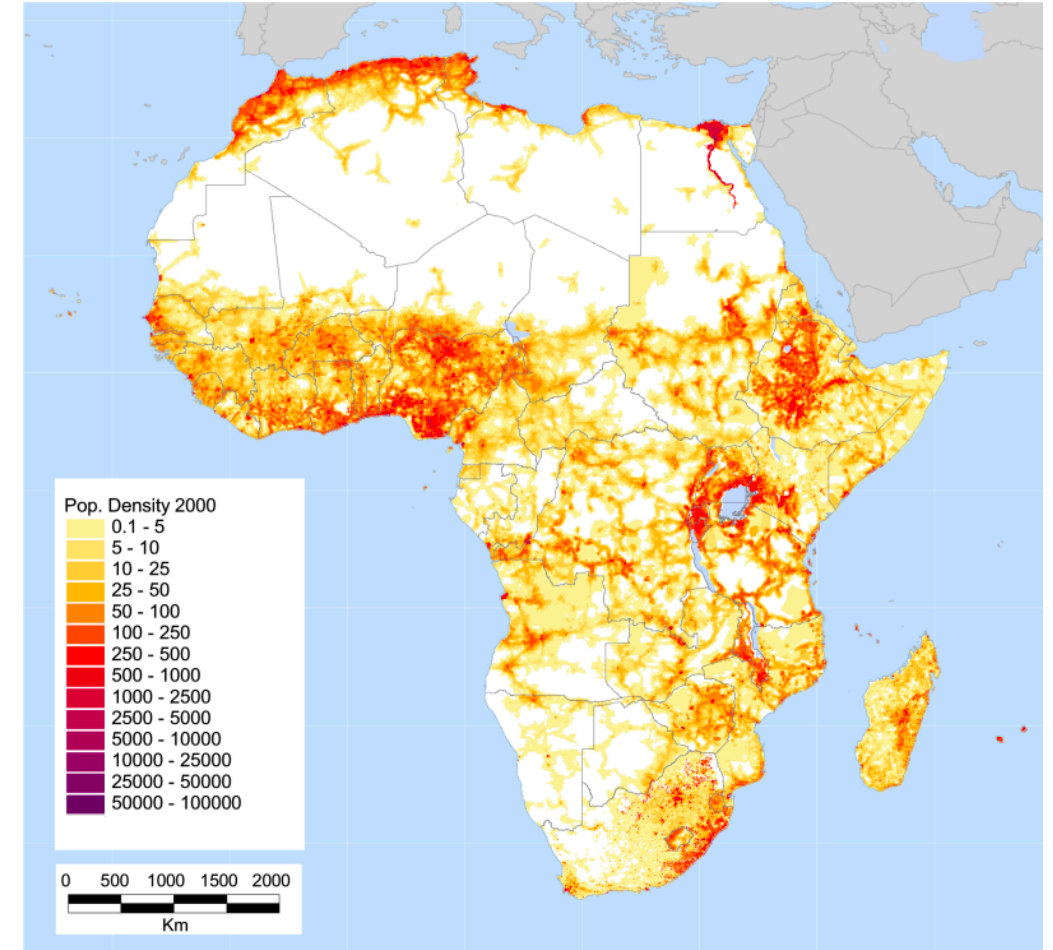
- “Sub-Saharan Africa is the tropical region *par excellence*, with 93 percent of its land area lying between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. At the root of Africa’s long-term growth crisis is Africa’s extraordinary geography.”
- Agriculture:
  - Low photosynthetic potential
  - High evapotranspiration (evaporation + transpiration)
  - Low and variable rainfall
  - Highly weathered soils
  - Veterinary diseases
  - Plant and animal pests
- Human health:
  - Infectious diseases

