

POL480H/2038H  
Studies in Comparative Political Theory  
Winter 2018

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Office hours: Tuesdays 3-5 PM

**Class meetings:** Larkin 213, Mondays, 10-12

**Course description:**

The current historical moment of globalization provides the context for the emerging field of “comparative political theory,” that is, the study of “non-Western” ideas about politics. Both of these terms (“comparative”; “non-Western”) are in scare quotes to signal that they fit awkwardly with what scholars in this field actually seek to accomplish. Many of them do not use an explicitly comparative method in their studies, and the term “non-Western” is a backhanded way of acknowledging that political theory, as an academic discipline, continues to be dominated by European and North American traditions of thought. The terminology itself demonstrates and reproduces the intellectual biases that we seek to resist. A better terminology would capture the aspiration to “deparochialize” political theory, that is, to configure political thought as a human activity that arises universally just because the political orders of human societies inescapably arouse conflicting judgments about better and worse forms of order.

In this course, we will critically examine what “comparative political theory” is and what it would mean to genuinely “deparochialize” political theory. The course neither presupposes background knowledge of any non-Western thought tradition, nor does it aspire to provide students with sufficient knowledge of particular traditions to ground serious scholarly contributions to this emerging field. To provide that background would require a series of specialized courses in, e.g., East Asian political thought, Indian political thought, Latin American political thought, Indigenous political thought, African political thought, and so on. Rather, the course aims at sharpening our understanding of (a) the purposes served by “deparochializing” political theory; and (b) the various methods by which we can seek to serve these purposes.

There is, of course, an internal relationship between one’s judgment as to the purposes of comparative political theory and the methods one uses to advance it. The course is loosely organized around the hypothesis that if we begin from the fact of globalization as the impetus for comparative political theory, we should begin by highlighting the concept of “modernity” as a background feature of the world we share: modernity is a baseline condition for globalization. Territorial states, market economies, bureaucratic organization, and methodological and normative individualism are common characteristics of “modern” social formations. Yet, as we will explore at the beginning of the course, modernity does not take a singular form. If our common predicament is modernity, the promise of comparative political theory is to deepen our understanding of the wide array of human adaptations to it, and to explore the relative advantages and disadvantages of dominant and alternative responses to our shared predicaments.

### **Course readings:**

All course readings are available online, either as copyright-compliant postings on the course Portal site or as links to the University of Toronto Libraries electronic collection. Readings are posted under the “Course Materials” tab on the Portal site for the course.

### **Course requirements:**

- Participation. Each member of the seminar is expected to attend every class having carefully studied the readings and having read response essays on the Blackboard site. Active, informed, and thoughtful participation in class discussion, based on a thorough reading of the assigned works, will count for 20 percent of your mark in the course. Should you be unable to attend class because of illness, please let me know in advance, via email.
- Response essays. Four times during the semester, each student will prepare a 2-page (500 word) critical response to the week’s readings. These essays must be posted on the course Blackboard site no later than 6:00 PM the evening before class. Each essay will be worth 5 percent of your final mark, for a total of 20 percent.
- Term paper proposal. Due in class, Feb. 12, 2018. Write a four-page (~ 1000 word) proposal for your term paper, stating your thesis question and including a bibliography of the main sources you will be relying upon. Your bibliography should be comprised of at least two or three major works from the syllabus, but should also include sources from the wider literature to which you have been guided through your research. Proposals must be posted on the class website prior to the due date. This proposal is worth 10 percent of your final mark.
- Comments on other students’ proposals. Students will be assigned to provide commentaries of 1-2 pages (250-500 words) each on two other students’ proposals. These comments must be posted on the Portal site by and submitted in hard copy in class on March 6, 2018, in order that your colleagues can take them into account in preparing their final papers. These comments will be assessed for the thoughtfulness and incisiveness of their responsiveness to proposals, and will count toward your participation mark for the course.
- Brief presentation of final paper, April 2, 2018. These presentations will provide the class with a brief overview of your approach to your term paper for the course, based in part on your initial proposal and the feedback you received. Presentations will not be separately marked, but will count toward the participation component of the course.
- Term papers, due April 2, 2018, in class and via turnitin.com. Students are required to complete one term paper on a topic of their choice, based on the themes of the course. Undergraduate term papers should be 15-20 pages in length; graduate papers should be 25-30 pages. Late penalties will accrue at the rate of 1 percent per day, including weekends. All papers should be submitted in hard copy and via the course portal. The term paper is worth 50 percent of your final mark in the course.

