Civil Society

Theory, History, Comparison

Edited by
John A. Hall

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Abonyi János és Miszlivetz Ferenc:
HÁLÓZATOK METSZÉSPONTJAIN.
A negyedik ipari forradalom társadalmi kihívásai

és

Sümegi István:
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A humántudományok és az értelem keresése.

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Contents

Notes on Contributors vii

1 In Search of Civil Society 1
John A. Hall

2 The Importance of Being Modular 32
Ernest Gellner

3 Civil Society in Communist China? Private Business and Political Alliance, 1989 56
David L. Wank

4 The Possibility of Civil Society: Traditions, Character and Challenges 80
Víctor Pérez-Díaz

5 The Nature of Social Ties and the Future of Postcommunist Society: Poland after Solidarity 110
Wlodzimierz Wesolowski

6 Civic Nation, Civil Society, Civil Religion 136
Christopher G. A. Bryant

7 Philosophers' Models on the Carpathian Lowlands 158
Chris Hann

8 Post-Marxism, No Friend of Civil Society 183
Hudson Meadwell

9 Animadversions upon Civil Society and Civic Virtue in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century 200
Adam B. Seligman

10 Modernity, Late Development and Civil Society 224
Nicos Mouzelis

11 From Controlled Inclusion to Coerced Marginalization: The Struggle for Civil Society in Latin America 250
Philip Oxhorn

12 Civil Society and Islam 278
Şerif Mardin

13 Civil Society and its Future 301
Salvador Giner

Index 326

1

In Search of Civil Society

John A. Hall

Civil society was placed at the forefront of public attention by attempts to establish decency in societies where it had most conspicuously been absent. If the term was invoked initially by Solidarity as part of its struggle against the Polish party-state, it soon became a rallying cry for many, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, who were opposed to statist socialism. John Keane's important 1988 collection on *Civil Society and the State* both captured and codified the spirit of civil society as it was understood in the 1980s.[1] Civil society was seen as the opposite of despotism, a space in which social groups could exist and move – something which exemplified and would ensure softer, more tolerable conditions of existence.

Whilst there is a core of sense in this definition that is of continuing relevance, many expectations implicit in Keane's volume were not realized. For one thing, communism did not fall, as many expected and some still believe, because of pressure from below, that is, from the forces of civil society; nor does that stunningly complete collapse ensure that the society that emerges will be civil. For another thing, the banner of civil society has been raised in very different social worlds. In February 1994, for example, José Alvarez Icaza told a demonstration held in Mexico City to support the Zapatista rebels of Chiapas that civil society should seize the political initiative and fight to open spaces for political participation.[2] The geographical extension in usage of the term points to a vital issue. Bluntly, the amount of diversity within the 'third wave' of democratization is very great.[3] Just as there are differential chances of consolidating civil society within the postcommunist world, so too are there major differences between this world as a whole and that in which societies seek to exit from authoritarian capital-

ism. The need for sociological precision about such matters is reinforced by the discovery that hopes for the creation and spread of civil society in fact rested on entirely different social forces – Eastern Europeans favouring the advent of capitalism, whilst Western post-Marxists privileged 'new' social movements that served as functional equivalents to the proletariat within their conceptual system.

These social complexities led some scholars – understandably irritated by the confusion, at times licentious, of description and prescription – to attack the usefulness of the term altogether. Little would be lost by abandoning the notion, such critics suggested, since its key meanings are effectively present in the more familiar concepts of democracy and liberalism.[4] The present volume represents current debate in containing papers – particularly that by Hann but with powerful reservations also coming from Wank and Wesolowski – written from this critical perspective. However, the character of the volume as a whole is positive. The response of most authors to the fuzziness of the term has been that of attempting to specify and delineate with greater care, to go beyond the essentially negative view of civil society as societal self-organization in opposition to the state – and to do so by analysing particular societies rather than, as had previously been the case, with reference to figures in intellectual history such as Ferguson, Hegel and Gramsci. Certainly, this introductory chapter offers a positive characterization of civil society in the belief that the sociological usefulness of the term can thereby be established. Definition is achieved in stages. A 'thick description' of the concept is offered to begin with by considering both the European origins and the enemies of civil society. This makes it then possible to correct the received definition of the concept. Once that has been done, attention turns to establishing the sociological foundations that explain the origin, maintenance and potential expansion of civil society. The principal reason for the argument taking this route is that civil society *is* complicated, most notably in being at one and the same time a social value and a set of social institutions. Some immediate comments about such a 'package deal' may prevent misunderstandings.

Whilst social values are very definitely a part of social reality, they have to make their way in the midst of economic and political forces possessed of logics of their own; if social developments can be held back by the absence of ideological codification, so too can ideological advance be stymied when lacking institutional support.

No a priori or empirically based general law allows us to specify the exact relations between cultural and structural forces throughout history.[5] One generalization that can be made about civil society – a generalization, it should be stressed, that goes against the implicit and optimistic determinism of most scholars' social evolutionary viewpoints – is that the value has weak or incomplete sociological moorings. My own endorsement of the value of civil society makes me regret this situation; that is, I would gladly embrace social tendencies sure to establish civil society even though this would diminish any conception of social agency and human responsibility.[6] Now it is important to underscore what is involved in the recognition that civil society has weak sociological roots, that its establishment everywhere is by no means inevitable. Putting matters in this way is in effect to keep analysis separate from hope, to conceptualize social processes in their own terms rather than in those of mere political desire. Further to that end, the argument turns clearly from description to prescription only at the end of the chapter. In summary, the analysis of civil society offered should stand separate from judgements to be made about it. Such cogency the analysis possesses, in other words, should be of use to those who dislike the value, its institutional support or the package deal as a whole.

