

EE460: Thai Economy

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Lecture 1

Historical Perspectives

Objectives

- The objective of this course is to provide students the basic understanding of Thailand's social and economic development by using analytical tools provided by economic theories.
- It is expected that students would be able to understand the complex and controversial issues of the Thai economy.

Class Evaluation

- Midterm (**30 points**) covering lecture 1 to 9.
- Essays, Quizzes, and attendance (**10 points**)
- Final exam (**60 points**) covering lecture 10 to 30.
- Class attendance is a necessary condition for passing the exam.
- There are negative correlates between the number of missing classes and final scores.
- Dress code: Always dress respectfully.

Main Themes

1. International trade and the wealth of nations
2. Historical comparison between Siam and Japan's early economic development
3. Economic changes in Thailand: 1850-1970
4. Determination of growth process

A puzzle

- Siam and Japan shared striking similarities when they were ***forced to*** open trade: Siam in 1855, Japan in 1859.
- Both countries started to modernize in contemporary reigns: King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), Meiji (1868-1912).
- Why are their development outcomes so far different?

1. International trade and wealth of nations

From Lisbon to **Nagasaki**
In 1571



Nagasaki: Japan's only channel to world trade

- In 1571, the little harbor village of Nagasaki quickly grew into a diverse port city, and Portuguese products were imported through Nagasaki (such as tobacco, bread, textiles and a Portuguese sponge-cake called *castella*) were assimilated into popular Japanese culture.
- *Tempura* derived from a popular Portuguese recipe originally, and takes its name from the Portuguese word, 'tempero' is another example of the enduring effects of this cultural exchange.
- The Portuguese also brought with them many goods from China.

Ayutthaya: A multicultural city

- A ***Portuguese explorer Fernando Mendes Pinto (1506-1583)*** wrote that foreigners accounted a quarter of the Ayutthaya kingdom's **400,000** inhabitants
- There were around 4,000 Portuguese lived in Ayutthaya and most of them were mestizos.
- They engaged in mercenaries, jewelers, navigators, translators, doctors, and confectioners.
- Many Thai deserts are of Portuguese origin.
- Moors or Muslims from India, Arabia, Turkey, and Persia came to Siam for commercial purpose, but many ended up settling in Ayutthaya.
- *Chinese were the most significant foreign population.*

Foreign Trade Monopoly

- Ayutthaya king set up a department to control trade and ***monopolize*** exports and imports.
- ***Thailand exported forest products to China and Japan:*** deer skin, sappan wood (an agent in manufacture of red dye), ***tin***, rhino horn, ivory, coconut wine.
- Siam's export pattern was determined by her factor endowment (Heckscher–Ohlin Theory)

Japanese arrived in Siam: since the early 16th century

- Most Japanese settlers in Siam were **Christian fugitives** fleeing Shogun Ieyasu's religious persecution.
- Around 1,000 Japanese immigrants settled in Ayutthaya on the bank of Chao Praya River, opposite the Portuguese village.

Yamada Nagamasa

- Yamada Nagamasa (1590–1630) was a Japanese adventurer who engaged in trade between Japan and the Thai kingdom of Ayutthaya.
- He rose to a prominent position in Ayutthaya and eventually became the governor of the Nakhon Si Thammaraj in southern Thailand.
- He became involved in Japanese trade activities with South-East Asia during the period of the **Red Seal** ships and settled in the kingdom of Ayutthaya from around 1612.

The red seal ship:
The power of trade monopoly



Trade, monopoly, protection, and wealth

- **Red seal ships** were Japanese armed merchant sailing ships bound for Southeast Asian ports with a red-sealed patent issued by the early Tokugawa shogunate in the first half of the 17th century.
- Between 1600 and 1635, more than 350 Japanese ships went overseas under this permit system.
- By doing so, Shogun Tokugawa was able **to control Japanese traders** and **reduce Japanese piracy** in the South Sea.
- Shogunate's seal also **guaranteed the protection** of the ships, since he vowed to pursue any pirate or nation who would violate it.

Yamada under the patronage of King Song Tham

- Yamada had been able to establish himself as a leader of the Japanese settlement and attained a senior Thai rank of nobility by actively supporting the military campaigns of the Thai king Song Tham.
- His military success secured him the position of governor in Nakorn Sri Thammarat, southern Thailand, where he established himself with 300 samurais.

Praya Sri-worawong and the war of succession

- Yamada returned from Nakorn Sri Thammarat to Ayutthaya in 1628-- the same year King Song Tham died and he got involved in the *war of succession against Phya Sriworawong*.
- In 1630 Yamada was wounded in combat and died of poisoning through his wounds.
- Phya Sriworawong, who attacked and destroyed the Japanese settlement, became a new king.

King Prasart Thong (1629-1656)

