

# Comparative Political Systems Gov't.121/04

Theme: Political Change in Democracies and Authoritarian Systems

Professor Daniel Brumberg

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## What is "Comparative Politics" and Why Should We Study It?

During the nineties the world witnessed historic changes. From Warsaw, Poland to Santiago, Chile, authoritarian regimes collapsed. Yet it is too early to confidently predict where these changes will lead. In some countries it seems that democracy and pluralism may be on the horizon. Elsewhere, old forms of chauvinist nationalism, racism and fascism are challenging and sometimes overcoming democratic forces.

Yet it is not only authoritarian regimes that have been buffeted by the winds of change. Some Western democracies have been pressed by an array of social, political and ideological groups to adopt political reforms. These groups want to change the "rules of the game" in order to make governments more responsive to their interests and concerns. In short, the quest to either establish or refurbish democracy has become a global phenomenon.

Why do movements for change and reform emerge? When are they successful and when do they fail? Are some types of authoritarian regimes more prone to piecemeal change over time, or to sudden revolutionary transformations? When and why do democracies face demands for change and how are the "rules of the game" altered to accommodate these demands?

These and many other difficult questions are not only of concern to academics. On the contrary, wherever policy makers in governments, business, banking and multi-lateral organizations forge policies about the present as well the future, they must have the analytical tools to identify patterns of political and social change. The various analytical tools that together constitute the field of "comparative politics" offer a means to measure such change, and its implications for the stability of existing *regimes* -- by which we mean the collection of institutions, rules, ideologies, and political processes that are used to establish and sustain rule.

Students of comparative politics begin with the study of history, in the sense that the concrete experience of different countries is our laboratory. But comparative politics is distinct from the field of history. Instead of telling a long and detailed story, comparativists try to systematically and carefully tease out from historical experience lessons, *propositions*, *hypotheses* and *theories* about which factors affect, cause or -- in the language of social science, *determine* -- different kinds of political regimes.

To generate propositions and theories, political scientists compare the experiences of similar as well as different kinds of regimes. The more comparisons -- and contrasts -- we undertake, the more we

can refine our theories. Eventually we hope to amass a store of knowledge that will help us evaluate the possible transformations of regimes that may occur under a given set of economic, social, intellectual and political circumstances.

This is a very complex and ambitious field. Moreover, it has gone through a process of theoretical or *conceptual* changes since War 11, as historical experience has repeatedly obliged political scientists to reevaluate their assumptions -- and even their carefully devised theories. Indeed, the field is so littered with spent theories that many social scientists wonder whether we can legitimately call "comparative politics" a coherent sub-discipline of political science at all.

Similar complaints have been heard regarding other more scientific disciplines such as the "dismal science" of economics. Political scientists -- particularly those who study broad historical processes -- frequently lack the luxury of "controlling" their environment, as do scientists in the hard disciplines such as physics, chemistry and biology. Nevertheless, once we recognize the limitations that attach to the study of "comparative politics," we can move ahead and familiarize ourselves with the tools of this inexact discipline -- and to apply them to the world in which we live.

### **The Purpose and Plan of this Course -- In a Nutshell**

To make some sense of the extraordinary changes occurring on a global scale Parts One provides an introduction to the theoretical and ideological issues that have guided the study of comparative politics. Part Two introduces the comparative study of liberal democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Part Three considers the institutional, social and ideological dynamics by which the "rules of the political game" are structured in different kinds of political systems. Part Four examines the socio-political roots of democracy in the United Kingdom, and as well as the forces that have created pressures for change. Part Five addresses politics in the Third World. In this section we review some theories of political development, and then consider the several specific challenges facing Third World states by examining the cases of Mexico, Egypt and Russia.

**Tests and Grading**: Students will complete two quizzes, a take-home mid-term and a in-class final. The quizzes each counts for 10% of the grade, the mid-term 35%, and the final 45%. I will take into account progress over time. Attendance will not be taken, but if you miss classes this will affect your grade!

### **Readings**:

**Required Text**: Gabriel Almond, B. Bingham Powell, Jr., Karen Strøm and Russell Dalton, Comparative Politics, Seventh Edition, (New York: Harpers, 1999).

**Additional Readings**: Other required readings are listed in the syllabus (see below). All these additional readings are on Reserve as "**electronic reserves**." These are as important -- and in some cases more important -- than those in the Almond and Powell text. Please plan ahead to make copies of these articles *ahead* of time!

### **Syllabus**

## **PART ONE: APPROACHES AND PARADIGMS**

### **Class 1 Introduction and Overview of Course**

*August 30*

### **Class 2: Comparative Politics Paradigms**

*September 6*

Almond and Powell, Comparative Politics, Chapter One, "Issues in Comparative Politics" pp. 3-32.

Howard Wiarda, "Comparative Politics Past and Present," in H. Wiarda, (ed.), New Directions in Comparative Politics, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 3-25.

## **PART TWO: COMPARING REGIME TYPES**

### **Class 3: Liberal Democracy Versus Democracy**

*September 11*

Robert Dahl, Polyarchy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971). Chapter 1, "Democratization and Public Opposition" pp. 1-9, Chapter 2, "Does Polyarchy Matter" pp.17-32.

Gaetano Mosca, The Ruling Class, Translated by Hannah D. Kahn, (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1939) pp.134-135, 153-158, 253-260,409-419. (Note: Reading starts where the page is marked "START" and ends where it is marked, "END.")

