THE ECONOMIC BESTSELLERS BEFORE 1850


by Kenneth E. Carpenter

The history of economic thought is widely recognized as that branch of intellectual history which asks how and why ideas change. In attempting to understand the process, one must try to comprehend past intellectual systems in their entirety. Awareness of the most popular works should facilitate this task. Along with identifying the bestsellers in economic literature, this exhibition catalogue, through giving details of the number of editions in the original and in translation, provides a rough measure of influence as shown by popularity.

We show only the most popular economic works published before 1850. The criterion taken for determining popularity is the total number of editions, whether in the original or translation. Only editions published before 1850 have been considered, so a work published in 1848 and exerting great influence in the second half of the nineteenth century would not be included. Practical works of the how-to-do-it variety, whether for the merchant, the farmer or the craftsman, have been excluded, although some of them, such as Savary’s Parfait Negociant were exceedingly popular.

The exhibition has been divided into parts — one covering the period of Mercantilism, the other of classical economics. The path to popularity in the Mercantilist era was to write a good, solid treatise or else to become embroiled in controversy. Examples of the former are: Davanzati, Lezione della monete, 1588; Mun, England’s treasure by forraign trade, 1664; Hornick, Oesterreich über alles wann es nur will, 1684; Gee, The trade and navigation of Great-Britain considered, 1729; Forbonnais, Elemens du commerce, 1754; Verri, Meditazioni sulla economia politica, 1771.

Many of these works must have served something of the purpose of textbooks, even if not necessarily in a formal way. One can easily imagine an English merchant taking on a promising young man and having him read — after hours — a work such as Mun’s England’s treasure by forraign trade. There were, however, bestsellers which definitely served as textbooks in the classroom. For instance, Genovesi was a professor at Naples, and his Lezioni di economia civile, 1765, is appropriately titled. Sonnenfels was also a professor, and his textbook is the only one which survived so far into the period of classical economics.

The best example of controversy making one’s work popular is John Law, although perhaps „notoriety” would be a better word. Not until 1720, fifteen years after publication of the first edition of his Money and trade considered, was there a second edition. Then, in 1720 and 1721, there were five editions in different languages. Banning a book could also help turn it into a great success. The burning of Vauban’s Projet d’une dixme royale, 1707, must have helped the sale of the many counterfeit editions.

Other books became popular because they dealt with topics of great popular interest at the time. In 1754, the comparative advantages and disadvantages of Great Britain and France in their

struggle for supremacy, was clearly a topic with the potential for creating a bestseller, and Plumard de Dangeul’s *Remarques sur les avantages et desavantages de la France et de la Grand-Bretagne* (1754) became a success.

In the Mercantilist period the vast majority of the popular works were English or French, with English predominating in the seventeenth century and French in the eighteenth. Contrary to what one would expect, eighteenth-century French books which were most popular were not those of the Physiocrats. Mirabeau does make the list, but for his *L’amí des hommes*, published before his adherence to the Physiocratic school.

The presence of several Italian books reflects the richness of Italian economic literature in this period. Of Spanish economic writers only Geronimo de Uztariz (*Theorica y practica del comercio*, 1724), was outstandingly popular, although another Spaniard, Pedro Rodriguez Campomanes, would have been expected to make the list with his *Discurso sobre el fomento de la industria popular* (1774). He was translated, into Dutch, German, Italian and Portuguese, and ordinarily, such widespread translating indicates a considerable number of editions in the original. Yet, in this case there appears to have been only one. Perhaps, as a major figure in the government of Charles III, his prominence led to a very large initial edition. Some support for this idea comes from the feeling one has that his book is relatively common.

The opposite extreme of a book never translated but still exceedingly popular in the original occurs only twice. That is the case with Philipp Wilhelm von Hornick’s *Oesterreich über alles wann es nur will* (1684), of which there were sixteen German editions. Of course, translation was ruled out for a work with such a title. The other instance is Wilhelm von Schröder’s *Fürstliche Schatz- und Rent-Kammer* (1686) of which there were eight editions, but no translations. German Cameralism, which differed from western Mercantilism in that it was produced by government officials rather than merchants, did not export well.

The literature of other countries has been examined for popular books but, save for one Dutch bestseller, none has been noted. In Denmark there are many instances of German and Danish editions of the same book, but rarely is there a second edition in either language. More than one edition in Swedish is virtually unknown and the same applies to Portuguese and Russian. Despite the absence of books in these languages from the list, six countries produced popular books in the Mercantilist period. This is in striking contrast to the period when classical economics held sway, for then only England and France produced the popular books, with one exception. Certainly, though, if this list were extended beyond 1850, other countries would again have been included.

In the era of classical economics, as in the Mercantilist period, most of the popular books are the solid treatises — Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Say, McCulloch, but the socialist authors are beginning to come to the fore. The works of both Owen and Louis Blanc fit into the most popular category. So does the *Communist Manifesto*, although most of the editions which can be found today were in newspapers or periodicals. Only one attempt to popularize orthodox economics was notably successful as a publishing venture, the Englishwoman, Mrs. Marcet’s *Conversations on political economy* (1816).

Mrs. Marcet’s work is the only one on this list aimed specifically at the less formally educated, and it raises the question of what, if anything, the common man thought about economic questions. Throughout both the periods of Mercantilism and classical economics it is possible to determine this to some extent, but the method must be different from the bestseller approach. When people were adversely affected by economic conditions, especially price rises, whether inflationary or otherwise, there tended to be a flood of literature. In these cases, one work followed another in rapid succession, and no single book was outstandingly popular. For a study of such
an instance, see Fritz Redlich, *Die deutsche Inflation des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts in der zeitgenössischen Literature; Die Kipper und Wipper* (1972), pp. 27–29, in which various works with more than one edition but still not more than three separate editions are noted. Later on in England, the literature issued in the controversy preceding the repeal of the corn laws was highly varied and addressed to all groups.

At times the flood of literature was perhaps all on a relatively high intellectual level, as in Sweden in 1765, when monetary problems were of great concern. The steady stream of pamphlets, one every five days, seems to have prevented any single work from receiving enough attention to make it a bestseller. Nonetheless, the effect must have been the same as a great bestseller, in terms of shaping Swedish awareness of economic questions.

Such instances indicate one of the limitations of this bestseller approach to determining what ideas were most widespread in any particular period. Other shortcomings will be pointed out in the next section on methodology.

**Methodology**

There are various problems in determining the number of editions. First of all, one must use cautiously the bibliographical information in monographs and even in bibliographies. A work such as Henry Higgs’ *Bibliography of Economics, 1751–1775* (1935) or Cossa’s *Saggi bibliografici di economia politica* (1963), is filled with errors. We have always sought confirmation of the existence of an edition through the use of library catalogues. Of course, sometimes the edition listed in the bibliography or monograph does exist but no copy has ended up in a major library. Since confirmation has always been sought, the number of editions is sometimes under-represented.

The number of editions is also greater than recorded here, because of the difficulty of identifying pirated editions. These pirated editions often have the same wording of the title, the same imprint, and the same number of pages. There is no way of discovering them except by comparing copies side by side. Few historians have done this. The only instance I know of in which a scholar has examined several copies and described variant editions in sufficient detail for someone to determine which edition he has is Franz Megnet, *Jean-Francois Melon (1675 bis 1738)* (1955) p. x-xi. (In this context, „edition” is used only to indicate another printing from a different setting of type, whether or not there are revisions). Even his listing appears incomplete.

Librarians have also been remiss in describing variant editions or even noting them at all. For instance, the Kress Library *Catalogue* notes only one 1769 edition of Genovesi’s *Delle Lezioni di commercio*, whereas there are three here, all supposedly published in Bassano, and all printed from different settings of type.