Figure 3. GDP Per Capita by Latitude, Selected Regions, 1995\*



# Geography and development: evidence from Africa

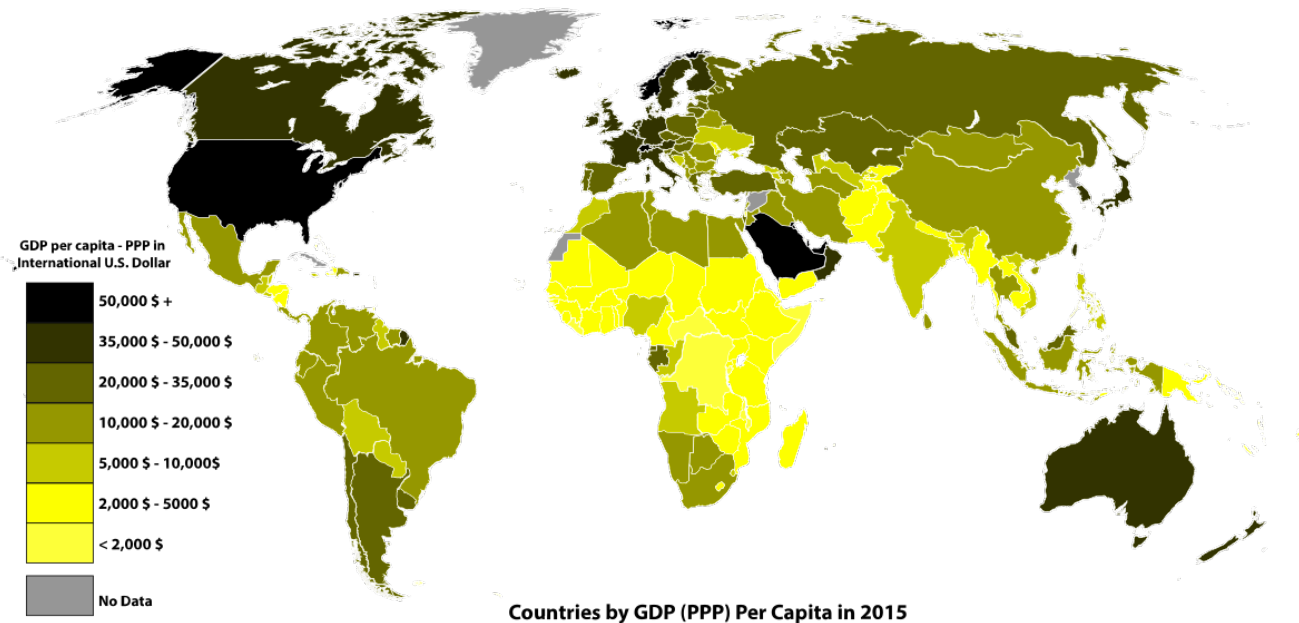
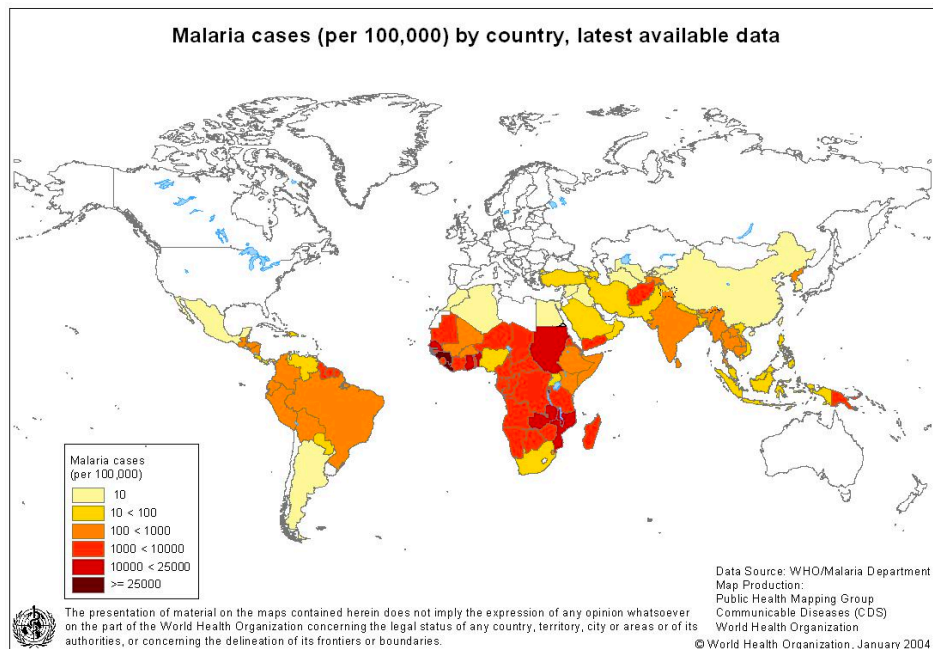
- Transport barriers:
  - Small coastline (relative to land area)
  - Few natural coastal ports
  - Populations generally far from the coast
  - High proportion of landlocked states
  - High proportion of the population within landlocked states
  - The absence of rivers leading into the interior of the continent that are navigable by ocean-going vessels
- Demographics:
  - (Historically) low population density and rate of urbanization
  - Delayed demographic transition from high fertility and high mortality to low fertility and low mortality
    - Bloom, David, et al. 1998. "Geography, Demography, and Economic Growth in Africa." *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 2: 207-295.





