From socialism via anti-imperialism to nationalism : EDA-TIP : socialist contest over Cyprus

Christofis, N.

Chapter 1
Methodology

The History of Comparative History: Changes and Evolution in Methods

More than three quarters of a century ago, Marc Bloch[1] suggested that the "comparative method will accomplish great things" and proposed that more historians should take up that form of doing history. Nonetheless, the comparative perspective existed long before Bloch made that statement as evidenced by the fact that Alexis de Tocquiville as well as Adam Smith and Karl Marx were using the comparative perspective long before him. However, a systematic approach was developed only in the 1930s, and it should be noted that the post-1930s generation of historians is not rooted in the older historiographic generation. By no means does that mean that they don't share the same roots in history; however, as with every "break," that specific "break" is marked by continuities and discontinuities with the past.

To summarize Peter Burke's points:[2] a) According to the traditional paradigm, history is essentially concerned with politics. On the other hand, new[3] history is concerned with virtually every human activity. b) Traditional historians tend to think of history as essentially a narrative of events, while new history is more concerned with the analysis of structures. c) Traditional history offers a view from above, in the sense that it has always concentrated on the great deeds of great men, statesmen, generals, or occasionally churchmen. On the other hand, a number of new historians are concerned with "history from below," in other words with the views of ordinary people and with their experiences of social change. d) According to the traditional paradigm, history should be based on "documentation." On the other hand, if historians are concerned with a greater variety of human activities than their predecessors, they must examine a greater variety of evidence (such as oral, visual, and/or statistical). e) The traditional paradigm did not take into account the multidimensional nature of people, events, movements and trends, and this has been criticized recently by some historians. f) In the traditional paradigm, history is objective. Today this ideal is generally seen as being

[1] Marc Bloch, "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies" in Frederic C. Lane and Jelle C. Riemersma (eds), *Enterprise and Secular Change, Readings in Economic History*, George Allen and Unwin, London, pp. 494-521 (in which footnotes are omitted). This is a translation of the paper Marc Bloch presented as an address at the International Congress of Historical Sciences, Oslo, Norway, August 1928 and was published in Marc Bloch, "Pour Une Histoire Comparée des Sociétés Européennes," *Revue de Synthése Historigue*, 1928, XLVI, pp. 15-50. Another English translation, slightly different from the first, can be found in Marc Bloch, "A Contribution towards a Comparative History of European Societies" pp. 44-81, in J. E. Anderson (trans.), *Land and Work in Medieval Europe: Selected Papers by Marc Bloch*, Harper and Row, New York, 1967.

[2] For elaboration on these points, see Peter Burke, "The New History: Its Past and its Future," pp. 3-6, in Peter Burke (ed), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed., Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001.

[3] For the meaning and use of the term "new" history, see Ibid.

unrealistic. g) Lastly, new historians' concern with the whole range of human activity encourages them to be inter-disciplinary in the sense of learning from and collaborating with social anthropologists, economists, literary critics, sociologists, and so on, in contrast to adherents to the traditional paradigm, which held to the discipline of history *stricto senso*.

Nevertheless, Marc Bloch is considered to be the father of "comparative history" because he, along with Otto Hintze, was among the first who attempted to codify it and relegate it to a "pattern," although his attempts to theorize it fell rather short. The former was influenced by the work of Emile Durkheim, while the latter drew upon the work of Max Weber.[4]

After the post-traumatic nationalistic experience and exclusionism brought about by World War I, it became apparent that a universal history "project" should be launched as an enterprise of salvation and thus save the newly formed nation-states from the impasse in which they found themselves. In this context, efforts were made to reconcile comparative history with the rest of the social sciences. Both Marc Bloch and Otto Hintze were already practicing their discipline and borrowing methods and approaches from other fields. The sociological influence that held sway over both of them, indicative of the influence of the fathers of sociology, indicates that first of all comparative approaches in the social sciences was more common than in history and secondly that history and the social sciences could be more effective together than apart.[5] In other words, as Peter Burke argues, in the chapter "Dialogue of the Deaf" in *History and Social Theory*,

> Historians and sociologists (in particular) have not always been the best of neighbors. Intellectual neighbors they certainly are, in the sense that practitioners of both disciplines are concerned (like social anthropologists) with society viewed as a whole and with the whole range of human behavior.
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> Sociology may be defined as the study of human society, with an emphasis on generalizations about its structure and development. History is better defined as the study of human societies in the plural, placing the emphasis on the differences between them and also on the changes which have taken place in each one over time. The two approaches have sometimes been viewed as contradictory, but it is more useful to treat them as complementary. It is only by comparing it

[4] See Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparative History," *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Elsevier 2001, pp. 2397-2403. It is noteworthy though that only in recent years has the term "comparative history" won a place in the encyclopaedias of the social sciences. See David L. Sills (ed), *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Science*, vol. 18, MacMillan, London, 1968 [bibliographical supplement 1979].

[5] For the convergence between history and sociology, see Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, 2nd ed., Polity Press, Cambridge, 2005 and for an earlier version of the previous one, see Peter Burke, *Sociology and History*, George Unwin & Allen, London, 1980. See also Charles Tilly, *As Sociology Meets History*, Academic Press, New York - London, 1981. One of the advocates of the rapprochement between history and sociology was Sylvia Thrupp, who founded the academic journal *Comparative Studies in Society and History* in 1958.

> with others that we can discover in what respects a given society is unique. Change is structured and structures change. […]
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> Historians and social theorists have the opportunity to free each other from different kinds of parochialism.[6] […]

As early as in 1928, Marc Bloch understood that comparative history, unlike comparative literature, had made little progress. Thus, in an influential paper Bloch attempted to answer the question "What is comparative history?" and what it means for a historian to "compare" and in doing so, guide new historians to take up this approach, without, as he claimed, having to be "discoverer of a new panacea."[7] For Bloch, a historian compares when

> … [he or she] selects two or more phenomena which appear at first sight to be analogous and which occur in one or more social milieus. He finds out how these phenomena resemble or differ from one another, traces their evolution, and, as far as possible, explains the similarities and differences. In order to have historical comparison, two conditions must be fulfilled: a certain similarity or analogy between observed phenomena – that is obvious – and a certain dissimilarity between the environments in which they occur.[8]

From the above explanation/definition, it becomes clear that in order for a historian to compare, he has to find similarities and differences. In this way, if a historian finds differences and similarities among his or her units of analysis, this proves that his or her subject is singular. Historians generally also attempt to understand change as something that occurs over time. As a rule, our interest in understanding, explaining, and portraying (even if not primarily narrative, but argumentative) are bound up with the structures of "before" and "after."[9]

However, even though most historians agree that "comparative history" provides valid answers for our questions and that only through comparison can myths be debunked, only a few have been willing to take that risk.[10] In today's era of globalization there are more and more scholarly works being undertaken, and scholars have been forced to broaden their focus of research to include a more comprehensive perspective. Nowadays, specialists who used to focus solely on their specific field are more skeptical than ever about their findings – in terms

[6] Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 2; Burke borrowed the expression "dialogue of the deaf" from Fernand Braudel.
[7] Marc Bloch, "A Contribution towards A Comparative History of European Societies," p. 44.
[8] Marc Bloch, "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies," p. 496.
[9] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems," p. 24, in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds.), *Comparison and History, Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, Routledge, Great Britain, 2004.
[10] See Marc Bloch, *op. cit*. and Sylvia L. Thrupp, "Editorial," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1958, pp. 1-4.

of if they have any validity or credibility – and hence they try to explore the same field from a different perspective out of their own locus. For example, it is unthinkable that nowadays an anthropologist could explore a religion without comparing/contrasting it with another religion or the same religion in another country, especially after the work of Malinowski and Clifford Geertz brought about such transformations of the field, and similarly, historians are expected to compare the country of his/her specialty with another.

