

Course Outline and Reading List

This is a course on the economic history of modern Europe with special emphasis on the issues of industrialization and development from 1700-1914. The focus will be on acquainting the students with the core issues surrounding the study of European economic history. This includes: Introduction to the new economic history. Central issues of discussion and debate. Research methodology. Economic reasoning within larger historical debates. Using economics and convincing economists. Institutions and economic development. Developing the institutional narrative.

This course should help familiarize you with the work of some of the most prominent scholars in Cliometrics and the more promising, interesting and/or popular research topics (the three not necessarily going hand-in-hand). You will also be introduced to the process of becoming an academic researcher and the problems involved with finding a research topic suitable for your dissertation. To that end, you will be graded on three separate activities: class participation through formal presentation and informal discussion during the course and a term paper due on Friday May 7, 2020 before 4 pm.

The paper should contain a critical essay on one important issue in the study of economic history. The time period studied must be between 1600 and 1914 unless special permission is given. The nation or nations studied must be outside of North America. **More important, you should test or attempt to study at least one specific hypothesis using historical data.** The test need not be econometric. While it is normal to expect that this will involve some modeling and simple regressions, it is also possible to produce a good paper making clever use of tables and graphs. What is essential is that you learn how to make an analytically rigorous argument and sustain or reject it on the basis of empirical evidence. You might seek to apply an existing model to different data or repeat a test that already exists in the literature using different time periods. The final work should be about 15-25 pages in length, double-spaced in Times Roman 12 font. Everyone must consult with me before writing their papers. **All topics will have to be approved in advance (by March 18, 2021).**

The following constitutes a tentative reading list. Most of the books are available in the bookstore or are in the library on reserve. I recommend you purchase the Brewer, Clark, and Nye books. Most of the articles may be downloaded from JSTOR or authors' websites.

Office hours by appointment online. Email [jnye@gmu.edu](mailto:jnye@gmu.edu).

## **I. Introduction – Cliometrics and the Universality of Economic Ideas**

McCloskey, D.N. "Does the Past Have a Useful Economics?" JEL 1976 pp. 434-61.

North, D.C. 1974. "Beyond the New Economic History" JEH.

Temin, Peter. "The Economy of the Early Roman Empire," Journal of Economic Perspectives, winter 2006.

## **II. Extensive Growth: the Malthusian Debate in Economic History**

Greg Clark. *Farewell to Alms* Chapters 1-9.

Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian. "The Potato's Contribution to Population and Urbanization: Evidence from an Historical Experiment" (Harvard Working Paper).

## **III. Economics and the Middle Ages: Slavery and The Open Fields Debate**

S. Fenoaltea, "Slavery and Supervision in Comparative Perspective: A Model" JEH 1984.

Domar, E. 1970. "The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom: A Hypothesis" JEH.

McCloskey. "The Open Fields of England: Rent, Risk, and the Rate of Interest" in D.W. Galenson ed. *Markets in History*, 1989.

S. Fenoaltea 1988. "Transactions Costs, Whig History, and the Common Fields" in *Politics and Society*, 16, no. 2-3, pp. 171-240.

## **IV. The State and Economic Development: Mercantilism and Economic Rivalry**

Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*.

Nye, *War, Wine, and Taxes*.

Mathias and O'Brien, 1976. "Taxation in England and France 1715-1810" *J. of European Econ. History*, pp. 601-50.

O'Brien, 1988. "The Political Economy of British Taxation, 1660-1815" *Economic History Review*.

## **V. Institutions and Colonialism**

Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2001 "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation," AER.

O'Brien, Patrick, 1988. "The Costs and Benefits of British Imperialism", *Past and Present*.

## **VI. The Industrial Revolution I.**

Mokyr, 1999. "Editor's Introduction: the New Economic History and the Industrial Revolution" in Mokyr, ed. *The British Industrial Revolution: an Economic Perspective*.

Mokyr, "Long Term Economic Growth and the History of Technology" draft chapter for Aghion and Durlauf, eds. *The Handbook of Economic Growth*.

North, Douglass, 1968. "Sources of Productivity in Ocean Shipping, 1600-1850". *J. of Political Economy*.

## **VII. What About China?**

Mokyr, "Why Was the Industrial Revolution a European Phenomenon?"

Allen, 2004. "Agricultural Productivity and Rural Incomes in England and the Yangtze Delta, c. 1620 to c. 1820." Oxford.

<http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/members/robert.allen/Papers/chineseag.pdf>

Deng, 2000. "A Critical Survey of Recent Research in Chinese Economic History," *Econ Hist Review*.

Ma, 2004. "Why Japan, Not China, Was the First to Develop in East Asia: Lessons from Sericulture 1850-1937," *Econ Devt and Cultural Change*.

Shiue and Keller, 2007. "Markets in China and Europe on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution," AER.

## **VIII. The Industrial Revolution: Debating Growth Statistics**

Clark on the Industrial Revolution. *Farewell to Alms*.

Crafts and Harley. 1992. "Output Growth and the British Industrial Revolution: A Restatement of the Crafts-Harley View." *Econ History Review*.

Harley and Crafts, 1995 "Cotton Textiles and Industrial Output Growth During the Industrial Revolution." *Econ History Review*.

## **IX. The Standard of Living Debate**

Clark, 2001. "Farm Wages and Living Standards in the Industrial Revolution: England, 1670-1869. *Econ History Review*.

Crafts, 1997. "Some Dimension of the 'Quality of Life' During the British Industrial Revolution." *Econ History Review*.

Lindert and Williamson 1983 "English Workers' Living Standards During the Industrial Revolution" *Econ History Review*.

Feinstein, 1998 "Pessimism Perpetuated: Real Wages and the Standard of Living in Britain during and After the Industrial Revolution," JEH.

Voth, J. 1998. "Time and Work in Eighteenth-Century London." JEH.

## **X. Long Run Inequality**

Hoffman, Jacks, Levin, and Lindert, 2002. "Real Inequality in Western Europe Since 1500." JEH.

## **XI. France I: Introduction and Public Finance**

Grantham "The French Cliometric Revolution: A Survey" 1997 *European Review of Economic History*.

Weir, David 1989. "Tontines, Public Finance, and Revolution in France and England, 1688-1789" JEH.

White, Eugene, 1989. "Was There a Solution to the Ancien Regime's Financial Dilemma?" JEH.

## **XII. France II: Agriculture**

Sicsic 1992. "City-Farm Wage Gaps in Nineteenth Century France." JEH

O'Brien and Prados de la Escosura, 1992. "Agricultural Productivity and European Industrialization, 1890-1980" *Econ History Review*.

## **XIII. France III: Scale, size, and management**

Landes, 1949. "French Entrepreneurship and Industrial Growth in the Nineteenth Century" JEH.

Nye, 1987. "Firm Size and Industrial Backwardness: A New Look at the French Industrialization Debate," JEH September.

Kinghorn and Nye, 1997 "The Scale of Production in Western Economic Development" JEH.

## **XIV. Russia**

Gerschenkron, 1965. "Agrarian Policies and Industrialization: Russia 1861-1917," in *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 6.

Gregory, Paul. 1991. "The Role of the State in Promoting Economic Development: The Russian Case and its General Implications," in R. Sylla and G. Toniolo (eds), *Patterns of European Industrialization: the Nineteenth Century*, Routledge.

**XV. To Be Announced**