

Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam in Political Economy

January 2020

Please answer one question from each part. Choose the three questions that show the depth and breadth of your knowledge. You may refer to the Political Economy reading list for author's names and titles but not other material.

Part I

1. How does income inequality affect the likelihood and pathways of democratic suffrage expansion? Compare income and land/asset inequality. Are they likely to work in the same way? Why or why not?
2. Does economic development press in the direction of democracy? Discuss two or three theories of this kind, the mechanisms they offer, and empirical strategies to understand this relationship.
3. Are women with earning potential likely to vote differently from women who do not work? Why or why not? With what consequences?

Part II

4. Does lobbying affect governments' allocation of resources, or does it reflect the existing allocation of interests within electoral districts? How would we know? In your answer, consider two or three definitions of lobbying behavior offered in the interest group literature.
5. Many countries have passed open government codes, which give citizens the right to access any public document. Are there any downsides of complete transparency in terms democratic accountability and government responsiveness? Does dynamic contracting help or hurt governance under full access to information?

Part III

6. Evaluate two or three competing theories of anti-immigration popular sentiment. Then consider conditions under which public opinion might differ from business opinion, and the conditions under which governments would favor one or the other.
7. How well do political institutions explain populist politics? How do we know when institutions drive outcomes, or other forces drive both institutions and outcomes? Draw on examples from several countries.