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Civil society from a historical perspective*

JÜRGEN KOCKA

Social Science Research Center Berlin, Reichpietschuhufer 50, D-10785 Berlin, Germany. E-mail: kocka@wz-berlin.de

In many languages, the concept of 'Civil society' has had an astonishing career over the last 10 to 15 years, in disciplines such as history and sociology as well as with the public at large. This article presents a short history of the concept, offers a definition and explores the reasons for its popularity by identifying its conceptual 'opponents', which have changed over time. It discusses the changing relations between civil society, the market economy, government and the private sphere. It deals with the affinity between civil society and the middle classes in some areas and periods. It finally explores the trends and limits of the emergence of a transnational civil society in Europe. It is an overview that deals with the present problems from a historical perspective.

Scholarly terms run their course, as do journalistic terms. They emerge, sometimes spread like epidemics and are on everyone's lips before they are pushed back to the margins and become outdated. During their heyday the terms fulfil many functions. In the sciences they are used to describe and analyse. In public discussion they identify affiliations and front positions like banners, gathering their followers behind them and leading them to battle. Scholarly and journalistic functions of a term sometimes obstruct one another.

'Civil society' is just such a term that has gained great popularity over the last 15 years and is still used frequently. That, which we call 'civil society' in English, is *spoleczenstwo obywatelskie* in Polish, *shimin shakai* in Japanese, and *Zivilgesellschaft* or *Bürgergesellschaft* in German. The meanings of these phrases are not identical in the different languages. And even the concept itself oscillates. It has been compared with pudding that is impossible to nail to the wall.[1]

In order to be able to use the term for scholarly purposes, it is necessary to recall its history and retrace the configurations that led to its ambiguity and its attractiveness. It must be defined, and after that the relationship between civil

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society and the market, on the one hand, and between civil society and the state, on the other, should be examined. Furthermore, I will discuss the prerequisites for a civil society; that is, the necessary actors and resources of civil society, and my concluding comments will deal with civil society in a nation-state and in transnational contexts. I will do all of this primarily with an eye towards the German–Central European path, but will draw comparisons with western and eastern Europe, from England to Russia.

Begriffsgeschichte, the history of the concept

The term 'civil society' has a long history, tracing back to the *societas civilis* in Aristotelian tradition. For centuries it has been among the central concepts in European thought on politics and society. Its connotations have varied, but it almost always dealt with social and political life beyond the domestic sphere of home and family. And it referred to issues of coexistence, to community beyond the purely particular, and to the general and the political, often normative and emphatic in nature.

The term *civil society*, *société civile*, *Zivilgesellschaft* or *Bürgergesellschaft* assumed its modern interpretation in the 17th and 18th centuries, largely through writers of the Enlightenment. Various contributions were made by John Locke, Adam Ferguson, Montesquieu, the Encyclopedists, Immanuel Kant, and many others.

'Civil society' had a positive connotation during the Enlightenment process. The term stood for what at the time was a utopian plan for a future civilization in which the people would live together in peace as politically mature, responsible citizens – as private individuals in their families and as citizens in public. They would be independent and free, independently cooperative under the rule of law but without being spoon-fed by the authoritarian state; there would be tolerance for cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity but without too great social inequality, in any case without the traditional form of corporative inequality. 'Civil society' was gradually defined in contrast to the state; at the time this largely meant an absolutist state. In other words, civil society was anti-absolutist. At the core of this anti-absolutist and anti-corporative 'plan' for future society, culture, and politics was the notion of social self-organization by individuals and groups. It was critical of tradition, utopian, and far ahead of reality, and it was supposed to stay that way.

