PH.D. Exam in Comparative Politics (Minor)
Spring 2004

You need to answer three questions with one selected 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 breadth of your knowledge. Avoid overlapping materials from one question to the next.

Section A.

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?

2. Both Russia and the People's Republic of China have shifted from economies based on central planning to economies much more governed by markets, yet they have done this through very different political processes. Why did the Communist Party in China survive, while that of Russia fell from power?

3. What is the role of international and domestic factors in explaining economic growth in backward economies?

Section B.

4. Explain the issue of "selection bias" in qualitative (comparative) research? Then discuss whether or not it can be overcome in the design of a research project.

5. How is the concept of preferences and preference formation dealt with in the literature on "new institutionalism"? Are there any noteworthy distinctions between historical, rational choice, and sociological "new institutionalisms" on the issue of preferences and preference formation?
6. Issues concerning measurement validity for both quantitative and qualitative research have emerged as an important topic in comparative analysis. What are these issues? What literature in comparative politics has been cited frequently in relationship to measurement validity problems?

Section C.

7. Although ethnic groups have been exterminated in the past, it is especially in the twentieth century that states have targeted specific domestic groups for destruction. For example Armenians in the Ottoman Empire; Jews and Romany in Nazi Germany; Chams, Vietnamese, and middle-classes in Cambodia; and Tutsi in Rwanda. Discuss and try to account for this contemporary phenomenon.

8. What link is there between ethnicity and successful nation states? Is a myth of common kinship necessary to create and/or to maintain a successful nation-state?

9. You have been named as an advisor to the new regime in Afghanistan. Your responsibility is to briefly explain the major causes of ethnic conflict and to suggest policies that might deal with the problem and be helpful to the new regime. What would you say?