EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Write on TWO of the following questions. Be specific about historical episodes and evidence and include reflections on the relevant historiography of the topic. Take care to avoid overlap in your choice of examples and evidence for your two essays.

1. An examination of any undergraduate textbook reveals how revolutionary a period early modern England was, in the eyes of historians. The era began with the Tudor revolution in government and was swiftly followed by a series of others: the Reformation (i.e. the religious revolution), the educational revolution, the English Revolution, the Glorious Revolution, the Scientific Revolution, the commercial revolution, the price revolution and, of course, the agricultural and industrial revolutions. Write an essay in which you analyze one of these revolutions. What was it, and how revolutionary was it, in your evaluation? What readings have helped shaped your views on the subject and how?

2. The 1534 Act of Supremacy gave Henry VIII jurisdiction over both the temporal and spiritual welfares of his subjects, an authority that no European monarch had ever been able to claim. Do you think that the royal supremacy turned out to be more trouble than it was worth for English monarchs? Were the obvious benefits of such power outweighed by significant disadvantage?

3. To what extent do you think that King Charles was responsible for the outbreak of civil war in 1642?

4. 1688 is now seen as having implications for English religious, economic and social history. Discuss, and what was its impact in Continental Europe?

5. In the seventeenth century most European monarchies turned in the direction of absolutism. What were the benefits of absolutism? What were the forces that worked against it?

6. Were there differences in the way science was pursued in absolutist settings? How did French censorship operate vis a vis science?