

# *Social Institutions of the Frontier*

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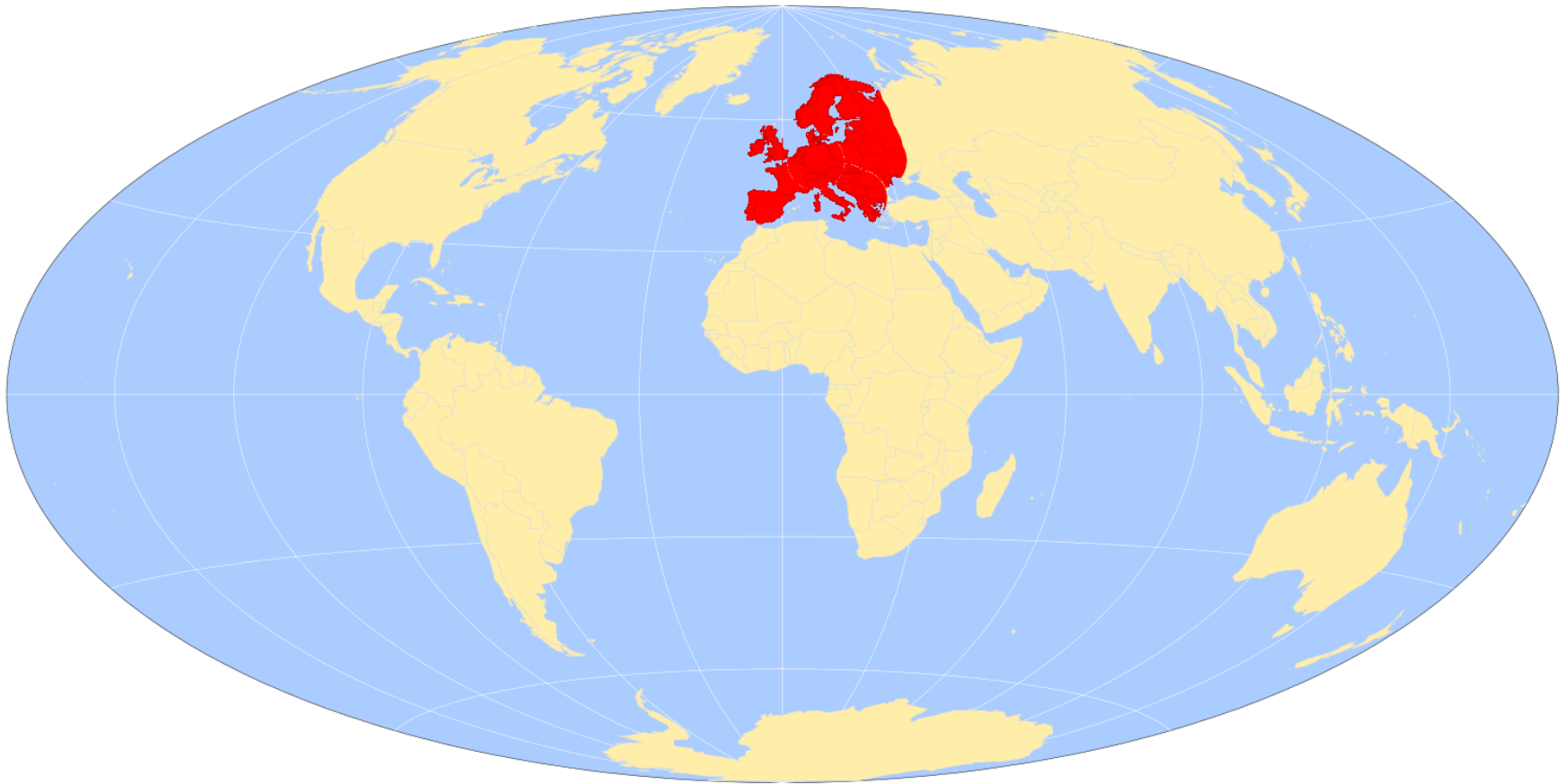
Higher School of Economics

- Copy of the paper:

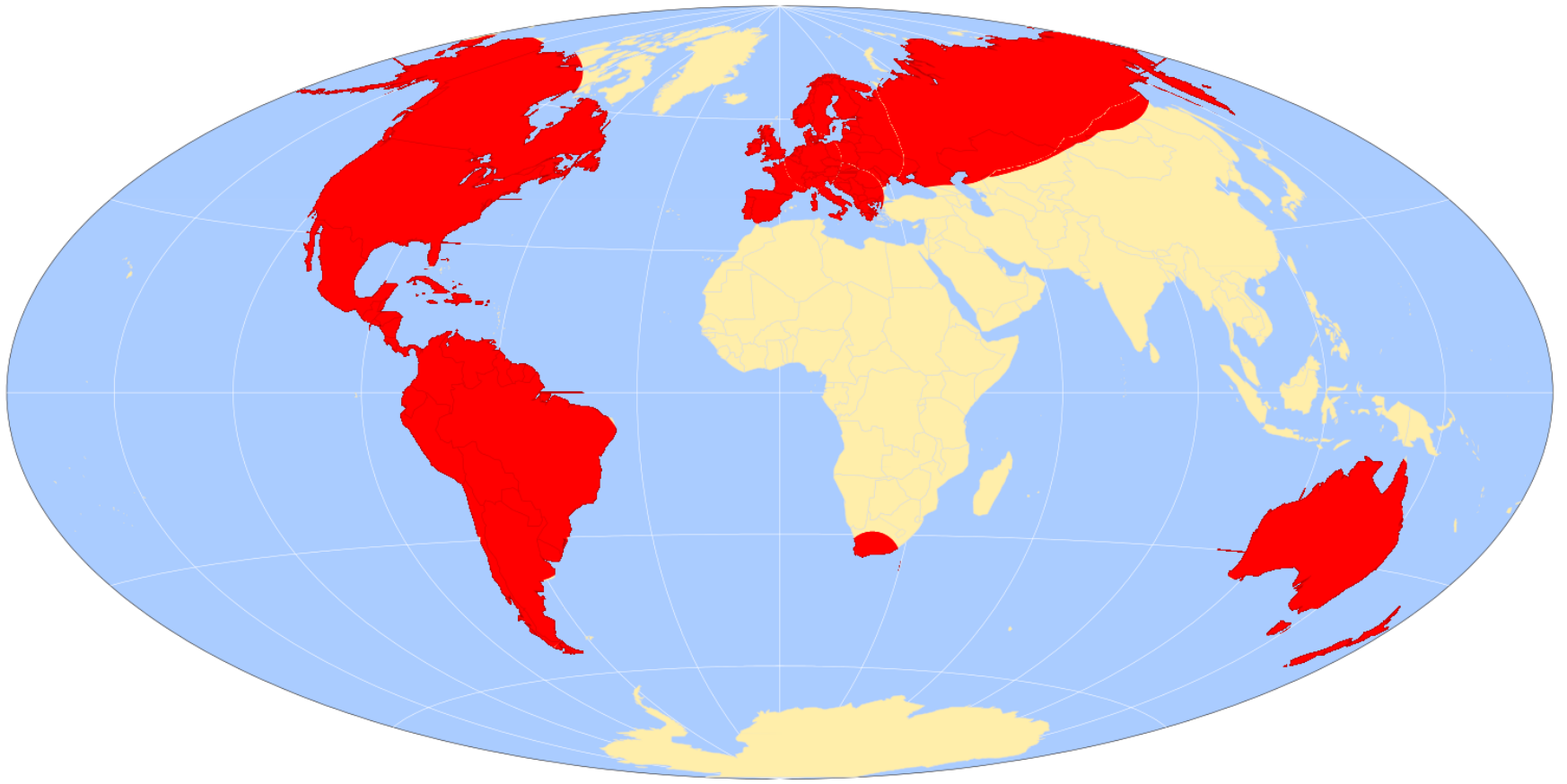
[www.papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2073331](http://www.papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2073331)

(Just google it e.g. 'Foa', 'Nemirovskaya', 'frontier', 'social')

