

INTL 8300
Fall, 2008

Grand Theory:
Large, Overarching Explanations in Sociology, Political Science,
and the Behavioral Sciences

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The purpose of this seminar is to examine the bases and biases of Grand Theory in the Social Sciences. By Grand Theory we mean those large, overarching explanations of social and political behavior – developmentalism, Marxism, political culture, institutionalism and the like – that give coherence to the discipline and provide the Big Picture. We are interested here in those major paradigms and conceptual frameworks that have dominated in the social sciences over the last century and a half as well as newer approaches and disciplines. History is not “over,” we find; in fact the debate over which of these theories and interpretations to use in our research and understanding of social and political change is as heated and important as ever.

The issues we wrestle with in the seminar are the following: What is grand theory? What are the main alternative Grand Theories? Does any one of these provide a full and complete explanation of social change and political development? What are the biases and assumptions, as well as the contributions to understanding, of each of these Grand Theories? Are any of these Grand Theories sufficient by themselves or must they be supplemented by other explanations; should we therefore be eclectic, picking and choosing among several Grand Theories? Is the pursuit of Grand Theory still useful or, in this new, more scientific and empirical era driven by demands for hard data, should we now focus on smaller, more manageable issues amenable to clear empirical research? But how can we do our empirical research if our larger ideas are still

unclear, inchoate, and fuzzy? If Grand Theory is still relevant and useful, how do we decide which Grand Theory to use?

In the social sciences generally and in policy circles over the last two decades, the assumption has been widespread that the era of Grand Theory has ended, that history, as Francis Fukuyama famously declared, is “over.” Democracy is said to be “the only game in town”; the so-called “Washington Consensus” proclaimed that it knew all the answers: free trade, democracy, and open, capitalistic markets. The notion that history is ended may have some validity in the highly-developed, post-industrial, democratic nations of North America, Western Europe, and Japan. But in the rest of the world – China, India, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America – we have discovered of late, history is not over: political, ethnic, religious, sectarian, tribal and other rivalries and conflicts are alive and well; so are revolution, civil war, and failed states. And even in the developed or First World – think of conflicted Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, maybe even the United States with its hardening cultural and political divisions between Red and Blue – history may not be quite as terminal as we had thought.

This seminar reexamines the role of Grand Theory in understanding human behavior and the development of nations. It explores not only the older paradigms such as developmentalism, Marxism, Positivism, Psychoanalysis, political culture, and institutionalism (Old and New), but also such newer approaches as sociobiology (Edmund Wilson), environmental determinism (Jared Diamond), genetic and chemical explanations (from our chemistry departments) and evidence from physics that we are merely a collection of nerve endings and electric impulses. The questions are: which of these paradigms, in a time of rising conflict and uncertainty about the future, still carries validity and explanatory power? Which of these are still useful in understanding our present condition? Is any one of these Grand Theories sufficient unto itself or

must we be eclectic, choosing the most useful and relevant aspects of several theories? If the latter, can we devise a model of Complex Multicausality that helps better than competing paradigms get at that complex, ever-changing phenomenon called truth?

Following the Introduction, each meeting of the seminar explores one of the major Grand Theories. To facilitate discussion, analysis, critique, and comparison, each theory is examined using the same outline and analytic framework. For each theory we will want to know its background, the development of the concept, its main spokesmen and traditions, the different schools of thought within that approach, the contributions of that theory as well as its biases and limits, and our overall assessment of that theory. The Conclusion sums up the findings of the individual sessions, looks for comparisons and contrasts among the theories, and explores the possibilities for bridges among the several islands of theories – “causeways among the archipelagoes,” as one reader of this statement put it.

This seminar is meant to be a serious, scholarly undertaking but it also carries important policy implications. If turned into a book, it also has major book possibilities in a number of disciplines. It would be most useful in courses on political development, social change, the Third World or the developing nations. It would also be appropriate as a text in introductory graduate seminars on approaches and methods, comparative politics, and introduction to the discipline (of political science, sociology, development studies). Note that with the fourteen sessions or chapters, it is designed specifically to fit a semester-length course.

