American Comprehensive Exam Notes

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Contents

1 POS550 Comparative Politics Core

1.1 On Method Questions

1.1.1 Brady and Collier (2010) Rethinking Social Inquiry

Author Henry Brady and David Collier

Year 2010

The difference between experiments and observational studies. KKV: use statistical (regression) ideas and principles into political analysis. Three criteria: unbiaseness, efficiency and consistency. Unbiased estimates that those that are replicated as the average when the same methods of inference are applied again and again to an event. If a measure shifts in the estimate in one way or the other, it is called bias. One major source of bias is that the informants who answer poll questions over under- or over-state their estimates to questions(p. 64). Efficiency, on the other hand, is a relative concept measured by calculating the variance of the estimator across hypothetical replications; the more observations there are, the better (i.e. smaller) the variability.

Conditional independence and specification assumption. The former one is the model of a statistical control. The later one is based on statistical models and restrictions.

Different from KKV: always increasing N is not a good idea. The later cases may be unrelevant to causal inference. Instead they argue for adding causal-process observations. (p.195)

1.1.2 Mahoney (2010) After KKV

Author James Mahoney

Year 2010

Summary

KKV's approach: process tracing as the search for intervening variables is useless. Their suggestion is to expand the size of N to achieve a determinate research design.

Brady and Collier: data-set observtion and causal-process observation.

Mahoney's approach: theory-testing usage of causal-process observation: independent variable CPOs, mechanism CPOs, and Auxiliary CPOs. Independent CPOs: provides information about the presence of an independent variable. Mechanism CPOs provides information about whether an intervening event posited by a theory is present. Auxiliary outcoe CPOs: information about particular occurences that should occur alongside the main outcome interest if in fact that outcome were caused in the way stipulated by the theory under investigation. Auxiliary outcomes are separate occurences that should be generated if the theory works.

1.1.3 Lijphart (1971) Comparative Politics and Comparative Method

Author Lijphart

Year 1971

Summary Comparative method as one methoe comparing to experimental, ans statistical method. Comparative method resembles statistical method, but the number of cases are much smaller.

Four suggestions: 1. Increase the number of cases as much as possible. 2. Reduce the 'property-space' analysis: if the sample of cases cannot be increased, it may be possible to combine two or more variables that express an essentially similar underlying characteristic into a single variable. 3. Focus the comparative analysis on comparable cases. 4. Focus on key variables.

1.1.4 Mahoney (2008) Toward a Unified Theory of Causality

Author James Mahoney

Year 2008

Journal CPS

Summary Case-oriented approach and population-oriented approach. Case-oriented research focuses on the necessary and sufficient conditions of causal mechanism. The population-oriented approach focuses on the typical effect, e.g. does development causes democracy? Suffcient and necessary causes. Population research with insufficient and necessary items.

1.1.5 Comparative Historical Analysis

1.2 Power and State

1.2.1 Huntington (2008) Political Order in Changing Society

Author Samuel Huntington

Year 1968

Summary Development causes political instability. Institutions that are more adaptable can withhold the instability brought by the social and economic development. Social developmeny increases political participation, and thereby instable factors.

1.2.2 Spruyt (1994) State Anarchy as Order

Author Hendrik Spruyt

Year 1994

Journal IO

Summary Why soveign territories displaced other rivalry format? Sovereign territorial state prevailed because it proved more effective at preventing defection by its members, reducing internal transaction costs, and making credible commitments to other units. It did this is three ways, first sovereign rulers were better at centralizing jurisdiction and authority. Consequently better at preventing free-riders. Second, sovereign territory was a means of structuring interunit behavior. States, or rather political social elites within that territory preferred similar styles. Third, due to the first two conditions, actors from other institutional arrangements defected to states or copied their institutional makeup.

1.2.3 Levi (1981) The Predatory Theory of Rule

Author Margaret Levi

Year 1981

Summary Trying to explain state behaviors. Why state pick some actions rather than others? State as a ruller. State as the ruler is predatory in that he attempts to formulate policies that maximize his personal objectives but that his success is dependent on his bargaining power vis-a-vis subjects, agents, and external actors. Policies are outcomes between rulers and individuals/groups.