Royal trade monopoly: 27 years

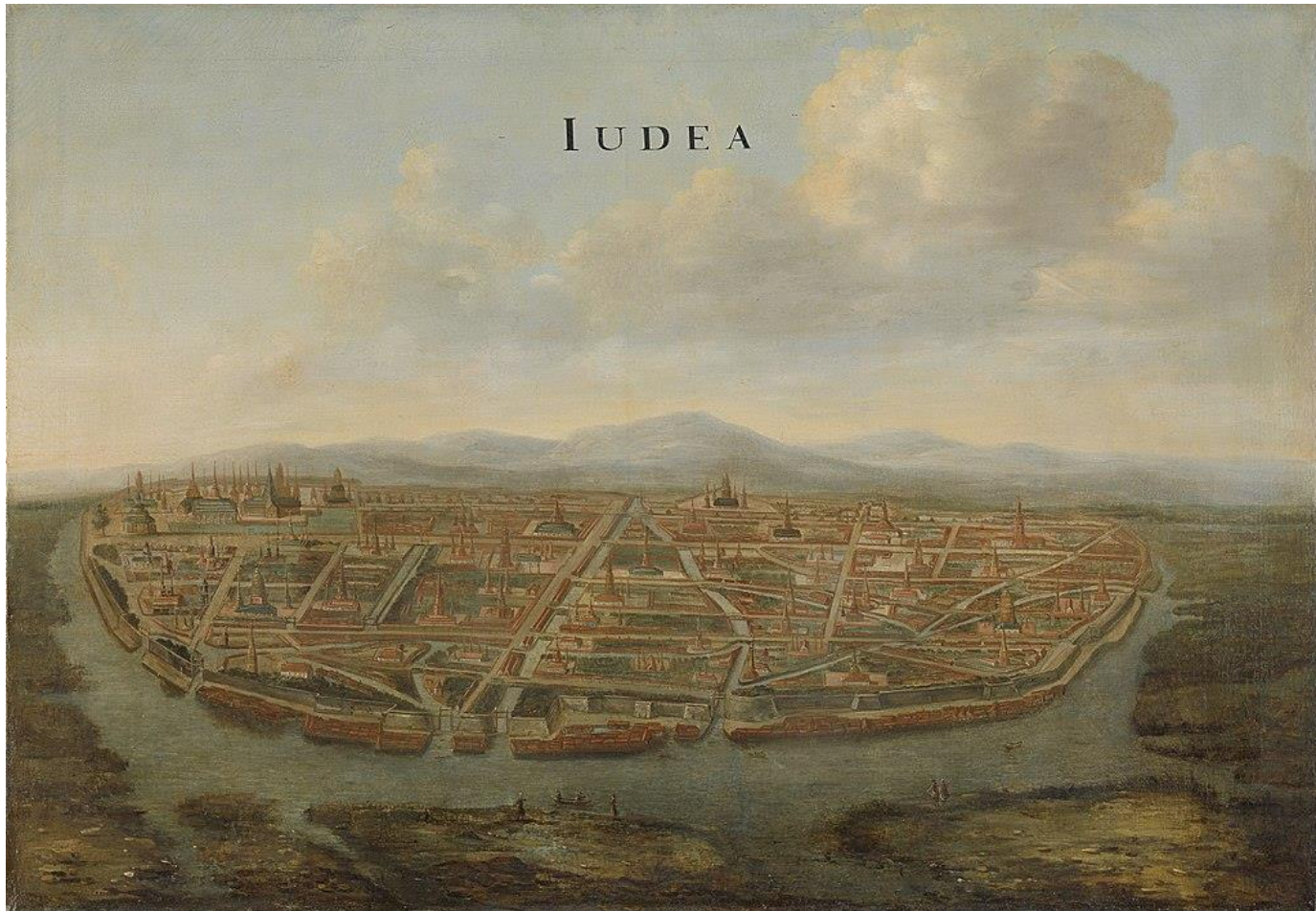
- The Japanese force was driven out by the new King Prasart Thong but returned later to trade deerskins (to make armor) and the skin of stingrays(to make sheathes for samurai swords).
- The new king strengthened the system of **royal monopoly** in commercial activities, making foreigners less competitive.
- Ayutthaya became *a transit hub* for trading goods between *Bay of Bengal, the main transport route to Europe, and the South China sea, the key route to the East and Southeast Asia.*

King Narai (1656-1688)

Trade openness created 32 years of prosperity

- Siamese kings were **open to foreign trade** and engaged to generate wealth.
- *Imports were textiles*, furniture, metal mortars, ready-made partitions, wooden furniture and bronzeware.
- It is evident that wealth of the nations depends on prosperous international trade.

Painting of Ayutthaya by Johannes Vingboons,
ordered by the [Dutch East India Company](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/collectie/), Amsterdam.
c.1665, <http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/collectie/>



2. Historical Perspective of Thailand's Economic Development

- What can we learn from historical path of Thailand's economic development?
- Why was Thailand able to grow rapidly between the 1960s and the early 1990s, but not after that?

Initial conditions in Siam and Japan: 1850-1914 (Yasuba and Likit, 1985)

- Both countries shared striking similarities when they were ***forced to*** open trade: Siam in 1855, Japan in 1859.
- Both countries started to modernize in contemporary reigns: King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), Emperor Meiji (1868-1912).
- **Industrialization** was the main trend in Japan, while specialization in **primary commodities** was the major tendency in Siam. This is where the departure began.

Studying abroad, importing knowledge

- The Japanese government had sent **6,000** students abroad *by 1881*, representing a fairly ***wide segment*** of the society, including former low-ranking samurais.
- Until late 1890s, Siam sent ***only a number*** of royal family to study abroad.
- The early groups of Thai ***middle-class*** students produced the ***leaders*** of the constitutional coup in 1932.

Higher education in early Japan

- **Science and engineering** have been emphasized from the start in Japan.
- The first national university was established in Tokyo in 1877 with faculties of humanities, law, natural sciences, and medicine. There was a separate college of engineering.
- Until 1887, the proportion of ***graduates in natural sciences, medicine, engineering and*** agriculture exceeded ***80 percent***.

Higher education

Different objectives and directions

- The forerunner of Chulalongkorn University (CU) was the *Royal Pages School*, established in 1902.
- The aim was to provide a general education with emphasis on training in ***government administration***.
- The CU engineering school was established in 1913 (36 years after Japan).

Changes in Japan's pattern of trade

- Japan's initial exports were mostly **primary products** such as raw silk, **tea**, and marine products.
- **Heckscher-Ohlin theorem** states that countries will **export** products that **intensively utilize** their **abundant** factors of production and **import** products that require the countries' **scarce** factors of production.
- What is the rational behind the H-O theory?

Fifty years after trading opening, Japan's imports turned into exports; exports became imports

- ***Domestic manufactures*** soon started substituting for imports of light industries and eventually became export industries.
- By 1914, Japan started exporting former import products: cotton yarn and cloth (manufactured goods).
- ***Primary commodities***: Cotton, sugar, soybeans and petroleum were major imports.

Dynamism of the Japanese economy was demonstrated by her changing trade pattern

- when prices of manufactured products increased relative to primary products, Japan benefited substantially from the improvement in the ***terms of trade*** (P_x / P_m)
- ***Favorable*** terms of trade led to export-led growth in Japan
- Alas, this was not the case for Siam, because there was no change in relative factor endowments.

3. *Economic Change in Thailand*, 1850-1970,

- James C. Ingram (1971) *Economic Change in Thailand*, 1850-1970, Stanford University Press
- The first version of this book was published in 1955, based on Ingram's doctoral dissertation submitted to Cornell University in 1952.

