Writing Assignment #5, due Dec. 5th

POLS 1155: Fall 2019

Find a recent (since January 2016) peer-reviewed journal article in political science that you find interesting <u>and</u> that is based on either a) a single case study or b) a comparative case study. In other words, your article should focus on one country, subnational unit, or historical event in order *to explain a broader theory* <u>or</u> it should use a detailed comparison of two or three or four cases in order *to explain a broader theory* (rather than discussing a theory in general terms, or making broad cross-national comparisons).

Then, in 500 to 700 words, answer the following questions:

- Why did the author(s) choose these specific cases to test or explain their theories?
- Why is this a valid choice of cases---why does this case (these cases) help make their argument convincing?
- What are the limits of this case selection? (*e.g., the author's choice of cases misses another important explanatory factor, it isn't very applicable for the rest of the world, etc.*) Make sure to clearly explain <u>why</u> these might be problematic.
- If you were going to do an additional case study to try and either support or challenge the authors' theory, what might be a good case (or set of cases) to examine? Name a specific country/unit/event (or comparison) that would help us evaluate the theory, and explain why it would be helpful.

This should be written as one single essay, rather than as bullet points or separate answers to each part of the prompt. However, since this is a descriptive evaluation and not an original argument, it does <u>not</u> require a thesis statement nor does it need to follow any specific format. And you do not need to go into great detail about the authors' argument beyond what you need to talk about case selection. But make sure your answers to all parts of the prompt are clear!

Notes:

Some relatively accessible journals that focus on comparative politics are *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and the *Journal of Democracy*, and it may be easiest to start by browsing these. But feel free to use ScholarOne or Google Scholar to search for topics of special interest and to use any peer-reviewed journal in the field.