DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY

THE PRE-MODERN WORLD
The economic and social development of Britain 1500-1680

The course will examine the main themes and issues of the economic and social development of Britain (in particular England) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The lectures will be given by Dr Musgrave and Dr Sweet. The tutorials (given by Dr Sweet) will be concerned with the history and development of society; you may choose to write an essay on a social or an economic topic.

LECTURES

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<td>Conclusion: Towards the Eighteenth Century</td>
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Aims and Objectives

The aims of the module are

- To provide you with a broad introduction to the nature of society, social change and economic change in Britain in the years before the Industrial Revolution.
- To give you an understanding of the differences between this earlier form of society and economy and modern society.
- To examine the ways in which people in the more distant past saw and understood their world.
- To examine critically and historically a number of key issues and themes in broader economic and social history such as ‘class’, ‘economic development’, the causes and consequences of population fluctuation, the role of popular belief.
- To allow you to examine the claims to modernity made for the period after 1750 in a historical context.
- To develop your skills in understanding and approaching complex material.
- To develop your skills in understanding differing cultural frameworks.
BRIEF CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND, 1509-1689

1509 Accession of Henry VIII
1529 Henry tries to seek annulment for marriage to Catherine of Aragon
1531 Parliament recognizes Henry as Supreme Head of the Church of England
Act concerning punishment for beggars and vagabonds draws distinction between able bodied and impotent poor
1533 Statute fixes maximum price for meat
1534 Act limiting ownership of sheep
1536 First act for dissolution of the monasteries
Enclosure Act
Act for punishment of sturdy vagabonds and beggars
Pilgrimage of Grace
1537 First authorized English Bible published
1539 Dissolution of the greater monasteries; creation of new bishoprics
1541 Parishes instructed to set up vernacular bibles in churches
1542 Beginning of great debasement of coinage – continues throughout 1540s
1547 Death of Henry VIII and accession of Edward VI
Dissolution of the Chantries
Act for the punishment of vagabonds and relief of poor and impotent persons
English invasion of Scotland
1549 Act of Uniformity
Tax on sheep and cloth; enclosures; riots in south of England; in West country and East Anglia (Kett’s Rebellion)
1550 Bad harvests; local risings; boom in cloth exports
1551 Fall in cloth exports and economic slump, bad harvest; great debasement peaks, local risings and outbreak of sweating sickness.
1552 Act for the provision and relief of the poor
1553 Death of Edward VI; 9 days reign of Lady Jane Grey; accession of Mary I
1554 Wyatt’s Rebellion and Mary’s marriage to Philip of Spain
1555 Restoration of papal supremacy and catholicism
Very bad harvest
Formation of the Muscovy Company (first joint stock company)
1557 War with France; epidemics continue
1558 Death of Mary and accession of Elizabeth
New book of rates (imposing duties on goods entering or leaving the country)
Epidemics continue
1559 Act of Supremacy and Uniformity (basis of the Anglican Church).
1560 Recoinage begins
1563 Statute of Artificers (regulating employment of poor)
Beggars Act and introduction of compulsory element in collection of poor relief.
Wednesdays as well as Fridays made ‘fish’ ie fasting days (boost fishing industry).
Thirty Nine Articles (doctrinal basis for the Anglican Church) approved.
Publication of Fox’s Acts and Monuments (also known as Fox’s Book of Martyrs).
Outbreaks of plague
1571 Statute allowing interest of up to 10% on loans
1572 Act for punishment of vagabonds and relief of the poor and impotent, introduces national poor rate system to support deserving poor.
1576 Poor Relief Act – stocks of raw materials to be provided throughout the country to give work to the unemployed.
1577 Sir Francis Drake begins circumnavigation of the world.
1585 Foundation of Virginia by Sir Walter Raleigh; foundation of the Barbary Company (trade with North Africa)
1588 Defeat of the Spanish Armada
1594 First of four years of bad harvests in succession; social unrest.
1598 Bad harvest and particularly heavy taxation (war in Ireland, threat from Spain). Legislation on the poor and vagabonds, and discharged soldiers.
1600 Foundation of the East India Company
1601 Poor Laws of 1597-8 reissued in slightly modified form. High levels of taxation continue
1603 Death of Elizabeth and Accession of James I
1604 Great Farm of customs: beginning of trade boom which lasts until 1614.
1605 Gunpowder Plot
1607 Midland Rising against Enclosures.
1608 New Book of Rates – leads to large increase in royal revenue
1614 Cockayne’s scheme for prohibition of export of undyed cloth; Merchant Adventurers’ charter suspended, and a crisis in the cloth industry for 3 years.
1617 Restoration of Merchant Adventurers’ Charter and end to Cockayne scheme.
1618 James I’s Book of Sports
1620 Unemployment in the cloth industry
1624 Trade begins to improve after a four year depression.
1625 Death of James I and accession of Charles I
1627 War with Spain and outbreaks of plague
1628 Unemployment in the cloth industry
1629-31 Trade slump
1630 Bad harvests; beginning of large scale emigration to the New World. Foundation of Guinea Company
1639 Outbreak of Bishops War
1640 Long Parliament meets
1642 Outbreak of Civil War
1643 New fiscal system introduced by Parliament
1644 New religious settlement
1646 End of first Civil War
1648 Second Civil War.
1649 Execution of Charles I
1652 War with United Provinces (First Dutch War) over trade.
1653 Cromwell becomes Lord Protector of England
1657 First of 5 successive bad harvests
1658 Death of Cromwell; his son Richard becomes Protector
1659 End of the Protectorate
1660 Restoration of Charles II
1662 Act of Uniformity
1663 Foundation of Royal Africa Company
1665 Second Anglo Dutch War
1666 Great Fire of London
1667 Hudson’s Bay Company established.
1668 Glorious Revolution
1669-81 Exclusion Crisis
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Students are advised to purchase a general text such as Sharpe, or either of the volumes by Wrightson. HOWEVER a single text book is NEVER sufficient. The reading list which follows is extensive and allows you to follow up many topics which can only be covered briefly in the lectures. You should use the list to guide you in your reading in preparation for the tutorials. Dr Musgrave and Dr Sweet will be happy to give you guidance with the list or provide additional suggestions for reading.