Bloch proceeds even further with his categorization, though rather abstractly, on how a historian can proceed with the "comparative method." He identifies two categories: a) "the units of comparison are societies far removed from one another in time or space"[11] and b) "the units of comparison are societies that are geographical neighbors and historical contemporaries, constantly influenced by one another" and "during the historical development of such societies, they are subject to the same over-all causes, just because they are so close together in time and space."[12]

The comparison is to take place after separating the units or, in other words, social systems; in order understand this, we can refer to the "logic of comparative history" by borrowing from Sewell, who argued that the "comparative method [...] is a means of systematically gathering evidence to test the validity of our explanations,"[13] and our explanations are derived from the hypothesis-testing approach, which is essential for a comparative historian. In other words, as Sewell claims: "If an historian attributes the appearance of phenomenon *A* in one society to the existence of condition *B*, he can check this hypothesis by trying to find other societies where *A* occurs without *B* or vice versa."[14] However, Sewell argues that Bloch's three distinct approaches "share a common logic, the logic of hypothesis-testing," something that Bloch never realized.[15]

The post-WWII era marked a significant increase in comparative studies, not only in history or sociology but in historical sociology as well, which managed to put itself on the map as a "distinct" discipline.[16] The 1960s were marked by the appearance of studies such as

[11] Marc Bloch, Ibid., p. 496.
[12] Ibid., p. 498. The advantage of comparing societies close to each other in space and time is that such societies, largely because they constantly influence each other, are likely to be more similar than societies which are far removed from one another. Consequently, the experimental condition of "all other factors being equal" is likely to be more completely achieved. William Sewell Jr., "Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History," *History and Theory*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1967, p. 215.
[13] William Sewell Jr., Ibid., p. 209.
[14] Ibid., p. 208. See also Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparative History," p. 2401.
[15] William Sewell Jr., p. 209. These three approaches will be analyzed in the following sub-chapter.
[16] Theda Skocpol argues that historical sociology is not and should not be a subfield or self-contained specialty within sociology itself; see her article "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology," p.

Shmuel N. Eisenstadt's *The Political Systems of Empires*, Reinhard Bendix's *Nation Building and Citizenship*, Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, and Charles Tilly's work on collective violence.[17] And it is in this vein that economist Sylvia Thrupp founded the academic journal *Comparative Studies in Society and History* in 1958, just one of many that were to follow in the following decades that have as their main focus comparative approaches.[18] These scholars, however, were perceived as being exceptional and peculiar and their approaches were not seen as being the rule, and the mainstream method was to use quantitative or fieldwork techniques to study specialized aspects of present-day societies.[19]

In all of the above studies, and even in those of Bloch, we can more or less discern the methodological distinction John Stuart Mill elaborated in his work *A System of Logic*. He identified two ways to proceed: the "Method of Agreement" and the "Method of Difference." These two methods are still widely used by contemporary scholars. First, one can try to establish several cases that have in common the phenomenon that one is trying to explain and that share a common a set of causal factors, although these may vary in other ways that might seem causally relevant. Second, one can contrast cases in which the phenomenon to be explained and the hypothesized causes are present in other cases in which the phenomenon and the causes are both absent but are otherwise quite similar to the positive cases.[20] Moreover, some researchers have tried to collapse distinct types of comparative history into a single methodological logic.[21] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers identify at least three

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359, in Theda Skocpol (ed), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, London – New York, 1984.

[17] Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires: The Rise and Fall of Historical Bureaucratic* Societies, Free Press, New York, 1963; Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies in our Changing Social Order*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1964; Barrington Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1966; Charles Tilly, "Collective Violence in European Perspective," pp. 5-34, in Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr (eds.), *A History of Violence in America: Historical and Comparative Perspective*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1969. For an examination of these studies, see Victoria E. Bonnell, "The Uses of Theory, Concepts and Comparison in Historical Sociology," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1980, pp. 156-173. For perspectives from the 1960s, see Ivan Vallier (ed), *Comparative Methods in Sociology: Essays on Trends and Applications*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971 and Amitai Etzioni and Frederic L. Dubow (eds), *Comparative Perspectives, Theories and Methods*, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1970.

[18] For a list of (unfortunately) just American academic journals that frequently publish papers on comparative history, see James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 5, fn. 10.

[19] Theda Skocpol, "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology," p. 356, Theda Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984.

[20] Taken selfsame by Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, 1979, p. 36.

[21] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1980, p. 175. The authors go on to add that "this

distinct logics-in-use of comparative history, which are comparative history as "macro-causal analysis," which actually resembles multivariate hypothesis testing, comparative history as the "parallel demonstration of theory," and comparative history as the "contrast of contexts."[22] Of course, each of these employs its own patterns of analysis, depending on the questions that are asked, and naturally each has both strengths and limitations.

Without ignoring the great importance of these studies and others in historical sociology and the critical stimulus they provided for comparative history, it was, however, historical research in monographic form that made available to historical sociologists the thesis and research results that would enable them to carry out extensive comparisons.[23] Following a period of neglect in terms of the comparative perspective,[24] the influential studies mentioned above paved the way for more to come, and by the mid-1960s, sociohistorical comparisons had penetrated all disciplines more or less to the same degree[25] and represented the leading role in social sciences, constantly providing new methods and theories. And along with the new theories and methods that emerged, new areas of comparisons came to the fore, two of which were the comparative study of "alternative modes of production" as Immanuel Wallerstein called it, and the comparative study of revolutions.[26]

Heinz-Gerhard Haupt argues that in Europe, at least a handful of papers published since the 1970s on comparative social history – without being limited to a specific area – focus on three central issues: first, they deal with the explanation of national peculiarities, which often – because of political events – are seen as characteristic of social developments in the last few centuries. Second, they focus on the different pathways that led individual European societies into the modern age (their distinctive features are identified in comparisons of different societies, and between European and non-European cultures). Lastly, the third focal point has been the European model and its social characteristics.[27]

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logic is seen as analogous in all important respects to the mode of hypothesis-testing through multivariate analysis that characterizes those areas of the social sciences where statistical or experimental research designs prevail."

[22] Ibid. For analysis of these three types of "logics" see Ibid., pp. 176-187 and for some studies that combine different possible pairs of the major types of comparative history, see the rest of the article pp. 187-197.

[23] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparative History," p. 2398.

[24] James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.), p. 3.

[25] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, p. 2399.

[26] Immanuel M. Wallerstein, "Modernization: Requiescat in Pace," in L. Coser and O. Larson (eds.), *The Uses of Controversy in Sociology*, Free Press, New York, 1976, as quoted in Raymond Grew, "The Case of Comparing Histories," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 85, no. 4, 1980, pp. 763-778. For comparisons on revolutions see the illuminating study by Theda Skocpol.

[27] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt. All these studies have demonstrated methodical diversity in both quantity and in quality, include integrated social, political and economic factors, and have focused attention on both linear and cyclical developments. Furthermore, they have compared societies as well as parts of societies.

In terms of developments in the United States, Raymond Grew argues that "the excitement of comparison may be found more often in classrooms than in print and in the colleges where a few teach broadly than in the universities where many research narrowly."[28] Grew's argument, however, simply cannot be valid. Charles Tilly and Theda Skocpol are just two of the most exceptional comparative researchers who produced opuses in the 1970s that are still widely in use. In short, the animadversion and nullification of so many contributions is ungrounded. In addition, it was this generation of comparative researchers from the 1960s and 1970s that stimulated and educated a completely new one.