Rulers take control over the state by force and control. The predatory theory argues that rulers will seek to design policies that miximize his revenues and power. However, because his ends often conflict with those of other, his policies are generally the outcome of a trade. The variations in policies are function of the constraints on the ruler's bargaining power in relation to specific groups of subjects, agents, external actors. **a ration comparison between rulers and agents**

1.2.4 Warner (2001) The rise of the state system in Africa

Author Carolyn Warner

Year 2001

Summary Concept of a state : Most definitions convey the notion that the state is an entity which controls conflict between individuals within a bounded territory, or, conversely, calls upon individuals to participate in conflicts with other bounded territories. Another view is that the state is the allocative mechanism within a political system.4 Such a system is one in which humans continuously interact with one another as they seek to satisfy their individual desires. In a political system, there is some general agreement on the 'rules of the game', and support for the government in its role as the mediator of competing claims. A third view is of the state as a symbolic system, in which ritual and culture create and bind a political community.

The realist approach: (Karl Schmitt): athoritive allocator. State as 'organized violence'

The IR approach, state with three distinct features: 1. hierarchial authority structure which accepts no external territorial jurisdiction, that is, it has sovereign authority 2. territorial demarcation with formal boundaries 3. a public judicial authority with codified laws.

1.2.5 Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) Economic Backwardness in Political Perspective

Author Acemoglu and Robinson

Year 2006

Journal APSR

Summary

Political replacement effect: under certain conditions elites will block the development and introduce of new technology. Innovations often erode elites' incumbency advantage, increasing the likelihood that they will be replaced. Fearing replacement, political elites are unwilling to initiate change and may even block economic development. Elites are unlikely to block development when there is a high degree of political competition or when they are highly entrenched. It is only when political competition is limited and also when their power is threatened that elites will block development. Blocking is also more likely when political stakes are higher, for example, because of land rents enjoyed by the elites. External threats, on the other hand, may reduce incentives to block.

No-blcoking case: UK and Germany, Japan Blcoking case: Habsburg Empire, Russia

Collorary: Gerschenkron (1962) Economci Backwardness in Historical Perspective, how backward economices lacking the economic prerequsites for inductralization could compensate in different ways.

1.2.6 Blaydes and Chaney (2013) The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian West and the Muslim World Before 1500 CE

Author Lisa Blaydes and Eirc Chaney

Year 2013

Journal APSR

Summary We document a divergence in the duration of rule for monarchs in Western Europe and the Islamic world beginning in the medieval period. While leadership tenures in the two regions were similar in the 8th century, Christian kings became increasingly long lived compared to Muslim sultans. We argue that forms of executive constraint that emerged under feudal institutions in Western Europe were associated with increased political stability and find empirical support for this argument. While feudal institutions served as the basis for military recruitment by European monarchs, Muslim sultans relied on mamlukism-or the use of military slaves imported from non-Muslim lands. Dependence on mamluk armies limited the bargaining strength of local notables vis-a-vis the sultan, hindering the development of a productively adversarial relationship between ruler and local elites. We argue that Muslim societies' reliance on mamluks, rather than local elites, as the basis for military leadership, may explain why the Glorious Revolution occurred in England, not Egypt.

Decentralizing power increases the cost of an unsuccessful revolt for the monarch's rivals. In other words, armed local elites in Europe were able to extract a better 'soft contract' from their monarch than in the Islamic world and were, therefore, less likely to overthrow that monarch.

1.3 Lipset Przeworski and Limongi Boix and Stokes

1.3.1 Lipset (1959) Some social requsites of democracy

1.3.2 Przeworski and Limongi (1997) Modernization, Theories and Facts

1.3.3 Boix and Stokes (2003) Endogenous Democratization

The relationship between economic growth and democracy is perhaps the most studied topic of comparative politics. Since Lipset (1959), a number of political scientists have engaged themselves in evaluating the impact of economic development on democracy-oriented political transitions as well as on the endurance of existing democracies. In other words, scholars pay attention, to use the metaphoric terminology, to the role economic development plays in the birth, survival, death, and sometimes, rebirth, of democracy.

They do not agree with each other, to some extent, on basic facts and explanations. Lipset insists that economic development, among other things, is one of the social requisites of democracy. Przeworski and Limongi (1997) argue that economic development influences democratic survival more than it influences transitions from dictatorship to democracy, while Boix and Stokes (2003) challenge their theory and reexamine the role of economic development in achieving and sustaining democracy based on a larger dataset with a more sophisticated statistical assessment.