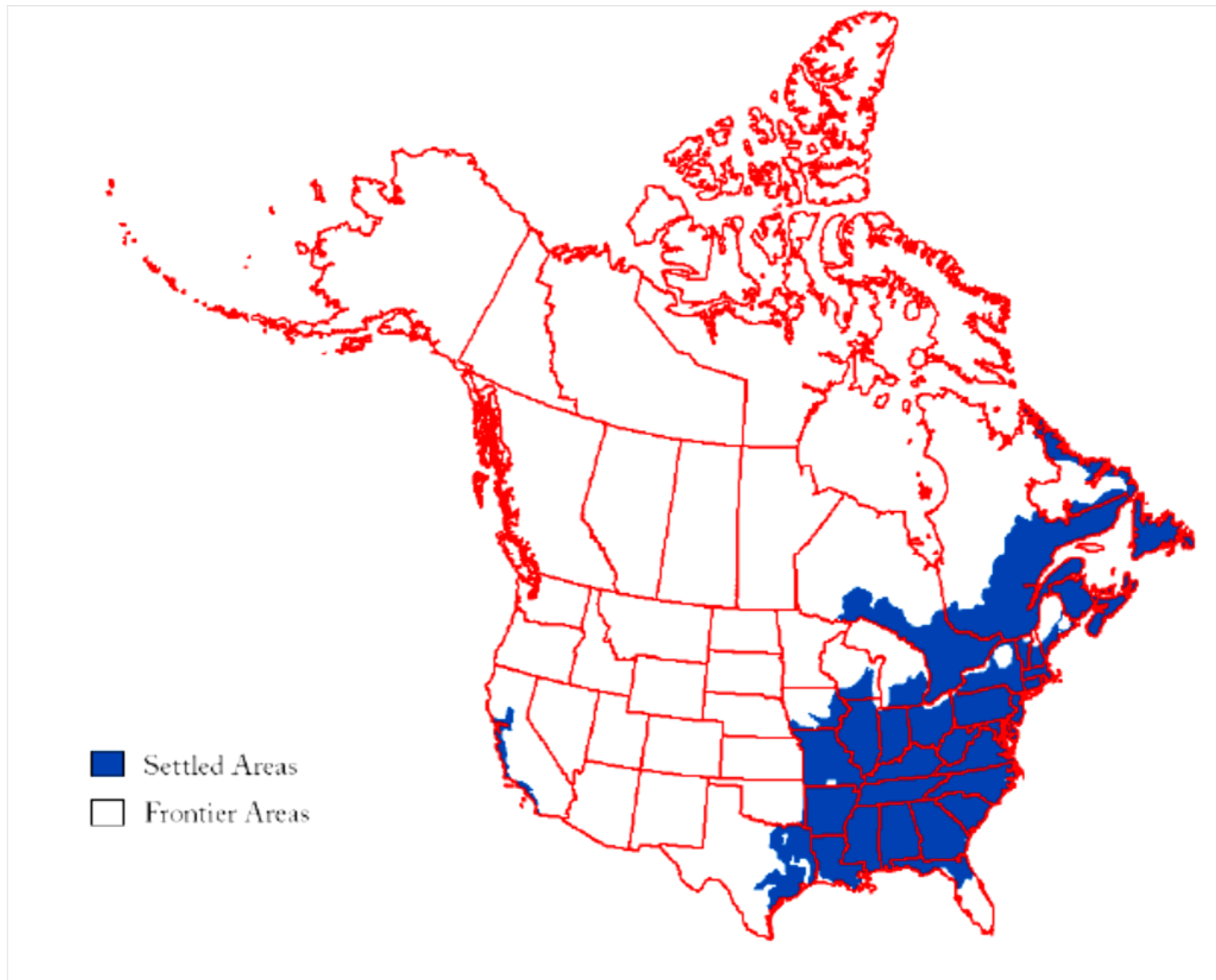
- 1491 – Europeans occupy 6.8% of world landmass



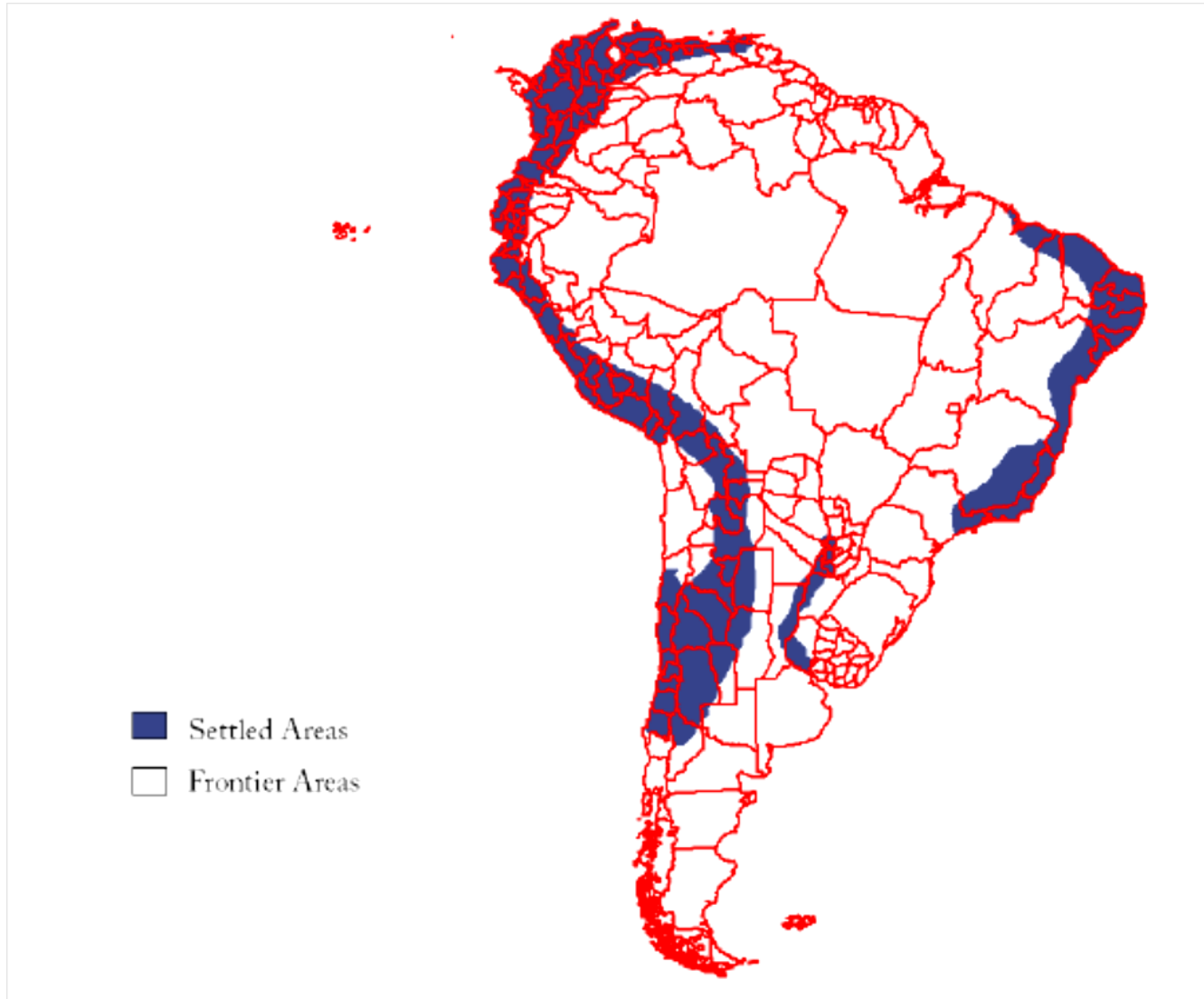
- 1891 – Europeans occupy 51.9% of world landmass



