

## **POL4: Comparative Politics**

---

### **Course organiser**

Christopher Bickerton ([cb799@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cb799@cam.ac.uk))

Department of Politics & International Studies, ARB, 7 West Road

### **Lecturers**

#### **Modules in Michaelmas**

Stephanie Diepeveen ([snd31@cam.ac.uk](mailto:snd31@cam.ac.uk))

Glen Rangwala ([gr10009@cam.ac.uk](mailto:gr10009@cam.ac.uk))

Christian Sorace ([cs2205@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cs2205@cam.ac.uk))

Pieter Van Houten ([pjv24@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pjv24@cam.ac.uk))

James Wood ([jdww82@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jdww82@cam.ac.uk))

Harald Wydra ([hbww23@cam.ac.uk](mailto:hbww23@cam.ac.uk))

#### **General Lectures in Lent**

Christopher Bickerton ([cb799@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cb799@cam.ac.uk))

#### **Lectures for Michaelmas Term Modules:**

Please check the Lecture List on the POLIS website for the times and venues of these lectures.

#### **General Lectures in Lent term:**

Please check the Lecture List on the POLIS website for the times and venues of these lectures.

---

#### Contents of this document

1. Aims and objectives of the paper
2. Brief description of the paper
3. Modes of teaching
4. Mode of assessment
5. Background reading
6. List of Lent modules
7. Lecture List for Lent term
8. Supervisions: questions and readings
9. Examination



## **1. Aims and objectives of the paper**

This is a broadly focused paper aiming to give students an understanding of the key actors and dynamics that make up the contemporary politics of states around the world. The paper pursues this goal from a comparative perspective, meaning that it selects examples from across the world in order to determine how universal certain domestic political phenomena are, what common causes they may share, and how different trajectories of political development are possible and why they occur. The paper also aims to give students a basic grasp of the comparative method, of its role in political science research, and of the usefulness of comparison in understanding our political environment. The paper aims to provide students with the conceptual tools needed to think about politics from a comparative perspective. It also aims to provide enough empirical knowledge for them to appreciate the diversity of political life and to match generalized insights about the nature of political behaviour with sophisticated empirical examples that illustrate variation and complexity.

## **2. Brief description of the paper**

Comparative politics uses the method of comparison as a way of exploring national political dynamics. The paper is divided into two parts: a lecture series plus accompanying supervisions in Lent term; and a set of modules consisting of 4 to 6 lectures each (of which students choose two), plus two supervisions for each module, in Michaelmas term. Overall, this paper focuses on three key concepts: states, regimes and interests. Each of the three themes covered by the Lent term lectures will take up one of these concepts in detail. To various extents, these concepts are addressed in concrete empirical contexts in the Michaelmas term modules. The modules come first in order that the course students are able to approach the general Lent term lectures with some empirical knowledge of the country/regional cases they will cover in the modules. Assessment for the paper will be in the form of an end-of-year exam.

### Modules

The first part of the course consists of five modules, with students being required to choose two out of the five. These modules focus on specific countries with the aim of giving students a more detailed introduction to different ways of conducting political analysis. Whilst involving some geographical focus, the modules are organized around some key themes of comparative politics, such as state formation, nation-building and nationalism, democratisation and authoritarianism and the role of religion in politics.

### Lecture Series in Lent term

The first theme on *state formation* will: explore the origins of state formation and theories of state formation developed by comparative historical sociologists; compare and assess the strength of various theoretical explanations for the emergence of modern states; compare the different trajectories of state formation taken by European states and explain the variation in state traditions amongst contemporary European states; look at state transformation outside of Europe, particularly at China, post-colonial states and post-communist states in Eastern Europe; explore contemporary processes of state-building, focusing in particular on international state-building i.e. the building of state institutions by outside powers.

The second theme on *regimes* will: study the origins of different political regimes, focusing in particular on the origins of democracy and authoritarianism; explore comparatively the

phenomenon of democratization, looking at differences across time and space; focus on the dynamics and resilience of authoritarian regimes; look at the presence of hybridity within political regimes, e.g. the phenomenon of 'illiberal democracies'; identify variation within the constitutional arrangements of democratic states, contrasting parliamentary, semi-presidential and presidential political systems.

The third theme on *modes of interest representation* will: study in detail political parties as a crucial actor representing interests in political life today; identify the origins of parties and detail their transformation over time, from factions through to mass parties up to present-day 'catch-all' and 'cartel parties'; look at the role of parties in contemporary politics and at the reasons for the high rates of disapproval and declining memberships that parties face in many parts of the world; explore how interests are represented outside of parliamentary politics, focusing on economic interest groups, private actors and non-governmental organizations; present theories and models of interest representation, focusing in particular on pluralism and corporatism.

### **3. Modes of teaching**

The first part of the paper consists of five modules, with students being required to choose two out of the five. Students will receive supervisions for these modules in Michaelmas term, in addition to the lectures which they are expected to attend. The second part of the course consists of 16 lectures. Students are expected to attend every lecture and they will be given supervisions in Lent term, organised around the three themes into which the lectures have been grouped.

### **4. Mode of assessment**

There will be a five hour examination paper in the Easter term, in which students will be required to answer three questions. The questions will be grouped into seven sections. The first section refers to the material covered in the Lent term lectures and students must answer one question from this section. Students must answer two questions from two of the remaining six sections (which correspond to the six Michaelmas term modules).

### **5. Background reading**

The following books are recommended as preparatory reading and as background reading during the course. Some are of a general nature; others focus on specific themes of comparative politics or in particular countries or regions. Some of the readings are academic books, others are written for a broader audience. Students should follow their interest in deciding what to read. Students may also wish to familiarize themselves with some of the leading comparative politics journals, in order to get a flavour of comparative political analysis. These include *Comparative Political Studies*, *The Journal of Democracy* and *Government and Opposition*. Students should also consult the readings lists of the individual modules as many of them contain useful introductory readings for the regions covered by the module, such as the Middle East or Eastern Europe.

#### General

C. A. Bayly (2004) *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford: Blackwells)

- F. Fukuyama (2012) *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* (London: Profile)
- (2014) *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy* (London: Profile)
- B. Guy Peters (2013) *Strategies for Comparative Research in Political Science* (Basingstoke: Palgrave)
- R. Hague, M. Harrop and J. McCormick (2016) *Comparative Government and Politics*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave) [or an earlier edition]
- S. Huntington (1968) *Political Order in Changing Societies* (London: Yale University Press)
- R. Lachmann (2010) *States and Power* (Cambridge: Polity)
- M. Mann (1986, 1993, 2012) *Sources of Social Power, 4 Volumes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) [all volumes available as ebooks]
- Y. Papadopoulos (2013) *Democracy in Crisis? Politics, Governance and Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave)
- A. de Tocqueville (2004) *Democracy in America*, transl. by Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Library of America) [available as ebook]

### Europe

- T. Bale (2013) *European Politics: A Comparative Introduction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Palgrave: Basingstoke)
- I. Berend (2010) *Europe since 1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- C. Bickerton (2016) *The European Union: A Citizen's Guide* (London: Penguin)
- T. Judt (2005) *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (William Heinemann: London)
- P. Mair (2014) *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing-Out of Western Democracy* (London: Verso)
- H. Wydra (2007) *Communism and the Emergence of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) [available as ebook]
- J. Zielonka (2014) *Is the EU Doomed?* (Polity: Cambridge)

### Middle East

- A. Hourani (1983 [1962]) *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, new ed.)
- M. Lynch (2006) *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, al-Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today* (New York: Columbia University Press)
- R. Owen (2004) *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge) [available as ebook]
- K. Selvik and S. Stenslie (2011) *Stability and Change in the Modern Middle East* (London: IB Tauris) [available as ebook]
- J. Stacher (2012) *Adaptable Autocrats: Regime Power in Egypt and Syria* (Stanford: Stanford University Press)

### Africa

- C. Clapham, (1996) *Africa and the International System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). [available as ebook]
- Cooper, F. (2002) *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Herbst, J. (2000) *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press) [available as ebook]

- R. Jackson (1996) *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) [available as ebook]
- Nugent, P. (2004) *Africa since Independence: A Comparative History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- N. Van de Walle (2001) *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

### China

- M. Blecher (2009) *China against the Tides: Restructuring through Revolution, Radicalism and Reform* (London: Bloomsbury)
- F. Dikotter (2022) *China After Mao: The Rise of a Superpower* (London: Bloomsbury)
- R. Mitter (2008) *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) [available as ebook]
- J. D. Spence (1999) *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co)
- Yongnian Zheng (ed.) (2012) *Contemporary China: A History since 1978* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell)

### India

- F. Frankel et al (2002) *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Z. Hasan (2004) *Parties and Party Politics in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- S. Khilnani (1999) *The Idea of India* (London: Hamish Hamilton)
- A. Kohli (2012) *Poverty Amid Plenty in the New India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

### South-East Asia

- J. Bertrand (2013) *Political Change in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- R. A Dayley & C. D Neher (2013) *Southeast Asia in the New International Era*, 6th ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press)
- D. Slater (2010) *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).[available as ebook]
- W. Case (2002) *Politics in Southeast Asia: Democracy or Less* (London: Routledge)
- T. Vu (2014) *Paths to Development in Asia: South Korea, Vietnam, China and Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) [available as ebook]

### United States

- L. Greenhouse (2012) *The US Supreme Court: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) [available as ebook]
- C. O. Jones (2007) *The American Presidency: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) [available as ebook]
- D.A. Ritchie (2010) *The US Congress: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) [available as ebook]
- Anthony J. Nownes (2013) *Interest Groups in American Politics: Pressure and Power* (Routledge, 2013)

M. Brewer and J. Stonecash (2009) *Dynamics of American Political Parties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

## **6. List of Michaelmas Term Modules**

The first part of this course is organized in the form of modules. Each module combines a country focus with a wider theme or themes of comparative politics, which will be covered in different ways in the general lecture series in Lent term.

Guides for each of the modules can be found on the POLIS website here:  
<https://www.polis.cam.ac.uk/Undergrad/Current/Part2a>

## **7. Lecture list for Lent term**

1. Introduction
2. Comparative politics and the comparative method

### Theme 1: States: origins and contemporary dynamics

3. State formation (theory, classical examples, Western Europe)
4. State formation (non-European)
5. International state-building

### Theme 2: Regimes: origins and contemporary dynamics

6. Origins of democracy and authoritarianism
7. Democratization (I)
8. Democratization (II)
9. Authoritarian/hybrid regimes
10. Constitutional features of democracy

### Theme 3: Modes of interest representation

11. Parties (origins and European experiences)
12. Parties (contemporary trends)
13. Economic interests
14. NGOs and civil society
15. Theories of interest representation
16. Conclusion



## 8. Supervisions: questions and readings

Students are required to do a minimum of two supervisions (and write a minimum of two essays) related to the Lent term lecture series. They will also receive two supervisions for each module they choose. Students will receive in total for the whole course at least six supervisions. For the supervisions that are related to the lectures, and which will be the basis for one section of the final written exam, each supervisor has a choice of at least two questions for each of the three themes of the course: 'States: origins and contemporary dynamics', 'Regimes: origins and contemporary dynamics' and 'Modes of interest representation'.

The questions belonging to each of these themes are set out below, along with a recommended set of readings. It indicates 'Basic readings', which set out the various relevant aspects of the topic, and which all students writing on the topic are expected to do. It also indicates 'Further readings' that will provide students with material for their examples, and for further perspectives (possibly useful for exam revision). Supervisors are expected to direct students in the selection of cases with which to answer questions and are free to suggest extra readings.