GENERAL TEXTS

Slack, P., Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England (1988)
Wrightson, Keith, English Society, 1580-1680 (1982)

The Economy
Bowden, P.J., The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England (1962)
-----, Industry in Tudor and Stuart England, 1 (1975)
Chartres, J. Internal trade in England, 1500-1700 (1977)
Chartres, J and Hey, D English Rural Society 1500-1800 (1990)
Davis, R. English Overseas Trade 1500-1700 (1973)
Hoskins, W.G., The Midland Peasant (1957)
Kerridge, E, Textile manufactures in early modern England (1985)
-----, ‘Progress and Backwardness in English Agriculture, 1500-1650’, Economic History Review, 1986
-----, Agricultural Regions and Agrarian History in England, 1500-1750 (1987)

The Family
Anderson, M., Approaches to the History of the Western Family, 1500-1914 (1980)
Ben-Amos, I. K., Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England (1994)
Bonfield, L., Marriage Settlements, 1601-1740 (1983)


Laslett, P. (ed), *The World we have lost* (1983)


**Gender Relations and the Experience of Women**


Prior, M (eds), *Women in English Society* (1985)
Thomas, K. ‘Women and the Civil War Sects’, *Past and Present* (1958)

**Literacy and Education**
Capp, B., *Astrology and the Popular Press* (1979)
Charlton, K. Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England (1999)
Spufford, M., ‘First Steps in Literacy: the Reading and Writing Experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers’, *Social History* (1979)
Stone, L. ‘The educational revolution in England, 1560-1640’, *Past and Present* (1964)
Wrightson, K., *English Society, 1580-1680* (1982), ch. 4
Religion and Reformation (Introductory only)
Capp, B., *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (1972)
Clark, P., “The Ramoth Gilead of the Good”: Urban Change and Political Radicalism in Gloucester, 1540-1640’ in Barry (ed.), *The Tudor and Stuart Town*
Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*
Youings, Joyce, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (1971)

Witchcraft
Thomas, K. *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1973)
Popular Cultures and Popular Beliefs: note that much of the material in the other sections is also relevant – there will be important material under religion, witchcraft, protest and resistance and gender.


