

# COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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SOC 2600

Fall 2009

Thursdays, 9AM-12PM

Maxcy 108

Office hours: Thursday, 4-6pm

Maxcy 408

## SYLLABUS

### Introductory comments

How can we turn historical narratives into convincing sociological arguments? Is sociology useful for understanding historical events? Sociologists interested in using historical cases to make generalizable arguments are facing challenges both from the more statistically-inclined fellow sociologists and from the humanistic and locally-oriented historians. In this class we will identify means to bypass various methodological challenges, introduce ourselves to the magic of the archives and the beauty of comparative thinking, and read some canonical sociological books engaging in historical questions and orientations.

### Course requirements

The students are expected to read the assigned materials, attend classes, and actively participate in the discussions.

In addition, students are required to write a final research paper. The final paper is an exercise in historical-sociological research. Each student (or, under permission, a couple of students) will find a site for archival research, go over the archival materials, and write a sociological paper based on the found materials. This exercise intends to offer students an opportunity to practice archival research and have first-hand experience in using historical materials for sociological questions of interest to them.

Thinking about research in collective settings is extremely useful and we will therefore try to spend some time in class talking about the issues emerging out of the research in preparation for the final paper. The following dates mark the time in which the discussions will take place.

The site with archival materials should be chosen by: October 15

A short (approx. 2 pages) outline should be submitted by: November 5

The final paper should be submitted by: December 17 (tentative date)

## Readings

Some of the readings are available on OCRA (class password is SOC2600).

In addition, there are assigned books (see list below) that can be purchased at the Brown Bookstore (or you can buy used books, which are sometimes much cheaper). These books are also on reserve at the library.

All the items listed below are required readings. The items with a star [\*] are the ones on OCRA.

\*

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ertman, Thomas. 1997. *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Mahoney, James and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paige, Jeffery M. 1997. *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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### Sept. 10: Introduction to the field

[\*] Skocpol, Theda. 1984. "Sociology's Historical Imagination," in *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, edited by Theda Skocpol. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mahoney, James, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. 2003. "Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[\*] Adams, Julia, Elisabeth C. Clemens and Ann Shola Orloff. 2004. "Social Theory, Modernity, and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology," in *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History and Sociology*, edited by Julia Adams, Elisabeth C. Clemens and Ann Shola Orloff. Chapel Hill: Duke University Press.

### Sept. 17: Skocpol on revolutions

Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France,*

*Russia, and China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction and Part I.

[\*] Skocpol, Theda, and Margaret Somers. 1980. "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22(2): 174-197. [Available also on-line]

### **Sept. 24: Small-N analysis [guest lecture by Richard Snyder]**

[\*] Snyder, Richard. 2001. "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method." *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 36(1): 93–110. [Available also on-line].

[\*] Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, Patrick Heller, and Marcelo Kunrath Silva. 2008. "Making Space for Civil Society: Institutional Reforms and Local Democracy in Brazil." *Social Forces* 86 (3): 1-26. [Available also on-line]

[\*] Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545. [Available also on-line]

[\*] Munck, Gerardo L. and Jay Verkuilen. 2005. "Research Designs," pp. 385-95, in *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement* Vol. 3, edited by Kimberly Kempf-Leonard. San Diego, Cal.: Academic Press.

### *Additional recommended readings*

[\*] Lieberman, Stanley. 1991. "Small N's and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases." *Social Forces* 70(2): 307-320. [Available also on-line]

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich. 2003. "Can One Or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?" In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[\*] Mahoney, James. 2008. "Toward a Unified Theory of Causality." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(4/5): 412-436. [Available also on-line]

### **Oct. 1: Ertman on state building / comparative thinking**

Ertman, Thomas. 1997. *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Conclusion.

Ragin, Charles. 1989. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 3, 4.

*Additional recommended readings*

Hall, Peter A. 2003. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Becker, Howard S. 1992. "Cases, Causes, Conjunctures, Stories, and Imagery," in *What is a Case? Explaining the Foundation of Social Inquiry*, edited by Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Oct. 8: Going to the archives**

[\*] Trachtenberg, Marc. 2006. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Chapters 3, 5, 6.

[\*] "From the Archives: Innovative Use of Data in Comparative Historical Research." Victoria Johnson, Melissa Wilde, Simone Polillo, and Amy Kate Bailey, Nathan Cermak and Stewart E. Tolnay, in *Trajectories: Newsletter of the ASA Comparative and Historical Sociology Section*. Spring 2008.

**Oct. 15: Conceptions of time, uses of historical narrative**

[\*] Griffin, Larry J. 1993. "Narrative, Event-Structure Analysis, and Causal Interpretation in Historical Sociology." *American Journal of Sociology* 98(5): 1094-1133. [Available also on-line]

[\*] Haydu, Jeffrey. 1998. "Making Use of the Past: Time Periods as Cases to Compare and as Sequences of Problem Solving." *American Journal of Sociology* 104 (2): 339-371. [Available also on-line]

Katznelson, Ira. 2003. "Periodization and Preferences," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pierson, Paul. 2003. "Big, Slow-Moving, and . . . Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Oct. 22: Path Dependence**

[\*] Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics." *American Political Science Review* 94: 251-67. [Available also on-line]

[\*] James Mahoney. 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology." *Theory and Society* 29 (4): 507-548. [Available also on-line]

[\*] Thelen, Kathleen. 1999. "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 369-404. [Available also on-line]

**Oct. 29: Paige on contemporary revolutions**

Paige, Jeffery M. 1997. *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Schrank, Andrew. 2006. "Case- Based Research," in *A Handbook For Social Science Field Research*, edited by Ellen Perelman and Sara R. Curran. Sage Books.

**Nov. 5: Sewell on time**

[\*] Sewell, W. H. Jr. 1996. "Three Temporalities: towards an Eventful Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, edited by T. J. McDonald. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

[\*] Sewell, William H. Jr. 1996. "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille." *Theory and Society* 25(6): 841-881. [Available also on-line]

[\*] Riley, Dylan. 2008. "The Historical Logic of Logics of History: Language and Labor in William H. Sewell Jr." *Social Science History* 32(4): 555-565. [Available also on-line]

**Nov. 12: Somers on citizenship**

[\*] Somers, Margaret R. 2008. *Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 1-60.

[\*] Calhoun, Craig. 1996. "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, edited by T. J. McDonald. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

**11 Nov. 19 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**12 Nov. 26 HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

**13 Dec. 3 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**