### Theme 1: States: origins and contemporary dynamics

Description of theme:

This theme is focused on the development of the modern state. The lectures cover topics such as the origins of the European state system, the relations between states and competing political units such as city states, city leagues and empires, the explanations given for the variety between European state trajectories (absolutist, constitutional, patrimonial etc.), the issue of state formation outside of Europe, the relationship between European states and global empires, the nature and specificity of non-European and post-colonial states, and the dynamics of state-building in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, focusing in particular on the practice of international state-building, its dynamics and an evaluation of its effectiveness.

Supervision essay questions plus readings listed below each question:

1. *Is 'elite politics' more important than 'war-making' as an explanation for the formation of the modern state? Answer with reference to at least two examples.*

#### Basic readings:

- \* R. Lachmann, *States and Power* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), Chapters 1 and 2. [available as ebook]
- \* C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States: A.D. 990-1990* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), Chapters 1, 2, and 3. [If you have trouble getting hold of this book, then at least read: C. Tilly, 'Cities and States in Europe, 1000-1800', *Theory and Society* 18:5 (1989), pp. 563-584.]
- \* T. Vu, 'Studying the State through State Formation', *World Politics*, 62:1 (2010), pp. 148-75.

#### Further readings:

On cases in Europe (mostly):

- H. Spruyt, 'The Origins, Development, and Possible Decline of the Modern State', *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002), pp. 127-149.
- T. Ertman, 'State Formation and State Building in Europe', in T. Janoski, et al (eds), *Handbook of Political Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) [available as ebook].
- R. Saylor and N. Wheeler, 'Paying for War and Building States: The Coalitional Politics of Debt Servicing and Tax Institutions', *World Politics* 69:2 (2017), pp. 366-408.
- T. Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) [available as ebook].
- D. Stasavage, *Public Debt and the Birth of the Democratic State: France and Great Britain 1688–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) [available as ebook].
- S. Gunn, D. Grummit and H. Cools, 'War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Widening the Debate', *War in History* 15:4 (2008), pp. 371-388.
- M. Mann, *Sources of Social Power, Vol. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Chapters 12-15 [available as ebook].
- L.B. Caspersen and J. Strandsbjerg (eds), *Does War Make States? Investigations of Charles Tilly's Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) [available as ebook].
- R. Bean, 'War and the Birth of the Nation State', *Journal of Economic History* 33:1 (1973), pp. 203-221.
- P. Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism and Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: Verso, 1974).
- R. Hague and M. Harrop, *Comparative Government and Politics*, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013), Chapter 2.

On other cases:

- M. A. Centeno, 'Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America', *American Journal of Sociology* 102:6 (1997), pp. 1565-1605.
- M. C. Desch, 'War and Strong States, Peace and Weak States?', *International Organization* 50:2 (1996), pp. 237-268.
- T. Gongora, 'War Making and State Power in the Contemporary Middle East', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29:3 (1997), pp. 323-340.
- J. Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', *International Security* 14:4 (1990), pp. 117-139.
- G. Sorensen, 'War and State Making: Why Doesn't It Work in the Third World?', *Security Dialogue* 32 (2001), pp. 341-352.
- B. D. Taylor and R. Botea, 'Tilly Tally: War-making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World', *International Studies Review* 10:1 (2008), pp. 27-56.
- D. Helling, 'Tillyan Footprints beyond Europe: War-Making and State-Making in the Case of Somaliland', *St Anthony's International Review* 6:1 (2010), pp. 103-123.
- C. G. Thies, 'National Design and State Building in Sub-Saharan Africa', *World Politics* 61:4, pp. 623-669.
- M. Kroenig and J. Stowsky, 'War Makes the State, But Not As It Pleases: Homeland Security and American Anti-Statism', *Security Studies* 15:2 (2006), pp. 225-270.
- C. G. Thies, 'War, Rivalry and State Building in Latin America', *American Journal of Political Science* 43:3 (2005), pp. 451-465.
- V. I. Ganey (2005) 'Post-Communism as an Episode of State Building: A Reversed Tillyan Perspective', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 38 (2005), pp. 425-445.

## 2. How 'European' is the phenomenon of the nation-state?

### Basic readings:

- \* H. Spruyt (2002) 'The Origins, Development, and Possible Decline of the Modern State', *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002), pp. 127-149.
- \* T. Vu, 'Studying the State through State Formation', *World Politics*, 62:1 (2010), pp. 148-75.
- \* F. Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* (London: Profile, 2012), Chapters 1, 5, 6, and 7 [available as ebook]
- \* E. Hobsbawm (1992) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Chapter 1 [available as ebook].

### Further readings:

- C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford: Blackwells, 2004), Chapter 7.
- J. Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014) [ebook of 2000 first edition available].
- J. Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', *International Security* 14:4 (1990), pp. 117-139.
- R. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Chapters 1-3 [available as ebook].
- R. H. Jackson and C. G. Rosberg, 'Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood', *World Politics* 35:1 (1982), pp. 1-24.
- C. G. Thies, 'National Design and State Building in Sub-Saharan Africa', *World Politics* 61:4, pp. 623-669.
- L. Anderson, 'The State in the Middle East and North Africa', *Comparative Politics* 20:1 (1987), pp. 1-18.
- L. Blaydes, 'State Building in the Middle East', *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017), pp. 487-504.
- T. Gongora, 'War Making and State Power in the Contemporary Middle East', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29:3 (1997), pp. 323-340.
- M. A. Centeno, 'Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America', *American Journal of Sociology* 102:6 (1997), pp. 1565-1605.
- C. G. Thies, 'War, Rivalry and State Building in Latin America', *American Journal of Political Science* 43:3 (2005), pp. 451-465.
- V. I. Ganey, 'Post-Communism as an Episode of State Building: A Reversed Tillyan Perspective', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 38 (2005), pp. 425-445.
- A. Grzymala-Busse and P. Jones-Luong, 'Reconceptualizing the State: Lessons from Post-Communism', *Politics and Society* 30:4 (2002), pp. 529-554.
- G. M. Easter, 'The Russian State in the Time of Putin', *Post-Soviet Affairs* 24:3 (2008), pp. 199-230.
- G. Sorensen, 'War and State Making: Why Doesn't It Work in the Third World?', *Security Dialogue* 32 (2001), pp. 341-352.
- B. D. Taylor and R. Botea, 'Tilly Tally: War-making and State-Making in the Contemporary Third World', *International Studies Review* 10:1 (2008), pp. 27-56.

3. *Can states be built from the outside, through international intervention? Answer with reference to at least two different cases of international state-building.*

Basic readings:

- \* T. Sisk, *Statebuilding* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014) [available as ebook]. [short introductory text, worth reading all of it]
- \* D. Chandler and T. Sisk (eds), *Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding* (London: Routledge, 2013) [available as ebook]. [large selection of chapters on all aspects of international statebuilding; select chapter(s) you are most interested in].

Further readings:

- P. Cunliffe, *Legions of Peace: UN Peacekeepers from the Global South* (London: Hurst, 2013), Chapters 2 and 3.
- R. Caplan, 'International Authority and State-building: The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina', *Global Governance*, 10:1 (2004), pp. 53-65.
- D. Chandler, *Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-building* (London: Pluto Press, 2006).
- S. Chesterman, *You, the People: the United Nations, Transitional Administration and State-building* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- J. Chopra, 'Building State Failure in East Timor', *Development and Change*, 33:5 (2002), pp. 979-1000.
- F. Fukuyama, 'The Imperative of State-building', *Journal of Democracy*, 15:2 (2004), pp. 17-31.
- F. Fukuyama, *State-building: Governance and World Order in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (London: Profile, 2004).
- F. Martin and G. Knaus (2003) 'Travails of the European Raj', *Journal of Democracy*, 14:3, pp. 60-74.
- O. Richmond, *Failed Statebuilding: Intervention and the Dynamics of Peace Formation* (Yale, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), Introduction and selected other chapters [available as ebook].
- R. Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) [available as ebook].
- P. Ashdown, *Swords and Ploughshares: Bringing Peace to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (London: Orion, 2007).

Theme 2: Regimes: origins and contemporary dynamics

Description of theme:

This theme focuses on political regimes and emphasizes the diversity of political outcomes that are possible alongside processes of societal modernization and the rise of capitalist and command economies. The theme looks at the explanations given for why some states develop in the direction of liberal parliamentary democracy whilst others do not, the process of democratization and its geographical spread across the globe, the resilience of authoritarian regimes in many parts of the world, the rise of hybrid regimes that blur the lines between democracy and authoritarianism, and some specific constitutional features of democratic regimes (especially the contrast between parliamentary and presidential forms of government).

Supervision essay questions plus readings listed below each question:

*1. What explains the emergence of democracy? Discuss with reference to one or more specific cases.*

Basic readings:

- \* C. Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Chapters 1, 2 and 7. [available as ebook]
- \* V. Bunce, 'Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations', *Comparative Political Studies* 33:6/7 (2000), pp. 703-734.
- \* A. Przeworski and F. Limongi, 'Modernization: Theories and Facts', *World Politics* 49:2 (1997), pp. 155-183.
- \* T. Carothers, 'How Democracies Emerge: The "Sequencing" Fallacy', *Journal of Democracy* 18:1 (2007), pp. 12-27.

Further readings:

On particular regions or countries (don't be daunted by the length of this; just pick one or a few of these readings for your essay!):

- B. Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), Chapters 1 and 2.
- D. Ziblatt, 'How Did Europe Democratize?', *World Politics* 58 (2006), pp. 311-338.
- T. Ertman, 'The Great Reform Act of 1832 and British Democratization', *Comparative Political Studies* 43: 8/9 (2010), pp. 1000-1022.
- S.E. Hanson, 'The Founding of the French Third Republic', *Comparative Political Studies* 43, 8/9 (2010), pp. 1023-1058.
- M. Bernhard, 'Democratization in Germany: A Reappraisal', *Comparative Politics* 33 (2001), pp. 379-400.
- T. Ertman, 'Democracy and Dictatorship in Interwar Europe Revisited', *World Politics* 50 (1998), pp. 475-505.
- S. Berman, 'How Democracies Emerge: Lessons from Europe', *Journal of Democracy* 18:1 (2007), pp. 28-41.
- T.L. Karl, 'Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America', *Comparative Politics* 23:1 (1990), pp. 1-21.
- K. Remmer, 'The Sustainability of Political Democracy: Lessons from South America', *Comparative Political Studies* 29 (1996), pp. 611-634.
- J. Mahoney, 'Path-Dependent Explanations of Regime Change: Central America in Comparative Perspective', *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36:1 (2001), pp. 111-141.
- J. Grugel, 'Latin America after the Third Wave', *Government and Opposition* 42:2 (2007), pp. 242-257.
- F. Hagopian, 'Democracy by Undemocratic Means? Elites, Political Pacts and Regime Transition in Brazil', *Comparative Political Studies* 23:2 (1990), pp. 147-170.
- J.L. Klesner, 'An electoral route to Democracy? Mexico's Transition in Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics* 30:4 (1998).
- G. O'Donnell, 'On the State, Democratization, and Some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Post-Communist Countries', *World Development* 21:8 (1993), pp. 1355-1369.

