Study questions for Gies & Gies’ “The Not So Dark Ages”


Sample Objective section questions – the neat antiquarian stuff

1. What is the name of part 1, part 2, and part 3, of the plow shown at right? Don’t worry about part 4.

2. Assuming the plow is used in England, to what era does the plow most likely belong?
   a. the pre-Roman era
   b. the Roman era
   c. the Middle Ages
   d. the late 1800’s after the advent of the farm tractor

3. Which part, 1, 2, or 3 is considered a major invention of the early Middle Ages.
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3

4. Where was this invention (from # 3 above) adopted? Where was this invention most needed?
   a. Northwestern Ireland
   b. Southern Europe, in particular the Po River Valley of Italy
   c. Northern Europe, for example Northern France and Germany
   d. The Ukraine and eastern Russia

5. Why did the region above (# 4) benefit more from this invention (# 3) than other regions?
   a. Potatoes became the main food staple starting in about 700 CE (700 AD).
   b. Rice became the main food staple starting in about 700 CE (700 AD).
   c. This area had many trees and a plow that could double as stump puller was needed.
   d. This area had heavy, clay, soils. Other types of plows could not turn the soil over effectively.

6. What did this invention (# 3) do to shape of plowed fields?
   a. Darn it! I left out the answer options!
   b. Oh well. Look back at your class notes &/or do a little research on the web to find the answer.

7. Why did this invention (# 3) change the shape of plowed fields?
   a. Darn it! I left out the answer options!
   b. Oh well. Look back at your class notes &/or do a little research on the web to find the answer.
8. _____ It’s the year 1000 AD and you are watching a plow being pulled across a field in France. What is most likely pulling this plow?
   a. a team of draft gerbils
   b. a team of oxen
   c. a team of humans
   d. a team of draft horses
   e. a steam powered tractor
   f. a rope that goes around a tree (to change direction) then winds around the axle of a water wheel

9. _____ It’s the year 1690 AD and you are watching a plow being pulled across a field in France. What is most likely pulling this plow?
   a. a team of draft gerbils
   b. a team of oxen
   c. a team of humans
   d. a team of draft horses
   e. a steam powered tractor
   f. a rope that goes around a tree (to change direction) then winds around the axle of a water wheel

10. _____ What invention best explains the change seen from # 8 to # 9?
    a. Darn it! I left out the answer options!
    b. Oh well. Look back at your class notes &/or do a little research on the web to find the answer.

11. Which of the following are advantages horses have over oxen as draft animals? Check (✓) any and all that apply.
    _____ Members of the opposite sex dig horses. If you are a medieval babe and want to date a medieval dude, show up to his house with a pair of horses. Same thing if you are medieval dude wooing a medieval babe, medieval hermaphrodite wooing, etc.
    _____ Horses are cheaper to feed and care for. “Hay is for Horses. Oats are for Oxen.”
    _____ Horses can work much longer hours than oxen.
    _____ Horses can pull faster, therefore allowing them to plow more in a work day.

12. Which of the following is an advantage oxen have over horses as draft animals? Check (✓) any and all that apply.
    _____ The romantic appeal of a knight or maiden on a horse has been greatly overstated. Members of the opposite sex dig oxen. If you are a medieval babe and want to date a medieval dude, show up to his house with a pair of oxen. Same thing if you are medieval dude wooing a medieval babe, medieval hermaphrodite wooing, etc.
    _____ Oxen are cheaper to feed and care for.
    _____ Oxen, especially bullocks (steers) also give milk.
    _____ Oxen can pull faster, therefore allowing them to plow more in a work day.
13 – 14. Below you have some beautiful illustrations of three types of waterwheels (side view).

13. Indicate the name of each of the following types of waterwheels.

14. Indicate which waterwheel type was the earliest in general use (1st), the 2nd in general use, and the last to come into general use (3rd).

15. Indicate which waterwheel type typically generated the most power (1st), the 2nd most power, and the least power (3rd).

16. Indicate which waterwheel type usually was the most expensive to produce (1st), the 2nd most expensive, and the least (3rd).

17. Lord Larry has a large plot of land. He wishes to use the 3 Field Crop rotation. Indicate what he is growing in each of his three fields (or otherwise using the field for). Note: The order does not matter. What matters is having the correct 3 things in any order.
18. Lady Lydia has a large plot of land. She wishes to use the 2 Field Crop rotation. Indicate what she is growing in each of his three fields (or otherwise using the field for). Note: The order does

| Field 1 | Field 2 |

19. _____ Which of the above field systems is considered to be the more productive?
   a. the 3 field system
   b. the 2 field system

20. What else, besides milling grains, were water wheels used for in the Middle Ages? Give me at least one example. Make sure you do more than just list the name of the process. Briefly explain the process.

21. (from class). It’s the year 1300 A.D. and you are a local lord planning to build a grain mill powered by a water wheel. You, however, have the potential problem of not being able to control the flow of the river. Sometimes the river’s flow is low when you want to power the mill. At other times the river keeps flowing when you are not using the mill (ex. at night). In short, you’d like some way to be able to store the river’s energy for later use. What, if anything, could be done in the year 1300? Answer with a few sentences and an illustration.

22. _____ During the High and Late Middle Ages (≥ 1000 AD – 1450 AD), technological progress in Europe was:
   a. almost non-existent. The technology at the end of the period was almost identical to that at the beginning of the period.
   b. was overall negative. Many “arts” were forgotten and many advanced techniques fell into disuse over the period.
   c. was relatively high and steady for human history prior to the Renaissance, Enlightenment, and Industrialization.
   d. was relatively high and steady even when compared to the modern era.
23. Later in this class, one of our readings will claim that Europe lost technology after the fall of Rome. Was there any evidence of lost technology based on our Gies & Gies class discussion?
   a. I don’t know. I used to know how to make those letter things into words … but now they just like scribbles to me. In fact I can’t even read this sentence.
   b. Yes, locally many regions lost knowledge of technology and production techniques. In fact, there were some bits of technological knowledge lost to the world as a whole.
   c. No, there is not a single case of Europe or even a local area losing knowledge after the fall of Rome. The reason historians used to call the period the “Dark Ages” is that there was a lot of political chaos.
   d. No, there is not a single case of Europe or even a local area losing knowledge after the fall of Rome. The reason historians used to call the period the “Dark Ages” is that the Catholic Church, for a while lost the government sanction and protection it had at the end of the Roman Empire.

24. In classes to follow shortly, we will discuss changes in European warfare and how they may have changed the political environment in Europe during the Early and High Middle Ages. What invention came to Europe (roughly) around \( 750 \text{ CE (AD)} \) that many think changed the nature of warfare?
   a. Darn it! I left out the answer options!
   b. Oh well. Look back at your class notes &/or do a little research on the web to find the answer.

25. How did the above (# 24) change warfare according to many?
   a. Infantry in large and well-coordinated units came to dominate the battlefield.
   b. Heavy cavalry came to dominate the battlefield.
   c. Long-range anti-personal weapons (ex. arrow storms) came to dominate the battlefield.
   d. Explosives, first buried explosives, then cannons, came to dominate military combat.

26. According to lecture (not Gies & Gies), when did the Warp Weighted Loom first used?
   a. in the ancient world at least as far back as classical Greece
   b. during the Early Middle Ages
   c. during the Late Middle Ages
   d. around the year 1600.
   e. around the year 1760
   f. Monday, 14 September at TCU … if Dr. Lovett gets his model finished in time.