

AP Comparative Government

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Primary Textbook: Ethel Wood's AP Comparative Government

Teacher: Trainor

1 Chapter 1 - Introduction to Comparative Government

1.1 Comparative Method

1. Government is the leadership and institutions which make national policy decisions, while comparative government is the study of the flow of power from different people and groups within a government
 - (a) Politics are the activities associated with the governance of a country or area, especially the debate or conflict among individuals or parties with or hoping to gain power
2. Political science, as a social science, can either be done based on empirical data, or facts and statistics, or normative issues, which are based on value judgements
 - (a) Since it is a science, it requires a hypothesis of a relationship with variables, to find a causation from the independent to dependent variable, such that one causes the other
 - (b) Correlations are when the change in both variables are simultaneous, implying the possibility of a causation, but not acting as evidence
3. The main comparative model is the three-world approach from the Cold War, dividing into the first world of the US and its allies, the second of the USSR and its allies, and the third world of economically underdeveloped, unaffiliated nations
 - (a) It is used in modern day, based on communist, post-communist, and capitalist nations, advanced, economically developed democracies, and developing nations
 - (b) Developing and communist nations are more likely to become authoritarian nations, rather than economically developed capitalist nations, which are likely to be democratic
 - (c) This model integrates political and economic systems, due to the economy having a strong factor in citizen interaction with the government, allows observation of the impact of political change since the fall of the USSR, and the impact of informal politics, or the interaction of citizens and the civil society, or the organization and defining of citizen activism, with politics
4. The Huntington model₁ states the next great conflict will be between different civilizations (the broadest level of identity/cultural similarities), having moved from monarch territories to nations (from the 1790s to 1910s) to ideologies
 - (a) After the Cold War between Western civilizations, non-Western groups began to move away from being puppets of the West, responding to Western ideas of appropriate policies in the UN and IMF, to going back to traditional ideas, and due to increased interaction between civilizations
 - i. Educated foreigners are now being educated in their own culture, while Western culture spreads through globalization, reversing past trends
 - ii. Finally, trade has begun moving backward toward mainly regional in recent years
 - iii. Most particularly the Western idea of a universal civilization contrasts the Eastern idea of particularism and differences between civilizations, forcing civilization to bandwagon with the west, isolate themselves, or modernize to create a balance of power (though only Japan has done it without moving towards Western)
 - (b) The civilizations include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Slavic-Orthodox, Hindu, Islamic, Latin American, and African civilizations, due different views on relationships, rights, hierarchy, and religion, such that intellectual debate is not possible
 - (c) Economic progress and social change has also weakened the power of nations, resulting in religious divisions taking over, leading to fundamentalism
 - (d) This is also the movement back to the original, unchanging institutions, rather than ideological divisions, spreading both influence between civilization and local territory

- along fault lines
- (e) This has manifested most commonly in economic rivalries such as US-Japan or US-China and civilization support for minor conflicts, but also in ethnic cleansing, Islamic fundamentalism, movement from democratic institutions, and military conflict
 - i. In addition, the double standard of exempting similar nations from human rights regulations, while condemning others, leads to conflict
 - ii. This leads to Western attempts to ban the production of non-Western weaponry, in an attempt to not hurt their interests, while other nations define it as equal protection, leading to middle eastern and eastern Weapons States
- (f) Torn countries between multiple civilizations must have the political and economic elite, the general public, and the majority of the new civilization agree to be able to take a new identity, found within Mexico
 - i. On the other hand, in the case of Russia, none are present with the Post-Cold War attempts to join the West

1.2 Sovereignty, Authority, and Power

1.2.1 Nation-States

1. States are organizations that define the use of violence within a specific territory, through military and weapon restrictions, with institutions to create policy and promote general welfare
 - (a) States thus have sovereignty, or the ability to create their own policies without influence
 - (b) States without sovereignty are subject to corruption, used by internal and external organizations for their own ends, often in undeveloped nations
2. Nations are groups of people with a common political identity, such that nationalism is the sense of belonging, often resulting in patriotism for the nation
3. Nation-states are the main form of a state, such that borders are drawn around a specific nation, providing the identity for those in the main nationality
 - (a) Bi/multi-national states are those containing multiple nations, such as the USSR, such that minority groups began protests for independence, decaying into nationstates, though the same issue has applied to the multinational Russia since
 - (b) Stateless nations are those without a state, such as the Kurds, often causing fierce nationalism
 - (c) Nations generally expanded from core areas, until they reached another nation-state, creating boundaries, with periphery areas around the core areas, with more open land and fewer towns
 - (d) Multicore states often have inner-conflict as the result of multiple groups having competing interests, and can hurt stability, such as in Nigeria, though often not, like the US