### **Academic integrity:**

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Please make sure you are familiar with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at UofT, and you are expected to know the rules. I take plagiarism very, very seriously.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the turnitin.com web site.

### **Week 1 (Jan. 8): Introduction**

#### *Recommended:*

- Williams, Melissa S., and Mark E. Warren. 2014. A Democratic Case for Comparative Political Theory. *Political Theory* 42 (1): 26-57.
- Williams, Melissa S., ed. Forthcoming. *Deparochializing Political Theory* (overview). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Benedict Anderson. 2006 [1983]. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, ch. 1.
- Taylor, Charles. 2002. Modern Social Imaginaries. *Public Culture* 14 (1): 91-124.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (available online through UofT Libraries), pp. 3-11.

### **Week 2 (Jan. 15): What is CPT? (Part I)**

#### *Required:*

- Dallmayr, Fred. 2004. Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory. *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (2): 249-257.
- Euben, Roxanne. 2008. "Traveling Theorists and Translating Practices," *Journeys to the Other Shore*, chapter 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press)(available online through UofT Libraries), pp. 26-46).
- March, Andrew. 2009. What Is Comparative Political Theory? *Review of Politics* 71: 531-65.
- Freedon, Michael, and Andrew Vincent. 2013. "Introduction: The Study of Comparative Political Thought." In *Comparative Political Thought: Theorizing Practices*, eds. Michael Freedon and Andrew Vincent. London: Routledge. 1-23.

#### *Recommended:*

- Godrej, Farah. 2009. Response to 'What is Comparative Political Theory?' *Review of Politics* 71: 567-582.

### **Week 3 (Jan. 22): What is CPT? (Part II)**

#### *Required:*

- Tully, James. Forthcoming. "Deparochializing Political Theory and Beyond: A Dialogue Approach to Comparative Political Thought," in Williams (ed.), *Deparochializing Political Theory*.

- Jenco, Leigh. Forthcoming. "Recentring Political Theory, Revisited: On Mobile Locality, General Applicability, and the Future of Comparative Political Theory," in Willams (ed.), *Deparochializing Political Theory*.
- El Amine, Loubna. 2016. "Beyond East and West: Reorienting Political Theory through the Prism of Modernity," *Perspectives on Politics* 14 (1): 102-120.

*Recommended:*

- Von Vacano, Diego. "The Scope of Comparative Political Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science* 18: 465-80.

**Week 4 (Jan. 29): Mohandas Gandhi Interlude**

*Required:*

- Gandhi, Mohandas. 2009. *"Hind Swaraj" and Other Writings*. Ed. Anthony Parel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009 (available online through UofT Libraries).
- Bilgrami, Akeel. 2003. Gandhi, the Philosopher. *Economic and Political Weekly* 38 (39): 4159-4165.
- Mantena, Karuna. 2012. Another Realism: The Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence. *American Political Science Review* 106 (2): 455-70.

*Recommended:*

- Parekh, Bhikhu C. 2001. *Gandhi: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (available online through UofT Libraries).

**Week 5 (Feb. 5): Methods**

*Required:*

- Jenco, Leigh Kathryn. 2007. "What Does Heaven Ever Say?" A Methods-centered Approach to Cross-cultural Engagement. *The American Political Science Review* 101 (4): 741-755.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1993. "Thick Translation." *Callaloo* 16 (4): 808-819.
- Kaviraj, Sudipta. 2002. "Ideas of Freedom in Modern India." In *The Idea of Freedom in Asia and Africa*, ed. Robert H. Taylor. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. 97-142.
- Chan, Joseph. 2012. "A Critical Reconstruction of Confucianism: Some Programmatic Notes." Presented at the Deparochializing Political Theory: Beyond "East" and "West", University of Victoria.

**Week 6 (Feb. 12): Kang Youwei Interlude**

*Required:*

- Kang Youwei, *Ta T'ung Shu: The One-World Philosophy of K'ang Yu-wei*. 1958. Trans. Laurence G. Thompson. London: Allen & Unwin.

