

**ECO 303Y1: The Economic History of Modern Europe, to 1914**

**Mid Year Test: 7 January 2009**

Answer **one** of the following **ten (10)** questions, **while avoiding any question related to your first term essay. If in any doubt, chose another question. Be sure to answer the entire question – in full, and as posed.** If you fail to do so, exactly as instructed, you may receive a failing grade. Your answer (essay format) should be about 2300 - 2650 words, or about 7-8 pages in typed form, and no more than 10 pages (with about 330 words per page), using double-spacing with 11 or 12-point font. **Underline or capitalize your surname (printed). Make sure that you clearly identify the question being answered, providing both the title and the question number.** Footnotes and bibliography are not required, though you may use in-line citations (author, year). **Your take-home exam is due on Wednesday, 14 January 2009, with no extensions permitted.** If you do not submit the exam by this date, you must instead do another and more formal term essay (i.e., with footnotes and annotated bibliography), which is due **Friday, 3 April 2009.**

**QUESTIONS: the first six questions are based on the A-List Essay Topics.**

1. Questions on The Hobsbawm thesis on the 17<sup>th</sup>-century 'General Crisis': answer all questions.
  - a) To what extent did the European economy experience a 'general crisis' during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (or from ca. 1620 to ca. 1750)?
  - b) What is the economic evidence for at least periodic crises: in foreign trade, in agriculture, in demography, in the behaviour of prices (inflation and deflation)?
  - b) If you agree that there were such crises, do you also agree with Hobsbawm that the 'general crisis' produced its own solutions, solutions that proved to be the most effective in England, i.e., to explain why England was 'homeland of the Industrial Revolution'?
  - c) Whether or not you agree with Hobsbawm, how and why can one still argue that the true turning points to explain the origins of the Industrial Revolution are better found in and from this era, especially from the 1660s, rather than from the 1760s, as is usually argued?
2. Discuss the nature and consequences of the economic decline of the Netherlands in the 18<sup>th</sup> century:
  - a) Was it due more to *endogenous* or to *exogenous* factors?
  - b) Was it more of a *relative* or an *absolute* economic decline?
  - c) Is there any relationship between the economic decline of the Netherlands and the advent of the British Industrial Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century? Did one influence the other?
3. What were the principal economic and social interrelationships between the 'Demographic' and 'Industrial Revolutions' of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Discuss in particular the following:
  - a) Was the 'Demographic Revolution' a cause or consequence of the Industrial Revolution?
  - b) How did demographic growth promote economic growth and industrialization?
  - c) Did demographic growth promote economic growth with or without adverse consequences for British standards of living?
  - d) In particular, did it do so with, or without, the consequences that Malthus had predicted – or without a 'Malthusian' intervention of 'providential' and/or 'prudential' checks to population growth?
4. Discuss the interrelationships between the so-called 'Agricultural' and 'Industrial' Industrial Revolutions in England, not only during traditional period assigned to the latter (1760 - 1840), but from as early as the 1660s? In particular, consider these questions:

- a) Was there in fact an ‘agricultural revolution’, in terms of both the organization of agriculture and the technological changes in agricultural production?
  - b) If so, when did such changes principally take place; and when and where were their consequences fully realized?
  - c) What impact did these agrarian changes have upon the supply of inputs for the industrial sector and on domestic markets for industrial production?
  - d) In particular, which was the more important factor in supplying the labour force for urban industrialization after 1800: the Enclosure movements or the Demographic Revolution?
5. In the context of the current ‘proto-industrialization’ debate, discuss the rural or agrarian roots of the British Industrial Revolution, answering the following questions:
- a) Did the development of rural handicraft industries, especially in textiles, help to lay the necessary foundations for the Industrial Revolution?
  - b) Why was so much industrial manufacturing rural before the Industrial Revolution; and thus how and why did such industrial locations become principally urban during the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
  - c) how did such changes in industrial location influence changes in industrial organization?
  - d) to what extent did urban industrialization depend upon an influx of labour from rural areas, and thus depend upon agrarian changes that liberated such labour, or increased the elasticity of the labour supply for urban industries?
6. Analyse the rural roots of modern industrialization, in the context of both the debates about the ‘General Crisis of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century’ and ‘Proto-Industrialization.’ Discuss the role and significance of rural industries, especially textile industries, in terms of the following quotations, explaining whether or not you agree with these assertions, in whole or only in part:
- a) Hobsbawm: ‘ “Putting-out” was a most effective dissolver of the traditional agrarian structure, and provided a means of rapidly increasing industrial production....,’
  - b) Mendels: ‘proto-industrialization [was] the first phase of the modern industrialization process.’
7. Compare and contrast the commercial and in particular the overseas colonial structures of the Netherlands and England (Great Britain from 1707) during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; and explain why the English commercial and colonial policies were more conducive to modern industrialization than were the Dutch policies.
8. Compare and contrast the role of financial institutions in the economic development of the Netherlands, England, and Scotland, from the 1660s to the 1870s (the Dutch, to the 1790s). What were the most important strengths and weaknesses of these institutions in these three countries?
9. Compare and contrast the major aspects of the Industrial Revolutions: in steam power, metallurgy, and cotton textiles. Analyse the changes in industrial technology, industrial organization, and their impact on both the domestic economy and British foreign trade (to 1850).
10. Discuss the role of the state – in particular, government commercial, fiscal-financial, and monetary policies – in the economic development of England, and then of Great Britain (from 1707), from the 1660s to the 1870s. Discuss both the costs and benefits of these government economic policies.