Is Africa an outlier?

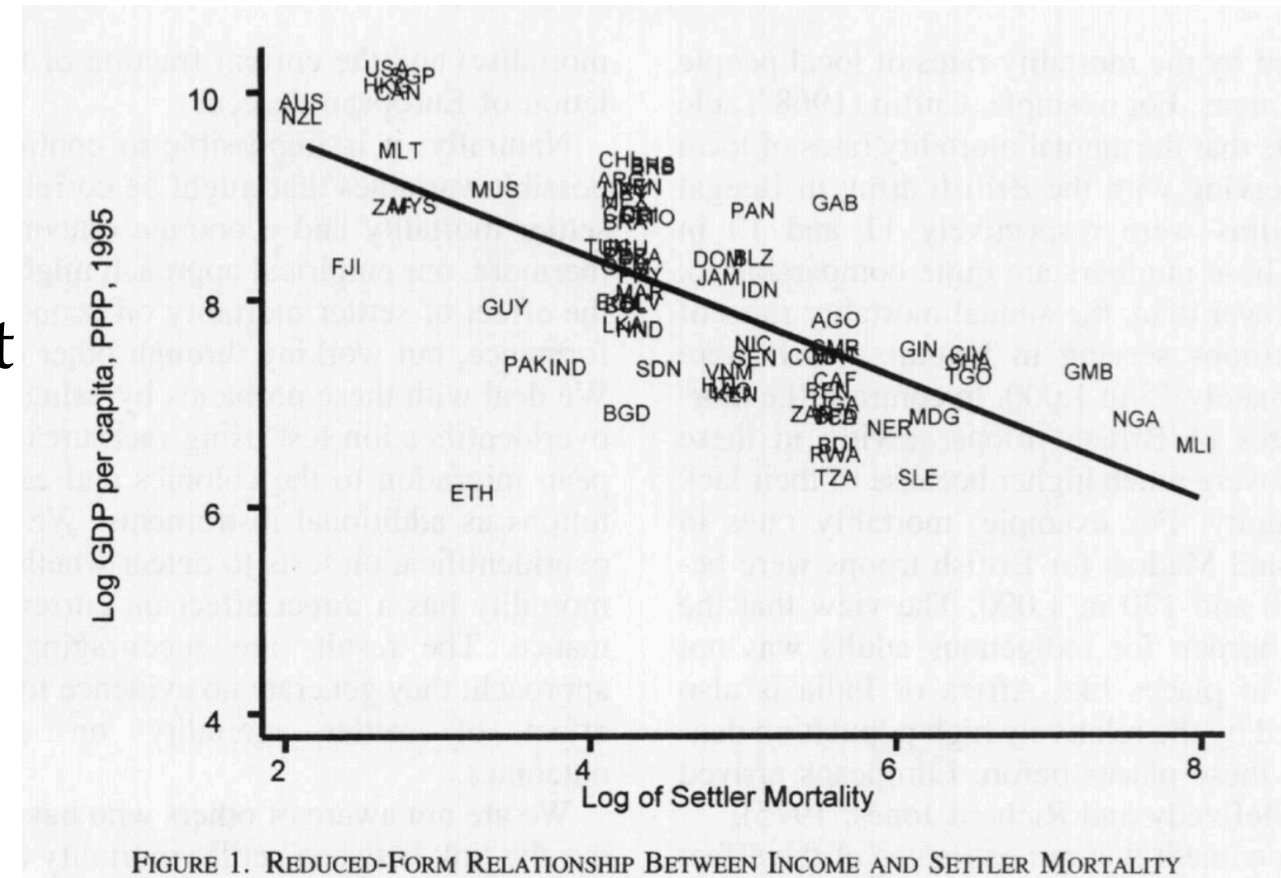
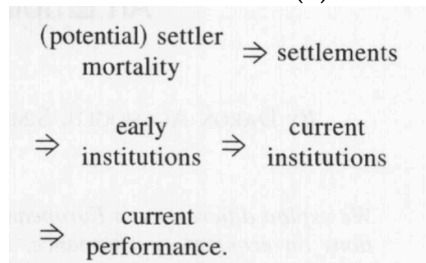
# Disease