- G. Munck and C.S. Leff, 'Modes of Transition and Democratization: South America and Eastern Europe in Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics* 29:3 (1997), pp. 343-362.
- M. McFaul, 'The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World', *World Politics* 54 (2002), pp. 212-244.
- V. Bunce, 'Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience', *World Politics* 55 (2003), pp. 167-92.
- H. Hale, 'Formal Constitutions in Informal Politics: Institutions and Democratization in Post-Soviet Eurasia', *World Politics* 63:4 (2011).
- R. Sakwa, 'The Future of Russian Democracy', *Government and Opposition* 46:4 (2011).
- Y-W. Chu, 'Labor and Democratization in South Korea and Taiwan', *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 28:2 (1998), pp. 185-202.
- T.J. Cheng and E.M. Kim, 'Making Democracy: Generalizing from the South Korean Experiences', in E. Friedman (ed), *The Politics of Democratization* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).
- S. Rigger, 'Taiwan's Best-Case Democratization', *Orbis* 48:2 (2004).
- A. Varshney, 'Why democracy survives', *Journal of Democracy* 9:3 (1998), pp. 36-56. (On India)
- J. Sidel, 'Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy Revisited: Colonial State and Chinese Immigrant in the Making of Modern Southeast Asia', *Comparative Politics* 40:2 (2008), pp. 127-148.
- A. Acharya, 'Southeast Asia's Democratic Moment', *Asian Survey* 39, 3 (1999), pp. 418-432.
- D. Slater, 'Revolutions, Crackdowns, and Quiescence: Communal Elites and Democratic Mobilization in Southeast Asia', *American Journal of Sociology* 115 (2009), pp. 203-254.
- K. O'Brien and R. Han, 'Path to Democracy? Assessing Village Elections in China', *Journal of Contemporary China* 18:60 (2009), pp. 359-378.
- J. Zhang, 'Markets, Class Structure and Democracy in China', *Democratization* 14:3 (2007).
- A.J. Nathan, 'Confucius and the Ballot Box: Why "Asian Values" Do not Stymie Democracy', *Foreign Affairs* 91 (2012).
- R. Joseph, 'Democratization in Africa since 1989: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives', *Comparative Politics* 29 (1997), pp. 363-382.
- R. Sandbrook, 'Transition without Consolidation: Democratization in Six African Cases', *Third World Quarterly* 17:1 (1996), pp. 69-88.
- L. Villalon, 'From Argument to Negotiation: Consulting Democracy in African Muslim Contexts', *Comparative Politics* 42:4 (2010), pp. 375-393.
- D. Branch and N. Cheeseman, 'Democratization, Sequencing, and State Failure in Africa: Lessons from Kenya', *African Affairs* 108:430 (2008), pp. 1-26.
- D. Berg-Schlosser, 'Determinants of Democratic Successes and Failures in Africa', *European Journal of Political Research* 47 (2008), pp. 269-306.
- G. Lynch and G. Crawford, 'Democratization in Africa 1990-2010: An Assessment', *Democratization* 18:2 (2011).
- B.U. Nwosu, 'Tracks of the Third Wave: Democracy Theory, Democratisation and the Dilemma of Political Succession in Africa', *Review of African Political Economy* 39, 131 (2012).
- M. Bratton and N. Van De Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- V. Nasr, 'The Rise of "Muslim Democracy"', *Journal of Democracy* 16:2 (2005), pp. 13-27.
- L. Berger, 'The Missing Link? US Policy and the International Dimensions of Failed Democratic Transitions in the Arab World', *Political Studies* 59:1 (2011).

J. J. Linz and A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). (Has case studies from several regions)

More general issues and analyses:

- J. Grugel and M.L. Bishop, *Democratization: A Critical Introduction* (Palgrave, 2014 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed]).
- S.M. Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy', *American Political Science Review* 53:1 (1959), pp. 69-105.
- D. Rustow, 'Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model', *Comparative Politics* 2:3 (1970), pp. 337-363.
- D. Brinks and M. Coppedge, 'Diffusion is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy', *Comparative Political Studies* 39:4 (2006), pp. 463-489.
- B. Geddes, 'What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years?', *Annual Review of Political Science* 2:1 (1999).
- C. Boix, 'Democracy, Development and the International System', *American Political Science Review* 105 (2011), pp. 809-828.
- T. Carothers, 'The End of the Transition Paradigm', *Journal of Democracy* 13:1 (2002), pp. 5-21.
- P. Burnell, 'Promoting Democracy', *Government and Opposition* 48:2 (2013), pp. 265-287.

## 2. Why are some authoritarian regimes more resilient than others?

### Basic readings:

- \* J. Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Chapter 1 [available as ebook].
- \* J. Gerschewski, 'The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Cooptation in Autocratic Regimes', *Democratization* 20:1 (2013), pp. 13-38.
- \* M.L. Ross, 'Does Oil Hinder Democracy?', *World Politics* 53:3 (2001), pp. 325-361.
- \* S. Levitsky and L.A. Way, 'Elections without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism', *Journal of Democracy* 13:2 (2002), pp. 51-65.

### Further readings:

On specific cases (don't be daunted by the length of this; just pick one or a few of these readings for your essay!):

- L. Anderson, 'Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East', *Political Science Quarterly* 106:1 (1991), pp. 1-15.
- E. Bellin, 'The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective', *Comparative Politics* 36:2 (2004), pp. 139-157.
- E. Bellin, 'Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism: Lessons of the Arab Spring', *Comparative Politics* 44:2 (2012), pp. 127-149.
- S.J. King, 'Sustaining Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa', *Political Science Quarterly* 122 (2007), pp. 433-460.
- J. Brownlee, 'Executive Elections in the Arab World: When and How Do They Matter?', *Comparative Political Studies* 44:7 (2011), pp. 807-828.
- G. Tezcür, 'Democracy Promotion, Authoritarian Resiliency, and Political Unrest in Iran', *Democratization* 19:1 (2012).

- Y.-T. Chang, Y. Zhu and P. Chong-Min, 'Authoritarian Nostalgia in Asia', *Journal of Democracy* 18:3 (2007).
- A. Nathan, 'Authoritarian Resilience', *Journal of Democracy* 14:3 (2003), pp. 6-17.
- M. Pei, 'Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?', *Journal of Democracy* 23:1 (2012). (On China)
- R. MacKinnon, 'China's "Networked Authoritarianism"', *Journal of Democracy* 22:2 (2012), pp. 32-46.
- J. Sidel, 'Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy Revisited: Colonial State and Chinese Immigrant in the Making of Modern Southeast Asia', *Comparative Politics* 40:2 (2008), pp. 127-148.
- D. Slater, 'Iron Cage in an Iron Fist: Authoritarian Institutions and the Personalization of Power in Malaysia', *Comparative Politics* 36:1 (2003), pp. 81-101.
- D. Slater, 'Strong-State Democratization in Malaysia and Singapore', *Journal of Democracy* 23:2 (2012), pp. 19-33.
- S. Ortmann, 'Singapore: Authoritarian, but Newly Competitive', *Journal of Democracy* 22:4 (2011).
- M. Mietzner, 'Indonesia's Democratic Stagnation: Anti-reformist Elites and Resilient Civil Society', *Democratization* 19:2 (2012).
- M. McFaul, 'The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World', *World Politics* 54 (2002), pp. 212-244.
- P. Roeder, 'Varieties of post-Soviet Authoritarian Regimes', *Post-Soviet Affairs* 10 (1994), pp. 61-101.
- L. Way, 'Authoritarian State Building and Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave', *World Politics* 57:2 (2005), pp. 365-381 (on the post-Soviet region).
- H. Hale, 'Regime Cycles: Democracy, Autocracy, and Revolution in Post-Soviet Eurasia', *World Politics* 58 (2005), pp. 133-165.
- T. Ertman, 'Democracy and Dictatorship in Interwar Europe Revisited', *World Politics* 50 (1998), pp. 475-505.
- M. Bratton and N. Van de Walle, 'Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa', *World Politics* 46:4 (1994).
- K.L. Remmer, 'Neopatrimonialism: The Politics of Military Rule in Chile, 1973-1987', *Comparative Politics* 21:2 (1989).
- J. Corrales and M. Penfold, 'Venezuela: Crowding out the Opposition', *Journal of Democracy* 18:2 (2007).
- S. Barracca, 'Military Coups in the Post-Cold War Era: Pakistan, Ecuador and Venezuela', *Third World Quarterly* 28:1 (2007).
- J. Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). (On Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, Philippines)
- J. Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Chapter 2 [available as e-book]. (On Kuwait, Morocco, Ecuador)

More general issues and analyses:

- B. Smith, 'Life of the Party: The Origins of Regime Breakdown and Persistence under Single-Party Rule', *World Politics* 57 (2005), pp. 421-451.
- T. Ambrosio, 'Constructing a Framework for Authoritarian Diffusion: Concepts, Dynamics, and Future Research', *International Studies Perspectives* 11 (2010), pp. 375-392.
- B. Magaloni, 'The Game of Electoral Fraud and the Ousting of Authoritarian Rule', *American Journal of Political Science* 54, 3 (2010).
- J. Gandhi and E. Lust-Okar, 'Elections under Authoritarianism', *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009), pp. 403-422.



- B. Magaloni, 'Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule', *Comparative Political Studies* 20, 10 (2008), pp. 715-741.
- B. Magaloni and R. Kricheli, 'Political Order and One-Party Rule', *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010).
- L. Gilbert and P. Mohseni, 'Beyond Authoritarianism: The Conceptualization of Hybrid Regimes', *Studies in Comparative International Development* 46, 3 (2011).
- M. Boogaards, 'How to Classify Hybrid Regimes? Defective Democracy and Electoral Authoritarianism', *Democratization* 16, 2 (2009).
- P. Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014 [3<sup>rd</sup> ed]) [or earlier ed.].
- B. Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (London: Beacon Press, 1966).
- S.P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).
- S. Levitsky and L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes After the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- A. Schedler, *The Politics of Uncertainty: Sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- D. Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- N. Ezrow and E. Frantz, *Dictators and Dictatorships: Understanding Authoritarian Regimes and Their Leaders* (London: Continuum, 2011).
- O. Tansey, K. Koehler and A. Schmotz, 'Ties to the Rest: Autocratic Linkages and Regime Survival', *Comparative Political Studies* 50:9 (2017), pp. 1221-54.

3. How important is regime type (parliamentary, presidential or semi-presidential) for the democratic performance of a country?

#### Basic readings:

- \* M.S. Shugart, 'Comparative Executive-Legislative Relations', in Rhodes, Binder and Rockman (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 344-365. [available online]
- \* A. Lijphart, 'Introduction', in Lijphart (ed), *Parliamentary versus Presidential Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 1-27.
- \* R. Elgie, 'From Linz to Tsebelis: Three Waves of Presidential/Parliamentary Studies?', *Democratization* 12:1 (2005), pp. 106-122.
- \* R. Elgie, *Semi-Presidentialism: Sub-Types and Democratic Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chapter 1 ('The Perils of Semi-Presidentialism?'), pp. 1-18 [available as ebook]

#### Further readings:

General arguments and broad empirical studies:

- J.A. Cheibub and F. Limongi, 'Democratic Institutions and Regime Survival: Parliamentary and Presidential Democracies Reconsidered', *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002), pp. 151-179.
- A. Stepan and C. Skach, 'Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism', *World Politics* 46:1 (1993), pp. 1-22.

