

Why some countries are poor and some rich - a non-Eurocentric view

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Part I: Introduction

All human beings are equal. This is the politically correct position around the world today. The position holds that individual *value* must correspond to individual characteristics, and not to ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, and so on. And since discrimination is wrong based on those kinds of background features, it is understood that all kinds of human beings have the same *potential ability* in all aspects of life.

Of course, in reality, there are many different perspectives and approaches to this position. What is worse, the vast majority of the human population does *not* seem to hold that position to be true. Different degrees of racism and prejudice dominate societies all around the world. The consequences are clear and present for every disadvantaged human being. The discriminated people usually possess less political power, lower social status and acceptability, and endure lower economic standards. Ethnic polarizations are a common element in most societies. They vary from segregated public spheres, to discrimination for jobs, to ethnic cleansing. Perceived ethnic differences also often spark wars.

This study embarks on a sensitive exploration of the relevance of ethnicity in world economy. The expectation is that ethnic polarizations at national levels also have significance at the global macro level. The hypothesis is that there is a *systematic* correlation between the ethnicity a country represents and sustained economic levels. This is perhaps an intuitive expectation, but we need a presentation capturing the *character* of these inequalities. The purpose is to reveal this aspect of global economy and bring it into the context of economic development (Part II). This kind of analysis is not included in mainstream economics, yet is so important when describing economic circumstances and formulating policy recommendations. Analysis of this sort is also important in understanding international power structures, processes and outcomes. International negotiations, as the recent Copenhagen climate conference, are one type of example. It seems arrogance and prejudice, coupled with racist attitudes, are still evident in these arenas.

Another purpose of this paper is to use, once revealed, the aspect of the global economy described above as a point of departure to an alternative and non-Eurocentric *histography* capturing processes that have resulted in contemporary economic inequalities at the global macro level (Part III). In the social sciences this theme has provided national and regional analytical perspectives for explaining why some nations are rich and some poor. In the field of economics, some of the most obvious explanatory variables of low levels of GDP per capita for a country are low levels of investment, technology and education. These characteristics are, in turn, explained by other features such as corrupt leadership, civil wars, poor infrastructures, and poor health care facilities. This analysis is sometimes enhanced by factors such as ethnic based conflicts, undemocratic institutions, weak property rights, and other growth impeding factors (among others: Commission for Africa 2005, Gallup 1998, Huntington 2005, Jones 2002, North 2005, Sachs 2000, Sachs 2001).

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These aspects are most often true and relevant. **However, it is very important to remember that these “explanations” are an expanded picture of a country *in* poverty. They are additional characteristics for poor economic conditions, rather than fundamental explanatory factors. They leave us with some necessary questions. Why these countries? Why these regions? And, in the present context, why these ethnic groups?** Why do Sub-Saharan countries exhibit so many civil conflicts, vicious leaders, low education levels, and poor infrastructures? If they are trapped in a vicious poverty circle, why them?

One line of argument emphasizes different cultural mentalities as explanation of different cultural, political, economical, and societal outcomes (among others see Huntington 2000). As such, we are basically left with the belief that poor nations have had (and have?) denizens with a less economically efficient cultural mentality, and rich nations have had (and have?) denizens with a more economically efficient cultural mentality. But the argument is based on a static view of culture. Historically, culture must be one of the most dynamic aspects in human societies.

Other lines of argument point out slavery and colonialism as forces in shaping the economic differences between nations. Surely, these forces must have had severe determining effects. But there is a need to go further in the analysis. For one, we ought to ask ourselves, why did not other ethnic groups go imperial the way the western Europeans did?

Another school of thought emphasizes difficult geography in making some countries poorer than others. This perspective has its most influential proponent in the economist Xavier Sala-i-Martin (Artadi 2003), who particularly emphasizes the unfortunate aspects of African geography. In similar fashion Jeffrey Sachs (2001) identifies tropical climates as harsh for economic development. In addition, there is a growing literature (the mentioned authors among the writers) pointing out a 'natural resource curse' for many developing countries. The central argument is that natural endowments are economic rents, which can lead to rampant rent-seeking activities when abundance prevails.

Standing on the shoulders of existing research material, I want to build an additional perspective from which to understand contemporary gaps in economic levels between countries - by assessing countries as sets of ethnic groups. The purpose of this text is not to dismiss or critically examine the above-mentioned explanatory factors. Rather, the purpose is to emphasize neglected aspects of contemporary global economy and its history.