# Disease: evidence from colonial settler mortality

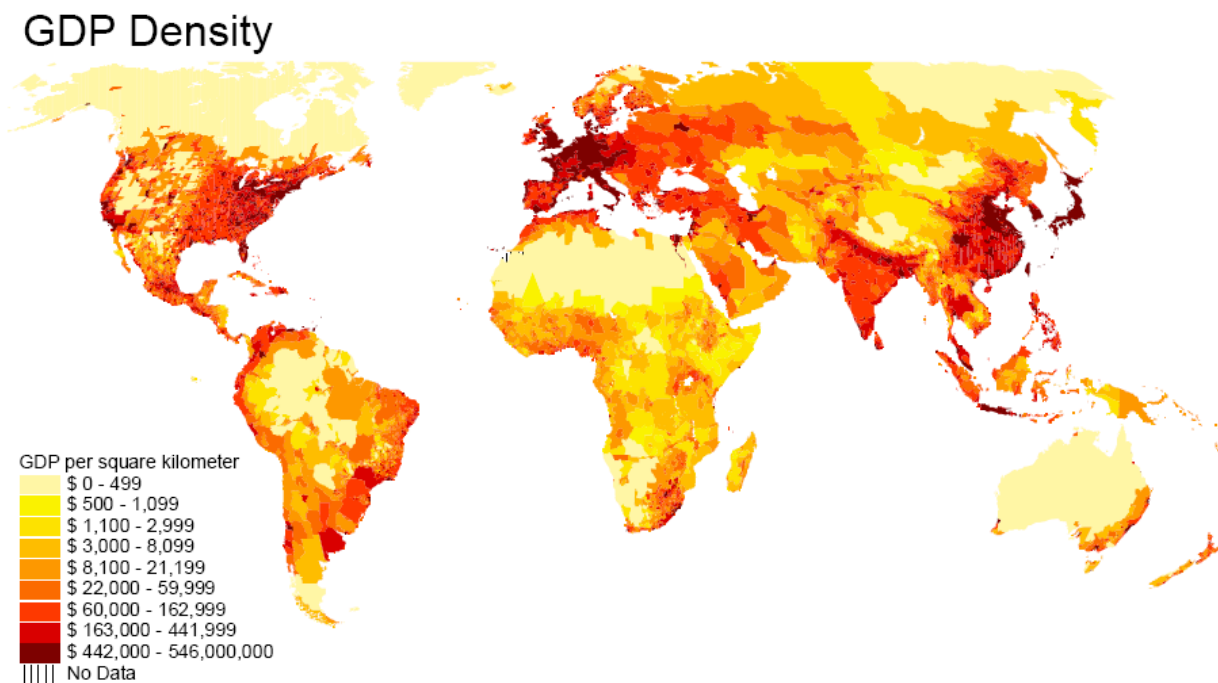
- Disease environment determined colonial policies, which in turn resulted in the establishment of different political regimes and divergent development trajectories.

- Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *American Economic Review* 91 (5).



# Access to trade

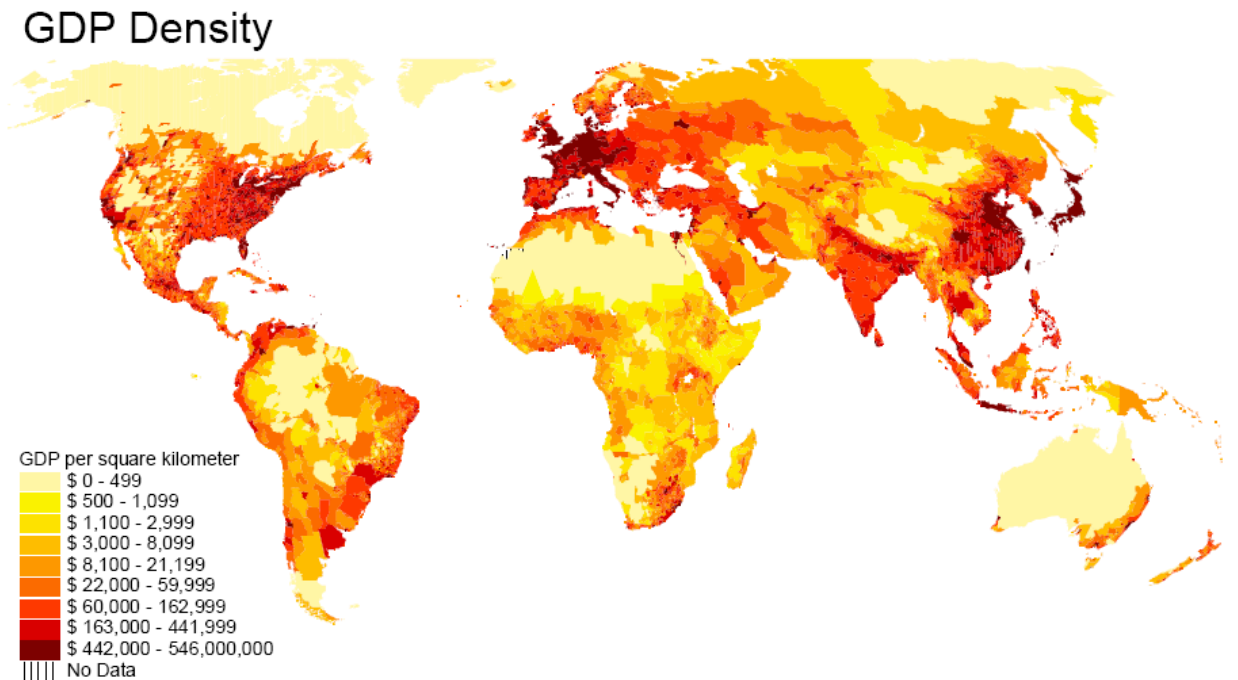
- “As by means of water-carriage a more extensive market is opened to every sort of industry than what land-carriage alone can afford it, so it is upon the sea-coast, and along the banks of navigable rivers, that industry of every kind naturally begins to subdivide and improve itself.” ->
- Economies of scale and specialization
  - Smith, Adam. 1776. *Wealth of Nations*.