- J. Gerring, S.C. Thacker and C. Moreno, 'Are Parliamentary Systems Better?', *Comparative Political Studies* 42:3 (2009), pp. 327-359.
- T. Hiroi and S. Omori, 'Perils of Presidentialism? Political Systems and the Stability of Democracy', *Democratization* 16:3 (2009), pp. 485-507.
- U.G. Theuerkauf, 'Presidentialism and the risk of ethnic violence', *Ethnopolitics* 12:1 (2013): 72-81 (and responses to this article in the same journal issue).
- D. Stockemer, 'Regime Type and Good Governance in Low and High Income States: What is the Empirical Link?', *Democratization* 21:1 (2014), pp. 118-136.
- J.J. Linz, 'The Perils of Presidentialism', *Journal of Democracy* 1:1 (1990), pp. 51-69.
- M. Shugart and J. Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- G. Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Palgrave, 1997), Chapters 5 and 6.
- A. Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (Yale University Press, 1999), Chapter 7 ('Executive-Legislative Relations').
- G. Tsebelis, 'Decision-Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism', *British Journal of Political Science* 25:3 (1995), pp. 389-325.
- R. Elgie, *Semi-Presidentialism: Sub-Types and Democratic Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

On more specific cases:

- A. King, 'Modes of Executive-Legislative Relations: Great Britain, France, and West Germany', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 1:1 (1976), pp. 11-34.
- F.W. Riggs, 'The Survival of Presidentialism in America: Para-Constitutional Practices', *International Political Science Review* 9:4 (1988), pp. 247-278.
- O.A. Neto, 'The Presidential Calculus: Executive Policy-Making and Cabinet Formation in the Americas', *Comparative Political Studies* 39:4 (2006), pp. 415-440.
- S. Mainwaring, 'Presidentialism in Latin America', *Latin American Research Review* 25, 1 (1990), pp. 157-179.
- K. Hochstetler and D. Samuels, 'Crisis and Rapid Reequilibration: The Consequences of Presidential Challenge and Failure in Latin America', *Comparative Politics* 43:2 (2011), pp. 127-145.
- S. Mainwaring and M. Shugart (eds), *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). (Has several case studies)
- S. Morgenstern and B. Nacif (eds), *Legislative Politics in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). (Has chapters on specific cases, and a useful concluding chapter by Cox & Morgenstern)
- G.M. Easter, 'Preference for Presidentialism: Postcommunist Regime Change in Russia and the NIS', *World Politics* 49:2 (1997), pp. 184-211.
- O. Protsyk, 'Troubled Semi-Presidentialism: Stability of the Constitutional System and Cabinet in Ukraine', *Europe-Asia Studies* 55:7 (2003), pp. 1077-1095.
- F. Fukuyama, B. Dressel and B. Chang, 'Facing the Perils of Presidentialism?', *Journal of Democracy* 16:2 (2005), pp. 102-116. (On Southeast Asia)
- N. Van de Walle, 'Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party System', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 41:2 (2003), pp. 297-321.
- R. Elgie (ed), *Semi-Presidentialism in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). [available as e-book]

- R. Elgie, S. Moestrup and Y-S. Wu (eds), *Semi-Presidentialism and Democracy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011). (Gives global overview of cases of semi-presidentialism.)
- R. Elgie and S. Moestrup (eds), *Semi-presidentialism in Central and Eastern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).
- P. Schleiter and E. Morgan-Jones, 'Party Government in Europe? Parliamentary and Semi-Presidential Democracies Compared', *European Journal of Political Research* 48:5 (2009), pp. 665-693.

### Theme 3: Modes of interest representation

#### Description of theme:

This theme looks at the actors in the political process and the interests represented at various stages of decision-making. It focuses on the key actors in politics: political parties, economic interests, NGOs and civil-society actors. It also focuses on the different ways in which the representation of interests can become institutionalized: via pluralist or corporatist modes of interest representation. The theme is historically very broad, starting with the origins of interest representation in the form of estates, professional guilds and other characteristic features of early modern political life. It looks at the role of factions as precursors to modern political parties, and the emergence of mass parties in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The theme also concerns itself with European and non-European dynamics. Furthermore, this theme considers contemporary forms of representation, such as new populist parties, and inquiries into the widespread scepticism many people feel concerning the ability of political actors to represent individual citizens.

Supervision essay questions plus required readings listed below each question:

1. *What role do political parties play in the working of representative government and how well do they perform this role today?*

#### Basic readings:

- \* T. Ball (ed), *Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay: The Federalist with Letters of "Brutus"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Federalist 10 [On factions] [available as ebook].
- \* R. Katz and P. Mair, 'Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy', *Party Politics*, 1:1 (1995), pp. 5-28.
- \* P. Mair, 'Representative versus Responsible Government', MpIfG Working Paper 09/8 (Cologne: MPifG, 2009).
- \* B. Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Chapter 6 [available as ebook].
- \* M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments' in P. Mair (ed) *The West European Party System* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
- \* E. E. Schattschneider (1942) *Party Government* (New York: Rinehart), Chapter 1.

#### Further readings:

On general issues and Western European cases:

- P. Webb, D. M. Farrell and I. Holliday, *Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) [available as ebook]
- R. Dalton and M. Wattenberg, *Parties Without Partisans: Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) [available as ebook].
- S. Scarrow, P. Webb and T. Poguntke (eds), *Organizing Political Parties: Representation, Participation, and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), Chapters 1 and 3.
- S.N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
- R. Katz and W. Crotty, *Handbook of Party Politics* (London: Sage, 2006), Chapter 4.
- R. Koole, 'Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? : A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party', *Party Politics*, 2:4 (1996), pp. 507-523.
- R. Katz and P. Mair, 'Cadre, Catch-all or Cartel? A Rejoinder', *Party Politics*, 2:4 (1996), pp. 525-34.
- R. Katz and P. Mair, 'The Cartel Party Thesis: A Restatement', *Perspectives on Politics* 7:4 (2009), pp. 753-766.
- P. Webb, 'Political Parties and Democracy: The Ambiguous Crisis', *Democratization*, 12:5 (2005), pp. 633-650.
- P. Webb, 'Political Parties, Representation and Politics in Contemporary Europe', in Erik Jones, Paul Heywood, Martin Rhodes and Ulrich Sedelmeier (eds), *Developments in European politics 2* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011).
- P. Mair, *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing Out of Western Democracy* (London: Verso, 2014), Chapters 1, 2 and 3.
- P. Mair, 'The Challenge to Party Government', *West European Politics*, 31 (2008), pp. 211-234.
- R. Dalton, D. M. Farrell and I. McAllister, *Political Parties and Democratic Linkages: How Parties Organize Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Introduction.
- H. Kriesi, 'The Populist Challenge', *West European Politics* 37:4 (2014), pp. 361-378.
- P. Ignazi, 'Power and the (Il)legitimacy of Political Parties: An Unavoidable Paradox of Contemporary Democracy?', *Party Politics* 20:2 (2014), pp. 160-169.
- P. Mair, 'Partyless Democracy and the 'Paradox' of New Labour', *New Left Review* 2 (March-April 2000), pp. 21-35.
- T. Bale, *The Conservative Party: From Thatcher to Cameron* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011).
- M. Flinders, A. Gamble, C. Hay and M. Kenny (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of British Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Chapters 16 and 24 [available online].
- T. Poguntke, 'Towards a New Party System: The Vanishing Hold of Catch-All Parties in Germany', *Party Politics* 20:6 (2014), pp. 950-963.
- U. Jun, 'Volksparteien under Pressure: Challenges and Adaptation', *German Politics* 20:1 (2011), pp. 200-222.
- P. Mair and I. van Biezen, 'Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies: 1980-2000', *Party Politics*, 7:1 (2001), pp. 5-21.
- I. Van Biezen, P. Mair, and T. Poguntke (2012) 'Going, Going,... Gone? The Decline of Party Membership in Contemporary Europe', *European Journal of Political Research*, 51 (2012), pp. 24-56.

On other cases:

- J. Lapalombara and M. Wiener, *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), Chapter 1.
- R. Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States* (London: University of California Press, 1969).

- H. Stoll, *Changing Societies, Changing Party Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- J. Cyr, *The Fates of Political Parties: Institutional Crisis, Continuity, and Change in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- Adrienne LeBas, *From Protest to Parties: Party Building and Democratization in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

## 2. What is the political significance of NGOs and civil society?

### Basic readings:

- \* S. Lang, *NGOs, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapters 1-3. [available as ebook]
- \* C. Boulding, *NGOs, Political Protest and Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), Chapter 2. [available as e-book]
- \* M. Foley and R. Edwards, 'Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and Social Capital in Comparative Perspective', *American Behavioral Scientist* 42:1 (1998): 5-20.
- \* R.W. Jackman and R.A. Miller, 'Social Capital and Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998), pp. 47-73.

### Further readings:

On civil society and NGOs more generally (although some of these include examples too):

- G. Baker, 'The Taming of the Idea of Civil Society', *Democratization* 6:3 (1999), pp. 1-29.
- L. Diamond, 'Rethinking Civil Society Towards Democratic Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy* 5:3 (1994).
- O. Encarnacion, 'Civil Society Reconsidered', *Comparative Politics* 38:3 (2006).
- M.W. Foley and R. Edwards, 'The Paradox of Civil Society', *Journal of Democracy* 7:3 (1996), pp. 38-52.
- C. Mercer, 'NGOs, Civil Society and Democratization: A Critical Review of the Literature', *Progress in Development Studies* 2:1 (2002), pp. 5-22.
- M. Bernhard and E. Karakoc, 'Civil Society and the Legacies of Dictatorship', *World Politics* 59, 4 (2009).
- M. Levi, 'Social and Unsocial Capital', *Politics and Society* 24 (1996), pp. 45-56.
- S. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2011) [or earlier ed.].
- S. Lang, *NGOs, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapters 4-7. [available as ebook]
- C. Boulding, *NGOs, Political Protest and Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). [available as ebook]

Further readings on specific cases:

- R. Putnam (ed), *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) [available as ebook]. (Case studies on Great Britain, US, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Australia, Japan)
- P. Hall, 'Social Capital in Britain', *British Journal of Political Science* 29 (1999), pp. 417-461.

- A. Appleton, "Associational Life in Contemporary France," in Alistair Cole et al (eds), *Development in French Politics 3* (Palgrave, 2005).
- R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- S. Berman, 'Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic', *World Politics* 49 (1997), pp. 401-429.
- R. Putnam, 'Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital', *Journal of Democracy* 6:1 (1995).
- P. McDonough, D.C. Shin and J.A. Moises, 'Democratization and Participation: Comparing Spain, Korea and Brazil', *Journal of Politics* 60:4 (1998), pp. 919-953.
- M.M. Howard, 'The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society', *Journal of Democracy* 13:1 (2002).
- M.M. Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- C. Marsh, 'Social Capital and Democracy in Russia', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000), pp. 183-199.
- S.L. Henderson, 'Selling Civil Society: Western Aid and the Nongovernmental Organization Sector in Russia', *Comparative Political Studies* 35:2 (2002), pp. 139-167.
- P. Jones-Luong and E. Weintal, 'The NGO Paradox: Democratic Goals and Non-Democratic Outcomes in Kazakhstan', *Europe-Asia Studies* 51:7 (1999), pp. 1267-1284.
- G. Guo, 'Organizational Involvement and Political Participation in China', *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (2007), pp. 457-482.
- T. Hildebrandt, *Social Organizations and the Authoritarian State in China* (Cambridge University Press, 2013) [available as e-book]
- S. Sen, 'Some Aspects of State-NGO Relationships in India in the Post-Independence Era', *Development and Change* 30 (1999), pp. 327-355.
- A. Varshney, 'Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond', *World Politics* 53 (2001), pp. 362-398.
- E-L.E. Hedman, 'Contesting State and Civil Society: Southeast Asian Trajectories', *Modern Asian Studies* 35:4 (2001), pp. 921-951.
- Q. Ma, *Non-Governmental Organizations in Contemporary China: Paving the Way to a Civil Society* (London: Routledge, 2006).
- E. Gyimak-Boadi, 'Civil Society in Africa', *Journal of Democracy* 7:2 (1996), pp. 118-132.
- A.C. Levan, 'Questioning Tocqueville in Africa: Continuity and Change in Civil Society during Nigeria's Democratization', *Democratization* 18:1 (2011), pp. 135-159.
- M. Pinkney, *NGOs, Africa and the Global Order* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).
- J. Townsend, G. Porter and E. Mawdsley, 'Creating Spaces of Resistance: Development NGOs and Their Clients in Ghana, India and Mexico', *Antipode* 36:5 (2004), pp. 871-899.
- A. Brysk, 'Democratizing Civil Society in Latin America', *Journal of Democracy* 11:3 (2000), pp. 151-165.
- S.E. Alvarez, 'Beyond NGO-ization? Reflections from Latin America', *Development* 52:2 (2009), pp. 175-184.
- B. Cannon and M. Hume, 'Central America, Civil Society and the "Pink Tide": Democratization or De-democratization', *Democratization* 19:6 (2012).

