

Department of Political Science, Yale University  
Field Examination in Comparative Politics  
August 19, 2013

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This is a closed-book, no-notes exam, with only access to a clean copy of the reading list allowed. You are required to answer 3 questions, including 2 questions from Section A (#1-4) and 1 from Section B. Each answer comprises one-third of the exam grade. The exam has a strict 21-page limit (double-space, 12 font). You have 7 hours.

*Section A. Answer 2 of the following 4 questions.*

- 1) What is the boundary between institutionalized and contentious politics? How do we understand the nature of contentious politics? What have we learned about the factors that encourage the eruption of contentious politics, the forms it takes, and its effects? What are the puzzles that remain unaddressed?
- 2) The literature on political institutions (including political parties) and regimes overlaps in some ways, and diverges in others. Compare the approaches of and lessons drawn from each. What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- 3) Does ethnicity differ from other kinds of cleavages important in political life, and if so, how? Pay particular attention to how cleavage types affect a) conflict and b) democratization.
- 4) What characterizes exemplary work in comparative politics? In your answer, address issues of a) methodology, b) theory, and c) relevance to public concerns, and consider the possibilities of tensions between these. Support your answer with examples from non-Yale faculty work on the reading list.

*Section B. Answer 1 of the following 2 questions.*

- 5) Compare and contrast early European state-building with 20th century experiences of state-building outside of Europe. In your response, consider at least two of the following factors: a) the timing of state-formation and its relationship to economic structures; b) the nature of colonial control (including presence or absence, kind and duration); c) the nature of society/social organization (e.g., identity, social class formation); and d) the presence of pre-existing political institutions.
- 6) The last two years have witnessed the fall of regimes and subsequent transition processes in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. How does the literature on comparative politics help inform us of the transition processes and their likely outcomes? What factors does it suggest we consider in order to understand these transitions? What expectations does it yield about their outcomes? And what gaps in the existing literature are revealed by the current transitions? You can draw upon a range of literatures, from those on transitions and democratization, political regimes and institutions, civil war, nationalism and state-building.