

Potential Mid-Term Examination Questions: Summer 2016

1. Why was Portugal the first western state to take up systematic exploration by sea, and why was Asia its preferred destination? (1)
2. Without denying the exploitation, diseases, and maltreatment brought by the Spaniards, what evidence suggests that Mexico, Central America, and South America were not idyllic societies before the appearance of the Europeans? (2)
3. Drawing on Richard Hakluyt's *Discourse on Western Planting* (1584), historians have listed the three English motives for exploration and colonial settlement as "God, Glory, and Gold" (not necessarily in that order). To what specific aims are historians referring when they invoke each of those causes? (3)
4. Some historians have identified Ireland and the nearest and earliest westward colony to which the English dispatched settlers. What differences in settlement policies distinguished the English effort to re-people Ireland from the policy pursued in encouraging migration to such colonies as Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Maryland? (3)
5. Discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between the economies and population compositions of England's colonies in the area now known as the American South and in the Caribbean. (4)
6. Discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between the economies and population compositions of England's colonies in the areas known as New England and the Middle Colonies. (4)
7. What characteristics distinguished slavery from other forms of bound labor in use at the same time in the English colonies? Why did the English turn to African slavery in the regions where they used it most? Why did it exist at all in other areas of the English colonies? Was there any other area in the Americas as heavily reliant as the English colonies on slave labor? (5)
8. Forms of bound labor, generally categorized as "indentured servitude," were common in the English colonies. What immediate and long-term benefits did persons engaged in the various kinds of bound labor get for their service? (5)
9. Which were the three largest European, non-English groups to migrate to the American colonies between 1715 and 1775? Why did each come, and where did each settle within the colonies? (6)
10. Succinctly describe the composition of the U.S. population in 1790 and identify the most notable sources of immigration between that date and 1815. (6)

11. How did immigration issues affect the emergence of political parties during the 1790s and the enactment of the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798? (7)
12. What kinds of developments occurred in U.S. society during the era of low immigration from the time of the Revolution into the 1830s that fostered an American national identity to which many citizens expected later immigrants would conform? (7)
13. What is the demographic or epidemiological transition, and why does it lead to periods of high migration? In seeking a focus for your answer, you may use Europe's experience between the middle of the eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth. (8)
14. Lesson 8 includes the graph of a normal curve (sometimes imprecisely called a bell curve) that represents the rise and fall of a migration wave. Scholars do not believe the curve exactly represents the wave (that is why it is described as "stylized"). Nevertheless, they find it useful to discuss the phases of the wave. Describe those phases. (8)
15. Why did Ireland become so dependent on potato agriculture? What were the advantages and disadvantages of the crop? Why did the potato blight of the 1840s have much greater consequences than any of the occasional short falls in production that had previously occurred? (9)
16. Some Irish nationalists have charged that the British turned the potato crisis of the 1840s into genocide, with the intention of ridding Ireland of its poor, tightening colonial control, and transforming the island's economy along modern lines. The British deny that charge, and most historians argue that much of the tragedy could not have been avoided. What are the arguments on each side of the debate? (9)
17. What were the political, economic, and demographic backgrounds leading to mass migration in the middle of the nineteenth century from the region now encompassing the nation of Germany? (10)
18. Although hundreds of thousands exceptions to the generalization existed, Irish immigrants initially tended to settle in the Northeastern states and German newcomers in the Middle West. What causes led to the different geographic distributions? (10)
19. Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, and Icelanders formed the core of Scandinavian immigration. Some scholars include Finns with Scandinavian immigration because of strong Swedish influence in western Finland. The first language of ethnic Finns, however, is not a Scandinavian tongue, and most Finnish emigration occurred at the same time as emigration from Finland's eastern neighbor, Russia. Focusing on the experiences of Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, and Icelanders, discuss the reasons for Scandinavian migration. (11)