Broader perspectives on NGOs and civil society:

- J. Hall (ed), *Civil Society: Theory, History and Comparison* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).
- S. Feldman, 'NGOs and Civil Society: Unstated Contradictions', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 554 (1997), pp. 46-65.

- M. Edwards (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Civil Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), especially Part 3 and Chapter 30. [available online]
- E. Schofer and M. Fourcade-Gourinchas, 'The Structural Contexts of Civic Engagement: Voluntary Association Membership in Comparative Perspective', *American Sociological Review* 66 (2001), pp. 806-828.
- M. Keck and K. Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).
- The State of Civil Society, 2013*: <http://socs.civicus.org>.

### 3. Do economic interests dominate politics?

#### Basic readings:

- \* C. Crouch, 'The Snakes and Ladders of Twenty-First Century Trade Unionism', *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 16, 1 (2000), pp. 70-83.
- \* G.K. Wilson, 'Corporate Political Strategies', *British Journal of Political Science* 20:2 (1990), pp. 281-288.
- \* R. Youngs, 'Democracy and the Multinationals', *Democratization* 11:1 (2004), pp. 127-147.

#### Further readings:

On labour unions:

- J. Visser, 'The Rise and Fall of Industrial Unionism', *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research* 18:2 (2012), pp. 129-141.
- P.H. Kristensen and R.S. Rocha, 'New Roles for the Trade Unions: Five Lines of Action for Carving Out a New Governance Regime', *Politics and Society* 40:3 (2012), pp. 453-479.
- L. Baccaro, K. Hamann and L. Turner, 'The Politics of Labour Movement Revitalization: The Need for a Revitalized Perspective', *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 9:1 (2003), pp. 119-133.
- D.G. Blanchflower, 'International Patterns of Union Membership', *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 45:1 (2007), pp. 1-28 (esp. first couple of sections).
- R. Gumbrell-McCormick and R. Hyman, *Trade Unions in Western Europe: Hard Times, Hard Choices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- D. Clawson and M.A. Clawson, 'What Has Happened to the US Labor Movement? Union Decline and Renewal', *Annual Review of Sociology* 25 (1999), pp. 95-119.
- M.V. Murillo, 'From Populism to Neoliberalism: Labor Unions and Market Reforms in Latin America', *World Politics* 52 (2000), pp. 135-174.
- S. Etchemendy and R. Berins Collier, 'Down but Not Out: Union Resurgence and Segmented Neocorporatism in Argentina (2003-2007)', *Politics and Society* 35:3 (2007), pp. 363-401.
- E. Webster and S. Buhlungu, 'Between Marginalization and Revitalization? The State of Trade Unionism in South Africa', *Review of African Political Economy* 31:100 (2004), pp. 229-245.
- P.D. Culpepper and A. Regan, 'Why Don't Governments Need Trade Unions Anymore? The Death of Social Pacts in Ireland and Italy', *Socio-Economic Review* 12:4 (2014), pp. 723-745.
- S. Luce, *Labor Movements: Global Perspectives* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014).

On business interests:

- D. Coen, W. Grant and G. Wilson, *The Oxford Handbook of Business and Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), esp. Chapters 1, 6, 8 and 10; Part III (which has chapters on business representation in the US, Europe, Latin America, Japan and China); and Chapters 16 and 22. [available online]
- M.A. Smith, 'The Mobilization and Influence of Business Interests', in L.S. Maisel et al (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) [available online].
- D.M. Hart, 'Business Is Not an Interest Group: On the Study of Companies in American National Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science* 7 (2004), pp. 47-69.
- K.M. Goldstein, *Interest Groups, Lobbying, and Participation in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) [available as ebook].
- D. Vogel, 'The Power of Business in America: A Re-Appraisal', *British Journal of Political Science* 13:1 (1983), pp. 19-43.
- W. Grant, 'Large Firms and Public Policy in Britain', *Journal of Public Policy* 4:1 (1984), pp. 1-17.
- A. Sampson, *Who Runs this Place? The Anatomy of Britain in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Murray, 2004)
- C. Mahoney, 'Lobbying success in the United States and the European Union', *Journal of Public Policy* 27:1 (2007), pp. 35-56.
- A. Rasmussen, B.J. Carroll and D. Lowery, 'Representatives of the Public? Public Opinion and Interest Group Activity', *European Journal of Political Research* 53:2 (2014), pp. 250-268 (on interest groups in the EU).
- D. Coen, 'The European Business Interest and the Nation State: Large-Firm Lobbying in the European Union and Member States', *Journal of Public Policy* 18 (1998), pp. 75-100.
- F. Traxler, 'The Long Term Development of Organized Business and its Implications for Corporatism', *European Journal of Political Research* 49 (2010), pp. 151-173.
- V. Yadav, 'Business Lobbies and Policymaking in Developing Countries: The Contrasting Cases of India and China', *Journal of Public Affairs* 8 (2008), pp. 67-82.
- S. Weymouth, 'Firm Lobbying and Influence in Developing Countries: A Multilevel Approach', *Business and Politics* 14:4 (2012), pp. 1-26.
- T. Fairfield, 'Business Power and Tax Reform: Taxing Profits and Income in Chile and Argentina', *Latin American Politics and Society* 52:2 (2010), pp. 37-71.
- E. Silva, 'State-Business Relations in Latin America', in L. Whitehead (ed), *Emerging Market Democracies* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).
- S. Maxfield and B.R. Schneider (eds), *Business and the State in Developing Countries* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).
- B.R. Schneider, *Business Politics and the State in Twentieth Century Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- T. Khanna and Y. Yafeh, 'Business Groups in Emerging Markets: Paragons or Parasites?', *Journal of Economic Literature* 45 (2007), pp. 331-372 (esp. section 4.1).

On multinational corporations:

- P. Egan, 'Hard Bargains: The Impact of Multinational Corporations on Economic Reform in Latin America', *Latin American Politics and Society* 52:1 (2010), pp. 1-32.
- L. Armijo (ed.), *Financial Globalisation and Democracy in Emerging Markets* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999)



- A. Walter, 'Do They Really Rule the World', *New Political Economy* 3:2 (1998), pp. 288-292 (on large, multinational corporations).
- D. Detomasi, 'The Multinational Corporation as a Political Actor', *Journal of Business Ethics* (March 2014).

General on (economic) interest groups and modes of interest representation:

- D. Jahn, 'Changing of the Guard: Trends in Corporatist Arrangements in 42 Highly Industrialized Societies from 1960 to 2010', *Socio-Economic Review* 14:1 (2016), pp. 47-71.
- O. Molina and M. Rhodes, 'Corporatism: The Past, Present and Future of a Concept', *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (2002), pp. 305-331.
- C. Mahoney and F. Baumgartner, 'Converging Perspectives on Interest-Group Research in Europe and America', *West European Politics* 31 (2008), pp. 1253-1273.
- J. Beyers, R. Eising and W. Maloney, 'Researching Interest Group Politics in Europe and Elsewhere', *West European Politics* 31 (2008), pp. 1103-1128.
- S. Avdagic and C. Crouch, 'Organized Economic Interests: Diversity and Change in an Enlarged Europe', in Paul M. Heywood et al, *Developments in European Politics* (Palgrave, 2006).
- F. Traxler, 'The Metamorphoses of Corporatism: From Classical to Lean Patterns', *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2004), pp. 571-598
- W. Streeck and P.C. Schmitter, 'From National Corporatism to Transnational Pluralism: Organized Interests in the Single European Market', *Politics and Society* 19:2 (1991), pp. 133-152.
- E.H. Allern and T. Bale, 'Political Parties and Interest Groups: Disentangling Complex Relations', *Party Politics* 18:1 (2012), pp. 7-25.
- A. Hassel, 'Policies and Politics in Social Pacts in Europe', *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 15:1 (2009), pp. 7-26.
- D. Bohle and B. Greskovits, 'Neoliberalism, Embedded Neoliberalism and Neocorporatism: Towards Transnational Capitalism in Central-Eastern Europe', *West European Politics* 30:3 (2007).

General and classic works in comparative politics on the role of economic interests:

- J.A. Caporaso and D.P. Levine, *Theories of Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Chapter 3 (on Marxian theories)
- P.C. Schmitter, 'Still the Century of Corporatism?', *Review of Politics* 36:1 (1974), pp. 85-131.
- G.A. Almond, 'Corporatism, Pluralism, and Professional Memory', *World Politics* 35:2 (1983), pp. 245-260.
- P.J. Katzenstein, *Small States in the World Economy: Industrial Policy in Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985). (On corporatist systems in Western Europe)
- S. Berger (ed), *Organized Interests in Western Europe: Pluralism, Corporatism, and the Transformation of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- C.E. Lindblom, *Politics and Markets: The World's Political-Economic Systems* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

## **9. Examination**

Examination for this course will be in the form of an exam taken in Easter Term. This exam will last five hours and will be typed on a computer with a script uploaded by the student onto the examinations platform. The examination paper will have six sections, A to F. Section A will contain 9 questions that are drawn from topics covered during the Lent term lectures. Students must answer one question from this section. Students must answer two questions from the remaining section B to F. These sections relate to the modules covered in Michaelmas term. Students will answer three questions in all, and cannot answer more than one question from each section. Students will receive guidance on the examination from supervisors and from the course organiser. The examiners reports from previous years are given below. 2014-2015 was the first year of a new syllabus and examination method and so earlier examination reports refer to a different system of assessment. Past papers can be accessed via the POL4 Moodle site.

### **POL4 Examiners report for 2020-2021**

This was the second year of exams conducted in the shadow of the corona virus pandemic. The format for the exam was a six hour window, with all exams taken virtually, typed by students and then uploaded onto the university system. It was thus an open book exam, as in 2020, though with a longer window than previously. Contrary to last year, all students were expected to take the exam, though in calculating final marks for Part 2A it was possible to not take into account the lowest mark of those papers taken.

148 scripts in total were marked. The format was the same as in previous years: a general section with 9 questions, and then sections made up of two questions based on the modules covered by students in Michaelmas term. Students were asked to answer one question from the general section and then two questions from two different module sections. Each student therefore answered 3 questions in total. Scripts were double-blind marked.

The distribution of marks was as follows: 30 students obtained a first class mark; 104 students obtained a 2.1. mark, 12 students obtained a 2.2. mark; and 2 students failed the paper. The average mark for the paper was 66.

There was an even spread of questions attempted by students, more even than in the past. The spread of marks for Section A questions was as follows: 8 for Q1, 20 for Q2, 9 for Q3, 2 for Q4, 31 for Q5, 3 for Q6, 16 for Q7, 21 for Q8, 0 for Q9. For the modules, all questions were answered, with an even spread across the two questions asked per module paper.

