

**How the economy and history have influenced each other throughout human civilization**

**Kamola Janaydarova** (Teacher of Math at the Presidential School in Nurafshon, Email: [kamolajanaydarova@gmail.com](mailto:kamolajanaydarova@gmail.com) )

**Eraliyeva Mehrinisa** (Teacher of History at the Presidential School in Nurafshon, Email: [qirolichatarixchi@gmail.com](mailto:qirolichatarixchi@gmail.com) )

**Abstract.** Economics and history are intertwined disciplines that shape the course of human civilization. The physical features of our planet have not only provided the backdrop for historical events but have also played a pivotal role in influencing the development and interactions of societies. This work explores the dynamic relationship between economy and history, delving into how economical factors have shaped historical events and, in turn, how human activities have left a lasting imprint on the landscape.

**Key words:** Economical features, landscapes, population, human, Silk Road.

The Earth's diverse landscapes, climate zones, and natural resources have served as a canvas upon which the drama of human history unfolds. For instance, the fertile plains of Mesopotamia, nestled between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, provided an ideal environment for the rise of ancient civilizations such as Sumeria and Babylon. The abundance of water and fertile soil facilitated agriculture, giving birth to settled communities and the foundations of organized societies. Economy has also played a crucial role in shaping geopolitical realities and power dynamics throughout history. The strategic location of regions and the availability of resources have often been catalysts for conflict and conquest. The Mediterranean, with its network of navigable waterways, became a crucial theater for the expansion of empires, from the Roman Empire to the Ottoman Empire, each leaving an indelible mark on the historical landscape. Economical features such as rivers, mountain ranges, and oceans have not only influenced territorial expansion but have also served as conduits for trade and cultural exchange. The Silk Road, an ancient network of trade routes connecting the East and West, facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies between diverse civilizations. The movement of people and commodities along these routes had profound effects on the development of societies, creating a tapestry of interconnected histories.

Economy and history are inextricably linked, constantly influencing and shaping each other throughout human civilization. **Technological Advancements:** Throughout history, technological breakthroughs have revolutionized economies. The invention of the printing press, the steam engine, and the internet, for example, have all had profound impacts on production, trade, and communication. **Political Shifts:** Political events, such as wars, revolutions, and changes in government, can dramatically alter economic systems. The Industrial Revolution, fueled by political stability and laissez-faire policies, transformed societies and economies. **Social Movements:** Social movements, like the labor movement or the women's suffrage movement, can influence economic policies and practices. These movements often fight for better working conditions, equal pay, and social safety nets. **Cultural Norms:** Cultural values and beliefs can shape economic behavior. For instance, a culture that values hard work and entrepreneurship may foster economic growth, while a culture that prioritizes leisure and social welfare may have different economic outcomes. **Resource Allocation:** The distribution of resources, such as land, labor, and capital, can determine the rise and fall of civilizations. Control over resources has often been a major factor in historical conflicts. **Economic Crises:** Economic downturns, like the Great Depression or the 2008 financial

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crisis, can have far-reaching social and political consequences. These crises can lead to social unrest, political upheaval, and even regime change. Economic Growth: Economic growth can lead to increased prosperity, improved living standards, and social progress. However, it can also exacerbate inequality and environmental problems. Globalization: The increasing interconnectedness of the global economy has had a profound impact on history, leading to the spread of ideas, technologies, and cultures. It has also contributed to the rise of global challenges, such as climate change and pandemics.

Economics has also shaped human behavior and adaptation through the lens of environmental determinism. The availability of resources, climate conditions, and natural barriers have influenced the way societies organize themselves and the technologies they develop. The nomadic lifestyles of the Mongols in the vast steppes of Central Asia, for example, were a response to the environmental conditions of the region, showcasing the symbiotic relationship between geography and human culture. Human geography, or the study of human activities and their interactions with the environment, has had a considerable impact on the historical evolution of various locations around the world. Here are a few instances:

While economics has undeniably influenced history, human activities have also left a lasting impact on the physical environment. The rise of industrialization, urbanization, and technological advancements has transformed landscapes, often at the cost of environmental sustainability. The deforestation of ancient civilizations, such as the Mayans in Mesoamerica, serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of unchecked human exploitation of natural resources. Economics and history share an intricate relationship, with geographical factors often serving as catalysts for historical events and human activities leaving a profound impact on the landscape. This essay explores this dynamic interplay, focusing on specific historical epochs and geographical features that have shaped the course of human civilization.