Chakri Dynasty: Historical Background

- Rama IV: King **Mongkut** (1851-68) 17 years
- Rama V: King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910)
42 years
- Rama VI: King Vajiravuhd (1910-1925) 15 years
- Rama VII : King Pracjadipok (1925-1935) 10 years
Abdicated the throne, ending the regime of absolute monarchy.
- Rama VIII: King Ananda-Mahidon (1935-46) 11 years
- Rama IX: King Bhumiphol (1946-2016) **70 years**

Ingram: Chapter 1

- Since the beginning of the Chakri dynasty, Thailand has had a period of peace.
- The British conquest of Burma removed the major source of conflict between *Siam and Burma*, but the decline of the **old enemy** in the west was soon followed by the rise of a new one in the east.
- The worst crisis came in 1893 when French gunboats forced their way up to the Cho Praya River and French troops occupied Chandaburi province in the east.
- By 1907, Thailand had lost 80,000 square miles of territory due to French colonial aspirations.

Buffer state and Siam's independence

- The British desire to keep Thailand as a ***buffer state*** between **British and French** possession in Asia, together with British interest in the trade with Bangkok (then 70 percent in British hands) was largely responsible for the use of British diplomacy **to preserve the independence** of Thailand.
- King ***Mongkut*** (Rama IV) came to the throne in **1851**, with the conviction that Siam must learn to live with the Western nations if she was to survive as an independent nation.

The Bowring Treaty: **1855**

- The treaty was signed in 1855, when British subjects were placed under ***consular jurisdiction***, rather than under the jurisdiction of Siamese law.
- For the first time, Siam granted extraterritoriality to aliens.
- British subjects were given ***the right to trade freely*** in all seaports and to reside permanently in Bangkok (no more king's trade monopoly).

Details of the treaty

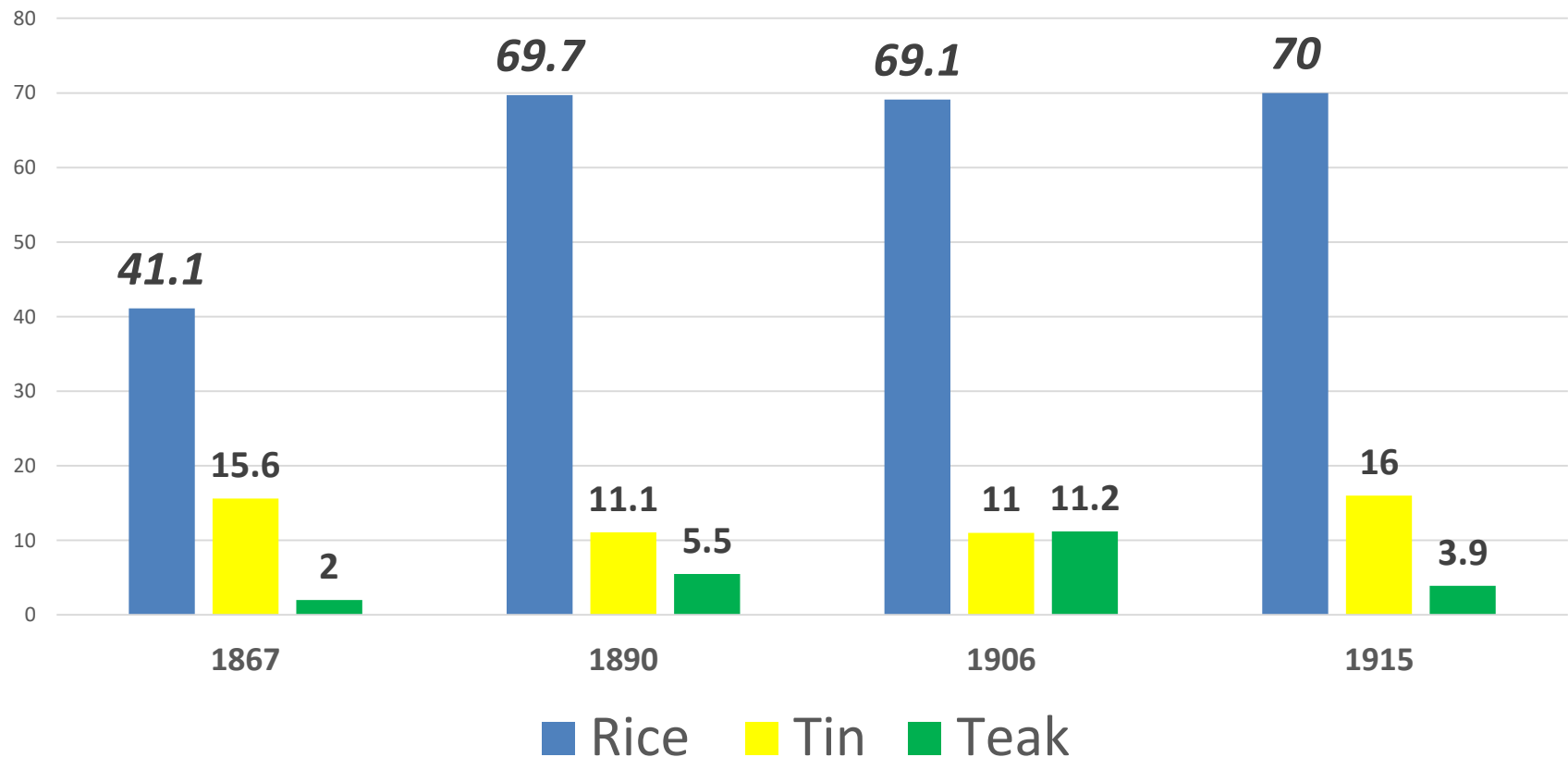
- Import duty was fixed at **3** percent for all articles, with two exceptions: **opium and gold** bullion were to be **free of duty**.
- Articles of **exports were to be taxed just once**, whether the tax was called an inland tax, a transit duty, or an export duty.
- The Siamese government reserved the right to prohibit the export of **salt, rice, and fish** whenever these articles were deemed to be scarce.

