



TRAJECTORIES



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From the Chair: Comparative-Historical Sociology as an Identity

Philip S. Gorski
Yale University

Is it possible for historical sociology to be politically relevant? Is it desirable? And if the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, what *sort* of political relevance would be possible and desirable? In thinking about these questions it is important to reflect on the location and trajectory of the field within the space of academic and political discourse. And there is no better guide in such reflections than Pierre Bourdieu.

In his various works on the field of cultural production, from *Homo Academicus* to *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu often drew a distinction between two different modes of cultural production: autonomous and heteronomous. The autonomous mode, as he understood it, is oriented towards a “restricted” market, one composed mainly of fellow producers. Scientific journals and literary magazines are good examples of autonomous products. The rewards in this realm are mainly symbolic – recognition of one sort or another from fellow producers. The heteronomous mode is oriented towards a (more) open market, made up of non-producers. One thinks, say, of non-fiction bestsellers or commercial films. Here, the rewards are mainly “temporal” ones (i.e., power and

*Editors' Note: Thanks to Dan Slater for suggesting “Trajectories” as the new name for the Newsletter of the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section. Thanks also to many other Section members who wrote to us with great suggestions!

money). Sociological work is mainly for a restricted market, and the market for historical sociology is arguably more restricted still, which requires a higher level of scholastic learning from its readers than, say, ethnographic studies of the urban poor, or interview-based work on family life, forms of work that have considerably greater cross-over potential for a “lay” audience. If the professoriate is, or at least aspires to be, a secularized clergy of sorts, then comparative-historical sociology is one of its monastic orders. Its practitioners labor in stillness and solitude, far away from the unruly – living – masses and take pride in arcane knowledge and linguistic competencies. Their texts circulate slowly – no “breakthrough” discoveries here – from cloister to cloister, as it were, if not in pouches and on horseback, then in little cardboard boxes and boxy brown trucks.

The nunnish/monkish mode of scholarship does have its advantages, of course, its charms even, as Bourdieu himself often pointed out. Intellectuals who seek to address the problems of the day, and regularly interact with the “laity”, too often wind up working on problems and speaking a language not fully their own. In Bourdieu’s terms, they are apt to deal in “preconstructed objects” with “folk theories.” So, there is something to be said for the academic cloister, and that is where Pierre Bourdieu spent much of his life – by choice. He consciously rejected the French model of the total intellectual embodied by Sartre and, to a lesser extent, by Foucault, a model that ignored disciplinary boundaries, sought a broader audience, and cultivated a “noble” and “literary” style. Instead, Bourdieu defiantly embraced a Germanic model, a model that accepted disciplinary specialization, addressed a scientific audience, and subordinated the seductions of stylistic beauty to the demands of conceptual precision. His prose was more Weber than Racine. And for this, he made no apologies. Only within the autonomous realm of specialized scholarship, where an “interest in disinterested analysis” could be cultivated, he argued, could scientific rationality fully unfold its powers.

Like Bourdieu, second-wave, comparative-historical sociology has spent most of its life in the cloister. But it was not born there. It was born on the other side of the tracks, in the struggles of the 1960s, in the Karl Marx Memorial Wing, so to speak. It was not until the 1970s, with the counter-

culture in shambles, that it decamped to the cloister to lick its wounds and think about the various questions raised in the last testament of its patron saint and chief theologian, problems of class (formation), (welfare) state, and (no socialist) party. And there it has flourished, both intellectually and professionally. It has made great strides in understanding its foundational problems: who could seriously argue that our knowledge of welfare-states and state-making are not much better than they were thirty years ago? And these successes have led to the settlement of its representatives in many of the great scholastic abbies of North America.

But scientific progress has arguably come at the expense of political irrelevance. In its younger years, its salad days, comparative-historical sociology spoke the lingua franca of a progressive empire: Marxism. Once in the cloister, we learned that the Marxist language is too limiting. In the meantime, it has gone out of fashion in many quarters. Today, it is merely one theoretical dialect among others: Weberian, feminist, Bourdieuvian, etc. Still, many of us – myself included – have gone on working on problems posed by Marxist politics: (welfare) states, class (formation) and (social) revolution – even as these problems disappeared, for the most part, from the political discussion. At the moment, feminist theory is probably the only theory that really connects historical sociology to the wider world of political debate, and its bridgehead on the activist side is arguably much weaker than it was a decade or two ago.

And now, cut to the late 1980s, to a close up of our protagonist, who has fled his comfortable office at the Collège de France for a soapbox somewhere in the heart of Paris.... Towards the end of his career Bourdieu decided to become a political street preacher confronting the myths of “globalization” and the neo-classical theology of the neo-liberal economics. He decided, as he put it, to convert some of his scientific capital into political capital, to use his scholarly renown to reach a broader audience – workers, farmers, civil servants and others threatened by the neoliberal crusade. His model was not Sartre, ready and willing to frame any problem with his philosophical *passe-partout*. It was Zola, the French novelist, whose famous “*J'accuse!*” initiated the Dreyfus affair. While these political interventions might appear to be at odds with his scientific commit-

ments, they were not. Insofar as the neoliberal agenda was a threat to autonomous production of all kinds, it was, in fact fully consistent with them.

Is Bourdieu's a model we should emulate? Probably not. Obviously, few if any of us have accumulated the stocks of scientific capital that Bourdieu did. And scientific capital isn't worth much in the political field of the US, especially these days. Someone interested in becoming a political operator in Washington would be better off with a degree in religion these days, be it an MDiv or a PhD in economics. The stock of secular fields like sociology and political science has slipped more than a little on the US markets.

Of course, there are many ways in which comparative-historical sociologists qua private citizens can become politically engaged. They can donate, blog, organize, march and so on. Here, I would like to suggest some ways in which they can become more engaged qua scholars. One is to use comparative-historical analysis to identify contexts or structures in which a particular social good can flourish. One example of such an analysis – not the only one, I'm sure – is the work of Andreas Koller, a Swiss research affiliated with the SSRC. His research focuses on the "public sphere." Rather than trying to explain cross-national or trans-historical variations in the structure of public spheres, as a second-wave historical sociologist might, or critiquing or reconstructing one normative theory of publicity, as a political theorist might, Koller uses historical experience as a means of identifying conditions that influence the "capacity for reasoned public choice."

The second strategy I would like to highlight is a mirror image of the first: using comparative-historical analysis to help diagnose social ills. An excellent, and underappreciated, example of this style of analysis is Michael Mann's recent book, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*. By means of a careful and detailed comparison of some of the most infamous episodes of ethnic violence, from the Armenian genocide through the Nazi death camps to the Cambodian killing fields, Mann is able to distill out some recurring conditions that conduce to political mass murder. It is a probabilistic and mechanistic theory rather than a deterministic and nomothetic one – which is part of what makes it so

useful. Key conditions include: high degrees of ethnic (as opposed to class) stratification; the construction and predominance of a single ethnic cleavage; an internally fractured political elite; and, last but not least – the most controversial element of the theory – a democratic social order in which the people is posited as sovereign – and defined in ethnic terms.

A third strategy is what might be called genealogical deconstruction. Here, for reasons of convenience, I will cite a paper of my own that puts conservative Protestantism in the US in comparative and historical context. Conservative Protestants like to portray themselves as the loyal guardians of an unbroken tradition – a theological, regional and political tradition. For the most part, their political opponents are only too happy to accept this collective autobiography, all the more so, since it enables them to stand on the side of "modernity", "change" and "progress." Outside observers, especially Europeans, are also happy to agree that America is, and has always been, "exceptional." And yet, none of this survives a minute of comparative-historical scrutiny. In, say, 1750, conservative Protestants in the US were Northeastern, Calvinist and collectivist, not evangelical, neoliberal heartlanders. Moreover, much of what now counts as "conservative Protestantism" – school choice and militant nationalism for instance – were much more evident in Northern Europe than in the US just a century ago. Insofar as these myths are not just scholarly errors but "principles of vision and di-vision" that structure political and social alliance and division, they are very much worth deconstructing.



Teaching Comparative and Historical Sociology

Editors' Note: For this feature, we invited a range of accomplished teachers in our subfield to reflect on the challenges of teaching comparative and historical sociology at the graduate and undergraduate levels. In particular, we asked contributors to comment on how they deal with the balance between introducing students to the varieties of methodological debate in the field versus training them in the practicalities of designing and carrying out a research program. Similarly, we asked our contributors for their thoughts regarding how to strike a balance between teaching students historical methods and introducing them to substantive writings in the tradition of historical sociology. We also invited commentators to discuss any particularly innovative teaching techniques they had developed in this area, or any teaching successes (or failures) that they would be willing to share with our larger community. Finally, we asked commentators how their substantive research interests in comparative historical sociology had informed their teaching practice.

The first of these essays is a lightly revised version of John Foran's contribution to the recently published new fifth edition of Teaching Comparative Historical Methods in Sociology (269 pages, summer 2007, American Sociological Association). Interested readers are invited to consult the volume for graduate and undergraduate syllabi and a selection of on-line resources for teaching comparative and historical sociology. The volume can be purchased in print (\$18) or in electronic form (\$9) by visiting the ASA website (<http://www.asanet.org>) under "Publications" and then "Syllabi Sets" or calling (202) 383-9005 ext. 389.

In addition, Mounira Maya Charrad, Jeff Haydu, and Mathieu Deflem contributed original essays to Trajectories in response to our queries.

Teaching Comparative and Historical Methods to Students at the Graduate and Undergraduate Levels

John Foran

University of California-Santa Barbara

"Sociological explanation is necessarily historical. Historical sociology is thus not some special kind of sociology; rather, it is the essence of the discipline."

– Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 2.

"Thinking without comparisons is unthinkable. And, in the absence of comparisons, so is all scientific thought and all scientific research. No one should be surprised that comparisons, implicit and explicit, pervade the work of social scientists and have done from the beginning."

– Guy Swanson, "Frameworks for Comparative Research," pp. 141-203 in Ivan Vallier, editor, *Comparative Methods in Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 145.

