

# Civil Society – East and West

## **Instructors:**

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## **Prerequisite / Co-requisite:**

None

## **Description:**

The purpose of the course is to present and discuss issues related to the notion of civil society in comparative perspective. The general theoretical framework of the course combines universal notions of human agency in bringing about social change with pluralist perspective on particular historical, cultural and political-ideological contexts. The course consists of four major thematic dimensions. Within the first, students are introduced to theories of civil society, collective action, cultural resistance as well as discussions on the political in relation to public/private sphere. The second dimension focuses on historical-structural conditions for social movements and other forms of transformative action. This includes trajectories of the modern world-system (core–periphery dynamics), diversity of ideologies and meanings of critical historical turning points (e.g. 1968 revolts, post-1989 transitions in East-Central Europe, contemporary criticism of neoliberalism and war). The third dimension concerns analysis and comparison of particular civil society actions and social movements, which express interests and needs of marginalized groups such as women, ethnic/cultural minorities and colonized peoples, workers, children and others. The comparative aspect is to capture influences, continuities, breaks and tensions in transnational networks of such movements due to East/West and North/South dynamics (for instance in feminism, the World Social Forum, nationalisms etc.). The fourth dimension concentrates on reflecting how civil society actions influence historical transformations of knowledge in diverse locations, including social sciences, media discourses and dominant patterns of education. The course is meant to integrate perspectives of various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, political science and international studies, education, history, cultural studies.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After taking this course, the students will be able to:

- Describe and compare various examples of civic action and social movements, situating them in the major historical/cultural contexts of local and global transformations;
- Critically describe and compare selected theories of civil society;
- Identify tensions and ruptures in selected social movements and civil society activism, and discuss them in the context of the dynamics of gender, ethnicity, class, generation and other relevant categories of social analysis;
- Describe how social movements influence the process of knowledge production and help to develop new patterns of education;
- Critically analyze media construction of civil society actions.

### **Requirements:**

1. You are required to read the assigned materials and **actively participate** in class discussions. You are also recommended to read, if possible, additional non-obligatory material (indicated in the course schedule as “supplementary text(s)”).
  - Each week, a class will begin with 15–30 minutes exchange on current public issues (politics, economy etc.) that are of your interest, in relation to the course theme.
  - Also, during classes no. 3–7, 9–11 and 13, one person will be assigned a task of introducing major readings by making a short synthesis of the texts’ content and proposing some issues for discussion. You will share this task in accordance with arrangements made in the first week of the course.
2. You are required to submit **3 short essays** at various stages of the course (due dates are indicated in the course schedule). Each essay must be between 700–1,000 words, and it should contain your reflections on selected aspect(s) of the course relating to previously read material (assigned and/or supplementary), films, class discussions etc. In each essay, you are required to make references, including quotes, to at least three different sources: two appearing in the course schedule and one freely chosen – the latter can be also from the reading list or from another book, article or audio/video material which you are familiar with.
3. You are required to prepare a **group presentation** on a topic related to the course theme. The presentation should offer a critical analysis of a selected aspect of civil society activism, with particular focus on protests or social campaigns, including their historical/local/national background, aims, modes of action, potential or actual effects, as well as the problem of media coverage of the relevant events of the campaign and its main actors, public reactions and impact. You should show how the issue you are presenting came about and developed and what resulted from it, as well as, what were some reactions to it. You can either concentrate on a single issue or take a more comparative perspective. Make sure to refer to readings discussed in the class and/or other background literature. Please discuss the topics of your presentations beforehand with the instructors.

### **Grading:**

3 short essays - 60 % (20% each)

