SYLLABUS

THE DUTCH REPUBLIC AND BRITAIN: THE MAKING OF MODERN SOCIETY AND A EUROPEAN WORLD ECONOMY

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH

A SEMINAR FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS

AT THE INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, AND WEBSTER UNIVERSITY, LEIDEN

June 30 to August 2, 2013
SEMINAR SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Introduction

The purpose of this five-week NEH Summer Seminar for School Teachers at the Historical Institute in London and Leiden, The Netherlands, is to investigate how a region of Northwestern Europe, centered on the North Sea, acquired the characteristics that historians have labeled modern. We will study how the national economy of the Dutch Republic rose to dominance in the new European world-economy of the seventeenth century, how Britain acquired this supremacy in the eighteenth century, and how it transformed itself to become the first industrial nation. Using a comparative method, we will study contemporary accounts, historical documents, seminal historical interpretations and visit some of the key places that experienced this world-historical transformation. We will explore the historiography of an important topic in European economic and social history, appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of humanistic studies, connect the study of the texts to the subject’s material culture, provide a broader perspective on contemporary issues associated with the term ‘globalization’ and do so in an atmosphere conducive to collegiality, study and reflection. The core texts for the seminar will consist of five important historical works:


Throughout the seminar we will use contemporary documents to ground our discussion in historical reality and to listen to the voices of actual historical participants. I have also photocopied and digitized a selection of historical documents, as well as some key scholarly articles, and collected these in a volume of ‘additional reading.’ In addition to a detailed analysis of our texts, we will attempt to ask larger questions. How did contemporary observers interpret the social, commercial and industrial changes of the period? Should we understand economic ideas and policies as relative to a particular time and place or against the prevailing principles of modern economic science? How do disciplinary traditions, ideological orientations and national identity help shape the arguments of our texts? How do the historical sites and museum exhibits
help us to understand the texts? What is the relationship between the pursuit of profit and empire in the building of the European led world-economy? Did the creation of a global trade network lay the foundation of an industrial economy and modern society in northwestern Europe? Does an economy have to experience an industrial revolution, such as that in Britain, to be labeled ‘modern’? Does our subject provide a useful perspective on our society’s efforts to grapple with the issues of globalization and economic change?

**Seminar structure**

The seminar will meet three mornings per week from 9:00 to noon with a break for refreshments. In addition we will meet two whole days during the first two weeks, one day per week during the other weeks, and one weekend for our museum and site visits. Participants are expected to take part in all sessions. I will be widely available for individual meetings with participants. The seminar will be organized into four cooperative learning groups and these groups will serve as the chief organizing principle of the morning meetings. Each group will lead the discussion on a rotating basis. The group will pose questions, provide a context, analyze the reading, suggest comparisons and present additional perspectives. This is not a lecture course. I will encourage everyone to participate actively.

I believe that the process of writing is crucial to learning. Each participant will be asked to keep a journal in which to record daily reactions to the reading, discussions and site visits. A few participants will be asked to share these reflections during each meeting. Each participant will write an interpretive essay (8-10 pages), or a more narrowly focused paper, on any topic related to the seminar. While longer papers are acceptable, the goal is to write a well-crafted and thoughtful essay rooted in the literature of the seminar of about eight pages. Drafts of essays will be discussed within each cooperative learning group and its argument will be presented to the seminar during the last week. Participants are welcome to revise their essays after the seminar, if they so wish, as long as they return it to me by September. Essays will be ‘published’ on our website.

Throughout the seminar you will have access to electronic resources at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Library. This is particularly useful for electronic access to scholarly journals through JSTOR. You will also have reading access to the library at the Institute for
Historical Research in London and to Leiden University libraries in the Netherlands. Our seminar website will serve as a convenient source of resources on our subject. It will welcome future contributions from participants, such as research contributions, essays, lesson plans, documents, or audio-visual material related to our subject. Our website http://www1.umassd.edu/ euro/ will thus serve as a means of continuing the learning community that we will build during the seminar. Essays and many resources from some of my previous NEH seminars on the industrial revolution in Britain can be found at http://www1.umassd.edu/ir/

Schedule

I Week of June 30—Institute for Historical Research, London

Sunday: 18:00 Dinner and Welcome Reception at the Queen’s Head and the Artichoke

Monday: 9:00-12:00

All academic sessions in London will be at the Institute for Historical Research, Senate House, University of London, Malet Street.