Under the influence of capitalism, which was gaining ground, and of early industrialism, the definition went through changes in the first half of the 19th century in works by Hegel, Marx, and others. 'Civil society' became even more clearly distinguished from the state than it had been and understood as a system of needs and work, of the market and particular interests, more in the sense of

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a 'middle-class (*bürgerliche*) society' of the bourgeoisie than as a 'civil society' made up of citizens (*Bürger*). In German the terms *Zivilgesellschaft* or *Bürgergesellschaft*, which traditionally had a positive connotation, were superseded by the term *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, which was used into the late 20th century mostly in a critical and polemical context. The traditional, positive meaning was retained longer in English and French, as for instance by de Tocqueville. On the whole, however, the term 'civil society' receded to the background in other languages as well, playing only a marginal role until roughly 1980.

As of around 1980, the term 'civil society' experienced a brilliant comeback. It became the central expression in anti-dictatorial critique, especially in East Central Europe – in Prague, Warsaw and Budapest, where dissidents such as Václav Havel, Bronislaw Geremek and György Konrád used the term to speak out against one-party dictatorships, Soviet hegemony and totalitarianism, and for freedom, pluralism and social autonomy. Corresponding movements could also be observed, in some cases even earlier, in Latin America and South Africa. The term is now used worldwide, in various political climates, among political centrists, and the left wing, by liberals, communitarians, and anti-globalization activists, by social scientists such as John Keane, Charles Taylor and Jürgen Habermas – always with a positive connotation. 'Civil society' was then translated back into German as *Zivilgesellschaft* in an effort to avoid the critical, polemical meaning of 'bourgeois' that was associated with '*bürgerliche* Gesellschaft'.[2]

Eighteenth-century ideas have evidently assumed new relevance at the close of the 20th century. 'Civil society' has become attractive in the victorious struggle against dictators, who represented the most egregious negation of civil society in the 20th century.

But even in the non-dictatorial Western world, the term fits – then as now – into the general political, intellectual climate. First of all it emphasizes social self-organization and individual responsibility, reflecting the widespread scepticism toward being spoon-fed by the state. Even in the West, many believe the interventionist social state is approaching its limits by regulating too much and becoming overburdened. Second, 'civil society', as demonstrated by the use of the phrase by present-day anti-globalization movements, promises an alternative to the unbridled capitalism that has been developing worldwide. The term thus reflects a new kind of critique of capitalism, since the logic of civil society, as determined by discourse, conflict and understanding, promises different solutions than those of the logic of the market, based on competition, exchange and optimization of individual benefits.

Finally, civic involvement and efforts to achieve common goals are an integral part of behaviour in civil society, no matter how differently the goals may be defined. In the greatly individualized and partly fragmented societies of the late-

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and post-industrial periods, 'civil society' promises an answer to the pressing question of what holds our societies together. Similar to Anglo-American discourse on the 'third way', the debate on civil society in Germany is about the necessity to redefine the interrelationship of politics, society and industry, and about the moral foundations of politics and the community. This explains why the term is so attractive and highly charged in many public discussions today.

I would like to make two statements based on this short historical survey of the term. First, from the outset – and repeatedly – the term 'civil society' has combined normative, and descriptive, analytical layers of meaning. This is still true today, which represents more an opportunity than a burden. Second, the 'main opponents' of the term have changed over the course of time, or rather, new opponents have appeared and their relative weight is constantly shifting. Along with changes in the main thrusts, however, have come changes in the scope and nuances of the meaning. In the eighteenth century it would not have made any sense for Adam Smith or Adam Ferguson to weaken the prominence of the anti-absolutist and anti-corporative connotation of the term by simultaneously distinguishing it from the market economy, since the market was still vying for its position. Quite the contrary, the market, competition, capitalism, citizens by virtue of their participation in economic life, these were alliance partners; and 'civil society' was not set off from the economy conceptually. Things were different regarding some late 20th-century authors. In view of the successful expansion of the capitalist market economy to the most remote countries and to the most intimate corners of our private lives, civil social action today is opposed not only to the all-controlling state but also to the all-permeating market. Accordingly, 'civil society' is now often distinguished from 'economy'. Finally, the post-modern experience of extreme individualisation and fragmentation is widespread today, whereas it was still rather marginal in the 1960s and 1970s. In reaction, the communitarian aspects of civil society, the cohesion it conveys and its social aspects are stressed with new emphasis. Today's definitions of 'civil society' should not simply cut off all reminders of these thrusts and distinctions if they want to avoid losing the connection to those discursive and practical, historical contexts that gave and still give the term its strength and attractiveness outside specialized empirical research.

