



# Geography

AND WESTERN CIVILIZATION

# Climate:

- ▶ One of the most important factors in development is geography, where the country is in the world, and climate.
- ▶ It's no coincidence that the poorest countries are in the tropics, where it is hot, the land is less fertile, water is more scarce, where diseases flourish.
- ▶ Conversely, Europe and North America profit from huge tracts of very fertile land, a temperate climate, and good rainfall.
- ▶ In extremes of climate, either hot or cold, too much energy goes into the simple business of survival for there to be much leftover energy for development.

## Location:

- ▶ geographical location plays a part in access to markets.
- ▶ All the great empires have been based around trade routes, and these are almost always maritime.
- ▶ There are notable exceptions, the medieval Mongol empire was based on the Silk Road from China to the west.
- ▶ 'Many of the world's poorest countries are severely hindered because they are **LANDLOCKED** - situated in high mountain ranges; or lack navigable rivers, long coastlines, or good natural harbors.'

## Location:

- ▶ Early civilizations lacked the expertise needed to construct the elaborate works necessary to modify the land for their own use, such as massive irrigation systems or graded tunnels and roads to pass through natural barriers.
- ▶ The earliest cities were established in geographically beneficial areas, providing their citizens with ready access to the natural resources they needed. – Pre Mesopotamia and Egypt.

# Resources:

- ▶ **Resources**
- ▶ Every country has been dealt a hand in natural resources.
- ▶ It takes infrastructure to capitalize on these, but some places have a distinct advantage over others.
- ▶ There are renewable resources – forests, fish, stocks that, if correctly managed, will refresh themselves.
  - ▶ Much South American development has been based on the Amazon rainforest, in natural rubber and then timber.
- ▶ Access to other resources - metals also determined where civilizations emerged.
  - ▶ For example, the **Hittite civilization** of Asia Minor relied heavily on iron ore and used iron tools and weapons to expand its power.
  - ▶ Germany rose to power in the late 19th century in part because of its rapid industrialization stemming from iron production.
  - ▶ In the 15th-17th centuries, Spain grew wealthy from the gold stolen from Mayan and Incan tribes of North and South America.

# How did geography contribute to the Growth of Western Civilization?

- ▶ WATERWAYS:
- ▶ Waterways, in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, contributed to the ability to transform from a nomadic people to stationary, by contributing to agriculture.
- ▶ Waterways were used as highways to transport goods and promote trade
- ▶ Waterways separate and can also create isolation of cultures by acting like barriers.

# How did geography contribute to the Growth of Western Civilization?

- ▶ Mountains / Land formations:
- ▶ Mountains acted as cultural barriers and allowed the people on either side autonomy from one another.
- ▶ They Create Physical Barriers - Two mountain ranges, the Alps and the Apennines, helped to protect Rome from invasion.
- ▶ **Fertile Land – can be provided by volcanic Mountains** -Rich volcanic soil makes the Po and Tiber river valleys ideally suited for agriculture. volcanic ash made the soil near Rome some of the best in all of Europe