It can be argued that since we can discern their influence that the "big"[29] questions posed by the later generation of comparative historians date back to the classicists of the 1960s and 1970s. The difference, though, is that the newer generation of researchers reinstated the modern classic tradition "not by simply repeating the emphases and styles of the founders, but by addressing fresh substantive issues and by marshalling novel historical evidence and new methodological tools that have become available over time."[30]

Our studies may have small-*N*s, i.e. a limited number of cases, but our questions and ideas are big, and one way to think big is politically. As Philips Abrams claimed: "Doing justice to the reality of history is not a matter of nothing the way in which the past provides a background to the present; it is a matter of treating what people do in the present as a struggle to create a future out of the past, of seeing the past not just as the womb of the *present* but the only raw material out of which the present can be constructed."[31]

And it was those "big" questions that stimulated further investigation in fields that until recently had gone untouched. The comparison of male and female roles as regards gender issues, class, age, race, ethnicity, and nation or in ethnographic and demographic surveys are some of the latest fields that comparative history has penetrated. While economic history, population history and political history were the first fields in which comparative historical roles played an important part starting in the 1950s, there are only a few left now, if none at all, for which comparison is not widely used as the fundamental instrument of analysis.

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[28] Raymond Grew, "The Case for Comparing Histories," p. 776.

[29] By "big" question I mean questions about large-scale outcomes which are regarded as being important by both specialists and non-specialists. See the small, but well documented and lucid study by Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes and Huge Comparisons*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1984.

[30] James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.), pp. 7-8.

[31] Philips Abrams as quoted in Julia Adams, Elizabeth S. Clemens and Ann Orloff, "Introduction: Social Theory, Modernity and the Three Waves of Historical Sociology," p. 2, in Julia Adams, Elizabeth S. Clemens and Ann Orloff, *Remaking Modernity: Politics, History and Sociology*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2005.

To understand the accomplishments of recent decades, Theda Skocpol argues that it is important to realize that comparative historical science is a *doubly engaged* enterprise.[32] Aiming to understand real-world transformations, its practitioners are simultaneously enmeshed in scholarly debates about causal hypotheses, theoretical frameworks, and optimal methods of empirical investigation.

Historical sociologists deal more or less with social structures or processes understood to be concretely situated in time and space. They address processes over time, and take temporal sequences seriously in accounting for the outcomes. Most historical analyses attend to the interplay of meaningful actions and structural contexts in order to make sense of the unfolding of unintended as well as intended outcomes in individual lives and social transformations. Historical sociological studies highlight the *particular* and *varying* features of specific kinds of social structures and patterns of change.[33] Historians, on the other hand, take the "historicist"[34] approach. However, the best possible way, whenever that is feasible, is a middle one located within both of the two approaches.

Comparative historical analysts have always been curious about larger questions and thus they constantly set forward questions which include broader and more complex phenomena and relationships often at the "macro-level of entire societies or political systems" in the constantly changing historical framework of the time and space in which we live. Moreover, it is because of their "curiosity" that during the whole period of the evolution of comparative historical analysis not just one but many methods were developed. Various methods were drafted, developed and even invented to serve the cause of the hypothetical questions that the researcher seeks. And it is for this exact reason that conventional methods or models, such as rational choice or even postmodernism, which consist of a single narrow-minded theoretical theories/paradigms, were never widely used. The comparative historical researcher is free from orthodoxies and can choose any model or method – quantitative or qualitative, or even both – to pose the questions of research. The model is selected based on the questions that will be asked and the kind of data that will be used.

[32] Theda Skocpol, "Doubly Engaged Social Science: The Promise of Comparative Historical Analysis," p. 409, in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds).
[33] Theda Skocpol, "Sociology's Historical Imagination," p. 1, in Theda Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*.
[34] George Fredrickson distinguished between "historicist" and "structuralist" approaches to comparative history. However, a decade later he also tended to agree that a middle ground is more productive than the former. See his introduction in George Fredrickson, *The Comparative Imagination: On the History of Racism, Nationalism and Social Movements*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997.

All these approaches can be discerned in the rising wave of works published in the 1990s[35] and 2000s, which at the same time marked the revival of comparative historical analysis and established it as the leading and fundamental approach not only to "big" questions but to small-*N* questions as well.

Why Comparative History: Aims, Methods and Limitations

The practice of comparative history[36] is not limited to finding mere similarities and differences, but rather to analysing and reconstructing, sometimes from scratch, the institutions or ideas/ideologies which tend to make the similarities and differences worth analysing. To compare two similar institutions or ideologies in two different settings, for example, as in our case socialism in two different countries, can help us obtain a broader perspective on that specific issue and understand better the route and the changes socialism underwent. Thus, we will be in a position to contribute a small piece of the larger puzzle of international history, or total history. It is up to the comparative historian, as it is for the historian in general, to set up the strict parameters of their analysis and thoroughly examine whether there is a "crucial moment of time" during which the elements under study underwent ideological transformations, whatever they may be.

Many researchers have tried to construct a definition of "comparative history" and answer the question of why a researcher should practise it, but a clear answer remains elusive. While researchers have agreed on many common elements, they have disagreed on more, and probably therein lies the reason that a single, universal method has never emerged.

The same holds true for the discipline of history. Asking "why comparative history" does not make any more sense than asking "why history." Comparative history possesses most of the same elements as the discipline of history itself. Comparative history is, of course, a sub-discipline of "history," but in specific cases it can lead to more credible results, or more important outcomes, because of the benefits of comparing similar, albeit not identical elements. This is not to say that comparative history is not subject to limitations; otherwise it would forfeit its scientific character and therefore lead to unsubstantiated conclusions. Used

[35] For a list of great publications dating from the 1990s, see the bibliography in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, "Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas," pp. 27-38, in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds). Heinz-Gerhard Haupt argues that comparative historical studies are more common in the historiography on modernity than in theoretical-oriented comparisons.

[36] The term "comparative history" is a term that is best avoided, Raymond Grew suggested, because comparison is not a method. Marc Bloch preferred to use the term *histoire compareé* instead of *histoire comparative* in his famous call for comparison in 1928.

properly, comparative history could be referred to as "salutary" history and it focuses on particular results:

> Comparative historical analysis is best considered part of a long-standing intellectual project oriented toward the explanation of substantively important outcomes. It is defined by a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualised comparison.[37]

Despite the divergences in the notion of "historical discourse," one could claim that there is a common ground of agreement among historians in terms of a convergence of what history is trying to achieve. The historians of the twentieth century have remained committed to the critical use of evidence upon which the nineteenth century "scientific"[38] school insisted; yet at the same time they have recognised that documents do not tell their own story and that the historians of the nineteenth century, in letting the past speak for itself, were generally insufficiently aware of the presuppositions which enabled them to establish threads of historical development.[39]

In Michel De Certeau's words, the historian is "like Robinson Crusoe on the shore of his island, before 'the vestige of a naked foot imprinted upon the sand,' historians travel along the borders of their present; they visit those beaches where the other appears only as a *trace* of what has *passed*. Here they set up their industry. On the basis of imprints which are now definitely mute (that which has passed will return no more, and its voice is lost forever), a literature is fabricated."[40] Almost exclusively, there are historians who abuse historical documents to serve their own interests or ideologies. It is up to historians' judgement what their research material will be, and they select the archives and documents they will use to prove their theses. But, these choices may be lurking behind their beliefs or, as has been

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[37] James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds), p. 6

[38] The word "scientific" is used with undivided attention needed because of the ambivalent meaning many scholars attributed to it. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logicus Philosophicus*, Routledge, London, 2001 and Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd ed., Pearson, London, 1999; Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Routledge, London, 2002; Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, 3rd ed., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1996; Paul Karl Feyerabend**,** *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*, 3rd ed., Verso, London – New York, 1993.

[39] Georg G. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography*, Methuen, Great Britain, 1984, p. 11.