The examples of Melon and Genovesi are not particularly unusual. Once one becomes aware of the possibility of pirated, counterfeit editions and begins to compare, copies, they turn up frequently. It must be emphasized that one’s inability to identify all the counterfeit editions means that the popularity of some authors is under-represented.

The problem is probably not so serious that books which should be on the list are not. Nonetheless, conclusions as to relative popularity should be drawn cautiously. Since some kinds of books must have been more frequently counterfeited than others, depending on the subject, time and place, one cannot simply assume that there are additional counterfeit editions of all the books. Without prior detailed bibliographical work and analysis, a study of relative popularity within a field or between subject fields must be seriously distorted.
On the one hand this catalogue does not record all the editions because some are not to be found in major libraries with published catalogues and because of counterfeiting. On the other hand, in some instances it may well record too many. If a book does not sell, a publisher goes out of business, or another publisher simply wants some copies under his imprint, it is common for a new title page to be printed and for it to be inserted in place of the old one. For example, the French translation of Verri, *Reflexions sur l'économie politique* was published in Lausanne in 1773. In 1795 those same sheets were reissued with a new title page dated 1795. Again, physical examination is necessary to catch such cases.

The problems in determining the number of editions of multi-volume works are enormous. In effect, each volume should be treated as a separate entity, but this is impossible because libraries do not catalogue in that detail. Instead, a typical entry might read: 6 v., 1757–61; followed by another reading: 6 v., 1759–61. It is useless to try to guess whether each volume is of a different edition or only some are. Hence, the entries for multi-volume works are exceedingly incomplete.

Even if these problems in determining the number of editions did not exist, this would not be enough for gauging accurately the popularity of certain works, for the size of the editions is not known. Although David Pottinger in *The French Book Trade in the Ancien Regime* (1958) estimates that the size of an edition of a book of general interest was one thousand or fifteen hundred copies, he then goes on to state that Morellet’s *Théorie du paradoxe* (1775) went into a second edition of two thousand within a week and that Necker’s *Compte rendue* (1781) „sold at a rate of three thousand a day and went far beyond a total of forty thousand” (p. 205). Although these cases illustrate that for a book expected to sell well or for one which caught on immediately, the size of editions greatly increased, in other cases later editions may sometimes have been rather small. That would happen with the steady but slow sellers. The pattern is probably that if there is a flurry of editions, they are large ones; but if the editions are spaced out, they are relatively small ones, perhaps 500 or 750 copies instead of 1,000 or 1,500.

To describe all the various editions of these books in detail would be useful, but it would also result in a work far greater in size than could be justified in an exhibition catalogue. Hence, the information is presented only in bare outline. We would be glad to supply additional information on request. In return, we would welcome knowing of authors who should have been included and of editions which have escaped us.
NOTE: Editions other than those cited here were sometimes found mentioned, but if we had doubts about the reliability of the source, the edition was usually not listed. To do otherwise would have been to compound the frequent errors in bibliographical information. There are, however, some editions listed without source or location symbol. These are to a large extent taken from book-sellers’ catalogs.

BN Catalogue general des livres imprimés de la Bibliothèque nationale, auteurs. 1924– .
Bruun Bruun, C. Bibliotheca danica. 1877–96. 3 v.
Humpert Humpert, M. Bibliographie der Kameralwissenschaften. 1937.
K Kress Library
MH Harvard College Library
MH-L Harvard Law School Library

I.

DAVANZATI, BERNARDO, 1529–1606.
Lezione delle monete... Firenze, 1588.

No copy recorded; entry from Cossa, Saggi bibliografici di economia politica (1963). The other editions noted below without indication of location are from Cossa.

It cannot be claimed that Davanzati’s work took Europe by storm, for its 1 editions were well spaced out over the next two and a half centuries. However, this continuing interest reflects Davanzati’s significant contribution to monetary theory and the felicity of his style.

2. In his Scisma d’Inghilterra, Florence, 1638.
4. (K) Same as edition 2, Padova, 1727.
8. (NUC) In his Operetta, Livorno, 1779.
9. (NUC) Same as edition 2, Bassano, 1782.
10. (K) In Custodi’s Scrittori classici italiani, parte antica, vol. 2, Milan, 1804.
11. (NUC) Same as edition 2, Milan, 1807.

II.

CULPEPER, SIR THOMAS, 1578–1662.
A tract against usury... London, 1621.
[3], 6–21 p. (the first three pages being numbered 3, 6 and 7).

This edition will be noted in the forthcoming revision of Pollard & Redgrave, A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475–1640.

Culpeper supported the widespread position that Dutch commercial eminence was due to the low rate of interest prevailing there. In a sense, it does not belong in this exhibition, for it probably would not have been so popular had Josiah Child not included it in his work. For further information on the editions of Josiah Child, see entry no. V.

2. (K) As above, paged 1–19.
4. (K) Tract against the high rate of usury... now recommended to the presse this third time, London, 1641.
11. (K) Sir Thomas Culepeper’s Tracts concerning usury, London, 1708 [with ‘Postscript 1709’]
12. (NUC) As above, 1709.
13.–15. In the 3 editions of Child, London [1740].
17. (K) In Child, Traites sur le commerce, Amsterdam and Berlin, 1754.
18. (NUC) Another French translation, Amsterdam, 1755.
20. (Clendenning) In the Dec. 1758 issue of Ezhemesiachnaia zhurnal.
III.

[COURT, PIETER DE LA], 1618–1685

Interest van Holland. Amsterdam, 1662.

In octavo format. This and other entries not otherwise identified are from A. J. van der Aa, Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden (1858), pt. 3, p. 243.

The only Dutch bestseller, this work is mainly an argument for industrial freedom plus moderate duties. It went through 13 editions by 1746. The English and French translations state on the title page that the author is Jean de Wit; the French edition is even entitled Mémoires de Jean de Wit. However, only two chapters are by that prominent Dutch statesman.

2. (K) Amsterdam, 1662. Differs from the above in being in 12mo format. Van der Aa records that there are copies in which signatures f and g are printed in smaller type. It is not clear whether this is another edition or merely another issue, and it is also not clear whether an 8º or 12º edition is referred to.

3. (K) German translation, [n.p.] 1665.

4. German translation, Amsterdam, 1665.

5. German translation, Grünau, 1668.

6. (K) Revised and published under the title. Aanwysing der heilsame politike Gronden en Maximen van de Republike van Holland, Leiden and Rotterdam, 1669.

7. As above, 1670.

8. (NUC) As above, 1671.

9. German translation, Rotterdam [i.e. Frankfurt am Main] 1671 (entry from Geschichte der volkswirt-schaftlichen Anschauungen der Niederländer, by E. Laspeyres (1863).


11. (GL) French translation which identifies itself as „troisième édition,” Ratisbonne, 1709.


IV.

MUN, THOMAS, 1571–1641

England’s treasure by forraign trade... London, 1664. (K)

Generally considered the classic of English Mercantilism, this work was also translated into French, Swedish and Italian, the last Italian edition being published exactly 100 years after the first English edition. There were 14 editions in all.

2. (K) London, 1669.


4. (K) London, 1698.


7. (K) London, 1713.
8. (K) London, 1718.
9. (K) Swedish translation, Stockholm, 1732.
10. A different Swedish translation, Stockholm, 1745.
11. (K) Glasgow, 1755.
14. (K) In Whitworth’s Scarce tracts on trade & commerce, London, 1778.

V.

[CHILD, SIR JOSIAH, Bart. I] 1630–1699
Brief observations concerning trade, and interest of money London, 1668 (K)


Along with Mun, Josiah Child was the most popular seventeenth-century English Mercantilist author. There were 10 English editions, as opposed to Mun’s eight, the last of which was published in 1804. However, Child was less popular abroad — two complete editions instead of 6.