Specifically, Lipset's study (1959) makes the classic statement on the relationship between modernization and democracy. He first establishes the link between per capita income and democracy based on cross-national and cross-sectional data. The rise in per capita GDP, Lipset argues, generates a transition to democracy. If a country develops over a longer period under dictatorship,the cumulated modernizing consequences will embrace democracy (see Przeworski and Limongi, 1997, p. 160). This modernization model, or endogenous explanation, in the terms of Przeworski and Limongi, hypothesizes a close association between development and democracy. For more than four decades, it has been the theoretical basis for empirical studies of the issue in the direction of comparative politics.

While previous quantitative studies go for the standard modernization line, Przeworski and Limongi (1997) provide alternative views on the development and democracy relationship in terms of endogenous vs. exogenous theory. They point out that economic development cannot explain transitions to democracy from 1950 to 1990. Transitions to democracy can take place at any level of economic development due to exogenous causes. Przeworski and Limongi assert that the correlation between economic growth and democratization does not necessarily entail causation, that is, modernization, especially the increase in per capita GDP, is not a causal factor in the process of democratization. There are no grounds to believe that economic development breeds democracies (p.167). Rather, their probit models show that democracy becomes more durable at higher levels of per capita income. They insist, therefore, that it is not that democracies are more likely to emerge when countries develop under authoritarianism, but that, however they do emerge, they are more likely to survive in countries that are already developed (P. 167). In other words, the fact that rich democracies tend not to collapse explains why there is a positive relationship between economic development and democracy. Meanwhile, economic development improves the probability for the sustentation of democracy far more than it improves the odds for a transition to democracy.

Nevertheless, Przeworski and Limongi's judgment that economic development does not play a significant role in transitions away from autocracy has been found flawed by Boix and Stokes reassessment (2003). Boix and Stokes contend that economic development does substantially increase the probability that a country will undertake a transition to democracy, which is labeled as endogenous democratization by Przeworski and Limongi. Yet they admit that development has a much greater positive effect on the probability of maintaining a democracy.

Although the above studies indeed present substantial evidence to illustrate a strong, positive relationship between economic development and democracy despite the differences in approach, they obviously leave many questions unanswered.

First, the tentative conclusions of these scholars have not yet revealed causal mechanisms linking development to democracy. For instance, Lipset early study focuses on their correlation, but examines neither the impact of GDP on democratization nor its ability to promote the consolidation of established democracies. Albeit Przeworski and Limongi have touched upon the fundamental question, they fail to articulate certain mechanisms to explain the influence of development not on transitions, but on democratic survival.

Second, the question of why democracy and wealth are associated with each other remains unexplained at micro, or to be more accurate, individual level. Do the poor care less about democracy? Do richer individuals have greater concern for democracy? In Lipset notion, when a society is more developed, people tend to care more about democracy and support it more. Is that true? Przeworski and Limongi also imply that even the poor in a rich democracy prefer their current regime to a regression to a dictatorship, whereas democracy-minded people under a dictatorship, no matter poor or rich, tend to increase as per capita income of the country raises. Unfortunately, they fall short of collecting empirical evidence at the individual level.

Third, when considering the democracy and development relationship, in which democracy is evaluated as a dependent variable and economic development an independent variable, we should not ignore another body of literature, which discusses the democracy and poverty relationship. Some scholars argue that poor people have benefited from living under democratic governments; others suggest that democracies have not functioned well for their poorest citizens. Democracy is examined here as an independent variable. Does democracy help create social wealth and better living standard for human beings, or, reversely, is it true that only an affluent society makes the ideal of democratization come true (also see Dahl's discussion on the causal direction, 1971, p. 70)? Causal directions still is remained as a chicken vs. egg puzzle (which comes first?).

Fourth, the wisdom received for development and democracy relationship, whether proposed by the modernization model or endogenous vs. exogenous theory, notwithstanding, should be tested to see its long-term robustness. Lipset expects their positive correlation has a long-term stability, but it is reasonable to assume that this association may vary over time. Given that his studies come out too early to include post-Cold war data since 1990, his forecast needs more empirical evidence to support. The same situation applies to Przeworski and Limongi, and Boix and Stokes. As we know, during the past 15 years many countries, the former Soviet Bloc countries in particular, had made a transition to democracy. Classic hypotheses regarding the association between democracy and development should be further testified with more extensive data.