1.2.2 Governmental Regimes

1. Regimes are the sets of rules that states set and follow, generally divided into authoritarian and democratic regimes
2. Democratic regimes can either be indirect, electing representatives for the people, or direct, with individuals directly having a say in government, generally only direct with small popu-

lations

- (a) Parliamentary systems are those where the legislature is elected, and those officials determine the executive, while presidential systems have both elected, with separation of powers between
 - i. Thus, in a parliamentary system, the prime minister doesn't have the same monopoly on power, rather "first among equals", such that it is harder to lobby, due to requiring a majority
 - ii. Cabinet members are also taken from the legislature, with a shadow cabinet of members of the largest opposition party
 - iii. In addition, since there is often more than two parties, they require the support of a third party to create a coalition government to get the majority needed, offering positions and policies
 - (b) While there are different levels of economic regulation, democracies have independent corporations from the government
 - (c) Most democracies are divided into a legislative, executive, and judicial branches
 - (d) Semi-presidential systems can also exist, such as in the 1993 Russian constitution, with both a parliamentary prime minister and a president sharing power, though the president has taken far more under Putin
 - (e) Democratic regimes rely on pluralism, or power split among many interest groups attempting to influence
3. Authoritarian regimes have power held by the political elites without citizen input, either by a dictator, hereditary monarch, aristocrats, or single political party, controlling both the government and economy
- (a) In these societies, there is no limits on the power of the leaders, responsibility to the public, or restriction of civil rights
 - (b) Communist countries are controlled by the party, controlling all aspects of life, following Marx or Zedong economic philosophy
 - (c) Corporatism is the supervision of government policies by some labor or business group, though it may be some other patron-client system
 - i. Corporatism often results from authoritarian regimes trying to provide the appearance of citizen involvement to gain co-optation, or citizen support, while banning other groups
 - ii. Patron-clientelism is the system of benefits provided to a specific group in exchange for vocal support
 - iii. It can also result from economic regulation or nationalization of industries resulting in close ties between government and industry
 - iv. Democratic corporatism can be shown by recognition of specific groups by the state, while forcing others to require recognition, legally bound to the state, working on behalf of the state
 - (d) Totalitarian regimes are a subset of authoritarian, which attempt to control all aspects of political and economic systems, often based on a strong ideological goal, such as communism
 - i. Totalitarian governments especially use violence to remove opposition, and are more illegitimate, in that they are not accepted by the people, which authoritarian governments may be
 - (e) Military rule is a common form of authoritarian, often taking power in a forced takeover/coup d'état during unrest, generally with public support, restricting civil liberties to preserve order, joining with the bureaucracy

- i. This can lead to a weak state, forcing other coup d'états, in a series of weak regimes
- 4. The Democratic Index was published by the Economist since 2007, ranking countries based on the electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, government functioning, political participation, and political culture
 - (a) It also categorizes into democracies (like the UK), flawed democracies, authoritarian (like Nigeria, Russia, China, and Iran), and hybrid regimes (like Mexico)

1.2.3 Legitimacy

1. Legitimacy, or the right to rule, is determined by the citizens, and is categorized as either traditional, charismatic, or rational-legal
 - (a) Legitimacy is easier to maintain in economic prosperity and with high government performance approval
2. Transitional is based on tradition, such as hereditary rulers, often based on myths, legends, religion, or divine right, with ceremonies, symbols, and artifacts to encourage the idea of legitimacy
3. Charismatic is often based on personality or military talent, such as Napoleon, though when he lost militarily, it faded, generally a shortlived form of legitimacy, unable to be passed on after death
4. Rational-legal is based on institutional laws and procedures, preserved through belief in the rule of law and acceptance of the authority of the state, such that shared political culture is important
 - (a) It can be based on common law, or legal tradition and precedents
 - (b) Legitimacy of rational-legal in democratic governments can be the result of the loss of the legitimacy of the electoral system
5. In modern states, the main form of legitimacy is from rational-legal, though traditional and charismatic allow easier gain of power, or influencing politics easier within interest groups
 - (a) Many states also preserve some form of traditional legitimacy, to add legitimacy to the legal-rational democratic form of government