Group presentation - 25 %

Active participation in class discussions - 15 %

## **Course schedule**

**Tuesday** classes on Sept 30, Oct 7 & 14 are from 2:45 to 4:30 PM, and for the rest of the course from 2:45 to 5:00 PM. All **Wednesday** classes are from 9:45 to 12:30 AM.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and readings</b>
1. Sept 30 (Tue)	<b>Introduction: Unpacking the “East/West” &amp; “North/South”, comparing perspectives</b>
2. Oct 1 (Wed)	<b>Civil society as a sphere of knowledge (re)production and ‘unmaking’: cross-cultural view</b> Said E.W., <i>Orientalism</i> , pp. 1–28 ‘Understanding modern racism in Poland’, @: <a href="http://limpehft.blogspot.com/2013/12/understanding-modern-racism-in-poland.html">http://limpehft.blogspot.com/2013/12/understanding-modern-racism-in-poland.html</a>
3. Oct 7 (Tue)	<b>Conceptualizing <i>civil society</i> (1)</b> Kumar K., Civil society: an inquiry into the usefulness of an historical term [and Ch. Bryant’s comment]
4. Oct 8 (Wed)	<b>Conceptualizing <i>civil society</i> (2)</b> Bobbio N., Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society Showstack Sassoon A., Family, Civil Society, and the State. The Actuality of Gramsci’s Notion of ‘Società Civile’  Supplementary text: Selections from Antonio Gramsci’s writings
5. Oct 14 (Tue)	<b>The Modern World-System: Structures and Historical Trajectories</b> Wallerstein I., <i>World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction</i> , pp. ix–xii, 23–41, 60–75
6. Oct 15 (Wed)	<b>Civil society and neoliberalism</b> George S., How to win the war of ideas: Lessons from the Gramscian right Sinha S., Neoliberalism and Civil Society: Project and Possibilities  Supplementary text: Fraser N., Feminism, Capitalism and the Cunning of History
7. Oct 21 (Tue)	<b>Crisis, resistance and alternatives to the “late” capitalism</b> Wallerstein I., <i>World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction</i> , pp. 76–90 Sader E., Beyond Civil Society: The Left after Porto Alegre  Supplementary texts: The Bamako Appeal (2006) World Social Forum calls (2002–2007) Wallerstein I., New Revolts Against the System Harman Ch., <i>A People’s History of the World</i> , pp. 577–601

8. Oct 22 **Civil society as intersection of history and biography**  
(Wed) Mannheim K., *The problem of generations*
- FIRST ESSAY DUE**
9. Oct 28 **Was there civil society under communism?**  
(Tue) Klein N., *The Shock Doctrine*, pp. 171–93  
Załęski P., *Self-governing Republic* in the thought of the Solidarity movement in Poland:  
Why Solidarity was not a civil society  
Harman Ch., *A People’s History of the World*, pp. 589–93  
Documents: “21 demands” (1980)
- Supplementary text: Program of “Solidarity” (1981)
10. Oct 29 **Women in Central and Eastern Europe before and after 1989**  
(Wed) Einhorn B., Sever Ch., *Gender and Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe*  
Ann Snitow, *Women’s Anniversaries. Snapshots of Polish Feminism since 1989*
- Supplementary text: Graff A., *Gender, Sexuality and Nation – Here and Now*
11. Nov 4 **Educating for civil society (1): Children as citizens**  
(Tue) Coady M., *Beings and Becomings: Historical and Philosophical Considerations of the Child as Citizen*  
Fielding M., *Alex Bloom – Pioneer of Radical State Education*  
Korczak J., Introduction + *The Child’s Right to Respect*
- Supplementary texts:  
Bloom A., *Compete or Co-operate?*  
Bloom A., *Learning through Living*
12. Nov 5 **Educating for civil society (2): The case of Reggio Emilia**  
(Wed) *Indications. Preschools and Infant-Toddler Centres of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia*
13. Nov 26 **Strategies and tactics of civil society actors**  
(Wed) Klein N., *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, Chapter 9 (Blockadia: The new climate warriors)  
Bauman Z., *On Education*, pp. 80–5
- Supplementary texts:  
Graeber D., *The New Anarchists*  
Hryciuk R., Korolczuk E., *At the intersection of gender and class: social mobilization around mothers’ rights in Poland (draft)*  
World Social Forum Charter of Principles and related documents (2001)

**SECOND ESSAY DUE**

14. Dec 2 **Religion, identity and generation: Jewish youth in Poland today**  
(Tue) Film: *The Passage* (2013) (screening and discussion in class)
15. Dec 3 **Reclaiming Poland's historical narratives: contested identities and cultural resistance**  
(Wed) Documentary screening and discussion in class  
Music album: R.U.T.A. – *Gore* (2012) (music pieces and songs' lyrics translated into English will be presented and discussed)
- Supplementary texts:  
Gerrits A., Antisemitism and Anti-Communism: The Myth of 'Judeo-Communism' in Eastern Europe  
Blatman D., Polish Antisemitism and 'Judeo-Communism': Historiography and Memory
16. Dec 9 **Presentations**  
(Tue)
17. Dec 10 **Presentations**  
(Wed)
- THIRD ESSAY DUE**