2. (K) A discourse about trade [London] 1690. The sheets of this edition were reissued in 1693 under the title, A new discourse of trade (K).


5–7. Bowyer records 3 editions [n.d.] which have been traditionally dated [1740?]. The following serves to distinguish them: Edition A, p. 143 followed by a page numbered 145 (K); edition B, p. 144 followed by a page numbered 141; edition C, p. 144 followed by a page correctly numbered 145 (K).

9. (K) French translation, Amsterdam and Berlin, 1754.
10. (NUC) Amsterdam, 1755.

VI.

[HORNICK, PHILIPP WILHELM VON] 1638–1712
Oesterreich über alles wann es nur will. [Nürnberg] 1684. (K)

The editions listed below for which no location symbol is given are cited in Magdalene Humpert’s Bibliographie der Kameralwissenschaften (1937); errors in Humpert are not infrequent.

This book is unusual in that there were 13 editions in German (16 if one includes those which have
been listed but of which no copy can be traced), but there was no translation. One need look no further than the title to ascertain one of the reasons.

3. Passau, 1685.
4. (MH) [n.p.] 1705.
6. (K) Regensburg, 1708.
7. (MH) Regensburg, 1712.
8. (NUC) Regensburg, 1717.
10. (K) Regensburg, 1723.
11. (K) Regensburg, 1727.
12. (MH) Frankfurt am Main, 1729.
13. (NUC) Frankfurt am Main, 1750.
14. (K) Frankfurt und Leipzig, 1753.
15. (NUC) Regensburg, 1764.
16. (K) Under the title: Bemerkungen über die österreichische Staatsökonomie, Berlin and Stettin, 1784.

VII.

[SCHRÖDER, WILHELM, Freiherr VON] 1640–1688
Fürstliche Schatz- und Rent-Kammer... Leipzig, 1686. (K)

The editions listed below for which no location symbol is given are cited in Humpert, Bibliographie der Kamerawissenschaften (1937).

This is another German work of which there were no translations, although 8 editions in the original. German Cameralism, which differed from Mercantilism in that the literature was produced by government officials instead of merchants, seems not to have been exportable.

2. (K) Leipzig, 1704.
3. (K) Leipzig, 1713.
4. 1718.
5. (K) Leipzig, 1721.
6. (K) Leipzig and Königsberg, 1737.
8. (S) Königsberg, 1752.

VIII.

[BOISGUILLEBERT, PIERRE LE PESANT, Sieur de] 1646–1714
Le detail de la France... [n.p.] 1695. (NUC)

Boisguillebert (or Boisgulbert) has been neglected by most economists but by others extravagantly
praised, so much so that Schumpeter (p. 215 fn.) referred to a „Boisguillebert cult.” The pattern of the editions of Boisguillebert is that there were 8 in the years 1695–1699 and then none until 1707, in which year 9 came out. In 1707, Vauban’s Projet d’une dixme royale was published; and since Boisguillebert advocated a related form of a royal tithe, his book again excited new interest. Editions even appeared in 1707, 1708 and 1712 under the title, Testament politique de monsieur de Vauban. 

3. (K) [n.p.] 1696, 245 p.
4. (K) La France ruinée sous le règne de Louis XIV, Cologne, 1696.
5. (NUC) Le détail de la France [n.p.] 1697.
7. (Cited in F. Cadet, Pierre de Boisguilbert, 1871) Le détail de la France, 1698.
14.–16. BN (K has only vol. 2) records three editions published in 1707 (2 vols.) without indication of place of publication, all with the title: Testament politique de monsieur de Vauban.
17. (BN, K has vol. 1 only) Same title as above, [n.p.] 1708.

IX.

[LAW, JOHN] 1671–1729.

Money and trade considered... Edinburgh, 1705. (K)

John Law’s book gave no immediate promise of being a bestseller. Not until 15 years after it was first published were there other editions. They resulted from his notoriety as controller-general of French finance. His speculative ventures collapsed in 1720, bringing to an end one of the great investment manias in history.

4. (K) French translation, La Haye, 1720.
5. (K) German translation, Leipzig, 1720.
7. (K) Glasgow, 1750.
8. (BM) In Somers, A fourth collection of scarce... tracts, London, 1752.
9. (K) Glasgow, 1760.
10. (K) In his Oeuvres, Paris, 1790.

11. (NUC) In Somers, A collection of scarce... tracts, London, 1815.


X.

VAUBAN, SEBASTIEN LE PRESTRE DE, 1633–1707

Projet d’une dixme royale... [Rouen?] 1707. (K)

The above is the first edition. There are many counterfeit editions dated 1707; one of them noted has 264 p., the others all 268 p. The edition of the Projet edited by E. Coornaert (Paris, 1933) has the statement, p. xxviii: "...Il se peut que de 1707 à 1709 il y en ait eu treize ou quatorze." As the following shows, there were at least that many. With the help of the distinguished Paris antiquarian bookseller, Michel Bernstein, who kindly sent xeroxes of the title pages of copies in his possession, we can identify counterfeit editions.

Vauban, a favorite of Louis XIV until this book came out, died shortly after it was suppressed. It was "one of the outstanding performances in the field of public finance, unsurpassed, before or after, in the neatness and cogency of the arguments" — Schumpeter, History of Economic Analysis (1966 [c. 1954]), p. 203–4. However, the excellence of a work does not necessarily make it a popular success. In this case, the author’s fame as a military figure and the suppression of the book must have been major factors.

2. (K) [n.p.] 1707 (264 p., with an ornament on the title-page which includes a tree).


4. (K) [n.p.] 1707 (268 p., with a sphere ornament). Last 5 lines of title-page read: leur Culture des Terres. / PAR / Monsieur le Maréchal DE VAUBAN, Chevalier des / Ordres du Roy, Commissaire General des Fortifications, & Gouverneurde la Citadelle de Lille. /

5. (K) [n.p.] 1707 (268 p., with a sphere ornament). Last 5 lines of title-page read: leure Culture des Terres. / PAR / Mons’. le Maréchal DE VAUBAN, Chevalier des Or- / dres du Roy, Commissaire General des Fortifications, / & Gouverneur de la Citadelle de Lille. /


8. [n.p.] 1708 (with a filigree ornament). Last 5 lines of title-page read: PAR / Mr. LE MARÉCHAL DE VAUBAN, Chevalier des Ordres du Roi, Commissaire / General des Fortifications, & Gouverneur / de la Citadelle de Lille. /


10. (BN) [n.p.] 1708 (with a sphere ornament).


13. (K) „8.éd.” [n.p.] 1708 (i.e. 1709). Last 2 lines of title-page read: Où l’on a ajouté la vie de l’Au- teur par Mr. DE FONTENELLE, Secrétaire perpetuel de l’Academie des Sciences /.
XI.

UZTARIZ, GÉRONIMO DE, 1670–1733
Theorica y practica de comercio... [Madrid, 1724], (K)

The editions noted below without any location symbol are from A. Mounier, Géronimo de Uztariz (Bordeaux, 1919).

Governments tend not to like those who tell them how to do things better, and, thus, the first edition of this book was banned when it came out in 1724. But the author’s fate was nonetheless better than many, for he was thereafter rewarded with honors and government positions. After his death, the government did in 1742 permit publication. This book, which discusses not only trade but many other aspects of the Spanish economy, is the only Spanish economic bestseller. Not only were there four Spanish editions, there were two in French, two in English and one in Italian.

2. (K) „2. impression.” Madrid, 1742.
4. (K) Another edition of the above, Dublin, 1752.
7. (K) „2 impression,” Madrid, 1757 (This setting of type is different from that of ed. 2)
8. (K) „3. impression” of the Spanish, 1757.

XII.