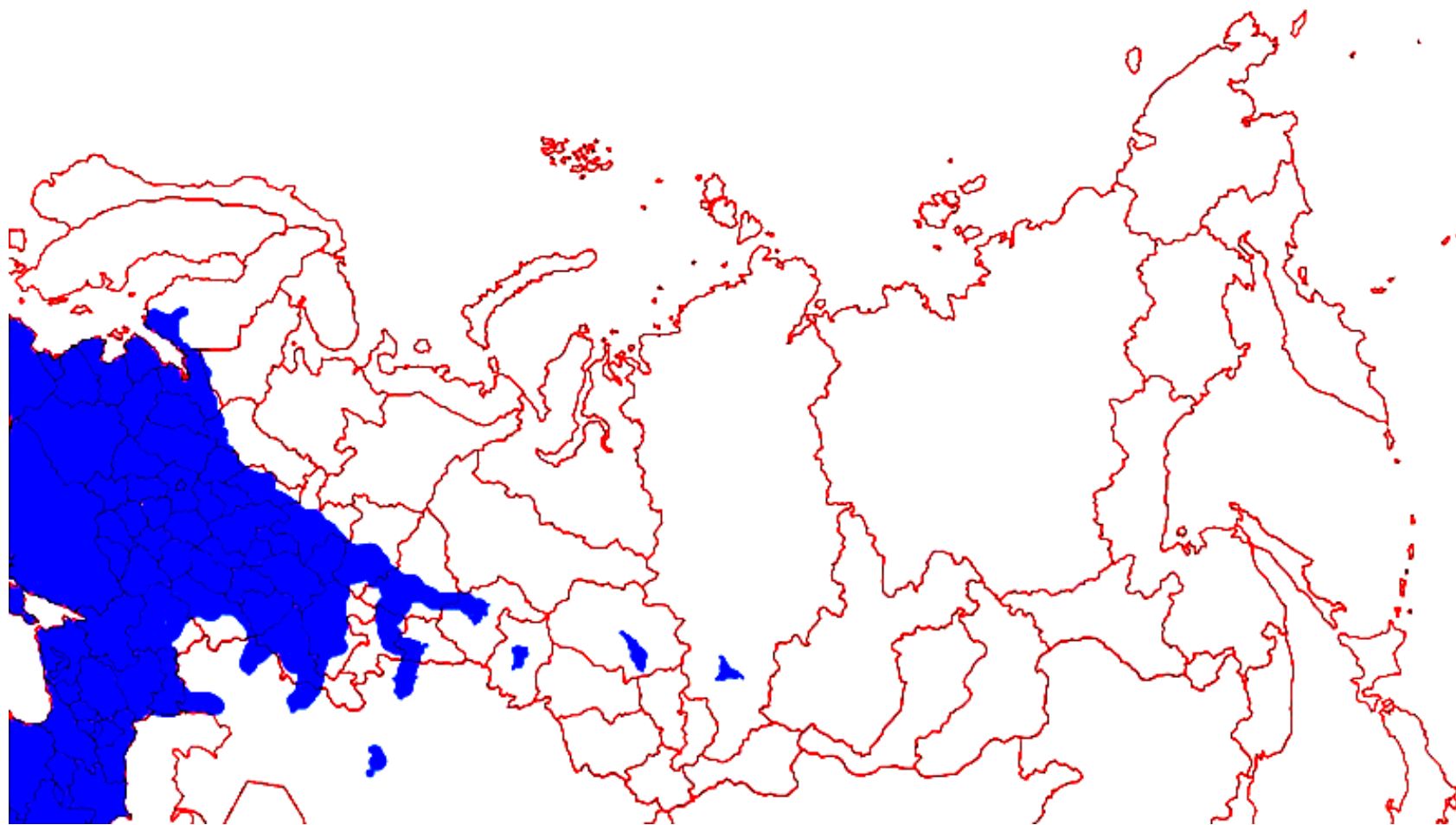
The Frontier in North America circa 1850  
(Source: Robinson and Garcia-Jimeno, 2009)



## The Frontier in South America circa 1850 (Source: Robinson and Garcia-Jimeno, 2009)



## The Frontier in Russia circa 1897



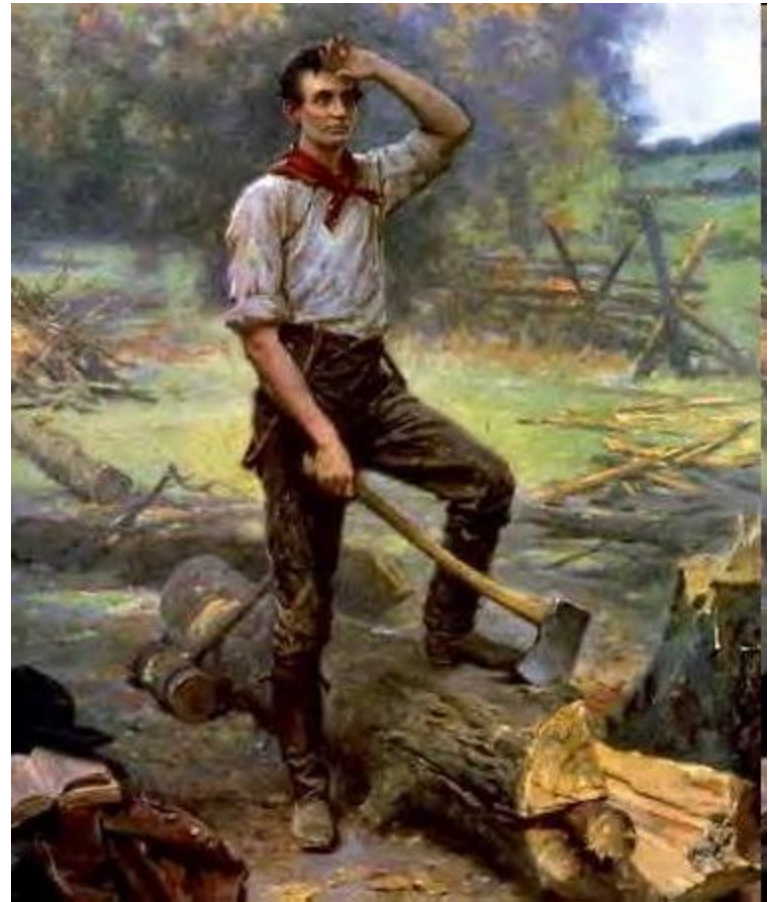
*To what extent does the settlement process in and of itself generate a new set of cultural and social institutions?*



# The “Frontier Thesis”

- Jackson Turner (1893) argued that the existence of a frontier defined American culture and values:

“what the Mediterranean Sea was to the Greeks, breaking the bond of custom, offering new experiences, calling out new institutions and activities, the ever retreating frontier has been to the United States”



# Socio-Cultural Attributes of the Frontier

- Individualism
- Economic libertarianism
- Egalitarianism
- Greater reliance on social cooperation, less reliance on government