*Recommended:*

- Zarrow, Peter. 2012. "Kang Youwei's Philosophy of Power and the 1898 Reform Movement," ch. 1 in *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885-1924*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- (also review Leigh Jenco's piece from last week)

**\*\* READING WEEK: NO CLASS ON FEB. 19 \*\***

**Week 7 (Feb. 26): The Space-Time of Politics**

**Term paper proposals due today, in class.**

*Required:*

- Kim, Youngmin. 2008. Cosmogony as Political Philosophy. *Philosophy East and West* 58 (1): 108-125.
- Borrows, John. 2000. "Landed Citizenship': Narratives of Aboriginal Political Participation." In *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, eds. Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 326-44.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2000. At the Edge of the World: Boundaries, Territoriality and Sovereignty in Africa," *Public Culture* 12 (1): 259-84.
- Zaman, M. Raquibuz. 2002. "Islamic Perspectives on Territorial Boundaries and Autonomy." In *Islamic Political Ethics: Civil Society, Pluralism and Conflict* ed. Sohail Hashmi. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 79-101.

*Recommended:*

- Appadurai, Arjun. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Public Culture* 2 (2): 1-24.
- Chan, Joseph. 2008. "Territorial Boundaries and Confucianism." In *Confucian Political Ethics* ed. Daniel Bell. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 61-84.
- Ikegami, Eiko. 1999. Democracy in an Age of Cyber-Financial Globalization: Time, Space, and Embeddedness from an Asian Perspective. *Social Research* 66 (3): 887.

**Week 8 (Mar. 5): Concepts: Law**

**Comments on other students' proposals due in class.**

*Required:*

- Walzer, Michael. 2012. *In God's Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible*. New Haven: Yale University Press, Preface and Chapter 1 (available online through UofT Libraries).
- Borrows, John. 2010. *Drawing Out Law: A Spirit's Guide*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Preface and Chapter 1.
- Tan, Sor-hoon. 2011. The Dao of Politics: Li (Rituals/Rites) and Laws as Pragmatic Tools of Government. *Philosophy East and West* 61 (3): 468-491.

*Recommended:*

- Pocock, J. G. A. 1964. Ritual, Language, Power: An Essay On The Apparent Political Meanings Of Ancient Chinese Philosophy. *Political Science* 16 (1): 3-31.

**Week 9 (Mar. 12): Sayyid Qutb Interlude**

*Required:*

- Qutb, Sayyid. 2006. *Milestones (Ma'alim fi'l tareeq)*. Ed. A.B. al-Mehri. Birmingham: Maktabah.

*Recommended:*

- Euben, Roxanne L. 1997. Comparative Political Theory: An Islamic Fundamentalist Critique of Rationalism. *The Journal of Politics* 59 (1): 28-55.
- March, Andrew F. 2010. Taking People As They Are: Islam As a "Realistic Utopia" in the Political Theory of Sayyid Qutb. *The American Political Science Review* 104 (1): 189-207.

**Week 10 (Mar. 19): Concepts: Peoples and Nations (Part I)**

*Required:*

- Fanon, Frantz. 1963. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, Chapter 3 ("The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness"), pp. 97-144.
- Ochoa Espejo, Paulina. 2012. Paradoxes of Popular Sovereignty: A View from Spanish America. *Journal of Politics* 74 (4): 1053-65.
- von Vacano, Diego A. 2012. *The Color of Citizenship: Race, Modernity and Latin American/Hispanic Political Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 2.
- Alfred, Taiiaki and Jeff Corntassel. 2005. "Being Indigenous: Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism." *Government and Opposition* 40(4): 597-614.

*Recommended:*

- Smith, Rogers M. 2003. *Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

**Week 11 (Mar. 26): Concepts: Peoples and Nations (Part II)**

*Required:*

- Bhargava, Rajeev. 2002. Liberal, Secular Democracy and Explanations of Hindu Nationalism. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 40 (3): 72-96.
- Fitzgerald, John. 1995. The Nationless State: The Search for a Nation in Modern Chinese Nationalism. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* (33): 75-104.
- Doak, Kevin Michael. 1997. "What is a Nation and Who Belongs? National Narratives and the Ethnic Imagination in Twentieth-Century Japan." *American Historical Review* 102 (2): 283-309.

**Week 12 (Apr. 2): Review and Student Presentations**

**Term papers due today, in class.** Each student will make a very brief presentation of her or his term paper.