Seminar Outline

Week 1. August 18	Introduction: Grand Theory
Week 2. August 25	Developmentalism and the Idea of Progress
Week 3. September 8	Class Analysis, Dependency, and Conflict Theory
Week 4. September 15	Cultural Explanations and the Concept of Political Culture
Week 5. September 22	Sociological Explanations: Comte, Durkheim, Weber, Lipset
Week 6. September 29	Psychology and Psychoanalysis: Freud and After
Week 7. October 6	Institutionalism Old and New
Week 8. October 13	Rational Choice Theory
Week 9. October 20	Environmental Determinism (Jared Diamond)
Week 10. October 27	Sociobiology: Edmund Wilson and His Critics
Week 11. November 3	Chemistry and Physics: Back to Basics
Week 12. November 10	Liberalism and Transitions to Democracy
Week 13. November 17	Non-Western Theories of Change
Week 14. December 1	Conclusion: Comparative Perspectives, Complex Multicausality, and a Wrapping Up
Week 15. December 8	Planning the Book: How to Get a Publishable Manuscript Out of a Graduate Seminar

Internal Outline for Each Presentation

1. Introduction
2. Background of the Theory
3. Development of the Concept
4. Main Spokesmen and Ideas
5. Different Schools of Thought
6. Contributions of the Theory
7. Biases and Limitations
8. Overall Assessment

GRAND THEORY

Annotated Outline

1. Introduction. The main ideas and theses for the book are set forth, the controversies about Grand Theory are outlined, and the plan of the book is introduced.
2. Developmentalism and the Idea of Progress. This idea goes back to the 18th century: it was revived in the 1960s and applied to the new or emerging nations. Both the contributions and the limits of this approach are explored.
3. Class Analysis, Conflict Theory, and Dependency. Class analysis goes back to Marx; its recent presentations include dependency theory and political economy approaches. We trace this history, the biases as well as the continuing relevance of the Marxian categories.
4. Cultural Explanations and the Importance of Political Culture. Systematic political cultural explanations go back to Weber, have a long history in cultural anthropology, and since the 1960s have had a strong impact on political science as well. Here we evaluate political culture as an explanatory factor.
5. Sociological Explanations. Comte, Durkheim, Weber, and Lipset are the main figures in the political sociology tradition. The question we pose is, are political phenomena the mirror image of class (as above) or social change, or do they have an autonomy of their own?
6. Psychology and Psychoanalysis: Freud and After. Psychoanalysis enjoyed an earlier popularity; now the Freudian categories are less used. But psychological factors in explaining human behavior are still important; here we seek to evaluate what is useful and what is less so in this approach.

7. Institutionalism Old and New. Is it culture that determines political outcomes or institutions; the debate has waxed long and furiously. Here we explore institutional (formal-legal, constitutional) approaches going back to the 40s and 50s, as well as the New Institutionalism in its various permutations.
8. Rational Choice Theory. Rational choice, which comes from Economics, presumes that behavior can be predicted on the basis of a number of assumptions about rational, calculating, self-interested individuals. We examine the application of rational choice to comparative politics and international relations.
9. Geographic/Environmental Determinism. Jared Diamond pioneered in this area, explaining why societies rise and fail on the basis of topography, geography, climate change, and environmental factors. His books have set off a whole new debate in the social sciences.
10. Sociobiology. The sociobiology school began some thirty years ago and is closely associated with Harvard's Edmund Wilson. Wilson's argument is that we are shaped powerfully, if not determined, by our genes and our biology, not by culture or other factors. The debate has been hot and heavy, with major policy consequences.
11. Chemistry and Physics: Back to Basics. Does humankind have free will or are we just a bundle of chemicals, electrical impulses, and nerve endings? As with sociobiology, the debate is heavy, with major implications for policy.
12. Liberalism and Transitions to Democracy. Liberalism, by which we mean a free and open society, has a long history in the West; recently, in the transitions-to-democracy literature, liberal theory has been resurrected in many Third World or developing nations. The issue is, are liberalism and democracy universally applicable or do they grow out of a unique, Western tradition?

13. Non-Western Theories of Change. Here we wrestle with the issue of whether there are uniquely Confucian or East Asian, Hindu (India), Islamic, African, and Latin American models of change and development. Is there one (predominantly Western) model of development or many, predominantly non-Western? Again, the issue has major policy implications.
14. Conclusion. Here we summarize the main findings of the book, provide evaluation and a comparative perspective, explore the theme of complex multicausality, and wrap up with some suggestions for further research and analysis.

