Answer one question from each section. You must do a total of three (3) questions. Be sure each essay has a clear line of argument, addresses as many dimensions of the question as possible, and offers relevant, persuasive evidence from specific secondary sources wherever appropriate. Good luck!

Section I

A. To what extent can we describe empires in the modern era as colonial? What are the specificities (if any) of different colonial regimes (where they exist)? What bearing does this have on post-colonial theory?

B. How portable are concepts like the web, contact zones, indigeneity and “chaotic pluralism” across imperial times and places? To what extent can or must interpretive frameworks or methods vary – and be malleable – depending on the sites of imperial comparison? (how) does this impact the scope of generalization that’s possible in this field of inquiry?

Section II

A. The demise of the imperial system in the twentieth century has been linked primarily to the rise of nationalism. Discuss the reasons for the differential ways this process affected European empires in the aftermath of the two world wars.

B. How would you design a graduate course in comparative empires? Your syllabus should contain 1) a rationale for the subject; 2) three conceptual rubrics through which you would teach the material; 3) a section on method; and one example of a course assignment designed to enable students to develop research skills in this arena.

Section III

A. The comparative study of empire is a fairly recent historiographical trend. Make the case for as well as against the comparative historicizing of empires – criteria, achievements, pitfalls – based on a critical reading of the handful of existing works.

B. Phenomena like the local and space/place are, arguably, questions of scale and positionality that require specific kinds of research design and equally purposeful methodological procedures. How does one map the scalar complexity of imperial power comparatively, in ways that are attentive to uneven development, contiguity, and those reterritorializations that calcify as they undo (and vice versa, of course). What, in other words, is transnational/comparative method in imperial history, and/or what should it be?