

## **Economic History Comprehensive Exam, April 29, 2019**

UCLA Department of Economics

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You have three hours to complete the exam. It is open book and open notes. You cannot email/message/text during the exam. Please answer three of the six essay questions. Answers should be typed and sent by email to Chiara Paz ([chiara@econ.ucla.edu](mailto:chiara@econ.ucla.edu)) by 7pm.

1. The Great Divergence seeks to explain the causes of the rise of Western Economies compared to the rest of the world. Which are the potential causes for the Great Divergence? Briefly state each of them and underscore their contributions and limitations. Are those causes able to explain whether the gap between developed and developing countries is stable/increasing over time?
2. Describe the origin of the Industrial Revolution and explain the difference between the First and the Second Industrial Revolution. What aspects of the Industrial Revolution economic theories try to explain? Analyze them, underscoring the limits of each. Which additional evidence would you like to see in order to be fully convinced by any of them?
3. Was Malthus right? Answer this question by first explaining the Malthusian theory of economic growth. Is the available evidence supportive of the predictions of this theory for the period prior to the Industrial Revolution? Why are some countries still trapped in a Malthusian economy? How can they escape it?
4. One of the major methodological contributions in recent economic history regards linking Census data. Explain the major linking techniques developed so far. Is there evidence of any of them producing more accurate results than the others? What is the advantage in terms of economic analysis of new research using linked Census data, compared to previous ones? Are the new findings different?
5. At the beginning of its history, the United States was poorer compared to other countries in the so-called New World. Why was it the case according to the Engerman and Sokoloff hypothesis? When the “reversal of the fortune” happened and why? What is the role of slave labor in explaining this pattern? Does the Nunn’s hypothesis contradict the Engerman and Sokoloff hypothesis?
6. Female labor force participation dramatically increased in the US after WWII. Discuss the role of the demand and supply shifters. What is the main assumption underlying this theory? Do the results change if this assumption is violated? What was the role of education and access to pill in explaining the female labor force participation increase pattern?