I have taught undergraduate and graduate courses in comparative and historical methods since joining the UCSB faculty as a new assistant professor in 1989. I typically teach each of them every two years, to between 7 and 16 graduate students and to about 15-30 undergraduates (the undergraduate course has been a seminar limited to 20 until very recently when we opened it up to 50 – UCSB requires each of our 1,000 undergraduate majors to complete one upper-level methods and research course). Both versions of the class are discussion-driven, and I put my formal "lectures" in the course reader or e-mail them to the students so that class time is not taken up with them.

My purpose in each class is to introduce students to the main approaches to doing historical and comparative research, including such formal methods as the John Stuart Mill/Theda Skocpol

methods of agreement and difference, the Boolean techniques of Charles Ragin's "qualitative comparative analysis," and the genre of social history, as well as more recent explorations of writing new historical narratives. We read both methodological texts (Ragin's indispensable *The Comparative Method*) and exemplary works and illustrations of each approach, including Skocpol's classic *States and Social Revolutions* and E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (selections only, of course!) or Carlo Ginzburg's wonderful detective work, *The Cheese and the Worms*.

Along the way, we take up such questions as:

What is a compelling research question, and how does one come up with one?

What makes for a good theory, and where do theories come from?

What sorts of data are used in given studies, and how are they gathered and analyzed?

What methods can be used in a given study, and what are their characteristic strengths and limitations?

What is the best way to write sociological analysis? How is an effective study organized?

How do theory, data, and method work together in a given piece of sociology?

What do we like and dislike about each of the works we encounter?

What is the nature of causation in the social world? Do we think of what we do as "science," "interpretation," "art," "story telling," or something else?

Students learn about such topics as inductive versus deductive reasoning, grounded theory, necessary and sufficient causes, multiple conjunctural causation, theoretical parsimony and complexity, the logics of comparison and contrast, the relationship between sociology and history, the dialogue of ideas and evidence, and counterfactual reasoning, among other things.

A final feature of the courses is a set of hands-on assignments: students make a written contribution

to a scholarly debate, solve a truth table using Boolean technique and interpret the results using their sociological imaginations, write a book review of a social history masterpiece, and design a research proposal on a topic of their choosing. [Editors' note: interested readers can find reproductions of these assignments in Foran's edited ASA compilation of syllabi.]

My first class meeting begins with discussions of the two quotes at the top of this essay (which, if memory serves, were found on Vicki Bonnell's syllabus in 1981), and with students constructing a list of all the methods in sociology they can think of (the funniest was a couple of years ago when a student rightly suggesting "googling" as a method of research!). When time permits (and with a 2½ to three hour meeting once a week it usually does), I have started showing Michael Moore's acclaimed movie, *Bowling for Columbine*, to start a discussion about what makes for a compelling research problem, and how we might hypothesize answers to the central question we formulate about it: in this case, why is the handgun murder rate so high for the United States and so low for Canada (where as many or more guns exist per capita)? The question's relevance was brought home two weeks before I wrote this introduction with the horrific events at Virginia Tech University on April 16, 2007, a tragedy which will shape every showing of this film from now on.

One thing I try to do each week in all of my classes is to give students a "How to Prepare for the Coming Week" handout that recaps what is in the syllabus, directs their attention to particular things in the reading, offers some questions to think about in advance, discusses assignments, and sometimes assigns certain students to make presentations in class or otherwise facilitate discussion.

After the first class meeting, we move into a two or three week unit on the methods of agreement and difference, as seen in Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparison of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), which we read in whole or in part, supplemented with other work by her on the revolutions, and with aids such as a handout which compare her definitions of the methods with John Stuart Mill's. We work hard to understand her

theory of what causes social revolutions (it turns out that her text authorizes constructing models of this with as few as two factors and as many as five or six), and as a class we construct a “truth table” of her argument based on our best understanding of her causal model, using the summaries arrayed in her famous table on pp. 155-57 of the book and checked against the data in her narrative accounts. We then assess how well she realized her comparative analysis based on the tensions and anomalies we find among her theory, the dictates of her method, and her rich secondary data. In a follow-up class, students read critical discussions of her methods and the study by such celebrated scholars as Michael Burawoy, William Sewell, Jack Goldstone, and Charles Ragin (and the less famous but bracing critique of Elizabeth Nichols, who was my classmate in Vicki Bonnell’s seminar!), as well as Skocpol’s spirited defenses of her work against the critics (we are typically dismayed by the tone of the debates, which affords a lesson in the etiquette of scholarly discourse). Students then have to write a take-home essay on the readings and discussions we have had over the first three weeks. At the end of the unit, students have found that they can understand a sociological classic (which at first encounter seemed quite inaccessible or at least intimidating in its language and concerns), acquired respect for the theoretical and empirical labor that writing the book involved, learned that even the best sociology can be criticized in a variety of ways, and made their own judgments about how well the book works as a sociological study of revolutions. My final remarks on the unit include the following judgment of my own:

What I’d like to say in conclusion today is, regardless of the problems of historical detail, of method, or of theory, this work is a brilliant example of comparative-historical analysis, one that takes on a very complex historical record and tries heroically to make sense of it. Even where it fails -- perhaps especially where it comes up short -- it provides rich food for thought. It is clearly and forcefully written and carried out, and its arguments are powerful, even when they are not fully satisfying. And that is the mark of a great book -- not that it provides all the answers we are looking for, but that it makes us think what a good answer would look like, and to realize, and thereby value, the effort of how hard it is to arrive at one.

Unit two of the course then introduces students to Charles Ragin’s “qualitative comparative analysis,” also known as QCA or Boolean analysis, as laid out in his groundbreaking methodological treatise, *The Comparative Method: Moving beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1989). I confess that this is one of the favorite teaching moments in all my repertoire, because even though I am not statistically very literate (despite several attempts to become so), I can teach students who are in the same boat a fairly technical, logically rigorous, and conceptually complex method that allows them to find interesting, meaningful, and unsuspected patterns across sets of cases that range in size from four or five to several dozen and more. And secondly, even though the results look like cut and dried equations in the mold of positivist hard science, they turn out to be quite the opposite: highly nuanced, holistic explorations of the multiple ways in which factors can come together to produce a result. I have been impressed by the method ever since my eyes were opened to it by teaching the book back in 1990, and eventually used it in my own attempt to follow in Skocpol’s footsteps with a comparative study of revolutions. This first took the form of a 1997 sketch of the argument in my edited volume *Theorizing Revolutions* (New York: Routledge), and culminated in the conclusion to my 2005 book, *Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Thank you, Charles, for making me a better comparative sociologist!

Unit two is introduced by a look at the first half of *The Comparative Method*, which is the occasion for taking students through the strengths and limitations of quantitative comparative sociology and qualitative case studies, and introducing them to Ragin’s social universe in which causation is conjunctural (more than one factor is needed to produce most outcomes) and multiple (more than one combination of causes may produce the outcome). This gets us out of some of the difficulties we had encountered in our study of Skocpol. Students are further intrigued to learn that causation can be *contradictory* as well, that is, that a given factor may be working to produce the outcome both when it is present or absent, depending on what other combinations of factors are present or absent with it in each instance. This section of the book also provides admirably clear definitions and illus-

trations of necessary and sufficient causes, introduces the goal of theoretical parsimony, and introduces students to what Ragin aptly calls “the dialogue of evidence and ideas.”

Session two of this unit is my chance to show off at the blackboard by taking students through the techniques of Boolean analysis as explained by Ragin in chapter 5 of the book. When they read this chapter before class, students are almost invariably in the dark about what is going on in simplifying truth tables of the outcomes of actual cases and their hypothesized causes, completely baffled by how to parse “primitive expressions” to arrive at “reduced expressions” and the mysteries of the “prime implicant chart.” All (normally) becomes clear by the end of the session, in which we go around and around the table taking turns carrying out the steps until everyone “gets it.” It is one of the most satisfying “ah-ha!” moments I routinely get to have in teaching, and it is incredibly empowering to young sociologists to find that they can make some order out of a tangled mass of data. In a follow-up session we get as far into the more advanced techniques of Boolean analysis as student interest, my abilities, and time permit, and students read and critique two exemplars (one by myself and the other by that subtle student of revolutions, Tim Wickham-Crowley, whose undergraduate syllabus appears in the ASA volume) that utilize Boolean techniques to explore the causes of revolution.

My methods seminar doubles as an introduction to the sociology of revolution, my own research specialty! – which actually raises a quite serious point, that we can make method come alive by putting it into action and we can teach students methods by using our own fields and research to illustrate them in action. As my essay question for this unit puts it, there is no extra credit for preferring Foran to Wickham-Crowley (I wonder how the papers would turn out though if Tim taught the two pieces in his classes...). The exercise for this unit also requires students to solve and explain the results of a hypothetical truth table of data on the adoption of a universal pension plan that I believe Charles Ragin provided me with long ago (I am happy to provide a key to the truth table to anyone who writes me for it). Students typically demonstrate great mastery of the technique on this exercise, and hone their theoretical skills in attempting

to account for the patterns they find and the differing causal models in the pieces by Tim and myself.

The graduate version of my comparative and historical sociology follows the undergraduate version rather closely to this point in the course, perhaps underlining the fact that undergraduates are fully capable of mastering these approaches and reading some of the best sociology that such approaches have given us, and that graduate training in comparative-historical methods, by the same token, should be built up step by step from the basics in the same fashion as for undergraduates. With the exception of a few supplemental readings here and there, the only significant difference in the two versions of the course is that I spend two weeks in the graduate course taking students through Charles Ragin’s next step up the scale of methodological sophistication, namely his 2000 methods text, *Fuzzy-Set Social Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). This text allows those who are starting to think about how they might apply Boolean analysis to their own master’s and doctoral writing projects to be taken to the next level: one where the binary limitations of truth tables (based as they are on the dichotomous full presence or absence of variables and outcomes) yield to the more nuanced possibilities of factors being “more or less present,” “more present than absent,” or more “absent than present.” It also allows students to see the limits of my methodological understanding as I typically can only explain so much of what is going on, given my discomfort with the simplest z test or two-dimensional property space! But this humbling exposure of my own intellectual shortcomings is at the same time an opportunity for us all to grasp more deeply the logic of qualitative comparative analysis and the dialogue it can offer between ideas and evidence, consider Ragin’s examples of IMF riots and the adoption or non-adoption of welfare states across the world, and once again ponder elegant expositions of necessity and sufficiency, the constitution of data populations and typologies, and much else besides.