GEE, JOSHUA
The trade and navigation of Great-Britain considered... London, 1729. (K)

Gee’s work, in support of a protectionist policy, was apparently intended for popular consumption. It succeeded. In addition to 9 English editions, there were four in French, 1 in Spanish and 1 in German.

2. (K) „2d ed.,” London, 1730.
3. (K) „3d ed.,” London, 1731.
4. (K) „4th ed.,” 1738.
5. (K) French translation, Londres, 1749.
6. (K) French translation, Amsterdam, 1750.
7. (K) French translation, Geneve, 1750.
8. (K) „5th ed.,” Glasgow, 1750.
9. (K) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1753.
10. (K) „6th ed.,” Glasgow, 1755.
11. (K) German translation, Kopenhagen, 1757.
12. (K) „6th ed.,” Glasgow, 1760.

XIII.

[MELON, JEAN FRANÇOIS] 1675–1738

Essai politique sur le commerce, par M.M*** [n.p.] 1734. (GL)

In the table of contents the title of the book appears.

Although formerly secretary to John Law, Melon opposed his views in this work, which serves to distinguish this edition from the second noted below. Vivid memories of Law’s financial schemes, less than a decade and a half after their collapse, must have contributed to the extraordinary success of this book, of which there were several counterfeit editions. Twenty in all were published, including translations into Danish, English, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Swedish. Charles Dutot, formerly cashier of Law’s Compagnie des Indes, defended Law. The defense was popular, but not nearly so much as the attack, there being only 6 editions between 1738 and 1754.

2. [n.p.] 1734. The title at head of table of contents has been replaced by an ornament.

3. [n.p.] 1734. Contains Errata and four separately numbered pages which protest against the circulation of manuscript copies filled with errors. (The descriptions of these three editions are taken from Franz Megnet, Jean-François Melon (1955). Presumably, in all of them the main body of the text constitutes 264 p.

4. (BN) [n.p.] 1734, 276 p.

5. (K) Amsterdam, 1735.


8. (K) [n.p.] 1736. The above 2 editions are described on the basis of Megnet, Jean-François Melon. The Kress copy under this date has on the title-page: Nouvelle Edition augmentée de sept Chapitres, & où les lacunes des Editions précédentes sont remplis. Of course it is impossible to tell whether this is different from edition 7 or whether in describing edition 7 Megnet shortened the reading and inserted a comma. However, there must be three 1736 editions, for BN records three but without distinguishing them in its Catalogue.

9. (K) English translation, Dublin, 1738. The same sheets with a cancel title-page were re-issued with the date 1739.

10. German translation, Jena, 1740.

11. (K) Amsterdam, 1742.


13. (K) Amsterdam, 1754.

14. (K) Italian translation, Venezia, 1754.

15. (Megnet) German translation, Kopenhagen, 1756.


17. (K) [n.p.] 1761.

18. (Clendenning) Russian translation, St. Petersburg, 1768.

19. (K) Italian translation, Napoli, 1778.

XIV.

BELLONI, GIROLAMO, Marchese, d. 1761
... De Commercio dissertatio, Romae, 1750 (K)

Belloni’s fame through his involvement in Vatican banking and finance are said to have contributed to making this treatise so popular — 17 editions between 1750 and 1788.

2. (K) Livorno, 1751.
3. In Journal oeconomique, March 1751.
5. (K) Bologna, 1752.
7. (K) German translation, Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1752.
8. (K) French translation, La Haye, 1755.
10. (K) Roma, 1757.
11. (GL) Venezia, 1757.
16. (NUC) Spanish translation, Santiago, 1788.
17. (K) In Scrittori classici italiani, Parte moderna, vol. 2, 1803.

XV.

HUME, DAVID, 1711–1776
Political discourses... Edinburgh, 1752. (K)

Despite the title, Hume’s Political discourses are largely economic in content. They were more successful than any English work of economics prior to Adam Smith.

2. (K) „2d ed.,” Edinburgh, 1752.
4. (GL) Discours politiques, Amsterdam, 1754.
5. (K) Vermischte Schriften fiber die Handlung, Hamburg und Leipzig, 1754–56.
6. (GL) Discours politiques, Dresde, 1755.
7. (GL) In Essays and treatises, London, 1758.
10. Saggi morali e politici, Amsterdam, 1764.
11. French translation, Amsterdam, 1767.
13. (GL) Political essays on commerce, Venice, 1767 (in both English and Italian).
15. Swedish translation, 1767.
17. (GL) Saggio sul commercio, Venezia, 1769.
18. (NUC) In Essays and treatises, London, 1770.
20. (NUC) Saggi politici sul commercio, Venice & Palermo, 1774.
21. (BM) In Essays and treatises, Dublin, 1779.
25. (NUC) Saggi politici sopra il commercio, Parma, 1798.
27. (NUC) Politische versuche, Königsberg, 1800.
28. (BM) In Essays and treatises, Edinburgh, 1804.
29. In Essays and treatises, Edinburgh, 1806.
32. (BM) In Essays and treatises, Edinburgh, 1809.
33. In C.J. Kraus, Vermischte Schriften, „neue Ausgabe,” 1813.
34. In Essays and Treatises, London, 1822.
35. (NUC) In Essays and treatises, London, 1825.
36. (K) In Mélanges d’économie politique, ed. by E. Daire, vol. 1, 1847.

XVI.

[HERBERT, CLAUDE JACQUES] 1700–1758

Essai sur la police générale des grains... London, 1753. (S)

Herbert’s work, which started off as a 53-page pamphlet and then was expanded, was one of the first published in the mid-eighteenth century debate as to whether the grain trade should be free. Herbert’s performance was not particularly distinguished and perhaps it owed its fame largely to being one of the first written on a subject that became a matter of widespread controversy. In addition to being translated into German, Italian and Spanish, it is one of the few economic works translated into Portuguese.

2. (BN) Londres, 1754.
4. (K) Berlin, 1755.
5. (K) German translation, Berlin, 1756.
6. (K) Berlin, 1757.
7. (K) Italian translation, Napoli, 1765.
8. (K) Portuguese translation, Bruxellas, 1766.
9. (NUC) Berlin, 1775.
10. (K) German translation, Wien, 1780.
11. (NUC) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1795.

XVII.

FORBONNAIS, FRANÇOIS VERON DUVERGER DE] 1722–1800

Elemens du commerce... Leyde, et se trouve à Paris, 1754. (K)

Schumpeter in his History of Economic Analysis (New York, 1966 [c. 1954]), p. 174, called Forbonnais “the prototype of the ‘useful’ or ‘sound’ economist of whom the public approves.” Schumpeter, when he said, just prior to the passage quoted, that Forbonnais “might be compared with Justi or Sonnenfels,” probably did not realize that there were three German editions of Forbonnais. It would be difficult to find another French economic writer of the period who was published in German three times, which shows how apt Schumpeter’s statement is.

2. (K) „2. éd.,” Leyde, et se trouve à Paris, 1754.
3. (K) „Nouvelle éd.,” Amsterdam, 1755.
4. (K) German translation, Hamburg und Leipzig, 1755.
5. (NUC) German translation, Triest, 1762.
6. (K) „Nouvelle éd.,” Leyde, et se trouve à Paris, 1766.
8. (NUC) „Nouvelle éd.,” Paris, 1767.
9. (K) German translation, Hamburg und Leipzig, 1767.
10. (NUC) „Nouvelle éd.,” Paris, an IV.

XVIII.

PLUMARD DE DANGEUL, ] b. 1722

Remarques sur les avantages et les désavantages de la France et de la Gr. Bretagne... Leyde, 1754. (K)

Written under an English pseudonym, John Nickolls, Plumard de Dangeul’s book was written on a subject which was to concern France greatly for nearly the next three fourths of a century. At the time of its publication, it was considered more interesting than any novel and was the talk of Paris. It was also widely translated, there being 10 editions in all.