Definition

Against this background, the definition of 'civil society' can be expressed in three ways: first, as a type of social action; second, as an area or sphere connected to, but separate from, economy, state, and the private sphere; and third, as the core of a draft or project that still has some utopian features.

First, 'civil society' refers to a *specific type of social action*[3] in contrast to others,

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that is, in contrast to struggle and war, to exchange and market, to rule and obedience, and in contrast to the peculiarities of private life. As a specific type of social action, 'civil society' is characterized by the fact that it (1) is oriented toward non-conflict, compromise, and understanding in public; (2) stresses individual independence and social self-organization; (3) recognizes plurality, difference and tension; (4) proceeds non-violently and peacefully; and (5) is, among other things, oriented toward general things, that is, it works actively for the common good based on the particular experience and interests of each individual, even if different actors in civil society might have very different conceptions of what constitutes the common good.

The civil social type of social action defined in this way is not totally absent from government administration and politics, nor is it totally absent in commercial businesses and their interaction and it is not totally absent in family and kinship relations. As far as state organs and their officials, businesses and their personnel, and families and kinship relations take advantage of this type of social action, they are active members of civil society. But other types of social action predominate in these areas, namely, that of political rule, market logic, and private life, respectively. The civil society type of social action is truly dominant in a social area or space that can be distinguished in modern, differentiated societies from government, business, and the private sphere – that is, the public space occupied by clubs, associations, social movements, networks and initiatives. This is why 'civil society' also refers to a *social sphere*, which encompasses 'a complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected non-governmental institutions that tend to be non-violent, self-organizing, self-reflexive, and permanently in tension with each other', a *social space* related to, but distinguished from, government, business, and the private sphere.[4]

Finally it is important to keep in mind that all historical experience has shown that civil society as a type of social action and a sphere of social self-organization can be asserted and established lastingly only if it is embedded within a circle of changing economic, social, political and cultural conditions that are, in turn, reinforced by civil society. This is apparent in the fact that civil society can often only be asserted and safeguarded in criticism of existing or impending conditions; in criticism, as I have previously mentioned, of being spoon-fed and oppressed by the authorities, in criticism of traditional forms of inequality and in resistance to being overwhelmed by the success of capitalism and in reaction to the fragmentation of, and lack of, solidarity in society. This shows that civil society is *part of a comprehensive plan or project* with features that have not been fully implemented from the time of the Enlightenment until today. To that extent, civil society remains a *utopia*, a promise that has yet to be entirely fulfilled, even if European reality today corresponds much more closely to this plan, this utopia, than it did in the past.

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This also means that civil society is never identical to real, existing societies, neither then nor now. Instead, we use 'civil society' to refer only to a cluster of structural elements of real, existent societies, although they also include other elements: state, market and the private sector, as well as violence, fanaticism and chaos. Societies can be distinguished according to the degree and manner in which they have implemented principles of civil society, thus posing a great task for comparative historical and social science studies to tackle.

Civil society, capitalism and state

I have separated the logic of civil society from the logic of the market, distinguishing between civil society and capitalism. This is necessary and the distinction should remain, but a modification must be made.

Not only is there tension between the market economy and civil society, there is also a degree of affinity. Clearly, the emergence and success of market economies is at least facilitated, if not made possible in the first place, through structures of civil society. This is because a market economy presupposes a certain social cohesion; it requires some level of trust and social capital, and these are resources offered by civil society. Conversely, civil society also needs the market. If the decentralization of economic decisions and economic power that is typical of functioning market economies is lacking, the prognosis for civil society is not good. In centralized administrative economies, civil society will not thrive, as exemplified by the social systems that existed in Central and Eastern Europe until the early 1990s. In a cross-national historical comparison, many parallels can be observed between the implementation of a market economy order and the extension of civil society.