Moreover, methodologically, we must bear in mind that different measurement and different datasets could lead to divergent results. The following points, among others, are worthy of further discussion.

(1) The measurement of democracy. Lipset defines democracy as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials (p. 71). He does not give his operational definition explicitly, although he indicates stable vs. unstable dichotomy in his data analysis. Przeworski and Limongi give a similar definition (p. 178), and treat democracy as a categorical variable by classifying 224 regimes into two groups: democracy and dictatorship. Biox and Stokes, due to their partial replication of Przeworski and Limongi's study, do not introduce a theoretical or operational concept of democracy of their own. We wonder whether the way they use in classification of democracy vs. dictatorship could be a cause of the divergence in their analyses.

(2) The indicators of economic development. Przeworski and Limongi (1997) apply a narrow measurement by using GNP per capita, in order to limit their discussion in an elementary descriptive pattern (p. 156). This indicator is obviously over-reductive. Lipset applies a more extensive measurement, which contains four indices including

industrialization, wealth, urbanization and education. This composite index can still be expanded. However, Lipset does not report the inter-item reliability. Can these indices for measuring economic development reliable? Earning $ 40,000 a year has different implications for an American family today from 20 years ago. By the same token, owning a car is a label of wealth in China though it is not so in the US. We need to be very careful when selecting indicators to measure economic development. More refined and reliable measurement of regime types, as well as development levels, is required for future studies.

(3) The datasets. The different conclusions on the relationship between development and democracy in these studies may result from the different sample of country or countries. We notice that Lipset studies European and Latin American countries, whereas Przeworski and Limongi include 135 countries all over the world in their study. On the other hand, Boix and Stokes incorporate data beginning from 1850. The comprehensiveness of their dataset helps them challenge the assertion of Przeworski and Limongi. If scholars take a look at the data of the last 15 years, would the conclusions be the same?

(4) Extra variables and certain contexts. No matter we examine the development and democracy relationship as a liner or non-liner causal model, we can neither omit some variable that influence development levels in priori, nor overlook their interactions, before evaluating the independent effect of development on democracy. Besides, studies may vary considerably in the incorporation of other possible control variables in the analyses, such as international relations, geographical factors, to name a few. Moreover, when dealing with large-N cases as a general phenomenon, we need to investigate how various contexts amplify or diminish the effect of development expected from the general theoretical hypotheses of democracy. In other words, when we explore some law-like generalizations, we must critically inquire about the necessity and means of modifying those generalizations under certain circumstances.

(5) Statistical testing. While acknowledging their theoretical contributions, we should note the limitation in Przeworski and Limongi's interpretation of their data analysis. Their probit model, employed also by Biox and Stokes, is undoubtedly more sophisticated than Lipset's cross-tabulations. Unfortunately, however, they do not bother to report the statistical significance between frequencies, as well as between probit values, hence the vulnerability of their models.

1.4 State Building

1.4.1 Ertman (1997) Birth of Leviathan

Author Thomas Ertman

Year 1997

Summary Key factors: the organization of local government during the first few centuries after state formation; the timing of the onset of sustained geopolitical competition; and the independent influence of strong representative assemblies on administrative and financial institutions – can account for most of the variation in political regimes and state infrastructures found across the continent on the eve of the French revolution.

The most important variable in determinig the regime type is the structure of local government.Where local government was organized during the early period of a state's development in a participatory manner – as was the case in England, scotland and Hungary, Poland – th result was cooperative interaction across status groups at both local level and national level. These interactions generated reserves of social captical as well as military resources which could then be mobilized to combat absolutism and force royal acceptance of constitutionalist power sharing. where on the other hand, local government was structured in a top-down, nonparticipatory way – as was true in Latin Europe and Germany – status-based representative assemblies remained internally divided and hence weak, and rulers were always able over the long run to push them aside and realize their absolutist designs,

The role of timing and the independent effect of parliament are also important.