## **Bibliography**

### Required readings

- Bauman Z., *On Education: Conversations with Riccardo Mazzeo*, Polity Press, 2012.
- Bobbio N., Gramsci and the Concept of Civil Society, in: John Keane (ed.), *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives*, Verso 1988, pp. 73–99
- Bryant Ch., Social Self-Organisation, Civility and Sociology: A Comment on Kumar's 'Civil Society', *British Journal of Sociology*, 1993, 44: 3, pp. 397-40.
- Coady M., Beings and Becomings: Historical and Philosophical Considerations of the Child an Citizens, in: G. Mac Naughton, P. Hughes, K. Smith (eds.), *Young Children as Active Citizens. Principles, Policies and Pedagogies*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008.
- Einhorn E., Sever Ch., Gender and Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 2003, 5:2, pp. 163–190.
- Fielding M., Alex Bloom, Pioneer of Radical State Education, *Forum*, 2005, 47:2-3.
- George S., How to win the war of ideas: Lessons from the Gramscian right, *Dissent*, summer 1997, pp. 47–53
- Harman Ch., *A People's History of the World*, Verso, 2008.
- Indications. Preschools and Infant-Toddler Centres of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia*, Reggio Children, 2010.
- Klein N., *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, Penguin Books, 2008.
- Klein N., *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, Penguin Random House, Knopf, 2014.
- Kumar K., Civil society: an inquiry into the usefulness of an historical term, *British Journal of Sociology*, 1993, 44: 3, pp. 375-395.

- Korczak J., *The Child's Right to Respect*, <http://www.arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta/janusz-little.pdf>
- Mannheim K., The Problem of Generations, in: K. Mannheim, *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952.
- Said E. W., *Orientalism*, London 2003
- Sen J., Waterman P. (eds.), *World Social Forum: Challenging Empires*, Black Rose Books, 2009 (selections).
- Sinha S., Neoliberalism and Civil Society: Project and Possibilities, in: A. Saad-Filho & D. Johnston (eds.), *Neoliberalism: A Critical Reader*, London 2005, pp. 163–9
- Showstack Sassoon A., Family, Civil Society, and the State. The Actuality of Gramsci's Notion of 'Societa Civile', *Dialektik*, 1995, 3.
- Snitow A., Women's Anniversaries. Snapshots of Polish Feminism since 1989. *Dissent*, fall 2009, pp. 61-67.
- "Solidarity" documents from 1980 & 1981
- Wallerstein I., *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, Duke University Press, 2004.
- Załęski P., *Self-governing Republic* in the thought of the Solidarity movement in Poland: Why Solidarity was not a civil society, Working Papers on the Solidarity movement, 07/2013

#### Supplementary texts

- The Bamako Appeal (2006), World Social Forum calls (2002–2007)
- Blatman D., Polish Antisemitism and 'Judeo-Communism': Historiography and Memory, *East European Jewish Affairs*, 27, 1, 1997, pp. 23–43
- Bloom A., Compete or Co-operate? *New Era*, 30:8, 1949, pp. 170-172.
- Bloom A., Learning through Living, in: M. Alderton Pink (ed.), *Moral Foundations of Citizenship*, London University Press, 1953.
- Forgacs D. (ed.), *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935*, New York University Press, 2000.
- Fraser N., Feminism, Capitalism and the Cunning of History, *New Left Review*, 56, Mar/Apr 2009.
- Gerrits A., Antisemitism and Anti-Communism: The Myth of 'Judeo-Communism' in Eastern Europe, *East European Jewish Affairs*, 25, 1, 1995, pp. 49–72
- Graeber D., New Anarchists, *New Left Review*, no. 13, 2002.
- Graff A., Gender, Sexuality and Nation – Here and Now, in: E. H. Oleksy (ed.), *Intimate Citizenships: Gender, Sexualities, Politics*, New York 2009, pp. 133–46
- Hryciuk R. E., Korolczuk E., At the intersection of gender and class: social mobilization around mothers' rights in Poland (draft).
- Wallerstein I., New Revolts Against the System, *New Left Review*, 18, Nov/Dec 2002.