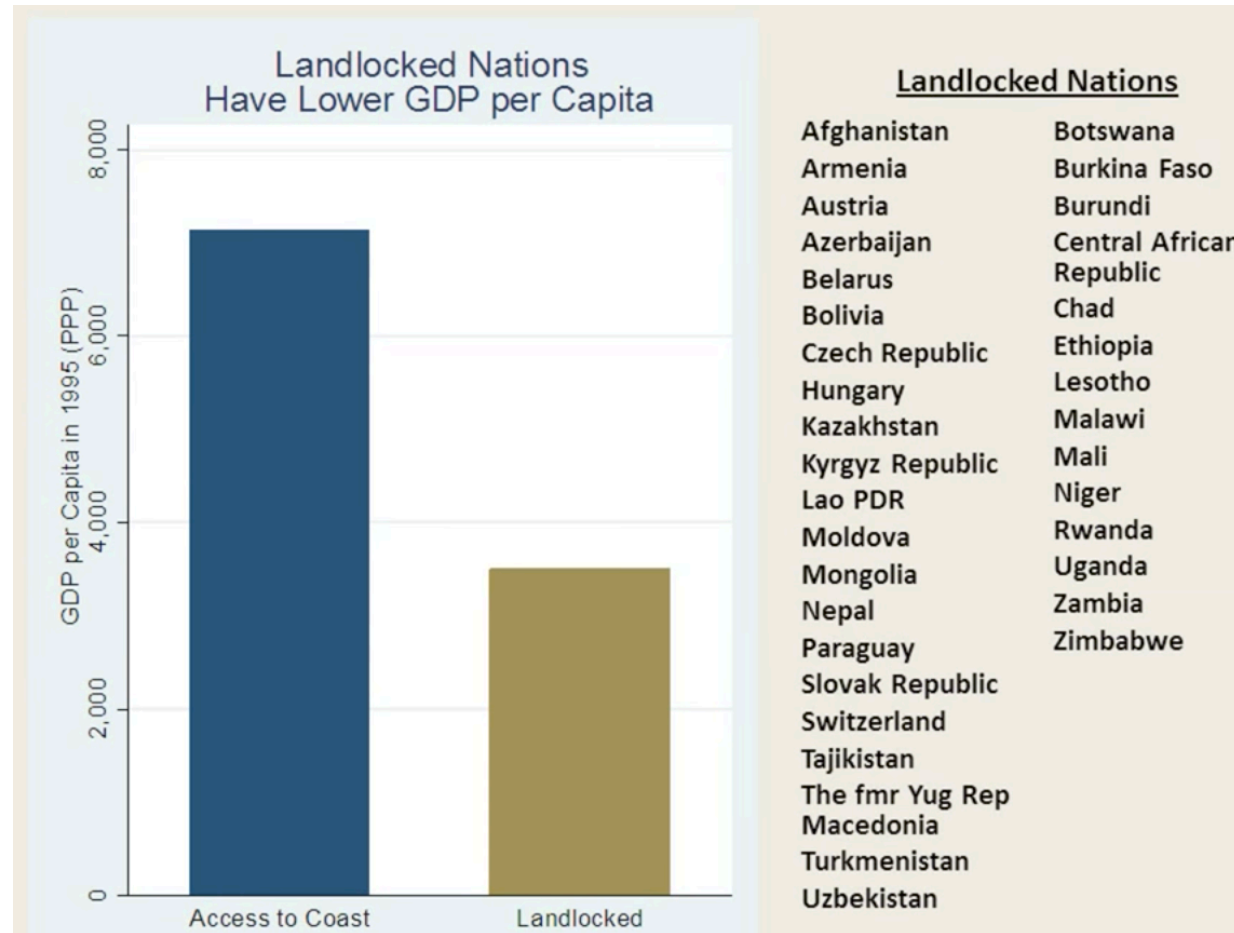
# Access to trade

- “There are in Africa none of those great inlets, such as the Baltic and Adriatic seas in Europe, the Mediterranean and Euxine seas in both Europe and Asia, and the gulfs of Arabia, Persia, India, Bengal, and Siam, in Asia, to carry maritime commerce into the interior parts of that great continent: and the great rivers of Africa are at too great a distance from one