1.2.4 Political Culture and Ideologies

1. Political culture is the collection of political beliefs, values, practices, and institutions which a country is based on, such that for a government to remain, it must be based on that culture
 - (a) Social capital, or reciprocity and trust between citizens and the state or other citizens of all levels, can be used to measure how democratic it is, such that more democratic makes it greater
 - i. On the other hand, social capital theory, which predicts difficulty in Islam or Confucian regions, has been critiqued for ignoring countries such as Turkey or India
 - (b) Consensual political culture is agreement on what issues should be solved and the process by which decisions are made, such that legitimacy of the government is accepted
 - (c) Conflictual political culture by fundamental economic, religious, or political differences often leads to conflict, and prevents effective rule
2. Political ideologies are sets of political values of the basic goal of government, held by the individual
 - (a) Liberalism values political and economic freedom, maximizing rights and freedoms, and allowing citizens to disagree with the state and attempt to influence decisions

- (b) Communism values equality, believing freedom won't create general prosperity, believing eventually a wealthy class will form and take control of the government, advocating state control of all resources to protect economic equality
- (c) Socialism values a combination of freedom and equality, believing in the free market and private ownership, but believes the state have heavy control of the economy to provide benefits and preserve equality
- (d) Fascism values strength, believing some groups are inherently inferior, attempting to create the strongest possible state, such that rights must be taken away by the authoritarian state to preserve it
- (e) Religious ideologies also play a large role in many nations, often having an official state religion, or having special interest groups influencing it

1.3 Political and Economic Change

1. Change generally happens both politically and economically simultaneously, and most countries experience it over time, but when happening separately, creates tensions
2. Change can occur through reform, attempting to use standard political and economic institutions to create change
 - (a) Revolution attempts to change the political and economic institutions through the overthrow or revision of the institutions, generally impacted economic, political, and social systems, regardless of the intent
 - (b) Coup d'états replace the government with new leaders by force, often carried out by the military, but can cause instability
3. The strongest attitude toward change is radicalism, or the belief in rapid, dramatic changes, often believing the institutions cannot be fixed, leading to revolutions
 - (a) Liberalism as an attitude is the belief in reform and gradual change, believing in repairing and improving existing systems, with the goal often of leading to a complete transformation over time
 - (b) Conservatism believes change is disruptive and causes unexpected negative outcomes, believing in the need to preserve legitimacy of government, basic societal values, and law and order
 - (c) Reactionaries believe that the current state has already move too far from basic societal values, wanting to use revolutionary means to return to old institutions
4. The first major trend of modern change is democratization, based on the idea of competitive elections, with many countries moving further to liberal/substantive democracies, instead of illiberal/procedural
 - (a) Liberal democracies have belief in neutrality of the judiciary, checks and balances on power, civil liberties, rule of law, civilian control of the military, and open civil society
 - i. Illiberal democracies often have an unchecked executive and restricted citizen groups, preventing truly free elections, but are necessary before a society can become a liberal democracy
 - (b) Huntington believes there are three waves of democratization, the first gradual until WWII, the second after WWII involving de-colonization, and the third involving the defeat of totalitarians after the Cold War
 - (c) Democratization is due to the legitimacy of authoritarians, expansion of urban middle class, human rights emphasis, and international snowball effect
 - (d) Democratization happens after a trigger event taking place, after a revolution of rising

- expectations of high living standards, causing democratic consolidation of the elites and public willing to share power, spreading throughout society called political liberalization
5. The second trend is economic liberalism, moving to market economies, such that it is under debate, due to influence such as China, if democracy and market economies inherently move together
 - (a) 19th century European reformists were generally middle-class bourgeoisie, who wanted their views represented in government, and economic goals unrestricted to allow economic mobility
 - (b) Radicals, on the other hand, believed that freedom clashed with equality, and thus a free market was not the ideal, including Marx, believing instead of a command economy of government owned businesses
 - i. These economies, in the USSR and China, had a state planning committee, with economic production blueprints and quotas in 5 year plans
 - ii. On the other hand, these generally, while creating economic growth, did not lead to higher living standards
 - (c) In recent years, most command economies have moved toward market economies with less government regulation, with the current debate between a mixed (with significant regulation and control from government) or market economy
 - (d) Economic liberalization is based on the failure of many command economies and the belief that government is too large
 - i. Thus, many command economies have had marketization toward market economies and privatization toward private ownership
 - ii. The main downside, the business cycle, has led most to adopt a mixed economy to lower the dangers of the business cycle
 6. The third trend is fragmentation, or divisions based on culture/ethnicity, moving away from prior globalization toward nationalism, especially found in the politicization of religion and increase in fundamentalism
 - (a) It is argued that those who believe in the clash of civilizations underestimate this factor of cultural differences