Part II: Empirics of global economic inequality and ethnicity

We will utilise macroeconomic statistics to proximate inequalities between ethnicities at the global macro level. The aim is to capture a picture of the significance, character and magnitude of ethnic related economic inequalities. The ideal way to show this would be to have a dataset with one column that represents an economic level figure, and one corresponding column of ethnic-belonging for every individual person in the world, and then make necessary computations. But of course we do not have this kind of dataset. Also, the ethnic variable would be hard to categorize and be unpractical in computations. But if we played devil's advocate and used the more concrete appearances of morphological traits as a proximate for ethnicity, and national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures as a proximate

for economic standards, we would have a workable dataset. The hypothesis must, in that case, be revised. Now the claim is that there is a significant worldwide correlation between nuances of human morphological traits and economic levels.

Naturally, this method does not come without shortcomings, particularly if we choose only one nuance of morphological trait for each country. Nowadays, most nations around the world are substantially multiethnic; and, since there are few datasets providing ethnic related economic figures, we would miss out on information at the national micro level. However, I am confident that information at the global macro level will be enough to exhibit a fair picture of economic conditions with regard to ethnicity as represented by nuances of morphological traits. Also, it is not our primary task to establish ethnic inequalities at all levels in the world, being an almost impossible task. Instead we are interested in capturing the *direction* of economic inequalities and understanding the approximate *magnitude* of these inequalities at the global macro level.

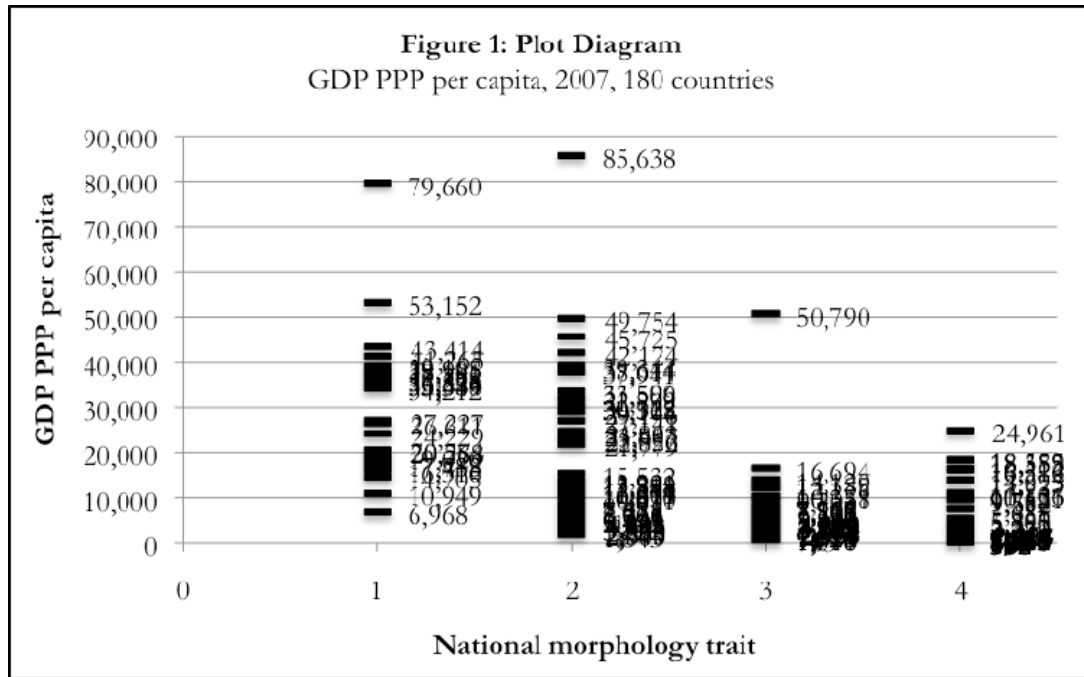
The statistical work is rather simple. We have one column with countries, a second column with corresponding GDP per capita figures, and a third column with corresponding ethnicity, mathematically represented by a morphological nuance scale from 1 to 4 (see Appendix 1). Countries with morphological trait 1 have their largest ethnic group characterized as having light coloured skin and light coloured hair. Morphological trait 2 represents light coloured skin and dark coloured hair, while morphological trait 3 represents darker coloured skin and dark coloured hair. And lastly, morphological trait 4 represents the darkest nuance of skin and hair colour. A brief summary of the geographical spread of this categorization would indicate that trait 1 is represented by countries in northern Europe and northern Asia, trait 2 by southern Europe, north Africa, and northern and southern America, trait 3 by south and southeast Asia, central America and few other countries in Latin America, and trait 4 is represented by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the subcontinent's diasporas by majority in the Caribbean countries. The geographical spread follows the acknowledged work of Nina G. Jablonski and George Chaplin (1999).