another to give occasion to any considerable inland navigation.”

- Smith, Adam. 1776. *Wealth of Nations*.

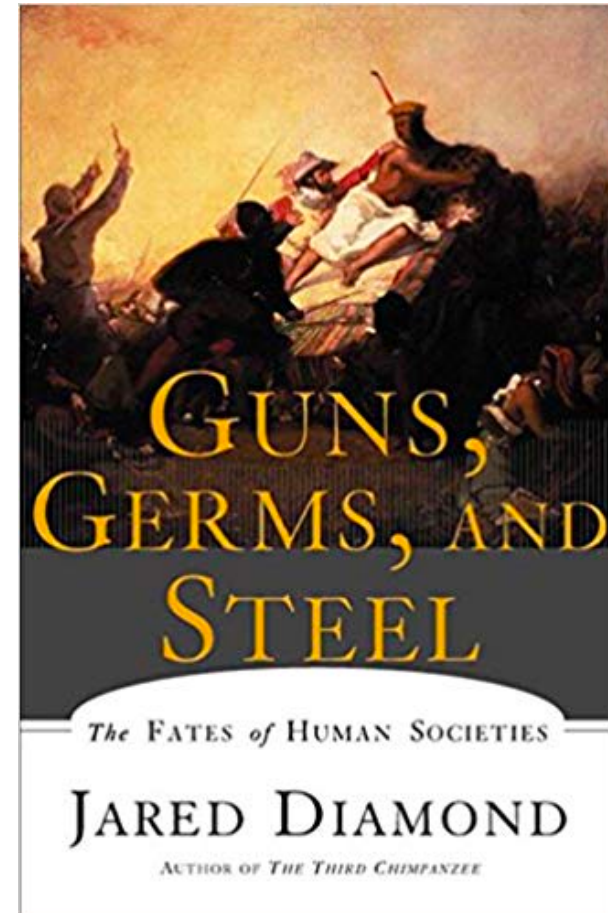


# Access to trade: empirical evidence



Gallup, John L., Jeffrey D. Sachs, and Andrew D. Mellinger. 1999. "Geography and Economic Development." *International Regional Science Review* 22 (2): 179–232.

# Guns, germs, and steel



What is Diamond's answer to Yali's question?