Historically, this parallelism is illustrated by the fact that merchants and manufacturers in 19th-century urban Europe were among the primary actors in civil society, not only in their private lives, but precisely as entrepreneurs. This is apparent among the activities of local self-administration in Western European cities prior to the Revolution of 1848 and it is exemplified by the patronage activities of big businessmen in St Petersburg around 1900. Present-day discussion of 'corporate culture' and the civil social engagement of today's large concerns and their foundations also come to mind. Not every form of patronage by wealthy individuals should be celebrated as civil social engagement. But, conversely, it would be just as false to dismiss every case of 'corporate citizenship' merely as a perception of purely individual interests veiled in ideology and thus discard them in the forecourt of civil society. These examples are meant to show that as much as businesspeople and their enterprises act, and must act, primarily according to the logic of the market, they can still be important as actors in civil society.

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On the other hand, there are variants of capitalism, types of capitalists, and forms of capitalist entrepreneurship that do not lend themselves at all to civil social engagement and which eat away at social cohesion instead of strengthening it. This negative relationship between entrepreneurship and civil society can be found primarily in forms of earlier and present-day enterprises that are especially mobile, spatially flexible and not settled – in the New Economy yesterday and international finance capitalism today. There are forms of capitalism that are parasitic with respect to civil society.

The relationship between civil society and the state, too, is complex and ambivalent. Earlier, the logic of civil society and that of administration and rule were analytically separated, that is, civil society was distinguished from the state. This too is necessary and the distinction should remain, but here, as well, a modification must be made.

First of all, it must be kept in mind that the relationship between civil society and the state needs to be defined differently depending on whether we are looking at the pre-democratic absolutism of the 18th century, the anti-democratic dictatorships of the 20th century, or today's democratic, constitutional states under the rule of law. Civil society emerged as a critical idea and oppositional force in the age of absolutism. In the struggle against dictatorships in the 20th century, it assumed new attractiveness. Its relationship to the state under parliamentarian, democratic conditions must be determined in a different fashion, namely, as a relationship of critical partnership and mutual reinforcement. Liberal, communitarian and social democratic concepts of civil society vary in how they determine the relationship between civil society and the state. From a social democratic perspective, it is underlined that a strong civil society needs a strong state, and vice versa.[5]

On the one hand, in order for civil society to develop fully and be maintained in the long term it needs political institutions that satisfy the criteria of a constitutional state and the rule of law, that permit democratic participation, the making of decisions on fundamental principles, setting legal conditions, and intervening to protect, foster and reconcile its citizens. The inherently diverse civil society finds the unity it needs only in a democratic state under the rule of law. Civil society cannot thrive without a political framework of this kind. Nowhere do NGOs constitute a substitute for a democratic state. But under pre-democratic conditions, under absolutist, autocratic or dictatorial rule, civil social thrusts can pave the way for, and promote, democratization (insofar as the dictator is not so radical that all civil social movements are prevented or destroyed, as was the case under Hitler and Stalin). On the other hand, it is civil society that influences the constitutional state under rule of law, fills it with life, makes it dynamic and forces it to be accountable. The dynamic part of civil society supplies the polity with the necessary energy and mobility. The *access* of civil social initiatives, movements

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and organizations *to the political system* is therefore a central condition in order for civil society to function.[6]

Strengthening civil society also serves to strengthen the state itself. But current interest in civil society, at least in the West, comes in part from experience that the state can become overextended in its position as an interventionist social welfare state, and that it provides for and spoon feeds its citizens more than it needs to. The state also weakens itself if it regulates, or attempts to regulate, excessively. We have reached a state of development in which the division of labour between state and society must be rethought. A strong state is one that concentrates its efforts and leaves a lot to the civil society.

