Comparative Historical Analysis: How to Use Time to Study the Past

Module: BM Seminar Politikwissenschaft II (1336SPoWi2) (9 ECTS).
Open for PhD students (6 ECTS)
Block sessions (dates see below)
Instructor: Prof. Dr. Marcus Kreuzer, Department of Political Science, Villanova University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Contact: markus.kreuzer@villanova.edu (please do not hesitate to ask me about any questions about the course)
Office hour: by appointment.

1. **Course description and Objectives**

We live in a constantly emerging world in which studying changes across time are just as crucial as analyzing differences across cases to understand our contemporary politics. Comparative historical analysis (CHA) has long studied such historical changes and made important contributions to our understanding of how to use time to study the past. It goes back to the 19th century classics in historical sociology and shares more recently its ambitions with American Political Development, history of the welfare state, comparative political economy, conflict studies, historical institutionalism, global history, and constructivist approaches in international relations. These approaches all point out that time is to the past what grammar is to language and maps are to space: an essential tool of analysis. CHA is the umbrella term for these various literatures and the contribution they make to analyzing temporal dynamics of politics in a more systematic fashion.

This course introduces the contributions that CHA in four discreet steps.
1. The course surveys the key macro-historical questions that CHA has posed going back to the 19th century and the two challenges it faces in answering them: presentism bias and temporal illiteracy.
2. The course identifies physical, clock-like time and historical, developmental time as the two distinct elements of time that differentiate CHA from other modes of explanation. It also demonstrates how the varying configurations of these two elements of time defines three distinct strands of CHA: macro-causal analysis, developmental analysis and deep history.
3. The core of the course elaborates on the three modes of CHA, the questions they pose, the ontological assumptions they make, the sort of evidence they use, and ultimately how they study the past.
4. The course concludes by demonstrating how the most successful works of CHA use these three modes of analysis concurrently to fully leverage their complementarities.

2. Preparation:

Please send me **no later than June 22, 2019** a prior paper, thesis proposal, or academic article that relates to your current research interests. The more succinct the paper the better. Ideally, the document should be no longer than 15 pages. The seminar tries to be as hands-on as possible and thus will ask you to apply the course insights to actual research projects. We will use the origins of proportional representation as one of our applications, but I also want you to apply those insights to your own research. Please note that the final assignment asks you apply the course material to your own research. I therefore will be helpful for you and me if you could identify a research project in advance of the course. Please note, that the project does not have to have a CHA focus. If you are using a more conventional cross-sectional or experimental approach, this is fine. We then would simply explore what sort of temporal elements such approaches background and how the project would change if it were to use a more explicit CHA approach. CHA is not a hermetically sealed off approach that is

unable to communicate with different methodologies. Quite the contrary and this what makes it so exciting but at times also rather complex and challenging. CHA is not for the 9-5, draw inside the lines social scientists …..

3. Course plan block session

Mon 1 July: 14-17.30 Room: Seminarraum S90 (Building 103)	**Session 1:** **Macro-Historical Questions and Temporal Illiteracy** **Required Reading**: • Jørgen Møller. *State Formation, Regime Change and Economic Development* (New York: Routledge, 2017): 12-17. • Matthew Lange. *Comparative Historical Methods* (London: Sage, 2013): 22-39 • Paul Pierson. 2004. *Politics in* Time (Princeton: Princeton University Press): 1-10. (Don't read 10-17 yet) **Home for this Session:** • Two-page memo illustrating a current research project. Discuss the central research question, relevant cases, pertinent theories. Add a brief bibliograpy **Homework 1): Time Spotting** (Prepare for Next Session 2 • Prepare a 2-page memo evaluating Boix's and Rokkan's treatments of time and mode of comparison. • Stein Rokkan. 1969. "Electoral Systems," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* David Sills (NY: McMillan, 1968): 11-13. • Carles Boix. 1999. "Setting the Rules of the Game: the Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies," *American Political Science Review* vol. 93/3 (September): 609-13.
Tue 2 July: 16.00-17.30 Room: tbd	Office Hours
Wed 3 July 14-17.30 Room: Seminarraum 310 (Building 101)	**Session 2:** **Varieties of Times and CHA** **Required Readings** • Marcus Kreuzer. Forthcoming. "The Temporal Foundations of CHA," *Oxford Handbook of Politics in Time*. Klaus Goetz ed. p. 1-29. • William Sewell. 2005. *Logics of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press): 1-18. • Jørgen Møller. *State Formation, Regime Change and Economic Development* (New York: Routledge, 2017): 18-28, [Methods]. **Homework 2** (Prepare the Next Module 3) • Write a two page memo locating your research project on the time map presented in the Kreuzer reading. Try to differentiate whether it fall inside or outside the CHA border. And if it fall inside, whether, it uses a thin or thick CHA approach.
Thu 4 July: 10.00-12.00, 14.00-16.00 Room: tbd	Office Hours

Thu 11 July:
9.00-17.30
Room: Seminarraum 1
(Building 110)
	Session 3: (9:00-12:30)
	Macro-Causal Analysis: Time-Scaling and Theory Development
	
	Required Readings
	• Jørgen Møller. *State Formation, Regime Change and Economic Development* (New York: Routledge, 2017): 98-106 [Skocpol], 107-21 [State Formation]
	• Falleti, T. G., & Mahoney, J. (2015). The Comparative Sequential Method. In J. E. Mahoney & K. Thelen (Eds.), *Advances in Comparative Historical Analysis: Resilience, Diversity, and Change* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press*: 211-25 (skim 225 to 39)
	• Pierson, P. (2003). Big, Slow-Moving and Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics. In J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer (Eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 177-80. [177-207 optional].
	