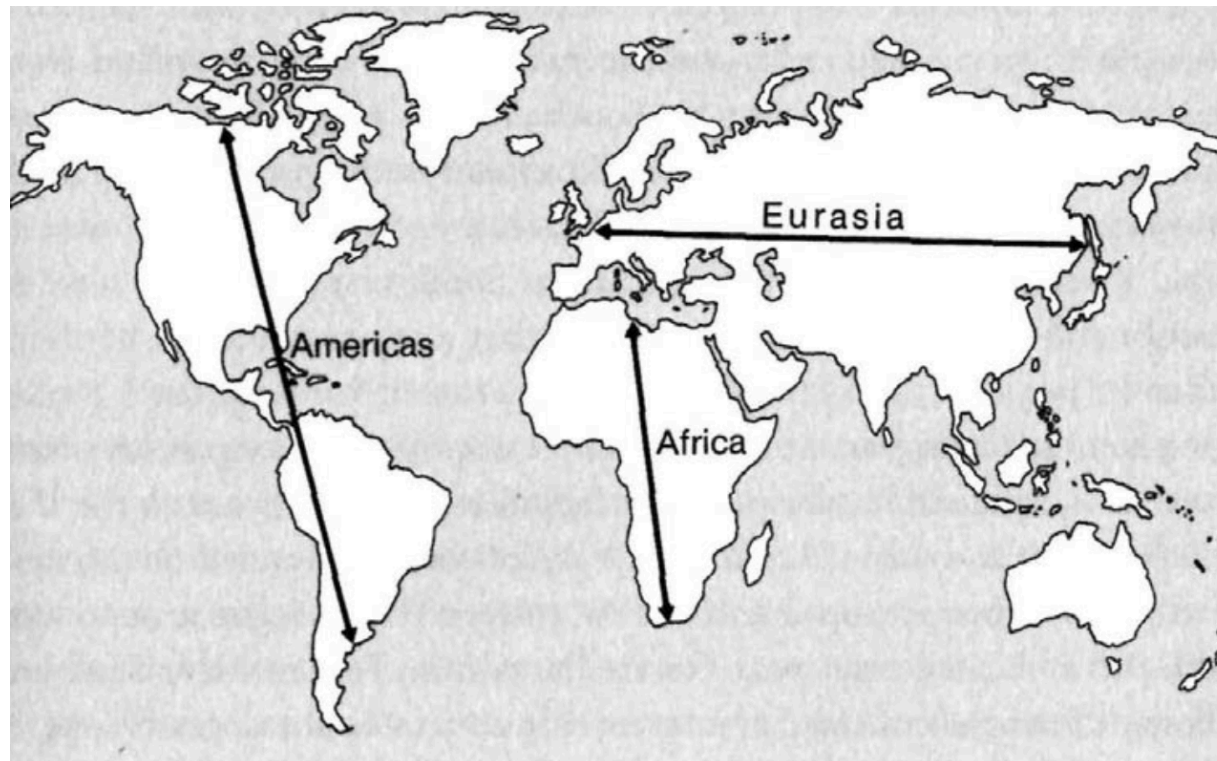
Eurasia developed before the other world regions. Why?

# Guns, germs, and steel

- Small numbers—and geographic concentration—of domesticable animals and crops
- Domesticable animals:
  - Sheep
  - Goats
  - Cows
  - Pigs
  - Horses
  - All of them from Eurasia
  - Also: Arabian and Bactrian camel, llama, alpaca, donkey, reindeer, water buffalo, yak, Bali cattle, mithan
- Major cereals:
  - Wheat and rice account for 41% of calories consumed in the world
  - Also: corn, barley, sorghum
  - All but corn from Eurasia

# Guns, germs, and steel

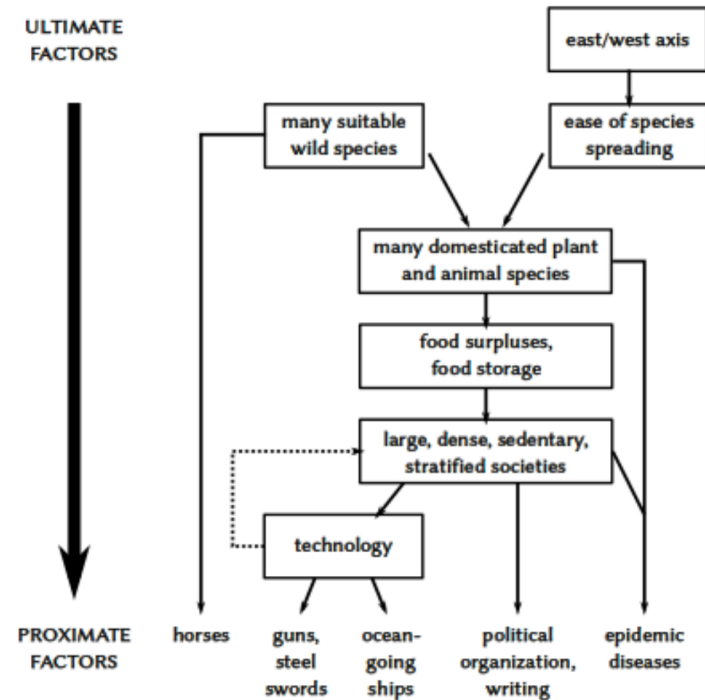
- Emergence of agriculture and domestication of animals ->
- Spread along continental axes



# Guns, germs, and steel

- Because of close proximity to domesticated animals, inhabitants of Eurasia developed some immunity to the major infectious diseases
  - In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, smallpox killed as much as 90% of the indigenous population of South America
- Germs + guns + steel ->
- Eurasian dominance

Factors underlying the broadest pattern of history



Can we say that there is a direct causal relationship between geography and development?

