

201 Comparative Government

Catarina Leão, Wolfson College

catarina.leao@politics.ox.ac.uk

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Tutorials

Comparative Government tutorials will run every Wednesday (weeks 1-8 HT) from 10:30 to 11:30am at Wolfson College. Room to be announced.

Essays

You will be required to submit 8 essays over the 8 weeks. The essays should be approximately 1,500 words in length, and should develop and critically sustain an argument of your choice. The essays should be sustained using the comparative government theoretical framework and literature, which you should illustrate with empirical examples. All essays must include page numbers, bibliography and references. The latter may be Harvard-style or in footnotes.

Please send me your essays via email by **10:00am the day before the tutorial**. You may chose one of the essay questions listed below. I will provide you with written feedback for each essay.

Tutorial Readings

Week 1: Democratization

Essay Questions

- ‘Provided it is in the interests of elites, democracy can be forged in any context.’ Discuss.
- How far can international actors shape the process of democratization in a country?
- What conclusions can be drawn about the relative desirability of presidentialism, parliamentarism, and other executive formats for the consolidation of democracy?
- Does growth cause democracy?
- ‘Rather than being the result of favourable economic indicators, democratic regimes are the outcome of long-standing cultural traits.’ Discuss.

Readings

- Roberts Clark, W., Golder, M. and Golder, S.(2013) *Principles of Comparative Politics*. (Washington DC: CQ Press). **Chapters 6, 7 and 8.**
- Geddes, B., (2009) ‘What Causes Democratization?’ Boix, C. and Stokes, S.C. eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). **Chapter 14.**
- Robinson, J.A. (2006) ‘Economic Development and Democracy’. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9, 503-527.
- Capoccia, G. and Ziblatt, D. (2010) ‘The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond’, *Comparative Political Studies*. August/September, 43, 931-968.

- Muller, E.N. and Seligson, M.A. (1994) “Civic Culture and Democracy: The Question of Causal Relationships”, *American Political Science Review*, 88(3), 635-652
- Carothers, T. (2002) ‘The End of the Transition Paradigm’, *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1), 5-21.

Week 2: Autocracies and Hybrid Regimes

Essay Questions

- ‘Rather than a wave of slower pace of democratization, hybrid regimes represent a new equilibrium.’ Discuss.
- Is Linz’s distinction between Totalitarian and Authoritarian regimes analytically useful?
- Why would an autocrat, or an elite, choose to grant power to the wider electorate?
- What factors explain why some countries democratize whereas others remain under the label of competitive authoritarianism?

Readings

- Svobik, M. (2012) *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. (New York: Cambridge University Press). **Chapters 1-3.**
- Gerschewski, J. (2013) ‘The three pillars of stability: legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes’, *Democratization*, 20(1), 13-38.
- Linz, J. J. (2000) *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*. (Lynne Rienner Publishers)
- Gandhi, J. (2008) *Political Institutions under Dictatorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). **Chapter 3.**

- Levitsky, S. and Way, L. (2002) 'The rise of competitive authoritarianism', *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2), 51-65.

Week 3: Legislatures

Essay Questions

- What explains variation in the institutional design of modern legislatures?
- Why do parties undertake parliamentary reforms?
- What explains the high party unity in parliamentary democracies
- How do the discipline of parliamentary parties, the strength of parliamentary committees, and the power of parliamentary agenda-setters influence the effectiveness of an assembly?
- 'The frequency with which government measures are defeated or modified by legislatures is a poor measure of the power of the legislature.' Do you agree? If so, what better ways are there of judging a legislature's effectiveness?
- Can modern legislatures ensure effective, accountable and representative government?
- Describe the differences in the legislature's role in presidential and parliamentary systems and analyse the consequences for government policy.
- How can parliamentary accountability, transparency, and oversight be strengthened?

Readings

- Laver, M. (2006) 'Legislatures and Parliaments in Comparative Context', in Weingast, B. and Wittman. D. eds. *Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press). **Chapter 7**

- Carroll, R., Cox, G.W. and Pachon, M. (2006) 'How Parties Create Electoral Democracy, Part 2', *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 31(2), 153-174.
- Cox, G.W. (2006) 'The Organization of Democratic Legislatures' in Weingast, B.R. and Wittman, D.A. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Carey, J.M. (2007) 'Competing Principals, Political Institutions, and Party Unity in Legislative Voting', *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 92-107.
- Arter, D., (2007) Comparing and classifying legislatures *Journal of Legislative Studies* 2006, 12(3-4).

Week 4: Executives

Essay Questions

- Is the categorization of democratic regimes into 'presidential', 'parliamentary', and 'semi-presidential' analytically satisfactory?
- 'Parliamentary systems are better at making policy than presidential systems.' Discuss.
- How and why does the relationship between an executive's formal authority and its actual power vary within and between states?
- Assess the importance of the trend towards strengthened executive leadership in modern democracies.