• Introduction
• Discussion of major questions and themes to be raised in the seminar
• Cooperative learning groups organization, seminar discussion assignments, and seminar projects
• Introduction to the Historical Institute Library

Tuesday 9:00-12:00


• What are the chief elements of what de Vries calls “the age of crisis”?
• What evidence points to a decline or consolidation of the peasant agricultural economy?
• What is ‘proto-industry’ and did it create a new class?
• Why are trade and urbanization dynamic economic forces and what is the relationship between European and international trade?
• What does de Vries mean by “capitalism creating its own demand”? 
• Does he see bourgeois capital as more dynamic than aristocratic or state capital?
• Does de Vries think that mercantilism played an important role in the success of particular national economies?
• Why did Britain rather than the Dutch Republic have the first industrial revolution?
• Based on this book how would you characterize de Vries’ vision of economic history? Does the work display an ideological orientation?

**Wednesday 9:00-12:00**


• What does Wrightson see as the chief characteristics of the household economy and what were the major economic and social institutions beyond the household in the late fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries?
• What does Wrightson see as the most important dynamic factors in sixteenth and early seventeenth century economic expansion?
• What is the effect of economic expansion and restructuring on social groups in society such as the yeoman farmers, the gentry, the merchants, the artisans, and the aristocrats?
• How do Harrison, Harrington and Child describe England’s social and economic structure and how do these relate to political power?

Discussion of possible Essay Topics in Co-operative Learning Groups

**Thursday 8:30-18:00**

Site Visits: The City, London Docks and Greenwich

• Travel will be by Tube and the Docklands Railway
• London Pool from Tower Bridge and St. Catherine’s Dock
• Walk to Greenwich through the Thames pedestrian tunnel
• Greenwich Palace, Painted Hall and Royal Observatory
• National Maritime Museum
• Museum in Docklands, London and international trade

Friday 8:30-1800
• Travel will be by Tube
• Guided walk through the City’s financial center and visit to the Bank of England Museum
• London Museum galleries on the History of London, emphasis on the period 1500-1900
• National Science Museum exhibits on the technology of early modern navigation and the coming of modern industry
• Victorian & Albert Museum, British Galleries

II Week of July 7—Leiden, The Netherlands
Monday, July 8, 6:00 PM Welcome Reception and Dinner in Leiden
Tuesday 9:00-12:00 and 14:00-15:30

• What does Wrightson cite as the chief evidence for his argument that between c. 1650 and 1750 specialization and regional integration created a market economy in Britain?
• What were the main ways in which the state could influence this economy? How important was the international economy to the domestic economy?
• What were the critical elements of Britain’s efficient capitalist agricultural system and how did its owners and managers remain gentlemen?
• Does Wrightson see the cultural and social values of the ‘middling sort’ as a cause or as a consequence of the creation of a commercial society in Britain by 1750?
• Did the laboring people become more dependent or independent in the century before 1750?
• Does Wrightson’s description of a market society in Britain fit with de Vries’ analysis of social and economic developments in northwestern Europe as a whole?
• What do North, Mandeville, Defoe, Hume, Millar, and Smith see as the chief principles that encourage economic change and growth? Which social groups, industries and social attitudes do they see as the most important to economic development?

14:00-15:30
Visit and introduction to the Leiden University Library

Wednesday 9:00-17:00
Guided city walk in Leiden led by Reno Raaijmakers, including the Lakehal Museum
Coach to Den Haag. City walk and visit to the Mauritshuis Museum for paintings from the Dutch Golden Age.

Thursday 9:00-12:00
• How did political late medieval rebellions in the Low Countries encourage the creation of the Flemish city-states?
• How did the economic reorientation of the Low Countries contribute to the formation of a bourgeois culture in Flanders and Brabant?
• In what sense was the Burgundian century (1385-1477) a ‘Golden Age’? Was it also a golden age for the growth of a capitalist economy?
• What were the economic and social consequences of the Burgundian period in The Netherlands (1477-1588)?