Texts

David Landes	The Wealth and Poverty of Nations
Rostow, W.W.	Stages of Economic Growth
Diamond, Jared	Guns, Germs & Steel
Raymond Aron	Modern Sociology: Comte, Durkheim, Weber
Shlomo Avineri	Marx and Marxism
F.H. Cardoso	Dependency
Harrison, Larry	Underdevelopment as a State of Mind
North, Douglas	Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance
Haggard, Stephan	Structural Factors in Development
Wilson, Edmund	Sociobiology
Braudel, Fernand	On History, The Mediterranean

August 18
Week 1
Introduction

This week we introduce the seminar. What is grand theory? What are the main alternative grand theories? Which are still useful in providing a conceptual framework for organizing and thinking about our research? What are the “puzzles” (Prof. Crepaz) to which grand theory gives rise? Is there still room for grand theory in a political science (and international affairs) discipline that has become increasingly “scientific,” empirical, and hard data-driven? Must we settle on one “grand theory” or is it still possible to be eclectic, to pick and choose among the useful elements of several theories? How do you decide which theory to use?

For this week I want you only to get a feel for what grand theory is all about. Dip into (you do not, for now, have to read them in their entirety) Braudel, Toynbee.

Read:

Fernand Braudel, On History

Matthew Melko, The Nature of Civilizations

Braudel, History of Civilizations

Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History

August 25
Week 2
Developmentalism

W.W. Rostow was, and remains, perhaps the most influential scholar in the development school. His writings influenced an entire generation, and more, of development scholars. Rostow not only wrote influential books but, in his positions of director of the Policy Planning under Kennedy at the State Department and then as national security advisor under Johnson, he had the opportunity (wouldn't we all love to be in a position to do that?) put his ideas into policy practice. Among other things, Rostow was the principal architect of the Alliance for Progress, the U.S. foreign aid program (AID), and the war in Vietnam.

Read Rostow carefully and make a list of his biases and assumptions. Then read some of the critiques of Rostow, my own included (in New Directions in Comparative Politics and Introduction to Comparative Politics). Be prepared to discuss:

1. Rostow's continuing influence on development policy.
2. Whether in the long run he might still prove to be correct.
3. His assumptions and whether they're proved correct or not.

Read:

W.W. Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth

H.J. Wiarda, as above

Almond and Coleman, Politics of Developing Areas

J. B. Bury, The Idea of Progress

Robert Nisbett, History of the Idea of Progress

September 8
Week 3
Class Analysis/Dependency

Class analysis has been with us for a long time, at least since Marx's famous formulation, if not before. Although Marxism was generally discredited as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, it has recently made something of a comeback, some people continue to find inspiration in Marx's message, and probably all of us can agree class is one of the key variables in explaining political behavior.

The first task is to understand Marx and the various revisions and permutations of his ideas over the last century and a half. What (if anything) is still valuable in his ideas, what can be salvaged, what is worth saving?

The most recent incarnation of Marx's ideas, as applied to the Third World, is dependency theory. We take this subject up in week 4. We'll want to know what dependency theory is, what its various schools are, and what this or other recent Marxian approaches such as the World Systems approach can contribute to our understanding. What is useful in the Marxist approach?

Read:

Shlomo Avineri, Karl Marx on Colonialism & Modernization
Varieties of Marxism
Social & Political Thought of Karl Marx

Theodore Moran, Multinational Corporations and the Politics of Development

Paul Baran, The Political Economy of Growth

F.H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, Dependency & Development in Latin America as well as the analyses and critiques of Wiarda and others in New Directions and Intro to Comparative Politics

Peter Evans, Dependant Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital

Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World System

Theodore Moran, Multinational Corps and the Politics of Dependence: Copper in Chile

September 15
Week 4
Cultural Approaches

What explains behavior? What hold back change? Is it mainly levels of economic development, class structure and behavior, social structure, or is it culture? The debate has animated the social sciences for at least two hundred years. What do we know now that we didn't know then?

We begin with the culture explanation classics: Franz Boaz, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, George Foster. All these are cultural anthropologists. Of course we all know that the foundations for cultural interpretations were laid by Weber. A recent, sophisticated follower of this tradition is Clifford Geertz. You might also want to read my edited book in this same tradition, Politics and Social Change in Latin America.

We'll want to look at contemporary expressions. You'll want to distinguish between bad (semi-racist) culture studies and good ones. Two schools of thought ought to be looked at: broad interpretive analysis like that presented by Landes in The Wealth and Poverty of Nations, and modern empirical studies such as those of Ronald Inglehart and his collaborators. Also read Larry Harrison, for contrast.