Empirics – the *direction* of global economic inequality and ethnicity

The results indicate that there is indeed a correlation between morphological traits and economic levels. In general, the darker morphological trait a country represents the lower its GDP per capita. Figure 1 displays the correlation picture for all but one country (Montenegro) from the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook October 2008 database (2008).

Note that the picture is based on only one year, which could suggest misrepresentation. However, since the comparative GDP per capita levels follow the same pattern for recent decades, there is no reason to extend the time period.

It is also relevant to point out that additional existing economic disparities relevant to ethnicity are imbedded in national figures. It seems that whichever country one looks at, the darker morphological trait a person has the higher the probability of that person to be worse off than persons with lighter morphological traits. This pattern is particularly significant in countries such as South Africa (Budlender 2002), USA (US Census Bureau 2005 and Loury



2004), Brazil (Davis 1999), Colombia, UK, and Australia. These countries have descriptive and statistical empirics showing ethnic diversified national economies. Unfortunately, this pattern seems to be persistent in other developed countries such as Sweden (Vogel 2002), France, and Italy. In no country are we to expect a contrasting pattern.

Naturally, the meaning of these results does not suggest persons with darker morphological traits are never to be found wealthy, only that the probability and/or the fraction is lower than people with lighter coloured physical appearances. For instance, *Forbes* magazine's list of the wealthiest persons in the world reveals this fact at the global elite level. The vast majority of the tracked 793 billionaires belong to our first and second categories of morphological traits; few persons of darker bodily nuances are represented (*Forbes Magazine* 2009).

Empirics - the *magnitude* of global economic inequality and ethnicity

In this context, it is interesting to note the population composition of the categorized morphological traits and countries. The population of morphological trait 1 is 512 millions, being the smallest group (see Table 1). The largest group is trait 2 countries, where China represents half the group's population of 2.6 billions of people. Trait 3 countries are as big, with 2.6 billions of people, where India represents almost half the group's population. The fourth group is represented by nearly 800 millions of people. The total population of the dataset is almost 6,6 billion, representing nearly all the world's human population. It is noteworthy to mention that regression results are not dissimilar when excluding China and India from the dataset, representing traits 2 and 3, respectively.

	Morphological traits				World
	1	2	3	4	
Countries	26	53	44	57	180
Countries (%)	14	29	24	32	100
Population (millions)	512	2,636	2,621	783	6,552
Population (%)	8	40	40	12	100

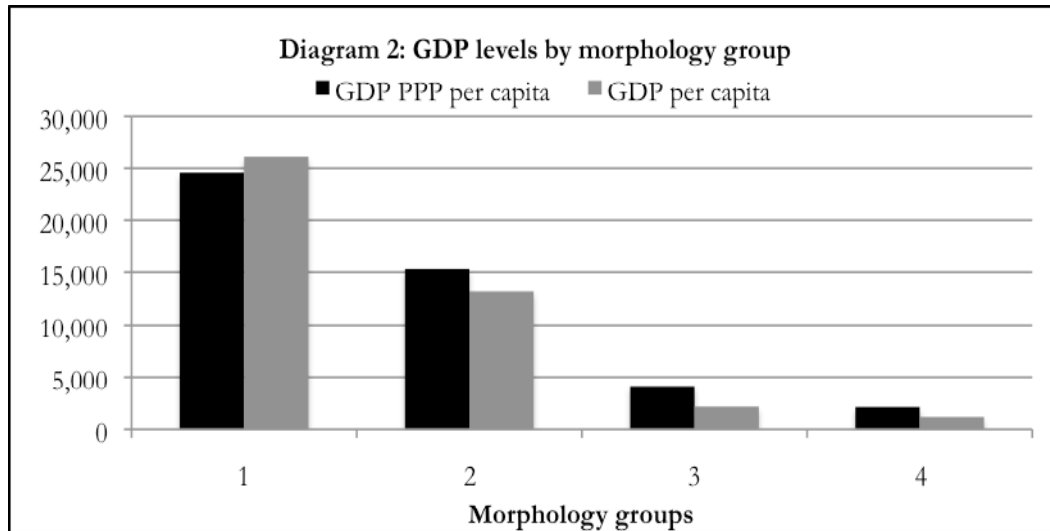
In current PPP US dollars, the lightest human ethnic group have about 1,6 times more GDP per capita than the second lightest group, six times more than the third group, and almost 12 times more than the fourth group. Put differently, the darkest ethnicities have only nine percent of the GDP levels of the lightest ones. This confirms the indication that there is a substantial *orderly* connection between nuances of morphological traits and economic levels in the world today: The higher the morphological number, the lower the GDP level (see Table 2). Again this relationship is not dissimilar when excluding China and India from the dataset.