The third and final major section of the courses turns to historical approaches to sociology and represents quite a shift of gears for students in terms of the reading and the methods involved. We usually read either excerpts from E. P.

Thompson's epic masterpiece, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1963), and/or Carlo Ginzburg's delectable *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982). These two meetings feature student presentations on parts of each text, a careful working through of what social history looks like, can do, and offers as a form of sociology, and culminate in an essay that allows students to explore questions of evidence, argument, method, and narrative in one of the works. As I tell students at the end of this unit:

A final problem with social history, as Ginzburg pointed out, is the scarcity of evidence available on the lives and thoughts of the lower classes of societies long past; because these groups did not leave lots of written records, they don't get into the history books. So we should take note of the sources that Thompson used in this study; what *are* his sources? [discussion follows] They include unpublished manuscripts, the archives of the British government, pamphlets and newspapers of the period (73 are named), memoirs and diaries (published or unpublished), as well as secondary sources (the works of other historians). All of these are far closer to the actors involved than the types of secondary sources that have been used by Skocpol, Wickham-Crowley, and myself. They allow us to see different things, and especially to enter into the heads of the people he is writing about, to see the world from their point of view, rather than impersonal or abstract concepts and structures. So this is a strength of social history as well.

This, then, is Thompson's project, and that of much social history: as I put it last time, to show how ordinary people lived and felt, how they weren't passive victims of their own history but played a far greater role in it than has been acknowledged by conventional historical studies, and that their lives are important if we are ever to have an accurate view of the past. Social history tries to tell this story out of the facts that are available, supplemented by theoretical insights and hunches, and it has revolutionized the way history is taught today.

The final meeting of the course allows us to wind things up in a less demanding (in terms of reading, which tapers off at this point) but stimulating session devoted to new ways of writing history and sociology. For this session we read David Samuels's "The Call of Stories" about the new, experimental history writing of such luminaries as Jonathan Spence, Natalie Zemon Davis, and Simon Schama. We engage in discussion of the uses of film and fiction as sociological texts and lenses on social reality. We also talk about the use of historical counterfactuals with a wonderful short essay by William Pitt Rivers, titled "Assassin's History," who counters Disraeli's claim that "Assassination has never changed the course of history" by speculating about a world in which John F. Kennedy, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr., had not been assassinated (allowing me to ask about a world in which Salvador Allende or Patrice Lumumba still walked the earth).

In the second half of the course, my undergraduates are given one final assignment that makes what has been a *methods* course also a small-scale *research* course: they are asked to design a research proposal. We spend a little bit of class time on this in most of our remaining meetings, and I make sure that each student not only has a topic they feel passionate about, but has turned it into a question they don't know the answer to. We then work to construct a research plan that would allow the student to explore the problem with empirical data, considering the steps required and the possible obstacles that would be encountered along the way. In Sociology 108CH, which takes place in the hothouse blur of a ten-week quarter, we can only formulate research proposals; in another methods class I have just started to teach, 108G: Methods and Research in Global and International Sociology, students actually do group research projects and make presentations of their results in the last week of the course. There is no reason that one couldn't construct the comparative-historical methods class along similar lines, although there is a definite trade-off in terms of time that can be devoted to reading and writing about the kind of texts that I have just been describing and actually doing research. One option which I give my students is to continue their research into a second quarter of work as an independent study with myself or with another faculty member

whose research lies closer to the student's project. This has the added virtue of allowing students at a large research university with a huge sociology major to work one on one with a faculty member who gets to know them and to carry out a research project of their own – that vital final step in becoming a sociologist who can *do* as well as understand social research.

Three other exercises I'd like to develop include a counterfactual history exercise, where students must work through the implications of historical paths from a given starting point that differs from what actually happened (i.e. what if Allende had not been overthrown in a coup in 1973 but had placed his men in charge of the military?); an archival document exercise, where students are asked to interpret and contextualize a document they are given; and a newspaper/magazine exercise, where students must do the same for a journalistic piece from the past.

Far too few sociology departments offer methods courses that are not either quantitative or qualitative in emphasis (and others fail to adequately address the alternatives in their survey of methods courses). It is my contention that each of us needs to develop such courses where they do not exist (and of course, improve them where they do!). Until comparative and historical methods are routinely taught at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and included in the methodological toolkits of all who practice sociology, our discipline will fall short of its potential to train citizens prepared to face the severe crises that lie ahead and to contribute to the public discourse, political work, and social action necessary to overcome them. Until that day, sociology itself will be the poorer.

Teaching Comparative and Historical Sociology: Challenges and New Directions

Mounira M. Charrad
University of Texas at Austin

The editors of our Section Newsletter asked me to write a piece on my experience teaching comparative historical sociology (CHS), and in particular about how one can combine the teaching of CHS with an interest in post-colonial studies. I have been teaching the graduate seminar on comparative historical methods for the last three years at the University of Texas in Austin. The seminar, like many in the field taught in other universities in the country, does not escape the euro-centric origin of our field, especially in works on state formation and the emergence of capitalism. These are the major issues addressed in the books I use as exemplars in teaching CHS. Scholars in the field have produced important insights into the non western world as they have re-examined “the history of revolution, state formation, gender, political economy, and race, and are now pushing the frontiers of research on Islam, development, and the postsocialist transition, to name only a few of the cutting edge topics,” as Monica Prasad (2006: 9) writes. Nevertheless, I believe that graduate students are better served by first learning the perspective from the foundational books and then going on to formulate their own research on the contemporary and postcolonial world. Students are in a strong position to discuss postcoloniality and the multiple modernities it encompasses once they master the basic tenets of CHS as a genre and learn how the genre developed.

When I first offered to teach CHS, which had not been taught for several years in my department, I was told to expect only limited interest among graduate students. The response has been otherwise. Interest is strong and has grown over time, but not necessarily because graduate students expect to learn a technique of doing research. When I ask them what they hope to get from the seminar, they often say that they want to know about CHS as a basis for better understanding theory. They also are attracted to CHS as an approach that asks the big and significant questions of macrohistorical

change. Regardless of whether graduate students later use a comparative historical method or not in their own research, I see the teaching of CHS as a way of encouraging students to think theoretically. We do not have a technique to teach in the same way as our quantitative colleagues do, or some who specialize in ethnography and interviews.

We have a logic of inquiry, however, a compelling way to ask questions, to offer explanations, and to build arguments. As Richard Lachmann put it in a personal communication, “we need to help our students figure out how to insert themselves into the debates that organize comparative-historical sociology....Our field is organized around debates, not techniques....Our first task should be to help students see themselves as participants in theoretically grounded debates and then to identify the empirical cases and the modes of analysis that will allow them to make significant interventions in such debates.” There is no formula to teach students how to identify meaningful research questions that will help them insert themselves in the debates of their times. In the same way, there is no blueprint on how to construct a research design, since each question requires the crafting of the appropriate comparisons.

For these reasons, I believe that CHS is best taught with the use of exemplars and I prefer to use books rather than articles. Books provide a fuller picture of the architecture of a study. They are more conducive to critical engagement in allowing students to see how the argument is constructed. In the seminar, we read closely books that span five decades of comparative and historical sociology. They are all meant as exemplars that “do” comparative and historical sociology. Each of them puts the methodology in practice to study a substantive sociological issue ranging from democracy and dictatorship to revolution, state formation, elite conflict, familial states, women’s rights, and citizenship. The purpose is to deconstruct the text in order to understand how the author has used comparisons to build a theoretical argument. We pay close attention to the dimensions that enter the comparisons, the sources and type of data used, and the strengths and the weaknesses of the study. In other words, we carefully dissect the study.

We start by reading Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (1966), Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (1979), and Skocpol’s critique (1973) of Moore. Coming as they do from being unaccustomed to read much history, students react with the feeling of being overwhelmed by historical information. It is a pleasure to see how quickly they become comfortable with such reading and move on to grasping the argument. It is with gratification that I see students rushing to the blackboard to draw a graphic representation of the argument of a book. In each book, we focus on the weaving of theory and history or how the thick description of cases meshes with the mapping of general patterns. Other books vary from time to time. Examples used recently include: Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (1989); Lachmann, *Capitalists in Spite of Themselves: Elite Conflict and Economic Transitions in Early Modern Europe* (2000); Adams, *The Familial State: The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (2005); Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationalism in France and Germany* (1998); and Charrad, *States and Women’s Rights: The Making of Post-colonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco* (2001).

In a second step, only after students have grappled with several books, we read articles commenting on various aspects of CHS strategies such as periodisation, the logic of small n’s, the risk of infinite regression and other specific issues. We read selected chapters in collections such as Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology* (1984), Mahoney and Rueschemeyer (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (2003), and Adams, Clemens and Orloff (eds.), *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History, and Sociology* (2005). We also use methodologically oriented articles in journals such as *Sociological Methods & Research; Theory and Society, American Journal of Sociology, Social Politics*, and others. By the time we discuss articles focused on various specific aspects of methodology in CHS, students have had enough exposure to exemplars to be able to use the articles to reflect on the studies they have read and think about what they would do, should they use CHS in their research. A theme we address is that of waves in CHS as

developed by Adams, Clemens and Orloff (2005), how much there is that is different or similar among waves, and how one thinks of new paradigms, new issues and new locales.