EUROPEAN ORIGINS

Gore Vidal once suggested that the deepest meaning of *Creation*, his magnificent novel about the origins of the world religions and ethics, was that agrarian civilizations before the advent of the great monotheistic creeds were the most tolerant in the history of mankind.[7] There is some justification for this view. On the one hand, the logistics of agrarian civilizations meant that they had no capacity to penetrate, let alone to police, the thoughts of the very varied pastoral tribes and peasant communities over which they ruled.[8] On the other hand, monotheism did bring in its train the potential for – and, with Christianity once Constantine had converted, the enthusiastic and vicious practice of – intolerance, for all that the principle of universal salvation envisaged and allowed the incorporation of all human beings into society for the first time. Nonetheless, the classical agrarian civilizations were not civil societies. The inability of the state to penetrate social life is not at all the same thing as the creation of social practices which make state–

society interactions civilized. Differently put, civil society has everything to do with the modern world in which such interaction is necessary. As the origins of that modernity lie within Europe, and within Europe alone, it accordingly makes sense to turn to it immediately.[9]

The deepest roots of civil society in Europe result from the way in which the removal of the centralized authority of Rome placed power in several sets of hands. What is most striking in comparative perspective is the separation between ideological and political power. Christianity had always refused to provide ideological justification for Rome, and it found thereafter that it could survive and prosper without benefit of an imperial polity. If this pattern was strikingly different from that of China and Byzantium, it came to differ quite as much as from Islam. By this is meant less the failure of the papal attempt to establish theocracy than the way in which ideological power came to underwrite mundane political rule – an attitude absent from Islam to this day. Fear of concentration of power in the hands of a secular emperor led the church to encourage kings, whom it made more than *primus inter pares* by ritual anointing and the singing of the *Laudes regiae*. But it would be a mistake to imagine that royal power thereby became unfettered. Rather, state-building took place within a field of pre-existent social forces. Kings were faced with feudal nobilities whose property rights were firmly established, as of course were those of the church. In these circumstances kings sought to enhance their powers by granting autonomy to towns; these became islands within the feudal sea in which new ideas and practices could develop.[10] All in all, this was an acephalous world in which liberties were both widespread and firmly codified in a legal system that privileged corporate rights.

This vesting of power into separate bodies might have led to a static society, in which different sources of power merely blocked any common enterprise. This did not happen, with European society in consequence gaining a restless dynamism that changed the pattern of world history. Trust and cooperation was initially made possible by the sense of unity provided by Christian norms; shared membership in a civilization certainly helped to revive and deepen economic interaction even within the medieval period.[11] However, cooperative relations *within* states became of ever greater importance. European rulers did not, as was the case elsewhere, conquer a society which they then had little real interest in organizing. On the contrary, state–society interaction necessarily became ever

more intense due to endless competition in war consequent on multipolarity; given the pre-existence of social relations, royal activism necessarily depended upon cooperation and coaxing quite as much as upon sheer coercion. The need for monies for war led to the practice of calling assemblies of the estates of the realm, that is, of church, nobility and townsmen – to whom were even added in Sweden and Norway representatives of the peasantry![12] Such assemblies took over tags of canon law – 'what touches all must be agreed by all' and 'no taxation without representation' – that made European states essentially rule bound. Of course, the fact that there were several such states was of enormous importance. A measure of internal decency was encouraged once it was realized that foul treatment to key social elements might encourage them to move and thereby to enrich a rival state, as clearly happened when the Huguenots were expelled from France. The presence of avenues of escape supported both economic and political liberties.

This account is slightly exaggerated. Central and Eastern European history took a turn away from social diversity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as nobles and kings allied against towns and independent peasantries.[13] In north-west Europe, by contrast, states remained rule bound even during absolutist rule in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; equally, multipolar pluralism was sufficiently well entrenched as to rule out all attempts – whether by popes, emperors or monarchs – at recreating imperial unity. Nonetheless, it is crucial for my argument to note that civil society gained in self-consciousness from the experience of fighting against politico-religious unification drives. What mattered most of all was the rise of toleration. Attempts at suppression of the religious diversity created by the Reformation failed because Charles V's imperial pretensions were destroyed by balance of power politics. The principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*, enshrined in 1555 at the Treaty of Augsburg, seemingly allowed for diversity and difference, at least between states. But the principle was not really accepted and internalized, as the brutality of the Thirty Years' War so decisively demonstrated. The Westphalian settlement of 1648 is a better marker of development in European attitudes, since it went beyond affirming the principle enshrined at Augsburg to the attempt to take religion out of geopolitics altogether, one mechanism towards which was the insistence that existing religious groups within states should be allowed to worship as they saw fit. As it happens, this marker too was incompletely observed, as is obvious once we remember that Locke's advocacy of toleration was written

a generation later, with Montesquieu's chapters in *The Spirit of the Laws* accepting religion as long as it was not allied to fanaticism coming a full century later.[14] But even if there is no absolutely decisive single marker, the change itself remains obvious. The long religious wars of Europe could not be won by either side, as Gellner stresses in his chapter, for the forces of pluralism could always defeat any drive to politico-religious unification. In the face of endlessly destructive stalemate, an extraordinary switch in attitudes took place: if agreement on detailed matters of belief could neither be reached nor imposed, a background consensus, to tolerate religious difference, was a viable alternative. What is at issue can be characterized somewhat differently. If toleration was at first merely accepted as a sour-grapes philosophy, that is, one imposed by circumstances beyond one's control, it came to be valued in itself. Civil society is thus a complex balance of consensus and conflict, the valuation of as much difference as is compatible with the bare minimum of consensus necessary for settled existence.

If civil society gained a degree of self-consciousness in this way, its role was vastly amplified by changes in means of communication. Social self-organization was enhanced by the spread of literacy and the creation of a mass print culture. Horizontal linkages in society free from state control grew enormously in the eighteenth century, and are properly symbolized by those varied institutions, from coffee shops to wig-makers', in which journals could be read and discussed. This infrastructure made it possible, to use Anderson's now famous phrase, to imagine new communities.[15] Sources of this increased interaction varied. At one end of the spectrum was the Anglo-Saxon route in which the growth of commercial society enabled and encouraged lateral social communication. The other end of the same spectrum was represented by the more statist version of infrastructural development pioneered in Prussia, a world in which the ability to read drill manuals did more that anything else to spread literacy.[16]

Significant claims have been made about the nature of civil society on the basis of this revolution in communicative technique. The most dramatic is Habermas's claim that rational will formation was encouraged by the emergence of what he terms 'the public sphere'.[17] Some excesses in Habermas's account – both the idealized portrait of democratic openness in the eighteenth century, particularly the failure to see how the definition of the public was increasingly such as to exclude women, and the picture of its destruction

by industrial capitalism – have become generally obvious.[18] Less remarked upon is the fact that the construction of new identities in civil society emerged in very large part for political reasons. Struggles for citizenship, whether internal to a state or separatist in character, were occasioned by the impact of an enormous jump in fiscal extraction on the part of late eighteenth-century states.[19] A claim closer to the spirit of the time is that civility in society is increased by an elective affinity between commerce and liberty.[20] Whilst money-making was rarely admired in itself, it was endorsed in very subtle argument: a world marked by interests would be one in which harsher passions, above all that of the desire to dominate, would lose their sway. More attention will be given later to the sociological links between capitalism and civil society, at that time and afterwards, and as a source of the maintenance of civil society as much as of its creation. But a final claim about eighteenth-century civil society must be noted first. An element of civil society as present in the mind of Montesquieu as in those of the Scottish moralists was that of fashion and refinement. These years saw the emergence of the first consumer society and of the modern novel: both forms exemplified a new form of individualism, in which people could try out, at first or second hand, different social roles.[21] Civil society was seen, in a nutshell, as a lively sphere marked by the spread of new codes of manners.

