All knowledge that is about human society, and not about the natural world, is historical knowledge, and therefore rests upon judgment and interpretation. This is not to say that facts or data are nonexistent, but that facts get their importance from what is made of them in interpretation... For interpretations depend very much on who the interpreter is, who he or she is addressing, what his or her purpose is, at what historical moment the interpretation takes place.  
Edward W. Said

What is not named largely remains unnoticed.  
Giovanni Sartori

Course Objectives

This course analyzes the nature of power and politics in the Global South. More specifically, it examines: the political and cognitive dimensions of the knowledge construction process in Comparative Politics; the ontological and epistemological assumptions of dominant theoretical interpretations of conflict, order, and change in South Asia, Africa and Latin America; the conceptual vocabulary of Comparative Politics and its capacity to represent/misrepresent the historical specificities of the societies of the Global South; the cognitive obstacles to, and opportunities for, the construction of "common horizons of significance" in Comparative Politics; and, the emergence and consolidation of non-Western interpretations of power and politics in the Global South.

Course Evaluation

Participation: 30%
Book Review: 20%
Essay: 50%
Books recommended for purchase


Assignments

Book review:

Participants in this course will review the novel *The Illegal*, by Lawrence Hill (Toronto: Lawrence Hill, 2015). Guidelines for this assignment will be provided by the instructor in class. The book review is due on January 28th **IN CLASS**.

Essay:

A research essay (17-20 double-spaced pages) will be due on March 31st **IN CLASS**. Students will determine the objective/focus and structure of their essays within one of the following general topics:

- Political and cognitive dimensions of the knowledge construction process in Comparative Politics.

- Ontological and epistemological assumptions of the dominant theoretical interpretations of conflict, order, and change in the Global South.

- The conceptual vocabulary of Comparative Politics and its capacity to represent/misrepresent the historical specificities of the societies of the Global South; and,

- Cognitive obstacles to, and opportunities for, the identification/articulation of “common horizons of significance” in Comparative Politics.

- The emergence and consolidation of non-Western interpretations of power and politics in the Global South.
Additional guidelines for this assignment will be provided by the instructor in class.

Participation:

Students in this course will be expected to master the assigned readings and to actively participate in the discussions that will take place every week. Moreover, they will be required to post a short critical assessment of the assigned readings on the Comparative Politics Bulletin Board that has been created for this purpose. Critical assessments must be posted no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday of each week. One student will formally introduce the assigned readings each week having read the other students’ critical comments on the bulletin board. To visit the Comparative Politics Bulletin Board on the web, go to:

http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/uwocomparativepolitics

Note: There is a penalty of 3% a day for late essays and written assignments, including weekends.
Course Outline

I: INTRODUCTION

January 7: Comparative Politics of the Global South: Do we Compare or do we Translate?


II. COMPARATIVE POLITICS AND YOUR BRAIN: COGNITIVE OBSTACLES TO, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR, THE GENERATION OF COMPARATIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

January 14: The Primacy of Perception and the Embodied Mind


**January 21: Cognitive Ethnocentrism and the Politics of Method in Comparative Politics**


**III. ORDER, CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

**January 28: Western Social Science and the Global South**


Michael Burawoy, “Open the social sciences: To whom and for what?” Portuguese Journal of Social Science, Vol. 6, No. 3, 137-146.

February 4: From Modernization Theory to Globalization


February 11: Modernization, Globalization, and Political Democracy


**February 25: From Dependency Theory to Neo-Structuralism**


http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/11325/97171192I_en.pdf?sequence=1


**March 3: The Search for Alternatives**


**IV. THE SILENCES OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS: DEEP CULTURE, EMOTIONS AND IDEAS OF GOD**

**March 10: Lost in Translation: Deep Culture**


March 17: Lost in Translation: Emotions


http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11133-006-9032-y#/page-

March 24: Lost in Translation: Ideas of God in the Global South


**March 31: Conclusions: Can Western Political Scientists Listen?**


