

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Faculty of Arts and Science

APRIL EXAMINATIONS 2012

ECO 301Y1 Y

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

Aid Allowed: Time-Chart of European Economic History

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. 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. ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS AS POSED, and IN FULL. NUMBER your questions; WRITE LEGIBLY, on one side of the page only; and DOUBLE-SPACE YOUR ANSWERS.**

1. Discuss, compare, and contrast the role of **exogenous** and **endogenous factors** in 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 answer, briefly describe these cycles of demographic growth and decline, explain what is meant by these two terms (exogenous and endogenous), and then answer the following three questions:
 - a) Before the Industrial Revolution era, did population growth inevitably mean a decline in real incomes, and thus an increase in malnutrition, disease, mortality, and declining fertility: i.e., a Malthusian trap?
 - b) what role did socio-economic institutions, such as the European Marriage Pattern, play in counteracting Malthusian forces – when, where, how, and why?
 - c) Was population growth the cause or consequence of economic growth?
2. Compare and contrast the causes and consequences of the decline of manorialism and serfdom during the later medieval and early-modern eras in at least two of the following regions: (a) England, (b) northern France, (c) the Mediterranean regions of France and Italy. By the 16th century, how did the peasantry, as social and economic institutions in the regions chosen, differ: from what they had been in the 13th century, and from each other in the 16th century?
3. Did western Europe experience a ‘Great Depression’ during the later Middle Ages?
 - a) if so: where, how, and why – in what regions of western Europe? Choose at least TWO regions.
 - b) if so: how did these regional economies recover, and how were their 16th-century economies different from what they had been in the later 13th and 14th centuries?
4. Analyse the role of both demographic and monetary factors in explaining the course of prices – i.e., of deflations and inflations – during TWO (or at least two) of the following three eras: (a) the ‘Great Depression’, from ca. 1320 - ca. 1520; (b) the ‘Price Revolution’ era, ca. 1520 - ca. 1640; (c) the ‘General Crisis’ era, from ca. 1640 - ca. 1750. Which set of forces was, in your view, the more important in each of the eras chosen?
5. Compare the role of religion and religious doctrines in the evolution of the west European economy, and its financial institutions in particular, from the 13th to the 18th centuries: as a positive or negative force, according to the regions of western European **and** the relevant time periods examined. In your comparisons, discuss what were the most important aspects of both Catholicism and Protestantism in influencing the development of European economic institutions and economic attitudes, over these centuries.
6. Compare and contrast the role of town governments and urban guilds in influencing the growth of the west European economies from the 13th to 16th centuries. In your answer explain why guilds – both mercantile and craft – became more powerful during later Middle Ages (from the 13th century, and then why their powers later waned.
7. Compare and contrast the development of the agrarian economies in England and France, from the

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14th to 18th centuries: in terms of both technological changes (including crop rotations) and institutional changes, analysing as well their economic consequences. Why were more Enclosures to be found in England than in France, during this period? Did such enclosures promote increased agricultural productivity and economic growth: and if so, how, when, where, and why?

8. How and why did the Venetians gain mastery in Mediterranean trade during the later Middle Ages; and how and why did they lose such mastery by the later 17th century? In your answer, discuss how, why, and with what consequences the Venetians responded to challenges to their commercial hegemony from: the Genoese, the Mamluks, the Catalans (Spanish), the Ottoman Turks, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English? You may choose to focus on just some of these.

OR: What maritime-based region proved to be the more important for the economic development of Europe, by the eighteenth century: the Baltic or the Mediterranean? Explain why and how, in terms of the key players (city states, territorial states, nation states) in European international trade.

9. How and why did the English succeed in establishing a more viable overseas commercial empire, and one more conducive to modern industrialization: than the Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish colonial empires? In particular, discuss the impact of economic changes during the 'General Crisis' era: were they more beneficial or harmful to the Dutch commercial hegemony and the final English victory? Do not answer both this question and no. 8 (either part)
10. Analyse the role of banking and financial institutions, in the both the **private and public sectors**, in the growth of the European economy, from the 13th to the 18th centuries. Compare and contrast the contribution of the Italians, South Germans, Dutch, and English, and explain how those financial contributions were linked to these regions's importance in international trade.
11. Discuss the role of wool and wool-based textiles (woollens, worsteds, hybrid 'stuffs') in the economic development of at least two of the following countries, from the 14th to mid 18th centuries: the Low Countries, England, Italy, Spain (Castile, Aragon, Catalonia). In your answer, explain, as far as possible, how changes in textile manufacturing influenced changes in the agricultural, commercial, as well as the industrial sectors of these countries.
12. What are the origins of modern European 'capitalism'? Discuss the historical literature on the contributions that **two** of the following debates made in explaining the rise of modern capitalism. Where relevant, discuss the debates between Marxist and non-Marxist historians on these issues. **But do not choose any debates discussed in any other questions** that you have answered:
- (a) The 'Price Revolution': the Hamilton Thesis
 - (b) The 'Rise of the Gentry': the Tawney Thesis
 - (c) 'Protestantism and the Spirit of Capitalism': The Weber-Tawney Thesis
 - (d) The 'General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century': the Hobsbawm Thesis
 - (e) The 'Early Industrial Revolution' in Tudor-Stuart England: the Nef Thesis