ENEMIES

Knowing one's enemies helps self-awareness because the acuteness of critique forces clarity in the conceptualization of one's own self-image. This principle distinctively applies here: five enemies of civil society are considered because of the power of their views and so as to better understand, by means of contrast, the nature of civil society.

The best-known enemy of civil society is despotism, whose greatest analysts are surely Montesquieu and Tocqueville. One element of Montesquieu's picture of despotism can be seen in the early *Persian Letters*. This has at its centre a subtle and shifting analysis of Usbek, a Persian visitor able to see the foibles of France but entirely deluded about his own situation as ruler of a seraglio. More particularly, Montesquieu anticipates Hegel's famous master–slave paradox in demonstrating the self-defeating quality of despotic rule. The women in the harem are right when they tell

Usbek that he is both lonely and unhappy. But the most acute analysis of the psychological consequence of despotism is made by his friend Rica who notes 'that being so firmly in possession leaves us nothing to desire'.[22] Rica tells his master that it is the freedom of French women that enables them to speak in such a way as to make it possible to learn about real feelings:

> I knew nothing about women until I came here. I have learnt more about them in a month than I should have done in thirty years inside a seraglio. With us everyone's character is uniformly the same, because they are forced. People do not seem what they are, but what they are obliged to be. Because of this enslavement of heart and mind, nothing is heard but the voice of fear, which has only one language, instead of nature, which expresses itself so diversely and appears in so many different forms.[23]

The emphasis on fear pervades the more formalized picture of despotism in *The Spirit of the Laws*. Fear is humiliating for every human being; it is a visceral and physical reaction, one that literally makes the skin creep. It may be that Montesquieu's ideal-typical portrait of oriental despotism is overdone, may further be that the stereotype that it created has much to answer for, but this should not distract in the twentieth century from the relevance of a politics directed against fear. Whilst it is difficult to establish any shared human conception of the good, a measure of universalism can be guaranteed negatively along the lines suggested by Montesquieu, that is, in terms of the prevention of fear.[24] If Montesquieu's intention was clear, the precise details of the character of the social and political arrangements that would achieve his goal remain a little murky. Whilst it is obvious that he advocated social pluralism so as to check the state, the relative importance he assigned to lawyers and nobles is by no means certain; equally, the extent to which a liberal polity depended on Germanic roots as compared to the beneficent effects of modern commerce was never finally elucidated.[25]

Writing with an eye on the excesses of the French Revolution, Tocqueville's initial hunch was that the people were politically dangerous. The unleashing of their envy looked set to lead to a tyranny of the majority. His favourable report on the United States, that is, his discovery that it was able to combine social equality with political liberty, did not finally change this viewpoint: America had been blessed by so many special circumstances that the full logic of popular sovereignty was held in check. But

Tocqueville did change his presupposition in his masterpiece, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*.[26] One element in his portrait of the old regime, namely his analysis of centralization, is famed, and of great relevance here:

> Any independent group, however small, which seemed desirous of taking action otherwise than under the aegis of the old administration filled it with alarm, and the tiniest free association of citizens, however harmless its aims, was regarded as a nuisance. The only corporate bodies tolerated were those whose members had been hand-picked by the administration and which were under its control. Even big industrial concerns were frowned upon. In a word, our administration resented the idea of private citizens' having any say in the control of their own enterprises, and preferred sterility to competition.[27]

But still more important for Tocqueville was the discovery that envy had been created and social trust and cooperation destroyed by the regime's habitual playing of divide-and-rule politics.[28] In one sense, the discovery that kings were more to blame than were the people for France's subsequent difficulty in combining liberty with equal social conditions led to optimism: different groups and classes could, in a condition of liberty, be able to cooperate in common tasks, thereby obviating the danger of any popular tyranny. But at a deeper level, Tocqueville was driven to pessimism. The legacy of the destruction of trust was disastrous:

> It was no easy task bringing together fellow citizens who had lived for many centuries aloof from, or even hostile to, each other and teaching them to co-operate in the management of their own affairs. It had been far easier to estrange them than it now was to reunite them, and in so doing France gave the world a memorable example. Yet, when sixty years ago the various classes which under the old order had been isolated units in the social system came once again in touch, it was on their sore spots that they made contact and their first gesture was to fly at each other's throats. Indeed, even today, though class distinctions are no more, the jealousies and antipathies they caused have not died out.[29]

This is to suggest a sort of historical determinism: societies with a history of social trust are likely to maintain it through changing social conditions, whilst those without it are unlikely to be able to achieve freedom in modern conditions. Such societies may be faced with the following scenario, a nightmare for Tocqueville, given his complete love of liberty:

> The segregation of classes, which was the crime of the late monarchy, became at a late stage a justification for it, since when the wealthy and enlightened classes were no longer able to act in concert and to take part in the government, the country became, to all intents and purposes, incapable of administering itself and it was needful that a master should step in.[30]

There is far less understanding of the second enemy faced by civil society. In recent years, some political theorists attracted to the idea of civil society have also served as spokesmen for the revival of the tradition of republican civic virtue. This is a frightful *mésalliance*, as Seligman and Meadwell make clear, since the views at the heart of the two positions stand utterly opposed to each other. We can see this particularly clearly by considering some eighteenth-century thinkers.

Many of the Enlightenment thinkers who championed the idea of civil society, in fact if not always in name, were clearly opposed to the tradition of civic virtue, however much they admired some of its moral qualities. This was certainly true of Hume and Smith who preferred the world of wealth to that of virtue on the ground that the Greek experience should not be taken as our founding moment because it had been based on slavery.[31] It is equally true of Montesquieu. His *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline* made clear that ancient virtue had been allied to militarism, and he made much of the spartan rigour of the regime that was necessary for its sustenance. In *The Spirit of the Laws* his preference was clearly for a liberal and commercial order in which social cohesion could be maintained by asking rather less of human beings. A commercial order, Montesquieu noted, was one in which 'happily, men are in a situation such that, though their passions inspire in them the thought of being wicked, they nevertheless have an interest in not being so.'[32] Further, he felt that fashion had a part to play in driving the economic mechanism of society, and he clearly endorsed the vigour that seemed to be part and parcel of commercial society. This was not to say that he naively assumed that an increase in money would ensure happiness. On the contrary, his remarks on suicide show him to have been well aware of the terrors that can haunt human beings. But here too his attitude is characteristically civil. It was irrational to make suicide an act calling for general opprobrium: the act should be decriminalized, a matter for private sorrow rather than public outrage. And this is but a single example of a consistent drive in