Forced by the West, Siam abruptly opened her trade sector to other western countries and Japan

- The Bowring treaty set a pattern which other countries were quick to follow with *similar treaties* with Siam.
- ***USA in 1856, France 1856 (just a year after the British)***
- Denmark 1858, Portugal 1859
- Netherlands 1860, Germany 1862
- Italy 1868, Spain 1870
- Japan 1898, Russia 1899 (almost 50 years after the British)

Impact of trade opening: specialization in rice production

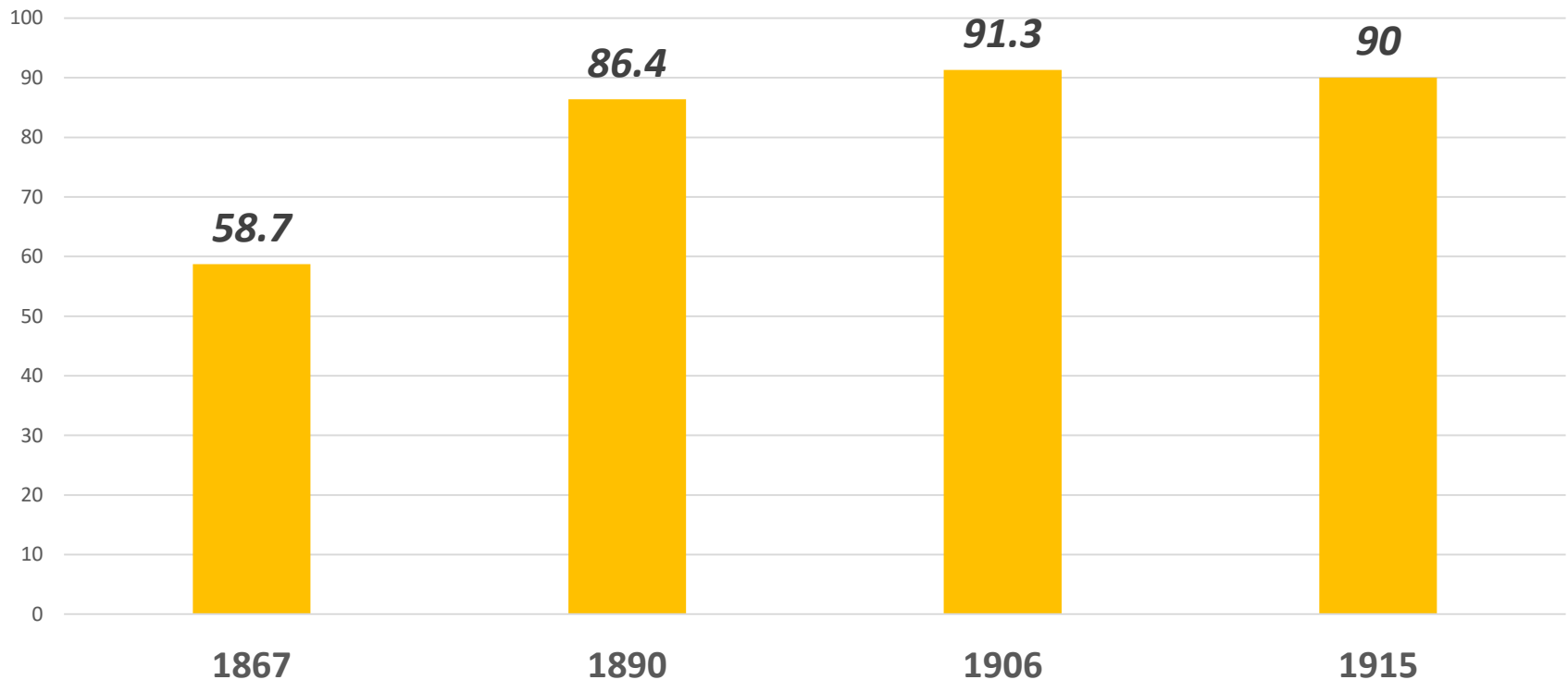
Shares of three primary commodities
(percent of total exports)