1.4 Citizens, Society, and the State

1. Social cleavages are divisions in society that are outside politics, but impact political policy-making based on causing deep political identification, including social, ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages
 - (a) Coinciding cleavages are those which divides the same groups against each other on issues, while cross-cutting cleavages are those which divide groups that agree on some issues, but disagree with others
 - (b) Regional conflicts are often the results of different levels of economic development, or religious divisions between regions
 - (c) The depth of the cleavages in the social structure of a society, the level of political party alignment with cleavages, and specific cleavages not involved in the political process determine the importance
2. Government-citizen relationships are based first on political efficacy, or the citizen ability to understand and influence political events, determining if they feel the government cares about their opinion
 - (a) This works to create active voting behavior, and political participation, rather than

- interacting purely through subject activities (obeying laws), creating political attitudes
- (b) Attitudes in other respects, such as trust or the ability of the government to impact their lives also play a role
- (c) Government transparency also changes interactions, preventing corruption, as well as the methods of learning about political actions to create immediate views
- 3. Social movements are organized, collective activities to create desired policies, using nontraditional reform methods and bring non-mainstream positions to mainstream society
- 4. Civil society are voluntary organizations outside the government to aid identification and advancement of personal interests, encouraged in liberal democracies
 - (a) They can be either political or apolitical (not politically active), rather just to promote goals and interests, preventing tyranny of the majority
 - (b) It has been argued that globalization has led to cosmopolitanism, or a universal political order and civil society based on worldwide identity and values, found within international, political, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
 - (c) Authoritarian nations are against civil society, dividing purely based on social cleavages
 - i. Civil societies are often formed later through civil education of democratic rights, and through NGO involvement

1.5 Political Institutions

1.5.1 National Forces

1. Political institutions are structures which carry out governing, though they cannot be assumed to have the same powers in each nation
2. Unitary systems have all policymaking centralized in one location, while federal systems divides between central government and sub-units, and confederal has power almost purely in sub-units, with a weak central
 - (a) Federal and confederal systems are criticized for inefficiency, due to local governments with possibly competing interests, such that very few governments are confederal for that reason
3. Supranational organizations affecting national policies are a result of integration, or the loss of sovereignty to gain international influence, based on shared policies and rules, such as the UN
 - (a) This results in a relationship between domestic policies and international relations, creating additional international trade, banking, assets, and foreign direct investment
 - (b) It also creates a ripple effect of international events
 - (c) On the other hand, integration ironically causes fragmentation, by dividing the world in regional international organizations, such as the EU
4. Centripetal forces are those which bind states together, such as nationalism, or identities based on nationalism, encouraging belief in laws and patriotism, using schools, symbols and holidays to promote it
 - (a) It is also encouraged by transportation systems and technology, uniting the parts of the country with each other and its government
5. Centrifugal forces include organizations rivaling the government for influence, such as the church in the USSR, or nationalism if leading to separatist movements or devolution
 - (a) Centifugal forces can often lead to devolution, or decentralized decision-making to regional governments, moving toward federalism, even in long-established states

- i. Devolutionary forces can include ethnonationalism, or the feeling of an ethnic group as a separate nation, with the right to autonomy, especially if the ethnic group is concentrated in a specific region, due to ethnic groups having a shared culture, language, customs, and religions
 - ii. Regional economic inequality or peripheral location, especially if cut off geographically, can also be a strong devolutionary force
- (b) Separatist movements to fully break into a separate nation, are generally ethnic, based in nationalism, and can be encouraged by peripheral location, socioeconomic inequality

1.5.2 Government Branches

1. The executive carries out laws, split into the head of state (symbolizing/representing the people at home and abroad, often a figurehead, often called the president) and the head of government (often the prime minister)
 - (a) The chief executive begins policy initiatives, often given veto power in a presidential system, makes foreign policy crisis decisions, and oversees the execution of laws
 - (b) The cabinet in a parliamentary system is led by the “first among equals” prime minister, taken from the legislature to run departments, formed from a cabinet coalition in a multi-party system with no majority
 - i. Cabinet coalitions can often lead to instability
 - ii. In presidential systems, the president chooses the cabinet, approved often by the legislature, often more independent than in a parliamentary system due to not being major political figures
 - iii. On the other hand, in a presidential system, the president can remove them from the cabinet if they disobey his wishes
 - (c) Bureaucracies are agencies to implement government policy, viewed by Weber as necessary to respond to a changing society, growing as the role of government grew
 - i. He stated all bureaucracies must be complete meritocracies with clear goals, extensive, well-established rules, task specialization/division of labor, a hierarchy
 - ii. On the other hand, he feared lack of meritocracy, found in the US by the patronage system until reformed after the Garfield assassination, and discretionary power to make small decisions, against democratic beliefs, but acknowledged they provided stability due to being unelected
 - iii. In authoritarian regimes, the head of government has complete power, and uses bureaucracy to directly control many aspects of life, with large amounts of patronage
 - iv. In many Latin American countries, the military regime formed a technocrat of civilian and military bureaucracy coalition, controlling government in the name of rapid modernization
 - v. Realistically, bureaucracies have characteristics of non-elected positions, efficient/partially meritocratic structures, job qualifications, hierarchy, and inefficient red tape (especially in large bureaucracies)
2. Legislatures are governing bodies, popularly elected, although in authoritarian regimes, are controlled by the executive
 - (a) Legislatures are either bicameral (two houses) or unicameral, often the former to allow an upper house for regional governments and a lower house, directly for the population, balancing regional powers
 - i. It can also be used in non-federal systems to allow a house further from the people,