2. (K) „2. éd.,” Leyde, 1754.
3. (K) „3. éd.,” Leyde, et se trouve à Paris, 1754.
7. (K) Italian translation, Venezia, 1758.
8. (K) Swedish translation, Stockholm, 1761.

XIX.

[MIRABEAU, VICTOR DE RIQUETTI, marquis de] 1715–1789

L’amî des hommes. Avignon, 1756. 3 v. (K) Note: Vol. 4 was published in 1758 and vols. 5–6 in 1760.

„It is difficult to understand – except on the hypothesis that force of temperament and glowing phrases will always carry everything before them — how it was that this man, whose unquestioned ability was completely spoiled by lack of judgment, could have enjoyed, though only for a few years, an international and national fame much greater than that of any other economist before or after, not excluding A. Smith or K. Marx. This happened ... on the strength of a performance that cannot be called impressive in anything except passionate phraseology.” — Schumpeter, History of Economic Analysis (1966 [c. 1954]) p. 175 n. on Mirabeau’s L’Ami des hommes.

R.H.I. Palgrave’s Dictionary of Political Economy (1910) v. 2, p. 775 states that L’Ami des hommes is said to have gone through forty editions, plus several translations. If true, Schumpeter’s comparison of Mirabeau’s reputation with that of Smith and Marx is valid, provided one remembers the qualification, „though only for a few years.” Since L’Ami des hommes is a multi-volume work, it is almost impossible to compile the evidence which would substantiate the claim for the number of editions, without extensive travel and personal examination of copies. Even if Mirabeau’s reputation were high today, the effort could only be justified if one were to attempt to discover significant textual revisions through the collation of editions. However, in a letter to C. J. Hirzel in the latter’s Le Socrate rustique, 4th ed. (Lausanne, 1777) p. 321–322, Mirabeau states that he believed in not revising his works, even where there is a demonstrable error. Thus, no bibliographer is likely ever to undertake the nightmarish task of sorting out the forty editions of this multi-volume book.

XX.

BIELFELD, JAKOB FRIEDRICH von, 1717–1770.

Institutions politiques, ouvrage où l’on traite de la société civile … La Haye, 1760. 2 v. (MH-L) Note: Vol. 3 was first published in Leiden in 1772.

This Cameralistic treatise is by a Prussian state official. It was more successful outside Germany than any other Cameralistic work, presumably because it was originally written in the international language of the eighteenth century — French.

2. (BN) Paris, 1761.
3. (NUC) German translation, Breslau, 1761.
4. (K) Paris, 1762.
5. (NUC) German translation, Breslau, 1764.
7. (S) „Nouvelle éd.,” Leide, 1767.
10. (Clendenning) Russian translation, Moscow, 1768.
11. (K) German translation, Bresslau, 1768–1773 (vol. 3, being the first German edition).

XXI.

[MIRABEAU, VICTOR DE RIQUETTI, marquis de] 1715–1789

In R.H.I. Palgrave, Dictionary of Political Economy (1910), vol. 2, p. 777, Dupont de Nemours is quoted as stating in 1769 that „This sublime work has to my knowledge been multiplied by eighteen editions.” One might almost have expected it to sell more, partly because of his great reputation as a result of L’Ami des Hommes (see entry 19) and also because he was imprisoned by the king for this book. However, his reputation was waning because of the bitterness and lawsuits which followed his separation from his wife in 1757. He was earning the reputation of „l’ami des hommes et l’ennemi de sa femme et de ses enfants.” We have not been able to distinguish 19 editions, some of which must have the same pagination as editions noted below.

2. (K) [n.p.] 1760, 336 p.
3. (K) [n.p.] 1760, 520 p.
4–5. [n.p.] 1761, 422 p. (BN lists two such editions; Kress has one).
7. (BN) Avignon, 1761, 324 p.
8. (GL) [n.p.] 1761, 413 p.
10. (K) L’ami du peuple, ou Essai sur une matiere importante, Hambourg, 1764.

XXII.

GENOVESI, ANTONIO, 1712–1769
Delle lezioni di commercio... Napoli, 1765–67. (NUC)

This book probably owes its popularity to the fact that Genovesi was a professor of economics at Naples and a great teacher.

2. (K) „2. ed. napoletana,” Napoli, 1768–70.
3. (K) Milano, 1768.
4–6. (All three in K). All have the imprint Bassano, 1769, but may be distinguished as follows. Edition A: In both vols, the imprint reads: Bassano, MDCCCLXIX. A spese Remondini di Venezia; There is no statement about Menchetti on the last page of each vol.; vol. 1, p. 20, last line of footnote begins: zare...; vol. 2, p. 180, last line of body of text begins: mazione...; Edition B: In both vols. the imprint reads Bassano, MDCCCLXIX. A spese Remondini; On the last page of each vol.: Corretto da D. Sebastiano Menchetti; vol. 1, p.20, last line of footnote begins: abbozzare...; vol. 2, p.180, last line of body of text reads: voce (a); Edition C: In both vols. the imprint reads Bassano, MDCCCLXIX. A spese Remondini di Venezia; On last page of each vol.: Corretto da D. Sebastiano Menchetti; vol. 1, p.20, last line of footnote begins: bozzare...; vol. 2, p. 180, last line of body of text begins: blica...;
7. (NUC) German translation, 1776. (Other information indicates that the German translation appeared during the years 1772–76. Were there two editions of at least the first volume?)
10. (K) Bassano, A spese Remondini di Venezia, 1788.
11. (NUC) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1789.
12. (K) Venezia, 1802.
13. (K) In Scrittori classici italiani, parte moderna, v. 7–9, Milano, 1803.
15. (K) Milano, 1820.

XXIII.

SONNENFELS, JOSEF von, 1732 or 3–1817.
Grundsätze der polizey-handlung und finanz...Wien, 1765–76. 3 v. (v. 2, 1767).

Sonnenfels’ 3-volume work well represented the liberal humanitarianism of Maria Theresia and Joseph II. It was the most important textbook in the Catholic German-speaking areas. In addition to at least 8 editions of all three volumes, there was even a one-volume, truncated edition for students, of which there were three editions. There were also three Italian translations, the latest in 1832, and a Latin edition which must have been for schools. Sonnenfels’ text continued to be used on into the 1840’s. Professors were required to do so by law. However, Joseph Kudler, whose Grundlehren der Volkswirtschaft, 2 v. (1846) replaced Sonnenfels, explains how the law was violated in spirit. Sonnenfels’ text was taken as the basis for attack on Cameralistic economics.

As noted earlier, it is almost impossible to list with accuracy the editions of multi-volume works, especially if the volumes were published over a number of years. Any attempt to list the first four editions will probably be wrong, so it is not done.

5. (Osterloh, Joseph von Sonnenfels) Italian translation, Milano, 1784.
7. (K) Truncated ed. by von Moshamm, München, 1787.
8. (Clendenning) Russian extracts, Moscow, 1787.
10. (K) 2d ed. of truncated version of von Moshamm, Munched, 1801.
12. (K) Italian translation, „ediz. 2da veneta,” Venezia, 1806.
13. (Kayser) Latin translation, Pressburg, 1808.
15. (K) 3d ed. of truncated version by von Moshamm, Tubingen, 1820.
STEUART, SIR JAMES, 1712–1780.

An inquiry into the principles of political oeconomy. London, 1767. 2 v. (K).

Sir James Steuart had the misfortune to be followed by Adam Smith in less than a decade. Otherwise, his work would probably have served as the standard English economic text. The publishing history of Steuart’s work is curious in various ways. Only two editions were published in Great Britain, but four in French and German translation. There were also two editions in English on the Continent, one of them in 1796 by the Basel publisher, Tourneisen. Tourneisen had also issued an edition of the Wealth of Nations in 1791, and he seems to have been a predecessor of the famous Tauchnitz of Leipzig in publishing English works on the Continent. It is also unusual that the section on banking continued to be useful, for it was re-published twice, in 1810 and 1812 at the time the Bullion controversy was raging.