The quality of scripts was as high as in recent years, with the open book exam having a discernible effect on the detail and precision of the scripts overall. Nevertheless, it was possible to distinguish between the stronger and the weaker scripts. The standard of the module answers was particularly robust, though in some cases it was possible to discern a standardized answer based heavily on lecture material. It is worth reminding students that the reproduction of lecture material in exams is unlikely to lead to very high marks. This is as true for answers to Section A questions as it is for those answering questions from the module sections.

As is usually the case with POL4 exams, the best answers were able to combine precise and clear conceptual arguments with detailed, relevant and complex examples. Some of the best scripts focused on a small number of examples and discussed them in great depth. Others ranged more widely but contained, overall, a very high and sophisticated level of empirical material. The weakest scripts were those containing almost no empirical material whatsoever.

In Section A, the most popular questions were about the link between economic development and democracy and about the role of organized interests in shaping government policies. Answers to the question on democracy were generally strong, with some of the very best answers giving detailed accounts of how this complex relationship can be understood and analysed in relation to specific empirical cases. The answers on organized interests were a little weaker, with general accounts of pluralism and corporatism dominating in place of answers with more focused empirical discussions.

The answers to the module sections were of a good standard. In answers to questions about varieties of capitalism, there was a tendency to give descriptive answers laying out the theory and model. Elsewhere, answers could have been strengthened by focusing as much as possible on the precise question being asked and the relevant terms deployed. A question about the role of institutional factors explaining differences in post war party systems in France and Germany elicited some outstanding answers but also many that did not clearly delineate institutional factors from other sorts of factors. In answer to a question about how war has shaped the state in Rwanda and Burundi, some answers did not focus on any particular period and tended also to discuss all factors shaping the state in these countries rather than focusing on war specifically. The best answers are those which answer in a direct and very precise fashion the question being asked.

### **POL4 Examiners report for 2020-2021**

The POL4 exam was conducted this year under the exceptional circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, the exam was taken virtually by students, in the form of an open book exam with answers typed on computer and submitted via an online platform. Students were not obliged to take the exam though they were encouraged to do so. 80 students in total took the exam. The exam set was the same as in previous years, with an opening section covering topics from the general lectures of Lent term 2020, and the remaining sections made up of two questions for each module offered to students and taken in Michaelmas term 2019. Students were asked to answer one question from the general section and one question from the two module sections. Each student answered 3 questions in total. Marking was different this year than in previous years. There was no double blind marking, with the exception of one student who was a Part 2B student. Scripts were divided up between markers.

The distribution of marks was as follows: 27 students were awarded a First class mark; 38 students were awarded a 2.1. mark; 13 students were awarded a 2.2. mark; and there were two Fails. The average mark for POL4 this year was 65.

The spread of marks for Section A was as follows: 24 for Q1, 8 for Q2, 7 for Q3, 10 for Q4, 10 for Q5, 4 for Q6, 16 for Q7, 0 for Q8, 1 for Q9.

For the module questions, 40 students answered Q10 and 9 students answered Q11, 11 students answered Q12 and 6 students answered Q13, 6 students answered Q14 and 21 students answered Q15, 5 students answered Q16 and 6 students answered Q17, 16 students answered

Q18 and 8 students answered Q19, 6 students answered Q20 and 11 students answered Q21, 8 students answered Q22 and 7 answered Q23.

The quality of scripts was maintained in comparison with past years. There was not a marked effect of an open book exam, with weak scripts weak in the same ways, and similarly with the stronger scripts.

As ever with POL4, the answers with the highest marks were those that combined a careful and sophisticated treatment of individual concepts with a detailed empirical exposition of their arguments. By this, it is meant a precise use of data, including names and dates for relevant cases, the reconstruction of historical cases, the details of relevant electoral results, the use of other sorts of data (electoral turnouts, creation/demise of political parties, party membership figures etc.). Whilst POL4 requires a degree of conceptual sophistication and awareness, it is not primarily a theoretical paper. Rather, it requires the development of arguments through the deployment of empirical material. Examples are therefore essential in order to achieve higher marks in POL4 and a complete absence of empirical material will lead to systematically lower marks. Lower marks were thus given to those scripts that did not cite any particular examples or did so in superficial and cursory ways. Scripts that were conceptually confused, or assumed the meaning of key concepts rather than providing clear definitions, were also marked down.

For the bulk of answers to Q1 of Section A, the highest marks were awarded to those scripts that did dwell too long on the elite conflict theory itself or ones that used the question for an extended discussion of the different *theories* of state formation. Rather, the better scripts quickly moved on to discussing examples and cases. Some interpreted the question as one about European versus non-European trajectories of state formation, which was satisfactorily done in some cases but the best answers explored the variation within Europe itself, showing the strengths or weaknesses of state formation through a detailed exposition of a very small number of cases.

Q7 on political parties was also reasonably popular but elicited answers that were given below average marks. The reason was that many of the scripts used the question as an opportunity for a general discussion of parties and what we might call the crisis of democracy. Few of the scripts provided very detailed examples, choosing instead to refer very briefly to a large number of parties or national examples.

With regards the modules, the answers were generally of a decent standard, with adequate details provided of the two relevant cases. This shows that the two-country module approach helps students get into detail with regards the individual countries. However, there was still some uncertainty about how well students had absorbed the relevant case studies. For the highest marks in the module section, students were able to demonstrate their extensive contemporary knowledge of the relevant national cases, along with detailed accounts of historical change over time. A number of questions required students to show some knowledge of change over time and this was able to differentiate those with a good grasp of historical change in the module cases and those with a weaker grasp.

### **POL4 Examiners report for 2016-2017**

This year's POL4 exam was taken by 140 candidates. For the mandatory Section A, the most popular questions were Q3 on non-Western experiences with state formation (35 answers) and

Q4 on democratisation and state capacity (30 answers). Q1 on the 'elite politics' theory of state formation (22 answers), Q5 on repression and authoritarian regimes (13 answers) and Q7 on political parties (23 answers) also received a considerable number of answers. Less popular were Q2 on international state-building (3 answers), Q6 on systems of government (no answers), Q8 on economic interests (9 answers) and Q9 on civil society (5 answers). For the other sections, 87 candidates answered questions from Section B (Q10: 61, Q11: 26), 85 candidates answered questions from Section C (Q12: 36, Q13: 49), 45 candidates answered questions from Section D (Q14: 29, Q15: 16), 18 candidates answered questions from Section E (Q16: 16, Q17: 2), and 45 candidates answered questions from F (Q18: 25, Q19: 20).

The candidates generally performed well in the exam and there were relatively few weak scripts. Eighteen candidates achieved First class marks, 107 candidates obtained marks in the 2.1 range (with a significant number in the higher 2.1 range), 14 obtained marks in the 2.2 range, and one candidate got a Fail mark (this candidate left the exam early for medical reasons).

The patterns of strengths and weaknesses showed some similarities to what we have seen in past POL4 exams. Most candidates were able to provide good empirical details in their answers (with relatively few inaccuracies) to questions from Sections B-F. The best answers combined these empirical details with a discussion of more general issues or concepts to place the empirical material in context. Moreover, it is pleasing to see that candidates were generally able to integrate examples in Section A answers (which is something that has clearly improved in recent years). However, there were still some answers who failed to do this (for example, in the questions on political parties and on democratisation), and these answers received lower marks.

Although this happened less frequently than in the past, there were still some essays that provided more a list of possible issues and factors rather than a focused answer on the specific issue the question asked about. Examples included a few answers to Q11 (on the importance of divisions over the status of religion in society in Egypt and Iran) and Q15 (on the role of economic development in democratic consolidation in Zimbabwe and South Africa). Furthermore, some of the weaker essays failed to focus enough on the question or crucial concepts mentioned in the questions. This happened, for example, in a few answers to Q3 (where the concept of 'state capacity' received hardly any attention in some essays), Q12 (where a few essays focused on the impact of revolutions on transformative policies, rather than on the effect of transformative policies on the consolidation of revolutions), Q13 (where some essays made it insufficiently clear how 'status of religion in society' was interpreted), Q14 (where a few essays focused on 'state-building' broadly conceived rather than 'nation-building'), and Q18 (which required some discussion of the interpretation of 'executive power').

Overall, however, the examiners were once again encouraged by the quality of this year's POL4 exam scripts.

### **POL4 Examiners report for 2015-2016**

There were 121 candidates who took this year's POL4 exam. For the mandatory Section A, the most popular questions were Q8 on war and state formation (39 answers) and Q1 on democratisation (35 answers), while Q7 on political parties (15 answers) and Q9 on a possible European pathway of state formation (13 answers) also received a significant number of answers. Less popular were Q2 on authoritarian states (8 answers), Q6 on international state-

building (8 answers), Q4 on civil society (3 answers), Q3 on systems of government (no answers), and Q4 on the role of economic interests (no answers). For the other sections, 74 candidates answered questions from Section B (Q10: 21, Q11: 53), 37 candidates answered questions from Section C (Q12: 20, Q13: 17), 54 candidates answered questions from Section D (Q14: 33, Q15: 21), 46 candidates answered questions from Section E (Q16: 19, Q17: 27), and 31 candidates answered questions from F (Q18: 11, Q19: 20).

On the whole, the candidates performed well in the exam and there were relatively few weak scripts. To give some idea of the distribution of marks, the 98 candidates from the Pol/IR stream achieved 11 First class marks, 73 marks in the 2.1 range (quite a few of which were in the higher 2.1 range), 13 marks in the 2.2 range, and one Third class mark.

The scripts showed similar patterns of strengths and weaknesses as in previous years. Most candidates were able to provide good empirical details in their answers (with pleasingly few inaccuracies), especially in the answers to questions from Sections B-F. The best answers combined some discussion of more general issues and concepts with useful and directly relevant empirical material, and directly addressed the question. Some of this is naturally more difficult to do in the answers to Section A questions than to the other questions, but the best answers in Section A managed to successfully integrate examples in the discussion. Answers who did not do this (as was, for example, the case with some of the answers to the question on political parties) received lower marks.

In addition, the answers that received marks on the lower end of the distribution suffered from one or more of the following problems. First, some essays didn't sufficiently focus on the specific question at hand or address the key concepts mentioned in the question. The clearest examples of the former issue were some answers to Q9 (on whether a European pathway to state formation exists), which is a question that, logically, cannot be satisfactorily answered by focusing primarily on cases and patterns of state formation outside Europe. However, it happened in a few other essays too. Some examples of the latter issue could be found in answers to Q10 that didn't sufficiently engage with the notion of 'religious nationalism'. Second, some essays provided more a list of possible issues and factors rather than a focused answer on the specific issue or factor that the question asked about. Examples included a few answers to Q11 (on the importance of 'rentier state' factors in Egypt and Saudi Arabia), Q14 (on the relevance of internal party features for explaining the success of populist parties in Western Europe), and Q16 (on the importance of political leadership in democratic consolidation in South Africa and Zimbabwe). This is probably the result of trying to use large parts of supervision essays to answer exam questions, which should be avoided. Third, some answers (for example on Q15 and Q17) did not sufficiently deal with the arguments and literature that the questions refer to to be fully satisfactory.

Overall, however, the examiners were encouraged by the quality of this year's exam scripts and hope that this will continue in the coming years.