It is at this juncture that we discuss how one moves from the study of state formation and economic transformations in the West to thinking about other parts of the world (Charrad 2006 and 2007). My own research has taught me that a move away from a Euro-centric perspective often requires the formulation of new concepts and the use of new dimensions. Several founders of the field have strongly inspired my argument in *States and Women's Rights* (2001). I have drawn on frames of reference used to analyze the relation between class and politics in shaping political outcomes, whether they be Weber's bureaucracy (1964), Moore's dictatorship and democracy (1966), Skocpol's revolutions (1979), Wallerstein's core-periphery relations of domination (1974), or Tilly's formation of national states (1975). Nevertheless, in considering political history in the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco) or more broadly in the Middle East, I found it necessary to bring kinship and communities of ascription to center stage in shaping conditions facilitating or, on the contrary, hindering state formation. I came to realize the key role played by the relation between political forces anchored in kin-based solidarities such as clans or kin groupings and centralizing forces in the development of nations and their polity. On a related but different theme, I am exploring notions of modernity in legal discourse in the Middle East. I have become increasingly convinced of "the messiness of modernity," to use Ming-cheng Lo's apt phrase (2005), and of the complex ways in which multiple modernities co-exist today. As comparative historical sociologists, we are likely to continue to use the concept of modernity since, as Adams, Clemens and Orloff suggest in their Introduction to *Remaking Modernity* (2005: 1-72; see also Adams and Orloff, 2005), the concept is still too useful for us to abandon it altogether. But we have to face its multiple forms and meanings depending on time and place.

In a similar vein, students in the CHS seminar feel at once seduced by CHS as a method of inquiry and eager to push its boundaries. Their concerns appear in the research proposal they are asked to

write at the end of the seminar, often as a step towards their dissertation prospectus. Students usually take away from their exposure to CHS at least a clearer sense of how to use cases, how to think comparatively, and how to bring historical depth to their object of study, even when they intend to use ethnographic data or interviews in their own research. If nothing else, they become more inclined to compare and to historicize. Some students plan to use either comparative or historical or comparative/historical methods in their dissertations. Their agendas often show them drawing on the major studies we have read and dissected in the course of the semester. Many choose units of analysis other than the nation-state or study countries outside of Europe and the US. Dissertations by former seminar members consider the following topics, for example: "The Family and the Making of Women's Activism in Lebanon" compares activists who use their kinship network as a source of leverage in politics and those who don't. "Transnational Social Change in the Age of Interdependence: The Nonviolent Revolutions of Iran and the Philippines" considers the relative absence of political violence in these two late twentieth century revolutions. "Peter, Paul, & Protest: Explaining Waves of Christian Activism in the 20th Century U.S." examines the ebb and flow of "purity" and "justice" oriented movements since the 1960s. "From Reel to Virtual" traces historical changes in women's labor on both sides of the camera in the adult film industry in the US from 1957 to 2005. "To Work or not to Work" compares women's experiences in Mexico and Turkey by placing in-depth interviews in historical context. "Beyond Ethno-Political Contention" discusses how changes in issues of state, citizenship and violence have shaped the 'new' Kurdish question in Turkey. What contribution to the debates within CHS these studies will make is still too early to tell. They show, however, the directions that young scholars are taking.

In thinking about the future of our field, I have asked dissertation writers to indicate where they would like to see CHS go from here. The answers include: "Move beyond the nation-state towards smaller units such as community or towards the global and regional levels"; "Do more on cities, networks, economic organizations, and cultural scripts"; "Address more contemporary issues in the way we know best, by examining history and

comparing cases”; “Extend CHS more and more into unconventional topic areas....discourse and language, religion, health”; “Contextualize and historicize the discipline itself by interrogating some of its questions and answers on the basis of new evidence from the non-western world.” Some of this is being done in the field, but more of it awaits future research.

In way of conclusion, I see the teaching of CHS as a way to encourage the imagination, creativity, and rigorous thinking of young scholars who are not afraid to ask questions that are significant even though not easy to answer. Learning to formulate manageable questions and to develop an elegant research design is at the same time their challenge and their reward. The way I find most effective to teach CHS is to invite future scholars to see how sociologists before them have posed questions and then gone about trying to address them.

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Global and Local in Teaching Historical Methods

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By the second or third week of my seminar on comparative and historical methods, students should be able to hum along to my mantra: We can not reason our way to *the* solution for methodological dilemmas in the field; it is better to think in terms of matching methods to particular research projects and scholarly styles, with a clear understanding of the trade-offs. I approach Greta Krippner and Nitsan Chorev's questions about teaching in the same pragmatic spirit.

Greta and Nitsan clearly identify some of the choices we have to make in teaching comparative and historical methods. Should we rely more on exemplars in the field, getting at issues of temporal analysis or comparative design by showing how the Great Ones did it? Or should we favor readings that make these abstract issues their main focus? Barrington Moore, Jr., or Charles Ragin on boolean QCA? How do we balance time devoted to general dilemmas of comparative-historical analysis against attention to practical guidelines for designing, executing, and pitching a manageable research project? In the long run, there should be no tension between these goals. In a ten- or fifteen-week term, with students under pressure to get published as soon as possible, there usually is.

These pedagogical quandaries are widely shared. In the spirit of historical research, I would add that other challenges are more local. The graduate program at UC San Diego attracts many students interested in interpretive cultural analysis and in science studies. Those substantive interests make them less receptive to many of the macro-sociological classics, including the work on labor and class relations that I know best. And their intellectual orientation makes them skeptical, at best, about the goal that drives many of the meth-

odological debates in our field: systematic causal analysis. If you've already ruled out any possibility of establishing that x causes y, there is not much point in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of Mill.

If some of the problems are local, some of the solutions are even more so. Not only may the strategies I have adopted work for me but not for others. In some years, they don't even work for me. Although I have not found the one best way of designing comparative-historical methods courses, I have settled on a few guidelines to deal with the global and local challenges of teaching them.

First, crib from the historians. Compared to most syllabi I've seen, I spend more time on issues commonly covered in historiography courses, such as how to analyze primary documents and how to organize and manage historical information. This is one way to address student calls for practical guidelines that they can quickly put to use in their own work. It also reflects my own scholarly style of relying heavily on primary sources. It has a subversive pedagogical goal as well. I try to show that even if one's interests are in interpreting cultures rather than analyzing causes, some of the same rules -- about triangulating sources, for example, or assessing the representativeness of documents -- apply.

Second, go for variety. Although my syllabi resemble many others in alternating between case studies and more abstract methodological discussions, in my choice of case studies I have come to rely on multiple articles rather than books. None of these will have the richness of *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. But this approach means that, in any given week, most students will find at least one or two studies that appeal to them -- a way of dealing with the diminished appeal of the comparative-historical canon among UCSD grad students. Articles are also less intimidating models for students hoping to get research published soon. And here too, there are pedagogical payoffs. Putting multiple historical or comparative studies on the table each week increases opportunities for bringing out more general points about methodological dilemmas and how different authors handle them. More, this sort of comparative analysis of articles exercises some of the same

analytical skills that comparativists apply to historical cases.

Third, use individual student interests as hooks for teaching comparative and historical methods. As in other courses, the main written work my students undertake is a research proposal in which they put broad principles – governing periodization or the selection of comparative cases, for example – to work on a topic of their own. Ideally, they continue to develop the proposal, and then execute it, in a research practicum later in the graduate program. Discussing individual projects with each student gives me another chance to get general methodological lessons across ("Look at how, if you followed Mill, your findings might lead you astray.") Having students present their research plans in seminar provides further opportunity to connect general principles to particular cases. And in my own mini-lectures on methodological topics, I try to pair object lessons from well-known published work with illustrations from the work of seminar participants. All of this, finally, gives us the chance to hum that mantra again: instead of seeking unconditional methodological truths, think about what research strategies and compromises make sense for a particular project.

My department offers an undergraduate as well as a graduate course on comparative and historical methods. The teaching challenges in these two classes are quite different. UCSD draws its students from the top percentiles of California high school graduates. Still, their analytical thinking is weak, making it difficult for them to move from topics of interest to research questions or to sociologically comparable cases. Most also need basic help in thinking about the relationship between question and evidence and in using specialized bibliographic tools in sociology and history. In my undergraduate classes, accordingly, abstract methodological debates get much less attention, and practical tips on doing research much more. This is a trade-off that I see as appropriate for students who (in most cases) will not be going further in the discipline. For undergraduates, too, some pedagogical gimmicks can be used that I would be embarrassed to try with graduate students. To encourage them to think analytically about the abstract properties of cases, for example, I might dump a random collection of objects on the table

and have students suggest different principles for grouping them (round vs. angular, fuzzy vs. smooth, manufactured vs. "natural," etc., with the added lesson that things like "smoothness" depend on how closely one wants or is able to look). Undergraduates do resemble grad students in one respect, however: they welcome the opportunity to pursue interests of their own, something undergraduates in a large public university rarely have a chance to do. As I march them through basic steps of their chosen projects, from formulating a question to selecting and justifying a second case, I can also move them at least part way from cases to principles.

Greta and Nitsan ask if this teaching strategy also reflects my own research agenda and intellectual biography. Indeed it does. Putting cases first makes sense to someone who finds rich particulars much more engaging than general theories, although I caution graduate students that reveling in historical minutiae is usually not a good career move. And learning the principles of comparative-historical methods through on-the-job training, as one works through one's own case, makes sense to me for another personal reason: I never took a course on comparative and historical methods.

Useless Tilly (et al.): Teaching Comparative-Historical Sociology Wisely

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Rocco: "What's worse, Curly, a dumbbell or a wiseguy?"

Curly: "A wiseguy, I guess."

—*Key Largo*, 1948.

