



Are We Done with Mercantilism?

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Abstract: Mercantilism has been the subject of debates concerning its characterization. By returning to its first critics, Mirabeau and Quesnay, we show that the mercantile system is essentially characterized by the valorization of a mode of economic development based on trade surpluses and on the imperative of price competitiveness. We conclude on the existence of a mercantile system in the 18th century, and suggest that the mercantile period begins with the advent of the commercial society.

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