One of the most compelling examples of geography shaping history is the Fertile Crescent. This crescent-shaped region, encompassing parts of modern-day Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan, is characterized by its fertile soil and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The availability of water and arable land in this region facilitated the development of agriculture around 10,000 BCE, marking the transition from nomadic lifestyles to settled communities. The Sumerians, among the earliest civilizations in human history, thrived in this fertile environment, establishing city-states with advanced agricultural practices. The geography of the Fertile Crescent not only allowed for the sustenance of large populations but also set the stage for the emergence of complex societies, governance structures, and written languages.

The Mediterranean Sea, surrounded by three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa—has been a crucible of geopolitical dynamics throughout history. The ancient Greeks, with their fragmented city-states, engaged in maritime trade and colonization due to the navigable waters of the Mediterranean. The geography of the region influenced the rise of powerful naval civilizations, including the Phoenicians and later the Romans. The strategic importance of controlling key points along the Mediterranean, such as the Strait of Gibraltar, has led to centuries of conflicts and power struggles. The Roman Empire, at its zenith, controlled vast territories bordering the Mediterranean, showcasing how geography played a pivotal role in shaping the geopolitical landscape of the ancient world. The Silk Road, an extensive network of trade routes connecting the East and West, is a testament to how geographical features can foster cultural exchange and economic interconnectedness. Stretching from China through Central Asia to the Mediterranean, the Silk Road

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facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies between diverse civilizations. Geographical obstacles, such as deserts and mountain ranges, required innovative solutions, including the development of camel caravans and the Silk Road's maritime routes. This exchange of goods and knowledge along the Silk Road played a crucial role in the development of civilizations, fostering the spread of religions, philosophies, and technological advancements.

By their very nature, general-purpose technological revolutions are also highly disruptive. The Luddites of the early 19th century resisted and tried to destroy machines that rendered their weaving skills obsolete, even though the machines ushered in new skills and jobs. Such disruption occurs precisely because the new technology is so flexible and pervasive. Consequently, many benefits come not simply from adopting the technology, but from adapting to the technology. The advent of electricity generation enabled power to be delivered precisely when and where needed, vastly improving manufacturing efficiency and paving the way for the modern production line. In the same vein, Uber is a taxi company using digital technology to deliver a better service.

An important component of a disruptive technology is that it must first be widely adopted before society adapts to it. Electricity delivery depended on generators. The current technological revolution depends on computers, the technical backbone of the Internet, search engines, and digital platforms. Because of the lags involved in adapting to new processes, such as replacing traditional printing with online publishing, it takes time before output growth accelerates. In the early stages of such revolutions, more and more resources are devoted to innovation and reorganization whose benefits are realized only much later.

For example, while James Watt marketed a relatively efficient engine in 1774, it took until 1812 for the first commercially successful steam locomotive to appear. And it wasn't until the 1830s that British output per capita clearly accelerated. Perhaps it is no wonder that the digital revolution doesn't show up in the productivity statistics quite yet—after all, the personal computer emerged only about 40 years ago.

But make no mistake—the digital revolution is well under way. In addition to transforming jobs and skills, it is also overhauling industries such as retailing and publishing and perhaps—in the not-too-distant future—trucking and banking. In the United Kingdom, Internet transactions already account for almost one-fifth of retail sales, excluding gasoline, up from just one-twentieth in 2008. And e-commerce sites are applying their data skills to finance. The Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba already owns a bank and is using knowledge about its customers to provide small-scale loans to Chinese consumers. Amazon.com, the American e-commerce site, is moving in the same direction.

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