These didactical observations are partly based on my experience teaching a comparative-historical sociology seminar as part of the methodology offerings in my Department's graduate program (a course outline is posted on www.mathieudeflem.net). My comments need to be prefaced by acknowledging that I am not a methods person. It will therefore be understood that I cannot now restrain myself to express my pleasant surprise when the recent edition of a popular methods textbook included among its examples of contemporary historical work a brief

exposition of my book on the history of international policing (Deflem 2002), warmly nestled in the company of works by Charles Perrow and Theda Skocpol (Babbie 2005:249-250). But perhaps I have to thank the police for that as well. As the practice of teaching is not isolated from our scholarship, some words are first in order about my perceptions of the field.¹

Chuckles

Arousing chuckles in preparation of the teaching of comparative-historical sociology (CHS) is the observation, in the presentation and perception of the field, of a stubborn and strikingly ahistorical obsession with Marxist preoccupations, or at least with a preference for Marx and theoretical frameworks with an underlying Marxist logic. In the United States, in particular, the primary color of CHS since the moment of its institutionalization has been red (e.g., Skocpol 1984). Spiced up with a conflict-theoretical appropriation of Weber, the result is an intellectual sort of tyranny of the 'political economy.' In reaction to a (presumably anti-Parsonian) understanding of sociology as a static enterprise, the lapse into Marxism was opportune more than appropriate. In actuality, the selective memory of sociology's historical-comparative roots was not only profusely ahistorical, but undoubtedly informed by, rather than resulting in, a pro-Marx orientation. The development of comparative-historical sociology could have been accomplished more astutely with recourse to classical sociologists.

It is certainly peculiar to be teaching CHS in a country in which not only a Miss Teen has limited knowledge of the world and its maps, and in which any significant public consciousness of the past is missing. The very foundations of CHS are telling in this respect because it would seem banal to have to argue that sociological analysis requires serious consideration of the historical context. Theoretically driven by the classics, the objectives of CHS can be more specifically formulated to include the combined quest for descriptive accounts of patterns, and analytical accountings of

the dynamics, of selected institutions. Broadening the purposes of CHS to scope extension exercises is useful only for those who value theory more than society, while social criticism pursuits might serve those who value societies that do not exist more than those that do.

As I methodologically prefer Durkheim, the conception of society as a thing apart is surely our discipline's greatest victory. The sociological conceptualization of society is, of course, not to be confused with concrete societies, which we typically restrict to nations or other locales that are more or less bound. (Incidentally, it was Parsons [1935] who warned of a similar confusion affecting historians with respect to the use of the term 'capitalism'). For CHS work, also, Durkheim is methodologically useful in having argued, and demonstrated by exemplary example, that "there is no sociology worthy of the name which does not possess a historical character" and that "[c]omparative sociology is not a special branch of sociology; it is sociology itself in so far as it ceases to be purely descriptive and aspires to account for facts" (Durkheim 1908:211, 1894:157).

As I analytically prefer Durkheim and Weber, the argument that some social process is fundamental to explaining the course of society, in terms of both stability and change, is equivalent to analytical reasoning. One can easily subsume under the heading of differentiation more specific processes, such as rationalization, but it is in any case important to recognize the fact that sociologists are always analytically oriented. Take the example of historical sociology and history. As historical sociologists, we are interested in the study of society and its constituent parts, as all sociologists are. The fact that the subject matter is not located in the present does not equate us to historians. Disciplines are differentiated also by how they approach their subject matters. This is not merely a matter of jargon. Analytical history probably baffles historians as well.

As I thematically sometimes prefer Weber, chuckles cannot be suppressed when reading that some have to contemplate on the logic of the organization of coercion as existing independent from the logic of production, whereas other CHS scholars have not just been observing the patterns of said

¹ For direct and indirect inspiration in presenting these ideas, I acknowledge Emirbayer (1996), Tilly (1981, 1984), the 'Tilly Weblog' on Professor Murmann's Web (<http://professor-murmann.info/index.php/weblog/tilly>), and others, too many to be quoted other than collectively.

logic but have been studying its dynamics as well. From a similar viewpoint, also, it must be acknowledged that the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate force is enlightening because it strikes right at the heart of processes of claiming and gaining legitimacy (through law, policing, control). But the colonization of CHS has also brought about a marginalization and exclusion of the sociological analysis of those societal institutions (law, family, religion, etc.) which others have refused to relegate to the superstructure.

Matters

What matters to the teaching of comparative-historical in the context of the above observations (and other, less related reflections) can be succinctly expressed in the following four promising proposals.

Rely on the classics. It is not merely a matter of good fortune that Weber and Durkheim, amongst others, began our discipline in an essentially comparative-historical fashion. Broadening our present-day understanding of CHS, as we should, to include next to historical and comparative also international/global work, the classics are not without value as well. In respects of social-science scholarship, the 19th century remains like a dream that lifts us up. The classics are not mere sources of justification for our work; they provide the very foundations of our discipline as a useful scholarly approach, though not necessarily as a guarantee for valid arrivals.

Do not teach CHS as a methodology, unless when necessary. Methodological writings in sociology are often divorced from theoretical issues, or mere exercises in epistemological fancy. CHS is not primarily a methodology. Teaching CHS implies teaching sociology. In formulating sociological questions, theory has primacy over methods. Clarifications on the status of theory will also help inform the relationships between CHS and related extra-sociological areas of inquiry (history, international and area studies). Thematically as well, CHS is shaped by the kind of questions that are asked. Taking the example of comparative sociology, such work takes on a different role when empirical linkages do or do not exist between the units that are compared. The sociological attention to globalization has brought this usefully to light

by focusing on structures and processing transcending beyond as well as taking place within relatively confined localities.

Teach CHS by example. Much of the methodology writings in CHS are epistemological, clarifying the status of CHS knowledge, rather than being oriented at presenting methods of how to do CHS research. To my knowledge, David Pitts' (1972) handbook on the use of historical sources in sociology and anthropology remains among the few works to develop data collection and analysis strategies. More such work is needed. In my own research, I remain convinced that a systematic classification of sources is more important than reading the methodological pieces on CHS which refuse to discuss such mundane matters. In answering sociological questions, however, methods enjoy primacy over theory. In my teaching, I have therefore decided to dispense with most of the highbrow epistemological exercises in the CHS area in favor of exposing students to concrete efforts in CHS work, specifically some of the many excellent monographs in our area. Students apply an analytical model to the selected books to uncover relevant aspects of theory, methods, and research findings. To be helpful for the student's intellectual development, also, special emphasis is placed on techniques of data collection, recording, classification, and analysis. It is after all sometimes important and entirely appropriate to know a lot about something, especially when it concerns the basis of all our work.

Do not rely on translations, unless when necessary. It was Max Weber who reminded us that "anyone who is forced to rely on translations... must make modest claims for the value of his work" (Weber 1920:28). Weber, it is to be noted, was speaking of himself. The requirement to rely on source data in their original prose is a soft one and cannot be stretched practically to a global scale. But there should be limits even to our limitations. Linguistic capabilities, also, inform at once our knowledge and understanding of the sociological works of classics and contemporaries as much as the sources of our thematic interests. By example, the point is not to know that Comte coined the term 'sociologie' but that he was forced to do so because of the evil doings of a Belgian.

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Conference Report

Thunder of History: Taxation in Comparative and Historical Perspective

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“The spirit of a people, its cultural level, its social structure, the deeds its policy may prepare—all this and more is written in its fiscal history, stripped of all phrases,” Joseph Schumpeter wrote in 1918. “He who knows how to listen to its message here discerns the thunder of world history more clearly than anywhere else” (1991 [1918]: 101). Public finance, Schumpeter argued, was the key to understanding many important things about comparative history—and the greatest advances in the field of public finance would come from historical sociology.

We think Schumpeter was right. On May 4 and 5, 2007, the Department of Sociology at Northwestern University hosted a conference titled “The Thunder of History: Taxation in Comparative and Historical Perspective,” with the co-sponsorship of the Graduate School, the Program in Comparative-Historical Social Science, the Tax Program at Northwestern Law School, the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, and the Institute for Policy Research. The conference drew top scholars from sociology, history, economics, law, and political science together to take stock of what their fields have learned from the comparative historical study of taxation and to chart an intellectual agenda for the field that Schumpeter called “fiscal sociology.”

The conference was inter-disciplinary, because several disciplines have converged on the insight that taxation is a central element of society: political scientists know that tax cuts are a major partisan battleground in the U.S. today, and that the rise of neoliberal ideology has propelled tax policy onto the political and public agenda of many other developed and developing countries as well. Legal scholars know that the tax code has become the preferred vehicle for promoting an enormous variety of domestic policies—from social provisions to industrial policies to educational subsi-

dies. Historians know that taxation has been a pivotal source of conflict and change from the American Revolution to the Reagan Revolution. And sociologists know that nearly every issue with which they are concerned—the obligations of the individual to society, the powers and legitimacy of the state, the allocation of public and private resources, the rise of bureaucratic administration, the reproduction of class, race, and gender inequalities—runs through the issue of taxation. Taxes formalize our obligations to each other. They define the inequalities we accept and those that we collectively seek to redress. They set the boundaries of what our governments can do. In the modern world, taxation *is* the social contract.

Taxation is one of the last frontiers for the historical turn in the human sciences, and comparative historical sociology has the potential to make an enormous contribution to the study of taxation. Although the tax structures of early modern Europe drew some attention from the “second wave” of historical sociology—especially in the fiscal-military model of state formation associated with scholars such as Michael Mann and Charles Tilly—this work had little impact on the field of public finance. Thus, we still know very little about why some societies consent to some kinds of tax regimes; about when, how or why tax institutions hang together functionally with each other, or with other social institutions; and about how exactly taxation became one of the central economic institutions in the modern world.

Scholars in this interdisciplinary field are on the leading edge of historical sociology. The papers presented at the Northwestern conference showcased three directions in which taxation challenges and extends recent historical sociology.