However, this leaves some open questions. For one thing, how and according to what criteria are tasks to be divided between the state and civil society, and how far can the principle of subsidiarity be taken? Furthermore, civil society, if left alone, can show signs of egoism and stagnation, of fundamentalism and resentment, of erosion and fragmentation. Strengthening civil society through a state that practices restraint can thus be politically double-edged and risky. It is important that the reinforcement of civil society does not lead the democratic state to shirk its central tasks. There are great differences in this respect from country to country as a result of their different histories.

Civil society, actors and resources

Who are the potential driving forces of civil society? Who provides its support? What resources are prerequisite for a civil society? I would like to discuss this historically, based on the example of Germany. Let me begin with the relationship between civil society and the middle class.[7]

With respect to the late 18th and early 19th centuries in German-speaking Central Europe, the terms *Bürgertum* and *bürgerlich* referred to the small urban social formation of businesspeople, industrialists, bankers and directors on the one hand, and to academically educated officials, professors, secondary school teachers, lawyers, physicians, clerics and journalists, on the other. As part of the middle class, these people were distinct from the nobility, the common masses, and the rural population. They were held together primarily through a common culture, that is, a middle-class culture (*bürgerliche Kultur*) that encompasses general education, certain values such as self-reliance, a specific family model and certain forms of communication. However, middle-class society, or *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, also referred to the model of society that today is called civil society. This ambiguity – *Bürger* means *bourgeois* as well as *citizen* – is not a semantic coincidence. It can be shown that, at the time, the project of a future civil society was popular and supported especially in the lodges, clubs and networks, in the correspondence and communication circles, the movements and political parties,

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in the atmosphere and culture of the urban middle class (including some members of the nobility and petty bourgeoisie). Other social strata and classes instead dissociated themselves more from that project. In fact they were often virtually excluded from it, they profited very little from it, and it meant very little to them.

This early affinity and alliance between middle-class culture and the project of civil society loosened up in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Parts of the middle class became conservative and defensive, turning away from essential aspects of civil society. The civil social project, however, gained new sympathisers, advocates, and supporters in social strata and classes that had previously had nothing to do with it, especially among skilled workers and in the social democratic labour movement. This became a decisive driving force in the further development of civil society. The history of the bourgeois middle class and that of civil society started going their separate ways.

Even today, remnants of the former affinity between middle-class culture and civic engagement can be observed; civil social activities in clubs, citizens' initiatives and NGOs exist mainly in educated urban middle-class milieus. That is the case at least in Germany. But today the project of civil society and civic involvement is greatly supported within many social strata, and not only by the middle class, the profile of which has become so blurred that it is questionable how to identify clearly it anyway.

It is evident when conducting a cross-national comparison that this close connection between the middle class and civil society did not exist everywhere, even in the 19th century. In Poland, the gentry took the place of the poorly developed, sometimes ethnically foreign middle class. In England and France the middle class and nobility became much more closely intertwined, resulting in broader social bases of the developing civil society. In Russia, prior to the First World War, civil social tendencies existed especially among the urban middle classes, the petty and intermediate bourgeoisie and in local politics.

This raises the question of who and what took the place of the middle class with respect to establishing a civil society in regions that had lost their middle classes or never really developed them, such as in Post-communist Eastern Europe following the radical changes around 1990.

In any case, in the past as in the present, certain social groups are very active in civil society and others are underrepresented. The capacity for civil society is distributed disproportionately, depending on time, availability, adequacy of resources, communication networks, education and other unequally distributed resources. Legal discrimination – of women, ethnic minorities and the poor – make civil social engagement all the more difficult. Civil society certainly does not presuppose social equality. But it emerged as a project opposing corporative inequality and to today it is sometimes obstructed and damaged by excessive economic and social inequality. Upon examining the mechanisms of civic

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involvement, it is possible to discover the significant role played by individual civil social 'entrepreneurs'. The role of religion and religiosity in the development or obstruction of civil society comes to bear very differently in different situations. Community church life in non-conformist religious congregations, such as the English and American Quakers, was and is at the root of civic involvement. On the other hand, the principles and practices of the major state religions usually stand opposed to the self-determination of civil society. It is decisive whether religions and churches appear in plural or singular. Another resource is ultimately trust: civic engagement requires a certain degree of trust – in oneself, in others, in the future. *Trust is good, but control is better*: Lenin's motto is not a slogan that supports civil society. All of this clearly shows that civil society can be neither decreed nor simply invented. It is dependent on historical prerequisites. It is always a product of history. It can be obstructed or fostered, but not decreed or constructed.