1.4.2 Skocpol (1979) State and Social Revolution

Author Theda Skocpol

Year 1979

1.5 Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol (1985) Bringing State Back in

1.5.1 Theda Skocpol Bringing state back

Summary The autonomy of a state: states conceived as organizations claiming control over territories and people may formulate and pursue goals that are not simply reflective of the demands or interests of social groups, classes, or society.

Bringing state back in the political analysis: state as organizations through which official collectivities may prusue distinctive goals realizing them more ot less effectively given the available state resources in relation to social settings. On the other hand, states may be viewed more macro-scopically as configurations of organization and action that influcen the meanings and methods of politics for all groups and classes in society.

chapter 1, 5, 6, 11.

1.5.2 Charles Tilly War Making and State Making as Organized Crime

Tilly argues that "war makes states". Historically, competition among "wielders of coercion" for control over territory and resources led to the characteristic European-style state familiar to us today, complete with a military, police force, tax bureaucracy, and courts of law. a) Successful war making (defeating external enemies) also helped rulers use force to disarm domestic rivals (like lords with private armies, or in a more contemporary sense: warlords, leaders of local militias). It allowed the concentration of coercive power in the hands of the ruler. (state making) b) War making spurred the development of state apparatuses, such as tax bureaucracies to extract taxes from society to finance the war effort. (extraction) c) To facilitate further success in war making, states promoted capital accumulation to ensure adequate resources would be available to the state. Courts of law provided one way to protect the property claims of powerful subjects/citizens without allowing those subjects/citizens to use force directly to defend their property. (protection)

War making promotes state building: to make effective war, they attempted to locate more capita. In the short run, the quest inevitably involved them inestablishing regular access to capitalists who could supply and arrange credit and in imposing one form of regular taxation or another on the people and activitiest within their sphere of control. As the process continued, state makers developed a durable interest in promoting the accumation of capital, sometimes in the guise of direct return to their own enterprise. Variations in the difficulty of collecting taxes, in the expense of the particular kind of armed force adopted, in the amount of war making required to hold off competitors, and so on resulted in the principal variations in the forms of European states. It all began with the effort to monopolize the means of violence within a delimited territory adjacent to a power holder's base.

What state does: 1. war making: eliminating or neutralizing their won rivals outsiede the territories in which they have clear and continuous priority as wielders of force 2. state making: elimating or neutralizing their rivals inside those territories 3. protection: eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of their clients 4. extration: acquiring the means of carrying out the first three activities – war making. state making and protection.

1.5.3 Peter Evans transnational linkages and the economic role of the state

How does transnational market affect the role of the state?

Evans' hypothesis in this chapter: an intensification of transnational economic linkages tends to be associated with an expansion of the state's role in a range of developing countries, and that such intensification has a dampening effect on the exapnsion of the state's role in those core countries that become major capital exporters.

"That state apparatuses in Third World countries are constrained by transnational linkages in ways that undermine their ability to promote domestic accumulation is incontrovertible. Nonetheless, the challenges of dealing with transnational linkages in general and contests with transnational capital in particular may, under certain circumstances, stimulate the development of new state capacities and may legitimate the expansion of the state's role into areas that would otherwise be the preserve of private capital."

In advanced countries, TNC (transnational companies) may inhibit the expansion of the state's role (case: US, UK).

1.5.4 Peter Evans Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol On the Road toward a More Adequate Understanding of the State

Studying States through analytical induction and historically comparisons: draws from the previous theories and research questions, then explore ideas through comparative and historical research.

1.5.5 King and Lieberman (2009) A Comparative Perspective on the American State Building

Author Desmond King and Robert Lieberman

Journal WP

Year 2009

Summary

1.5.6 Krasner (1984) Approaches to the State: Alternative conceptions and historical dynamics

Author Stephen Krasner

Year 1984

Summary

The statist approach: 1. see politics as a problem of rule and control rather than as one of allocation. 2. Treat state as an independent actor, cam either be exogenous or endogenous. 3. emphasize on institutional constriants. 4. more axious to take the 'historical cue'. 5. statist arguments are more inclined to see disjunctures and stress within any given political systems.

Comparing with the pluralist approach: Dahl (who governs): pluralism emphasizes the problem of allocation rather than ones of rule and control. Dahl views the state as a collection of individuals occupying particular roles, not as an administrative apparatus or legal order.

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