2. (K) German translation, Hamburg, 1769–70.
3. German translation, Tübingen, 1769–72. (BN has vol. 2 dated 1785.)
4. (K) Dublin, 1770.
6. (BM) “Paris, 1792.” (Possibly, this is only a re-issue of no. 5, with canceled title-pages.)
7. (Humpert) Basel, 1796.
8. (Kayser) Strassburg, 1796.
9. (K) In his Works..., London, 1805.
11. (K) 2d ed. of no. 10. London, 1812.

VERRI, PIETRO, conte, 1728–1797.

Meditazioni sulla economia politica. Livorno, 1771.

The reception accorded to Genovesi’s work (entry 22) indicates that Italians felt a real need for a general economic treatise, and the 6 editions of Verri’s Meditazioni within the first two years of publication indicates that the need had not been sated. On the other hand, despite Verri’s greatness (Schumpeter states he would have to be „included in any list of the greatest economists.”), no further separate editions came out in Italian, whereas the slow but steady sales of Genovesi’s treatise indicate it was found more suitable as a text. Outside Italy, Verri’s publishing history was remarkable — four French editions, two in German, at least one, perhaps two in Dutch, and a partial Russian translation.

2. (K) Napoli, 1771.
3. (Einaudi Library, Turin) Genova, 1771.
4. (GL) [Milano, 1771]
5. (K) Venezia, 1771.
6. (K) „Ed. 6, accresciuta dall’autore”, Livorno, 1772.
7. (K) French translation, Lausanne, 1773. The sheets of this ed. were reissued with a new title-page (Lausanne, 1795).
8. (GL) German translation, Dresden, 1774.
9. (K) French translation, Londres, chez S. Hooper, 1776. (K has another issue: Londres, impr. par A. Grant, 1776).
10. (BN) French translation, La Haye, 1779. (Perhaps only the sheets of the Lausanne, 1773 edition with a new preface.)

11. (K) In his Discorsi, Milano, 1781.

12. (BN) In his Opere filosofiche, Parigi, 1784, 382 p.

13. (BM) In his Opere filosofiche, Parigi, 1784, 2 v.

14. (Kayser) German translation, Mannheim, 1785.

15. (BN) Paris, an VIII [1799]. Last page erroneously numbered 107, instead of 207. Copies also occur (K) dated 1799 and with p. 207 correctly numbered. These may represent two issues rather than two editions.


18. (K) In Scrittori classici, vol. 15, Milano, 1804.

19. (K) In his Opere filosofiche, Milano, 1818.


XXVI.

NECKER, JACQUES, 1732–1804.


This work, which has been called „déplorablement célèbre,” was opposed to the Physiocratic doctrine of free trade in grain. Instead, Necker favored retention of the old prohibition against the export of grain. The reason for the book’s popularity lies not with its conclusion but rather with Necker’s style and the argument he used. He claims that those who would benefit from free trade are the large proprietors, for they would then be able to dispose of their surplus most advantageously. Thus, he claims free trade favors property rights, rather than the common good.

C. Vacher de Lapouge, Necker économiste (Paris, 1914, p. 6, states that there were some 20 editions in France in 10 years, as well as translations. Many of the editions must be counterfeited or pirated editions which could be identified only through careful comparison of copies, for we have found only five in the first ten years, plus translations.

2. (K) 2. éd. Paris, 1775. (2 pts., 236, 184 p.)

3. (K) 2. éd. Paris, 1775. (275 p.)


7. (Kayser) German translation, Dresden, 1777.

8. (K) In his Oeuvres completes ... Paris, 1820–21.

9. (BN) In Collection des principaux économistes, 1848.
XXVII.

SMITH, ADAM, 1723–1790.

An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations... London, 1776. (K).

See The Vanderblue Memorial Collection of Smithiana, Boston, 1939, where the following are noted: 23 editions published in England between 1776 and 1847; 29 in Scotland between 1805 and 1850; 4 in Ireland, 1776–1801; 2 in Switzerland, 1791 and 1801; and 6 in the U.S., 1789 to 1818. The following translations are also noted: Danish, 1778–80; Dutch, 1796; 17 French editions between 1778 and 1843; 7 German editions between 1776–78 and 1846–47; Italian translation, 1790–91; Russian translation, 1802–06; and Spanish translations in 1794 and 1805–06. This makes 94 editions, not including 13 truncated editions in English or in translation, some of which are extensive.

XXVIII.

NECKER, JACQUES 1732–1804.

Compte rendu au roi ... au mois de janvier. 1781. Paris, Impr. royale, 1781, 116 p. (BN)

David Pottinger in The French Book Trade in the Ancien Regime (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 205 states that Necker’s Compte rendu, printed at the Imprimerie Royale, sold at the rate of 3,000 a day and total sales exceeded 40,000. In addition, one finds many other editions. This must be the best-selling financial statement ever issued. Ironically, its very success caused Necker’s downfall in that jealousy led to intrigues to discredit him in the eyes of the King. They succeeded, and Necker was dismissed.

The following list must be incomplete.
7. (Kayser) Basel, Serini, 1781.
8. (Kayser) Basel, Thurneisen, 1781.
9. (Kayser) Quedlinb., Ernst, 1781.
10. (Bruun) Danish translation, Kopenhagen, 1781.
12. (Kayser) German translation, Quedlinb., Ernst, 1781.
13. (Kayser) German translation, Hamburg (i.e. Altenburg) 1781.
14. (Kayser) German translation, Wien, 1781.
15. (Kayser) German translation, Berlin, 1781.
17. In his Oeuvres, Londres, 1785.
XXIX.

NECKER, JACQUES, 1732–1804.

De l’administration des finances de la France... [n.p.] 1784. (K).

Necker went from success to success and is the only author to have produced 3 bestsellers. This work, despite being in three volumes, is said, in C. Coquelin & Guillaumin, Dictionnaire de l’économie politique (1854) v. 2, p. 272, to have sold 80,000 copies. Kress has 6 copies of this 1784 edition. All are printed from the same setting of type, but they differ slightly in terms of the pagination, the number of errata listed and the extent to which the errata have been corrected. These slight variations indicate great demand. There were also pirated French editions plus translations into English and German. Translations of part 1 only appeared in Danish and Russian.


3. (K) [n.p.] 1784. 3 v. (vol. I: iv, clxx, 354 p., fold, table; vol. II: 1 p., iii, 536 p.; vol. III: 1 p.l., iv, 468 p.) Errata lists: I, 354 (consists of 11 items); II, iii (consists of 6 items); III, iv (consists of 6 items).


5. (K) [n.p.] 1784. 3 v. (vol. I: vi, clxx, 352 p., fold, table; vol. II: vi, 536 p.; vol. III: vi, 468 p.) No errata lists. Errata are all corrected in vol. I. Vol. II, p. 109, l. 2 erroneously reads: qu’elle... Vol. III, all errata corrected except p. 323, l. 7, ...payemnets...


8. (Humpert) German translation. Köln, 1784.

9. (Humpert) German translation. Augsburg, 1784.

10. (K) Lausanne, 1785.

11. (K) [n.p.] 1785. 2 v.


15. (K) In his Oeuvres, Londres, 1785.


17. (Humpert) German translation. Lübeck, 1785.


BENTHAM, JEREMY, 1748–1832.

Defence of usury... London, 1787. (GL).

Bentham’s argument against a maximum rate of interest set by law went through 20 editions, including French, German and Spanish translations. More quoted than read today, he must in his own time have been read as well.