Montesquieu to make the law softer and more reliable, that is, to revise laws that were not needed or which were gratuitously cruel.[33]

There is then a world of difference between this view and that of Rousseau, the high apostle of virtue.[34] Rousseau's concern was less that the new commercial world would lack cohesion than that it would alienate human beings from their true selves – something which would, however, eventually lead to social collapse. Above all, Rousseau loathed everything to do with the world of manners. In his *Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre*, he made crystal clear his dislike of the theatre, and of fashion and the city more generally, on the grounds that anything that allowed or encouraged the individual to imagine himself or herself as different would cause unhappiness.[35] Instead of encouraging the trying on of different personalities, it was rather necessary for humans to be anchored in a stage of simplicity, free from the diversion and complexity that he held to be the cause of psychic discomfort.[36] At this point a paradox positively jumps out at us. Rousseau portrayed himself as an honest soul, revealing his heart in a new spirit of authenticity, and thereby sought to condemn the superficial and false world of conventional social appearance.[37] What is striking then is that Rousseau's adulation of authenticity goes hand in hand with a low opinion of his fellows, seen as weak, easily distracted and incapable of handling complexity by themselves. Hence it is absolutely apparent that coercion is required to solve the problem of being: people really must be 'forced to be free', not least by the retention of social simplicity, that is, the downplaying of commerce and fashion in favour of a return to a world of considerable rigour. It is entirely appropriate to stress the elective affinity between Rousseau's implicitly authoritarian ideas and the actual violence perpetrated by revolutionaries seeking to establish a modern citizens' republic.[38] This stands in marked contrast to the legacy of Montesquieu, most famously used by the founding fathers of the United States to ensure a constitution of balance and moderation.[39]

The concern for moral unity based on the belief that the individual was incapable of handling complexity remained a perennial theme in social thought. This is clearly true of Durkheim, to whose ideas we shall return, as can be seen in the way in which his very first work admired Rousseau whilst signally mistaking Montesquieu's central purpose.[40] But the desire for moral unity marks the thought of Karl Marx quite as much. Durkheim's criticism of socialism – that it sought merely to enhance egoism rather than to establish genuine moral regulation – was wildly wrong.[41] At

the deepest level, Marx resembled Rousseau in having an equal dislike for any splitting of human faculties. This is clearly seen in his early essays, a key theme of which is that the gap between civil and political society had to be overcome.[42] This concern with unity may well have Aristotelian roots.[43] Whatever the case, there is no doubt but that Marx's theory, despite its essential humanism and voluntarism, was used to justify the imposition of a coercive ideological tyranny.

The third enemy of civil society is one form of nationalism. By this is meant those varied practices – mass population transfers, forced integration, ethnic cleansing, genocide – by means of which complete social homogeneity is created. This version of nationalism can be seen as the linking of a single nation, whether real or constructed, to its own state. Such nationalism can strengthen, create or subvert states; whatever the case, its characteristic practices make it opposed to civil society.[44] Nonetheless, this is only one way in which to look at this form of nationalism. Gellner's chapter sees nationalism in general as an occasional friend rather than an eternal foe of civil society.[45] The most obvious consideration here is that nationalists can stand close to liberalism when they are part of a struggle against a despotic regime. More strikingly, Gellner stresses that modern industrial society depends upon homogeneity. There is a sense in which he averts his gaze – knowingly, hating the suffering involved – from the processes by which such homogeneity is established, whilst telling us that it is a background condition for civil as much as for industrial society. The implication of this position is, for example, that Slovenia and the Czech Republic – and Poland and Hungary, thanks to the depredations of Hitler and Stalin – have a better chance at establishing a civil society than does the Ukraine or Russia.

One problem with Gellner's position is that it tends to functionalism in seeing nationalism as being *caused* by the needs of industrialism. Whilst that notion can be given sense and reference, it remains the case that early European nationalism is best explained in political rather than in socioeconomic terms.[46] Nationalist feelings were evident, *pace* Gellner, before industrialization, and they resulted from states seeking to rationalize their societies so as to prosper in war.[47] But in a sense that is a detail. It is much more important to cast light on the vexed question of the causal patterning involved in different types of nationalism.

Bryant notes in his chapter that nations can be imagined in civic as well as in ethnic terms. This is an important distinction. Most

obviously, ethnic imagining *even in combination with social homogeneity* can lead to continuing incivility in society. This finding raises the question as to whether the civic form of imagining might create – rather than, as Gellner has it, be the consequence of – the social homogeneity necessary for civil society. Differently put, do we in fact possess some principles that allow us to handle and direct nationalism, rather than merely to be at its mercy? One should not be too optimistic here. The very first civic nationalism, that of the United States, sought to exclude the loyalists, and it thereafter insisted on rather complete social homogenization, on being a 'melting pot' rather than, as in Canada, a 'salad bowl'. The second great civic nationalism, that of the French Revolution, felt so possessed of the truth that it became imperialistic, a process which did more to spread a nationalism stressing the need for a unitary societal will in nineteenth-century Europe than did industrialization. Nonetheless, some descriptive force as well as prescriptive hope does reside in the more civic style of imagining. For one thing, contemporary naturalization rates in 'civic' France are far higher than those in 'ethnic' Germany.[48] In terms of more general liberal principles, it is clear that nationalist movements have much to do with the desire to exit from authoritarian regimes. Austria-Hungary might have survived the nationalities problem had it been prepared to embrace political liberalism: most peoples sought to preserve their historic rights, their national identities, and would have been happy without their own state – so long, that is, as their voice could be heard within a liberal empire. The failure to adopt a more liberal option ranks as an historic tragedy because the option was a genuine possibility. The option was defeated by the arrogance of the emperor, the desire to continue to play great power politics and the belief that imperial possessions were necessary for economic well-being – all of which were held to demand a unitary state and to rule out more liberal, confederal solutions to the nationalities problem. But the optimism that this engenders needs to be qualified. What might have taken place in Austria-Hungary may not be at all possible elsewhere. There is a world of difference between building a nation, whether civic or ethnic, within previously established state boundaries and the creation of state and nation at the same time – with a clear relationship existing between an excluded group gaining democratic rights and political intolerance. Differently put, a measure of homogeneity existed within Austria-Hungary that lay behind and made possible a liberal and civic option. The complete absence of any such background vastly

increases the chances of nationalism being opposed to civil society. But even here one should be cautious, given the remarkable and continuing success of the liberal and secular national identity created by the founding fathers of modern India.[49]

