

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE

Please answer **FOUR** of the following eight questions, including at least one from each of the three Parts, and not more than two questions from Part A.

Part A (answer at least one, and not more than two)

(Question 1.) “All societies before 1800 were Malthusian.” Explain what this claim means. Evaluate it using evidence from particular cases.

(Question 2.) An important element in many economic histories is the growth of markets. Is there any evidence in England between 1300 and 1800 of significant improvements in either goods, capital or labor markets?

(Question 3.) Two agricultural institutions that are supposed to have affected economic efficiency are Britain’s enclosures from the seventeenth century through the early nineteenth, and the sharecropping of the postbellum American South. What explains the widespread existence of each of these, and what were their effects on the economic efficiency of Britain and the American South, respectively?

(Question 4.) How crucial were the productivity gains of Britain’s textile sector and “the new draperies” in explaining (a) the rise in Britain’ real wages and (b) her trade patterns in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? How would you evaluate whether these sectoral productivity gains were the result of rising trade opportunities and improving institutions?

Part B (answer at least one)

(Question 5.) What happened to the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers in the United States across the twentieth century? What forces explain the movements you observe?

(Question 6.) Did the postbellum South grow too much cotton? In what sense did it do so? Too much for the best interests of those who worked the land, too much for the best interests of the South, too much for the best interests of the United States, all of these, or none of these? What evidence convinces you?

Part C (answer at least one)

(Question 7.) The gold standard has absorbed a considerable amount of attention by economic historians. Briefly: (a) describe the rise, functioning, and fall of the gold standard with particular emphasis on its costs and benefits and historical context; and (b.) discuss the lessons for current policy-makers provided by historical experience with the gold standard.

(Question 8.) The long-run evolution of globalization was contemporaneous with the extension of extra-European empires. What are the arguments and evidence—both pro and con—for the economic effects of empire in the context of globalization? What are the arguments and evidence—both pro and con—for the long-run effects of empire on the development of colonizers and the colonized?