First, recent work re-examines the scope of the fiscal-military model. According to that model, military competition drove the development of the modern state: war made states by encouraging rulers to develop new bureaucratic techniques for extracting and administering resources before their military competitors did. At the Northwestern conference, Charles Tilly’s keynote address extended this model to the problem of democracy, spelling

out mechanisms by which taxation and other forms of state extraction might lead to democratization. Andrea Campbell assembled historical public opinion data to explore the interplay of war, democracy, and popular consent. But other scholars challenged the model: Joel Slemrod's analysis found very small effects of warfare on taxpayer compliance, and W. Elliot Brownlee showed that military conquest *failed* to remake the Japanese tax structure after World War II. All of this research will continue to spell out the scope conditions and mechanisms of the fiscal-military model—clarifying how and under what conditions war increases the size and power of the state.

Second, fiscal sociology is challenging the orthodox historical sociology of state formation and of the rise of the welfare state. Fred Block argued that religious ideas may play a greater role in constructing or dismantling the welfare state than scholars have appreciated. Joseph Thorndike argued that New Deal tax policy was more focused on soaking the rich than protecting the poor—raising the possibility that the New Deal in some respects may have *undermined* the political foundations for a strong welfare state. Robin Einhorn showed that the fiscal-military model of state formation in early modern Europe missed a crucial variable that was decisive for the development of tax administration in the North American case—namely, slavery. And Evan Lieberman showed the importance of racial boundaries to the construction of state capacity. All of this research suggests that canonical historical sociology texts may have missed important variables or misinterpreted key historical turning points in the formation of the modern world.

Third, some of the new fiscal sociology implies a deeper challenge to the underlying conceptual foundations of historical sociology. In particular, students of taxation are unpacking the reified concept of the “state”—and with it, the common metanarrative that modernity is characterized by a growing public sector. One strand of research questions the internal coherence of public institutions. For example, Nancy Staudt showed that courts and legislatures in the post-WWII United States play independent and important roles in defining tax policy. Another strand of this research

shows how tax policy constructs the very boundary between state and society. Christopher Howard argued that tax breaks can be understood as social welfare programs, implying that *reducing* tax revenues can sometimes expand the reach of the state. Edgar Kiser and Audrey Sacks argued that conditions in some parts of early modern Europe and contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa make tax farming a more effective alternative to bureaucratic administration—implying that privatization can sometimes *increase* the reach of state power. And Beverly Moran turned a critical eye on the whole edifice of contemporary tax scholarship by historicizing Adam Smith's canonical writings on taxation. Taken collectively, these papers are unsettling to some deeply cherished assumptions shared by historical sociology and mainstream public finance scholarship—most particularly the assumption that we can speak unproblematically of the growth of the state as a central problem of modernity.

These papers only begin to suggest the payoff of comparative historical research on taxation. Fiscal sociology is a wide open field. There is an enormous amount of descriptive empirical research to be done. We remain surprisingly ignorant of the development, variation, and impact of tax systems. There is also substantial theoretical work ahead. Scholars in this field are still clearing out the cobwebs of modernization theory, long since banished from other corners of historical sociology.

As conference organizers we are happy to report that this theoretical work is underway. Many of the conference papers described here will appear in an edited volume. And in addition to these papers, the conference included a day-long graduate student workshop on fiscal sociology (funded by the American Sociological Association's Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline and the National Science Foundation). Judging by the quality of the dissertation projects we saw, some of the best work in this field is yet to come. We invite you to be a part of it.

Schumpeter, Joseph. 1991 [1918]. "The Crisis of the Tax State." Pp. 99-140 in *The Economics and Sociology of Capitalism*, edited by R. Swedberg. Princeton: Princeton University Press.



Identities

Editors' Note: In this section, comparative-historical scholars reflect on why they entered the subfield. We invite contributions to this section for future issues of the newsletter.

Arthur Stinchcombe

Northwestern University

Paul Lazarsfeld apparently once said that we didn't need undergraduate sociology as long as we had the Trotskyite movement. I never got that advice in time, but followed it anyway, majoring in mathematics to go to Berkeley in sociology. Trotsky was a great historical and comparative scholar, whatever his other failings. While I was in the army working on a closed mental ward on the night shift (as far as a pacifist could get from military authority), I read most of the core reading lists for prelims from Berkeley, Columbia, and Chicago, which supplemented Trotsky and Marx in comparative and historical scholarship. In graduate school I learned to read German and Russian. The latter was because Clark Kerr, on his way to becoming University President, wrote that the USSR, being an industrial society, would have to open up. I figured I could then go see if socialism really worked. Kerr was right, except 40 years or so too early. So I decided I had to study somewhere else (I relearned Russian recently to study federalism there). Spanish seemed to give access to the most developing countries, and I had a couple of college years, with excellent phonetic tutoring from a friend preparing to work for the State Department.

As an Assistant Professor, I bought a station wagon, packed up the wife and kids, and took off to Aguascalientes, Mexico, to interview *ejido* vs. small farm peasants, and urban entrepreneurs, about their work and politics. None of the papers I wrote on the topic were published; don't study countries and topics that nobody wants to know about. Survey interviewing about people's real life problems, though, is a great way to learn to really speak a language, because you get lots of experience with the vocabulary of a few topics, and you don't have to make up as many questions to keep the conversation going on the fly. You can then expand your active vocabulary at your leisure.

Later on I got some research money and a Fulbright and interviewed steel plant middle class people, and a random sample of urban non-steel middle class people from the nearby town, in Chile, Argentina, and Venezuela. I wrote *Creating Efficient Industrial Administrations*, and hardly anyone read it. American socialists did not want to know how to run socialist steel plants (one of the three was being privatized at the time), and South American steel managers may have thought reading metallurgical engineering would help them more than reading sociology, if they had to read something in English. I read metallurgy in English in the shop manager's office, where I was permitted to sit and listen to executive meetings, whenever there was no one there. Better to know enough not to write something outrageous about the technology; I know why engineers in the early 60s thought rolled steel was stronger than cast steel, and if you are puzzled in the middle of the night on that question, I take night phone calls for emergency treatment of ignorance. Many of the engineers in those meetings spoke Spanish with heavy Italian accents, but I could at least understand those that spoke with American accents, even if they didn't speak Spanish.

Later on I wrote a book with Carol Heimer on the Norwegian oil industry, but in a marketing miracle the book was marketed in Norway for a reasonable price, and too expensively in England and the US for even a class at the Harvard School of Business, so the person HSB who read and liked it couldn't assign it. So basically no one read that one either, unless they were ritualistic when considering hiring me. It was read with some attentiveness in the engineering school in Tromsø in Norway.

I won't go on about comparative and historical books of mine that nobody read. I should have gone out of the business, but I am addicted. I am writing, slowly, a book on comparative federalism. I can't in all honesty, given my biography, peddle it to academic publishers, given the economic troubles they are in without that additional burden. So I am publishing (if they are accepted—I haven't got word) the chapters as working papers in a series of the comparative and historical studies center at Northwestern University. My father

said of his Master's thesis that it satisfied the ancient description of masters papers: "disinterring facts from one part of the library to re-inter them in another part." Look up Northwestern working papers series to disinter.

Nina Bandelj

University of California, Irvine

I got fascinated by comparison upon my first visit to the United States when I was a teenager. "Hi, how are you doing?" said a man in a uniform at the entrance to a shopping mall. I blushed and couldn't possibly answer. This was a personal question. I didn't know the guy. That this was a customer service rep automatically uttering a phrase without expecting an answer did not occur to me. After all, there was nothing like "customer service" in socialist Yugoslavia where I grew up, not to mention shopping malls. Besides, I always thought that the purpose of asking a question is to receive an answer. So I was happy that the friends I was with (who had been acculturated to the American ways already) pushed me along before I made a fool of myself and started explaining to the guy that he must have mistaken me for someone else.

This little incident got me thinking about differences across societies, and I would go on to add many more impressions during the four years when I attended Augsburg College in Minneapolis. Like the one about the concept of race. Growing up in a terribly homogenous community where I had never seen a person of a different racial background than mine, how could I know that a college friend who had what I thought was only slightly darker skin compared to mine was in fact considered as an African American. And then hearing all the stories from fellow international students about their homelands and customs... what a treat! Although Yugoslavia was much more open than other communist states - after all, I did visit my aunt in Italy almost every summer, and once even accompanied my mother on her labor union trip to Czechoslovakia - still, exposure to other cultures was limited, to say the least.

At that point, I had no idea, however, that *sociology* is a field that would allow me to study cross-societal differences systematically. I thought I

would study economics. To be honest, I thought I *should* study economics. You see, when my father won a National Medal for Innovation from Marshall Tito he was interviewed for a prominent newspaper and in that interview he mentioned that he would like his daughter to become an economist. Truth be told, my father never ever said to me what I should or should not study. But the copy of the interview was framed on our living room wall so no words were necessary. I went to take the entrance exams to the Faculty of Economics in Ljubljana. I survived the challenge. Communism didn't. Regimes collapsed, countries liberalized, and I got a chance to pursue liberal arts education in a capitalist country *par excellence*. My personal trajectory was crucially influenced by the historic events of 1989. I forgot the Faculty of Economics and eagerly packed my life into two suitcases to embark on my very own cross-cultural experience at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. I started taking economics classes but by my sophomore year I finally admitted to myself that I was more interested in people than abstract curves of demand and supply. In the first semester of my junior year I took three sociology classes. After that I took all the other sociology classes offered at Augsburg, plus an independent study in sociological theory and a gender course at a sister college. Still, I didn't think I knew enough to be considered a sociologist so I decided to go for grad school. It was time to write a personal statement about what I wanted to study. I didn't have to think long. You see, each summer during college I would return to my home country, which had in the meanwhile acquired a whole new identity - no longer Yugoslavia, but Slovenia, a sovereign state for the very first time in history. My summer visits felt like going to a living laboratory. Such rapid societal transformations that one could hardly keep track of the changes. Transition with a capital T, Western economics experts professed. Party, Plan, Collectivism today, Plurality, Market, Self-Interest tomorrow. But as most sociologists countered, the lived experiences have been much more complex and certainly not as natural as the Privatization and Democracy advisors made it sound. As far as I was concerned, it was not merely a choice of a study subject. I *had to* try to untangle this complexity. I had to try to understand what has been happening to my family, to my community, to my country, to more than a hundred million people from Central and Eastern Europe. I

wrote that in my graduate school applications. It seems to have worked with the admissions committee at Princeton.