2. (K) Dublin, 1788.
3. (NUC) German translation, Halle, 1788.
7. (K) Philadelphia, 1796.

MENGOTTI, FRANCESCO, conte, 1749-1830.

Ragionamento... presentato alla Real Societa economica fiorentina. Firenze, 1792.

Later editions were published under the title, Il Colbertismo. This treatise won the prize of the Royal Economic Society in Florence for the best answer to the question: In order for a state to increase its population and the products of its territory, is it better to favor its manufactures through obstacles to free trade or by permitting perfect free trade. Mengotti favored free trade.

Mengotti is a figure to whom one can find almost no reference in the literature of the history of economics. Apparently his performance as an economist was undistinguished but his style pleasing.

Since no. 10 identifies itself as the „11. ed.,” many must be missing from this list. Del commercio de’ Romani and Il Colbertismo were often published together, although there appear to be slightly fewer editions of the former.

2. (K) „2. ed.,” Venezia, 1792.
3. (Kayser) German translation, München, 1794.
4. (Kayser) German translation, Leipzig, 1794.
5. (GL) Verona, 1797.
6. (K) „5. ed.” with his Del commercio de’ Romani. Venezia, S. Apollinare, 1803. BN has with im-
print of A. Graziosii. Another issue rather than another edition?
7. (K) In Scrittori classici italiani, parte moderna, v. 36, Milano, 1804.
8. (K) Firenze, 1819.
9. (K) With his Del commercio de’ Romani, Firenze, 1828.

XXXII.

[MALTHUS, THOMAS ROBERT], 1766–1834.
An essay on the principle of population... London, 1798. (K).
Malthus was somewhat more popular than Ricardo, eighteen editions as opposed to three.
5. (K) German translation, Altona, 1807.
8. (K) Additions to the 4th and former edns., London, 1817.
13. (K) Georgetown, 1831.
15. (K) In Collection des principaux économistes, Paris, 1845.
16. (K) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1846.
17. (Palau) Madrid, 1848.

XXXIII.

SAY, JEAN BAPTISTE, 1767–1832.
Traité d’économie politique,... Paris, 1803. (K)
Save for the Wealth of Nations, Say’s Traité d’économie politique was the most popular work of the first half of the nineteenth century. Thirty-two editions have been noted. Included in that number are translations into Danish, English, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. Say was more popular in the U.S. before 1850 than Adam Smith — seven editions as opposed to six.
3. (K) German translation, Halle und Leipzig, 1807.
Owen sought a fundamental reorganization of society along cooperative principles, and his ideas were widely influential in Great Britain and the U.S. There were 11 editions and might have been more had his anti-religious views not alienated many people. No complete translations are recorded.

2. (K) London, 1813. [i.e. 1814?]
3. (K) London, 1816.

XXXIV.

[OWEN, ROBERT] 1771–1858.

Issued in four parts.

Owen sought a fundamental reorganization of society along cooperative principles, and his ideas were widely influential in Great Britain and the U.S. There were 11 editions and might have been more had his anti-religious views not alienated many people. No complete translations are recorded.

2. (K) London, 1813. [i.e. 1814?]
3. (K) London, 1816.
4. (K) London, 1817.
5. (K) London, 1818.
9. (K) Title as above, Manchester, 1837.
10. Manchester, 1840. (cited in Wales National Library, Bibliography of Robert Owen, 1925.)

XXXV.

SAY, JEAN BAPTISTE, 1767–1832.

There were not as many separately published editions of the Catéchisme as of the Traité. However, it is relatively short and so was sometimes appended to other works of Say. Some such instances may well have gone unnoted. Its shortness also led to a greater number of translations. The person who could not read French would have been more likely to be introduced to Say’s writings through the Catéchisme, rather than through the Traité. In addition to translations into English, German, and Spanish, there were also translations into Danish, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, and Swedish.

2. (K) Spanish translation, in his Tratado de economía política, Madrid, 1816.
4. (K) German translation, Karlsruhe, 1816.
5. (K) English translation, Philadelphia, 1817.
6. (K) Swedish translation, Stockholm, 1818.
7. (K) „2. éd.,” Paris, 1821.
10. (K) Portuguese translation, Lisbon, 1822.
11. (K) Italian translation, „2. ed.,” Milano, 1824.
12. (K) Danish translation, Kopenhagen, 1825.
15. (Kayser) German translation, Stuttgart, 1827.
18. (K) in J. Droz, Economie politique, Bruxelles, 1841.
20. (K) In Oeuvres diverses, Paris, 1848.
XXXVI.

[MARCET, MRS. JANE (HALDIMAND)] 1769–1858.
Conversations on political economy... London, 1816. (K).

„Speaking of texts, we should not pass by Mrs. Jane Marcet’s Conversations.... James Mill’s was an elementary, but not an easy, text on pure theory. McCulloch’s was the saleable stuff for the college course in general economics. Mrs. Marcet’s was economics for what we should call high-school girls....” Schumpeter, p. 477 fn. D. L. Thomson in her Adam Smith’s Daughters (N.Y., 1973), p. 25 fn., states that there were 16 editions. Since works intended for popular consumption tend to be more difficult to find in library catalogues than scholarly treatises, it is not surprising that we have been unable to find all those 16 editions. Instead, we have noted 14 which includes Dutch, French, German, and Spanish translations.

2. (K) Philadelphia, 1817.
4. (NUC) French translation, Genéve, 1817.
5. (K) „3d ed.,” London, 1819.

XXXVII.

RICARDO, DAVID, 1772–1823.
On the principles of political economy, and taxation... London, 1817. (K).

With only 3 separate editions published in England, it cannot be claimed that Ricardo truly was popular. However, his importance was widely recognized, for he was translated into Danish, French, German, Polish and perhaps Spanish.

2. (K) „2d ed.,” London, 1819.
5. (K) „3d ed.,” London, 1821.
6. German translation, 1821. (Entries 6 and 7 from Ricardo, Works and Correspondence, ed. by P. Sraffa, vol. 10 [1955]).
9. (K) „3. éd.,” Bruxelles, 1835.
10. (K) Danish translation, 1839.
11. (K) German translation, 1837–38.
12. (K) In his Works, London, 1846.
13. (K) In Collection des principaux économistes, 1847.
14. Spanish translation, 1848, by J. A. Seogne (not listed by Sraffa or in A. Palau y Dulcet, Manuel del librero hispano-americano, 1948—). However, it is noted in 2 bibliographies, albeit unreliable ones: Cossa, Saggi bibliografici di economia politica (1963) and J. Stammhammer, Bibliographie der Finanzwissenschaft (1903). Does it exist?

XXXVIII.

MCCULLOCH, JOHN RAMSAY, 1789–1864.

The principles of political economy... Edinburgh, 1825. (K).

McCulloch’s Principles might be called the Samuelson of its day in that it was the college text, although not as popular as Samuelson. In addition to 4 editions published in Great Britain, there were 2 issued in English for the use of the Portuguese exile community in Paris, plus Spanish and German translations.

5. (K) German translation, Stuttgart, 1831.

XXXIX.

BLANC, LOUIS, 1811–1882.


Louis Blanc’s Organisation du travail first appeared in the Journal, Revue du progrès social. It made his reputation as the leader of the French socialists. The „9. éd.” was published in Paris in 1850, but there were more than this. No copy can be located of many of them. In addition, there were 3 English editions in 1848 and two in German in 1847 and 1848.

3. (BN) [Paris] Administration de librairie, 1841, 244 p.
7. (NUC) „5. éd.,” Paris, 1847.
9. (Kayser) German translation, Nordhausen, 1847.
10. (K) „5. éd.,” Paris, 1848.
14. (K) German translation, Leipzig, 1848.

XL.

