

CENS 315 -- Civil Society in Theory and Practice

Professor Thomas Kemple

Taught on UBC campus and in Guatemala

Summer Term One 2022 (May 15th-June 30th) Global Seminar Term Abroad

This course, taught on location in Guatemala in coordination with Phil 335A -- Power and Oppression, examines major ideas concerning the nature and role of civil society in an era when there has been great optimism about its potential to oppose the oppressive power of states and markets. In recent decades, the concept of 'civil society' as a distinct field of experience which has emerged *between* the private and the public spheres has increasingly become both a focus of research for the social sciences and a rallying cry for political action in the service of a global cosmopolitan society.

Drawing on our direct and participant observations of a society heavily dependent on transnational nongovernmental organizations, the learning outcomes provide students with knowledge of sociological methods and theories for assessing: 1) the strengths and weaknesses of civil society organizations and 2) the challenges of social transformation. By combining academic reading and writing with fieldwork and experiential learning, students are encouraged to draw connections between the arguments of prominent social thinkers on cosmopolitanism, globalization, and civil society, on the one hand, and their own encounters with local initiatives and community partners, on the other.

Readings: Available on Canvas. *=Guatemala focused readings; **=Indigenous authors

Note: Weeks 1-3 will be taught on the UBC campus, weeks 5-7 on location in Guatemala. A selection of academic publications on Guatemalan history, politics, and culture will be made available to students at the beginning of the courses. Students will use these in developing topics relevant to their reflection papers and final research essays.

Classes 1-5 (Week 1; meets with Phil 335): Colonial Capitalism and Civil Society

Introduction: * Bartolomé de las Casas, 'Preface,' *In Defense of the Indians*

* Jon Beasley-Murray, 'Prologue: October 10, 1492', in *Post-Hegemony*

Thomas Hobbes, Frontispiece and Chapters 10, 13-14, *Leviathan*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* part II, pp. 60-70

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Parts I and II of *The Communist Manifesto*

Hannah Arendt, 'Ideology and Terror', in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

J. S. Mill, 'On Individuality,' *On Liberty*

Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (selections)

Michel Foucault, 'Panopticism,' ch. 3, *Discipline and Punish*

Michel Foucault, 'The Repressive Hypothesis,' ch. 2, *Hist. of Sexuality* vol. 1

** Irma Otzoy, 'Tecún Uman and the Conquest Dance [Pre-Conquest]'

Classes 6-7 (Week 2): Civil Society as Capitalist Hegemony and Critical Ideal

** Juan José Arévalo, 'A New Guatemala [The 10 Years of Spring]'

Immanuel Wallerstein, 'Hegemony in the Capitalist World Economy'

Antonio Gramsci, from *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*

** Various authors, 'Declaration of Iximché [Road to Revolution]'

Nancy Fraser, 'Reframing Justice in a Global World'

Alexis Tocqueville, from *Democracy in America*

Class 8 (Week 3): Civil Society as Political Power and Cosmopolitan Vision

- ** Myrna Mack, 'Assistance and Control [Genocide and Resistance]'
- Ulrich Beck, 'The Cosmopolitan Perspective: The Second Age of Modernity'
- Jürgen Habermas, 'Civil Society, Public Opinion, and Communicative Power'

-- Mid-Term Test, Tuesday, Jun 6th, 9:30am -- **Travel to Guatemala June 8**

Class 9 (Week 5): Civil Society and Mobility in Rural Guatemala

- * Kate Doyle, 'The Atrocity Files [Unsettled Peace]'
- * David Stoll, 'Great Expectations in a Guatemalan Town'
- * J. Jailey Philpot-Munson, 'Peace under Fire: Understanding Evangelical Resistance'

Classes 10-11 (Week 6): Global Power and Guatemalan Civil Society

- ** Dominga Vásquez, 'Solidarity is a Characteristic of the Mayan People'
- ** Victor Montejo, 'Indigenous Rights, Security and Democracy in the Americas'
- * J. T. Way, 'Cuatro Gramos Norte: Fragmentation and Concentration'
- Yanacopoulos and Smith, 'The Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism of International NGOs'
- Iris Marion Young, 'Civil Society and Its Limits,' *Inclusion and Democracy*

-- Reflection Paper due Thursday --

Class 12 (Week 6): * **Research Presentations** (meets jointly with Phil 335)

Students choose additional reading on the Guatemalan context and present their findings to the group, either individually or in pairs. Presentations should link themes addressed in either course to the particular situation, showing e.g. how local conditions illustrate general ideas or show weaknesses or gaps in general theories. A selection of readings will be made available in Week 1 to students, who are encouraged to choose topics relevant to their final research papers.

-- Research Paper (due after the course on Canvas)--

Evaluation:

- 1) One 2-3 page Précis (based on 2 or more readings): 10%
- 2) One 2-3 page Reflection Paper (based on 1 or more readings and fieldnotes): 10%
- 3) One 5-10 minute in-class 'First Word' (focusing on 1 reading): 10%
(Participation in the course as a whole will also be factored into the final evaluation of the First-Word).
- 4) Mid-term test (focusing on knowledge of course readings in Weeks 1-2): 25%
- 5) Research Presentation (with Phil 335A based on supplementary readings): 15%
(Presentations can be done singly or in pairs. See above for details.)
- 6) 6-8 page Research Paper (based on readings and fieldnotes): 30%
(9-10 page Research Papers may count for 40%, with the lowest grade on the Précis, Reflection Paper, or First Word dropped. Details provided in class).

Classes meet for three hours, although some flexibility may be needed to adapt to local contingencies in Guatemala. Students are expected to read the assigned material before class, to attend all class meetings, and to take an active part in discussions. Late penalties will be waived in case of illness or family emergencies. Papers should be typed and double-spaced. Students may find internet cafes to be a good space to write and print papers.