[40] Jeremy Ahearne, *Michel De Certeau, Interpretation and its Other*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1995, p. 10. Although De Certeau is right when he points out that history is full of traces that have passed, he claims that the past, or *time*, does not play a significant role in the historian's craft. In other words, he argues that (without a doubt) it is an overstatement to say that "time" provides the "raw data of historical analysis" or its "specific object." According to their methods, historians deal with the physical objects (papers, stones, images, sounds, and so on) that are distinguished within the continuum of perceptions through the organization of a society and the systems of relevance which belong to a "science." They work on materials in order to transform them into history. Michel De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998, p. 71.

widely proven, there are political choices involved, choices that make the historians' task even harder than it already is. Even when we are dealing with what we might call "uncontaminated evidence," the interpretation may be uncertain.[41] The difficulty is that in evaluating their evidence, historians can appeal, for the most part, only to probability and common sense, neither of which is a very precise yardstick.[42] No historian is a saint, and no historian is flawless.

Many scholars claim that history has to be objective, not dogmatic and disengaged from religious or political beliefs. However, it has been argued that such a claim is utopian. There is no unilateral history, because, simply put, there is no one singular "history" but rather "histories." And by saying "histories" I mean the different schools of history (to mention just a few of the major ones there are the adherents of the Ranke school, the *Annales*, the British Marxists, and the history of mentalities, but other newer schools have emerged as well, such as those that focus on gender studies, cultural studies, and so on). Depending on the issue, the approach varies. For example, Braudel's study on the Mediterranean uses the longue durée method, because for such a topic that was the best possible tool for approaching a subject like that instead of using a "national" approach which would clearly limit the findings of such research.

It would not be an exaggeration to claim that the profession of the comparative historian shares the same thoughts, practises, concerns and responsibilities with those of the historian. In Raymond Grew's words:

> [In part,] such hesitance reflects some of the admirable if modest qualities most widely respected and fully shared within the historical profession – caution, accuracy, unpretentiousness, and respect for the integrity of documents and for the particular.[43]

Historians, however, tend to reject comparison because of the faulty assumption that they deal with the specific, the singular and the unprecedented. On the other hand, only through comparison we are able to discern what is missing, to understand, in other words, the importance of a special absence.[44] As Barrington Moore notes:

> Comparisons can serve as a rough negative check on accepted historical explanations. And a comparative approach may lead to new

[41] John Dannon (ed), *The Historian at Work*, London, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1980, p. 5.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Raymond Grew, "The Case for Comparing Histories," p. 763. Raymond Grew distinguishes four categories in which "comparative history" serves as a catalyst: a) in asking questions, b) in identifying historical problems, c) in designing the appropriate research, and d) in reaching and testing significant conclusions.
[44] Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 48.

> historical generalizations. In practice these features constitute a single intellectual process and make such a study more than a disparate collection of interesting cases... Learning about the disastrous consequences for democracy of a coalition between agrarian and industrial elites in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany, the much discussed marriage of iron and rye – one wonders why a similar marriage between iron and cotton did not prevent the coming of Civil War in the United States.[45]

Comparisons function as a kind of foil and as "counter-history" to the history presented; they may have a positive, exemplary function or a negative, critical one.[46] The analysis of comparative-historical patterns can allow for a more adequate testing of established theory than does the study of a single nation, culture, or time period. In comparative history you cannot omit the international context. It is compulsory to situate the global within the particular, and vice versa. Many nations and societies tend to consider themselves to be superior, but analyses that stick to the national framework, and therefore see everything from a national perspective, create the inevitable proposal that national problems must have national causes. On the contrary, quite the contrary happens. Every national problem comprises only a small part of a larger puzzle within which a national problem can contribute to solving and in our case explaining who we were and who we are now.

One of the great advantages of historical comparisons is that they reduce the bias induced by culturally and historically limited analyses and interpretations of the social world. The above argument, however, can be reversed. In other words, it can also reflect a bias. Many studies argued in favour of the European phenomenon, or rather the phenomenon of the West, and in the process ignored or neglected the particularities of the East. One fine example is Samuel P. Huntington's article, and later book, that, among other things, overestimates Europe and protracts the existing bias.[47] Comparative historians should and must be aware of each country's particularities because social structures and processes in the past were generally quite different from those observed today, and contemporary institutional arrangements and social relations differ substantially among cultures, regions, and states.

[45] Barrington Moore Jr., pp. xiii-xiv.
[46] Chris Lorenz, "Comparative Historiography," p. 28.
[47] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 3, 1993 and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order*, Free Press, New York, 2002. For a critique of these see Gerard Piel, "The West is the Best," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 4, 1993 and Kishore Mahbubani, "The Dangers of Decadence: What the Rest can Teach the West," vol. 73, no. 4, 1993.

Patterns of historical change and continuity, moreover, vary from one country or culture to another.[48]

The collective memory of a people and history take part in an interactive procedure in which both the collective memory of a people and history itself are subjected to constant revision, rewriting and reconstruction. Comparative history steps in to supplement this difficult process by providing a more credible explanation using examples from different cases and criss-crossing data and information.

Chris Lorenz's critical remarks about comparative historiography are valid for comparative history as well:

> Since comparison is the only way to identify and explain both differences and similarities between national historiographical traditions, the comparative approach is the logical (though laborious) path to follow in historiography… Comparison is the only procedure to disentangle the general from the specific in each particular national context […].[49]

In other words, it is easy to draw the conclusion that one of the great advantages of comparative history is that it drives issues (such as nationalism, racism, etc.) to the forefront and demands that they be resolved in some fashion that is neither parochial nor culture-bound. Comparative analysis is a means of viewing history from a cosmopolitan or international perspective, which in turns makes the experience of individual nations more meaningful.[50]

The deeper roots of the quest for comparative history lie in a desire not merely to understand our immediate social, cultural, and personal selves, but to comprehend our underlying human nature. We seek answers to questions such as "Who are we?" "Why are we the way we are?" and "What else could we be?" Such questions may remain unanswerable without systematic comparative study or reflection. Comparisons of our society with others are, at least potentially, liberating exercises. If we approach our data with an open mind, we quickly discover that habits and beliefs which we consider to be fundamental may be seen by others as being marginal, and vice versa.[51]

Comparative historical inquiry is distinctive because its practitioners engage in systematic and contextualized comparisons of similar and contrasting cases. Systematic comparison is, of

[48] Larry J. Griffin and Robin Stryker, *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Gale, London, p. 384.
[49] Chris Lorenz, pp. 29-30.
[50] George M. Fredrickson, p. 7.
[51] Amitai Etzioni and Frederic L. Dubow (eds).

course, indispensable given the analytic interest in causal analysis. As previously mentioned, most comparative historical work aims for an explanation of important outcomes within delimited historical contexts, usually focusing on a small number of cases. While this approach does not directly aim for universally applicable knowledge, it represents an exchange that provides significant advantages.[52]

Methods

It is an undisputable truth that there is no universally accepted, unique methodology or even a set of elemental steps that a comparative historian should or could follow as far as the extent of their research is concerned. As regards methodology in comparative history, much progress was made due to the convergence of history and the social sciences. In this way, the great question that emerges in Peter Burke's book *History and Social Theory* concerning "how" took the discipline of history one step further. In fact, while Ranke used to ask "what," we should be asking "how."

On the other hand, while there is no single method for carrying out comparative history, if we accept the fact that history is more than a chronology of events, historians agree that any attempt to explain a historical event invariably implies a comparison with something else that happened somewhere else, whether earlier or later. Theoretically, everything can be compared with everything. As Jeet Heer claims, there is nothing wrong with "comparing apples with oranges," as the well-known expression goes. In fact, they seem eminently comparable: they are both fruits, both spherical, and both sold at the supermarket.[53] The present example provides a "rule of thumb" concerning what can and what cannot be compared. Thus, the units of analysis must lay bare fundamental similarities but they should not be identical. Theoretically and generally speaking, we could agree with the above argument. On the other hand, strictly and schematically, if we accept it unconditionally, it could be essentially problematic. For example, the fact that the structural changes that occurred in the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire and the structural changes in today's Turkey, generally referred to as reforms, are not easily comparable; we would definitely need strict restrictions and a setting of firm rules in order to proceed on such a route.

Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka argue that "there are important differences between the comparative method in the discipline of history, strictly speaking, and systematic

[52] James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.), p. 13.
[53] Jeet Heer, "Comparing Intellectuals: Apples with Oranges," *Canadian Review of American Studies*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2003, pp. 144-147.

social sciences. However, these differences are not fundamental, but rather differences of degree."[54] The "historicist" approach, as Frederickson calls it, follows the historical tradition as far as primary sources are concerned. Of course, comparative historians should skilfully utilize primary sources, but this is quite difficult to achieve unless there are merely two cases to utilize in a comparison.[55] Therefore, if there are more than two cases, comparative historians depend more on secondary literature as they comprise the main body of sources. However, yet again therein lies another difficulty, which is efficient assessment of the historiographical context, and as noted before, each historian interprets their sources in their own specific way.

A principle of historical studies is the impossibility of disengaging an event or series of events from their specific historical context, which means that that specific event occurred in that specific "time-place" due to a series of existing preconditions. Braudel justifies the above argument in the following manner: "History is the child of its time."[56] Historians attempt to comprehend changes over time as a form of development. In other words, they try to reconstruct the event and explain it within the given historical context because that is the only way it makes sense. If the same phenomena occurred in a different time and place, the two would be unrelated. For that reason, we can differentiate or isolate the events under study from their historical framework.

However, on the other hand, comparisons can slip past both chronology and the total context in question:

> One separates out the individual cases, subjects them to examination from a specific perspective, reduces their complexity, and studies

[54] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt – Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems," p. 24, in Deborah Cohen & Maura O'Connor (eds).

[55] Raymond Grew and George Frederickson are two of many who believe in medium range comparisons.

[56] Inaugural lecture given at the College de France, 1 December 1950; Quoted in Fernand Braudel, "The Situation of History in 1950," p. 6, in Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans. Sarah Mathews, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1980. "All historical work is concerned with breaking down the past, choosing among its chronological realities according to more or less conscious preferences and exclusions. Traditional history, with its concern for the short time span, for the individual and the event, has long accustomed us for the headlong, dramatic, breathless rush of its narrative" in *Annales E.S.C.*, no. 4 (October-December 1958), Debats et combats, pp. 725-753; quoted in Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences," p. 27, in Fernand Braudel. Moreover, besides the short time span, "there is the history of the long, even of the very long time span, of the longue durée." To translate this as "long duration" would be unfitting and of no service at all. In Braudel's mind, time is used as a general term without beginning and end, in contrast to most historians who tend to use it as a set of number of years. It is a period of time that encompasses not only a "moment in time" but rather a series of "moments" closely intertwined with each other that constitute the events and force that change of all factors. Moreover, the longue durée is a structural model according to Braudel, who treats it in terms of a process. "For us historians" he argues, "a structure is of course a construct, an architecture, but over and above that is a reality which time uses and abuses over long periods." Ibid., p. 31.

> them as exemplary cases belonging to a "universal," the *tertium comparationis*.[57]

Moreover, it is commonly argued that in comparative history the loss of context is less important than the number of reference cases:

> By choosing medium-range theories and argumentation on a moderate level of abstraction, one limits as far as possible both the loss of concreteness and the distance from the object of study. To do justice to the diverse kinds of relationship affecting a particular case, comparative historical studies include processes rather constellations, and link the analysis of individual situations with questions derived from the historical study of relationships. The integration of individual cases into the total social context can be intensified through close attention to the linguistic and conceptual specifics that define and influence these contexts.[58]

Comparative history is believed to provide the tools that researchers need to move away from the "national," although this is not always the case. Since the nineteenth century, the idea of the nation represented the proper unit of analysis for the past because it was, and in many respects still is, widely claimed that history is intimately entangled with the "nation."[59] Myths, traditions, and "eternal" enemies are all parts of this "imagined"[60] nation-building process. This image of past times created the stereotypes popular today which prompt the prolongation of past perceptions and in turn create an ahistorical, or even an anti-historical, present. The struggle to understand the "other" is at the same time the struggle for self-realization and self-consciousness as well. Historians, looking to legitimate their own nation-state did so by comparing it, implicitly or explicitly, with other nation-states, and through comparison a sense of legitimacy emerged together with a feeling of superiority. In this way, when historians undertake the heavy burden of comparison, they seek to disentangle national explanations and enrich the research traditions of a given society.

However, many scholars criticized the use of nations as the central unit of analysis, and numerous comparative works were subjected to critique. Notably, Ian Tyrrell argues that "the

[57] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparative History," p. 2401.
[58] Ibid.
[59] As the study of history becomes increasingly global, the national level will continue to decrease in significance. See Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparative History," p. 2402. The national approach has been called into question by two developments: microhistory and intercultural history.
[60] The term "imagined" here is a reference to Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London – New York, 2006, p. 101. This imaginative act of identification was based on the dispersed people in these societies who would never see most of the places in which their "imagined" compatriots lived.

research design of comparative history is narrowly conceived to test purely national differences rather than convey a more varied sense of the elements that make up the diversity of historical experience."[61] Tyrrell is right when he argues that the nation no longer has to be the unit of analysis. As an example of this, economic historians started using regions as units of analysis and micro-history as a comparative tool in their research. However, economic comparative historians who choose specific regions and specific places and times risk falling into the trap of missing the bigger picture.

Macro-history[62] on the other hand, does not limit itself to a specific time and place. It always keeps the big picture in mind while not ignoring the changes that occur in the units of analysis. In macro-analysis there are at least three distinct types of comparison, as noted before: comparative history as "macro-causal analysis," comparative history as the "parallel demonstration of theory" and comparative history as a "contrast of contexts."[63] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers's illuminating article elaborates on these three distinct methods using various broadly acclaimed and widely read opuses as examples for each case, and their analysis will be used here as a summary framework because it is considered to have greatly contributed to the methodology of comparative history, but the following discussion will omit the reference books used in their article.

In the case of "parallel demonstration of theory," the researchers attempt to convince their readers of their theoretical background and demonstrate that the same explicitly given theory can work well in a different setting. However, the researcher runs the risk of falling short when they are trying to prove their point because of the theoretical shortcomings that are present – as with any other theory – and in effect, he or she might neglect or ignore some important variables, which in turn could lead to a different outcome. In short, "parallel demonstration of theory" (equivalent to "illustrative comparison") seeks to establish the validity of theoretical arguments. For example, Eisenstadt in *Political Systems of Empires*

[61] Ian Tyrrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review*, vol. 96, no. 4, 1991, p. 1036. Tyrrell goes on to argue that comparison is not necessarily antagonistic to exceptionalism. However, only through comparison is it possible to understand if a case is exceptional, which will be characterized as the exception and not the rule. Comparison thus becomes the means for understanding exceptionalism or the singularity of a specific case, and not the other way around. Raymond Grew made a similar comment when he argued that "the tendency to make the nation (and the nation is defined by the state) the ultimate unit of analysis is the single most important inhibition on comparative study." He goes on to assert that "whole nations usually prove too grand, too comprehensive for the kind of fruitful comparison that uses discriminating logic to make a discovery or establish a point not visible before." See Raymond Grew, "The Comparative Weakness of American History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 16, no. 1, 1985, p. 93.

[62] Macro-history is understood to be in conjunction with macro-sociology. The latter tends to either analyze large collectivities or, more abstractly, social systems and social structures, whether these are societies, groups, cultures or organizations.