	Morphological traits				World
	1	2	3	4	
GDP PPP (millions)	12 581 789	40 333 588	10 870 199	1 647 939	65 433 515
GDP PPP (%)	19.2	61.6	16.6	2.5	100
GDP PPP per capita	24 588	15 298	4 148	2 104	9 987
Trait 1 relation	1	1.6	5.9	11.7	2.5
Trait 2 relation	0.62	1	3.69	7.27	1.53
Trait 3 relation	0.17	0.27	1	1.97	0.42
Trait 4 relation	0.09	0.14	0.51	1	0.21

The results in current US dollars are even worse, although a similar orderly correlation prevails. Here, the lightest group makes two times more than the second, 12 times more than the third group, and 22 times more than the darkest group. People with the darkest morphological trait have only four percent of the lightest groups' income levels (see table 3). Again, it would be reasonable to expect even wider inequalities if we would be able to account for economic figures within countries.

	Morphological traits				World
	1	2	3	4	
GDP (millions)	13 346 009	34 796 521	5 612 424	914 108	54 669 062
GDP (%)	24.4	63.6	10.3	1.7	100
GDP per capita	26 081	13 198	2 142	1 167	8 344
Trait 1 relation	1	2.0	12.2	22.3	3.1
Trait 2 relation	0.51	1	6.16	11.31	1.58
Trait 3 relation	0.08	0.16	1	1.84	0.26
Trait 4 relation	0.04	0.09	0.54	1	0.14

Note also that while Group 1 consists of eight percent of world population, they have 24 percent of total world current GDP - three times their populace fraction. Group 2 has about 1.5 times more GDP than its populace fraction, while group 3 has four times less than their populace fraction. Of course group 4 is in the worst position with seven times less GDP than their populace fraction. The relative differences between groups of morphological nuances are even clearer by considering Diagram 2, which illustrates the economic relations between groups of morphological traits in graphic form.



Part III: Histography of ethnicity in global economy

The groundwork for the politically correct human equality position comes from biology. There is nowadays almost a complete consensus among biologists that there is only one human race, *Homo sapiens*, in the world today. One interpretation of this would be to hold that there are no differences in our capabilities by being an African, Asian, European, or any other ethnic related belonging.

However, the results above are in contrast with the biological concept of human equality. If human ethnicities are equal in value and ability we expect them to have at least similar levels of economic standards, as far as ethnicity goes. The question is then, why do we have *this* orderly ethnic segmented global economy? Why not the reverse? Are people with darker bodily nuances less economically productive? Are people with lighter bodily nuances more vicious by practicing racism and imperialism? Why did not Africans go imperial the way the Europeans did? *What makes us biologically equal, but economically unequal?*

In the following, a brief histography will be presented where the purpose is to highlight the main imprints to the creation of the colour-coded global economy of today as presented above.

Histography – the *direction* of global economic inequality and ethnicity

Western European kingdoms went imperial because they *needed* to - at the end of the fifteenth century Europe was in less good shape than other parts of the world. The continent had had its population size halved through long periods of epidemics like the so-called Black Death (Crosby 1999). Before this time period, poverty and richness seem to have been about at the same *levels* between societies (Maddison 2001). Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that imperial ambitions and hegemony are not exclusive to Europeans. World history reveals that human groups have for long gone imperial against each other all over the world. In more recent times we have had the English, French, Dutch, Russian and others going imperial from Europe; in Asia we have had the Mongols, Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, Arabs and many others going imperial; in Africa there have been the empires of Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Ashanti, Zulu and several others. In America there were the Aztecs, Inca and the Maya civilizations in particular, waging imperial wars and rule. In our context, this means European colonizers are not particularly vicious or intelligent, since every set of ethnic groups have been involved in colonial endeavour. In parallel, colonised people are not particularly kind or less intelligent, since every set of ethnic groups has been subject to colonial rule.

