

econgeo 2022



Bernhard Fuhrer

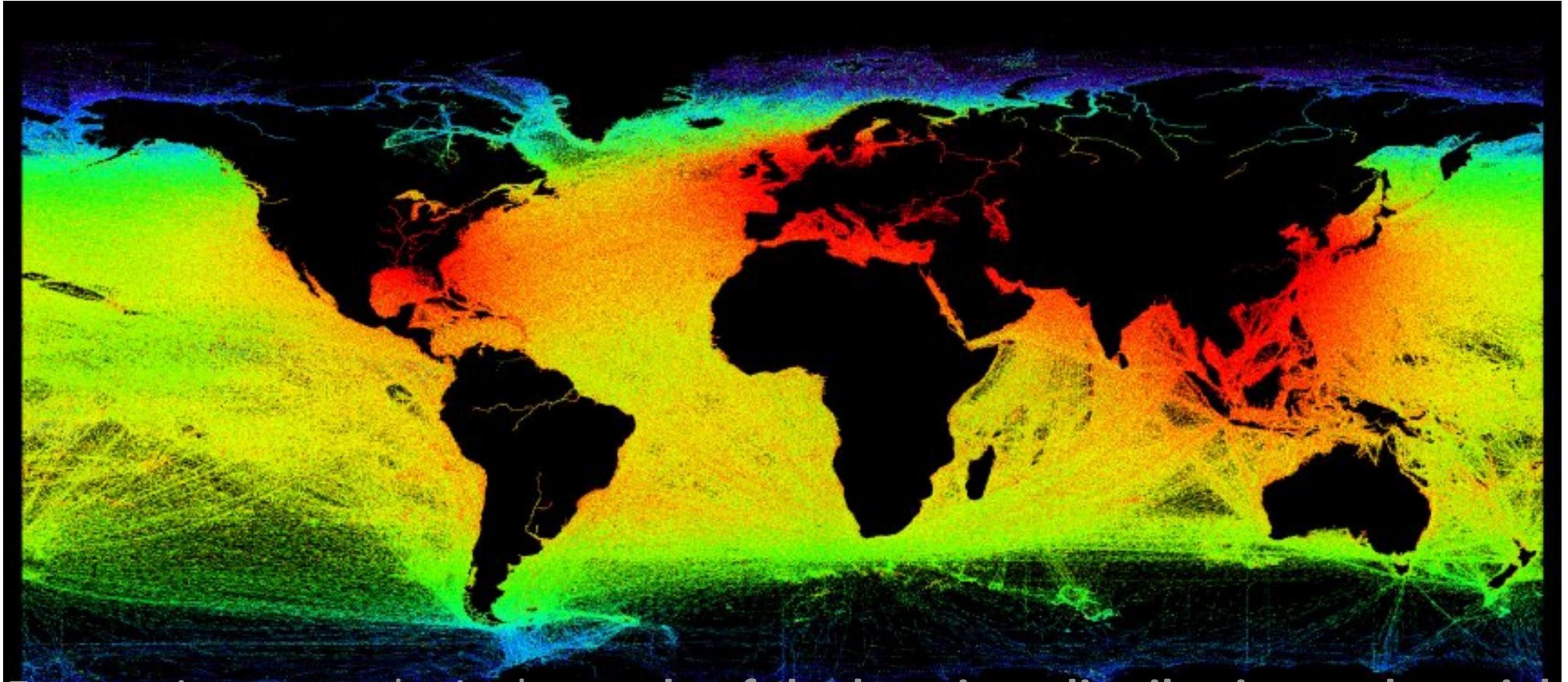
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 @SNISGeneva

Goals for today / program

- Have a notion of what economic geography means in this course (slide 3)
- Get to know each other / state expectations (slide 4)
- Understand the course learning goals / structure of the course (slide 5)
- Know how the exam works (slide 7 & 8)
- Free book of the week; Steven Pinker, Enlightenment now (slide 9)
- Take a perception test (slide 11)
- Read short texts and discuss them (slide 12)
- Watch a disquieting film and guess what it has to do with the course (slide 14 & mini homework)

What is shown on this map?



Economic geography is the study of the location, distribution and spatial organisation of economic activities across the world

Get to know each other

- Me:
 - Interested in economics but not in studying economics
 - After masters in geography (on segregation in Belfast) PhD in economic geography focusing on biotechnology clusters
 - During my time as lecturer in Bern conversion to macro- and radical geography. Interested in
 - origins and dynamics of uneven development
 - Capitalism in its different forms across the globe
- You:
 - Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and enter code 7314 4659 (check for validity) and answer three questions
 - What are you passionate about? (Max 3 replies, does not have to do anything with this course!)
 - State of the world? (10 years ago, 10 years from now)
 - What economic topics interest you?



