

Econ 214 Topics in Economic History: European

Fall 2007

MWF 2:10 – 3:00 pm

Baxter 311

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In this class we will learn both economics and history. The tools of economics will help us to understand history, and the events of history will help us to understand economic processes, and may lead us to revise economic theories. Economic history allows us to find out what happens when we can no longer hang on to those simplifying assumptions that economists hold so dear. Economic history is about paying attention to institutions. History can help us understand our world if we ask it the right questions.

This class is not organized chronologically. I could never hope to teach a complete economic history of Europe in a semester, and I'd rather teach you a few things in more depth than many things superficially. Don't expect to cover everything. I specifically stayed away from textbooks because they are too boring for me to read. Instead, I have focused on four big ideas: Custom vs. the Market, the Great Divergence, Communism, and Globalization.

Evaluation

Your grade for this course will be divided among the following items:

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|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Midterm | 20% |
| Final Exam | 24% |
| 3 Essays | 12% each |
| Homework, including one presentation | 8% |
| Quizzes/Outlines and Participation | 12% |

Assignments

You are expected to come to class having read and thought about the assigned text, and ready to participate in discussion. The quality of the class depends on your contributions. To encourage you to do so I will either give you a short quiz on the reading or ask you to turn in an outline of the reading.

To encourage you to do the readings, I will either ask you to turn in an outline or give you a quiz for each of the readings.

Homework: You will have three homework assignments that involve gathering and presenting data. In addition, you will each do a brief presentation on an article about wages.

Essays: You will write three 4-5 page essays on the course readings. Topics TBA.

Readings

The following books are (or will be) available at the bookstore:

- Gregory Clark, *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World*, Princeton University Press, 2007
- Robert C. Allen, *Farm to Factory: A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 2003
- Jeffrey Sachs, *Poland's Jump to the Market Economy*, MIT Press, 1994
- Kevin O'Rourke and Jeffrey Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy*, MIT Press, 1999

The rest of the readings for this class are available either on JSTOR or on Blackboard.

Outline

I. Custom or Market?

A. The Ancient Economy

- Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Beacon Press, 1957, Ch. 4–6
- Peter Temin, "A Market Economy in the Early Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies*, 2001, 91:169-81.
- Peter Temin "The Labor Market of the Early Roman Empire," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Spring 2004, 34:513-38.

B. The Modern Economy: Prices and Wages

- E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, Feb. 1971, 50:76-136
- Donald Woodward, "The Determination of Wage Rates in the Early Modern North of England," *Economic History Review*, Feb. 1994, 47:22-43
- Sheilagh Ogilvie, "Guilds, efficiency, and social capital: evidence from German proto-industry" *Economic History Review*, May 2004

II. The Great Divergence

- "The Industrial Revolution" [Video]
- Joel Mokyr, *The Lever of Riches: Technological Creativity and Economic Progress*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1990, Ch. 9-10
- Gregory Clark, *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World*, Princeton University Press, 2007

III. Communism

A. Russia before Communism

- Robert C. Allen, *Farm to Factory: A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 2003, Ch. 1-2

B. Russia under Communism

Paul Krugman, "The Myth of Asia's Miracle," *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 1994, 73(6): 62-78

Robert C. Allen, *Farm to Factory: A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 2003, Ch. 3-10

C. Post-Communist Europe

Jeffrey Sachs, *Poland's Jump to the Market Economy*, MIT Press, 1994

IV. Globalization

David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some are so Rich and some so Poor*, Norton, 1998, Ch. 5-6, 11-12

John Vincent Nye, "The Myth of Free-Trade Britain and Fortress France: Tariffs and Trade in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History*, March 1991, 51:23-46

Kevin O'Rourke and Jeffrey Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy*, MIT Press, 1999

Schedule

| Date | Task | Topic | Reading |
|---------|------------------------|--|--|
| Aug. 24 | | Introduction A Note on Sources | |
| | | CUSTOM OR MARKET? | |
| 27 | | The Ancient Economy | Polanyi, Ch. 4-6 |
| 29 | | The Ancient Economy | Temin 2001 and 2004 |
| 31 | | Prices | Thompson |
| Sept. 3 | | Wages | Woodward |
| 5 | Paper 1 Due | Lecture: Were Women's Wages Customary? | |
| 7 | | No Class | |
| 10 | | The Power of Guilds | Ogilvie |
| | | THE GREAT DIVERGENCE | |
| 12 | HW1 | Lecture: The Great Divergence | |
| 14 | Student Presentations | Wages over the Long Run | |
| 17 | Spinning Demonstration | Industrial Revolution: Technology | |
| 19 | | Technology: Video Part I | |
| 21 | | Why England? | Mokyr, <i>Lever of Riches</i> , Ch. 9-10 |
| 24 | | Why England? Video Part II | |
| 26 | | Why England? | North and Weingast, <i>Crafts</i> |

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|--------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 28 | | Standard of Living Video Part III | |
| Oct. 1 | Student Presentations | Standard of Living | |
| 3 | | | Clark Ch. 1-3 |
| 5 | | | Clark Ch. 4-6 |
| 8 | | | Clark Ch. 7-9 |
| 10 | | | Clark Ch. 10-12 |
| 12 | FALL BREAK | | |
| 15 | | | Clark Ch. 15-18 |
| 17 | MIDTERM | | |
| | | COMMUNISM | |
| 19 | Paper 2 Due | Lecture: Russia before Communism | |
| 22 | | | Allen Ch. 1-2 |
| 24 | | Growth under Communism | Krugman |
| 26 | | | Allen Ch. 3-4 |
| 29 | | | Allen Ch. 5-6 |
| 31 | | | Allen Ch. 7-8 |
| Nov. 2 | | | Allen Ch. 9-10 |
| 5 | | Lecture: The Fall of Communism | |
| 7 | | Transition in Poland | Sachs |
| 9 | HW2 | Transition | |
| 12 | | Evaluating the Experiment | |
| | | GLOBALIZATION | |
| 14 | | Globalization before 1800 | Landes, Ch. 5-6, 11-12 |
| 16 | | Trade in the 19 th Century | Nye |
| | THANKSGIVING BREAK | | |
| 26 | | Convergence? | O'Rourke and Williamson Ch. 2 |
| 28 | Paper 3 Due | Trade in Goods | O'Rourke and Williamson Ch. 3-4 |
| 30 | | Protectionism | O'Rourke and Williamson Ch. 5-6 |
| Dec. 3 | | Migration | O'Rourke and Williamson Ch. 7-8 |
| 5 | | Evaluating Globalization | O'Rourke and Williamson Ch. 9, 14 |
| 7 | HW3 | European Union | |
| 12 | FINAL EXAM 1:30 pm | | |