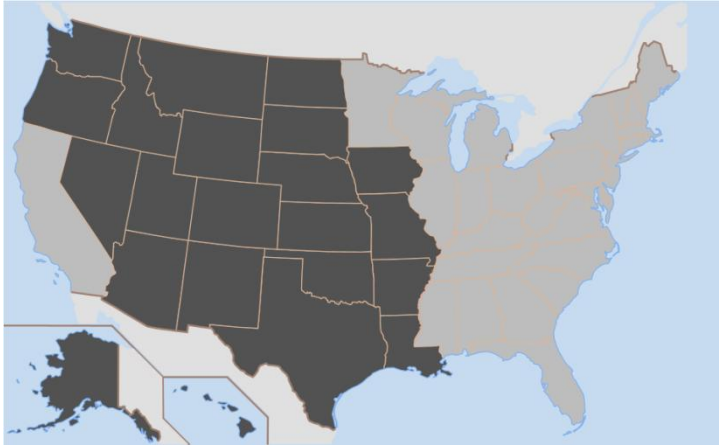
# AMERICAN FRONTIER LIFE



	<b>Distance from Political Authority</b>	<b>Population Sparsity</b>	<i>Net Migration, 1950-</i>
<b>Brazilian Interior</b>			
- North (Amazonas)	2860km*	3.8/km <sup>2</sup>	
- Centre-West	930km*	8.1/km <sup>2</sup>	
- <i>national av.</i>		22/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Canadian West</b>			
- Alberta	2874km	5.9/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- British Columbia	3551km	4.76/km <sup>2</sup>	Medium
- Saskatchewan	2213km	1.75/km <sup>2</sup>	Medium
- <i>national av.</i>		3.41/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>United States Frontier</b>			
- Southwest	1905km	28.5/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- California	3700km	93.3/km <sup>2</sup>	Medium
- Northwest	3746km	25.41/km <sup>2</sup>	Medium
- Rocky Mountains	3189km	25.55/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- Alaska	5422km	0.49/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- Upper Midwest	1502km	15.0/km <sup>2</sup>	Low
- <i>national av.</i>		32/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Russian Federation</b>			
- Siberia	2821km	3.76/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- Far East	6434km	1.0/km <sup>2</sup>	High
- Urals	1159km	6.8/km <sup>2</sup>	Low
- Northern Provinces	995km		Low
- <i>national av.</i>		8.3/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Argentina</b>			
- Cordoba	625km	Low	Low
- Mendoza	958km	Medium	Low
- <i>national av.</i>		14/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Chinese Western Provinces</b>			
- Xinjiang	2414km	13/km <sup>2</sup>	Low*
- <i>national av.</i>		140/km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Kazakhstan</b>			
- <i>national av.</i>		5.8/km <sup>2</sup>	