Going back to the U.S. each September helped to keep the comparative lens in focus. This was *very* important. Certainly, the insider role offers tremendous advantages but it also easily blurs the researcher's vision. I kept thinking of Weber: our biography can guide the choice of our study subject as long as our study adheres to scientific standards once we embark on it.

But with so many changes going on in front of my eyes, the next challenge emerged: how to focus on just one aspect manageable for a research project. Wonderful Princeton faculty were clearly instrumental but so was – again – my biography. Or better, my father's biography. In weekly phone conversations with my family on Sundays at 2pm (8pm their time), I would hear about my dad's job and the drama that was unfolding in his company. A medium-sized postsocialist firm restructuring to adapt to market standards was being courted by American investors. What a wonderful opportunity for them I thought. A chance to access worldwide markets, upgrade technologically and managerially, and most of all, receive a huge capital injection for an ailing patient firm. However, the middle managers and workers of the firm thought just the opposite. They feared that Americans were going to mercilessly downsize and ruin the community character of the company. Some were very blunt: we shouldn't care about the money, it's the soul of the company that counts! The events culminated in the company wide protests against the foreign acquisition. Americans didn't think such hostility was a good ground to start the business and withdrew their offer after almost a year of negotiations. But this was not the end of the story. A year later half of this company was acquired by a German multinational, without any protest, without any fear that the company would lose its soul. How could this be? After all, foreign investment transactions, economists insist, are based on rational efficiency considerations and a straightforward risk and return assessment. What I kept hearing about from conversations with my father was more about power struggles, social ties, cultural conceptions, emotions and how German capital was different than American capital. Luck-

ily, I was not studying economics but sociology. Even better, I was taking a terrific economic sociology seminar led by Viviana Zelizer and came to understand that the role of social forces in economic processes was not an anomaly but a standard to be expected in any practical economic transaction, made particularly apparent in conditions of uncertainty. And if anything, uncertainty was paramount in transforming Central and Eastern Europe. I decided to find out more rigorously to what extent social forces influenced foreign investment into postsocialist countries. I wrote a paper for a class which was later published in *Social Forces*. I satisfied some of my curiosity but many questions remained unanswered. I remained fascinated by the social embeddedness of transformations from socialism to capitalism. Because private foreign investment did not exist during socialism, studying its penetration into the region after 1989 was a strategic research site to understand how markets are created and how they operate. This is how from family conversations a dissertation topic was born.

Almost seven years later, this research is being published as a book entitled *From Communists to Foreign Capitalists: The Social Foundations of Foreign Direct Investment in Postsocialist Europe*, scheduled to come out at the end of the year with Princeton University Press. I hope the book stands for a rigorous study that exposes the embeddedness of postsocialist economies. I show how inflows of foreign investment into eleven European postsocialist countries after 1989 depend on degrees of market institutionalization and legitimization by postsocialist states, trying to balance domestic interests and international pressures. I also show how, at a micro level, foreign investment transactions are enabled and constrained by networks, politics and culture, and negotiated by practical actors swimming creatively in the sea of uncertainty. At the same time, and in a true C. Wright Mills tradition, my research links biography and history: seeing in my father's personal experience a microcosm of grand social transformations that fundamentally changed lives of more than a hundred million people from Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of Communist regimes, is the sociological imagination that inspires the book.



Recent Dissertations

ASSIMILATION AND THE MEANING OF AMERICA, 1915-2005

Shannon Latkin Anderson
University of Virginia, 2007

This thesis examines contested notions of American national identity over the period 1915-2005, using dialogical discourse analysis and the methods of historical sociology. Based upon the claim that thoughts about assimilation reveal thoughts about the nation, the investigation centers on three historical moments where immigration was a prominent national issue, using as its focal writings Horace Kallen's "Democracy vs. the Melting-Pot" (1915), Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *Beyond the Melting Pot* (1963), and Samuel Huntington's *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (2004).

The findings show that throughout the period under investigation, multiple narratives of America were always present, with particular ones being dominant in each moment. The examination of such imaginings of America illustrates the way social context affects not only which stories are more or less compelling in a given moment, but also the particulars of these stories. This dissertation locates a narrative arc such that nativist rhetoric commonly espoused at the turn of the twentieth century during a period of high levels of immigration is being revised and offered anew in the midst of the high levels of immigration present at the turn of the twenty-first century. Simultaneously, and provocatively, the story of the assimilative powers of America as a melting pot has been able to fully establish itself as one definition of America, while that of a diverse, pluralist America—a multicultural America—has also gained standing.

The appeal and traction of particular imaginings of America prove to be dependent upon many social factors. This study looks at assimilation, wars and foreign affairs, the economy, and other social movements. Each of these speaks to the concerns of this project, but ultimately my findings show that immigration and involvement in foreign affairs play the more significant roles in the construction, maintenance, and renovation of national stories.

THE RISE OF THE COMPETITION STATE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: THE POLITICS OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

Jan Drahokoupil
Central European University, Budapest, 2007

This thesis explains convergence of state strategies in the Visegrád Four region in the late nineties. After a period of distinctive national strategies, which — with the exception of Hungary — promoted domestic accumulation, the states in the region converged towards distinctive models of the competition state. The dominant state strategies aim at promoting competitiveness by attracting foreign direct investment. The states are thus increasingly internationalized, forging economic globalization by facilitating capital accumulation for transnational investors. This thesis investigates three key moments of the processes of convergence and state internationalization. First, it analyzes the path shaping moment of the early nineties, in which the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia embarked the internally-oriented strategies and only Hungary promoted foreign-based accumulation. Second, it focuses on the moment of convergence in the late nineties when states throughout the region became internationalized. Third, it investigates political and social support of the competition state in respective countries and mechanisms reproducing it hegemony.

The peripheral mode of integration into which the CEE embarked at the beginning of the nineties made the region structurally dependent on foreign capital. These structural exigencies represent the main mechanism that accounts for the convergence towards the competition state in CEE. In the early nineties, the reform strategies throughout the V4 have followed the neoliberal doctrine of macroeconomic stabilization, market liberalization, and privatization. This installed political-economic structures that made the exigencies of global accumulation a political prerequisite for national strategies in the region. However, they were translated into political outcomes only by the end of the nineties. The transnationally constituted domestic politics explains both the initial inward-oriented outcomes and later shifts toward the competition state. The emergence of the externally

oriented competition states has been conditioned upon the unfolding hegemony of what I call the comprador service sector within the states and societies in CEE. This process has created a field of force that allowed this sector to come to the forefront as its interests could become “universal.” The comprador service sector helped to translate the structural power of transnational capital into tactical forms of power that enabled agential power to work in sync with the interests of the multinationals.

The competition state has a solid political, institutional, and structural underpinning within the V4. Structurally, foreign-led economies have crystallized in the region, with foreign control of leading export industries and most of the public utilities, and unprecedented levels of foreign dominance in the banking sector. Institutionally, EU regulatory framework locks in the state strategies in the competitive direction. Politically, it is promoted by a power bloc centred around the multinational investors and organized by the comprador service sector. Formation of what I call the investment promotion machines and resistance to them shows the dynamic and continuous reproduction of the competition state and its political underpinning. Investment promotion machines are largely constituted ad-hoc around particular FDI-reliant regional development projects or even around promoting single investor within the region. These temporary articulations of the power bloc get mobilized when a locality is promoted to lure an investor in the investment-location bidding. Investment promotion machines are extremely effective in promoting the interests of investors within the state and in the regions.

**TRAJECTORIES OF HEGEMONY AND
DOMINATION IN COLOMBIA: A COM-
PARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE COFFEE,
BANANA AND COCA REGIONS FROM THE
RISE OF DEVELOPMENTALISM TO THE
ERA OF NEOLIBERALISM**

Phillip A. Hough

Johns Hopkins University, 2007

This study is a comparative analysis of class relations in three sub-national regions in Colombia (coffee, banana, and cattle/coca producing regions). The author uses comparative-historical methods including archival data collected from

governmental and non-governmental sources, secondary sources, and primary sources to address two key questions. First, why do we find starkly different elite-subaltern relations in these regions *at the same period in history* (the post-war developmental era)? The coffee region was characterized by a consensual form of rule, the banana region was characterized by a coercive form of rule, and the cattle/coca region was characterized by a situation in which local cattle elites lost their control over the region to guerrillas who established a war economy based upon coca production. The second question is why these relatively stable forms of class relations in each region collapsed in the 1980s and 1990s?

Regarding question one, the study confirms Wallerstein’s thesis linking position in the core-periphery hierarchy of wealth to different local forms of class rule. Yet, it finds that this position is subject to change, depending upon the capacity of local elites to move up the global commodity chain through “collective action” efforts. During the developmental era, Colombia’s coffee elites were successful in this endeavor while banana elites were not. Regarding question two, the study finds that the world-systemic shift from developmentalism to neoliberal globalization helps explain the collapse of consensual class relations in the coffee region. In the banana region, however, the democratization of the state played the most decisive role in undermining the foundations of coercive elite rule. Finally, the shift from guerrilla “counter-hegemony” to a situation characterized by both guerrilla and elite domination of local coca farmers in Caquetá is best explained by national-level economic transformations (the increasing importance of the cattle industry) and global geopolitical processes (the U.S. “war on drugs” and “war on terror”).

Announcements

Francesco Duina's *The Social Construction of Free Trade: The EU, NAFTA, and Mercosur* (Princeton University Press 2006) was selected as an Outstanding Academic Title for 2006 by Choice Magazine. The book's Chinese translation is forthcoming with China Social Science Press.

Julian Go (Boston University) received an ASA-NSF Funds for the Advancement of the Discipline Award for his project "Cycles of Global Power: the United States and British Empires Compared."

