Sociology 316

HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY

Winter Quarter 2008

Instructor: Professor Gi-Wook Shin, E301 Encina Hall, 723-2408
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-5 or by appointment.
Class Meetings: Tuesdays 2:15-5 at Terman 332

Course Description: The seminar will survey major works in historical and comparative sociology, i.e., one that employs macro-comparative and historical methods as a form of sociological analysis. We will begin by reading programmatic and methodological statements about historical and comparative sociology, and then examine a range of published works embodying various theoretical ideas and methodological designs. The primary purpose of this course is to acquaint students with key works in historical and comparative sociology and thus reading and class discussion will be the core of the seminar.

Format: The course will primarily run in seminar format along with a brief introductory lecture by the instructor. Each student is expected to make presentations of assigned readings to stimulate class discussion. It is crucial for students to get prepared for class discussion by completing readings of assigned works for each class time.

Requirements: Each student is required to submit a total of seven position papers on topics of weeks 3-9. The position paper must 1) discuss the book’s main research problem, theoretical aim, and methodological issue and 2) offer student’s own assessment of the book with regard to these three areas, indicating both strength and weakness. The paper must be submitted on the day of class, prior to class discussion, to get credit. It should be typed and double-spaced with about one thousand words. Course grade will be based on class presentation and participation (30%) and position papers (70% = 7 x 10%).

Textbooks:
1. Theda Skocpol ed, *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology.*
3. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*
5. A Course Reader
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction

C.W. Mills, *Sociological Imagination*, Ch 1 (“The Promise”) and 8 (“Uses of History”)

Week 2: Theory and Methodology

Dietrich Rueschemeyer, “Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?” pp. 305-336 in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*.

Week 3: Weber and the Rise of the West


Week 4: Polanyi and the Great Transformation

Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*  
Skocpol, *Vision and Method*, Ch. 3.

Week 5: Moore and Paths to Modernity

Skocpol, *Vision and Method*, Ch. 10

Week 6: Wallerstein and the World System

Skocpol, *Vision and Method*, Ch. 9
Week 7: Brenner and Class Conflict in Social Change

“The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism,”

Week 8 Thompson and the Making of the Working Class

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, Preface and Chs. 6, 9, 10, 16
Skocpol, *Vision and Method*, Ch. 7

Week 9: Skocpol and Social Revolution

Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, Chs. 1-3 and Conclusion

Week 10: Emerging Research Agenda and Strategies

Theda Skocpol, *Vision and Method*, Ch. 11