## Frontier Regions of the United States



## Frontier Regions of Canada



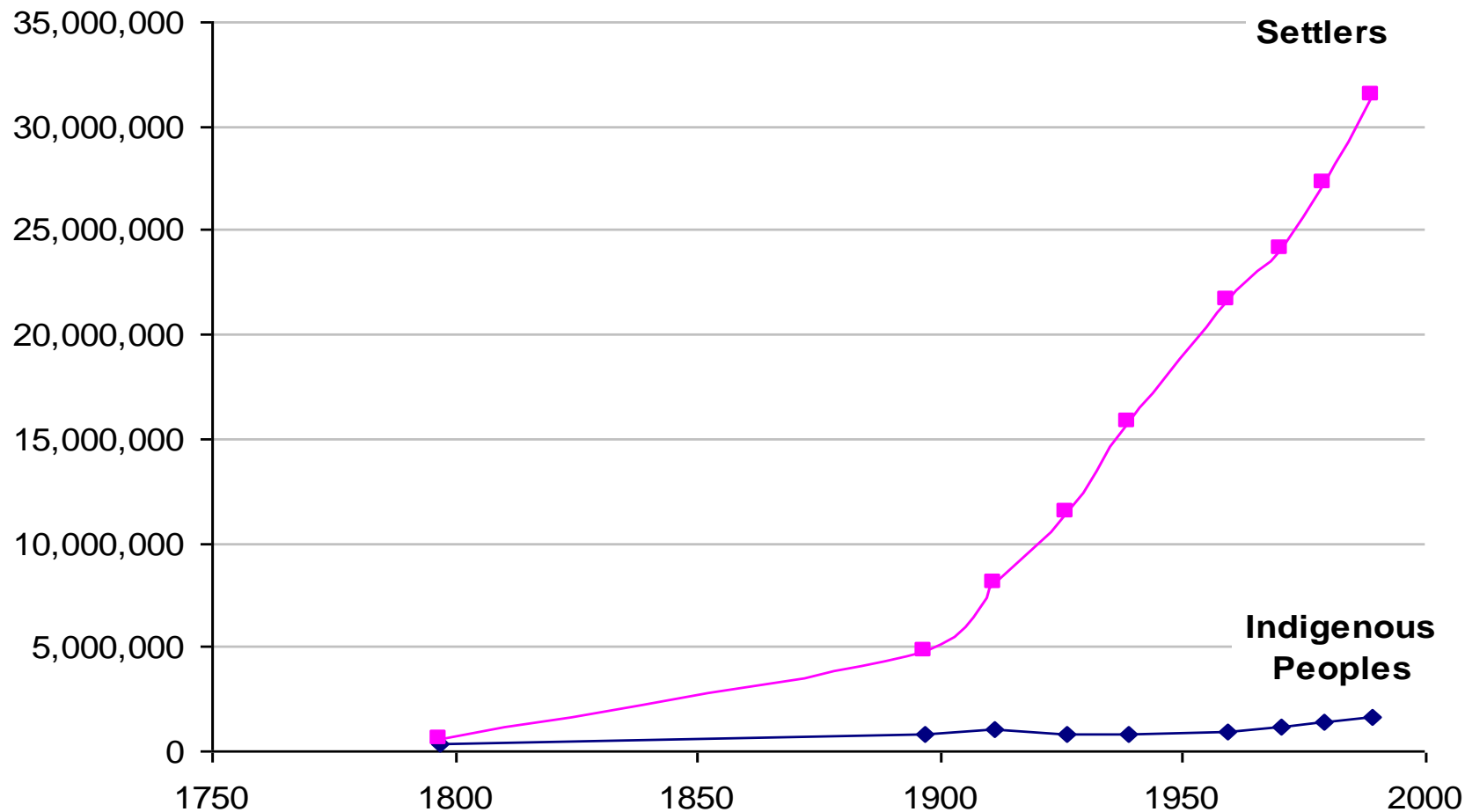
## Frontier Regions of Brazil



## Frontier Regions of Russia

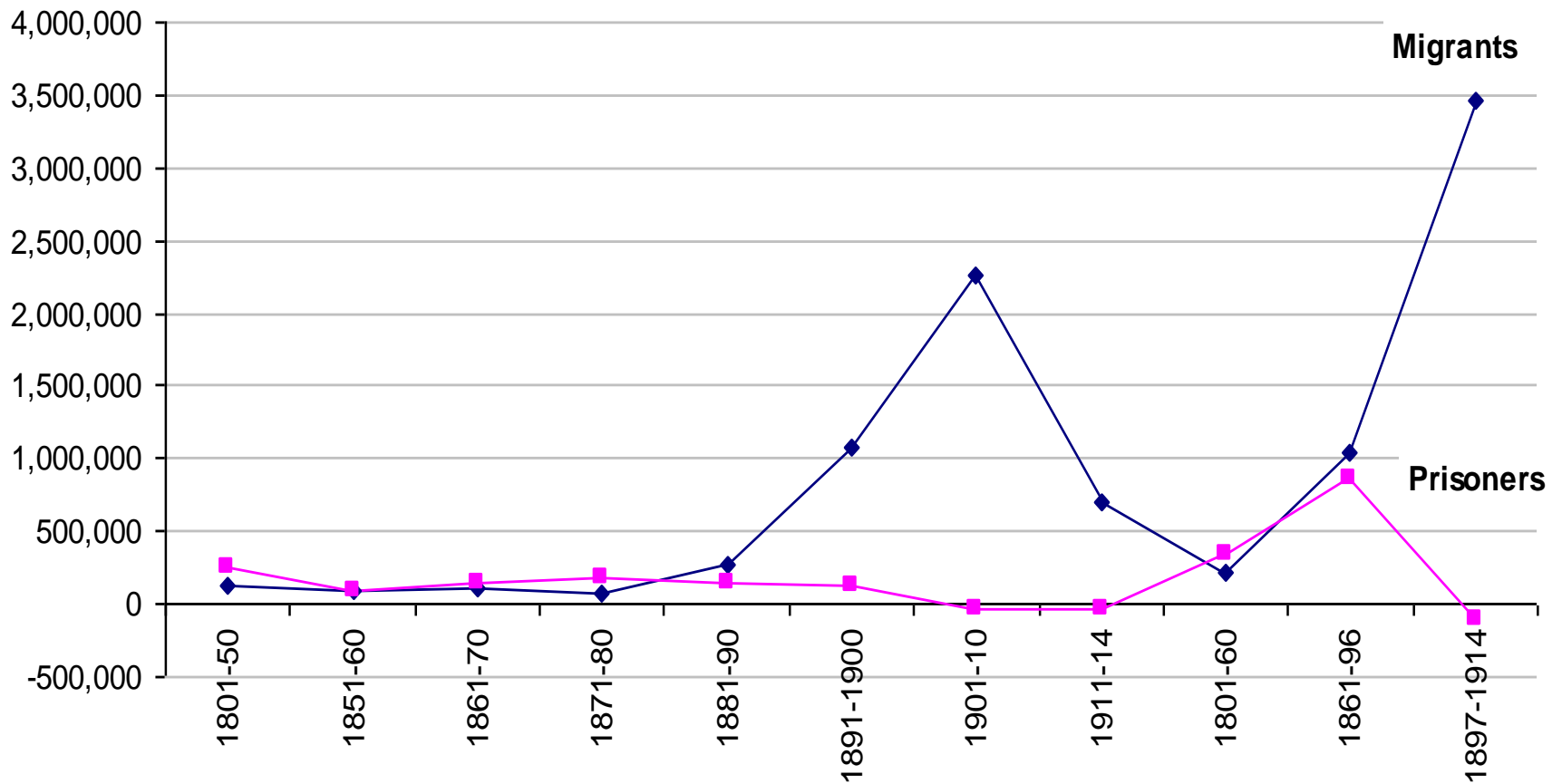


## Indigenous and non-Indigenous Population of Siberia, 1796-1989



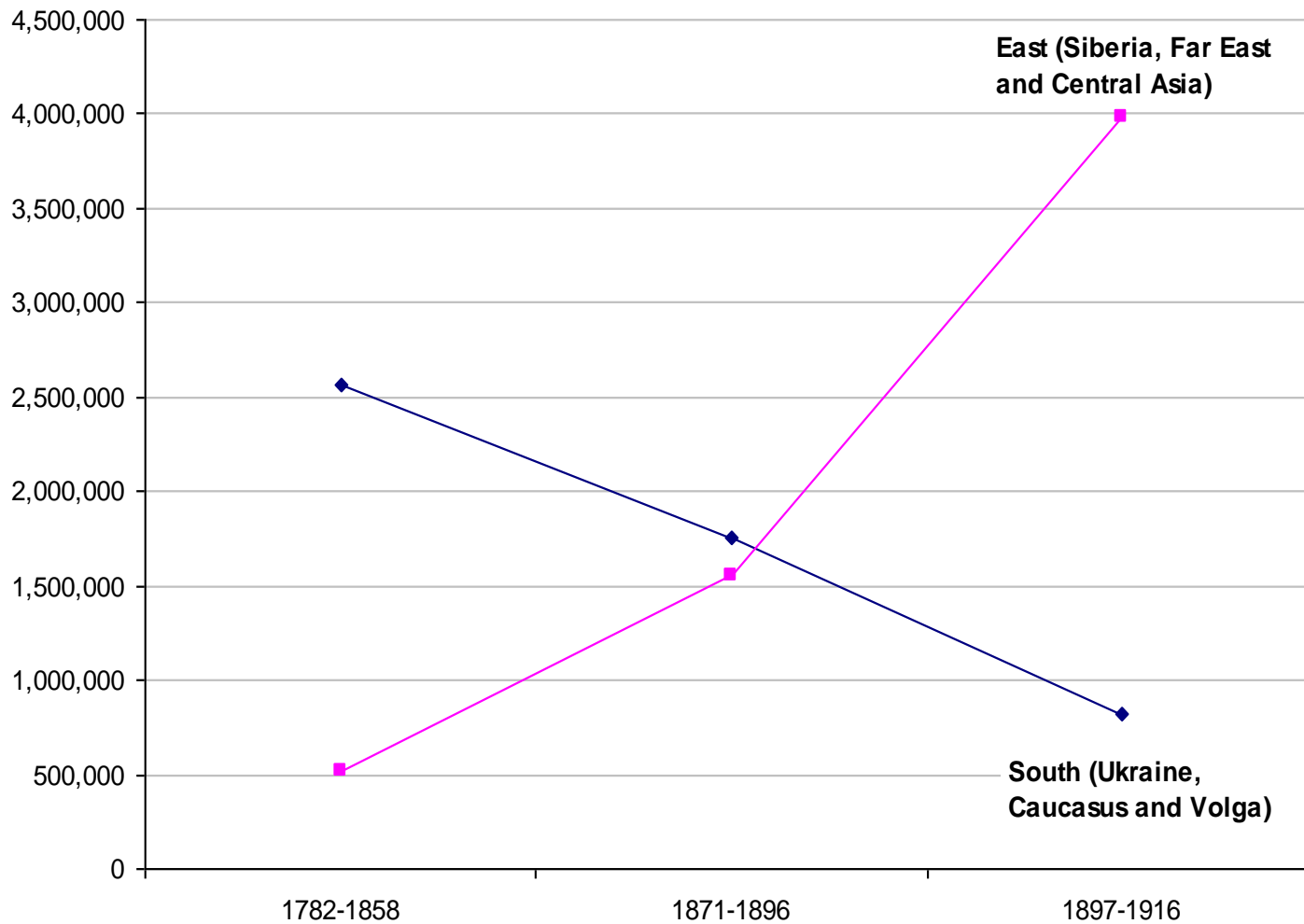
Sources: 1976-7 data from Gagemeister, 1854. Subsequent data cited in Forsyth, James A., *History of the Peoples of Siberia. Russia's North Asian Colony, 1581-1990*. P. 405. Calculated from *Aziatskaya Rossia*, vol. I, pp. 82-5; V.I. Kozlov, *Natsionalnosti SSSR*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 1982, pp. 285-7; *Narody Sibiri; USSR, Censuses, 1959, 1970, 1979*, and preliminary data for 1989 published in the Report on the USSR, 1990, no. 201, pp. 15-19.

## Settlers in the Asian part of Russia, 1801-1914



Source: Obolenskiy V.V. (1928, C. 84). *International and inter-continental migrations in pre-war Russia and the USSR*. Moscow: Central Statistical Board.

## Internal Migration Flows in Imperial Russia, 1782-1916



Source: Mironov B.N. (2009). *Historical sociology of Russia*. St. Petersburg.

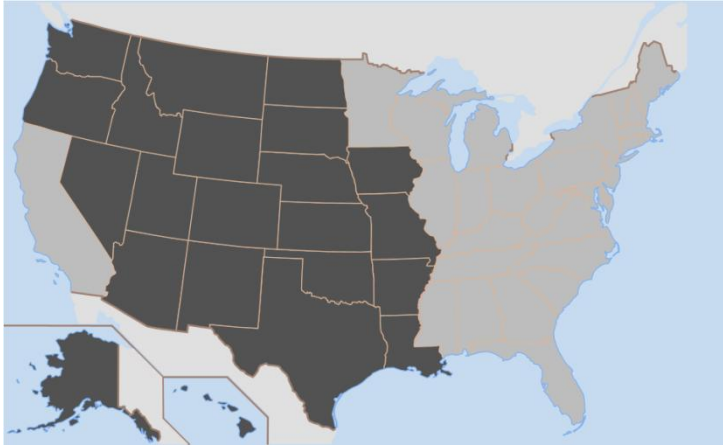


## Internal deportations in the USSR

Period	Number of deportees
1920	45,000
1930-1931	2,050,000
1932-1934	535,000
1935-1938	260,000
1939-1941	395,000
1941-1942	1,200,000
1943-1944	870,000
1944-1945	260,000
1947-1952	400,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,015,000</b>