Read:

Margaret Mead, Coming of Age in Somoa

Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture
The Chrysanthemum and the Sword

Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures

David Landes, The Wealth and Poverty of Nations

Ronald Inglehart, Culture Change in Advanced Industrial Societies

Larry Harrison, Underdevelopment Is a State of Mind

Also Jung, Comparative Political Culture

Stephen Welch, The Concept of Political Culture

September 22
Week 5
Sociological Approaches

From economic and cultural determinism, we now go to deterministic sociological approaches. It's important that we understand the foundations of sociology in Comte, Durkheim, and Weber. We need to know these authors and the differences between them. Also where their influence was greatest: Europe, Latin America, but not so much the U.S.—at least until Talcott Parsons translates much of Weber. Why do you suppose the influence of these great sociologists, or that of Marx for that matter, was less in the U.S. than elsewhere?

More recently the Weberian categories have been applied to the Third World, by S.M. Lipset, Karl Deutsch, C.E. Black and others. There are interesting parallels in this regard both with Rostow and with Marx/dependency analysis. Do these categories, born in Europe, have universal validity? Are they equally relevant in non-Western cultures and societies with different patterns of economic growth, social change, and the continuity of tradition? We look at the founders (Comte, Durkheim, Weber) and then turn to the modern application of their ideas to the Third World.

Read:

Raymond Aron, Foundations of Sociology

S.M. Lipset, "Social Requisites of Democracy," APSR (March, 1959) 69-105

Karl Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," APSR (September, 1961) 493-514

C.E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization

Again, the critiques of these in Wiarda

September 29
Week 6
Psychology and Psychoanalysis: Freud and After

Freudian psychoanalysis was one of the great social science breakthroughs of the early twentieth century, comparable to Marxism in the nineteenth. By this time it is widely accepted that we act and behave in part as a result of subconscious forces that we only barely understand.

But Freud claimed more than that. He said that psychoanalysis was a *science*. Just as much as physics or chemistry.

But is it? Recent analysis has focused on Freud's biases. Were his patients really representative of humankind? What were Freud's own prejudices? How did his biases influence his supposed "science?"

How did Freud and his successors meet this challenge? What is today left of psychoanalysis? Distinguish what is useful and what must be scrapped. If you're a psychology major, what can be salvaged in this discipline?

Read:

George Markari, Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents

Peter Kramer, Freud: Inventor of the Modern Mind

Marc Hauser, Moral Minds: How Nature Designed Our Universal Sense of Right and wrong

October 6
Week 7
Institutions and Institutionalism

Cultural and psychological explanations drive some of our colleagues crazy; they much prefer institutional or “structural” explanations. Some of these debates seem emotional and ideologically-driven; we need to retain a sense of objectivity about this.

There is the old institutional approach and the “new institutionalism.” The first approach is exemplified in some of the early writings in the comparative politics field, in such works as those by Friedrich, Finer, Duverger, and K.C. Wheare; Karl Loewenstein is a transitional figure between the old-world formal-legal approach and the new-world (American) political science.

The “new institutionalism” is best summarized in the essay by Frank Wilson in Wiarda, New Directions. Note especially Wilson’s expansionist, even “imperialist” definition of institutions.

As applied to developing countries, see the work of Stephan Haggard. As far as I can tell, he argues that Asian development has nothing to do with Asian culture and everything to do with Asian institutions. Is he correct or are the culturalists? What would Confucius say, to paraphrase a recent popular question?

Read:

Karl Freidrich, Constitutional Government and Democracy

Herman Finer, The Theory and Practice of Modern Government

Karl Loewenstein, Political Power and the Governmental Process

Frank Wilson, “The New Institutionalism,” in Wiarda, New Directions (3rd Edition)

Stephan Haggard, Pathways from the Periphery: The Politics of Growth in Newly Industrializing Countries.
Developing Nations and the Politics of Global Integration.

October 13
Week 8
Rational Choice Theory

Rational choice theory has taken some areas of the discipline—and some departments—by storm. It has been less influential in Comparative Politics where the argument has been that distinct cultures and societies cannot all be subsumed under this one single explanatory paradigm. Nevertheless, rational choice has a certain logic and appeal, and we should certainly be aware of this approach and the challenges it represents.

Read:

Robert Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy —one of the first rational choice studies

George Tsebelis, Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics

Robert Bates and Barry Weingast, “A New Comparative Politics: Integrating Rational Choice and Interpretist Perspectives” (Harvard: Center for International Affairs, Paper No. 95-3, April, 1995).

David Collier and Deborah Norden, “Strategic Choice Models of Political Change in Latin America,” Comparative Politics, vol. 24 (1992).

John W. Sloan, “Comparative Public Choice and Public Policy in Latin America” Journal of Developing Areas (April, 1982).

