

Agenda: Session 5. Sociology 929. Social Enterprise. September 29, 2010

1. **Social enterprises & transformations:** Nearly all of the examples in the book are examples of problem-solving to fill gaps in the existing system, especially because of state withdrawal/weakness/failure rather than prefigurative alternatives to the system.
 - If social enterprises fill gaps in capitalism, can they really be transformative? (Emmanuel)
 - Does social enterprises' reliance on markets therefore further the reproduction of capitalist forms of economic organization? (Emmanuel)
 - The Georgia example and the African examples all seem very much supporting the existing system – modeling capitalist relations, integrating people into the capitalist system, etc. Is there anything anti-capitalist here? (Michael)
 - How can we assess the contributions of social enterprises to empowerment? Is the governance structure critical for this? (Joo-hee)

2. **Definitional issues: Clarify what we mean by a “social enterprise”.**
 - Can the big umbrella term really be useful? (Ayca)
 - What do we gain and lose from talking about the non-profit sector as a whole? (Matt)
 - Kerlin’s definition has only two conditions: social mission + provides goods/services by bearing risk. Should other dimensions be added? (Joo-hee)

3. **International aid:**
 - How should we think of the relation of international aid to social enterprises? (Nina)
 - Does increasing dependence on state & international undermine autonomy of social enterprises? (Ayca)
 - The impact of EU assistance seems positive, but African cases seem more problematic (Trevor)

4. **Regional groupings, comparative analysis:**
 - Can we really learn anything useful from these regional groupings, or are they too heterogeneous? (Nina)
 - The explanatory model of variations in character of social enterprise seems very unsatisfactory. (Joao)
 - Can the variables discussed in the book help us understand the contexts in which social enterprises can be part of a social economy instead of simply commercial activity? (Tylan)

5. **Micro-credit organizations:** whose interests do these serve? How should we think of these? (Ayca) Does the emphasis on micro-loans increase injustice? (Tylan)

6. **Social entrepreneurs vs organizational form.** How should we think about the relationship between individuals (as social entrepreneurs) and organizational structure – (Growing power as an example)? (Lindesy)

7. **Legal forms & globalization.** The global spread of the “social enterprise” as a recognized form, and the associated spread of legal forms. (Nate)

8. **Reciprocity:** Social economy may have transformative potential because it could shift the basis for economic exchanges from market-value to reciprocity. Can social enterprises expand the reciprocity economy? (Eunhee)

9. **Governance issues:** Are there downsides to stakeholder governance? What are the implications for democratic governance? (Eunhee)