

Folger Seminar 2015

Debating Capitalism: Early Modern Political Economies

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Emerging discourses of political economy offered a series of powerful analytical frameworks for understanding and shaping the profound changes underway in early modern Europe and its empires. This seminar will trace a number of different traditions of political economy, primarily from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and explore some of the vibrant debates that took place over the merits, and consequences, of improvements in the “wealth of the nation.” The readings listed below have been chosen to guide our investigation of the ways in which political economy was embedded in discourses about natural history and religion, moral philosophy and political theory, gender and law. While canonical works by theorists like Locke, Mandeville, Hume, Rousseau, Smith and others are well represented here, we have also sought to include lesser-known works on political economy, as well as related literary and legal texts composed by lawyers and merchants, public officials and pundits. By incorporating some of these other kinds of texts, and by focusing squarely upon the languages of political economy, this seminar seeks both to build upon and to expand the inquiries of the Center for the History of British Political Thought.

Week 1: January 29: Histories of Commerce, Law and Empire

Samuel Pufendorf, *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* (1672), bk 2, ch 2, bk 4, ch 4

Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), bk 3

Geoffrey Gilbert, *Historical Account of the Original and Nature as well as the Law of Devises and Revocations* (1739), pp.1-14; *A Treatise on the Court of Exchequer* (1758), ch. XV

Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws* (1750), bks 20-21

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality among Men* (1755), part 2

Giles Jacob, *Lex Mercatoria* (1718), Introduction

J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 1999)

Prelude, chs. 20-21; vol 4 (Cambridge University Press, 2005), ch. 13

Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas about Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), chs. 1-2

Suggested additional reading:

Joshua Getzler, “Theories of Property and Economic Development,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 26, 4 (Spring 1996): 639-69

Istvan Hont, "Language of sociability and commerce: Samuel Pufendorf and the theoretical foundations of the 'Four-Stages Theory' in *Jealousy of Trade* (Harvard University Press, 2005)
Ronald Meeks, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge University Press, 1976), ch. 1
Paul Cheney, *Revolutionary Commerce: Globalization and the French Monarchy* (Harvard University Press, 2010), ch. 3

Week 2: February 5: Merchants, Competition, and Corporations

Hugo Grotius. *Free Sea* (1609)
Gerrard Malynes, *Lex Mercatoria* (1622), ch. V
Thomas Misselden, *Free Trade, or The Meanes to Make Trade Flourish* (1622), chs. 1-3
Thomas Mun, *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade* (1664), chs. I-IV
Henry Robinson, *Englands Safety in Trades Encrease* (1641), pp. 1-34
Josiah Child, *A New Discourse on Trade* (1693), ch. 3
Nicholas Barbon, *A Discourse of Trade* (1690), pp. 34-70
Jean-Francois Melon, *A Political Essay upon Commerce* (1738), chs. I, IV
David Hume, *Of Commerce* (1752)

William Pettigrew, "Free to Enslave: Politics and the Escalation of Britain's Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1688 – 1714." *William and Mary Quarterly* (January, 2007)
Philip Stern, "Companies: Monopoly, Sovereignty, and the East Indies" in Stern and Wennerlind (eds) *Mercantilism Reimagined* (Oxford University Press, 2013)

Suggested additional reading:

Thomas Leng, "Commercial Conflict and Regulation in the Discourse of Trade in Seventeenth-Century England," *The Historical Journal* (Dec., 2005)
Istvan Hont, "Free Trade and the Economic Limits to National Politics: Neo-Machiavellian Political Economy Reconsidered" in *Jealousy of Trade* (Harvard University Press, 2005)
Steve Pincus, "Neither Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism: Commercial Society and the Defenders of the English Commonwealth." *American Historical Review* (June, 1998)
Sophus Reinert, *Translating Empire: Emulation and the Origins of Political Economy* (Harvard University Press, 2011), ch. 3

Week 3: February 12: Gender and Labor/Property

Mary Astell, *Reflections upon Marriage* (1706)
Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726), chs. XI, XXI
Daniel Defoe, [Andrew Moreton] *Every-Body's Business is No-Body's Business; or Private Abuses, Publick Grievances* (1725)
Daniel Defoe, *Roxana* (1724)
Emilie Du Chatelet, Introduction to *Fable of the Bees*, ch. 1 in Zissner & Bour eds.,
Emilie Du Chatelet, *Selected Philosophical and Scientific Writing* (University of Chicago Press, 2009)
Eliza Haywood, *Female Spectator* (1744-46), bks 1, 23
Female Tatler #9 (July 25-27 1709), #96(?) (February 20-22 1710)
Joseph Addison, *Spectator* #155 (1711)

Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in 18th-century Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2012), ch. 2
Amy Louise Erickson, "Coverture & Capitalism," *History Workshop Journal* 59 (Spring 2005): 1-16
Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), ch. 3

Suggested additional reading:

The Man of Manners Or Plebian Polish'd (1737)
Daniel Defoe, *A Treatise Concerning the Use & Abuse of the Marriage Bed* (1727)
Bernard Mandeville, *Modest Defence of the Publick Stews* (1725)
Laura Mandel, *Misogynous Economies: The Business of Literature in 18th-century Britain* (University Press of Kentucky, 1999), chs 2-3
Laura Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce: Prostitution in 18th-century British Literature and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 3

Week 4: February 26: Credit and Trust

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), chs. 13-14
Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726), chs. XIII-XV, XVII, XXIV-XXV

William Potter, *The Key Of Wealth* (1650), bk. I, sect. I-IV; bk. II, sect. I, III-IV; bk. III, sect. I; bk. IV, sect. I.

John Law, *Money and Trade Considered* (1705), chs. VII-VIII
George Berkeley, *The Querist* (1725), # 1-65, 217-254
David Hume, *Of Money* (1752)
Galliani, *Della Moneta* (1751), chs. 2, 5

Charles Davenant, *Discourse on the Public Revenue* (1698), bk. II
Jean-Francois Melon, *A Political Essay upon Commerce* (1738), ch. XVIII
Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws* (1750), bk. 22
David Hume, *Of Public Credit* (1752)

Laura Brown, *Fables of Modernity: Literature and Culture in the English Eighteenth Century*, ch. 3.

Koen Stapelbroek, *Love, Self-Deceit, and Money: Commerce and Morality in the Early Neapolitan Enlightenment*, ch. 5

Suggested additional reading:

William Paterson, *A Brief Account of the Intended Bank of England* (1694)
Daniel Defoe, "An Essay on Publick Credit" (1710)
Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution*, ch. 3
Julian Hoppit, "The Myths of the South Sea Bubble." *Transactions of the RHS* (2002)
J. G. A. Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1975), ch. 13

Istvan Hont, "The rhapsody of public debt: David Hume and voluntary state bankruptcy" in *Jealousy of Trade* (Harvard University Press, 2005)
Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Palgrave, 1998), chs. 5-6

Week 5: March 5: Accounting and Calculating History

William Petty, *Essays in Political Arithmetic* (1711)
John Locke, "Essay on the Poor Laws," in Mark Goldie ed., *Locke: Political Essays* (Cambridge University Press, 1997)
Giles Jacob, *The Compleat Parish Officer* (1723), sect. 2, "Overseers of the Poor"
Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (1721), # 112-22
Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, bk I, chs 8-9

Natasha Glaisyer, "Calculating Credibility: Print Culture, Trust and Economic Figures in Early 18th-century England," *Economic History Review* 60, 4 (2007): 685-711
Carol Blum, *Strength in Numbers: Population, Reproduction, and Power in Eighteenth-Century France* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), chs. 2-3
Ted McCormick, *William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic* (Oxford University Press, 2009), ch. 5
Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), ch. 2

Suggested additional reading:

David Dalrymple *Time Bargains Tried by the Rules of Equity and Principles of the Civil Law* (1720)
Mandeville, *Essay on Charity Schools* (1723)
Julian Hoppit, "Political Arithmetic in Eighteenth-Century England," *Economic History Review* (Aug. 1996)
Ian Hacking, *The Emergence of Probability* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), ch. 12
Lorraine Daston, *Classical Probability in the Enlightenment* (Princeton University Press, 1988), ch. 3

Week 6: March 19: Nature

Samuel Hartlib, *An Essay for Advancement of Husbandry-Learning* (1655)
Cressy Dymock, *A Discoverie for Division or Setting out of Land* (1653), pp. 1-22
Carl Linnaeus, *The Oeconomia of Nature* (1749)
Du Pont de Nemours, *On the Origin and Progress of a New Science* (1768), selections
Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, *Reflections on the Formation and the Distribution of Wealth* (1766), selections
Francois Quesnay, *The Oeconomical Table* (1766), Introduction