Civil society and the family

It is common to separate civil society and the family by definition and to view them as occupying different spheres. My earlier argumentation followed these lines, with some restrictions. But here as well, modifications are necessary. Especially from the perspective of gender history, studies have been conducted in recent years that have shown for the middle classes what had always applied in another way for families of peasants and workers – namely, that the 19th and early 20th-century family was definitely not merely a private matter; it also had public aspects. Consequently, the categorical separation of 'public' and 'private' must be greatly qualified. To that end Gunilla Budde recently aimed to depict the middle-class family of the 19th century as a central institution of civil society. Even those who do not wish to go that far cannot deny that the lives particularly of larger middle-class families with important functions extended far into civil society, enabling and strengthening it. Just think of the diverse educational achievements of the families, and within the families, those of the women, aimed toward self-reliance and civic involvement. And of the semi-public living spaces of the middle class, especially in earlier times, when strangers were invited into the home, socializing was practised and civic representation took place. And of the civic engagement of the women, especially in cultural, charitable and social fields, while at the same time they maintained their roles in the home, not breaking away from the family.

The constitution of family and kinship, at least in Western and Central Europe, supplied important conditions for the rise of civil society in yet another way. Here, family bonds did not absorb the loyalty and involvement of their members to a degree that was so absolute and without gaps as to leave no room for civic

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engagement. Not every kind of family and kinship was equally suited for civil society. This is clearly shown by a comparison of Western and Central Europe with the ethnic kinship and clan groups in South-eastern and Southern Europe, not to mention those in other parts of the world.

A diachronic comparison is also insightful. The far-reaching breakthrough of civil society in western Germany starting in the 1960s went hand in hand with a degeneration of family cohesion and functions. This can be understood as an indication of the disjunction of civil society and family in recent times as compared with the 19th century. Research in this area is still lacking.[8]

Civil society, nation and Europe

It is sometimes claimed that civil society and the nation-state are twins, inextricably linked. But historical evidence shows that the matter is far more complex.

When comparing European countries in the 19th century, we can observe civil social endeavours and associations – clubs, theatre groups, citizens' movements and other social organisations – that developed within the framework of established territorial sovereignties and nation-states (as in Western Europe) and also those that were attempted although no accepted state framework existed, or even in opposition to the given state form, as in East, Central and South-eastern Europe. In such cases, civil social efforts opposed the empires established there – the Habsburg, Tsarist and Ottoman empires were increasingly viewed as foreign rule. The findings are not uniform. Sometimes, as in Poland, civil social initiatives in the absence of a nation-state framework were particularly strong. And sometimes, the lack of state support proved a weakness.

Certainly, some civil social initiatives in the 19th century contrasted the established state forms and developed in opposition to them, especially in East central and South-eastern Europe. Until the founding of nation-states around 1870 this also applied to Germany and Italy. Here, politically committed athletes, singers and scientists built up national networks long before the nation-state was formed. In late 19th and early 20th-century Europe, many civil social movements, networks and NGOs emerged that extended beyond national borders. These included the abolitionist movement, the struggle for women's suffrage, the international labour movement, campaigns against prostitution or alcoholism, and then – continuing to today – the struggle for disarmament and peace. In particular, most recently there have been waves of transnationalization. Civil society has now crossed national borders with unprecedented vehemence and in new political spheres – just think of environmental, human rights, and anti-globalisation movements. New, decentralised forms and new means of communication are available to this end.

