

PRELIMINARY DOCTORAL EXAMINATION

THE BRITISH ISLES, 1558-1812

Fall 1999

I. Choose either A or B (ONE HOUR):

A. One of the perennial concerns of British monarchs and governments from the age of King Henry II to that of Queen Elizabeth II has been the English connection with Ireland. What was the nature of that connection between the age of Queen Elizabeth I and that of King George III? What were the most important changes in Anglo-Irish relations that took place during those two-and-a-half centuries?

B. The roots of the British Empire can be traced back to the sailors/explorers/privateers of the age of Queen Elizabeth I. Specialists in Colonial American History are usually familiar with the detailed origins of the thirteen colonies. Which parts of the world other than the thirteen colonies did the English and the Scots explore, trade with, and "colonize" during the years before 1776?

II. Choose either C or D (ONE HOUR)

C. Stephen Greenblatt's thesis about early modern identity has been both challenged and defended by historians and literary critics. Summarize the thesis and write a critique of its plausibility. In the light of the most recent work on the subject of early modern identity and character, how does Greenblatt's thesis fare? Why are questions of identity relevant to the study of early modern England?

D. Douglas Hay's article "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law" was published in 1975. Since then, the study of crime and the law in early modern England has grown tremendously. Write a historiographical essay describing the work in the field since that time. What is the relationship between legal and social history? What impact has cultural history had on the emerging picture of early modern law?

III. Choose either E or F (ONE HOUR)

E. During the eighteenth century, what were the most important institutions of Great Britain's national government (the government that for the colonists of North America--either personally or institutionally--represented the mother country)? How were those institutions related to one another?

F. The period 1689-1815 has sometimes been referred to as the time of "The Second Hundred Years War." Which conflicts are comprehended by that capsule description? Why was Britain at war during so many of these years? How did those years of war affect Britain's government, economy, and society?

IV. (ONE HOUR)

The study of history is made up not only of socio-economic forces and expressions of elite and popular culture, but also of the lives and works of individual human beings. Choose any five (5) of the following and explain in each case who the person was, when and where the person lived, and why historians have considered his or her works and activities important.

1. Sir Walter Raleigh
2. Sir Edward Coke
3. Oliver Cromwell
4. Thomas Hobbes
5. John Locke
6. Daniel Defoe
7. Edward Gibbon
8. Edmund Burke
9. Hannah More
10. Charles James Fox