However, the expansion of Western Europe became significantly different from other colonial processes. In relevance to our context, the process particularly included:

- Global proportions,
- Ecological imperialism,
- Mass permanent settlements,
- Slaves embodied solely by darker skinned people, and
- Colour-coded racism.

Considering the first point listed above, before the outreach of the Iberian kingdoms, most imperial ambitions were continental or regional. Perhaps it was not a coincidence that it was the Spanish and the Portuguese who initiated this extraordinary expansion. Their geographical location is 'far out' from continental Europe and the Mediterranean shores, hampering beneficial interactions. In addition, the kingdoms had significant hatred for the Muslims of northern Africa, thus impeding potentially beneficial trade (Landes 1998). Perhaps the curiosity incentive was higher for naval exploration in such a location with surrounding sea. Of course, it was not their intention to discover a 'new' continent. They were lucky to do so, particularly when it turned out that their bacterial flora, together with the bacterial flora of their animals, were devastating and most often lethal for the Indigenous Americans. This is what Alfred W. Crosby (1999) calls *ecological imperialism*. This is very crucial, since the cost of the expansionary and extraction process became less costly. It was now easier to extract vast areas of landmasses and thus natural resources, which was followed by accumulations in economic, political and social power, which in turn created further spectrum for colonial settlements and expansions in other parts of the world.

Further, the great natural resources of the 'new' continent demanded huge quantities of labour for the extraction and production processes (Diamond 1997). This could be supplied cheaply through existing trade networks of slaves, from the geographically optimal continent of Africa. Slaves, inferior, as their societal status suggested, were now concretely observed as people with darker morphological traits. Now on one side were the people in governance: western Europeans with light body colours, on the other side were enslaved people under

direct rule: Africans with dark body colours. While in between there were other people under European sovereignty: Indigenous Americans, Indians, Chinese, Arabs, and other African and Asian people with darker morphological traits than Europeans. These perceptions in particular must have laid the foundations for the orderly colour-coded racism in Western Europe and their settlement nations.

For the colonisers, skin colours were one of the most important signifiers for the status of a person (Loomba 2006). This is most visible when considering the perspectives the British held towards Asians on one hand and Africans on the other. The British held Africans so low in value that they transported Indians and other Orientals to Africa to build necessary infrastructure for the production and transportation of goods. The Africans were believed not intelligent enough for the task. According to a compilation presented by Floyd Dotson (1975) the number of Orientals in Africa was nearly one million people at the end of the colonial period in 1950s, spread mostly in the British controlled southern and eastern parts of Africa. Even today, there are significant numbers of people with Indian ancestry in these regions.

These perceptions, together with xenophobia and related prejudice, received practical imprints through centuries of societal constructions, stigmatisations and mistreatment during the process of colonial rule around the world, but also within countries in Europe and Neo-Europe during and after colonial times (there are of course numerous studies on this subject, perhaps the most assessable one is Fredrickson 2002 and 2003). Together these forces created and augmented ethnic related rifts in socioeconomic standards around the world.

Histography – the *magnitude* of global economic inequality and ethnicity

It was, however, not until the advent of the nineteenth century that significant differences in economic levels became a reality at the global level. Before that time economic levels between various regions of the world were practically equal, particularly over longer time periods (Maddison 2001). That is, large economic differences at the global level have only existed for about 200 years. Although economic inequalities were existent, particularly within nations of the Americas between Europeans on one hand and Indigenous Americans and Africans on the other, it was not until the spur of *industrialism* that these ethnic divergences in economic levels reached greater magnitude at the global level.

Furthermore, we are able to pinpoint some factors that had significant relevance in shaping this greater magnitude in ethnic related economic inequality at the global level:

- Industrialism
- Capitalism
- Cold war
- Imperial competition
- Scientific racism
- Distorted decolonisation

It is not a coincidence that industrial creativity emerged in Britain and spread to other western European nations first. Higher economic levels are interlinked with higher technical and social development. Colonial nations enjoyed higher economic levels, and had thus a friendlier atmosphere (culture mentality, if you will) to creativity, which stimulated technological progress (Acemoglu 2001). In relation, technological spillovers had a regional and ethnic bias.

A significant economic gap was created, for instance, between western and eastern Europe at the more mature stage of industrialism, and more so between Western Europe and the presently developing South (Landes 1998). Where technology did extend to other regions, it was basically to meet the interests of the imperial power and its settlement processes. Moreover, it took significant time for technology to transfer to other regions, even to relatively close areas. It took, for instance, nearly 100 years for industrial capacity to reach Sweden after its emergence in Britain (Rider 1999).