- and thus less impulsive, to moderate decisions
- (b) Legislatures often create, debate, and vote on policies, have taxing and spending power, appoint officials to other branches, serve as appeals courts, impeachment courts, and act as elite recruitment for future government leaders
- 3. Judiciaries serve in authoritarian regimes under the control of the executive, simply as legal courts or rubber-stamps
 - (a) Constitutional courts, defending the democratic principles of a country, often have judicial review to rule on constitutionality of government actions, and have the power to protect against other citizens infringing on rights
 - (b) Courts have been criticized for being unelected though, and are often weaker than the other branches

1.5.3 Linkage Institutions

1. Linkage institutions are groups which connect government to citizens, such as parties, media, and interest groups, larger in nations with a larger government and population
2. Political parties provide labels for voting, hold politicians more accountable, and bring different people and ideas to a united group
 - (a) Two-party systems provide a plurality electoral system, while multi-party provide proportional generally, the latter being more standard
3. Electoral systems determine how votes are cast and counted
 - (a) In the US, UK, and India, the first-past-the-post system is used/plurality/winner-take-all system is used, competing for a single seat
 - (b) Many nations use a proportional system, creating multi-member districts, voting for a party instead of a candidate, and others use a mixed system combining the two
 - i. Proportional systems also encourage coalitions to form a majority to get legislation passed
 - (c) Elections fall into either an election of public officials, referendums to vote on a policy issue (called by the government), or an initiative to vote on policy (called by a petition of citizens)
 - i. Plebiscites are non-binding referendums to gauge public opinion
4. Interest groups are organizations attempt to influence public policy, existing independent from the government based on a common interest
 - (a) Nonpolitical groups can also be interest groups, seeking to advance a private or corporate interest
 - (b) Interest groups, unlike political parties, do not run candidates to influence the process, but may support candidates
 - (c) In a multi-party system, they are more similar, in that single issue parties often form, rather than broad platform parties
 - (d) In authoritarian states, interest groups must be government-sanctioned, acting as transmission belts to extend party influence to members of the group and the general public
 - (e) Interest group pluralism has complete independence, getting their own funds and leaders
 - (f) Corporatism has fewer groups compete, with each group generally having a monopoly over the sector, sanctioned and often protected by the government, in between the other two systems
 - i. State corporatism has the states decide which groups take control of each sector, while societal corporatism has the interest group form the monopoly, and gain its

own power within the state

5. Political elites, or leaders with high amounts of political influence, are found in every system, such that there must be methods of recruitment to find future elites
 - (a) Further, all nations must have a system of political succession, or replacing ineffective or resigning leaders

1.6 Public Policy

1. Policy is created by the three branches of government, interest groups, and political parties, to solve general issues
2. Economic performance is one of the most important issues, affected by both international and domestic trade
 - (a) This is measured by GDP, Gross National Product (GDP + Income Earned by Citizens Outside the Country), GNP per capita, or Purchasing Power Parity
3. Environmental issues are also a major modern problem, especially in Europe, leading to green, environmental parties and international interest groups
4. Social welfare, such as providing health, employment, education, and family services, are important factors
 - (a) These are measured by literacy rates, income distribution, education levels, life expectancy, Gini Index for economic inequality, and the Human Development Index (measuring the well-being of citizens by a variety of social welfare factors and GDP)
5. Civil liberties, or the promotion of freedom, and political rights, or the promotion of equality, involve government protection
 - (a) These range based on the amount of rights preserved in addition to levels of government involvement, and are often guaranteed by constitutions in liberal democracies
 - (b) Freedom House ranks nations from 1 (most free) to 7 as a measure

2 Chapter 2 - United Kingdom

3 Articles

1. "The Clash of Civilizations?" by Samuel Huntington