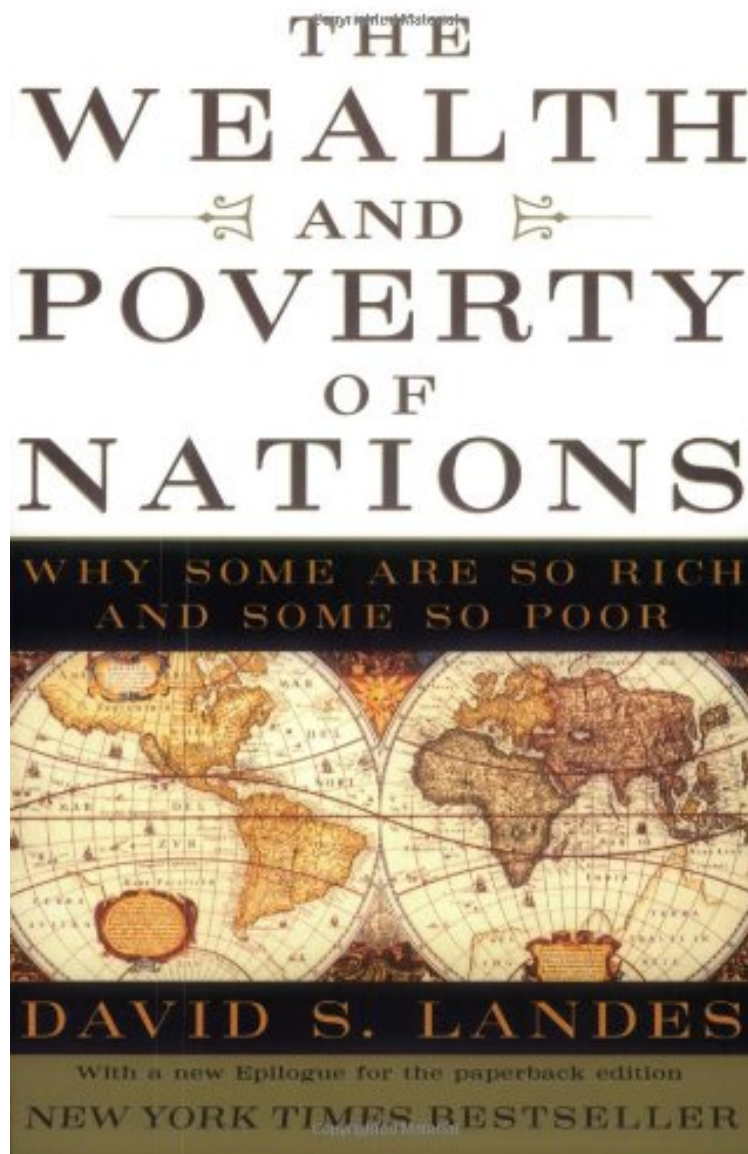


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The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor

David S. Landes

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David S. Landes : The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Stuart S
Very easy to follow. A good explanation of the cultural, resource and geographic reasons for relative wealth between nations.
5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Combination of History Economics
That is Enjoyable
By Careful Consumer
The problem some readers may have is that the author gives an unvarnished, no holes barred, tell it like it is, narrative. Many individuals, as well as nation states want to blame everyone but themselves for short comings. The author pulls no punches. He does gore a lot of sacred cows (not only in India) and that always stirs controversy. But that's what made this book so valuable. The only part I might disagree with is the implied generalization that some groups of immigrants to the United States do well because of their home land's culture. Those that come to this country are a sub-set, a non-representative group that is NOT a cross section of their home population. e.g., the British and other settlers to the New World. They are a select group of either entrepreneurs, risk takers, or else the desperate. They are the ones that either are looking to make a killing or else have nothing to lose and take risk and make it big or else fail trying and try again. It is worth the price of admission just for the bibliography and footnotes as well as his humor and cynicism. Again a great read!!!
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting and persuasively
By Andrew Portnov
This is a brilliant book. I read it some time ago and still love it. So many things in everyday life and so many origins of nowadays issues of nations become obvious after one reads this book. This time I've got two items to make a present to friends. And they already reported that they love it as well.

"Readers cannot but be provoked and stimulated by this splendidly iconoclastic and refreshing book." Andrew Porter, New York Times Book Review
The Wealth and Poverty of Nations is David S. Landes's acclaimed, best-selling exploration of one of the most contentious and hotly debated questions of our time: Why do some nations achieve economic success while others remain mired in poverty? The answer, as Landes definitively illustrates, is a complex interplay of cultural mores and historical circumstance. Rich with anecdotal evidence, piercing analysis, and a truly astonishing range of erudition, The Wealth and Poverty of Nations is a "picture of enormous sweep and brilliant insight" (Kenneth Arrow) as well as one of the most audaciously ambitious works of history in decades. For the paperback edition, Landes has written a new epilogue, in which he takes account of Asian financial crises and the international tension between overconfidence and reality. Maps

.com Professor David S. Landes takes a historic approach to the analysis of the distribution of wealth in this landmark study of world economics. Landes argues that the key to today's disparity between the rich and poor nations of the world stems directly from the industrial revolution, in which some countries made the leap to industrialization and became fabulously rich, while other countries failed to adapt and remained poor. Why some countries were able to industrialize and others weren't has been the subject of much heated debate over the decades; climate, natural resources, and geography have all been put forward as explanations--and are all brushed aside by Landes in favor of his own controversial theory: that the ability to effect an industrial revolution is dependent on certain cultural traits, without which industrialization is impossible to sustain. Landes contrasts the characteristics of successfully industrialized nations--work, thrift, honesty, patience, and tenacity--with those of nonindustrial countries, arguing that until these values are internalized by all nations, the gulf between the rich and poor will continue to grow.
From Publishers Weekly
Landes (Revolution in Time), Harvard professor emeritus of history, undertakes an economic and cultural history of the world during the past five centuries. His well-written, sometimes witty analysis is the kind of work one wants to pause over and reflect upon at each chapter before moving ahead. Landes's principal argument is that the richest nations continue to prosper while poorer nations lag behind because of their relative ability or inability to exploit science, technology and economic opportunity. In every case?from ancient China to modern Japan?he maintains this is largely the result of national attitudes about a myriad of cultural factors. Landes traces the story of England's industrial revolution and America's system of mass production as indicators of the West's superiority over the rest of the world. Some of his historical illustrations are thought-provoking: for example, the importance of air conditioning to the development of the New South in the U.S. and the impact of a lifetime of eating with chopsticks on the manual dexterity of Asia's microprocessing workers. Most of all, Landes stresses the importance of cultural values, such as a predisposition for hard work, open-mindedness and a commitment to democracy, in determining a nation's course toward wealth and power. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From Library Journal
Harvard professor emeritus of history Landes argues that for the last thousand years, Western civilization
Awith its knowledge, techniques, and political and social ideologies
Ahas been "the prime mover of development and modernity" and that countries such as Japan have become rich because they emulated the West. (LJ 3/1/98) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.