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ECO 301Y1: The Economic History of Late-Medieval and Early-Modern Europe

Mid Year Test: Wednesday, 10 January 2007

Answer **ONE and only one** of the following **twelve (12)** questions, **while avoiding any questions related to your first term essay. If in doubt, choose another topic. Please be sure to answer the entire question, and as posed.** Your essays 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 12-point font. Please prepare your answer on a word-processor or a typewriter; or contact me if you cannot do so. Put your **name** (printed), **student number**, **e-mail address**, and the **question number** at the top of the first page or on the title page of your paper. **Underline or capitalize your surname (printed). Make sure that you clearly identify the question being answered, providing both the title and the question number.** Note that the topic of your first term essay has been recorded, along with your grade. Please prepare your answer on a word-processor or a typewriter. Handwritten papers must be double-spaced and clearly legible.

The answer submitted must be *uniquely* your own work. Your answer must not be a mere repetition of lecture notes and must show some evidence that you have read not only the lecture notes (imperative!) but also some of the recommended texts, books, essays, or articles for this course (on the reading lists for the major topics, especially). Footnotes and bibliographies are not required (but you may supply in-text references; or a brief list of references at the end).

Your take-home exam is due on Wednesday, 17 January 2007, with no extensions permitted. If you do not submit the exam by this date, you must instead do another and more formal term essay (with footnotes and annotated bibliography), which will be due on **Friday, 6 April 2007.**

QUESTIONS: the first six questions are based on the A-List topics for this term

1. Compare and contrast the causes – whether *endogenous* or *exogenous* – and consequences, economic and social, of the two great demographic crises of the fourteenth century: the Great Famine and the Black Death. Were they in any way related? How much of Europe was afflicted by each or by both?
2. Why after serfdom had declined, or was withering away, in western Europe, did it spread throughout much of eastern Europe from the later-medieval era, but especially from the sixteenth century? Answer as well both of the following questions:
 - (a) How and why did eastern serfdom differ from the earlier western serfdom?
 - (b) To what extent are economic models based on demography and international trade (or commercial factors) successful in explaining the spread and intensity of eastern serfdom? What socio-institutional models must also be called upon for a fuller explanation?
3. Explain the economic and political interrelationships between and among warfare, taxation, and demographic decline; and also their economic consequences, in late-medieval Europe, from ca. 1280 to ca. 1500. To what extent did warfare and taxation contribute to the periodic economic crises of late-medieval western Europe (or to the so-called late-medieval ‘Great Depression’)?
4. What role did money (supplies and circulation of) and monetary factors play in determining the cycles of inflation and deflation in the late-medieval European economy, to the end of the fifteenth century? In particular, discuss the following issues:

- (a) what roles did monetary factors, and their interrelationships with demographic factors, play in the late-medieval economic crises (or the so-called late medieval ‘Great Depression’)?
- (b) what were the economic and social consequences of both inflation and deflation?
5. What roles, positive and negative, did the Church play in the western medieval economy (up to the end of the fifteenth century), in particular Church doctrines in the realms of economics and society (morally acceptable conduct, etc.)? Focus in particular on the sector of banking and finance: both private and public finance.
6. Discuss and explain the economic and organic institutional interrelationships, in northern medieval Europe, between Feudalism, Manorialism, Serfdom, and Open-Field Agriculture,
- (a) i.e., why were both serfdom and open- or common-field agriculture generally found on manorial estates, and why were they almost always feudal fiefs?
- (b) why were these interrelationships stronger in northern Europe than in southern Europe?
- (c) how did agricultural differences between the north and south affect these agrarian institutions?
7. Did medieval western Europe experience a rise in real wages and real incomes, especially after the Black Death? Answer all of the following questions.
- a) If so: when, where, how, and why?
- b) If so: analyse the role of demographic, monetary, and institutional factors.
- c) If so: analyse as well the role of government economic policies, particularly in the realm of public finance and taxation.
- d) In general, in late-medieval western Europe, who gained the most and who suffered from changes in real incomes and in income distributions?
8. How, where, when, and why did the Enclosure movement spread in fifteenth-century England? In your answer consider all of the following:
- a) were the primary causes commercial, demographic, institutional (or a combination of the three)
- b) How did Enclosures affect the property rights and the economic fortunes of the English peasantry: and how did the transition from serfdom to copyholder status affect the various social groupings of the English peasantry?
- c) Why did the Low Countries, and France (and/or Italy, or other continental countries) not experience an enclosure movement in this era: why was England unique?
9. Discuss the importance of both wool and of woollen cloth in the late-medieval western European economy: in terms of changes in the agricultural, commercial-financial, and industrial sectors? Who gained and who lost in terms of these wool-based economic changes from ca. 1200 - ca. 1500?
10. Why did the Italians dominate the commerce and finance of late-medieval western Europe: in so doing, what institutional innovations did they create in commerce, banking, and finance?
11. Why were England, Holland-Zealand, and Portugal economic ‘backwaters’ in the High Middle Ages; and how did each, in their own spheres of activity, come to challenge the economic dominance of the north-Germanic Hanseatic League and the Italians during the fifteenth century?
12. Compare and contrast the economic significance (for economic growth) of technological innovations in three of the following sectors or industries, during the later Middle Ages: agriculture, mining and metallurgy, textile industries, shipbuilding and navigation, banking and finance.