Other new literature; check out the library and internet

Of course, Gerardo Munck chapter in Wiarda, New Directions

Barbara Geddes, various writings

October 20
Week 9
Environmental and Geographic Determinism

As social scientists, we're used to going back, as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Braudel, Rostow, Landes, and others have all done, to the sixteenth century. For that is when (1) Europe and "the West" forged ahead of other areas, and (2) the main difference began appearing between Northwest Europe (Protestant, Enlightenment, industrial, rationalist) and Southern/Eastern Europe (none of the above).

But now social scientists are pushing these time frontiers and differences back even farther. Jared Diamond in today's readings pushes us back to the origins of man and argues that geography and environment are the key determining factors (although see also the ending of his book where he seems to argue something different). Fernand Braudel, in some passages, also seems to take a geographic determinist approach.

In next weeks' readings Edmund Wilson pushes the time frame back even farther to our biological beginnings. Other physical scientists are now explaining differences in terms of pure chemistry, physics, or electrical impulses. Recently some of these findings have been reflected in the political science discipline.

Read:

Jared Diamond, Guns, Germs and Steel
As well as the various reviews and critiques of his work.

Review Fernand Braudel, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II

October 27
Week 10
Sociobiology

First, review the previous discussion. Second, read Wilson—his more recent works. Third, read his critics, who are often besides themselves. Fourth, read some of the other sociobiology writing that present more sophisticated, less controversial perspectives. Fifth, read the political science applications of these ideas to see (1) if they're useful, and (2) if political scientists understand biology (or science!).

So, where do we stand? Is this stuff useful? Are we like Wilson's ants? Is it all racist? Are we just products of our genes, chemistry, and nerve endings? Where does culture enter in? Is it all nature, or nurture too, or what balance? Is there no free will? Where does class analysis and institutions enter in, or are these just epiphenomena of more basic forces? Is this the new frontier in studying political behavior?

Read:

Edmund Wilson, Sociobiology (more recent edition)

Wilson's (many) critics

Somit and Peterson, Darwinism, Dominance and Democracy

Seymour Itskoff, Human Intelligence and National Power

Blank and Hines, Biology and Political Science

Ferenc Feher, Biopolitics

Gerald Hoppo, Biopolitics, Political Psychology, and International Politics. Special issue of P.S. on biology and politics (2005)

November 3
Week 11
Chemistry and Physics

As social scientists, we are used to reading Marx, Durkheim, Weber, *et al.* But now the natural scientists (biologists like Wilson, chemists, physicists) are also imposing on our terrain. Their arguments are that modern science shows humans not to be all that different from other organisms. That we are not much different from ants (Wilson), chimps, or mountain gorillas. That we are really just a bunch of genes and electrical nerve endings.

These are among the new frontiers in the social sciences. What do you make of these ideas? Do they leave you uncomfortable? Where do we draw the line between nature (genes) and nurture (the environment)? If it's all or mostly based on genes, chemistry, and electrical impulses, of what use are the social programs aimed at helping people move ahead? Are such explanations "racist?" If not racist, then damaging. And certainly discouraging of reform. So should we shut these scientists up if their findings threaten long-term social agendas? What balance can you arrive at?

Read:

Ronald Green, Babies by Design: The Ethics of Genetic Choice
The Altruism Equation: Seven Scientists Search for the Origins of Goodness

Frans de Waal, Primates and Philosophers: How Morality Developed

John Searle, Freedom and Neurobiology: Reflection on Free Will, Language, and Political Power

Susan Blackmore, Conversations on Consciousness: What the Best Minds Think about the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to be Human

Richard Restak, The Naked Brain: How the Emerging Neurosociety is Changing How We Live, Work, and Love

APSA Perspectives on Politics, vol. 2, No. 4 PS (December, 04) Special issue on neurosciences and politics.

Anne and Paul Ehrlich, The Dominant Animal: Human Evolution and the Environment

November 10
Week 12
Liberalism and Transitions to Democracy

Have we now overcome past differences? Is liberal democracy now universal? How about American-style, free-market capitalism?