20. Discuss the negative impacts on America's cities fairly or unfairly associated with the coming of the immigrants of the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. (12)
21. Discuss the economic and religious conflicts in which immigrants became involved during the decades preceding the Civil War. (12)
22. Who were the Know-Nothings, why did their political gain strength, and where did their membership go politically after the movement waned? (12)
23. Explain what the "whiteness thesis" proposes and point out its strengths and weaknesses. (13)
24. Compare the prevailing attitudes of the dominant population in the pre-Civil War United States toward African Americans and Native Americans (Indians). (13)
25. Discuss the role played by immigrant soldiers in the American Civil War and their attitudes toward the conflict. (14)
26. Tales of America's war recount the contribution of immigrant soldiers and often imply or even assert that their demonstrations of bravery led to a diminishment of prejudice against them. That message is undoubtedly partly correct, but the whole story is more complicated. What evidence exists that the Civil War did not eradicate bad feelings and may even have aggravated them among some people? (14)
27. How were the advances promised to the African American population through the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments as well as under several federal laws of the 1860s and 1870s undone? (15)
28. Who were the "Friends of the Indian," and why are modern commentators critical of some of the programs they endorsed? (15)
29. Who were the Molly Maguires, and how do historians disagree among themselves regarding the Mollys role in American labor history? (16)
30. What differences in membership and political attitude distinguished the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the International Workers of the World from each other? (16)
31. What was the "Americanist" controversy within the Catholic Church in the United States? (17)
32. What was the clash between the Irish and other nationalities, most notably the Germans, about the importance of maintaining cultural and linguistic ties with Europe? (17)

33. What roles did the Chinese play in the economy of the American West between the 1850s and 1870s? (18)
34. Considering the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and other measures affecting Chinese immigration, as well as the Foran Act of 1885, compare Congressional attitudes toward Asian and European immigration in that era. (19)
35. What fundamental changes did the Immigration Acts of 1882 and 1891 introduce in regard to the control of entry into the United States? (19)
36. Describe the major Supreme Court cases through 1885 that led to and ratified federal control of immigration. (19)
37. Historians have often described the influx of immigrants from the 1890s to the 1920s as the "New Immigration," in contrast to the preceding movement from the 1840s to the 1880s, which they have called the "Old Immigration." Aware of the suspicious origins of the comparison, they are more frequently using the terms "Third Wave" and "Second Wave." Being careful to avoid the problems associated with the New versus Old comparison, make an argument that the Third Wave entailed remarkable changes from the Second. (20)
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39. What were the causes of Italian emigration during the final decades of the nineteenth century and the opening ones of the twentieth? (21)
40. To what nations did Italian emigrants go, and how did the relative ranking of those places change as the sending areas within Italy changed? (21)
41. What were the causes of Jewish emigration during the final decades of the nineteenth century and the opening ones of the twentieth? From where did Jews emigrate? (22)
42. To what extent, if any, was persecution a special factor leading Jews to emigrate? (22)
43. What are the advantages and disadvantages of discussing as a single phenomenon the emigration from Europe of Slavic-language nationalities at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth? (23)

44. What were the common causes of emigration from Slavic-speaking areas of Europe during the final decades of the nineteenth century and the opening ones of the twentieth? Identify as well notable specific causes for the migration of particular ethnic groups among them. (23)
45. What specific measures did the federal and state governments impose against Japanese immigration before the enactment of comprehensive restrictive legislation in the 1920s? (24)
46. What were picture brides, and why were they a cause of popular concern? (24)
47. What does the evidence presented in this course suggest was the immigrants' impact on the American standard of living in the decades around the beginning of the twentieth century? In addition to allegations that the lowered wages, what were the major complaints made about how immigrants affected the workplace and the economy? (25)
48. What factors seem most likely to explain the low level of wages earned by immigrants in the decades around the beginning of the twentieth century? (25)
49. Describe the implications for the assessment of immigration's value that could be found in the work of Social Darwinists, eugenicists, and the popular anthropologists like Ripley and Grant. (26)
50. What was the theory of "race suicide"? What were its implications for immigration policy? What were the shortcomings of the theory as a description of reality? (26)