Course Learning Goals

1. Understand **basic concepts of economic geography** (location theories, value chains, regional innovation systems, institutional and evolutionary theories, varieties of capitalism)
2. Discover and analyse **manifestations and driving forces of socio- and spatio-economic inequalities** (inequality measurements, drivers of inequality, origins and development of financial crisis 2008)
3. Understand **the link between the monetary system, capitalism and sustainability**
4. **(Exam)** Carry out a small research project on a self-chosen subject possibly even in the form of a short film!

Moodle / PowerPoints

- Moodle

- Please enrol in course “GG.0210 Géographie économique SP22” with the key ‘Econgeo2022’ : <https://moodle.unifr.ch/course/view.php?id=266216>

- Language / PowerPoints

- the lecture is in French, but I answer German questions in German
- the PowerPoint slides are available in pdf Format before the lecture
- the slides are in English so nobody is disadvantageded

Exam = written article on topic of your choice (4-6 pages)

- Reminder: 3 ECTS=75-90h work; lectures = 28h; **available for study: 50h**
- Your exam = individual article based on group work
 - at least 1500 words long (max. 2000 words)
 - Incl. bibliography (bibliography not counted in minimum words above)
- Two sample exams and their evaluation
 - Elise Moraz et Camille Thiébaud
 - Very different subjects (système circulaire de consommation, Le bois en tant que tournant écologique)
 - High investment due to personal interest
 - (C.f histogram) Exceptionally high grades on average
 - Practice run for bachelor paper

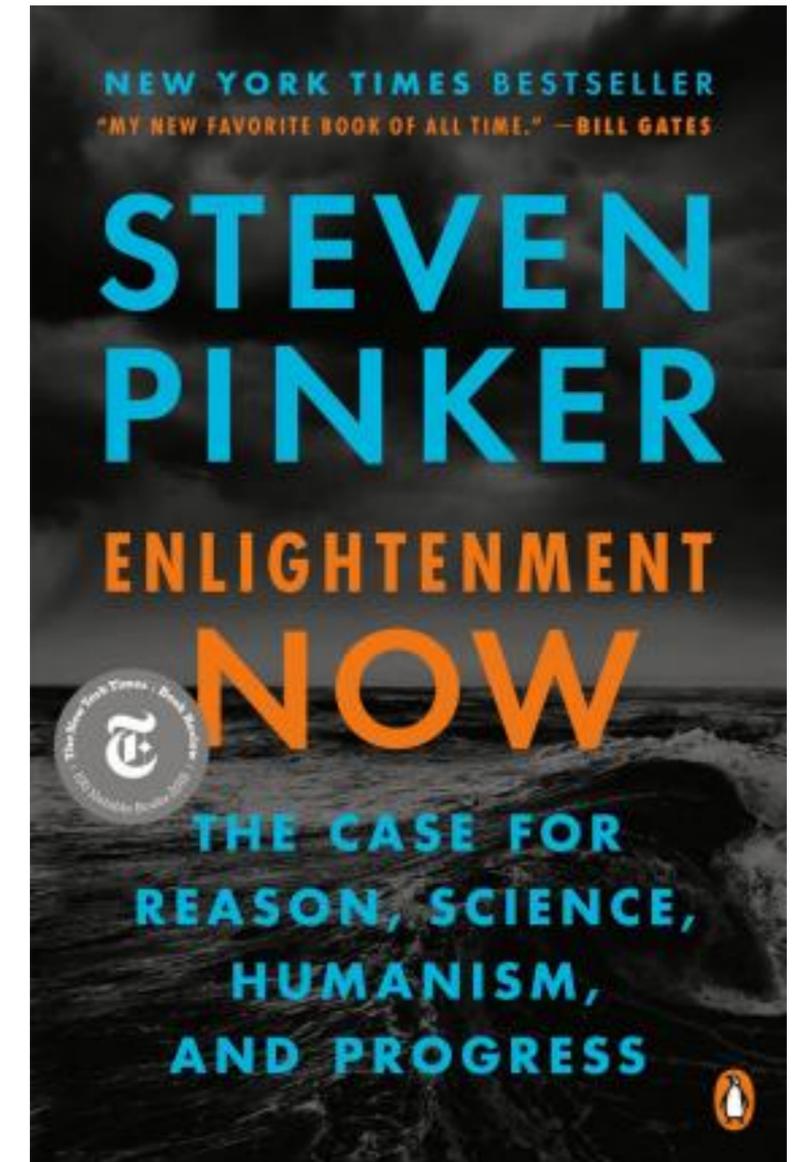
Camille Thiébaud - Le bois en tant que tournant écologique



