

# Guns, germs, and steel: the fates of human societies

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Prosperity leads to the arrogance of power and such societies try to take advantage of others. The author argues " First, a centralized decision-maker had the advantage of concentrating troops and resources. Second, the official religions and patriotic fervor of many states make their troops willing to fight suicidal" (p. 281). Food surplus resulting in power is a correct argument by the author. According to him, this happens on account of the ultimate cause and his articulation is right.

One of the fascinating issues in human history is the discussion as to why some nations gained power and others failed in that area. The author takes the dig at the same traditional question of why the Europeans countries colonized Africans and why Africans were unsuccessful in that count? He reasons out that geography is singularly responsible for historical inequalities at any time of human history. His argument is generally sound, barring some flaws. His all-inclusive support for geography as the powerhouse of development is untenable. He ignores the outcomes of technological innovations and the growth of capitalism during that period of history. Moreover, the author does not provide a proper explanation as to why the Europeans had the impulse to colonize. He tackles the question of Europeans having the economic wherewithal to colonize. If Europeans had knowledge about fighting the war and greed for wealth, the natives too had that. Why did the natives fail in their confrontation with the Europeans? The author does not give a satisfactory answer to that.

As for the argument of the author about agriculture, his articulation holds good in the current world scenario, as nations with surplus food production  
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dominate world politics and exercise power. Park Wilde writes “ In food policy, as in all policy-making, people acquire and use political power and influence for both principled and self-interested reasons”. (5) This in tandem with the argument of Diamond that food, agriculture, and environment play the important and biggest role in the development of a civilization as it has happened in the case of the US. But plant and animal species alone are not responsible for prosperity, though it is one of the major factors. Geographical location is another factor that has bearing on economic prosperity. This is the ultimate cause of European superiority. For the advantage given by nature and no human efforts can provide a substitute. The countries around the Mediterranean Sea had/have the ultimate advantage as it provides the facility for trade, food and protection from other lands. As such, Europe's location played a major role in the growth of the continent as a whole. The responses of Diamond on various issues, barring a few, are scientific and sound and they hold well in the current political scenarios of the world.