

**International Trade and European Economic Revival, 1000-1400:
Lessons for Our Times**

<http://msuweb.montclair.edu/~lebelp/PLBTradeAndCivilizationInHistoricalPerspective.html>
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Course Description: At a time when nationalism and protectionism are once again on the rise, it is worth examining how international trade has shaped the historical evolution of economic and social development. Instead of drawing more recent comparisons with the Great Depression of the 1930s, or the Great Recession of 2008, we take a longer view to examine the impact of changes in international trade in Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the dawn of the European Renaissance. The course will provide systematic coverage of the political, economic, financial, and environmental dimensions of economic activity, and governance in the European Middle Ages. Emphasis will be given to understanding how institutional evolution affected the generation and transmission of knowledge, and thus the speed and shape of Europe's economic revival. From this perspective, we draw implications for the current climate of international relations and trade.

- 1. The Collapse of Trade in Europe and the Rise of Feudal Governance, 500-1000**
 - a. Economic and Demographic dynamics ñ Statistical Estimates
 - b. Political governance in transition ñ Kings, Dukes, Peasants, and the Church
 - c. The Expansion of Islam Across the Mediterranean and into Europe
 - d. The collapse of cities and the rise of the manorial system into social classes

- 2. The Crusades, the Revival of Commerce, and Early Capitalism, 1000-1300**
 - a. Crusade failures and economic revival
 - b. Market Fairs and the Revival of Cities
 - c. Cathedrals and Castles on a Grand Scale
 - d. The Emergence of Financial Institutions and the rise of nation-state governance

- 3. Economic Growth and Development: Successes and Failures, 1300-1400**
 - a. The revival and expansion of classical knowledge in Europe
 - b. Advances in Agrarian technology
 - c. The Bubonic Plague of 1347-1351 and its effects on labor and the economy
 - d. Explorers and cartography inform new worlds of discovery

- 4. The Role of International Trade in Europe's economic revival: Lessons for Today**
 - a. Contours of commerce and the shaping of political boundaries in Europe
 - b. The rise of central governments and the crafting of nation-states, empires, and federations.
 - c. The role of multinational institutions in sustaining global economic growth
 - d. National identity in a time of changing political boundaries through international trade: the challenge of a globalizing world.

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