Thomas, K. *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1973)


**Protest and Resistance**


In J. Brewer and J. Styles (eds), *An Ungovernable People*


Thompson, E.P. *Customs in Common* (1991)


Walter, J., ‘Grain riots and popular attitudes to the law: Maldon and the crisis of 1629’ in J. Brewer and J. Styles (eds), *An Ungovernable People*. 

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Social Structures, Community and class

Clark, P. *English Provincial Society* (1977)
Grassby, R., ‘The personal wealth of the business community in 17th century England’, *EcHR* 91970)
Tillyard, E.M.W. *The Elizabethan world picture* (1943)

Urban Life and the Growth of Towns

Clark P and SlackP., *Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700* (1972)
Clark, P. and Slack, P. *English Towns in Transition 1500-1700* (1976)
Fisher, F. J. ‘The development of London as a centre of conspicuous consumption’, *TRHS* (1948)

**Poverty and Social Policy**
Slack, P., *Poverty in Early Stuart Salisbury* (1975)
Slack, P., ‘Great and Good Towns’ in *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*
Thomas, K. *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) chs 7 and 8

**Life and Death**
Bradley, L. *The Plague Reconsidered* (1979)
Laslett, P. *The World we have lost* (1983)

A selection of online resources for early modern history is available at
[http://www.le.ac.uk/history/teaching/earlymod.htm](http://www.le.ac.uk/history/teaching/earlymod.htm)
**CLASSES & ESSAYS**

**Classes** - You are expected to attend four classes. Attendance at classes is monitored and action will be taken if you are absent from more than 2 classes without proper explanation. If you cannot give your explanation directly to your tutor, you should contact the School Office in person, by email (ten@le.ac.uk) or by phone - 0116-252-2588).

**Minor assignment** - The assignment will comprise of a commentary of c.1,000 words upon a primary source, to be chosen from a selection which will be distributed during the first lectures.

**Essay(s)** - You are required to write ONE or TWO (20 credit students only) essays from the list below. You tutor will give you guidance as to reading for each essay if you request it.

Your essay should be about 2,500 words in length (not including footnotes and the bibliography) and should follow the attached Departmental style sheet. You must append a bibliography of the books and articles you have read (not just of those you have cited). Any student repeating the year must chose a different topic from last year for the assignment and essay(s).

The topics for classes and essays are listed below. You must not write an essay on a topic you have covered in class.

1. How have historians accounted for the fluctuations of the early modern demographic regime?
2. How ‘progressive’ was English agriculture, 1603-1660?
3. Discuss the impact of plague and famine on the population of England, 1603-60.
4. What evidence is there for a polarization between popular and elite culture in the early modern period?
5. What were the social and economic changes which necessitated the development of a system of poor relief?
6. Why did the puritans fail to change the morals and manners of the English people, 1590-1660?
7. How serious a threat to the social and political order were riots and rebellions before 1660?
8. What do criminal statistics reveal about the actual level of violence and property crime in our period?
9. What did it mean to be a gentleman in the early modern period?
10. What was the impact of towns and cities on the social and economic life of England, 1603-60?
11. To what extent did women lack power in early modern England?
12. Assess the economic and social significance of the growth of London in our period.
13. How far is it possible to talk of an ‘English’ economy in 1700?
14. What role did foreign trade play in changing the English economy 1500-1680?
15. Why was the family such an important institution in early modern England?
16. What differences would the changes consequent upon the Reformation have made to the patterns of every day life in early modern England?