Industrialism worsened inequalities between (ethnic) societies through a much faster paced economic process, particularly in the twentieth century. According to the statistical works of Angus Maddison (2001), economic growth was close to zero before the 1820s - before the spur of industrialism. This is because industrial production is characterized by increasing returns to scale - ideas create more ideas (Sachs 2000).

Another exacerbating aspect of industrialism is the development of more advanced and exploitative economic forces, *capitalism*. From a global ethnic related perspective, capitalist development had unequal conditions as a starting point. Since money makes money, the ethnic groups that suffered deteriorated economic and social conditions had more difficult circumstances in which to make money.

Moreover, *competition* was always fierce for the new conquests of land and people, the latter in the form of African slave trade and labour. In fact, it is relevant to speculate about the possibility of greater wealth accumulation for the western empires if they had not fought each other for such a long time. Although, from competition there follows not only destruction but also creation. With vast new resources at their disposal on the one side, and competition on the other side, the nations had fundamental drivers for faster development and where, for instance, a lot of the development was initially in weaponry and warfare.

The increasingly developed powder guns and naval techniques proved crucial in the conquests of Asia and later Africa at the end of the nineteenth century, extending ethnic related economic inequalities. In Africa, some of the valuable natural endowments have been (and still are) gold, diamonds, rubber, coffee, copper, cacao, tea, bananas, bauxite, and oil. Access to cheap labour was also a driving force, at least in the extraction process of the natural resources. The continent had until then been experienced as one-step-from-death for Europeans, whose resistance to the bacterial flora of Africa was very weak. But now, at the end of the nineteenth century, medical support had been developed so that the hardship was minimized. The scramble for Africa between the European nations was initiated in a political conference in Berlin during 1884-1885 where seven empires divided the continent geographically among themselves. The simplicity of this division is very explicit when looking at a political map of Africa, most countries having straight lines as borders. This had fatal consequences for the African people, on top of being invaded and ruled over. This is because many ethnic groups were forcefully divided and then compelled to sustain life in a made-up nation under foreign rule that also included many other ethnic groups who in turn had different cultures and languages.

At the end of nineteenth century, Europeans were more powerful than before and probably also more racist. They were extracting resources and accumulating wealth from America, Asia and Oceania. With this confidence, *scientific racism* established Europeans as the most superior 'race', and dark skinned people from Sub-Saharan Africa the most inferior. As a matter of fact, dark skinned people were hardly regarded as humans, making it easier

to act ferocious. Comparative analysis of the tools, methods and behaviours of colonizers, implies a correlation between their manners and body colours of their victims. Africans paid the highest cost under colonial rule. Thus, these practices further widened the economic differences between ethnic groups.

New times, new struggles for humankind: only about 60 years ago, a *decolonisation* process began in Asia and Africa (Davidson 2001). However, political independence is not automatically emancipation, freedom, and development. The colonisers left behind clustered countries, not societies as initially. They left behind a gap in human development. During oppression times, people were hindered in developing their societies, and were instead kept busy in the colonial apparatus, and/or were involved in emancipation struggles. While the Europeans and their descendents in the Americas and Oceania had developed significantly through the industrialisation process, the colonised groups' societal and economic development deteriorated. Thus, the wide economic disparity that grew between nations, and indirectly between ethnic groups, became a significant fact.

During this short time they have been politically independent countries, but vulnerable and weak ones, with unskilled, uneducated, frustrated, and alienated populations. As a result, the new nations were easy prey for ambitious elites, domestic or foreign. *Cold War* tactics forced the newly independent countries, like nearly all countries around the world, to choose a side. The regimes had to choose between the socialist empire of the Soviet Union and the capitalist empire of the USA. The incentives were financial and political support; the deterrent was international intervention. It is important to note that, although other countries suffered the same Cold War pressures, the newly liberated countries were more vulnerable to the political order. They had less political, economical and social power to influence the character of the tensions and their consequences to their societies. In general, the two empires did not care what kind of leaders they got support from, nor to whom they gave financial aid and loans.

Part IV: Concluding remarks

This study has explored the relations between human body colours and levels of economic attainment. In so doing it offers an alternative **and non-Eurocentric** approach to the classical question of why some nations are rich and some poor. In this respect, the study has reached two original conclusions.

