PH.D. EXAMINATION IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Fall 2003

Student ID#__________________________

DIRECTIONS

Do not put your name on the examination. For identification, please use your student ID in the space indicated above.

If comparative politics is your major field, please answer one (1) question from Section A and two (2) questions from Section B. You have six (6) hours to complete the examination.

If comparative politics is your minor field, please answer one (1) question from each section. You have four (4) hours to complete the examination.

This is an open book examination. Return the examination to Traci when completed. Demonstrate the depth and breadth of your knowledge. Avoid overlapping material from one question to the other.

Section A

1. Political culture has experienced a revival among comparativists in recent years. Landes, Putnam, Huntington, and Inglehart, among others, have used culture to explain the wealth and poverty of, or within, nations. With specific reference to two or more of these scholars and to their critics, assess the utility and limitations of political culture in understanding wealth and poverty of, or within, nations.

2. What is “selection bias” in qualitative research? Can it be overcome in the designing of a research project?

3. What is the structural approach to the study of politics. Explain how at least two practitioners have used the concept of structure and offer a critique.

4. Students of the role of culture in politics emphasize the subjective meaning of behavior. Is this emphasis useful?

5. What is nationalism? Why is it important? How can it be explained? What accounts for the differences in its importance in different parts of the world?
6. Critically discuss the comparative historical method in comparative politics and contrast its usage and utility to at least one other approach.

**Section B**

1. A number of scholars have discussed a difference between communitarian, or coordinated, and Anglo-American, or liberal, versions of capitalism. What are these differences, and are they significant? Have the differences substantially diminished in recent years? Cite relevant literature and examples.

2. One of the alternatives open to non-Western societies in dealing with the challenge of the West discussed in the literature is “to modernize but not to Westernize.” Is this a realistic alternative? Why? Why not? What are the problems and difficulties involved in choosing this alternative? What non-Western society has been most successful in its attempt to modernize and, at the same time, to preserve its indigenous values and institutions?

3. It is frequently argued that cultural diversity presents challenges to national cohesion, integration, and social peace? Do you agree with this argument? Why are some societies seemingly more successful in dealing with cultural diversity and its effects than others?

4. In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel P. Huntington, argues that civilizations, not states, have become the key components in world politics, and that Western Christianity and the cultural characteristics associated with it constitute an essential prerequisite for western-style democracy. Where does this argument leave the “institutionalists?” How would Robert Dahl, and, more recently, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan respond to this argument? What is your position?

5. Discuss a particular case of ethnic conflict, analyzing its causes and outcomes.

6. Discuss some of the non-economic reasons why certain non-Western countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have succeeded in terms of economic development and democratization, while so many others have failed.
Ph.D. Exam in Comparative Politics

Spring 2003

Student ID

Do not print your name on the examination. For identification please use your student ID number in the space indicated above.

If comparative politics is your major field, please answer two questions from each section. You have eight (8) hours to complete the examination.

If comparative politics is your minor field, please answer three questions, including at least one (1) question from each section. You have six (6) hours to complete the examination.

This is an open book exam. Return the exam to Traci when completed. Demonstrate the depth and breadth of your knowledge. Avoid overlapping material from one question to the next.

Section A

1. The literature on modern democracy has long recognized the existence of a fundamental contradiction between the theory, self-image and appearance, or the "ideal" of democracy, on the one hand, and the reality of oligarchic structure and processes, as well as other generally undemocratic aspects of the actual operation of modern democracy, on the other. Discuss and explain this contradiction, citing relevant literature where appropriate. Do you agree with the argument that the opposition between "democracy in theory" and "democracy in practice" has been intensified and, perhaps, exaggerated because of the different perspectives of two academic disciplines or fields of study that have been major contributors to the debate about modern democracy, viz., constitutional law and political sociology. Explain why you agree or disagree.

2. What is "selection bias" in qualitative research? Can it be overcome in the designing of a research project?

3. Political culture has experienced a revival among comparativists in recent years. Landes, Putnam, Huntington, and Inglehart, among others, have used culture to explain the wealth and poverty of, or within, nations. With specific reference to two or more of these scholars and to their critics, assess the utility and limitations of political culture in understanding wealth and poverty of, or within, nations.

4. What do King, Keohane and Verba mean by the "logic of inference" and how does it apply to qualitative as well as quantitative methods. What are some of the criticisms articulated in reference to their arguments?

5. Compare two or more approaches to the study of the role of ideas in politics. Which theories and methods can best help us understand how ideas affect political outcomes?
Section B

1. Discuss the phenomenon of 19th and early 20th century European anti-Semitism and its relation to Nazi policies of genocide that are popularly known as the "Holocaust".

2. Has the concept, "embedded autonomy," enriched our understanding of state-society relations?

3. Germany, Japan and other nations with "communitarian" economic systems are agonizing over whether and how much they need to reform their systems of labor relations, finance, and competition in order to increase growth rates and create more jobs. What will be gained and what will be lost if such nations make market relations more fluid? How will shifts in economic policy affect the broad political landscape of these nations? (Refer to at least one national case.)

4. What is the future of nationalism in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the political developments in Eastern and Western Europe, and in the "age" of globalization?

5. Should students of comparative politics devote more attention to the study of ethnic and religious conflict? Cite relevant examples and pertinent literature in support of your argument.