# Guns, germs, and steel – and institutions

- Easterly and Levine:
  - “We find evidence that tropics, germs, and crops affect development through institutions. We find no evidence that tropics, germs, and crops affect country incomes directly other than through institutions, nor do we find any effect of policies on development once we control for institutions.”
    - Easterly, William, and Ross Levine. 2003. “Tropics, germs, and crops: how endowments influence economic development.” *Journal of Monetary Economics* 50 (1): 3-39.

# Guns, germs, and steel—and institutions: evidence from the Americas

- Sokoloff and Engerman
  - Latin America:
    - Large and concentrated factor endowments:
      - Brazil and the Caribbean: production of sugar and other highly valued crops (that required extensive use of slaves)
      - Mexico and Peru: rich mineral resources →
    - Highly unequal distribution of wealth, elite persistence and stability →
    - In the long term, low economic development
  - Canada and the United States:
    - More limited factor endowments: production of grains and hays, based on laborers of European descent who had relatively high and similar levels of human capital ->
    - Relatively equal distribution of wealth →
    - Large middle class, small elites →
    - High economic development

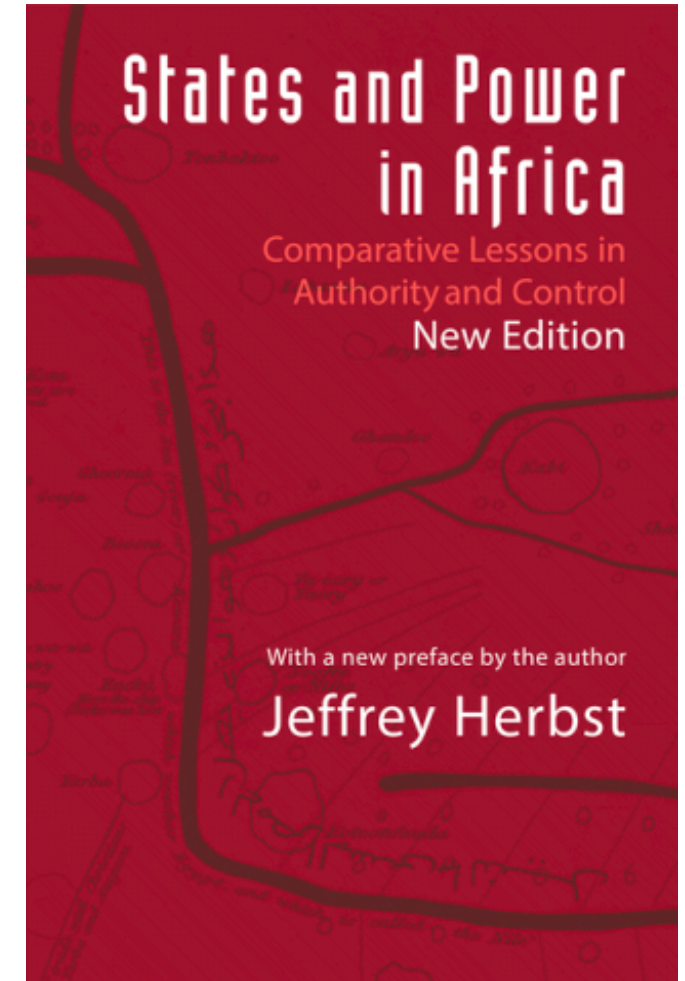
- Sokoloff, Kenneth, and Stanley Engerman. 2000. "History lessons: Institutions, factor endowments, and paths of development in the New World." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14 (3): 217-32.

# (Political) geography and political development

- Herbst:
  - Rulers' considerations:
    - Cost of expanding the domestic power infrastructure
    - Nature of national boundaries
    - State system design



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# (Political) geography and political development

- Precolonial Africa:
  - Daunting physical geography +
  - Limited technologies of coercion +
  - No security imperative to physically control the hinterlands +
  - Land vs. labor and the primacy of exist →
  - High expense of projection of power →
  - Cost calculations →
  - Direct control only over the political core

- Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.



# Implications

- Geography →
- (Colonial) history →
- Institutions