	Session 4: (14:00-17:30)
	Developmental Analysis: Concept Formation and Periodization
	
	Required Readings:
	• Capoccia, G., & Ziblatt, D. (2010). The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies. *Comparative Political Studies*, *43*(8–9), 931-68
	• Dan Slater and Eric Simmons. 2010. Informative Regress. Antecedent Conditions in Comparative Politics. *Comparative Political Studies* 43/7: 886-96. [Skip 897-917]
	In class project:
	• Please make sure you will have closely read before class Nina Barzachka. 2014. "When Winning Seats is Not Everything," *Comparative Politics* (January): 209-20.
	• I will break you into group to discuss the following:
	   • How does Barzachka theoretically reformulates the Rokkan/Boix thesis. In what elements do the arguments overlap and depart from each other.
	   • Discuss a time-scaling strategy to reformulate a theory relevant in your research project. Briefly summarize the theory, identify the time-scaling strategy, conjecture of what new theoretical insights you might uncover.
	Homework 3: Conceptualization (Prepare for Next Module 5)
	• Discuss a re-contexualizing strategy for a concept related to your research project. Briefly summarize the concept, identify the original and new context, and conjecture what new conceptual insights you might uncover. Length 1 page
	• Prepare Powerpoint presentation for Session 6.

Fri 12 July: 9.00-17.30 Room: Seminarraum 310 (Building 101)	**Session 5: (9:00-12:30) Times Series and Deep History** **Required Readings:** • Jørgen Møller. *State Formation, Regime Change and Economic Development* (New York: Routledge, 2017): 139-50. • Ian Morris *The Measure of Civilization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013): 1-24**.** **Session 6: (14:00-17:30) Wrapping Up** • No readings. Final presentations. **Time-Spotting Presentation by Students** • Short Powerpoint presentations highlighting the temporal elements in student's current research projects. (More detailed instructions to be provided)

Requisites:

The course does not have any formal requisites. CHA welcomes scholars of all sorts of methodologies and substantive interests. However, to give you some advance idea of what to expect, I have two modest expectations:

1. Fox-like cognitive mindset:
   - a healthy dose of skepticism that the experimental method is adequate to answer *all* social science questions;
   - a mindset that values not just robust results but also theoretically grounded answers; that is, an intellectual orientation that values theory development just as much as testing theories.
   - a desire to explore the complementarities between different modes of inquiry and embrace the resulting complexities.
   - It certainly would be helpful, but it is not essential, if students have some familiarity with historically oriented social science approaches.

2. Please send me no later than June 22, 2019 a prior paper, thesis proposal, or academic article that relates to your current research interests. The more succinct the paper the better. Ideally, the document should be no longer than 15 pages. The seminar tries to be as hands-on as possible and thus will ask you to apply the course insights to actual research projects. We will use the origins of proportional representation as one of our applications, but I also want you to apply those insights to your own research. Please note that the final assignment asks you apply the course material to your own research. I therefore will be helpful for you and me if you could identify a research project in advance of the course. Please note, that the project does not have to have a CHA focus. If you are using a more conventional cross-sectional or experimental approach, this is fine. We then would simply explore what sort of temporal elements such approaches background and how the project would change if it were to use a more explicit CHA approach. CHA is not a hermetically sealed off approach that is unable to communicate with different methodologies. Quite the contrary and this what makes it so exciting but at times also rather complex and challenging. CHA is not for the 9-5, draw inside the lines social scientists …..

Course Organization and Expectations:

1. I will lecture for roughly half of our class time and devote the rest to Q&A, discussions, smaller exercises, and discussion of small homework assignments. Class participation therefore will be crucial and you are expected to have done the readings for each of our modules.

2. The homework assignments are related to a set of readings dealing with the origins of proportional representation. This literature is interesting because it has a singular focus, the adoption or non-adoption of PR during the first democratization wave, but contains wide range of different temporal frameworks. It thus provides our excellent baseline for exploring how different scholars did or did not grapple with the complexities of time. You will be asked to apply the class material to this literature through a set of small homework memos.

3. Term Paper
   a. 3000-4000 words. Submit it until August 31st via e-mail to Markus.Kreuzer@villanova.edu
   b. The goal of the paper is to review, extend, and apply the material to your own research interests and thereby assess your temporal literacy. Carefully review the literature related to your research interest and then select five articles to illustrate interesting variations in how they do or do not pay attention to time. Make sure that it contains at least one short/short article that serves as your base line. Try to find then article that have more of a CHA orientation and ideally use elements of physical and historical time. The more varied the articles are in their temporal approaches, the easier this assignment will be. So, devote some thought on which article that you choose.
   c. Elements of the paper.
      i. Annotated bibliography of your 5 articles related to you research field. Focus on their research questions and empirical findings. Don't discuss their treatment of time. (no more than three pages)
      ii. Compare the articles in terms of the following elements
         1. Type of research question posed
         2. Time scales used.
         3. Classify them into macro-historical analysis, developmental analysis or deep history.
         4. How are they using the elements of these three strands of CHA.
         5. Assess them in terms of the effectives in how they incorporate time in their analysis
         6. Select two of the articles and highlight how their different uses of time could complement their respective analysis.
   d. Please submit your paper as .docx document. All papers are electronically checked for plagiarism. Every paper has to include the following statement, signed and attached to the main text: http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/sites/cccp/Lehre/Erklaerung_fuer_Hausarbeiten.pdf

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5. Grading:

All parts of the examination must receive a passing grade in order to pass the module examination as a whole; i.e. a failing grade in one part cannot be balanced by an excellent grade in the other. The final grade is calculated on the basis of the term paper (40%), class participation (30%), and homework assignments (30%). No papers will be accepted after August 31, 2019.