Friday 8:00-Sunday 18:00: Weekend trip to Flanders, overnight accommodations in Ghent
• Travel will be by coach and train
• Walk in Antwerp, the Grote Markt and historic center, including a visit to the Kathedraal
• Rubens House in Antwerp
• City Walk in Bruges, including visits to the Hallen (16th c. covered market), Basiliek van het Heilge Bloed, Stadhuis and Groeningsmuseum

• City Walk in Ghent, including St. Bataafs Kathedraal, Belfort and Lakenhalle (cloth hall), Grasslei (late medieval harbor), and Gravensteen

III Week of July 14—Leiden, The Netherlands

Monday 9:00-12:00


• What do you see as the chief characteristics of government and society under Burgundian and Habsburg rule?

• What was the connection between Humanism and Reformation in the Low Countries? How successful was the Reformation in the Low Countries before the Revolt?

• Why has the Catholic thinker, Erasmus, been seen as one of the greatest influences on the culture of the Protestant Republic?

• What is Israel’s interpretation of the origin of the revolt of the Netherlands?

• What is Israel’s explanation of the division of the Netherlands between the Republic and the Spanish empire?

• How did the Republic emerge as a great power during the early Republic and why does Israel stress this as a crucial aspect of its history?

• How does Israel explain the beginning of Dutch primacy in world trade? According to Israel, how did Amsterdam’s entrepôt differ from that of Antwerp? How did Dutch success in the ‘bulk trades’ complement its success in the ‘rich trades’?

• What were the chief characteristics of Dutch Society in the early Republic? Would you describe it as a ‘bourgeois’ society?
Tuesday 9:00-12:00
Israel, Chapters 16-30; photocopies of documents on religion and government in the Republic in Rowen sections V, VI.

- Why did Toleration fail in the early Republic?
- What is meant by ‘Confessionalization’ in the Republic and what was the nature of Toleration in the later Republic?
- How would you describe the political structure of the Republic during the mid-17th century?
- What is the ‘True Freedom” and why did it decline?
- Why does Israel see Dutch intellectual life as a ‘new culture’? Is it a bourgeois culture?

Wednesday 8:30 -19:00
Site Visits in Amsterdam
Depart for Amsterdam at 8.30
- City Walk of the old center of Amsterdam
- Amsterdam City Hall (Koninklijk Paleis).
- Amsterdam’s Historical Museum
Depart from Amsterdam at 19:00

Thursday 9:00-12:00

- What does the making and marketing of pictures tell us about the Dutch Golden Age?
- What are the connection between Dutch artistic ‘realism’ and the Republic’s economic and social ideals?
- What are the connections between the Republic’s art and its science and literature?
- How does Dutch art of the Golden Age reflect the Republic’s global economy and its emerging national identity?
- What does the portraiture of the Golden Age tell us about gender, love, status, civic identity, the self and community?
IV Week of July 21—Leiden, The Netherlands

Monday 9:00-12:00

Israel, chapters 31-44. Photocopies of selections on the trade and commerce of the Republic in Rowen, sections VII, VIII, including Hugo Grotius, The Freedom Of The Seas, Or The Right Which Belongs To The Dutch To Take Part In The East Indian Trade (1609); and Sir William Temple, Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands (1673). Pieter de la Court, The True Interest and Maxims of the Republic of Holland (1662) in Henry C. Clark, Commerce, Culture & Liberty: Readings on Capitalism Before Adam Smith, 2003.

- Why did the Dutch economy emerge successfully from the crisis of the world economy in the seventeenth century?
- Why did the Dutch succeed in the Asian trade system but had much less success in the Atlantic?
- What is the role of empire in Dutch economic success during this period?
- What was the relationship of the Republic’s international trade network to its industrial development?
- To what factors does Israel ascribe relative Dutch economic decline? Does he see the political factors or the economic factors as most crucial in the Republic’s relative decline?
- Does Israel see the Republic’s government as an effective force in the Republic’s economic growth?
- Which sectors of the Republic’s economy maintained their leadership the longest?
- What is Hugo Grotius’ argument on the freedom of the seas?
- To what does Temple attribute the Republic’s economic success?
- Can we describe Pieter de la Court as an advocate of free trade? How might de la Court’s social and economic background have influenced his views?

