History 159B.
Industrialization and Imperialism. Europe and the World, 1780-1914

This course surveys major trends in economic history of Europe from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to the outbreak of World War I. It will focus on the spread of modern industry from Britain to continental Europe, North America, and Japan; the development of an integrated international economy, or “early globalization”; the gold standard; and the economic impact of imperialism and colonial empires.

This course is equivalent to Economics 111B. Economics majors may apply the course to their major requirements.

Basic knowledge of economics is helpful, as is a general background in world history, but there are no formal prerequisites for enrollment in this course.

Evaluation will be based on a mid-term examination (20%), a term paper of 7-8 pages to be described later (20%), discussion session participation (20%), and a final exam (40%).

All assigned readings, except as noted in the syllabus below, are assembled in a reader available at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft.

Reading Assignments

25 August. Introduction.

30 Aug – 1 Sept. The origins of modern economic growth.


6-8 Sept. The British Industrial Revolution.


20-22 Sept.: Germany.

Toni Pierenkemper and Richard Tilly, The German Economy during the Nineteenth Century (2004), Ch. 1, pp. 3-12; Ch 3-4, pp. 23-72; Ch 7-9, pp. 113-144.


27-29 Sept.: Italy and Russia

Gianni Toniolo, An Economic History of Liberal Italy, Ch. 5-6, pp. 36-59; Ch. 12, pp. 133-50.

Trebilcock, Ch. 4, pp. 205-291.
4 Oct. Industrialization in Comparative Perspective.


6 Oct. Mid Term Exam


Massimo Livi-Bacci, A Concise History of World Population (1992), Ch. 4, pp. 100-45.


Dudley Baines, Emigration from Europe, 1815-1930 (1991), Ch. 1, pp. 7-16; Ch. 3-5, pp. 21-42; Ch. 9, pp. 58-65.

18-25 Oct. Did Economic Growth increase Inequality?


27 Oct. - 1 Nov. Imperialism


3-15 Nov. A Globalizing Economy


Clark, Farewell to Alms, Ch 15-17, pp. 303-70.


David Landes, Unbound Prometheus (1969), Ch. 5, pp. 231-49 (Also in Cambridge Economic History of Europe Vol. 6, pp. 458-76.)


6-8 Dec. RRR Week.