Economics 301Y1

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

Topic No. 12: The Rise of the Dutch Commercial Empire, ca. 1360 - ca. 1580

Revised: 6 October 2006

Within each section, readings are listed in chronological order of original publication, when that can be ascertained, except for some collections of essays.

READINGS

A. General Studies:


** 5. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, *Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei* (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as *The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work, in the original Dutch version.


B. Dutch Agriculture and Agrarian Society: the Foundations of Commercial Expansion


(b) Eddy Van Cauwenberghe and Herman Van der Wee, ‘Productivity, Evolution of Rents, and Farm Size in the Southern Netherlands Agriculture from the 14th to the 17th Century’, pp. 125-62.


11. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:


C. The Herring Fisheries


4. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press,
1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:

D. Shipping and Shipbuilding


the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries’, Atti del V Convegno Internazionale di Studi Colombiani navi e navigazioni nei secoli XV e XVI (Genoa: Civico Istituto Colombiano, 1990), 199-211; republished in Richard W. Unger, Ships and Shipping in the North Sea and Atlantic, 1400 - 1800, Variorum Collected Series CS 601 (Aldershot and Brookfield, Vt., Ashgate, 1997).


26. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:


E. Textiles, Brewing, Other Manufacturing Industries, and Labour


25. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:


a) Patrick Chorley, ‘The Evolution of the Woollen, 1300 - 1700’, pp. 7-34


E. Dutch Commerce: with the Hanse, England, the Low Countries, and the Baltic, 14th to 16th Centuries


3. F. Ketner, Handel en scheepvaart van Amsterdam in de vijftiende eeuw (Brill, 1946).


* 22. Johanna Maria Van Winter, ed., The Interactions of Amsterdam and Antwerp with the Baltic Region, 1400 - 1800 (De Nederlanden en het Oostzeegebied, 1400 - 1800), Het Nederlandsch Economisch-Historisch Archief no. 16, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983. See especially the following essays:

(a) Richard W. Unger, ‘Integration of Baltic and Low Countries Grain
**Markets**, pp. 1-10.

(b) Herman Van der Wee, ‘Money and Economic Interdependence between the Northern and Southern Netherlands and the Baltic, 15th - 17th Centuries’, pp. 11-18.


(d) Michel Morineau, ‘Le commerce de la Baltique dans ses rapports avec le commerce hors de la Baltique, du milieu du XVie siècle à la fin du XVIIIe’, pp. 31 - 42.


(1) ‘The Low Countries in Transition: From the Middle Ages to Early Modern Times’,


(4) (with Eddy Van Cauwenberghue) ‘Agrarian History and Public Finances in Flanders, 14th to 17th Century’, pp. 69-83. [From Annales: Économies, sociétés, civilisations, 28 (1973), 1051-64.]


(12) ‘Prices and Wages as Development Variables: A Comparison between England and
the Southern Netherlands, 1400-1700’, pp. 223-41. [From Actae Historia Neerlandica, 10 (1978), 58-78.]


35. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul, eds., England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1994).


39. **Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei** (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as **The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815** (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:


b) ‘The Export of Timber and Timber By-Products from the Baltic Region to Western Europe, 1575-1775’, pp. 1-14 [original publication].


e) ‘The Baltic Trade and the Decline of the Dutch Economy in the 18th Century’ [co-authored with Frits Snapper], from J. Lemmink and H. Van Koningsbrugge, eds., **Baltic Affairs: Relations Between the Netherlands and North-Eastern Europe, 1500 - 1800** (Nijmegen, 1990), pp. 263-86.

f) ‘Hamburg: the ‘Continent’s Most English City’’, pp. 1-13 [original publication]


42. Dieter Seifert, Holland und die Hanse (Cologne: Bohlau, 1997).
F. London, Bruges, Antwerp and Amsterdam, 14th to 16th Centuries


23. Jan de Vries and Ad Van der Woude, Nederland 1500 - 1815: De eerste ronde van moderne economische groei (Amsterdam: Balans, 1995); republished in English translation as The First Modern Economy: Growth, Decline, and Perserverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500 - 1815 (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See an important review article based on this magisterial work:

Arthur Van Riel, ‘Rethinking the Economic History of the Dutch Republic: The Rise and Decline of Economic Modernity Before the Advent of Industrialized Growth’,
G. **Holland Under Habsburg Rule and The Revolt of the Netherlands, 1506 - 1609**


**QUESTIONS**

1. What were the chief factors responsible for the rise of the Dutch towns to commercial power, from
the late 14th century to the Revolt of the Netherlands? Discuss in terms of the following:
(a) Geographic location of Holland and Zeeland, resources, demography, agrarian and social structure.
(b) The herring fisheries.
(c) Commercial relations with the Hanseatic towns, Scandinavia, and the Baltic regions.
(d) Commercial relations with the adjacent Low Countries and England.
(e) Trade in textiles, fish, salt, lumber, grains, and beer.

2. What was the economic significance of the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1568 (or 1572) to the Truce of 1609 with Spain? In what respects did it contribute, directly or indirectly, to the achievement of Dutch commercial and financial hegemony in the 17th century?

3. What was the significance of the Baltic Sea region (Scandinavia, East Germany, Poland, and Livonia and Russia) for Dutch commercial power? How were the Dutch able to wrest control of this region from both the Hanseatic League and the English?

4. What factors account for Dutch supremacy in both shipbuilding and shipping in the 16th and 17th centuries? Why couldn't the English compete effectively until the 17th century?

5. What was the importance of the textile industry in Holland from the late 14th to the mid-16th centuries?

6. The Dutch urban mercantile economy: medieval or modern?