

Department of Political Science, Yale University

Field Examination in Comparative Politics

January 2018

INSTRUCTIONS: This is a closed book, closed notes exam, with access to a clean copy of the reading list only. You are required to answer 3 questions (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.

1. In the 1940s, E. E. Schattschneider held that modern democracy is unthinkable except in terms of political parties. Is that still true today? What is the role of political parties in democracy, what explains variations in the size and polarization of party systems, and do theories of parties and party systems apply equally to wealthy and developing democracies?
2. Most theories of democratization in comparative politics pivot around social class conflict and cooperation. But how do these theories vary, which do you find persuasive, and what avenues for additional research are open to adjudicating among them?
3. Amartya Sen's claim that democracy averts famines is well-known. Interrogate this claim, paying particular attention to the conditions under which elections are likely to improve social welfare and the differential effects democracy is likely to have on distinct types of benefits.
4. If 'war makes the state,' as Tilly argues, what are the factors that *weaken* states and state capacity?
5. In what way do ethnic cleavages hamper collective action and development?
6. In view of on-going debates about research transparency in political science, what do you view as the largest challenges to verifying empirical results produced using different methodologies (i.e. quantitative and qualitative, experimental and observational)? What types of solutions would you propose?