# Results

### Frontier Regions of the United States



### Frontier Regions of Canada



### Frontier Regions of Brazil

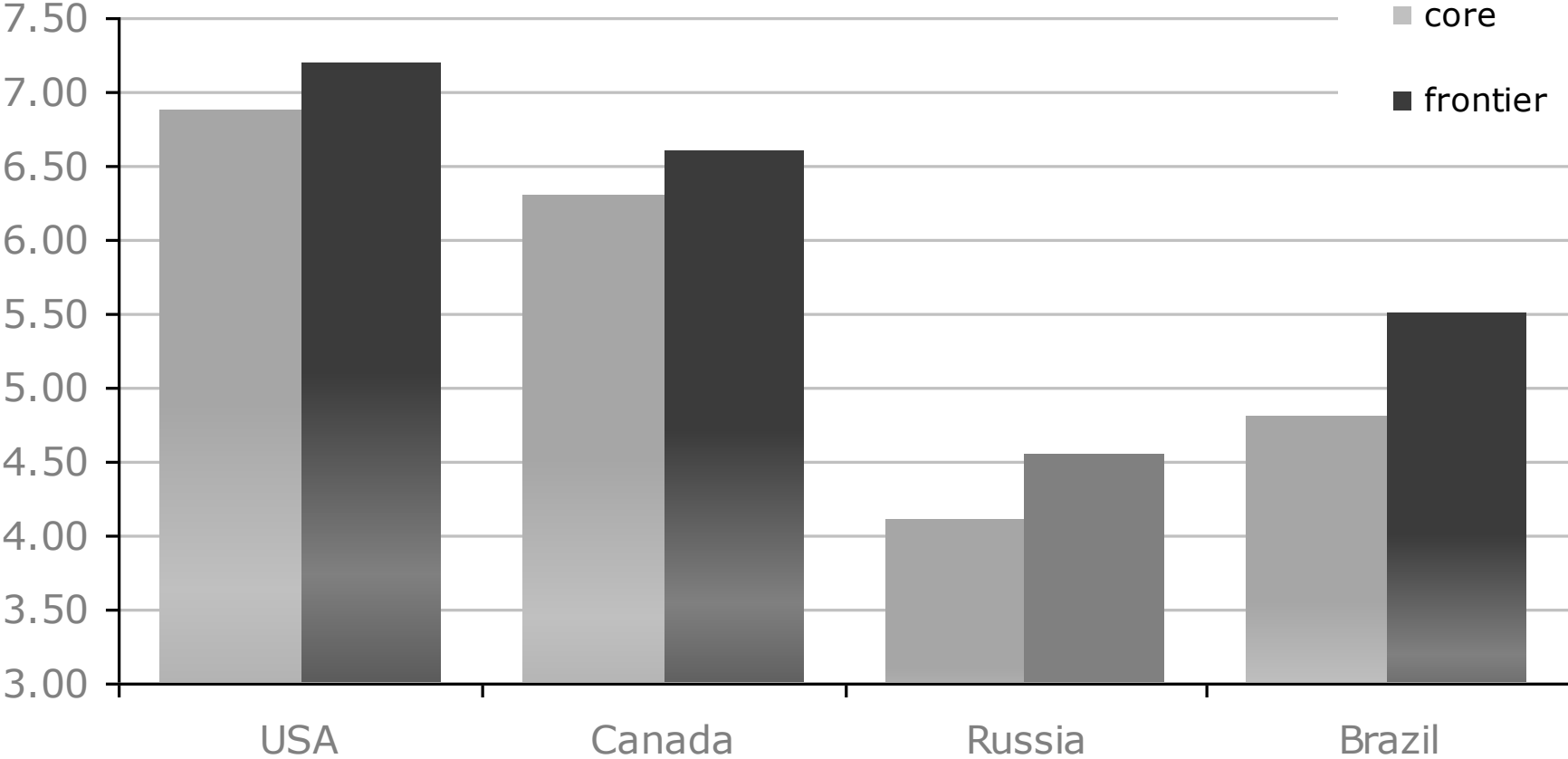


### Frontier Regions of Russia



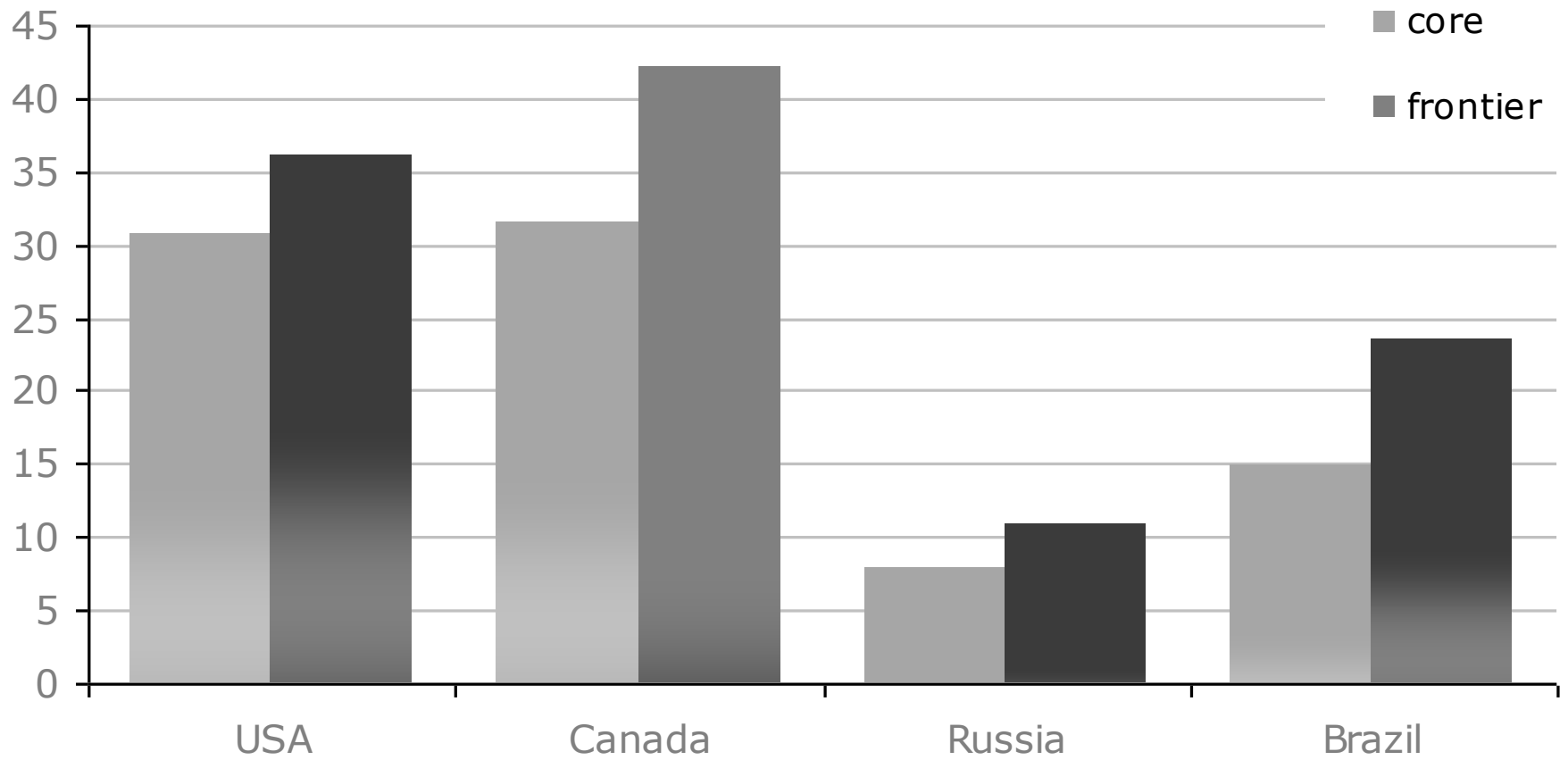
# Individualism

# Which of these views is closer to your own: '1' Government should take more responsibility, '10' Individuals should take more responsibility for themselves?

