SS 129: Sample mid term

Please complete the exam in no more than two hours. Please while you are free to examine the readings assigned for this class, please do not use outside sources unless indicated.

Complete

3pts Complete one of two (100 words)

1a. Why did Fogel argue railroads were not important to American economic growth? do you agree? Why?

1b. Why did Summerhill argue railroads were important to Brazilian economic growth? do you agree? Why?

3pts Complete one of two (100 words)

2a. Landes made much of watchmakers’ skills would a greater focus on material science have been appropriate? Why?

2b. Harley down played the importance of institutional change in Ocean shipping, why. Do you agree Why?

8Pts Complete one of two (400 words)

3a. To what extent were the changes in US agriculture analyzed by Olmstead and Rhode made possible by the spread of railroads? Why?

3b. Given the natural depreciation of biological innovation, should attempts at harnessing solar energy today focus on biological converters (e.g. grasses) or mechanical ones (solar panels or other devices). Suggest how you would make the decision .

11pts Complete one of two (500 words)

4a. is the experience of the Cotton textile industry consistent with the notion that the productivity of mechanical inventions is largely an engineering issue? Why? Given your answer what policy recommendations would you propose to a country seeking to accelerate its growth rate?

4b. Both in shipping and in railroads, mechanical innovations massively reduced the time it took to transport goods. How much of these innovations had a systemic quality that also required change in the organization of industry or even society?

For those of you keen on studying ahead. At least one and at most three questions will recur either on the mid-term or on the final