Ideologies have consequences, and both Marxism and nationalism have been used as strategies of forced development. The background assumption of Mouzelis's chapter is that late development tends to be an enemy of civil society. Such statist development concentrates economic and political power massively, and is normally undertaken under the aegis of total ideologies of varying sorts. Mouzelis shows how clientelism and populism served in Latin America as regime strategies designed to replace social self-organization. His general picture is reinforced by a consideration of the Soviet model of industrialization. Here the concentration of power was so great that it ruined any balancing of the state by social forces, with social self-organization being explicitly excluded along the lines noted by Tocqueville. Both these cases should be seen in the light of a further principle of Tocqueville's political sociology, namely that revolutions often reinforce existing social patterns. Certainly, the strategy adopted in Latin America, for all that it reinforced concentrations of power, reflected the interests of a highly inegalitarian society; further, the social atomization of Soviet rule in Russia merely perfected a strategy already present under the tsars.[50] In contrast, late development of Denmark and Finland, for all the trauma that it involved, was not such as to undermine pre-existing social pluralism.[51]

A final enemy of civil society is cultural. The desire to balance the state and to respect individualism is not inscribed in the historic process, an acorn somehow ready in every culture to turn into an oak tree. The emphasis on caste in Indian civilization emphatically condemns people to a status order. Further, current history makes it absolutely apparent that Islam possesses a civilizational vision of its own, radically opposed to that of the West. The logical clarity enshrined in Islam – the monistic and puritanical scripturalism of its monotheism – obviated any equivalent to occidental 'liberties': possession of the truth was so complete that the culture was radically contractualist rather than corporatist.[52] In addition, its social institutions did not allow for the autonomy of cities, that is, the shell within which many of the practices of civility have been born. But Mardin's brilliant chapter suggests that the force of this cultural ideal may be changing, certainly in Turkey and perhaps more generally. The impact of external cultural and institutional forces seems

still more powerful on East Asian societies – in any case possessed of a cultural pattern with marked resonance to that inherent in the ideal of civil society.

ESCAPING SOCIAL CAGES

To this point, the account of the nature of civil society has sought to be suggestive by being descriptive. The principal point has been that living with difference is as important to the notion of civil society as is the control of despotism. But it is now time to change tempo by making the argument more directly analytic. The best way of doing so is to make use of the material presented in order formally to go beyond the traditional definition of civil society as the self-organization of strong and autonomous groups that balance the state.

That definition must be qualified to prevent it encouraging error. The fundamental argument made by Gellner's chapter is that not every set of autonomous groups creates a civil society. He illustrates this claim with reference to the ancient world and to the classical heartland of Islam, in both of which the individual is caged by kinship groups.[53] This analysis of the potential for cousins to be as tyrannical as the state is surely correct. Civil society must depend upon the ability to escape any particular cage; membership of autonomous groups needs to be both voluntary and overlapping if society is to become civil. This is to make individualism a core component of civil society – with the provision of social space for human experimentation being, *pace* Rousseau, necessary to that end. A corollary of this point about the sort of groups that suit civil society concerns relativism. Gore Vidal was wrong to stress the 'tolerance' of the world before monotheism because of the intolerance within the social segments of that world. Similarly, any modern version of multiculturalism which completely caged its members would be opposed, as Seligman properly insists in his chapter, to the spirit of civil society. Diversity is attractive only within a shared framework which values the worth of the individual.

If Gellner's point marks a real advance, we can improve analytically upon the received notion of civil society still further by correcting a prejudice that seems to remain at the back of his mind. The notion that groups, albeit of the right type, should balance the state is subtly wrong. This manner of conceptualizing state–society re-

lations leaves much to be desired because it tends to see the state exclusively as a threat. In Eastern Europe in recent years, this led many reformers to seek virtually to abolish the state, in the belief that civil society would work best in its absence. The current situation of Russia, bereft of the rule of law, demonstrates the weakness of this view. The state is needed by civil society for protection and so as to ensure basic social conditions, such as, in recent years, the protection of women inside the household. It is important to stress that strength is not given to the state by its sitting autonomously above society, detached from the key groups of society. On the contrary, the image of the state that suits civil society is that of eighteenth-century Britain in which state and society interacted continuously, with state capacity being increased by the ability to work through notables who accepted this because they trusted an institution – *their* institution – that they could control. The expression that catches this notion best is that applied by Samuels to the contemporary Japanese state, that is, that it amounts to being a 'politics of reciprocal consent'.[54]

No discussion of social caging would be complete without reference to the future of our own principal cage, namely that of the nation-state. It is often claimed that the era of the nation-state is now over, that its autonomy has been undermined by the globalization of capital and of culture.[55] This usefully points to the fact that states exist in larger societies, albeit the fact that they have done so for a very long time diminishes the power and the originality of this claim. How should this social pattern, whose salience has certainly increased – that is, the fact that we have multiple and overlapping identities because we belong to different societies[56] – be seen by analysts and adherents of the notion of civil society? Does it represent a loss of the ability to control a state, or is it something altogether more positive, an extension of international links allowing for the emergence of an international civil society? There is some truth to both sides of the equation without absolute clarity being yet available as to which will prove to be the more important. The fact that civil society has been gained through nation-states must cause hesitation. It is at least possible that the members of a more international society will gain advantages at the expense of those who remain nationally caged within a state less and less capable of providing decent social conditions. But the form that international society takes in the future remains open. Against this vision of the increasing salience of capitalist society can be set that of the European Union: this larger shell decidedly increases civility,

of Great Britain as much as of states in Eastern Europe wishing to join, because of its insistence on democracy allied to minority rights. But if national social caging brought citizenship, it equally proved capable of causing disaster. When the leaders of nation-states are tightly caged by nationalist pressure groups, they may no longer be able to play the game of realism – that is, they are forced to place 'national interest' above the norms of international society. German leaders became caged in this manner in the years before 1914, and this was one factor that led to the onset of world war.[57] The safety of the world thus depends upon what can usefully be called sophisticated realism, that is, a realism that stresses the society of states rather than a crude Hobbesian realism based on a view of mere international anarchy.[58] The growth of international society, the fact that the leaders of the G7 countries understand each other and, literally, speak the same language, is thus something to be welcomed by the adherents of civil society.