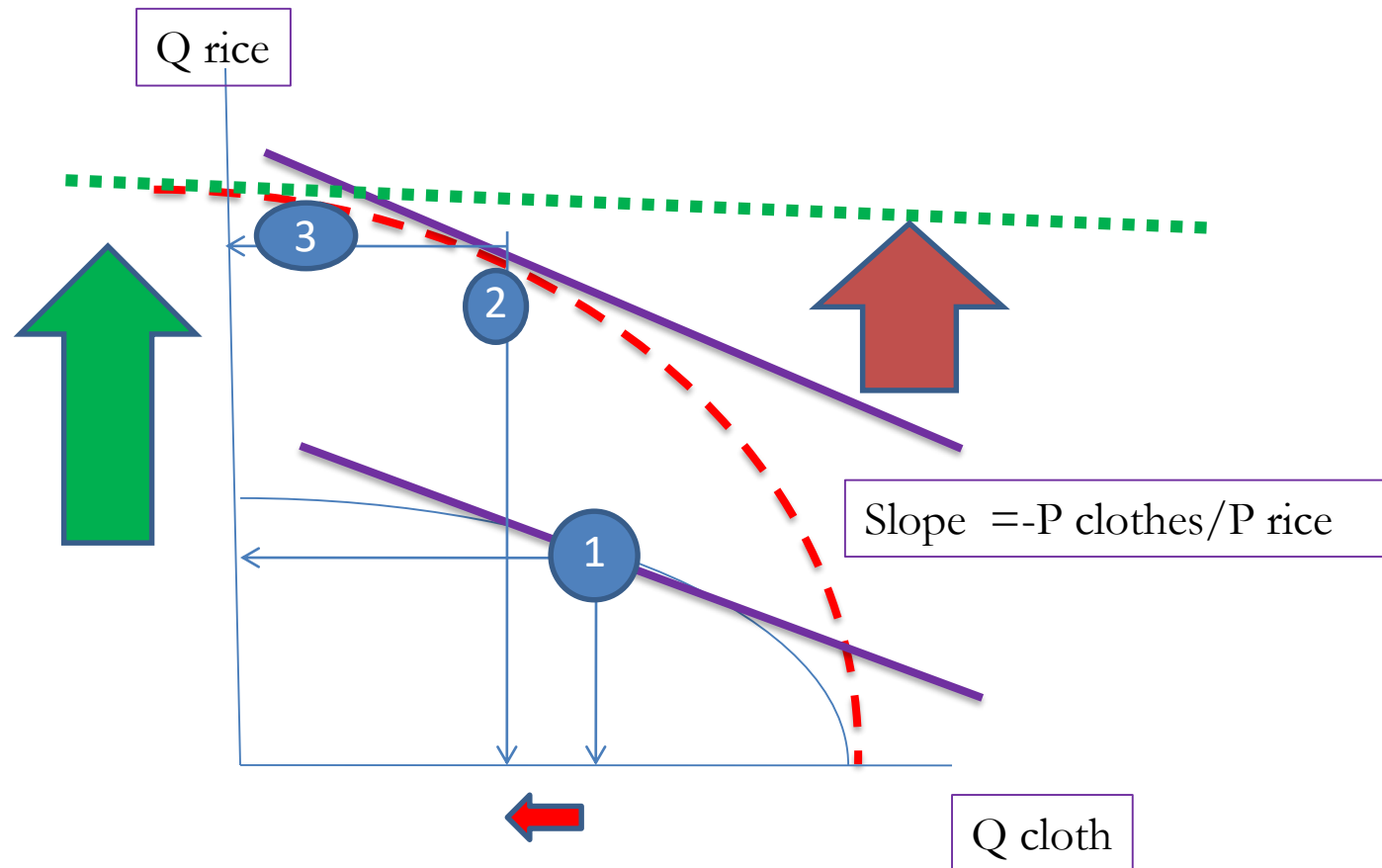


Why had not this pattern of trade changed until the 1960s?

Concentration of primary exports

Top 3 primary commodity exports
(percent of total exports)





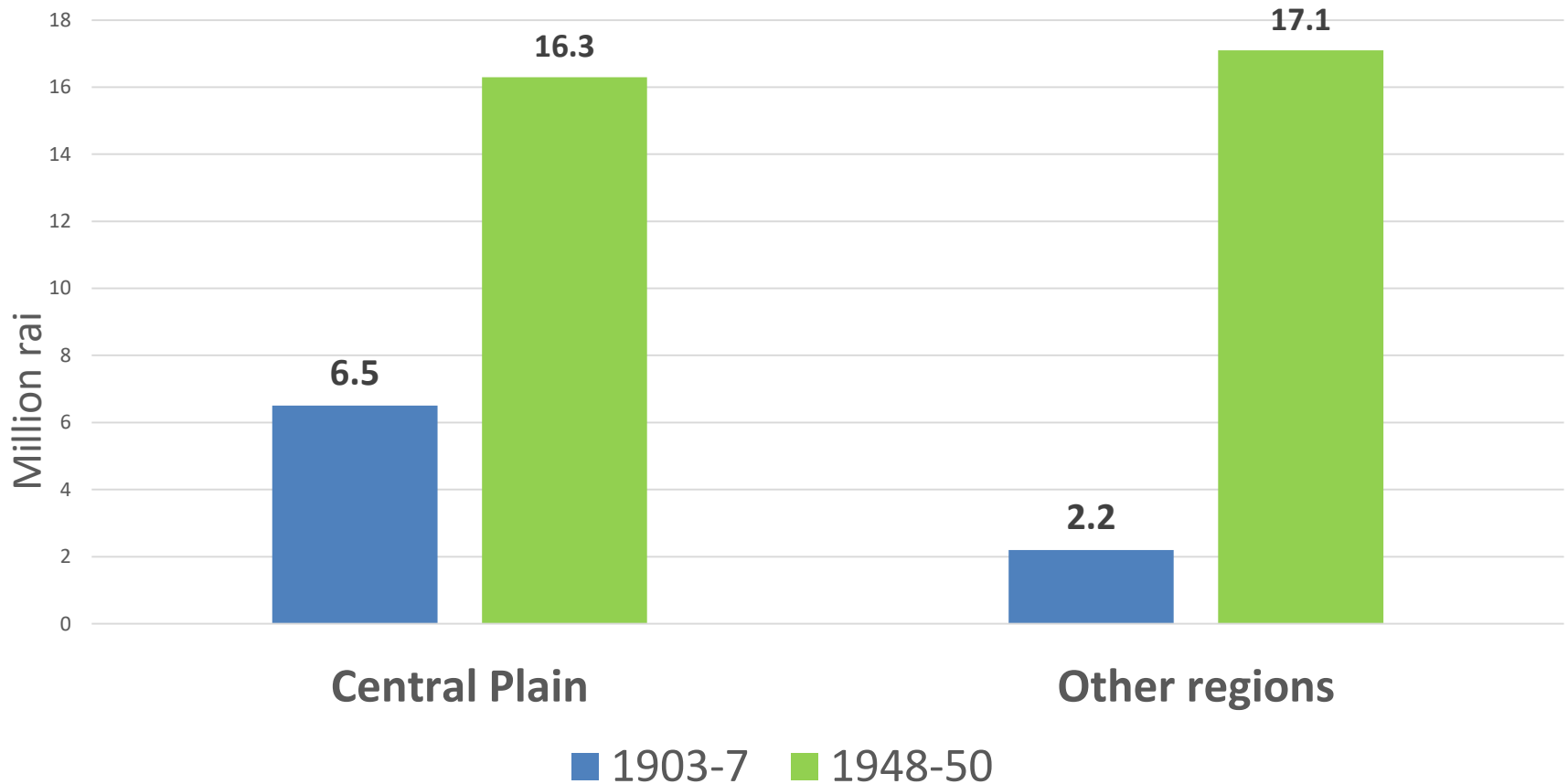
An increase in supply of land (reduction in forest areas) shifts the PPC *disproportionately* outward in the direction of rice production.

Production of cloth actually declines, given that the relative price of cloth remains unchanged.

When rice export prices increased, there would be further forest encroachment.