1. The poverty and wealth of nations are significantly and orderly correlated with the representative morphological trait of their citizens.
2. This correlation stems from colour-coded colonial practices, created from a spectrum where ethnic groups of light morphological traits were the colonizers – a group on top of the societal hierarchy, and where ethnic groups of dark morphological traits were the enslaved ones – a group on the bottom of the societal hierarchy.

The basis for the first conclusion lies on the empirical results of correlations between morphological traits, represented by four nuances of bodily colours, and sustained economic levels, represented by GDP per capita figures. Countries with the majority of their citizens with lighter morphological traits are in general richer than countries with the majority of their citizens with darker morphological traits. In other words, the systematic *direction* is that the lighter a country, the higher the probability of that country having a higher economic level. The importance of the results is also shown by the statistical showcase, which highlights the

magnitude of these inequalities. For instance, in current PPP US dollars, the darkest ethnic groups have only about nine percent of the GDP per capita level the lightest group enjoy, 14 percent of the second lightest group, and 51 percent of the third darkest group, while having only 21 per cent of the world average income of nearly 10 000 PPP US dollars.

The second main conclusion means that the above results are neither coincidental nor a simple reflection of geography. Colour-coded polarisations are a force in practically all societies around the world, and thus a harsh reality for countless people regardless of geographic location. In our context, a global histography provided an overview of processes and turns of events shaping and enhancing the ethnically biased economic levels. Adopting an original perspective and piecing together rather familiar facts from various disciplines brought an insight to the metaphysics of our colour-coded global economy.

In particular, the correlation between GDP levels and ethnicity at the international macro level exist *primarily* because it happened to be lighter ethnic groups of western Europe that were the colonisers, while it happened to be darker ethnic groups of Sub-Saharan Africa that where the enslaved ones. This social condition sparked and established colour-coded perceptions in colonial practices during nearly 500 years. Note that this does not mean colour-coded racism or other ethnic polarisations have not existed before. Here, the emphasis is on the creation of colour-coded polarisations relevant to contemporary global economy. Nor does it mean that ethnicity is the single shaper of economic inequalities. Here, the aim has been to highlight it as a variable that has determined international comparative development.

Moreover, another original conclusion in this study deals with the question of why it happened to be western Europeans, and not for instance West Africans, who went globally imperial. It was argued that Europe had, at the time, a greater need to explore external economic opportunities than other regions. This is because the continent was in relatively worse shape, and had a longer distance to the flourishing trade routes between east Africa, Middle East and south Asia. In relation, we are able to conclude that forced labour was suffered by Africans, mainly because Indigenous Americans where perishing under imperial warfare (mainly due to differences in bacterial flora), and Africa was closer to the shores of conquered Americas than Asian regions.

Having reached the conclusions regarding the colour-coded *direction* of the ethnic related global economy, we may turn to its *magnitude*. This study confirms previous conclusions that the western European colonial process started a division of the world through the mere character of colonial practices. That is, colonial powers gained higher socioeconomic levels, while those of people under their rule deteriorated. Another confirmation is that industrialism happened to emerge in Europe because of a more developed socioeconomic framework, made possible via gains of imperial hegemony. Yet another important shared conclusion is that this technological progress sparked (positive) economic growth, a rather new concept, increasing the economic differences between nations further. However, this study extends these conclusions by incorporating the ethnic aspect. In other words, we conclude that contemporary differences in GDP per capita levels were reached through an *ethnically excluding technology-driven economic development*.

In addition, we are able to understand why it is that sub-Saharan Africans happen to be the poorest ethnic group today. Western Europeans where more racist and powerful than before, when, at the end of the nineteenth century, they also embarked on the political invasion of the sub-continent. Since the darkest people where perceived at the bottom of the

human hierarchy, the sub-continent and its peoples suffered the cruellest imprints of colonial hegemony and economic exclusions. Societies were ferociously altered and natural resources exploited, taking the ethnically divided global economy to new extremes.

Moreover, we are able to understand these historical imprints as foundations to structures and norms that still prevent certain countries and peoples from gaining the benefits of technology, finance, and socioeconomic development in general. Not only do low development levels create forms of vicious circles of poverty, it is also possible that they spur vicious circles of ethnic related perceptions. A country's development level might be perceived as reflections of attributes and competences of its people. In particular, majority ethnic groups in high-income nations might be seen as superior to majority ethnic groups in low-income nations. This would lead to further reluctance in incorporating certain countries and ethnic groups into economic and political processes, while the unequal conditions worsen through the global capitalist forces at play.