It is as well to own up to an ambivalence on my own part at this point. Peace between nations rests on two different and potentially opposed foundations. To this point emphasis has been placed on the ability of statesmen to inhabit a single international society. The conduct of realism certainly depends upon a shared appreciation of its rules, mechanisms and signalling devices; to this base of international relations is sometimes added the sharing of other norms – as between Anglo-Saxon powers in the past and between liberal states in the European Union. But it is always dangerous to leave the conduct of international affairs completely to statesmen; more particularly, statesmen are often saved from making mistakes by public scrutiny of their policies. There is a clear tension here, between international elite understandings and national popular control. In the long run, the only way in which that tension could be resolved would be for the spread of international society to be such as to involve popular forces rather than elite segments. If that is desirable, it does not as yet look sociologically likely, given that very many remain nationally caged – and thereby potential fodder for nationalist political agitation.[59]

DEVELOPMENT, REGIME, TRAUMA

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of civil society concerns its sociological moorings, that is, the nature of the social processes that cause and support it. A key matter here is whether the processes of

the first birth of civil society are, so to speak, universal, so that we can look forward to a spread of civil society in consequence. Any easy universalism will have to be rejected. This makes the chances for an extension of civil society at one and the same time worse and better. Obviously, the balanced social portfolio of European history is missing in many areas of the world, not least because of the pressure of forced nation-building and industrialization. Against this negative consideration can be set, however, other factors pointing in the opposite direction. For one thing, the contours of civil society are recognized and sought for, in large part because the notion is associated with economic development and softer political rule; differently put, the popularity of the concept helps corrode some of the certainty of the ideological visions still powerful in the modern world. For another thing, the modern world political economy is blessed with an international order of sorts, making both protectionism and geopolitical conflict, at least between major powers, less likely; this may allow nationalism to be slightly less fundamentalist in some places, that is, it may permit confederal experiments, given that unitary states are less necessary.

Before seeing how these factors play out in different regions of the world, it is important to begin analysis with the social evolutionary optimism noted at the start of the chapter. Such social determinism is quite widespread in classical social thought. Marx is an exemplar in holding that the bourgeoisie was fated to attack feudalism, and thus serve as the carrier, at least for a period, of liberal ideals. From this sort of general view came the optimistic notion that economic development will lead to greater social differentiation, and that this raw material will become organized so as to create a decent polity.[60] The pioneering role of a capitalist bourgeoisie was held to be particularly significant in accounting for the emergence of civil society in the West; the potential of the same class for demanding and maintaining civil society has equally formed the basis of most theories which hope for or expect civil society in the East and in the South.[61] But the idea that social differentiation would create civil society has not rested only on the bourgeoisie. Particular attention to the contribution made by working classes has recently been given by Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens.[62] The core of their case rests as clearly upon economic interest as had that of Marxist and other social evolutionist accounts, with a difference in interpretation following from the insistence that bourgeoisies will find it in their interests to oppose and workers in theirs to demand social change. Beyond such

economistic views, however, stand accounts, particularly of the last days of the Soviet bloc, which make much of the role played by pressures from church and environmental groups in causing the collapse of communism.

Whilst developmentalist views are not bereft of all sense, above all because a wide diffusion of property does help to *maintain* civil society, scepticism should be shown with regard to the *causal* pattern identified. Most obviously, little pressure for change in communist society came from below, with the *annus mirabilis* of 1989 rather seeing social forces suddenly occupying political space hurriedly vacated by party-states.[63] More generally, the origins of civil society in Europe go back, as noted, well before the social differentiation induced by economic development; differently put, social differentiation was clearly present, *pace* Durkheim, before the modern division of labour. Putnam's important book on traditions of government within Italy recognizes this, and adds to it a virtually complete historical determinism: civil society is seen as being very old, and, against received wisdom, as the condition rather than the consequence of economic development.[64] But if we bracket this consideration for a moment, further analysis undermines the view that classes are bound to demand an extension of civil society.

It is indeed true that the bourgeoisie in European history was at times an opponent of the state. One background factor making it so was relative pacification; differently put, the fact that urban middle classes in the classical heartland of Islam faced continuing incursions of nomadic tribesmen necessarily made them friends of the state.[65] Nonetheless, capitalists and other middle-class fragments in the West have often made vertical connections to the state, not least in the important case of Wilhelmine Germany, and this is always likely to be so when such actors are in fear of challenges from below.[66] Wank's chapter demonstrates the opportunistic behaviour of Chinese capitalists in 1989, and to this could be added the sorry fact that some privatizations in the former Soviet bloc are in effect piratizations, in which *nomenklatura* connections matter as much as ever.[67] Whilst it is true that the record of working classes in connection with the defence of civil society is strikingly good, essentialist definitions of class work no better here than they did for the middle classes. Those few working-class movements that have been – or that have seemed to be – genuinely radical have bred an intransigence on the part of their opponents that has helped block the emergence of civil society. In Latin America liberalizations

from below, in contrast to decompressions initiated from above, have tended to fail.[68]

If all of this suggests caution about any easy and automatic triumph of civil society, it also calls for more constructive analysis and explanation. Something must first be said about the way in which working classes gain differential characters from the regimes with which they interact.[69] This analysis will in turn push back the causal chain from popular forces to the political elite, that is, towards explanation of regime character. Attention will first be focused on the birth of civil society in the West before then examining the chances that it might be extended elsewhere.

There has been very great variation in levels of class consciousness amongst different working classes.[70] At one end of a scale of militancy in the years before 1914 can be placed the accommodationist working class of the United States and at the other the revolutionary workers of St Petersburg, with British labour loyalty and German socialist militancy standing between these poles. Such variation is best explained in political terms. Liberalism diffuses social conflict, whereas autocracy and authoritarianism concentrates it. There is everything to be said, in other words, for Dahrendorf's observation that conflict becomes intense when different types of conflict are imposed on top of each other.[71] Russian workers had no choice but to 'take on' the state since it prevented them organizing their own trade unions; by contrast, American workers organized their class conflict at the industrial level, whilst remaining loyal to a political system which had given all white males the vote by the 1830s.

This analysis reinforces a point made earlier, that pure exclusion from power does not produce civility. Russian workers were revolutionary and, still more importantly, served as a vehicle by means of which an utterly illiberal political intelligentsia came to power. Equally, however, one can again doubt the extent to which the United States deserves to be considered a civil society. Mann has recently shown that the complete domestication of the American working class owed as much to a stick employed by liberalism as to its more familiar carrots – as much to vicious repression of socialist ideals as to easy acceptance of business unionism and economic growth.[72] Differently put, there is in the United States a single culture, essentially capitalist in spirit, rather than a civil society based on the coexistence of competing political traditions. If at times the presence of such traditions has led to stalemate in Europe, at best it has represented that genuine difference – not to mention

the material achievements of the welfare state – which stands as the core of civil society.

