

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Faculty of Arts and Science

APRIL/MAY EXAMINATIONS 2003

ECO 201Y1 Y

The Economic History of Later Medieval and Early Modern Europe, 1250 - 1750

**Aids Allowed: one letter-sized sheet, double-sided (21.5 cm by 27.5 cm),
containing any data or information that the student wishes to supply.**

Duration - 3 Hours

Answer any **THREE** of the following **twelve (12)** questions, provided that they are **different** questions, spending no more than one hour on each. All questions are of equal value. You may answer questions related to your term essays. **But do not give similar answers to the questions selected; and thus do not select questions with similar themes, since many of the questions have overlapping topics.** Please number your questions properly; write legibly, on one side of the page only; and **double-space** your answers.

1. Discuss the role of famine, disease, and warfare, in relation to other key economic factors, in determining or strongly influencing the cycles of demographic growth and decline in the western European economy, from the mid 13th to mid-18th centuries (c.1250 - c.1750). In your view, was population growth the cause or consequence of economic growth; and did population growth inevitably mean a decline in real incomes, and thus an increase in malnutrition, disease, and mortality (and declining fertility): i.e., a Malthusian trap?
2. Did western Europe experience, from the 1290s, a series of international economic crises and then a genuine 'Great Depression', or at least an economic contraction, lasting into the 15th century? **Discuss this question in two parts.**
 - (a) How general and prolonged was the 'economic contraction'? Evaluate the role of some or all of the following factors in inducing and prolonging that contraction: (i) the Black Death, demographic crises, and population decline; (ii) feudal warfare, feudal/ state fiscal and monetary policies, and disruptions to international trade; (iii) monetary crises and monetary contractions; (iv) cycles of inflation and deflation, and their impact on factor prices; (v) agrarian crises and crises in the fortunes of landowners and peasants.
 - (b) how, when, where, and why did the European economy recover from this prolonged economic contraction, if not 'Great Depression'. [N.B. Do not answer both questions 1 and 2]
3. Discuss the economic benefits and costs of serfdom, for both landlords and peasants, explaining why serfdom, having reached its 'peak' in Carolingian Europe, declined from the 13th century, and was virtually extinct in the West by the 16th century, while from about that time, or earlier, serfdom began spreading into eastern Europe (east of the Elbe). Discuss in particular the validity of various commercial, demographic and institutional models – those governing relations between landlords, peasants, and governments -- in explaining these changes in western and eastern serfdom.
4. Compare and contrast the role of monetary and demographic factors in explaining the changing prices levels and general economic phenomena of the Price Revolution era (ca. 1520 - ca. 1650) and the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century (ca. 1640 - ca. 1750): i.e., in particular the inflation of the former and the deflation or price-stagnation of the latter. In your answer, discuss the economic and social consequences of both inflation and deflation, distinguishing clearly between changes in relative prices and changes in the overall price level (price index).

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5. Analyse the relationship between **demographic** changes and **agrarian** changes – in terms of both agricultural organization and technological changes in European agriculture – in one or both of the following periods: (a) 1300 - 1520; (b) 1520 - 1750. Your answer should compare and contrast the changes involved in at least **two** European countries or regions: England, the Low Countries, France, Italy, north-eastern Europe (Prussia-Brandenburg, Poland, Lithuania, Russia).
6. Discuss the origins, nature, evolution, and the consequences, **economic and social**, of the enclosure movements in western Europe, from the 15th to 18th centuries, explaining why: (a) enclosures were so much more prominent in England than in France, and (b) why the consequent fortunes and fate of the peasantry differed so markedly between the two countries by the eve of the French Revolution. Who benefited and who lost from such enclosures? [Do not answer both questions 5 and 6]
7. Discuss the role and influence of the Church in the medieval and early-modern economy, in particular its influence on the evolution of banking, credit, and financial institutions, in terms of private deposit banking, foreign exchange banking, and public finances, both urban and national (leading to the establishment of permanent funded debts in early-modern western Europe).
8. In the context of the current ‘proto-industrialization’ debate, explain why so many manufacturing industries were or became rural in later-medieval, early-modern Europe, while others remained urban. In your answer, compare and contrast the benefits and costs of rural and urban industrial locations, with particular reference to the organization and technologies of the textile and metallurgical industries, explaining why these two became the ‘spearheads of modern industrialization’, with the onset of the 18th-century Industrial Revolution.
9. Discuss the relative role of wool and wool-based textile industries in England and at least one other European country or region (the Low Countries, France, Italy, Spain) from the 14th to 18th centuries, explaining how, when, and why England obtained dominance in European markets for its products of first the Old Draperies, and then of the New Draperies. [Do not answer both questions 8 and 9, unless your topical coverage is entirely different]
10. Compare and contrast the economic roles of the Iberian peninsula (Aragon-Catalonia, Castile, Portugal) and Italy – or of their various component regions – in the later-medieval and early modern periods, explaining both their economic pre-eminence during the later 15th and 16th centuries, and their decline in the 17th century. Were such economic ‘declines’ a major aspect of the ‘General Crisis of the 17th century’, or were they independent phenomena, in the context of international competition for commercial and colonial supremacy?
11. How and why did the Dutch defeat both the Germans (Hanseatic League) and the English in securing dominance in Baltic-North Sea and then European commerce, from the 14th to 17th centuries, but why during the later 17th and 18th centuries did the English manage to achieve an overseas colonial-commercial empire more conducive to modern industrialization than did the Dutch?
12. Discuss the role of transportation and navigation facilities, especially for maritime trade, in the development of the European economy, from the 14th to 18th centuries, in terms of both technological changes and industrial-commercial organization. In your answer, explain why in some periods land-based transport and overland continental routes predominated, while in others maritime transport and oceanic routes predominated. [Do not do both questions 11 and 12, unless you can convincingly make them different in subject matter].