For a general, but flawed, overview see Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave; also Diamond, Lipset, and Linz, Democracy in Developing Nations; also Wiarda, Comparative Democracy and Democratization

- A. Latin America
 - Wiarda, The Democratic Revolution in LA
 - Wiarda, Corporatism and Authoritarianism in LA—Revisited

- B. Southern Europe
 - Enrique Baloyra, Comparing New Democracies
 - Wiarda, Politics in Iberia
 - Wiarda and Mott, Catholic Roots and Democratic Flowers

- C. East Asia
 - Lipset, Linz, and Diamond, Democracy in Asia
 - Thomas Robinson, Development and Democracy in East Asia
 - Peter Moody, chapter in Wiarda, Democracy

- D. Russia/Eastern Europe
 - Dale Herspring, chapter in Wiarda, Non-Western Theories
 - Wiarda “Transitions to Democracy in Comparative Perspective,” PAWSS Perspectives (December, 1990); chapter in Introduction to Comparative Politics

- E. Flawed studies
 - G. O’Donnell et.al., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule
 - Adam Przeworsky, studies of Eastern Europe, Latin America, etc.

- F. Has the democratic transition been overrated or reached its peak? Read Fareed Zakariah, “Illiberal Democracy,” Foreign Affairs; Wiarda, Dilemmas of Democracy in Latin America.

November 17
Week 13
Non-Western or Indigenous Theories of Change

This was a hot issue in the 70s, then it was drowned out by American claims of universalism (democracy, free markets) in the 80s, now it is back again.

The issues is, are all these theories (Marxism, developmentalism, transitions to democracy) really universal or the products of a particularly Western tradition. Why, so far, no attention to Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam? What is truly universal and what is particular in all these theories?

The general literature includes A.H. Somjee, Parallels and Actuals of Political Development and Political Capacity in Developing Societies; Wiarda, Ethnocentrism and Foreign Policy: Can We Understand the Third World?, and Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," Foreign Affairs, and his book of the same title.

The best way to proceed is by regions:

- A. Latin America
Veliz, The Centralist Tradition in LA
Wiarda, Politics and Social Change in LA
Donna Van Cott, book on Indigenous Movements in Latin America
- B. India, the subcontinent
Lloyd and Suzanne Rudolph, The Modernity of Tradition
A.H. Somjee, various writings
- C. East Asia
Thomas Robinson, Development and Democracy in East Asia
Raul Manglapus, Will of the People
The debate over "Asian Values."
Peter Moody chapters in Wiarda (ed.) Non-Western, Democracy
- D. Africa
Larry Diamond, Democracy in Africa
Chapters 7 and 10 in Rustow and Erickson
Crawford Young, The Politics of Cultural Pluralism
- E. The Islamic World
Chapter 13 in Rustow
E. Said, Orientalism
Anwar Syed, Pakistan
Newer works on the politics of Islam, in Wiarda (edited vols. below)

A region-by-region analysis and summing up is Howard J. Wiarda (ed.), Non-Western Theories of Development; see also his recently edited volume, Comparative Democracy and Democratization.

December 1
Week 14
Conclusion: Complex Multicausality

Is there are one of these single-cause explanations that you find compelling? Be prepared to defend your position. Or perhaps you prefer a combination of explanations. Ditto.

Or perhaps you prefer multicausality. But then how do you sort out what explanations or models are most important? Is regression analysis the answer? How do you decide which model or explanation, or what combination of them, to utilize in what circumstances and over what issues. If we are eclectic in our choices, we still need to decide questions of the appropriateness and explanatory power of the models we use. These are often difficult decisions.

Have we decided these BIG questions? What model(s) to use and why? Can we even reach final conclusions on these issues? Isn't adjusting and adapting the models we use in the light of new facts and findings at the heart of the scientific method?

To me, these have always seemed to be pragmatic issues, not ideological ones: we should utilize the models that are useful to us and best help us understand the issues, problems, and "puzzles" (Crepaz again) that we seek to explore.

There are, it seems to me, no absolutely final answers to these questions. And that, in my view, is not all bad. We need constantly to be refining and updating the models we use and even discarding old and inappropriate ones that have outlived their usefulness.

Even if there are no final answers, there are some guidelines. Here are a few of my suggestions:

Read:

F. Braudel, On History and other writings

Braudel, Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World
Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism
History of Civilizations

Wiarda, Introduction to Comparative Politics
New Directions in Comparative Politics

December 8
Week 15
A Planning Session

Is there enough material to turn this seminar into a book? Who will write what? Can we get a book contract? Should some chapters be left out?

Each person will need to follow the outline. The analyses must be well-written, provocative. Be prepared to be edited. Be prepared to rewrite. Don't be discouraged if we get some rejections; that's part of the process.

I can edit, oversee, and write the Intro and Conclusion. We'll need the pages of the various chapters renumbered and a single manuscript to send to publishers. We'll all have to do some word processing.