If the causal link between workers and civil society is less than perfect, what can be said about the sociology of more middling groups? More particularly, the analysis demands that attention be given to a prior question. Why were some states blessed with regimes sufficiently liberal to produce moderate working classes which could be relatively easily incorporated into the polity? In the English case, such liberalism was not always present; on the contrary, it was a historical achievement. Seventeenth-century England had been prey to civil war, treason trials, regicide, conspiracy and the sundering of families. The very sudden move to political stability between 1675 and 1725 seems to be best explained by this traumatic experience. In a condition of continuing stalemate, in which neither side was capable of outright victory, it suddenly began to make sense, as it had to those divided by religion in early modern Europe, to try to live together – the successful accomplishment of which then fostered a culture of civility.[73] For all that this political achievement was genuinely autonomous, it was nonetheless aided by economic factors. For one thing, the stalemate itself resulted from negative resisting power in society being widely spread. For another thing, the acceptance of party alternation in government was eased by the presence of a growing economy, that is, of a source of remuneration other than that derived from political power. Differently put, separate patterns of power reinforced each other, making any full account of the creation of civil society necessarily multi-causal in character.

Let us reflect on what has been said by distinguishing between three analytic categories. Putnam may be right, firstly, to say that the civility of some societies is virtually shrouded in the mists of time. But his case is exaggerated, given the existence of a second category, that in which civil society may (or may not) be *achieved*. This category is one in which a proto civil society is in existence, that is, social differentiation is available on the basis of which civil society could be consolidated. It may be that industrialization increases the number of societies of this type. Nonetheless, what remains striking is that political skill is required to make the breakthrough to civil society. Britain achieved this in the early eighteenth century and Spain in recent years. In contrast, Germany was unable to make this transition autonomously. Factors that explain this failure are not hard to find: divide-and-rule politics were encouraged by the lack of social homogeneity in the country, above all by

religious division, and this in turn created such social distrust that different groups were thereafter unable to cooperate with each other. All the same, structural conditions were not so overwhelmingly unfavourable as to make an autonomous transition impossible to envisage. Max Weber was right, for example, to argue the liberal Machiavellian case just made, namely, that the working class could have been accommodated within the nation, and would have responded to such an offer with an increase in loyalty and a diminution of radicalism.[74] In consequence, the disastrous failure to move towards civil society becomes ascribable to political irresponsibility. This judgement is much reinforced when noting the existence of a third category, that in which structural factors are so massively unfavourable as to make the chances of achieving civil society very slim indeed. Societies facing rapid industrialization and, still more, nation-building often find themselves with politics of such total societal novelty – a situation in which, unfortunately, everything is up for grabs – as almost to rule out the possibility of civil society.

Let us turn from – or, rather, put flesh on – these abstract considerations by straightforward analysis of the chances of extending civil society in the different political economies of the modern world. Let us begin with the east, and then turn to the south.

Hindsight makes us realize that communist power systems rested, so to speak, on feet of clay. Lenin had once remarked that the absence of self-organizations under tsarism would make it hard really to penetrate society. The prescience of this insight was most spectacularly seen in the manner in which this historical project came to an end. Civil society had been so destroyed – by bolshevism still more than by tsarism – that a reforming elite could find no partner with whom to make pacts, so as to conduct a controlled decompression of political life.[75] In consequence, the name of the game in this part of the world is now democratization rather than liberalization. Many scholars accordingly suggest that the reform plans of most elites are likely to be blocked by instant democratic pressures.[76] Such reform is of course desperately needed since all of this world is involved in a double transition, to democracy and the market – to which some must add basic nation-building as well.[77] The chances for the emergence of a civil society look dim in the face of such a historical agenda.

Pessimism can be overdone. Depoliticization has resulted from absolute disenchantment with the past, leaving a good deal of steer-

ing room for elites to push through economic reforms. There may be little to fear from movements from below:

> it also follows that it is entirely possible to have pluralism and a wide variety of small groups competing for influence without ever pulling large numbers of people into political life . . . if states remain strictly liberal and do not grant organisational advantages to large groups, it may well be possible to maintain pluralism without extensive mass movements. If, for example, workers are free not to join unions, many will simply not join.[78]

Further, postcommunist societies have no equivalent of Latin America's intact and powerful landed elite. Revolution destroyed the old classes, whilst those *nomenklatura* members who did not enter business are now very clearly defeated – except, of course, for those who have retained power by changing their colours, that is, by moving from communism to nationalism. All in all, the amount of resistance from within the elite to radical change is historically abnormally low. Most important of all, however, is something that has nothing to do with the legacy of communism, namely geography. Many East and Central European states are extremely happy to have policies directed by experts associated with the European Union. The desire to return to Europe means that there is considerable resistance to the reintroduction of authoritarian incivilities.

If these factors lend advantage, it remains important to stress that depoliticization is not the same thing as the consolidation of civil society. The absence of positive faith in a regime can lead at any time to the emergence of symbolic politics, and in particular to trust in one's ethnic group – a situation especially likely to block moves to civil society, given the large number of ethnic Russians resident in the former peripheral republics. More generally, a country is only strong when an orderly civil society works with the state. At present, most states in former communist countries may have autonomy but this scarcely makes up for the absence of linkages with society. The lack of self-organization of society may be impeded, interestingly enough, by the legacy of excessive egalitarianism: differently put, the striking of bargains – that is, the practice of normal, civil politics – only becomes possible once interests have become conscious and organised.

It is already apparent that there will be diverse national outcomes to these postcommunist dilemmas. Societies which broke firmly

with the communist past, which are physically close to the European Union, which have civil traditions and histories of social self-organization and which have already undertaken basic nation-building may well be able to establish civil societies. Against the hopes that can be entertained for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Estonia and Slovenia, however, have to be set the fears and pessimism that inevitably rise up when one looks further east. In this connection it is well worth noting the contrast between the post-Soviet Russian situation and that which is developing in the remaining great communist power. China's reversal of Soviet policy, that is, its emphasis on *perestroika before glasnost*, looks set to create a proto civil society, that is, a socially differentiated society in which interests are well articulated. If elite skill can engineer a political opening, civil society may thereby have a good chance of being consolidated.

The picture of Latin America revealed by the chapters of Mouzelis and Oxhorn suggests a social world whose chances of achieving civil society are poised on a knife edge. For all that the transition to civil society is far less complicated than it is in postcommunism, the fundamental difficulty that remains is recognizable from that world. The legacy of populism and clientelism is such that societal self-organization is very far from yet forming a proto civil society. In addition, redistributive policies – which, given gross social inequality, are needed if civil society is to have meaning – may lead to resistance on the part of the established elite. Against the obvious pessimism engendered by these considerations can be set three factors which point in the opposite direction. Firstly, fights within the elite of many countries have become moderated and civil as the result of brutal trauma. The determination to keep conflict within bounds in countries such as Argentina and Chile, where memories of the vicious consequences of extremes are sufficiently fresh, is such as to induce considerable self-discipline. Secondly, the chances for civil society are on balance improved by the historic rejection of import-substituting industrialization. The possibility of a rise in levels of economic growth and an increase in connections to the external world will both lend support to civil society. What is most exciting, thirdly, is Oxhorn's picture of the creation of genuine movements from below, designed to ensure that economic liberalization will not be at their expense. As yet, it is too early to be certain that such new movements will remain free from state interference. What remains desperately needed is the creation of a modern party system, that is, of parties at once inde-

pendent of the state apparatus and under the control of well-articulated interests in society. It is worth noting in this connection that East Asian societies, whose marked economic growth has given them both wealth and sufficient social differentiation to support a civil society, suffer quite as much from the absence of a party system. Trust within the political elite is limited, with the current president of South Korea seemingly seeking legitimacy by means of open populism.

