

Yale University

Department of Political Science

Comprehensive Field Examination in Comparative Politics

August 2022

Instructions: Answer 3 of the 7 questions below. Choose questions that show the depth and breadth of your knowledge. Each answer comprises one-third of the exam grade. The exam has a strict 21-page limit (double-space, 12 font). You have 7.5 hours to complete the exam. This exam is not open-book, but you can use up to 30 single-spaced pages of notes using standard 12-pt font size and a clean copy of the reading list.

Questions:

1. Do theories of party development account for the rise of populism? Discuss with reference to the experience of two countries.
2. What is the role of economic inequality in the emergence of social movements, mass revolts, civil war, and/or revolutions? Discuss with reference to at least three cases since 2010.
3. How do rural conflicts contribute to democratization? Discuss at least two theoretical arguments that link these two variables and their empirical strategies to understand this relationship.
4. Do "classic" pre-2010 theories from the literatures on democratization or political institutions explain the recent wave of democratic erosion? Discuss with reference to at least three cases.
5. To what extent do theories of state-building that explain the rise of taxation explain other (non-tax) forms of state-building? Discuss the theoretical arguments and any evidence relevant to investigating the theories' scope conditions.
6. Ethnic heterogeneity and the provision of public goods are negatively correlated in a large sample of countries. Why? Discuss at least three mechanisms that can account for this correlation and the empirical evidence at hand. What new areas of empirical research do you think are necessary to gain a deeper theoretical understanding of the relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and the production of public goods?
7. What is the interplay between concept-building and causal theorizing in comparative politics? Discuss with reference to the development of one of the key literatures in comparative politics covered in this exam.