

National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

2nd Semester Examination 2002-3
Final Year and Visiting Students

HI309: Writing the Histories of Ireland, Britain and the British Overseas

Prof. John Horne
 Prof. Nicholas Canny

Time Allowed: TWO hours
Answer THREE questions

1. 'History is a stage where forces which are within human control contend and co-operate with forces which are not'. R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (1926). What were the forces that Tawney believed were beyond human control, and what momentum did he discern on the stage of history during the early-modern centuries?
2. Writing on early-modern Europe during the 1950s was enlivened by debate over a seventeenth-century crisis and that on early-modern England by the 'storm over the gentry'. Explain how these two debates intersected with each other, and describe what methodological and ideological issues were at stake?
3. It is frequently said that the study of history in Ireland was first professionalized in 1938. What did this professionalization involve, and how did the new history writing differ from that which had gone before?
4. Seventeenth-century Ireland assumed a new importance in more general historiography because publications by Hugh F. Kearney and Aidan Clarke cast doubt on the usefulness of the gentry debate. Discuss.
5. The Origins of the English Civil War, edited by Conrad Russell (London, 1973) is regarded as a fundamental collection of revisionist essays. What was being revised, and how was understanding of the origins of the civil war altered by it?
6. Consider the impact of the arguments of the 'revisionists' upon the writing of social history in and on early-modern England.
7. Discuss the significance of the observation that there was a war, or even wars, of the Three Kingdoms as well as an English Civil War.
8. What is 'new' about New British History and consider the difficulties that its exponents have experienced in reaching a consensus on subject and method.
9. How has writing on early-modern Scotland or early-modern Ireland been influenced by the revisionist and New British History debates?