If one can hope, with more or less conviction, for the spread of civil society in the social worlds considered, foreboding seems natural when considering other political economies. Adherence to the ideal of civil society in modern India, amongst popular sectors as well as within the elite, is very remarkable; but this exists within the social context of caste, which still cages huge numbers with awful efficiency. The situation in Islam is probably more threatening. Whilst Mardin may be right to say that the dream of Islam can be diluted in favour of that of civil society, the process he notes in modern Turkey is far from general at the moment. One reason for this is that social and economic modernization can be aided by Islamic 'fundamentalism', that is, by stressing that high tradition of the belief system favouring literacy and puritanism. Another reason is that many Islamic countries are almost swamped by enormous social problems: this is most obviously true of Egypt, whose political system, anyway far from liberal, looks as it will have the greatest difficulty dealing with an immense demographic revolution. A similar point must be made about Africa. Whilst one can hope that consociational deals of one sort or another can promote civic imaginings and so limit ethnic conflict, there is much to be said for the view that the nation-state has been a curse for Africa. This point is made with unrivalled force by Basil Davidson. Unfortunately, his hopes that 'ethos of African community' might replace the nation-state seem terribly vague.[79] To that extent, Africa seems so condemned to harsh nation-building as to rule out many hopes for civil society.

FROM DESCRIPTION TO PRESCRIPTION

Civil society is a particular form of society, appreciating social diversity and able to limit the depredations of political power, that was born in Europe; it may, with luck, skill and imagination, spread to some other regions of the world. If this central claim is clear, an

ambivalence at work in the argument can usefully be highlighted once again. The presence of difference, of varied identities, has been seen as a benefit, but an emphasis has equally been placed on the capacity and right to move between – even shop around for – such identities; diversity is valued within certain bounds. The European tone to the argument, including critical comments made about the monolithic nature of American culture, should certainly not be accepted too easily. European society bred two world wars – which is to say that its civility has been far from stable.

It is well worth moving away from this definition towards endorsing it. The best way to start doing so is to stress that the concept of civil society is *not* equivalent, as some would have it, to more familiar and valued notions. Democracy can be decidedly incivil, as Tocqueville realized and as ethnic cleansing often demonstrates; differently put, we value democracy in large part because we expect it to be married to civil practices. More controversially, liberalism is not quite the same thing as civil society. In this matter, I differ from Seligman whose chapter can best be seen as a call for civil society to be held in the spirit of civic virtue.[80] One can easily see that he has in mind the need for a strong *conscience collective*, which he believes was present in seventeenth-century New England, so that difference will not lead to disaster. I agree that some background sense of unity is needed, but am troubled by the Durkheimian tone of his demand for an extensive shared social identity – and am far from convinced of the civil nature of early America. More importantly, Durkheim should be seen in the last analyis as an illiberal thinker, wishing to cage individuals morally because convinced that they could not manage their lives on their own. A more limited shared identity is surely proper to liberalism, as is the insistence, derived from Montesquieu and Tocqueville, that the people can be trusted to rule themselves.[81]

It is not hard to mount a defence of the desirability of this sort of morally complex society. Meadwell's chapter suggests that the privileging of diversity has a great deal to do with the workings of modern science, and interestingly criticizes Habermas, as I have criticized Seligman, for wishing for more unity than is proper to liberalism. A more general way to support the notion of moral diversity is by returning to the question of authenticity. It is quite true that many social practices of civil society project a false front for the individual. There is a very great deal to be said in favour of such good manners, that is, of such moderated hypocrisy. Human beings need the privacy of social roles in order that they can exper-

iment with who they are and what they wish to become. The trouble with Rousseau, and with his intellectual descendant Sartre, is the belief that we have a fixed personality.[82] Life is not quite like that. We suffer, as Proust put it, from the 'intermittences of the heart', from varied longings, many of which make us unhappy. Still the response of Proust to this situation seems to me the only one that makes sense for the maturity of mankind. At the end of his great novel, the narrator sees a young boy gazing longingly at an aristocratic house. He looks set to go down the false trails of adulation for society and for art, and the author accordingly wonders whether he should warn him that he might waste his life. He decides not to do so, in the belief that every human being must find his or her way in life. If civil society can liberate, this is not to say that life suddenly becomes easy. The establishment of a personal identity is difficult.

If this is straightforward but cautious endorsement, this chapter can usefully finish on a more immediately prescriptive note. One can detect something of a difference between authors such as Habermas, who see civil society as deeply threatened and comprised by late capitalism,[83] and others – represented here by Giner and Pérez-Díaz – who characterize modern society rather differently and stress the presence of social trends that may help the consolidation of civil society. But this is a difference between friends. Civil society is fragile, and it needs to be extended.

NOTES

1 J. Keane, ed., *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives*, Verso, London, 1988. Although Keane's contribution to the revival of the concept in the West was critical, many of his views had been anticipated by J. Cohen, *Class and Civil Society: The Limits of Marxian Critical Theory*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, Mass., 1983.

2 I am indebted to Patricia Foxen for this reference.

3 S. P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla., 1991.

4 K. Kumar, 'Civil Society: An Inquiry into the Usefulness of an Historical Term', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, 1993. The usefulness of the term has been interestingly defended by C. G. A. Bryant, 'Social Self-Organisation, Civility and Sociology: A Comment on Kumar's "Civil Society"', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, 1993. This debate was continued by the same authors in the *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 45, 1994.

5 J. A. Hall, 'Ideas and the Social Sciences', in J. Goldstein and R. Keohane, eds, *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1993.

6 In this I differ from Pérez-Díaz's argument, despite agreement as to the weak institutional bases of civil society.
7 G. Vidal, *Creation*, Heinemann, London, 1981. The comment in question was made in a BBC interview shortly after the publication of the novel.
8 E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983, ch. 2; P. Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1989.
9 J. A. Hall, *Powers and Liberties*, Blackwell, 1985, part I.
10 P. Burke, 'City States', in J. A. Hall, *States in History*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1986.
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