[MARX, KARL] 1818–1883 (and FRIEDRICK ENGELS)


Four printings of the first edition of the Communist Manifesto, 1848, have been identified, as well as a second separate edition in the same year. Separately published editions in Dutch and Swedish also exist. In addition, the Communist Manifesto was published in German and other languages in newspapers and periodicals. Exact figures are impossible to give because copies of some editions apparently no longer exist, but for a list of the 22 published and projected versions, 1848 to 1850, see Bert Andreas, Le manifeste communiste de Marx et Engels; histoire et bibliographie (Milano, 1963).
Additions and Corrections

to

The Economics Bestsellers Before 1850.

ADDENDA to p. 2; the next to last paragraph, the discussion of Campomanes.

According to Antonio Conca, the translator of the 1787 Italian edition (p. ii-iii), there were two Spanish editions in 1774. The first consisted of 5,000 copies; the second, of 40,000 copies which the government had distributed to parishes throughout the country. Two editions from different settings of type, but with the same pagination and text on the title-page, have been noted (both in Hitotsubashi University). They may be distinguished as follows:

Edition A:

p. iv; last line begins: nado ...

p. cxcviii; first line begins: dad económica ...

Edition B:

p. iv; last line begins: disciplinado ...

p. cxcviii; first line begins: cada provincia ...

ADD to List of Sources; p. 7.

Thi Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo.

Reeder Reeder, John Ph, „Bibliografía de Traducciones, al castellano y catalán durante el siglo XVIII, de obras de pensamiento económico“ in Moneda y credito, no. 126 (Sept. 1973), p. 57–77.

Page 8. I. DAVANZATI.

2. Add location: (K)

6. Add location: (K)

6a. (Thi) In Scisma d’Inghilterra, Venezia, 1756.

13a. Possibly in (NUC) Operette scelt, Reggio, 1829.

II. CULPEPPER.

Delete 12. This was based on an erroneous entry for no. 11.

Page 9. III. COURT.

4. Add location: (K)

Page 10. V. CHILD.

8. Change imprint from London to Glasgow.

Page 12. IX. LAW.


Page 13. X. VAUBAN.

4. leur should read leure. 8. Add location: (Thi) . 9. Add location: (Thi)

Page 14. XI. UZTARIZ.

9. Add location: (Thi)
XII. GEE.
Add 2a. (GL) Dublin, 1730.
6. Delete (K); add: (NUC)

Page 15.
XIII. MELON.
15. Delete (Megnet); add: (NUC)
20. Add: (Reeder)
Add 21. (NUC) Italian translation, 1795 (a reissue?)

XIV. BELLONI.
2. Add note: There were probably two Livorno editions: In Kress the title page reads: Nuova edizione. Also, the publisher’s dedication states: pubblicato di nuovo con le mie stampe.
14. Add location: (K)

Page 16.
XV. HUME.
Add 20a. (Thi) In Essays and treatises, Edinburgh, 1777.
It should be noted that the Hume list is really only suggestive. Much work needs to be done.

Page 17.
XVI. HERBERT.
Add 4a. (Reeder) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1755.
Add 12. Italian translation, Milan, 1816 (cited in Luigi dal Pane, La questione del commercio dei grani nel settecento in Italia, 1932.

XVIII. PLUMARD DE DANGEUL.
Add 4a. (NUC) “Nouvelle éd.,” Amsterdam, 1754.
Add 5b. (Reeder) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1755.
6. Change entry to: (K) Danish translation, Copenhagen, 1756.
Add 6a. German translation, Mitau, 1756 (H. Fromm, Bibliographie deutscher Uebersetzungen aus dem Französischen, 1950–1953)
Add 6b. German translation, Berlin, 1757 (Kayser)
Add 6c. German translation, Danzig & Leipzig, 1757 (Katalog der Commerz-Bibliothek in Hamburg)

Page 19.
XXI. MIRABEAU.
Add to the description of the first edition: viii, 336 p. (K)
It should be noted that the above is a quarto edition and probably the first.
Change 3 to read: viii, 520 p.
Change 4–5 to read: viii, 422 p.
Add 9a. [n.p.] 1761, viii, 423 p. (cited in bookseller’s catalog)

XXII. GENOVESI.
Add 13a. (K) Bassano, 1803.

Page 20.
XXIII. SONNENFELS.
9. Change to: (K) 6 Aufl., Wien, 1798 (v. 1, [n.d.])
11. Change to: 7 Aufl., Wien, 1804-05 (Thi has v. 2 & 3)
14. Add: (Thi has v. 1, 1819)

Page 22. XXVI. NECKER.
Add 4a. (NUC) 4. éd., Paris, 1775 (2 v. in 1)
5. Change (BN) to (BM)
Add 7a. (Reeder) Spanish translation, Madrid, 1783.

Page 22–23. XXVIII. NECKER.
Add 5b. (NUC) Berlin, Voss, 1781, 142 p. (in French)
Add 9a. (NUC) Hambourg, 1781 (in French)
15. Change (Kayser) to (Thi)

Page 24–25. XXIX. NECKER.
Add 19b. (NUC) Partial Italian translation. 1786-87. 3 v.
Add 20a. (NUC) German translation (partial?) Weimar, 1790.

Page 25–26. XXXI. MENGOTTI.
3. Change (Kayser) to (NUC)
5. Add: with his Del commercio de’ Romani.
Add 8a. (NUC) With his Del commercio de’ Romani, Milano, 1802.
Add 11. (NUC) With his Del commercio de’ Romani, Venezia, 1841.

XXXIII. SAY.
9. Add: (K)

Page 27. XXVI. SAY.
Add 5a. (Biblioteca Nazionale Braudense, Milan) Italian translation, Milan, 1817.
Add 17a. Portuguese translation, Coimbra, 1839 (cited in M. B. Amzalak, Joao Baptista Say, 1932)

XXVI. MARCET.
4. Add: BN has with some pagination but dated 1834. A reissue? Another edition?
Note: The French editions of 1817 and 1825 are different translations.

Page 28. XXXVII. RICARDO.
6. Add: (Thi)
Reverse entries nos. 10 & 11.
Developing Economics - Developing Economics 1250d 1 tweets. This new Working Paper studies the economics books which “judged by the number of editions” were the most influential between 1500 and 1849, and compares these to what is represented “Irwin Collier 1275d ago. Some neglected masterpieces (Eric Reinert - 80 Economic Bestsellers before 1850: A Fresh Look at the History of Economic Thought) developingeconomics.org/2017/06/01/80-â€¦ via @CriticalDev #RethinkingEconomics #EconHis. 0. Tony Addison 863d ago. Some neglected masterpieces (Eric Reinert - 80 Economic Bestsellers before 1850: A Fresh Look at the History of Economic Thought) developingeconomics.org/2017/06/01/80-â€¦ via @CriticalDev #RethinkingEconomics #EconHis. 0. Privacy | © 2020 Thinklab. Category: economic history, Economic theory, economics, Erik Reinert, History, History of Economic Thought. Category: economic history, Economic theory, economics, Erik Reinert, History, History of Economic Thought. Latest Tweets. [tweetslide]. Union for Radical Political Economics © 2018. Search results for: the-economic-bestsellers-before-1850. The Economic Bestsellers Before 1850 by Baker Library,Kenneth E. Carpenter. Title : The Economic Bestsellers Before 1850. Author : Baker Library,Kenneth E. Carpenter. PublisherÂ Summary: The mid-eighteenth century witnessed what might be dubbed an economic turn that resolutely changed the trajectory of world history. The discipline of economics itself emerged amidst this turn, and it is frequently traced back to the work of FranÃ§ois Quesnay and his school of Physiocracy. Though lionized by the subsequent historiography of economics, the theoretical postulates and policy consequences of Physiocracy were disastrous at the time, resulting in a veritable subsistence trauma in France.