

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester II, 1985-86

History 801

Mr. Clover

TOPIC: THE ANCIENT ECONOMY

Fickle humanity steals, discards, avoids, buys, hoards, covets and sells goods and services with such bewildering unpredictability that economists' predictions never have an even chance of being correct. The student who wishes to study the economy of the Classical Mediterranean has the added disadvantage of attitudes shaped by modern industrialization. A society whose majority performed agricultural labor bears no resemblance to the modern world, where most people in advanced countries live and work in cities.

Each participant in this seminar will consider and report on an economic document or economic aspect of the Ancient World -- for instance, Hesiod's Works and Days, the economic dimension of the Roman conquest of the Hellenistic East, and Diocletian's Edict on Prices. Introductory discussions on modern attitudes toward the economies of the Classical Mediterranean and pre-industrial societies in general will precede the reports on specific topics.

The seminar is open to both graduates and upper-level undergraduates. Meeting time: Mondays, from 3:30 until 5:30 P.M.

INTRODUCTORY READING

- *% Adam Smith, THE WEALTH OF NATIONS, ed. A. Skinner. Viking Penguin/Penguin Books.
- *% M. I. Finley, THE ANCIENT ECONOMY. University of California Press Paperback.

- * required purchase at the bookstores
- % on three-day reserve in H.C. White no. 1191

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

A paper on some aspect of the Classical Mediterranean will be due one week after the last meeting of the seminar. Suggested maximum length: 10 to 20 pages. Decide by Monday, February 10th, whether you will write your paper on your assigned topic, or on another topic. Paper topics will be discussed in individual consultations with the instructor before February 10th.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Preparing Reports

Each report topic contains citations of a number of books, journals, encyclopedias etc. Start your search for the works cited on the second floor of the Memorial Library, where the central catalogue of the UW-Madison Library System is located.

The title of each report topic and the accompanying readings suggest a general line of inquiry. Try to pick out of these information which contributes toward our understanding of the economy of the particular place and time with which you are concerned.

For each report topic there is presently reserved one two-hour meeting period. Use up to one-half of your assigned period to present your topic, and then allow the remaining time for questions. If we finish the presentation-plus-discussion early, we'll just go home early.

DATE	WEEK	TASK	SPEAKER(S)
Feb. 3	III	Discussion: Adam Smith's <u>Wealth of Nations</u>	Everybody
Feb. 10	IV	(1) Discussion: M. I. Finley's <u>Ancient Economy</u>	Everybody
Feb. 17	V	Report #1: Hesiod's <u>Works and Days</u>	Jeff Pinkham
Feb. 24	VI	Report #2: Xenophon's <u>Oeconomicus</u> and the emergence of Greek estates	James Bogowith
March 3	VII	Report #3: Isocrates' <u>Trapeziticus</u> and Greek Banking	Daniel Jastram
March 10	VIII	Report #4: Two studies of Athens' economy after the Peloponnesian War (diss. progress report)	Tom Barcz

DATE	WEEK	TASK	SPEAKER(S)
March 17	IX	Report #5: The economy of the Hellenistic Cyclades (Diss. progress report)	Gary Reger
April 7	XI	Report #6: The Hannibalic War and the Roman Denarius	Skip Muzik
April 14	XII	Report #7: The economic role of Jerusalem's Temple in the age of Herod the Great	Gary Shayne
April 21	XIII	Report #8: The idea of communal property in the early Christian community	David Bergman
April 28	XIV	Report #9: Diocletian's Edict on Prices	Donald Parsons
May 5	XV	Report #10: The functioning of large estates in fifth-century Gaul	Vincent Burns
May 12		<u>The seminar paper is due.</u>	