[63] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers.

employed this method to establish the validity of theoretical arguments[64] by drawing upon, among others, Weber. Eisenstadt's study is based on a comparative study of thirty-two political systems (twenty-seven of the thirty-two are protobureaucratic empires and five prebureucratic or patrimonial states). His objectives are to analyze the emergence and long-term fates of historical bureaucratic empires throughout world history, and to explain why some empires fell while others modernized. Eisenstadt sides with the possibility of systematically and theoretically explaining historical variations. For Eisenstadt, societies possess systemic qualities that are real and describable, and the nature of a society and of change in that society are taken into account.[65] In an ambitious study like this one, "only by drawing comparisons can one pattern be isolated from other patterns. The focus of a comparative analysis should be the delineation of similarities and differences among units – be these units societies or individuals or something more intangible, such as ideas or change."[66] By controlling the unit of observation and then categorizing the differences among those units, Eisenstadt equates comparison with classification, which is actually the essence of "parallel demonstration theory."

In the second case, that of "contrast of contexts," the researchers try to achieve through the juxtaposition of cases with an almost exactly opposite objective from that of "parallel comparative history." A crucial characteristic of this method is that the researcher does not neglect the historical integrity of each case, which shares an equal proportion of the analysis of the "contrast of contexts" for the researcher out of respect for the historical indivisibility of the unit of analysis. The units of analysis consist of irreducible wholes, each a complex and sociohistorical configuration in its own right. In short, "contrast of contexts" applies comparisons to bring out the unique features of particular cases to show how these features affect the unfolding of putatively general social processes. Above all, contrasts are drawn between or among individual cases. Usually such contrasts are developed with the aid of references to broad themes or orienting questions or ideal-type concepts. Themes and questions may serve as frameworks for pointing out differences between or among cases.[67]

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[64] Shmuel N. Eisenstadt; for a more recent study adopting "parallel demonstration theory," see Rose McDermott, *Risk-Taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1998.
[65] Gary G. Hamilton, "Configurations in History: The Historical Sociology of S. N. Eisenstadt," p. 91, in Theda Skocpol (ed), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*.
[66] Ibid., p. 96.
[67] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, p. 178.

One of the first researchers to use this approach was Reinhard Bendix, and his *Nation-Building and Citizenship*[68] is one of the best examples of "contrast of contexts." As Bendix argues,

> Comparative analysis of historical change attempts a closer approximation to the historical evidence than is possible either on the assumptions of evolutionism, or of system-theory, or of social engineering. As a result, it promises less in the way of prediction and of guiding social action toward defined goals.[69]

Bendix seems to agree with Barrington Moore Jr. when the latter warns against "too strong a devotion to theory" because it may do violence to historical facts. Moore, however, differs from Bendix in that he "searches for a theoretical explanation of the contrasting transformations he studies, identifying hypothetically causal variables in one case that are then explored in other cases with similar outcomes and, negatively, in yet others with different results."[70] Bendix's strategy, on the other hand, depends on contrasts among cases. Bendix avoids explanatory generalizations, and comparison is used to highlight the diversity of concrete historical experiences related to similar issues. Therefore, the ideas in *Nation-Building* are not presented as an explanation to be tested or applied. Rather, as Skocpol and Somers put it, "he sees them as either 'sociological universals' or middle-range ideal types meant to establish a frame of reference for the historical case accounts and comparisons between and among them."[71] In turn, the comparisons reveal the particularities of the cases. For example, in *Nation-Building*, forms of "political modernization" in Western Europe are contrasted with analogous changes (or their absence) in Russia, Japan, and India.

However, this kind of method pursues comparative history within the confines of a kind of "self-denying ordinance" against endeavours to develop new explanations.[72] Bendix's open-ended agnosticism, however, may in fact close the door on advances in theoretical generalization. Bendix, and in that respect many researchers who adopt this method as their approach, contrasts grand theories with his own metatheoretical guesses and assertions rather than examining their varied applications in light of historical evidence. In that way, he misses the opportunity to draw systematic delimitations and thus more specific causal propositions

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[68] Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order*, Wiley, New York, 1964.

[69] As quoted in Dietrich Rueschemeyer, "Theoretical Generalization and Historical Particularity in the Comparative Sociology of Reinhard Bendix," pp. 138-139, in Theda Skocpol (ed).

[70] Ibid, p. 140.

[71] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, p. 181.

[72] Ibid., p. 192. Historical cases may be used to point out the limits of general theories, but for the most part the focus is not on theories or hypotheses or explanatory problems. Rather it is on the cases themselves and the contrasts between and among them that underline the uniqueness of each.

from his analyses not only because of the inherent difficulties but also because he does not really aim to develop propositions transcending historical particularity.[73] In other words, the purpose of the theorists who adhere to "contrast of contexts" is to show that processes are distinctive and therefore they cannot be reduced to universal principles or theory. This leads to a selection of cases that appear to be similar; as such, this is an approach which also invariably cannot lead to the development of alternative explanations, due to its selective approach.

The third and last method is "macro-causal analysis."[74] With this approach, historical comparisons are used to test the validity of existing theoretical hypotheses and to develop new causal generalizations to replace invalidated ones. It is a multivariate analysis to which scholars turn in order to validate causal statements about macro-phenomena for which, inherently, there are too many variables and not enough cases. Macro-analytic comparative historians proceed by selecting or referring to aspects of historical cases in order to set up approximations to controlled comparisons.[75] In short, the purpose of comparative historical analysis is to develop new explanations, and to "set scope conditions" for theory. Macro-causal analysis employs comparisons for the purpose of making causal inferences about macro-historical processes and structures. Ideally, comparisons are used to generate new historical generalizations and thus theories, as is the case with studies such as those carried out by Barrington Moore Jr. and Theda Skocpol. New theories are constructed from the convergence or absence of features and consequences. Unlike parallel demonstration, which tends towards repetition, and contrast history, which tends to be more descriptive than explanatory, macro-causal analysis obviates the need to provide coherent narratives and makes it possible to focus on what is needed to address specific explanatory problems. In order to achieve its purpose, "macro-causal analysis" adopts the "method of agreement" and "method of difference."

With the "method of agreement" cases are chosen with same outcome (dependent variable), and possible causal factors among cases are compared. In the process, this approach tries to isolate one or a few features that are the same across cases, and finally, concludes that this is the causal factor producing the similar outcome. Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* presents one of the finest examples of "Macro-causal Analysis." Through

[73] Dietrich Rueschemeyer, pp. 159-160.
[74] Macro-causal analysis is marked by at least three different techniques: the nominal, the ordinal, and the narrative, and not only by a single causal inference. See James Mahoney, "Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis," *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 104, no. 4, 1999, pp. 1154-1196.
[75] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, pp. 182-183.

structural analysis, Skopcol focuses on how purposive action brings about revolutions. Her study compares the French, American, and Chinese Revolutions, and asserts that, in contrast to previous interpretations, social revolutions are the rapid and basic transformations of a society's state and class structures. She adopts both John Stuart Mill's "method of agreement" and "method of difference" in order to attain her findings. In a rather schematic way, an example of the "method of agreement" is presented in the following table:[76]

Example of Method of Agreement
Causes of Revolution in Russia, China, and France

Cause	Russia	China	France
Differences: type of government, religion, level of industrialization, and other factors			
State	Yes	Yes	Yes
+	+	+	+
Peasant	Yes	Yes	Yes
‖	‖	‖	‖
Revolution	Yes	Yes	Yes

The "method of difference" involves the selection of cases with different outcomes (dependent variable), a comparison of possible causal factors among cases, and attempts to isolate one or a few features that are different among cases, as well as a conclusion that this is the decisive difference (i.e. the causal factor) that produces the different outcomes. Again, using Skocpol's study, the following table can be created:

Example of Method of Difference:
Causes of Revolution in France and Germany

Causes	France	Germany in 1848
Fragmented elites	Yes	Yes
Military threat	Yes	Yes
Village autonomy high, so peasants could revolt	Yes	No
‖	‖	‖
Successful Revolution	Yes	No

At that point however, it would be wise to refer to the criticism Skocpol received on methodological grounds. For example, and perhaps one of the most elaborative criticisms on Skocpol work, Michael Burawoy criticizes her comparative method, based on John Stuart Mill's methods of difference and agreement. Burawoy claims that her method is based on the principle of *falsifiability* and instead proffers a method of science based on the progressive, deductive research program.[77] Furthermore, Burawoy argues against the strict applicability of

[76] Tables taken from http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~jraymo/links/soc357/class1_F09.pdf (accessed May 2, 2014).
[77] Michael Burawoy, "Two Methods in Search of Science: Skocpol versus Trotsky", *Theory and Society*, vol. 18, no. 6, 1989, pp. 759-805; For another criticism on Skocpol's work, see William H. Sewell Jr. "Ideologies and Social Revolutions: Reflections on the French Case," *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 57, no. 1, 1985, pp.