Readings

- Roberts Clark, W., Golder, M. and Golder, S. (2013) *Principles of Comparative Politics*. (Washington DC: CQ Press), **Chapter 12**.

- Tsebelis, G. (2002) *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press) **Introduction and Chapter 3.**
- Linz, J. (1990) 'The Perils of Presidentialism', *Journal of Democracy*, 1(1),51-69.
- Eaton, K. (2000) 'Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism in the Policy Arena', *Comparative Politics*, 32(3), 355-376
- Cheibub, J.A. (2007) *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism and Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). **Introduction**

Week 5: Electoral Systems

Essay Questions

- Has the classification of electoral systems in 'majority' and 'proportional' been made obsolete by the recent emergence and diffusion of 'mixed' electoral systems?
- What impact does the electoral system have on the shape and operation of the party system?
- What are the determinants of electoral reform?

Readings

- Roberts Clark, W., Golder, M. and Golder, S. (2013) *Principles of Comparative Politics*. (Washington DC: CQ Press), **Chapter 13.**
- Bowler, S. (2008) 'Electoral Systems', in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), **Chapter 29.**
- Boix, C. (1999) 'Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies', *American Political Science Review*, 93(3), 609-624.

- Shugart, M.S. and Wattenberg, M.P. eds. (2001) *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). **Introduction**
- Chang, E.C.C. and Golden, M.A. (2007) 'Electoral systems, district magnitude and corruption' *British Journal of Political Science*, 37, 115-137.

Week 6: Party Systems

Essay Questions

- "Party organizations of a traditional kind are no longer needed - either for running election campaigns or for any other purpose." Do you agree?
- Is there an increasing tendency for parties to converge on the political centre-ground? If so, does this mean that differences between party systems are increasingly superficial? If not, does this mean that any changes in party systems are rather superficial?
- How can change in party systems best be explained?

Readings

- Roberts Clark, W., Golder, M. and Golder, S. (2013) *Principles of Comparative Politics*. (Washington DC: CQ Press), **Chapter 14**.
- Kirchheimer, O. (1966) 'The Transformation of the Western European Party Systems', in La Palombara, J. and Weiner, M. *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 177-200.
- Rueda, D. (2005) 'Insider–Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties', *American Political Science Review*, 99, 61-74

- Kitschelt, H. and Wilkinson, S. (2007) ‘Citizen-politician Linkages: An Introduction’, in Kitschelt and Wilkinson ed. *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). **Chapter 1**
- Wolinetz, S.B. (2002) ‘Beyond the Catch-All Party: Approaches to the Study of Parties and Party Organization in Contemporary Democracies’, in Gunther, R. et al. eds. *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 136-165.

Week 7: Democratic Challenges: Corruption Clientelism

Essay Questions

- Some argue that in the absence of strong welfare states, clientelism benefits the poor. Do you agree?
- “Appealing to voters on the basis of policy, and distributing gifts and favors, are diametrically opposed ways of campaigning.” Discuss.
- “In the presence of the secret ballot, vote buying transactions are unenforceable. Parties should not waste resources distributing gifts and favors during campaigns.” Discuss.
- Under what conditions is vote buying more likely to flourish? Why do some machines collapse?

Readings

- Kitschelt, H. (2000) ‘Linkages Between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics’, *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(6-7), 845-879
- Stokes, S. (2007) ‘Political Clientelism’ in Boix, C. and Stokes, S. eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

- Lehoucq, F. (2003) ‘Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types and Consequences’, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6, 233-256
- Wantchenkon, L. (2003) ‘Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from A Field Experiment in Benin’, *World Politics*, 55(3), 399-422
- Fox, J. (1994) ‘The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico’, *World Politics*, 46, 151–84

Week 8: Democratic Outcomes

Essay Questions

- Do democracies outperform autocracies in terms of social equality, human development, and the delivery of welfare services?
- What are the effects of political competition under democracy?
- ‘Democracy combines efficiency with equality.’ Discuss.
- Is economic growth higher under democracy?

Readings

- Sen, A. (2000) ‘The Importance of Democracy’ in *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books) 146-159.
- Dahl, R.A., Shapiro, I. and Cheibub, J. A., *The Democracy Sourcebook* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press). **Chapter 8 “Democracy’s Effects”**.
- Acemoglu, D. et al. (2014). ‘Democracy Does Cause Growth.’ *NBER Working Paper Series*.
- Engerman, S.L. and Sokoloff, K.L. (2008) ‘Debating the role of institutions in political and economic development: Theory, history, and findings’, *Annual Review Of Political Science*, 11, 119-135.

- Ross, M. (2006) 'Is democracy good for the poor?', *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4), 860-874.