### **Examiners report for 2014-2015**

This was the first year of the new Pol 4 paper, where assessment was conducted entirely through an end of year exam in Easter Term. The exam paper was divided up, with the first section containing 9 questions each of which tested material covered in the Michaelmas term lectures. The remaining sections were composed of 2 questions each and each section corresponded to a module taught in Lent term. As students were asked to answer 1 question

from the first section and then 1 question from the two module-sections which they had taken in Lent term, each student answered 3 questions in total.

112 students took this paper in total. The distribution of the marks was as follows: 8 students were awarded a First; 94 students were awarded a 2.1 (49 students obtained an 'upper' 2.1 and 45 obtained a 'lower' 2.1); 9 students were awarded a 2.2; and 1 student obtained a Third.

In section A, the spread of answers to individual questions is as follows: 17 students answered Q1, 12 students answered Q2, 1 student answered Q3, 1 student answered Q4, 3 students answered Q5, 14 students answered Q6, 12 students answered Q7, 11 students answered Q8, 41 students answered Q9. In other words, 66 out of 112 students answered a question on the theme of state formation. 16 students answered a question on the theme of modes of interest representation and 30 students answered a question from the theme on democratization and regimes.

The spread across the sections devoted to individual modules corresponds to the numbers taking those modules. 29 students answered Q10, 33 students answered Q11, 43 students answered Q12, 7 students answered Q13, 12 students answered Q14, 17 students answered Q15, 12 students answered Q16, 17 students answered Q17, 12 students answered Q18, 20 students answered Q19, 13 students answered Q20 and 9 students answered Q21.

Overall the best answers combined a critical analysis of literature/concepts with a direct attempt at answering the question. Often, the literature itself was used as a way of structuring the question e.g. with question 19 on sanctions or question 17 on mainstream responses to the rise of populism, leaving little room for a critical treatment of the scholarly literature itself. In instances where only one or two examples were used in any detail, there was no awareness that this posed problems of generalizability and that single cases may not be representative of a phenomenon as a whole.

The following remarks raise issues relevant to specific questions. Not all questions will be discussed here, only those raising particular issues.

On Question 2, there was relatively little attention given to the meaning of institutional differences, with many relying on the framework provided by Gerschewski without justifying this in terms of the question itself.

Question 8 was specifically about the European context and yet many students discussed Centeno's work on Latin America and articles on state formation in South East Asia. The comparison in this question should really have been intra-European rather than with other regions. It is also important to add that the question was asking student to outline specifically the role played by war in state formation in Europe. This could have been done by identifying the distinctiveness of war in comparison to other dynamics of state formation, perhaps by suggesting there was a temporal dimension (war plays an important role early on, less so later, for instance). Alternatively, it could have been argued that war has played both a formative and a destructive role in state formation. Instead, most students answered the question by evaluating the validity of Tilly's argument, which is not the same thing. The best answers considered analytically and empirically the role of war but did not frame the issue as Tilly versus competing explanations.

Question 9 was answered well overall though there was a tendency to use it simply as an occasion for testing Charles Tilly's thesis about "states make war and war makes states". Tilly's argument may not export particularly well beyond the early modern European period but there were many other ways of answering this particular question. Indeed, one might have answered this question very well with no reference to Tilly at all. There was also a strong tendency to assume that Tilly's argument works perfectly for early modern Europe, with a very undifferentiated account given of modern Europe's development.

On questions 10 and 11, the comparison of Egypt and Saudi Arabia was commonly used but not always to its fullest effect. Students rarely systematically compared the two cases and even more rarely picked up interesting differences and similarities. Q10 was most obviously pointing at the very least to the fact that authoritarianism in both Egypt and Saudi Arabia has been resilient in spite of very great differences in the economic records of both regimes. And yet few students framed their answers around this initial and arresting difference, to then probe further as the essay develops. Q11 deserved more systematic consideration of the specificity of religious discourse as opposed to other kinds of political discourse.

On question 12, the better answers took issue with the term 'national interest', pointing out that how it is defined may determine one's views on the balance of power between President and Congress.

On question 15, most students answered the question entirely through a reference to history (cultural legacy, Cold War legacy, history of dissidence) even though the question is referring to why Eastern European states took divergent democratization paths *since 1989*. More recent events such as economic crises in Russia or EU membership were not mentioned. For such a question, the decision to focus purely on historical explanations deserved more justification.

On question 17, it would have been good to see more reflection on the meaning of 'success'. Does a successful response to populism by mainstream parties mean eliminating them from the political system through the formation of an anti-populist *cordon sanitaire*? Or does success mean an incorporation of the concerns of populist parties into mainstream political life? Most answers tended only to describe rather mechanically the various response strategies identified by Bale et al.

On question 20, there was a frequent discussion of ethnic violence in Indonesia at the time of the Asian financial crisis (anti-Chinese violence in wake of economic collapse in Indonesia) as if this was an argument about the ethnic conflicts stemming from democratization. Few candidates properly differentiated between democratization and economic crises as sources of ethnic violence.

#### **POL4 Examiners report 2013-2014**

This was the third year in which this paper was examined using a combination of a long essay and a two hour written exam. 71 students took this paper, though one student withdrew leaving 70 as the final total. This will be the final year in which the paper will be examined in this way, with the long essay to be replaced with a longer written exam next year.

The marks for the long essay, submitted in Lent term, were as follows. There were 8 Firsts, 22 high 2.1s, 28 low 2.1s, 11 2.2s and one fail. As with previous years, performance in the long



essays was relatively weak. A number of students did far better in the exam than in the essay; some, though far fewer in number, performed better in the essay than in the final exam.

As in the past, the best essays were excellent and combined detailed analysis of cases with a broader conceptual framework or argument that held together well across the whole of the essay. In the better essays, it is evident that students had planned their work and conducted as extensive research as possible given the time constraints. They took full advantage of being able to develop their arguments at length. Weaker essays tended to show little evidence of planning or preparation, reading was limited and there was little by way of a conceptual framework or argument. Choices of cases were not explained and weak essays tended towards the descriptive.

The results of the Easter term exams were as follows. Out of the 70 students who sat the exam, there were 28 Firsts, 31 high 2.1s, 8 low 2.1s, 2 2.2s and 1 fail. The exam answers as a whole demonstrated a good grasp of the country cases discussed and of the overarching themes used to compare different countries.

Answers to the exam questions were spread out in the following way: 16 students answered one question from section A, 17 students answered one question from section B, 47 students answered a question from section C, 25 students answered a question from section D, 26 students answered a question from section E and 9 students answered a question from section F. Each student was asked to answer two questions, each one from a different section.

Within the sections, the breakdown was as follows.

For section A, 3 students answered question A1, 3 students answered question A2 and 10 students answered question A3. On question A3, some chose to focus on economic policy, others on immigration and some on the approach to the EU. The answers were of a good standard, though there was some tendency to reproduce stereotypical models of French or German policy approaches. More attention was paid to policies than to policy approaches as such, the latter often brought in only as an afterthought. Some answers dwelt too much on the early post-war period, with little account of contemporary changes.

For section B, 7 students answered question B4, 2 students answered question B5 and 8 students answered question B6. Answers for this section were generally good but there was a tendency to reproduce too literally the lecture material. As a result, some answers veered off the question. Students should remember that they are expected to assimilate and analyse the lecture material rather than reproduce it directly in the exam.

For section C, 23 students answered question C7, 19 students answered question C8 and 15 students answered question C9. On question C7, the most popular question on the exam, all answers selected Saudi Arabia and Egypt as their comparative cases. Most answers focused on how the stability in Saudi Arabia and the upheaval in Egypt indicate the differences between these two countries. The better answers focused similarities *and* differences and brought the two cases together in their analysis. Weaker answers focused simply on differences, presenting stylized accounts of both countries. Weaker answers also tended to provide potted histories of each country, independently of the question itself. The best answers focused on the Arab spring and the nature of authoritarianism, using the case studies to illustrate various points. On question C8, the strongest answers questioned whether the term ‘tamed’ was appropriate for thinking about how religion and the state are connected to one another in the Arab world. More

typical responses compared Egypt and Saudi Arabia, concluding that Saudi Arabia was successful in ‘taming’ religious movements whereas in Egypt this had been less successful.

On section D, 16 students answered question D10 and 9 students answered question D11. For D10, the best answers covered both the issue of what the intention of the Constitution was vis-à-vis foreign policy and the developments outside of the Constitution that have made it difficult for the executive to be controlled in this area. Weaker answers considered just the role of the executive in the Constitution but with little focus on the foreign policy dimension itself. On question D11, which was on public opinion and foreign policy in the US, very few answers tackled the question directly. Most tended to focus entirely on the problem of public opinion and its role in political decisions. Very little attention was directed to the specific features of foreign policy and on possible differences between how public opinion and domestic policy-making are related in general, and how they are specifically related in the case of foreign policy decision-making. Answers, in short, lacked specificity.

On section E, 7 students answered question E12 and 19 students answered question E13. Questions were generally good and demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the Congo and its history. Some answers could have benefitted from being less descriptive and more analytical.

On section F, 7 students answered question F14 and 2 students answered question F15. The answers to these questions were generally good, averaging out as the highest marks of the 5 sections.

Overall, and consistent with remarks from previous examiner’s reports, exam answers would have benefitted from being more analytical and less descriptive, more oriented towards developing a distinctive argument and less focused on reproducing lecture material, and in some cases such as in section D answers needed to be more specifically directed at the topic. The best answers contained extensive empirical detail, were analytically sophisticated, and answered the question directly and succinctly.

#### **POL4 Examinerss Report for 2012-13**

This was the second year this Comparative Politics paper ran in its current format, which includes a mixed assessment process: a 5,000 word essay and a two-hour exam. This year the paper was taken by 88 students in Part IIA and 5 students in Part IIB. The same assessment procedures and marking standards were applied to both groups of students.

The marks for the 5,000 word essays, submitted in Lent term, were as follows: 13 students received a mark in the first class range, 24 students received a high 2.1 (65-69), 24 students received a low 2.1 (60-64), 27 students received 2.2s, 4 students received 3rds, and 2 students received a Pass mark. These results are a bit weaker than last year, especially on the lower end of the scale, where there were more 2.2 and 3rd marks than last year (and last year there were no Pass marks).

As last year, the best essays, while applying quite different approaches, all found a good balance between conceptual and descriptive material, and were sensible and convincing in the number of cases and examples that were used. Moreover, they based their analysis on a relatively wide variety of sources and considered different arguments and interpretations. It is clear that many students again worked diligently on their essays and conducted a considerable amount of research for them.

Essays which received lower marks suffered from many of the same problems as last year's weaker essays: poor writing and editing (which, if severe, limit an essay to at most a high 2.2. mark), inconsistent referencing styles, too much reliance on quotations rather than the candidate's own words and arguments, and/or reliance on only a small number of arguments (thus ignoring possible counter-arguments) and sources. It was also noticeable that several essays strayed too far from the questions set and, thus, did not really provide answers to these questions. Another common problem was that the relation between the general arguments in an essay and the specific cases/examples was not sufficiently explained, or – in some cases – that the empirical material was hardly introduced or set up at all.

Despite some excellent essays, as well as a considerable number of very competent essays, it has to be said that the performance on these essays was overall rather disappointing. Looking at their exam performance (in this paper as well as in other papers), many students taking this paper should be able to do better on their essays than they did. One of the issues may be that some students don't take this part of the assessment seriously enough. However, given the nature of the classing criteria, especially for Part IIA students, a low mark on the essay can have a very significantly negative effect on the possibility of receiving a good overall class. Students taking this paper in the future should be aware of this.