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShaOM9yg6-k>

Free book of the week

- Steven Pinker - Enlightenment now
 - The ideals of the Enlightenment are products of human reason, but they always struggle with other strands of human nature: loyalty to tribe, deference to authority, magical thinking, the blaming of misfortune on evildoers. The second decade of the 21st century has seen the rise of political movements that depict their countries as being pulled into a hellish dystopia by malign factions that can be resisted only by a strong leader who wrenches the country backward to make it “great again.”



Free book of the week

- This book is my attempt to restate the ideals of the Enlightenment in the language and concepts of the 21st century...The bulk of the book is devoted to defending those ideals in a distinctively 21st-century way: with data.
- What is enlightenment? In a 1784 essay with that question as its title, Immanuel Kant answered that it consists of “humankind’s emergence from its self-incurred immaturity,” its “lazy and cowardly” submission to the “dogmas and formulas” of religious or political authority. Enlightenment’s motto, he proclaimed, is “Dare to understand!” and its foundational demand is freedom of thought and speech.
- Available on Moodle (pdf): Have a look, have a read!
- Best book to counter Covid-19 gloom and pessimistic, dystopian view of the present & **great slogan for this course - DARE TO UNDERSTAND!**

Take a perception test!

- <http://forms.gapminder.org/s3/test-2018>
- No need to fill in the last page (contact info) if you don't want to
- All those who score less than 100% have an interest to stay in this course :-)

Discussion - state of the world

- Texts available on Moodle in the folder ‘le monde va-t-il bien?’
- Lecture (8’) suivi de discussion (10’)
 - Francophones: Lisez soit l’article “La nouvelle richesse du monde” soit l’article “les inégalités sont un choix politique” Si vous avez le temp cherchez d’autres sources concernant le thème
 - Deutschsprachige: Lesen Sie den Artikel “Soziale Ungleichheit - Superreiche täglich 2,5 Mrd. Dollar reicher – was bleibt für den Rest?” & recherchieren Sie weitere Quellen zum Thema
- Present the contents of the articles to your colleagues and explain why you agree / disagree. Explain what further sources you found (and how)

Economic Geography Basics

- Definition: **Economic geography is the study of the location, distribution and spatial organisation of economic activities across the world.**
- **Methods**
 - mostly **inductive approaches**: based on field work you observe reality and try to infer the mechanisms that are at play
 - this contrasts with deductive approaches that first postulate a mechanism and then try to test whether it can be verified or falsified

L'effondrement (J+5, la station service)

- <https://vimeo.com/510928259>



- Travail à rendre sur Moodle: Qu'est ce qui s'est passé le jour J et quel pourrait être le lien entre la vidéo et le cours 'géographie économique'? (max 200 mots)

- Leroy-Giraud, Albin. 2018. “La Nouvelle Richesse Du Monde.” *Sciences Humaines*, no. 300 (Février): 37–41.
- Les, Parasites. n.d. *L’effondrement - Ep2 - La Station Service*. Accessed January 18, 2020. <https://vimeo.com/510928259>.
- Oxfam, International. 2019. “Soziale Ungleichheit: Superreiche täglich 2,5 Mrd. Dollar reicher – was bleibt für den Rest?” Oxfam Deutschland. February 1, 2019. <https://www.oxfam.de/ueber-uns/aktuelles/2019-01-21-superreiche-taeglich-25-mrd-dollar-reicher-bleibt-rest>.
- Piketty, Thomas. 2020. “Thomas Piketty, ‘Les inégalités sont un choix politique.’” *Sciences Humaines*, no. 321 (January): 26–29.
- Pinker, Steven. 2019. *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*. Reprint Edition. Penguin Books.

Takeaway 1/14

- Economic geography is the **study of the location, distribution and spatial organisation of economic activities across the world**
- The course will have a **theoretical part (basics of economic geography)**, a practical part focusing on **inequalities** and a **system's part on capitalism**
- The exam will be a small research project on a self-i self-chosen subject in economic geography
- **We tend to see the world rather pessimistically** (c.f. gapminder test)
- **Rising inequalities and reduction of poverty seem to go hand in hand** (c.f. discussion of texts)