### **Class 4: Totalitarianism Systems**

*September 13*

N.S. Timasheff, "Totalitarianism, Despotism, Dictatorship," and Carl Friedrich, "The Unique Character of Totalitarian Society" in Friedrich, (ed.) Totalitarianism (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1954 pp. 39-59.

Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, Translated by Ralph Manheim, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971) pp.393-33, 442-451.

### **Class 5: Authoritarian Systems**

*September 18*

Juan Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes" in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, (eds), Handbook of Political Science Volume 3, (Menlo Park: Addison Welley, 1975) pp. 264-277.

Egypt's "Charter of National Action," pp. 195-205 (stopping at "The Roots of the Egyptian Struggle"). This can be found in Nissim Rejwan's Nasserist Ideology Its Exponents and Critics, (New York: John Wiley,1974). *Note: It is probably listed under "Rejwan" in the Reserve List*

## **PART THREE: LEGITIMIZING & STRUCTURING THE "RULES OF THE GAME"**

### **Class 6: The Cultural Bases of "Legitimacy"**

*September 20*

Almond and Powell, Chapter 2, pp. 33- 46, and Chapter 3, pp. 36 to top of 56.

Max Weber, Economy and Society, Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), "The Types of Legitimate Domination" pp. 212-45.

**Class 7: Institutionalizing “Legitimacy;” Socialization & Elite Recruitment** *September 25*

Almond and Powell, Chapter 3, 49-65.

**Class 8: Interest Articulation** *September 27*

Almond and Powell, Chapter 4, pp. 66-84.

**Class 9: Interest Aggregation and Political Parties** *October 2 and 4*

Almond and Powell, Chapter 5, 85-98.

Arend Lijphart, Democracies, Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984). “The Westminster Model of Democracy” pp. 1-9. “Party Systems: Two-Party and Multiparty Patterns” pp. 106-111. “The Consensus Model of Democracy” pp. 21-30, Party Systems: The Issue Dimensions of Partisan Conflict” pp. 127-143.

**October 9: Yom: Kippour** (🕯️)

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#### **PART FOUR: POLITICAL CHANGE WITHIN DEMOCRACIES**

<p><b>Class 10: The Case of the U.K. :Why Is Reform Necessary?</b>  <b>Quiz Number One!</b> 🕯️ <b>And: Take Home Assignment!</b></p>	<p><i>October 11</i>  <b>(Due: October 23).</b></p>
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Re-read Lijphart above, particularly his discussion on pages 127- 43.

Richard Rose, Chapter 9. "Politics in England" in Almond and Powell, pp. 161-209

**Class 11: England Continued..** *October 16*

**Class 12: England Wrapped up** *October 18*

Finish Rose and Carefully Read: Economist Readings (On Reserve).

#### **PART FIVE: THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE "THIRD WORLD"**

**Class 13: The Third World State: Cultural Explanations** *October 23*

“Cultural Explanations: The Man in the Bagdad Café,” 243-50.

**Class 14: The Third World State as “Neo-Patrimonialist”** *October 25*

Christopher Clapham, "The Third World State, Chapter 3," in Clapham, Third World Politics: An Introduction (London: Croom Helm, 1985) pp. 39-59

**Class 15: Competing Explanations of Instability and Authoritarianism: The Institutional Explanation**

*October 30*

Samuel Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay" in Claude Welch, Political Modernization (Belmont, Wadsworth Publishing, 1967) pp. 207-246.

**Class 16: The Dependency Explanation**

*November 1*

Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Under-development" in Charles Wilber, (ed.) The Political Economy of Development and Under-development (New York: McGraw Hill, 1992) pp. 107-118.

**Class 17: MEXICO: From One Party Populist Authoritarianism to Democracy?**

*November 6*

**(Quiz 2!)**

Cornelius, Chapter 15 in Almond and Powell, pp. 463-511.

**Class 18: Mexico Continued**

*November 8*

Roberto E. Blum, "The Weight of the Past," *Journal of Democracy*, October, 1997, 28-42.

**Class 19: Concluding Mexico**

*November 13*

John Bailey and Arturo Valenzuela, "The Shape of the Future," *Journal of Democracy*, October 1997, 43-57.

**Class 20: EGYPT: "Unruly Corporatism" and "Dissonant Politics"**

*November 15*



Lesch, Chapter 17, in Almond and Powell, pp. 571-625.

**Class 21: Egypt Continued**

*November 20*

Robert Bianchi, Unruly Corporatism, Associational Life in Twentieth-Century Egypt, (New York and Oxford: 1989) pp. 20 (Starting from "Corporatism") to 26 (stopping after first paragraph at the top of page 26).

(Take a third look at the reading from the "Charter of National Action" cited above.!)

**November 22: No class!**

**Class 22: Concluding Egypt***November 27*

Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Reform and Frustration in Egypt," Journal of Democracy, October 1996, pp.125-134.

**Class 23: Russia: Stability and Economic Growth Versus Democracy?***November 29*

Thomas Remington and Frederick C. Barghoorn, Chapter 13, "Politics in the USSR" in Almond and Powell, pp. 373-416.

**Class: 24: Russia Continued***December 4***Class 25: Concluding Russia***December 6*

Dimitri Glinksy and Peter Reddaway, "The Ravages of 'Market Bolshevism,'" *Journal of Democracy*, No.2 (1992) 19-34.



**Who is this man?**