The Easter term exams produced better results than the essays. 16 students received a first class mark, and 39 students received a mark in the 65-69 range. A further 23 students received a mark in the 60-64 range, while 15 students received 2.2 marks. The large majority of the students showed that they had developed good knowledge and understanding of the cases and regions, although – as last year – sometimes this knowledge was not applied directly enough to the specific question (rather than the broader topic) to warrant a first class mark.

All questions received at least one answer. Most popular was the Middle East section, where 27 students answered *q.7* on economic factors, 21 students answered *q.8* on post-Arab Spring religious tensions and only 7 students attempted *q.9* on democratisation risks in the region. As for the other two 'regional' modules, the section on Eastern Europe received 21 answers (6 for *q.4* on nationalism and ideological traditions, 9 for *q.5* on the influence of communist regimes on democratic transitions, and 6 for *q.6* on models of democracy), while the section on Western Europe received 23 answers (4 for *q.1* on parties and party systems, 11 for *q.2* on political executives, and 8 for *q.3* on policy approaches in France and Germany). The case study on US elections received 31 answers (23 for *q.10* on the 2008 election and 8 for *q.11* on the post-1968 Republican majority), while the case study on Congo received 32 answers (13 on *q.12* on external influences on the Congolese state and 19 on *q.13* whether Congo can be considered a failed state). Finally, the case study on environmental policy in China received 14 answers, which were unevenly distributed (13 for *q.14* on policy implementation problems and 1 for *q.15* on managing the environmental consequences of economic growth).

Compared to last year (when this problem was discussed at some length in the examiners' report), there were not as many answers that failed to engage with the exact wording of the question. Some such problems still occurred, for example, for *q.3*, where not all answers paid enough attention to the word 'still' in the question, and for *q.8*, where some answers provided a general account of the role of religion in the politics of Egypt and Saudi Arabia without considering how the Arab Spring may have influenced the extent to which religious tensions became more salient and openly expressed than before. A few answers to *q.4* also did not

sufficiently address how ‘ideological traditions’ were interpreted and whether nationalism can be seen as a phenomenon that is (at least analytically) separate from these traditions.

A more significant problem continued to be that many answers resort to just listing a list of factors (e.g., on *q.2*, where some answers did not attempt to argue why some sources of power can be seen as more important than others, and on *q.14*, where good answers went beyond listing the problems to indicate what the underlying sources of these problems are) or rely on a single – and sometimes simplistic – line of reasoning (e.g., in answers to *q.8*, where some answers based their answer entirely on the role that religion had played in the legitimacy strategies of the regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia without arguing why religion remained important – or perhaps became even more important – after the Arab Spring). Furthermore, there were again some essays that spent too much time on an introduction and/or repetitive conclusion rather than use the time and space to further develop certain arguments or examples.

It is clear that most students gained a good understanding of the details and complexities of the regions and cases that they studied. The best essays managed to convey this through a close focus on the actual question and a consideration of different arguments and points. Many of the answers that obtained 2.1 marks provided solid accounts, but lacked some analytical focus on specific arguments or examples. The weaker answers contained factual mistakes, did not focus sufficiently on the questions, or only addressed a very limited set of points.

#### **POL4 Examinerss Report for 2011-12**

This was the first year of the new paper in Comparative Politics, and the first time that a paper in Politics & International Relations had been examined through a mixed assessment process, compromising a long essay and an exam. It was taken by 84 students in Part IIA and 4 students in Part IIB. The same assessment process and marking standards were applied to both groups of students.

The 5,000 word essays, submitted in Lent term, adopted a variety of approaches, and a broad spectrum of abilities was apparent to the examiners. Most students had prepared their essays thoroughly, drawing upon a wide range of sources, including (where appropriate) primary materials such as official and archival documents, news reports and interview texts. It was encouraging to see the enthusiasm and energy with which some essays were evidently researched and written. A relatively small number of students however still treated this component of the course in a similar way to normal supervision essays, looking at only a small number of major academic works on the topic, and content simply to regurgitate their main points. Such essays would normally gain no more than a mid-2.2. An associated problem was that a few students relied exclusively upon one text or one author for an account of a case study; all political events of any complexity are amenable to different interpretations, and one cannot engage critically and effectively with a case unless one has explored these differences.

In terms of substance, many of the best essays were able to both address major conceptual or theoretical issues, and to argue in detail about specific cases. Almost all of the best essays recognised and explained a broad theoretical framework within which to situate their answers, and were able to develop arguments and counter-arguments within this framework. The essay was then developed through an in-depth exploration of a relatively small number of cases. A few essays tried to use too many cases (in some essays, there were attempts to use five or more cases), which resulted in a degree of superficiality, and some care is needed in ensuring that the number of cases chosen is appropriate for the question. It is difficult to provide general

guidance about the essays, as the type of the question and students' own preferences will sometimes lead towards different essay structures – there is no set formula for writing long essays for this paper. Nevertheless, all the best essays for this paper managed to find a balance between conceptual and descriptive material, and reviewed and evaluated counter-arguments.

There were a number of common problems of format, style and presentation. The most apparent problem was that a large number of students still do not have an appropriate system for referencing and bibliographies. A short account of how to reference is included in the paper guide, and a more detailed version is included in the Politics & International Relations Handbook. Many students seem to have ignored this, and instead adopted their own anachronistic system, or indeed no system at all, for referencing and bibliographies. It really is important that by the time students are in their second years that they learn how to organise their references in a recognised, systematic way.

Whilst some essays were immaculately written, a significant number of essays contained persistent grammatical problems. It was difficult to tell whether this was down to carelessness or ignorance. It was clear that quite a few students do not know how to use semi-colons, deploying them where they should be using commas. If students think this is a problem, they should talk to their directors of studies and/or tutors urgently, as most Colleges are able to provide remedial help. Essays which contain repeated typos and grammatical mistakes cannot achieve a mark higher than a 2.2, so it really is worthwhile to sort this out.

The third common stylistic problem was that of quotation. Some students leaned too heavily on extensive quotation from academic sources, with a few essays containing multiple paragraph-length quotations. Two students copied text *verbatim* or near-*verbatim* from sources, properly referenced but without quotation marks. This is considered plagiarism, and both students were significantly penalised. In relation to both issues, it is important that students learn to put arguments in their own words; there is no point in just reprinting what someone else has written. The whole point of the essay, after all, is to encourage you to make your own arguments in your own terms.

Essays that exceeded the word limit were penalised. In one case, a student was brought below a class boundary for this essay, which resulted in an overall class lower than they would have otherwise received.

Notwithstanding these problems, 14 students (all in Part IIA) obtained an average mark in the first class range for their essays. 27 students obtained a high 2.1 (a mark of 65-69), and a 27 a low 2.1 (60-64). 18 students received 2.2s, and 2 students received 3<sup>rd</sup>s.

The Easter term exams produced slightly fewer 1<sup>st</sup>s than the essays but more high 2.1s. 12 students received a first class average, and 33 received marks in the 65-69 range. 27 received low 2.1s, 14 received 2.2s, one student received a 3<sup>rd</sup>, and one student withdrew. The majority of students demonstrated a good amount of detailed and relevant knowledge about the regions and cases, although often this knowledge was not applied sharply enough to what exactly the question was asking – hence the high number of 2.1s.

All questions on the exam paper drew at least five responses, except for *q.5*, on differences in the forms of authoritarianism that were present in Eastern Europe, which did not tempt a single student. The most popular question was *q.8*, on the religious discourse of opposition movements in the Arab world, which had all of 42 students taking it. *q.11*, on whether the 2008

presidential elections were unwinnable for the Republicans, and *q.12*, on explanations for the survival of the Congolese state, were the next most popular, each drawing 28 responses.

Perhaps the two most common problems found in the exam scripts were those of not thinking quite carefully enough about what the terms of the question meant, and of not considering or weighing up alternative explanations for the phenomenon that was being asked about. In the first category, an example is *q.4*, which asked about the effect of nationalism on state traditions in Eastern Europe. Only one of the eight students taking this question made a serious attempt to unpack the notion of ‘state traditions’, and evaluate the extent to which nationalism can be considered as something external to those traditions (it was no surprise that this student received a high 1<sup>st</sup> class mark). Other students used the term as if it had a clear and unambiguous meaning, but without stopping to review the different types of activities (resilient institutions, enduring expectations, formalised rituals?) that could be incorporated within this notion. As a result, it was never clear what exactly they were arguing about, even by the end of the essay.

A similar problem attached to the notion of what made an election ‘unwinnable’ in *q.11*: some students gave an extensive account of the reasons why the Republicans lost, and concluded that made the election unwinnable for them. But this is to render the question meaningless. Implicit in the question is some distinction between elections that are unwinnable and winnable elections that are still lost – and that needs to be worked through if the question is to be answered successfully.

The second type of problem comes from those students who picked one explanatory mode and simply pursued that unreflectively throughout the essay. This was most obviously so with *q.8*, on religion and opposition in the Arab world. A large number of these essays staked the claim at the start that governments in the Arab world have used religion heavily as a form of legitimisation, and therefore opposition groups have to respond using a similar frame. Much of the rest of these essays was then devoted to an account of how the Saudi and Egyptian governments had instrumentalised religion. But this link doesn’t necessarily follow, at least in any sort of straightforward way. A government’s adoption of a set of symbolic reference points could just as straightforwardly lead to the discrediting of those symbols. Opposition movements may deliberately adopt strategies of legitimisation that distinguish their approach from those of a government. It would need to be explained why this has not happened, at least to the extent it might have done, for the argument to work.

Most students who answered *q.12*, on the reasons for the survival of the Congolese state, were able to distinguish different reasons, and were able to categorise those reasons (typically bringing into their accounts the role of external interests, international assistance, the interests of the Congolese elite and institutions, popular nationalism and everyday coping strategies). Somewhat too often this just became a list, with a paragraph or two on each reason. The best answers by contrast were able to weigh these accounts up against each other, for example by working through a series of successive explanations but showing the limitations of each of them alongside the explanation, and their intersections.

Few students need more encouragement to understand the regions and cases in depth; there were only a small number of essays which demonstrated inadequate knowledge or made serious factual mistakes. Focusing an essay on the question though remains a problem. It was striking how many answers to the question on whether parliaments can control the executive in Western Europe (*q.3*) gave general accounts of the constraints on executives, with sometimes large

sections of the essay unrelated to the role of parliaments. The question on the convergence of policies between France and Germany (*q.1*) also led some students into giving accounts of the long-standing differences of the policies of these two countries, with barely a word said about convergence or divergence over time. *q.13* on how Congo's historical legacy has shaped its political economy was answered by some students by giving a simple narrative history of Congo's economic structure. A little bit of careful thought and planning would surely have been enough in each of these cases to make students realise that they were in danger of wasting a lot of time on writing about matters that were not relevant for answering the essay question.

The other great waste of time came from laborious introductions that provided overviews of essays. The number of students who expended a large proportion of their essays explaining all the things that their essays would argue was disappointing, even distressing. One student wrote the first half of each of the two essays explaining what would be argued, before going on to repeat exactly the same material in the same order in the second half of each essay. Exam essays are inevitably short; there is no point at all in telling the reader what they will be reading within a page or two.

The most pleasing aspect of reviewing the exam scripts was in appreciating the extent to which students had clearly developed quite extensive knowledge, and a sense of the key debates, about regions and countries which at the start of the year few of them had much familiarity. Many essays brought in recent events, occurring after the latest academic literature or the last supervisions, indicating that interests have been developed through the course that persist beyond the lecture room. Even if it didn't always come out in the essay, it was apparent that most students taking this paper have read and thought a lot about the complexities and uncertainties of the politics of these diverse regions of the world.