Tuesday 9:00-12:00

Chapters (photocopies) from The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. I, The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century, Nicholas Canny,

• Why does Canny question the widely held assumption that “there was a necessary connection between exploration and exploitation and that the establishment of overseas empires was the inevitable consequence of Discovery”?

• What are the links Canny sees between colonization in Ireland and the Americas?

• Why, according to Canny, did the connection between empire and economic prosperity did not become commonly accepted until the late seventeenth century in England?

• According to Braddick, why did the English state assume a much more prominent role in the promotion of foreign trade and empire during the seventeenth century? Was it effective?

• Why, according to Zahedieh, when England’s transoceanic trade was only 20 per cent of its foreign trade, did contemporaries see it as so important and why does she argue that it was of strategic importance to England’s economic development by the late seventeenth century?

• According to Aylmer, why does the role of the state and the navy become increasingly important in the expansion of England’s trade and empire by the end of the seventeenth century?

• How are O’Brien’s conclusions on the connection between international trade and British economic growth?

• Why does Price make a distinction between the ‘commercial empire’ and the formal empire? What were the chief products traded with the ‘commercial empire’ and why did the increase
in demand play an important role in encouraging industrialization in Britain, according to Price?

- Why was the Atlantic slave trade, which in itself was not a large percentage of trade, so important to Britain’s overall international trade? What is Richardson’s position on the debate about slavery and industrialization?
- What, according to Marshall, was the consequence for the role of international trade in Britain’s economy of ‘the swing to the East’ of the British Empire after the American Revolution to the early nineteenth century?

Wednesday 8:30-19:00
Site Visits to North Holland: Industry, Polders, and Zuiderzee Ports
Depart for the Zaan at 8:30
- Zaanse Schans and Zaan Museum, industrial windmills in North Holland
Depart for Hoorn and Enkhuizen at 11:30
- Hoorn City Walk
- Enkhuizen City Walk
- Enkhuizen Museum: Binnen—East India warehouse, Buiten—museum village
Depart from Enkhuizen at 19:00

Thursday 9:00-12:00

- How does Allen demonstrate that pre-industrial Britain had a high-wage economy?
- How does Allen reinterprett Britain’s agricultural revolution in the pre-industrial period?
- Why are declining industries crucial to Berg’s view of the revolutionary nature of industrialization?
- What is Allen’s argument about Britain’s cheap energy economy in the preindustrial period?
• How does Britain’s pre-industrial economy explain that Britain could produce the first industrial revolution?

• What, according to Berg, are the links between colonial products, women’s desires, consumer demand and industrialization? What is the relationship between Berg’s emphasis on the demand factor of consumption and our own recent experience?

• Why was the commercial revolution crucial to economic growth on both sides of the North Sea?

V Week of July 28—Leiden, The Netherlands

Monday 9:00-12:00


• According to Allen, why did Britain have the first industrial revolution?

• What according to Allen were the key technologies of the first industrial revolution and why were they British?

• What is Allen’s argument about Britain’s industrial revolution and modern economic growth?

• What is de Vries’ argument on the connection between the ‘industrious revolution’ and modern economic growth?

• Why, according to de Vries and van der Woude, does the experience of the Dutch Republic call into question much of the historiography of the British industrial revolution?

• Judging from Allen’s study, what are the chief characteristics of the new economic history?

• Now that we are at the end of the reading, what do you think of O’Brien’s argument on the connection between economic growth, mercantilism and imperialism?
**Tuesday 9:00-12:00**
Seminar project presentations and discussion

**Wednesday 8:30-17**
Site Visits: Amsterdam and Haarlem
Depart for Amsterdam at 8:30
• National Scheepvaart (Maritime) Museum
Depart for Haarlem at 12:30
• Haarlem city walk and visit to the Frans Hals Museum
Depart from Haarlem at 19:00

**Thursday 9:00-12:00**
Seminar project presentations and Discussion
Farewell Dinner and Party: 18:00

**Friday, August 2, Depart Leiden, AM.**