Paul Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford University Press, 2015), ch. 4
Lisbet Rausing, *Linnaeus: Nature and Nation* (Harvard University Press, 1999), ch. 5
Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, *Enlightenment's Frontier: The Scottish Highlands and the Origins of Environmentalism* (Yale University Press, 2013), ch. 2

John Shovlin, *The Political Economy of Virtue: Luxury, Patriotism, and the Origins of the French Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 2

Suggested additional reading:

Andre Wakefield, *The Disordered Police State: German Cameralism as Science and Practice* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), ch. 3-4

Keith Tribe, "Cameralism and the Science of Government," *Journal of Modern History* (June 1984)

Pamela Smith, *The Business of Alchemy: Science and Culture in the Holy Roman Empire* (Princeton University Press, 1994), ch. 4

Alix Cooper, *Inventing the Indigenous: Local Knowledge and Natural History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), ch. 3

Week 7: March 26: The Self

Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees* (1714)

Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1729), Treatise I, sect. I. and Treatise II

Joseph Butler, *Five Sermons* (1729), Sermon 1

David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751), sect. I-III

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1761), part I

John Robertson, *The Case for Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples 1680-1760* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), chs. 6-7

Pierre Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith: A Genealogy of Economic Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), ch. 1

Suggested additional reading:

E.J. Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable: Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), chs. 1-2

Mikko Tolonen, *Mandeville and Hume: Anatomists of Civil Society* (Voltaire Foundation, 2013), ch. 2

Week 8: April 2: Wealth and Virtue

John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757-8), part III, sect. I-V

Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), part VI

Voltaire, *The Man of the World* (1738)

Fenelon, *Telemachus* (1699), bk. XVII

Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (1721), #11-14

Jean-Francois Melon, *A Political Essay upon Commerce* (1738), ch. IX

David Hume, *Of Refinement of the Arts* (1752)

Richard Sher, "From Troglodytes to Americans: Montesquieu and the Scottish Enlightenment on Liberty, Virtue, and Commerce" in D. Wootton, *Republicanism: Liberty and Commercial Society* (Stanford University Press, 1994)

Michael Sonenscher, *Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution* (Princeton University Press, 2007), ch. 3

Suggested additional reading:

Albert Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism Before its Triumph* (Princeton University Press, 1977)

J. G. A. Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1975), ch. XIV

Anoush Terjanian, *Commerce and its Discontents in Eighteenth-Century French Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 1

Week 9: April 16: Empire and Slavery

Francis Hargrave, *An Argument in the Case of James Somersett a Negro* (1772)

Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws* (1750), bks 15-17

Selections from *Encyclopedie*: “slavery” “slave trade” “Africa” “Congo”

Willem Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (1705), letter xviii

Jean-Francois Melon, *A Political Essay upon Commerce* (1738), chs. IV-V

Denis Diderot, *Philosophical and Political History of European Trade and Settlements in the Two Indies, Political Writings* (1783), pp. 169-214

Christopher Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (UNC Press, 2006), ch. 4

Sankar Muthu, “Commerce Conquest and Cosmopolitanism” in Muthu ed., *Empire and Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Anoush Terjanian, *Commerce and its Discontents in Eighteenth-Century French Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2012), ch. 2

Robin Law, “West Africa’s Discovery of the Atlantic,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 44, 1 (2011): 1-25

Suggested additional reading:

Andrew Fletcher, *Two Discourses Concerning the Affairs of Scotland* (1698), Second Discourse
Laws Concerning Masters and Servants, by a Gentleman of the Inner Temple (1767)

William Pettigrew, *Freedom’s Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672-1752* (UNC Press, 2013), chs. 3, 6

Catherine Molineux, *Faces of Perfect Ebony: Encountering Atlantic Slavery in Imperial Britain* (Harvard University Press, 2012), ch. 1

Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (University of Pennsylvania, 2004), ch. 3

Week 10: April 23: Utopian Visions

Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), sect. V

William Robertson, *View of the Progress of Society in Europe*, selections

Abbe Raynal, *Philosophical History* trans Justamont (1777; 3rd edn), vol 5 pp. 492-511

Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch”

J.G. Fichte, “Review of Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*”

Isaac Nakhimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State: Perpetual Peace and Commercial Society from Rousseau to Fichte* (Princeton University Press, 2011), ch. 3

Iain McDaniel, *Adam Ferguson in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Roman Past and Europe's Future* (Harvard University Press, 2013), ch. 4

Istvan Hont, "The 'Rich Country—Poor Country' Debate Revisited" in Wennerlind and Schabas, *David Hume's Political Economy* (Routledge, 2008)