Paddy planted areas expanded

(rai = 0.4 acre)



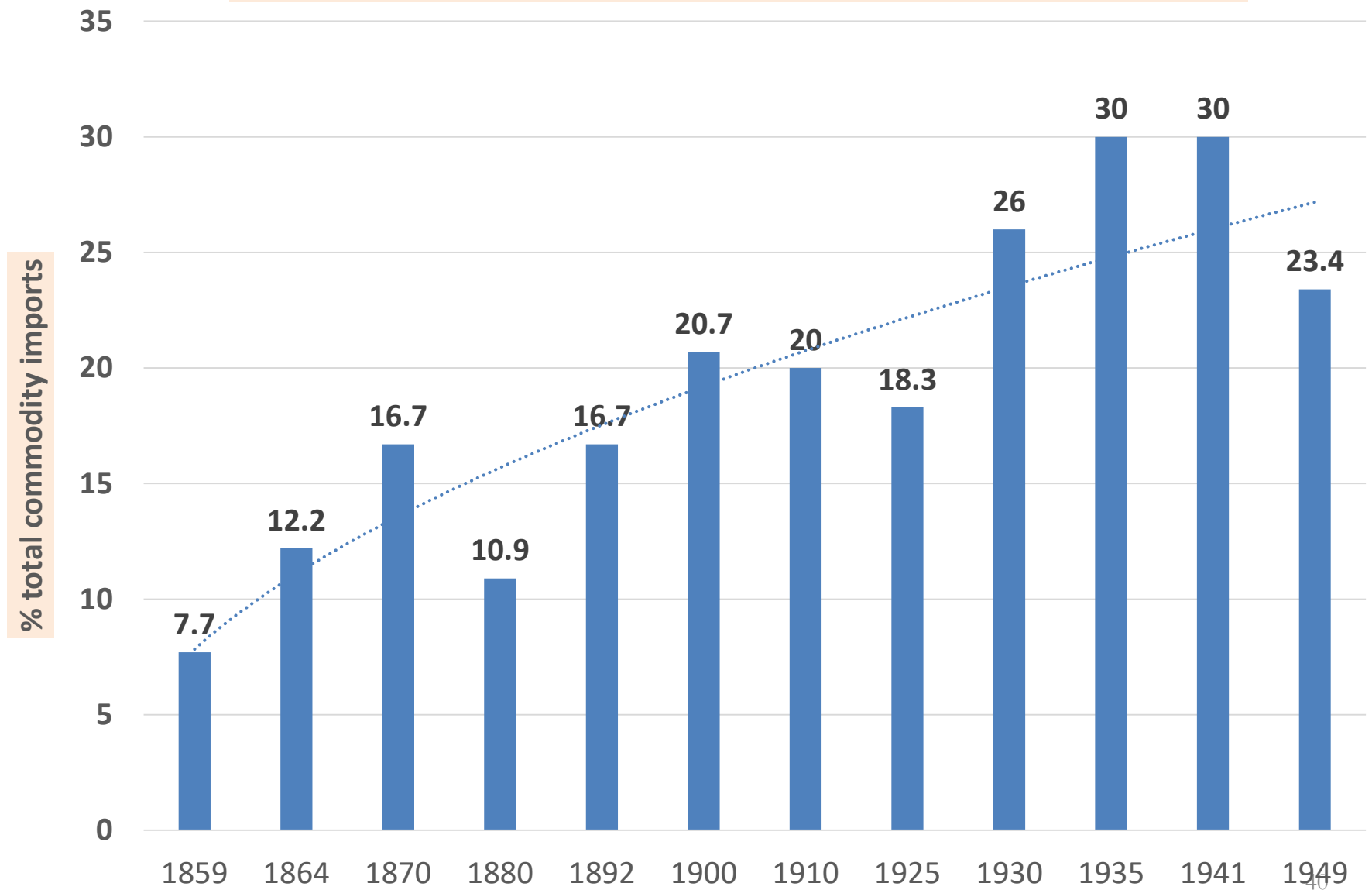
Early trade pattern

- Textiles: silk and cotton were exported in small quantity from Bangkok.
- The production of cloth was a slow, painful process. Tools and equipment were primitive. The yield of raw cotton and silk was low because of plant diseases, insects and poor strains.
- The finished product was coarse and expensive, though strong and durable. The local dyes were somber and ***less appealing*** than the bright colors of the imported clothes.
- The Thais were eager to buy the cheaper, if less durable, foreign cloth.
- That was the death knell of Thailand's local textile industry.

Imported capital and consumer goods

- In 1929, imports of *textile, yarns, kerosene, and canned milk* were widely consumed by two million people,
- While *imported items of high values* such as *canned fruit, confectionary, and biscuits* were consumed by only 10,000 customers in foreign community, including Europeans, *upper-income Thais*.
- *Low tariff policy accounted for the increase in imported capital goods* since 1926, while government imports of machinery and equipment for railways and irrigation works accounted for the long run increase.

Imported Capital Goods: railways and irrigation equipment
Source: Ingram (p.129)



Thailand's trade pattern in 1950

- The nature of her imports and their relation to the economy gives Thailand an extremely **high income-elasticity of demand for imports**, which in turn is a major reason why she has been able to consistently maintain *a strong balance of trade*.
- *When export falls, thus reducing incomes, imports tend to fall immediately* in the same degree.
- Since **Thailand normally had an export surplus**, from 1850 to 1950, this adjustment process acted to preserve that position even when exports declined sharply.”
- Source: Ingram's Chapter 6, p. 128

Gainers and losers from trade

- **Stolper-Samuelson theorem:** *A rise in the relative price of a good will lead to **a rise** in the return to that factor which is used most **intensively** in the production of the good, and conversely, to **a fall** in the return to the other factor.*
- Because rice is a land-intensive product, **land lords** gained from rising rent as the export price of rice went up sharply.
- Trade openness redistributed income from rice farmers to land owners.

Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792)

- The sandwich was named after him; however, the story that ties the origin of the name to a specific incident in 1762 in which Sandwich (according to an account in a French travel book) spent 24 hours at a gaming table without other food is widely thought to be apocryphal.

David Ricardo: The political economy of the ***corn laws*** (England , 1804)

- Corn Laws were introduced in Britain in 1804 to protect domestic farmers against foreign competition by the imposition of a heavy duty on foreign grains.
- They were beneficial to farmers and landlords but caused staple food shortages in industrial towns and impoverished rural areas.
- It was repealed in 1846.

