**Debate Question**

*The authors of this book argue that institutions matter more than cultural factors in explaining global inequality. Do you agree?*

**Topic 1: Christian Ethics, Human Rights, and Economic Growth**

* **Background**
  + Christian ethics introduced ideas such as **natural rights (God-given human rights)** and **freedom of the individual**.
  + These principles influenced the abolition of slavery and the rise of democratic institutions.
* **Discussion Points**
  + Did Christian ethics provide a **cultural foundation** for stronger institutions that supported economic growth?
  + Or did **inclusive institutions** themselves allow these ethical values to spread more effectively?
  + How can we separate the role of **culture** (ethics, beliefs) from the role of **institutions** (laws, constitutions, governance structures)?

**Topic 2: Communism and the Role of Institutions vs. Poverty**

* **Background**
  + The Communist Revolution **failed in England** but **succeeded in Russia**.
  + England had stronger political and economic institutions that resisted radical change.
  + Russia’s weaker institutions and widespread poverty created fertile ground for revolution.
* **Discussion Points**
  + Was it the **weakness of institutions** that caused communism to succeed in Russia?
  + Or did **poverty and inequality (economic conditions)** drive the creation of institutions that supported communism?
  + Can we say that **institutions shape economic destiny**, or do **economic struggles reshape institutions**?