

Assignment 1: Presentation

The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development:
An Empirical Investigation **Acemoglu et al. (2001)**

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Research Question and Data

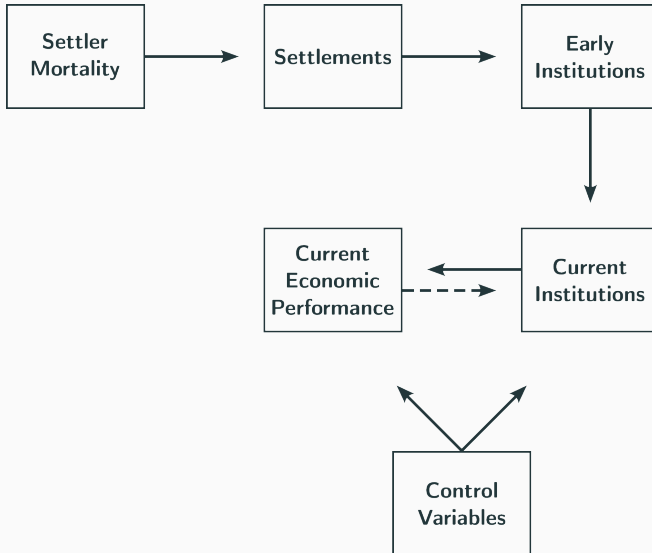
Do differences in **institutional quality**, measured through European mortality rate, explain the variation in **economic performance** across countries?

- **GDP per capita (1995):** log GDP per capita, PPP-adjusted from World Bank.
- **Protection against expropriation (1985-1995):** scale 0-10, higher score = less risk. From Political Risk Services.
- **European settler mortality:** log of deaths per 1000 European settlers¹, largely compiled from Curtin (1964, 1968, 1998) and Gutierrez (1986).
- **Control variables:** geography/climate, colonial history, natural resources, disease environment, etc.

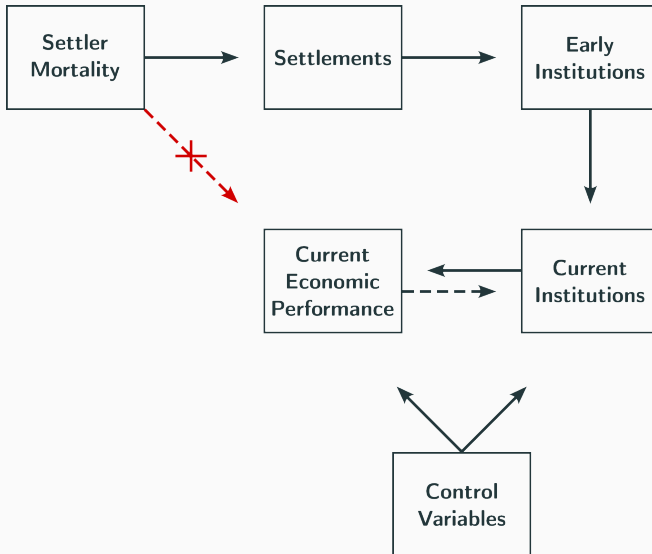
¹soldiers, bishops and sailors stationed in colonies between XVII and XIX centuries

Assumptions

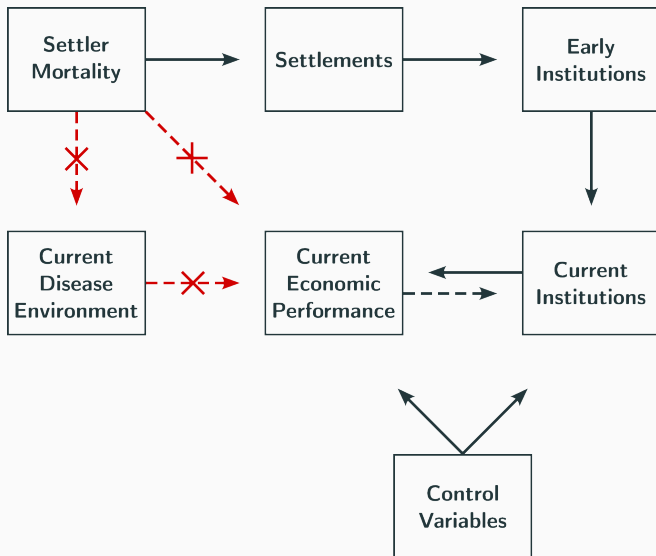
Key Assumptions



Key Assumptions



Possible Violations



Critical Assessment

- **Strength:** Statistical robustness
- **Economically relevant:** Institutional reform can result in significant increase in economic performance
- **External validity:** Mixed between colonies and non-colonies
- **Improvements:** Analyze decolonization process

Thank you!

References

Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. **“The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation”**. In: *American Economic Review* 91.5 (Dec. 2001)