

2024 MAYIS DOKTORA YETERLİK SORULARI

COMPARATIVE POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

1) Write an essay on the field of Comparative Politics and Government by focusing on the differences between Comparative Politics and Comparative Government as well as the methodological turning points in the history of the field.

2) Authoritarianism has been one of the central research topics in the comparative politics field. a) Please choose and discuss a theoretical framework/approach that explains the rise of authoritarianism in contemporary politics from a comparative perspective. b) Compare your preferred framework/approach with two rival explanations in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. c) Please identify the main challenges of this literature in tackling its subject matter.

3) Based on the literature on Comparative Politics, what are the potential “perils” (i.e. dangers) of presidential systems? In light of scholarly works, what theoretical and empirical evidence support or oppose this claim? Is it the institutional design of the countries (including the regime choice) or social, cultural, and economic conditions that matter the most for the prospects for democracy? Discuss.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND URBAN POLITICS

1- Please compare and contrast “urban” and “local” as two theoretical categories employed to investigate/frame the political phenomena in the Global South. Which category, do you think would be more helpful in explaining different facets of the political struggles/contestation/reforms of the period stretching from the early 1980s to the present?

2-What sort of challenges, do you think, stand before the adoption of “planning as a logic and form of policy-making/implementation” in the local government practice today to overcome the institutional/fiscal/political deadlocks created by the recent crises of neoliberalism?

3-Metropolitan cities have become a battleground for not only metropolitan issues like housing, urban poverty, infrastructure, and transportation, etc. but also for such national and global issues as presidential elections, refugee questions, and economic and ecological crises. It is also interesting to note that the mayors of Istanbul and Ankara were named as potential candidates in the last presidential election. Write an essay on the dynamics behind the increasing importance of metropolitan cities in political processes.

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Please answer **two** of the following questions:

1. Write a critical essay elaborating the contributions and limitations of modern social contract theories with respect to political thought and practices in terms of modern conceptions of freedom, the notion of rights, and the legitimacy of political authority. Answer by reference to the works of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.
2. The conditions encountered by the **stateless people** in terms of their legal-political situation and their rights or rightlessness have become a central concern for contemporary political thinkers in last decades. Discuss the reasons for such growing concern for the “right to have rights” and corresponding novelties and difficulties in conceiving rights, law and politics by reference to at least two thinkers who focus on these issues.
3. Is political theory necessarily a critical activity? Discuss your answer with respect to at least three contemporary thinkers and what this might mean to each.

PUBLIC POLICY

Please answer **two** of the following questions:

1. Write an essay explaining the relationship between financialization of contemporary capitalism and social cohesion. Identify the different theoretical perspectives explaining financialization and focus your essay on one public policy implication (ie. social inclusion, labour market policy, social security, social aid etc.) of the relationship between financialization and social cohesion.
2. Under what conditions, do you think, “administrative reform” would be a prerequisite for “policy reform”? And when administrative reform would not be necessary for a (radical) policy change, and why? You might want to cite examples from different policy sectors/countries and to develop your answer with reference to these keywords: “status quo”, “institutions”, “policy implementation”, “rationality”, “multi-level governance”.
3. “In what ways” and “why”, do you think, the policy implementers in the Global South and those in the Global North would differ from each other in terms of their capacity/ability to control/shape the policy“making” process (from mobilization to agenda setting, and then to policy formulation)? You might want to cite examples from different policy sectors/countries as you develop your answer and benefit from the following keywords: “informal(ity)”, “vetoe points”, “policy capacity”, “street level bureaucrats”, “state vs market(s) vs civil society”.

STUDIES IN MASS COMMUNICATION, IDEOLOGY AND CULTURE

Please answer **two** of the following questions:

1. What is the role played by overproduction/under-consumption on the relation between accumulation and value crisis? Discuss its validity in the field of cultural production.
2. Discuss the following quotation:
“... the problem with the use of culture as an analytical concept as it has developed within culture and media studies is that it has become entirely vacuous. If it refers to the meaning-endowed nature of all human action and all social structure then it cannot be used analytically to discriminate either between sets of actions or structures, for instance between a television programme and a given state of the labour market, or between symbols and what symbols are used to represent or express. Culture then designates everything and thus nothing.”

THEORIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

1) Please critically evaluate and discuss the following quotation:

“Public administration is ultimately a problem in political theory: the fundamental problem in a democracy is responsibility to popular control; the responsibility and responsiveness of the administrative agencies and the bureaucracies to the elected officials (the chief executives, the legislators) is of central importance in a government based increasingly on the exercise of discretionary power by the agencies of administration.” (Wallace Sayre)

2) Please compare and contrast two major perspectives in public administration, namely New Public Management and Governance, on the basis of their focus, objectives, management techniques and politics (role of elected officials). Please also enrich your essay with concrete examples.

3) Write an essay in which you explain and discuss public-private partnerships (PPPs) in terms of infrastructure making projects. Discuss their effectiveness and challenges from both bureaucratic and socio-political perspectives. Also express your views on how to overcome the challenges you have mentioned.

TURKISH POLITICS

1. It has been argued that since 2002 the Justice and Development Party's institutional resilience and electoral dominance has been marked by its transformation from a religiously conservative party into a 'personalistic mass party'. Please write an essay on this process by focusing on the AKP's differences and similarities from Turkey's previous conservative-right parties and by analyzing the relevant factors underlying its long-term electoral dominance, as well as the impact of all of these on the political regime's shift to competitive authoritarianism.

2. How do you assess the role and significance of political Islamists in Turkish political history? What are the institutional, structural and/or historical explanations as to how and why Islamist parties have taken a place and role in Turkish politics? In your response, please provide at least three scholarly works to support your arguments.

3. What is the role and significance of structural, institutional, and agency-based explanations regarding democratic backsliding in Turkey? Based on these three strands of the literature (referring to at least two scholarly works for each strand), please evaluate the relevant contemporary developments in Turkish politics.