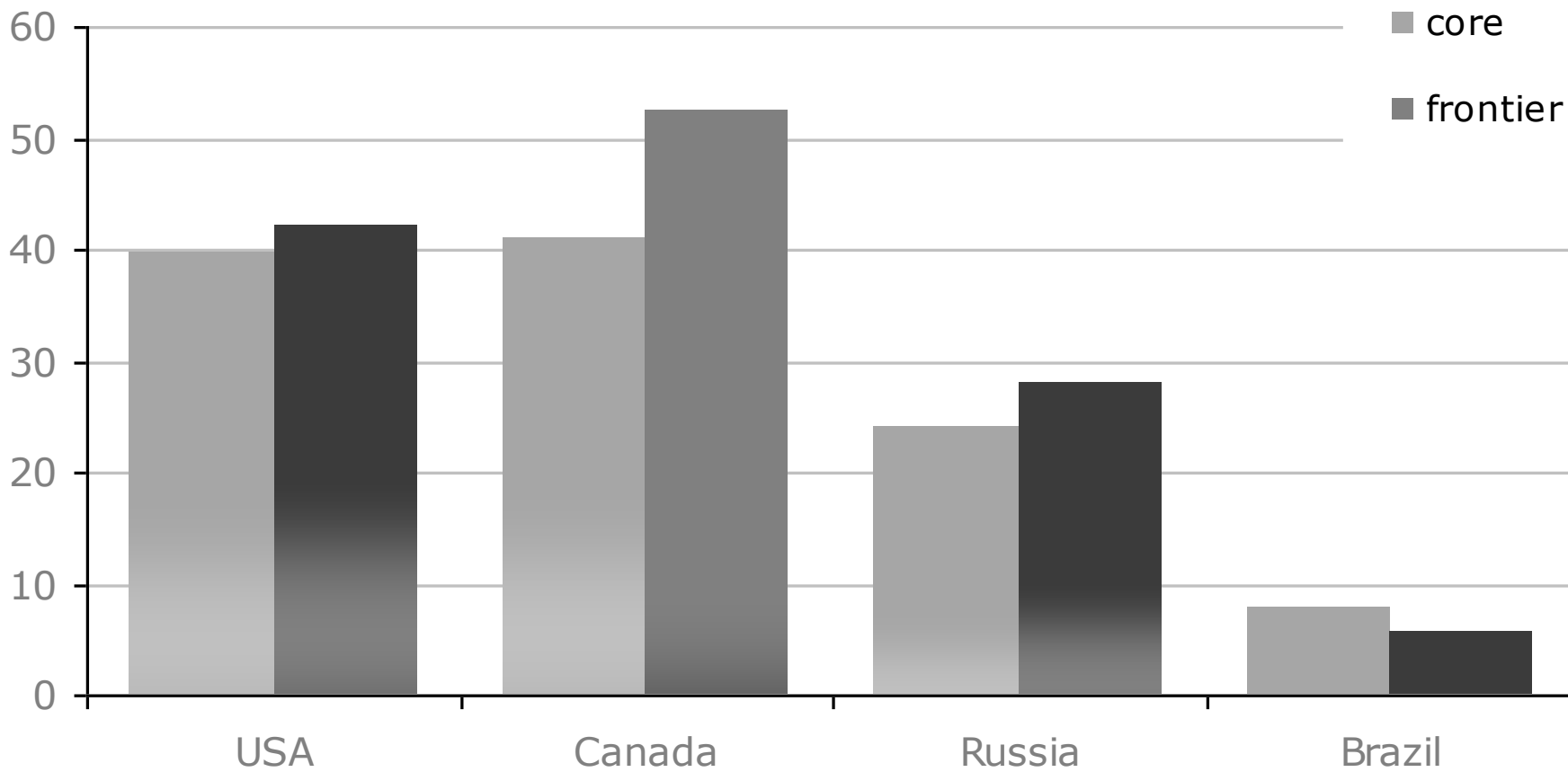


# **Social Cooperation**

# Percentage of Respondents who are Active or Inactive Members of Arts or Cultural Associations

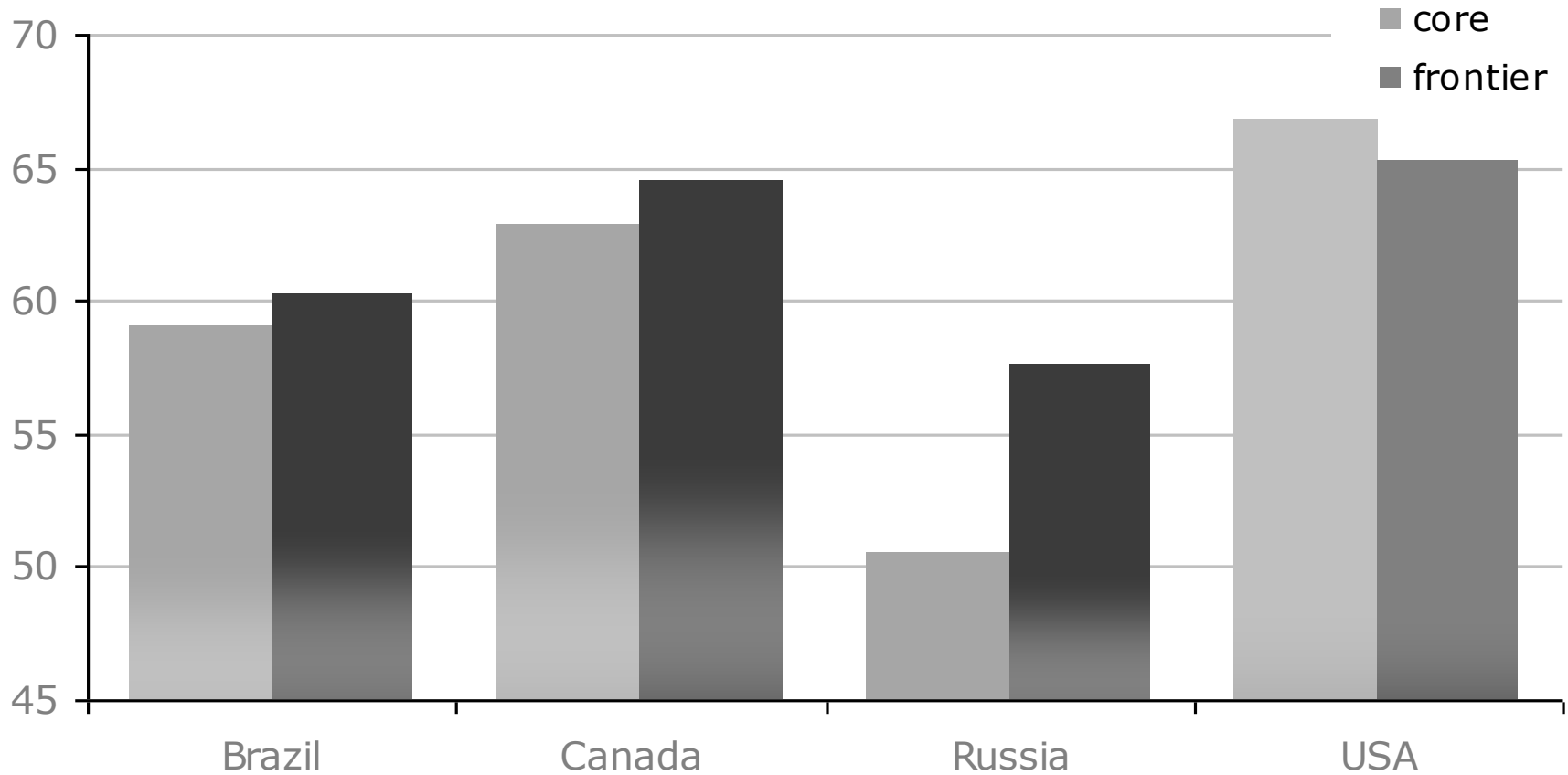


## Percentage who say that “In general, people can be trusted”



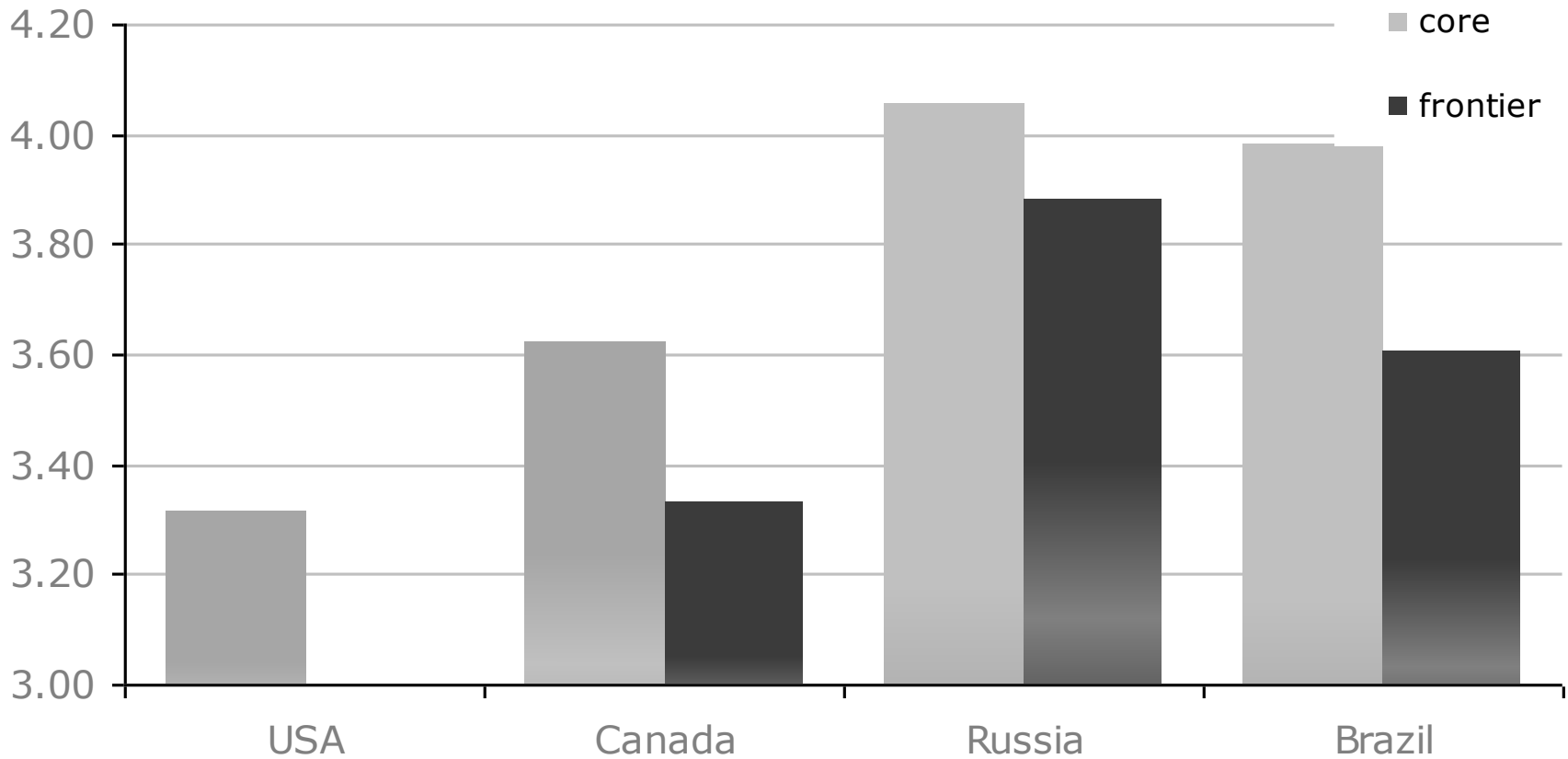


## Percentage of Respondents Who 'Have Done' or 'Would be Willing to' Join a Peaceful Demonstration



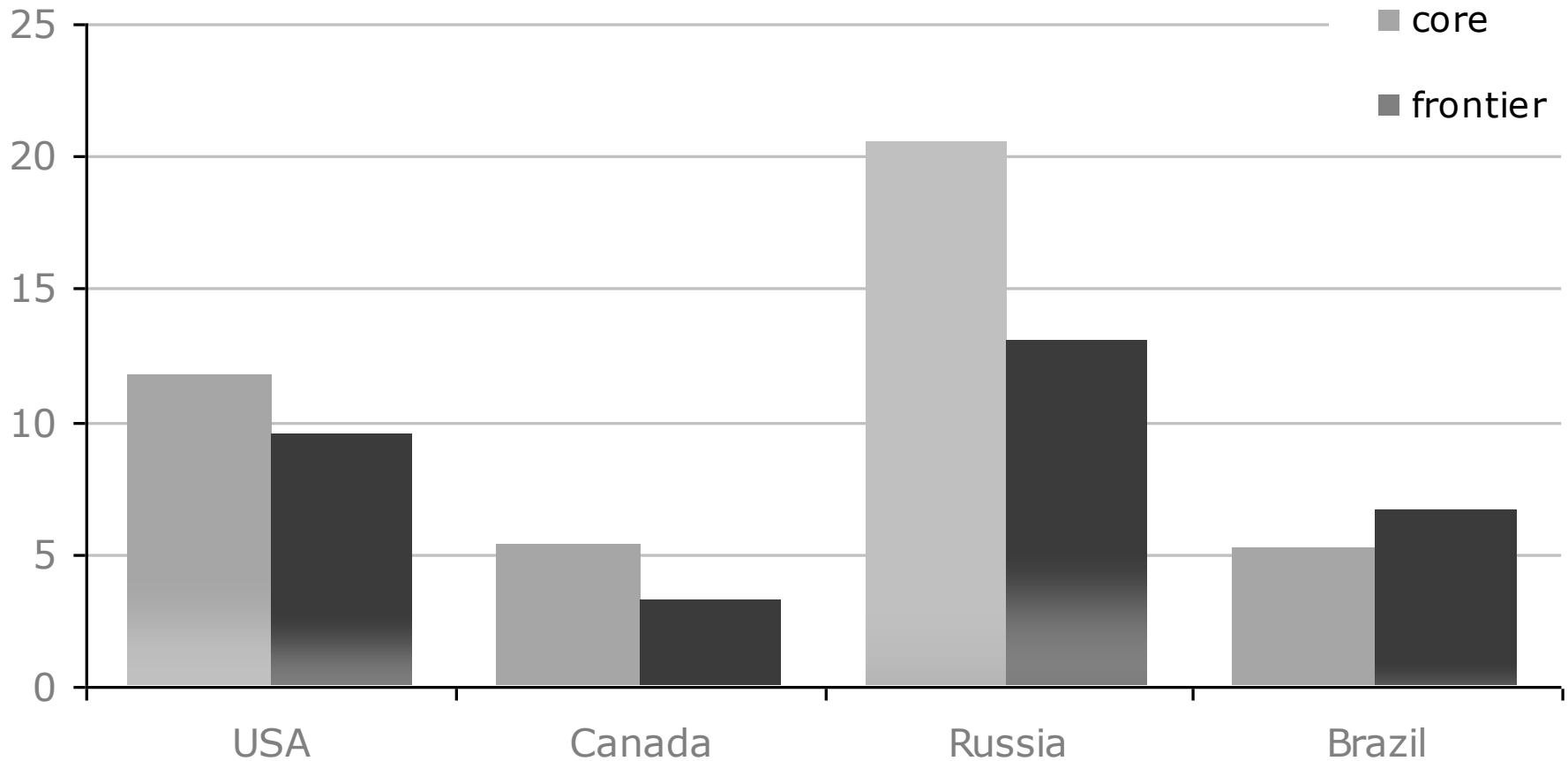
# **Economic Libertarianism**

**Which of these views is closer to your own: '1' Competition is good, it stimulates people to work harder '10' Competition is harmful, it brings out the worst in people?**



# Tolerance

## Percentage of Respondents Objecting to Having a 'Foreign Worker or an Immigrant' as a Neighbour



# Some Observations for Further Study

- Individualism, social cooperation, and economic libertarianism appear to be universal features of the frontier, and not simply a specificity of the United States.
- Social tolerance is more pronounced in the cases of Russia, the United States, and Canada than in Brazil, where it is lower in frontier zones.
- One hypothesis is that this is a result of the outcome of the settlement process – whereas in the other frontiers, the indigenous population was largely marginalised or eliminated; in Brazil settler-indigenous conflict remains widespread today - hence lower social and interethnic tolerance and trust. This is discussed in much greater detail in the paper.
- We are working on extending the frontier analysis to other cases.
- While frontier regions have stronger ‘social’ institutions, they often have weaker governance and rule of law (higher homicide, corruption, poor public goods provision). Understanding this paradox is also at the centre of the current research program.