Suzanne H. Risley's dissertation, entitled "Cultures of Security, Cultures of Rights: Security, Rights Activism, and the Growth of Anarchism in Catalunya (1896-1909)" won the 2006-7 Dean's Outstanding Dissertation Award for the best dissertation in the social sciences at NYU.

New Publications of Section Members

Agassi, Judith Buber. 2007. *The Jewish Women Prisoners of Ravensbrück*. Oxford: Oneworld Publication.

Benoit, Oliver. 2007. "Essentiment and the Gairy social Revolution," Small AXE, vol. 22.

Bodemann, Michal and Gokce Yurdakul. 2007. *Citizenship and Immigrant Incorporation: Comparative Perspectives on North America and Western Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Calvo, Esteban and John B. Williamson. Forthcoming. "Old-Age Pension Reform and Modernization Pathways: Lessons for China from Latin America." *Journal of Aging Studies*. Available at: <http://www2.bc.edu/~calvobra/>

Chorev, Nitsan. 2007. *Remaking U.S. Trade Policy: From Protectionism to Globalization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Chorev, Nitsan. 2007. "A Fluid Divide: Domestic and International Factors in U.S. Trade Policy

Formation." *Review of International Political Economy* 14(4): 653-689

Cook-Martín, David. Forthcoming. "Rules, Red Tape, and Paperwork: The Archeology of State Control over International Migration, 1853-1930." *Journal of Historical Sociology*.

Duina, Francesco and Tapio Raunio. 2007. "The Open Method of Coordination and National Parliaments: Further Marginalization or New Opportunities?" *Journal of European Public Policy* 14 (4).

Essary, Elizabeth H. Forthcoming. "Speaking of Globalization... Frame Analysis and the World Society." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*.

Gerson, Judith and Diane Wolf. eds. 2007. *Sociology Confront the Holocaust: Memories and Identities in Jewish Diasporas*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gerteis, Joseph. 2007. *Class and the Color Line: Interracial Class Coalition in the Knights of Labor and the Populist Movement*: Duke University Press, October 2007.

Go, Julian. 2007. "The Provinciality of American Empire: 'Liberal Exceptionalism and US Colonial Rule.'" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (1).

Go, Julian. 2007. "Waves of American Empire, 1787-2003: US Hegemony and Imperialistic Activity from the Shores of Tripoli to Iraq." *International Sociology* 22 (1).

Hempel, Lynn. Forthcoming. "Power, Wealth, and (Sometimes) Collective Identity: Resource Access and Ethnic Identification in a Plural Society" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*.

Johnston, Hank and Paul Almeida, eds. 2006. *Latin American Social Movements: Globalization, Democratization, and Transnational Networks*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Kalberg, Stephen. 2007. "A Cross-National Consensus on a Unified Sociological Theory?" *European Journal of Social Theory* 10 (2): 206-219.

Kalberg, Stephe. 2006. "Ascetic Protestantism and American Uniqueness: The Political Cultures of Germany and the United States Compared," pp. 231-48 in *Safeguarding German-American Relations in the New Century*, edited by Hermann Kurthen, Antonio V. Menendez-Alarcon, and Stefan Immerfall. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Krippner, Greta R. 2007. "The Making of U.S. Monetary Policy: Central Bank Transparency and the Neoliberal Dilemma." *Theory and Society* 36(6) [Forthcoming].

Labreg, Marnia. 2007. *Torture and the Twilight of Empire: From Algiers to Baghdad*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Labreg, Marnia. 2007. "Battling for a 'New Man': Fanon and the French Counter-Revolutionaries," *Human Architecture V*, Special Double-Issue.

Loveman, Mara and Jeronimo O. Muniz. 2007. "How Puerto Rico Became White: Boundary Dynamics and Intercensus Racial Reclassification." *American Sociological Review* 72 (6): 915-939. [Forthcoming]

Mielants, Eric. 2007. *The Origins of Capitalism and the Rise of the West*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Minter, William, Gail Hovey, and Charles Cobb Jr., eds. 2007. *No Easy Victories: African Liberation and American Activists over a Half Century, 1950-2000*. Africa World Press. With a foreword by Nelson Mandela.

Pangsapa, Piya. 2007. *Textures of Struggle: The Emergence of Resistance among Garment Workers in Thailand*. Ithaca: ILR / Cornell University Press.

Ranganathan, Shilpa and Harland Prechel. 2007. "Political Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Globalization in India: Redefining Corporate Property Rights to Facilitate Foreign Ownership, 1991-2005," in *Research in Political Sociology* 16: 201-

244.

Robertson, Roland. 2007. "Open Societies, Closed Minds? Exploring the Ubiquity of Suspicion and Voyeurism." *Globalizations* 4 (3): 399-416.

Robertson, Roland and Richard Giulianotti, eds. 2007. *Globalization and Sport*. Blackwell.

Robertson, Roland and Jan Aart Scholte, eds.. *Encyclopedia of Globalization*, 4 Volumes, MTM/Routledge.

Smilde, David. 2007. *Reason to Believe: Cultural Agency in Latin American Evangelicalism*. University of California Press.

Tiryakian, Edward A. 2007. "Introduction," pp. vii-xxxi in Pitirim A. Sorokin, *The United States and Russia*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Tiryakian, Edward A. 2007. "When is the Nation no Longer?" Pp. 55-74 in Andreas Sturm, M. Young, and E. Zuelow, eds. *Nationalism in a Global Era: The Persistence of Nations*. Routledge Studies in Nationalism and Ethnicity. London & New York: Routledge.

Tiryakian, Edward A. 2007. "Coping with Collective Stigma: The Case of Germany," pp. 359-398 in Daniel Rothbart and Karina Korostelina, eds. *Identity, Morality, and Threat: Studies in Violent Conflict*. Lanham, MD: Lexington/Rowman and Littlefield.

Wilde, Melissa J. 2007. *Vatican II: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Change*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Call for Papers

The XXXIInd Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS) Conference will take place 24-26 April, 2008, at Fairfield University, in Fairfield, CT. The organizers invite papers relating to the theme, "Flows of People and Money across the World-System." Please send your 2-3 page proposals (abstracts) or entire paper as an electronic attachment to: pews2008@yahoo.com by December 31st.

The International Sociological Association's Thematic Group #02 on Comparative and Historical Sociology is participating at the International Sociological Association's 1st Forum (Barcelona, Spain, Sept. 5-8, 2008, see http://www.isa-sociology.org/barcelona_2008/). The call for papers as well as related information on deadlines and themes are available at http://www.isa-sociology.org/barcelona_2008/tg/tg02.htm. For more information about the Group see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/tg02.htm>, where you will find the 2007 Newsletter. Contributions, announcements, and related information is sought for the 2008 Newsletter. Interested parties should email Victor Roudometof (Newsletter editor) at roudomet@ucy.ac.cy.

Global Studies Association New York City, Pace University, June 6-8. We have a great line up, Saskia Sassen, Immanuel Wallerstein, Giovanni Arigghi, Beverly Silver, Craig Calhoun, Bill Fletcher are all confirmed as plenary speakers. Please send proposal to me Lauren Langman, (Llang944@aol.com) & Jerry Harris (gharris234@comcast.net) by March, 2008. For more information see: <http://www.net4dem.org/mayglobal>.

Upcoming Events

Phil Gorski, Steve Kalberg, Joachim Savelsberg, and John Torpey are doing a panel on "American Exceptionalism?" at the Social Science History Association, November 15-18, 2007.

The panel, titled "American Exceptionalism?", explores the venerable question of American peculiarity from a number of different perspectives. Philip Gorski (Yale) examines the strength of conservative Protestantism as a political force in the United States by comparing contemporary conservative Protestantism to other currents in contemporary conservatism and with earlier forms of political Protestantism, not only in the United States, but also in England and the Netherlands. Stephen Kalberg (Boston University) explores the uniqueness of the civic sphere in the United States compared with that in Europe, and in particular its capacity, in various manifestations, to tame American "heroic individualism." Joachim Savelsberg (University of Minnesota) discusses legal proceedings against "evil-doers" and the "institutionalized good conscience" that they create in the United States in the context of peculiarly American cultural and institutional features and the country's strong position in the international community. Finally, John Torpey (CUNY Graduate Center) examines the meaning and varied uses of the term "American exceptionalism" and its usefulness for purposes of contemporary social analysis, particularly with an eye toward the prospects of progressive social policy.

Full conference program available at: <http://www.ssha.org/>.

The Comparative and Historical Sociology Section would like to congratulate:

Monica Prasad, Northwestern University

Winner of the Barrington Moore (Best Book) Prize of the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section for *The Politics of Free Markets: The Rise of Neoliberal Economic Policies in Britain, France, Germany and the United States* (University of Chicago Press, 2006)

Honorable Mention: John Foran, Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Committee: The committee members were Michael Mann (chair), Richard Lachman, and Ming-Cheng Lo. [Note: Originally the committee was James Mahoney (chair), Michael Mann, and Ming-Cheng Lo. When it became apparent that one of the main candidates was a colleague of James Mahoney, he recused himself, Michael Mann took over as chair, and Richard Lachman joined the committee.]

Andreas Wimmer and Brian Min, UCLA

Winner of the Best Article Award of the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section for "From Empire to Nation-State: Explaining Wars in the Modern World, 1816" *American Sociological Review* 71:867-897. 2006.

Committee: Marion Fourcade (Chair), Anne Kane, and Monica Prasad

Anna Paretskaya, The New School of Social Research

Winner of the Reinhard Bendix (Best Student Paper) Prize of the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section, for "Middle Class without Capitalism? Socialist Ideology and Post-Collectivist Discourse in Late Soviet Union."

Committee: Miguel Centeno (Chair), Ann Mische, and Amy Bailey

Thanks to all of the Committee members for their service to the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section!

In the next issue of *Trajectories*:

Special Feature on:

*From the Archives: Innovative Use of Data in
Comparative and Historical Research*

...plus a personal reflection by Peter Bearman, and more!

Contributions welcome: please contact the Editors at krippner@umich.edu
and Nistan_Chorev@brown.edu