Mill's methodology by Skocpol, and he states, "In examining the outcomes of revolutions, Skocpol drops the strict application of the method of agreement and of difference for the looser strategy in which the ways of the old regime collapsed, and in which the timing and nature of peasant revolt, old regime socioeconomic legacies, and world historical events set in motion social struggles among political leaders trying "to assert and make good their claims to state sovereignty." Furthermore, Burawoy argues that "her [Skocpol's] explanations are "overidentified" with more independent variables than cases, to ask himself, "If her [Skocpol's] analysis of outcomes does not have the virtue of boldness and precision, does it at least avoid the pitfalls of her theory of revolutionary causes, namely, the absence of causal mechanisms and the artificial separation of cause and consequence?"[78]

As with the previous two methods, "macro-causal analysis" has some disadvantages as well. While numerous scholars have opted for this method of comparative approach, at the same time they tend to choose the "method of agreement" or the "method of difference" instead of trying to use both of them at the same time, whenever that is possible of course.[79] Additionally, other limitations include the fact that the researcher must assume deterministic causality and measurement error, especially when it comes to the coding of ordinal and interval variables. Critiques of this method stress the fact that there is a high possibility that there will be multiple causes or effects of interaction, and therefore, it is unlikely that you could measure *all* causal factors. This leads to problems of omitted variable bias (OVB) and selection of the dependent variable. Nevertheless, macro-causal analysis serves as perhaps one possible way of proceeding with comparisons because its main tool is criticizing and invalidating mistaken theories. New theories have emerged, however, which are constructed on the convergence or absence of features and consequences. Unlike parallel demonstration, which tends towards repetition, and contrast history, which tends to be more descriptive than explanatory, macro-causal analysis obviates the need to provide coherent narratives and makes it possible to focus on what is needed to address specific explanatory problems.[80]

As noted above, each of these methods have considerable advantages as well as disadvantages. None of these theories can be argued to be the best or more complete than the others. Researchers have acknowledged that fact, and thus are willing to proceed by

57-85 and Elizabeth Nichols, "Skocpol on Revolution: Comparative Analysis vs. Historical Conjecture", pp. 163-186, in Richard F. Thomasson (ed.), *Comparative Social Research*, vol. 9, JAI Press, Greenwich, 1986.

[78] Burawoy, p. 771-772

[79] Barrington Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* and Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* are two examples that make an extensive effort, whenever it is possible and serves their cause, to combine both of Mill's approaches.

[80] Walter Scheidel, "Introduction," p. 5, in Walter Scheidel (ed.), *Rome and China: Comparative Perspectives on Ancient World Empires*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.

combining, mostly in pairs, the above-mentioned three methods.[81] Although it is very difficult to combine two methods at once and do it well, there are some scholars, such as Charles Tilly, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Immanuel Wallerstein and Marcel van der Linden, who have used comparison as their main approach for the issues they are dealing with and thus perhaps it would be wiser to treat them as a distinct category. Charles Tilly and Immanuel Wallerstein are two exemplar scholars and their perspectives,[82] but not their intellectual goals, are similar. Tilly, as he states in *Big Structures*, follows a "historically grounded analysis of big structures and large processes as alternatives to the timeless, placeless models of social organization and social change that came to us with the nineteenth-century heritage," while Wallerstein contends that "the fundamental error of ahistorical social science (including ahistorical versions of Marxism) is to reify parts of the totality into such units and then compare these reifies structures."[83] "No doubt," Skocpol and Somers argue, "when *any* combination of pairs of the major logics of comparative history is attempted, the relative segregation of the logics within separate parts or levels of analysis within the work as a whole helps to make such a combination less confusing than it would be if the logics were fused throughout."[84]

The fact that there is no singular concrete methodology gives the comparative historian the freedom to move back and forth in time and on different levels of comparison, from the "historicist" to the "structuralist" approach, or from the qualitative method to the quantitative and vice versa. The method that comparative historians choose depends strictly on the line of questioning they pose and the hypothesis they wish to verify. Thus, the comparative historian is not strictly bound to choose between black and white. This freedom of "touch and go" helps them identify the best possible method for each case. "The choice of the phenomena to

[81] Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, New Left Books, London, 1974, and Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly and Richard Tilly, *The Rebellious Century, 1830-1930*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1975, are two of these studies. As far as Perry Anderson's study is concerned, however, the reader should be more skeptical and not take for granted his arguments on the Ottoman Empire. He treats the Ottoman Empire as a static unity awaiting rejuvenation by modernization as modeled in the West. For critiques of this claim, see Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj, *The Formation of the Modern State*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1991, p. 105, fn. 12 and the introduction by Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, "'Oriental Despotism' in world-system perspective," p. 385, n. 13, in Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, Cambridge University Press & Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Cambridge, 1987.

[82] For an analysis of Tilly, see the article by Lynn Hunt, "Charles Tilly's Collective Action," pp. 244-275, in Theda Skocpol (ed.), *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984 and Charles Ragin – Daniel Chirot, "The World System of Immanuel Wallerstein: Sociology and Politics as History," pp. 276-312.

[83] Philip McMichael, "Incorporating Comparison within a World-Historical Perspective: An Alternative Comparative Method," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 55, no. 3, 1990, p. 385.

[84] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, p. 187.

be explained is the responsibility of the historian, not the comparative method,"[85] because "only the unity of problem makes a centre."[86]

Limitations

Comparative study is a remedy for many problems, but it does not mean that it is free of limitations or unresolved issues. Like any method, comparison has its shortcomings. The researcher should be quite careful to avoid misleading outcomes and conclusions. I would argue that the most important issues are two arguments of essence and four of practical needs.

First, and probably the most important and crucial problem, is that of generalization, which comparative historians should resist. For comparative historians, as for historians of any sort, the past is strictly particular and should be studied as such. By ignoring the discreteness and otherness of the past, the discipline of history falls into the trap of oversimplification and relativism, while at the same time the specific elements that comprise the past are ignored as if the past was being equated with the present. Generalization should be conceived as being in correlation with the cases under study. Each case's particularities (cultural, geographical, and even national for scholars who are dealing with nations) should share equal weight and each case's specifities should be presented, so that the generalization can be properly conceived.

Secondly, comparative historians should resist the singularity of their case, in contrast with historians who treat their case study as being singular and different. Comparative history serves primarily to separate the important from the incidental and the partial from the general. Thus, it can be argued that comparison points the way towards causal explanations. In extension, the task of the comparativist is to point out new ways of asking and not prove that their case studies are singular and thus more important than others. Each case has its own share of significance. Comparison, moreover, is important because it casts into relief facets of various individual experiences that specialists have taken for granted.[87] In other words, nothing is to be taken for granted in comparisons. There are no cases that are singular, but only the results are. Through identification and determination of the salience of a variety of different factors, we are eventually led by comparison to the particular combination.