It would be naïve to consider our contemporary world as free from ethnocentrism. This infection spreads from local, to regional, to national, to continental levels. But this need not be controversial or shameful as long as we do something about it. It seems that information restrictions are to blame. Our life span and immobility put restrictions on the number of people we can really get to know. We know ourselves and the people close to us the best. We care most for them and less for people unfamiliar to us. And because more importance is given to people that one feels closest to, we tend to have polarisations and segregations based on ethnic belonging. This means these individual preferences, at first sight natural and harmless, can become ethnically divisive, or even racist, at the aggregated level. Hopefully, with the development of information technology we may overcome this aspect of human relations. We have the potential to be less ethnocentric than we are. This study is an information package for that endeavour, and the struggle for a more equal human society.

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Appendix is on the next page.

APPENDIX: Countries with their representative morphological trait

Country	M.T.	Country	M.T.	Country	M.T.	Country	M.T.
Afghanistan	3	Dominica	4	Lebanon	2	Saudi Arabia	2
Albania	2	Dominican Republic	3	Lesotho	4	Senegal	4
Algeria	2	Ecuador	3	Liberia	4	Serbia	2
Angola	4	Egypt	2	Libya	2	Seychelles	3
Antigua and Barbuda	4	El Salvador	3	Lithuania	1	Sierra Leone	4
Argentina	2	Equatorial Guinea	4	Luxembourg	1	Singapore	2
Armenia	2	Eritrea	4	Macedonia	2	Slovak Republic	1
Australia	1	Estonia	1	Madagascar	4	Slovenia	1
Austria	1	Ethiopia	4	Malawi	4	Solomon Islands	3
Azerbaijan	2	Fiji	3	Malaysia	3	South Africa	4
Bahamas, The	4	Finland	1	Maldives	3	Spain	2
Bahrain	2	France	2	Mali	4	Sri Lanka	3
Bangladesh	3	Gabon	4	Malta	2	St. Kitts and Nevis	4
Barbados	4	Gambia, The	4	Mauritania	4	St. Lucia	4
Belarus	1	Georgia	2	Mauritius	4	St. Vincent	4
Belgium	1	Germany	1	Mexico	3	Sudan	4
Belize	3	Ghana	4	Moldova	2	Suriname	3
Benin	4	Greece	2	Mongolia	2	Swaziland	4
Bhutan	3	Grenada	4	Morocco	2	Sweden	1
Bolivia	3	Guatemala	3	Mozambique	4	Switzerland	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	Guinea	4	Myanmar	3	Syrian Arab Republic	2
Botswana	4	Guinea-Bissau	4	Namibia	4	Taiwan	2
Brazil	3	Guyana	3	Nepal	3	Tajikistan	2
Brunei Darussalam	3	Haiti	4	Netherlands	1	Tanzania	4
Bulgaria	2	Honduras	3	Netherlands Antilles	2	Thailand	3
Burkina Faso	4	Hong Kong SAR	2	New Zealand	1	Timor-Leste	3
Burundi	4	Hungary	1	Nicaragua	3	Togo	4
Cambodia	3	Iceland	1	Niger	4	Tonga	3
Cameroon	4	India	3	Nigeria	4	Trinidad and Tobago	4
Canada	2	Indonesia	3	Norway	1	Tunisia	2
Cape Verde	4	Iran	2	Oman	2	Turkey	2
Central African Republic	4	Ireland	1	Pakistan	3	Turkmenistan	2
Chad	4	Israel	2	Panama	3	Uganda	4
Chile	2	Italy	2	Papua New Guinea	3	Ukraine	1
China	2	Jamaica	4	Paraguay	3	United Arab Emirates	2
Colombia	3	Japan	2	Peru	3	United Kingdom	1
Comoros	4	Jordan	2	Philippines	3	United States	2
Congo, Republic of	4	Kazakhstan	2	Poland	1	Uruguay	2
Costa Rica	3	Kenya	4	Portugal	2	Uzbekistan	2
Cote d'Ivoire	4	Kiribati	3	Qatar	2	Vanuatu	3
Croatia	2	Korea	2	Romania	2	Venezuela	3
Cyprus	2	Kuwait	2	Russia	1	Vietnam	3
Czech Republic	1	Kyrgyz Republic	2	Rwanda	4	Yemen	2
Denmark	1	Laos	3	Samoa	3	Zambia	4
Djibouti	4	Latvia	1	Sao Tome and Principe	4	Zimbabwe	4

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