Trade and development divergence

- The Meiji Restoration drastically *redistributed Japanese income* and provided opportunity for the private sector to grow.
- Development was enhanced by **subsidies** of early private factories (industrial promotion not protection) and a strong emphasis on **infrastructure** and **education**.
- ***The lack of infrastructure development retards Thailand's economic development.***

Development divergence between Siam and Japan

- The lack of serious efforts to learn from abroad to propagate knowledge domestically is another cultural factor.
- Given a contrast in initial conditions, institutional changes and policies, economic development divergence between Thailand and Japan emerged.

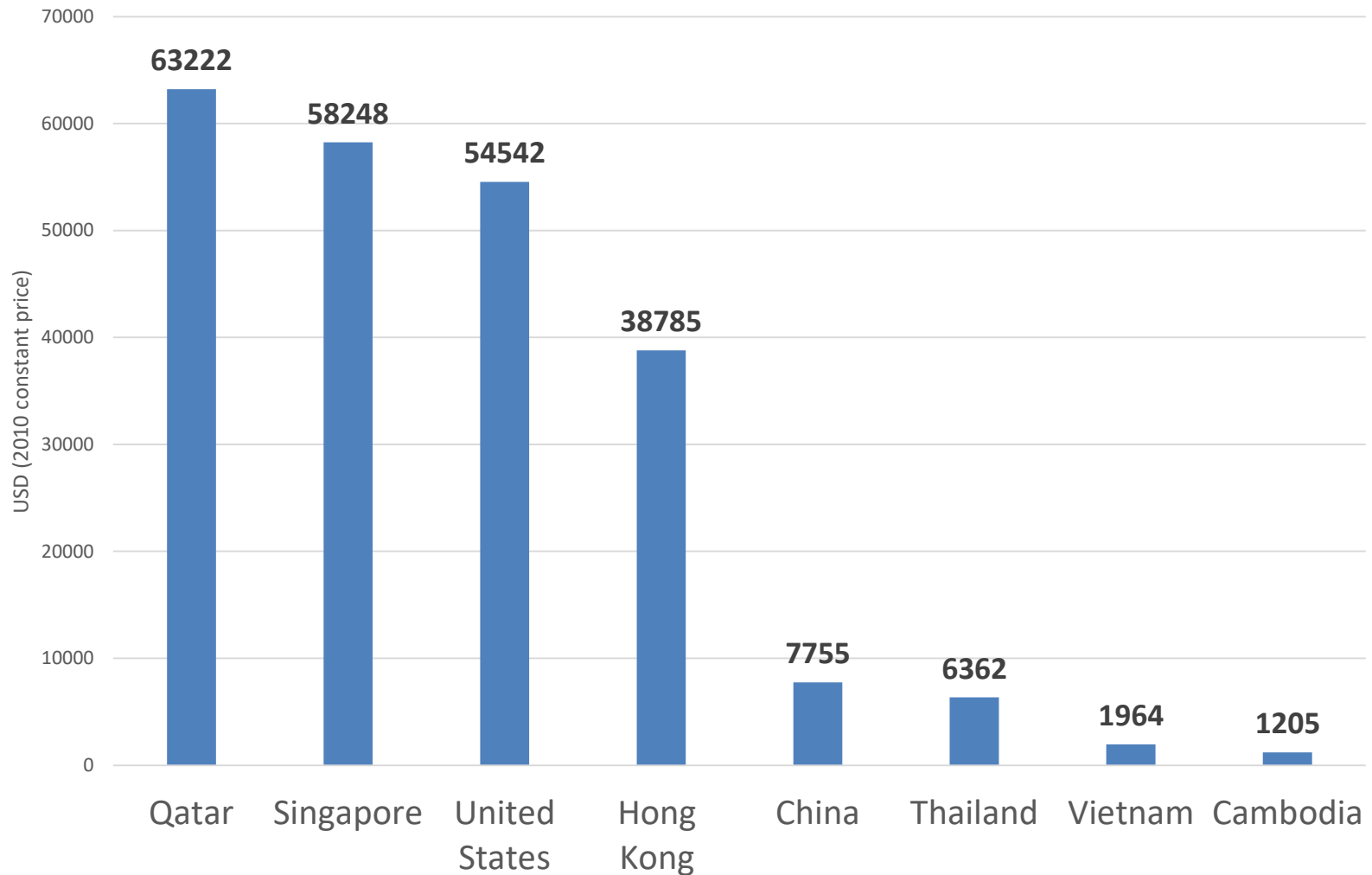
A resource-cursed country?

- The **abundant** supply of land *may* have retarded industrialization, with lagging technical progress in both industry and agriculture.
- Was Siam a ***resource-cursed*** economy?
- What are discernable factors remaining until these days?

4. Determination of Growth Process

- Why is there a spectacular income gap between the world's rich and poor nations?
- Average income of Sierra Leone is one hundred times ***lower*** than that in Luxembourg.

GDP percap (2018)



In Search of Prosperity

Dani Rodrik (2003)

What do we learn from country narratives?

- Rodrik had a cursory look at the cross-national record of the last few decades
- There are **deeper determinants** of economic performance beyond **economic variables** (such as physical and human capital and price distortions).
- Rodrik provide answers to these questions:
- How has China managed to grow so rapidly despite the absence of full-fledged private property right?
- What happened in India after the early 1980s to lift its growth rate by three percentage points?

Explain why countries have different growth paths

- How have Mauritius and Botswana managed to avoid problems that other countries in sub-Saharan Africa have succumbed to?
- Why did **Brazil** and **Venezuela** do so well until the early 1980s and so poorly thereafter?
- Why did Venezuela continue to stagnate despite a sharp improvement in their fundamentals since the 1980s? What has gone wrong with Venezuela?
- *Is Venezuela a resource cursed country?*

Determination of economic growth

- Total output is a function of resource **endowments**(labor, physical, human capital) and the **productivity** with which these endowments are deployed to produce GDP.
- In general, income growth stems from three channels:

Conventional determinants of economic growth

- (a) Physical capital deepening
- (b) Human capital accumulation
- (c) Productivity growth through innovation



$$y = f(K, L, \emptyset)$$

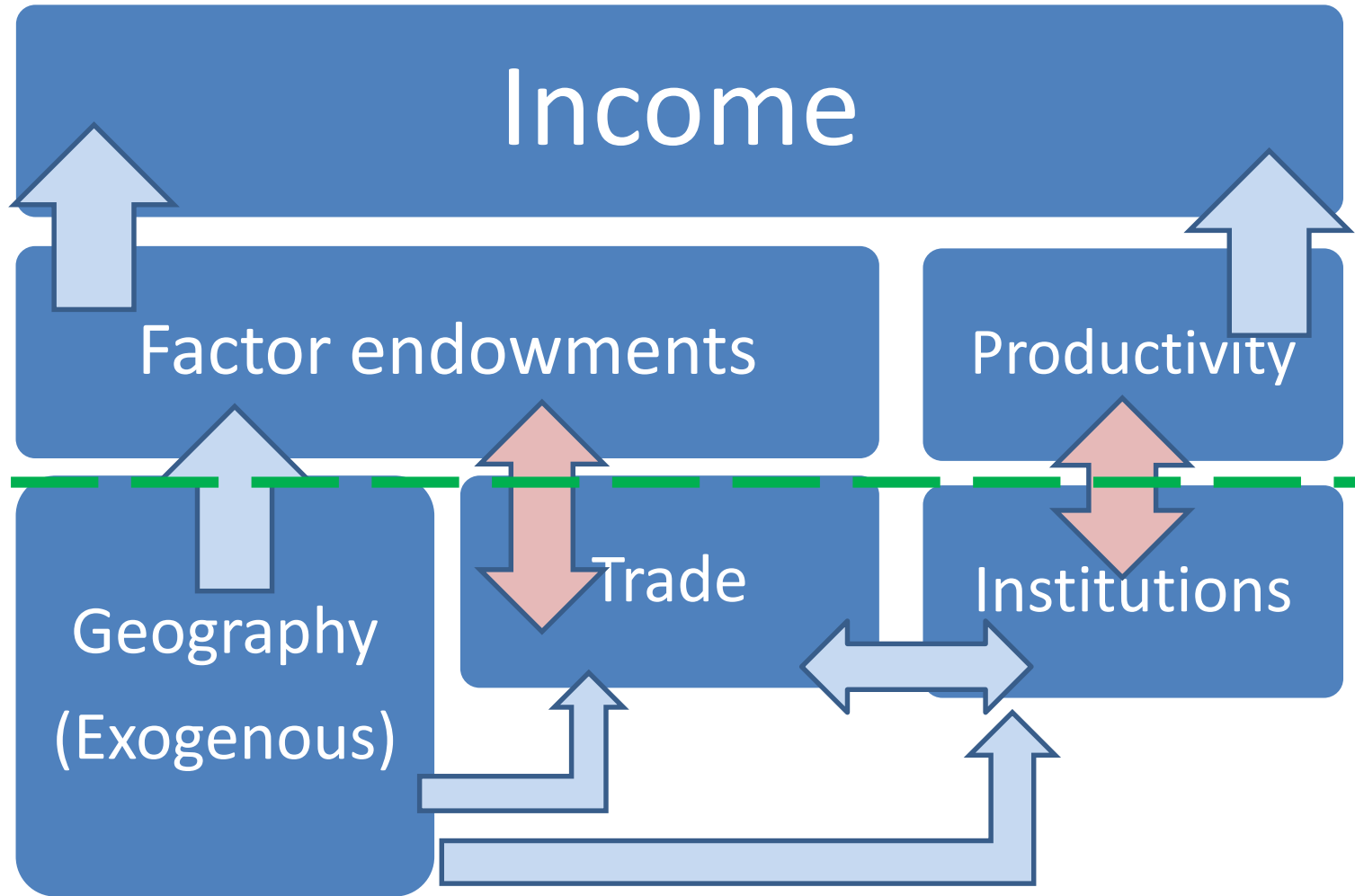
However, there are *deeper* determinants of growth than those three channels.

$$y = f(K, L, \emptyset) + \mathbf{3Zs}$$

Fundamental Determinants of Growth

- **(Z1) Geography:** advantages and disadvantages posed by a country's physical location (latitude, proximity to navigable waters, climate), but geography is ***not*** destiny.
- **(Z2) Trade (Integration):** market size and the benefits of participation in international trade in goods, services, capital, and labor.
- **(Z3) Quality institutions:** quality of formal and informal sociopolitical arrangement—from legal system to political institutions.

Dani Rodrick: All growth economics on one page



Third richest country in the world: Singapore (\$90,530)

Third poorest country in the world: Burundi (\$814 per capita per year)

Partial correlations between income and fundamental determinants

- Distance from the equator (geography)
- Trade integration (weaker correlation)
- Rodrik argued that trade or government policy toward trade are *not as important as* the **institutional setting or quality of institutions** (strong correlation)

The most important determinant

- Good institutions can **overcome** geographical constraints and poor initial conditions (Singapore).
- ***Good institutions can be acquired***, but doing so often requires experimentation, willingness to depart from orthodoxy and attention to **local conditions** (*one size does not fit all*).
- The onset of economic growth **does not** require **deep and extensive institutional reform**, but it **does later on**.
- And that explains why Thailand's growth has slowed down since the 2006 coup.

Characteristics of good institutions

- Good institutions provide *public officials with the incentives* to provide market-fostering public goods at *least cost* in *terms of corruption and rent-seeking*.
- Good institutions ensure property rights, appropriate regulatory structures, the quality and *independence of the judiciary* and bureaucratic capacity.

Quality of institutions is the key to foster growth

- Institutions that provide dependable property rights, ***manage conflict***, maintain **law and order**, and ***align*** economic incentives with ***social costs and benefits*** are the foundation of long-term growth.
- ***Sustaining high growth*** in the face of adverse circumstances requires ***stronger*** institutions ever.

The number speaks for itself

	Thailand	Japan
Population	66.6 m	126 m
Ministries	22	12
Ministers	36	18
Civil servants	2,000,000	500,000
Rural officials	400,000	3,000,000

To recap

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3. Economic changes in Thailand: 1850-1970
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Main Conclusions

- Trade and economic prosperity are related.
- Siam and Japan differed in their paths of early economic development because of **quality of institutions** *and development policy*.
- Economic changes in Thailand in the period 1850-1970 were engineered by trade opening.
- Fundamental determinants of strong growth include high quality of institutions