The comparative historian should pay attention to four distinct issues, as identified by Stefan Berger: a) the historian needs close familiarity with more than one social context; b) comparativists need to reflect on spatial and time constraints; c) they have to consider

[85] William Sewell Jr., p. 213.
[86] Marc Bloch, "Une Étude Régionale: Géographie ou Histoire?" *Annales d' Histoire Economique et Sociale* 6, January 1934, p. 81, as quoted in Theda Skopcol and Margaret Somers, p. 194.
[87] See Deborah Cohen and Susan Pedersen contributions in Deborah Cohen & Maura O'Connor (eds).

theoretical and conceptual frameworks for their comparison; and d) they have to have a feeling for linguistic pitfalls in transnational comparisons involving more than one language.[88]

The historian should be aware of the historiographical traditions of each social context. No matter how obvious that might be, it is quite important for the historian to be familiar with the primary and secondary sources they are going to use. As noted above, the use of primary sources is suggested for two cases of comparison, while for others the use of the secondary sources is suggested because otherwise the comparison will be too difficult. Also, secondary sources should not be downplayed or underestimated. Fritz Redlich described very cogently the relationship between primary and secondary sources:

> Comparative historiography's main sources are by necessity historical monographs, i.e. the results of proceeding generations of historians. While up to now historical work to be recognized had to be based on primary sources…comparative historiography demands as its source material a welter of monographs. It would go to the archives to fill gaps in our knowledge and check to see if the monograph writers really saw those aspects of historical fact or development in which we are interested. One might put it in this way: while traditional monographic historiography begins in the archives, comparative history ends it there.[89]

Different questions were and are asked in different societies. Thus, a historiographical comparison might be a better place to start because first of all, it will save a great amount of time and second, it will clarify the research design by asking proper and perhaps more important questions. However, at times there are not enough sources to proceed with the comparison. The historian thus must take on the anthropologist's role and make extended stays to study the society from within to get a more complete picture of the units the historian wishes to analyze. In that way it will be possible to avoid the mistake of comparing groups or institutions which at first glance seem to bear similarities but then turn out to prove superficial.

Comparativists should be very careful and precise as far as geographical and time delineations are concerned for the simple reason that they do not represent or define "natural, absolute or concrete" units of comparison. The fact that geographical boundaries, as pointed out before, do not constitute such a significant factor because the number of cases chosen

[88] Stefan Berger, "Comparative History," p. 166, in Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing History, Theory and Practice*, Oxford University Press, Oxford – New York, 2003.
[89] Fritz Redlich as quoted in George Frederickson, p. 11.

does not mean that they should not be considered. Geographical boundaries define the historical context as well, because after all a "transition may have its own costs."[90] Geographical boundaries, along with time caesuras, provide the variable from which perspective we see particular events or structures.

Third, the historian should choose the object of comparison. Theoretically, the historian can compare the incomparable, but schematically it needs to be specific and precise as far as their units of analysis are concerned. Precise question(s) give specific answer(s). Moreover, most of the time the questions asked create the theoretical and conceptual framework that structures the whole comparative work. Additionally, it will help the comparativist to escape the very important problem of causality, with which comparative history is interwoven. As Deborah Cohen explains, "in attempting to explain why X happened or developed in country A and not in country B, comparative studies tend to place explanatory weight on a few factors." In other words, she maintains that "a focus on *why* (in a narrow sense) replaces attention to *how*."[91] The fact that events A and B happened in countries Y and Z respectively does not mean that they happened at the same time and because of the same factors. Thus, maybe the question *how* is more important than *why*.

Finally, there is the problem of language, especially when a study is dealing with concepts and terms, because the same word might have different meanings in two different social settings. Stefan Berger uses the example of the word "liberal." In Germany, it was the French conception of the word and its meanings which carried positive connotations that were imported. In Britain, the word was brought in from Spanish and carried markedly negative connotations.[92] In other words, a common ground must be found, or rather a terminology for specific keywords, which will dominate the study. This shortcoming may be overcome, simply, as Frederickson suggests, if the comparative historian establishes direct connections with historians working on the other, the exotic case.[93]

In Quest of an Approach

Historians and social scientists tend to argue over methods as if there were only two ways to look at history, either in the sense that every historical sequence is unique or else there are general principles or "laws." But neither of those positions are quite correct. The reality is that

[90] Amitai Etzioni & Fredric L. DuBow, p. 5.
[91] Deborah Cohen, p. 62.
[92] Stefan Berger, p. 169.
[93] George Frederickson, p. 12.

of historical variation.[94] Elements with greater or lesser continuity over time vary and combine in distinctive ways across time and space. Doing history, in other words reconstructing, describing, and explaining particular sequences of events, is almost always a matter of identifying which particular aspects of a complex situation are changing and which are remaining more or less the same, and then attempting to answer the question of why.[95]

What distinguishes comparative history is its use of the case-based method to study historical variation, and the asking of questions, for example, as regards this study: Why did left-wing parties adopt, if that is the case, a different political strategy compared to the initial stages of their function? Did ideology play a role in the adoption of this change? What were the factors that contributed to it? Did the same happen in other countries and to other left-wing parties? What makes comparative history interesting is that the answer in each case is not known in advance, or if it is known, we can test its validity by contrasting it wwith another case. It is an empirical inquiry with the aim of discovering what happened and why. For example, we know that *a posteriori*, both of the parties adopted a "nationalist" strategy. What we do not know, however, is which factors led the parties to adopt such policies.

It has been argued that the intriguing and central goal of comparative history is to find causal explanations of historical events. Given that historical variation reveals both continuity and change, comparative history proceeds by asking which elements of the historical record were crucial.[96] Our case, however, presents a variation to the above argument as the two cases interact with each other, and influence each other incessantly, as their history demonstrate. As such, the obstacle we have to face is that John Stuart Mill's "method of agreement" and "method of difference", cannot be exercised in full, or rather in a strict manner. Mill's approach was designed to apply in completely separate cases. For example, it was designed to apply between animals that are or are not infected with anything and are naturally far from each other to prevent passing the disease to uninfected animals to avoid.[97] Therefore, the methodology that will be followed is that of an *explorative contrast* instead, including transformations over time and historical dynamics, by choosing processes as their objects of comparison.[98]

Therefore, although some of the methodological elements of Mill will permeate this study, we will not follow strictly his methodology. In other words, although we will not follow Mill

[94] Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World*, University of California Press, Berkeley - Los Angeles - London, 1991, p. 51.
[95] Ibid., p. 52.
[96] Ibid.
[97] I would like to thank Prof. Marcel van der Linden for the present comment.
[98] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, p. 29.

strict senson, similarities and differences are impossible not to be stressed. We will try to discern, sequences of events, or processes that demonstrate similarities and/or differences between our cases and contrast them with each other. Thus, we will use case-based comparisons and contrasts to investigate historical variation and offer explanations of particular outcomes by identifying critical factors that led to differences between similar situations and/or by identifying those processes that occur in different settings.

Finally, we aim to contrast our cases with each other with the use of empirical data. Utilizing an explorative contrast we hope to suggest modifications to existing generalized historical narratives concerning the history of the Turkish and Greek left, and contribute to the Cyprus Question from a different perspective. Our initial analytical comparisons will necessarily be grounded to some degree on parallel exposition for the purpose of establishing a sound evidentiary basis for the comparative investigation. No attempts will be made to provide comprehensive coverage of all noteworthy or conventionally emphasized features of each country or party under review, but to those elements that are helpful to us to show the process of change in the two cases. The resulting series of interlocking case studies will make it possible to establish a more systematic profile of differences and similarities which can be used to assess the relative significance of particular variables on the development of these parties and their political agenda in general, and on the Cyprus Question in particular.