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Nevertheless, even today civil society has remained largely within a nation-state framework. We are still a far cry from a European – not to mention a global – civil society. There are many reasons for this, but let me mention just one of them. Civil society is closely linked with the public sphere. The public sphere involves communication, and communication requires a common language. Multilingual Europe thus has a difficult hurdle to overcome before a European civil society can emerge. Or should the European civil society of the future speak English?

The idea of civil society was born during the Enlightenment. It is thus a product of the West. But its principles claim universal validity. Within Europe, the idea has shifted eastward, but it has changed in the process. In the eastern part of the continent, inspiration came from western ideas, but that which was, and is, adopted is not merely an imitation. A selective adaptation to the respective conditions has usually taken place. Civil society emerged and is emerging along different paths and in different variants. In different places it may be stronger or weaker, it may come earlier or later, but always, if it emerges at all, it is different, despite the mutual observations, influence, and impact that extend beyond borders. The reality in one country cannot simply be the model for development in another country. But comparisons serve an important purpose, in scholarly discourse as in social and political life.

Notes

1. For a good introduction see J. Keane (1998) *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions* (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp. 12–31.
2. For a more detailed discussion of the history of the concept (*Begriffsgeschichte*) see J. Kocka (2000) Zivilgesellschaft als historisches Problem und Versprechen. In M. Hildermeier, J. Kocka and C. Conrad (Eds) *Europäische Zivilgesellschaft in Ost und West. Begriff, Geschichte, Chancen* (Frankfurt/M: Campus), pp. 14–20.
3. For a substantively similar analysis, though using different terms, see H.-J. Lauth (1999) Strategische, reflexive und ambivalente Zivilgesellschaften. Ein Vorschlag zur Typologie von Zivilgesellschaften im Systemwechsel. In H. Zinecker (Ed), *Unvollendete Demokratisierung in Nichtmarktökonomien. Die Blackbox zwischen Staat und Wirtschaft in den Transitionsländern des Südens und Ostens*, (Amsterdam: Fakultas), pp. 95–120 and D. Ruch (2002) Zivilgesellschaft als Forschungsgegenstand. Systematische, historische und forschungspraktische Annäherungen. Manuscript (Berlin: WZB).
4. The quote is from Keane, *Civil Society* (as in note 1 above), p. 6. Sometimes the term 'civil society' is closely related to terms such as the 'third sector' or 'non-profit sector'. See also L. M. Salamon *et al*. (Eds) (1999) *Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector* (Baltimore: Center for Civil Society Studies), especially p. xvii; H. K.

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Anheier (1999) Der Dritte Sektor im internationalen Vergleich. Ökonomische und zivilgesellschaftliche Dimensionen von Nonprofit-Organisationen. *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* **9**, pp. 197–212; H. K. Anheier, E. Priller and A. Zimmer (2000) Zur zivilgesellschaftlichen Dimension des Dritten Sektors. In H.-D. Klingeman and F. Neidhardt (Eds) *Zur Zukunft der Demokratie. Herausforderungen im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*, WZB-Jahrbuch (Berlin: Edition Sigma), pp. 71–98. According to the definition proposed here, organizations, initiatives and networks of the third sector should be considered part of 'civil society' only if and to the extent that they correspond to the aforementioned type of social action. Consequently, violent or fanatic, intolerant organizations, movements and initiatives may belong to the 'third sector' but do not qualify as belonging to civil society. The distinction, however, is difficult to make in individual cases.

5. See also N. Bermeo and P. Nord (2000) *Civil Society before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield); W. Merkel and H.-J. Puhle (1999) *Von der Diktatur zur Demokratie. Transformationen, Erfolgsbedingungen, Entwicklungspfade* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag), pp. 166–174; T. Meyer and R. Weil (Eds) (2002) *Die Bürgergesellschaft. Perspektiven für Bürgerbeteiligung und Bürgerkommunikation* (Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz), especially the articles on the issue of civil society by Thomas Meyer and Ansgar Klein, pp. 9–64.
6. The criterion of access is strongly emphasized in S. N. Eisenstadt (2002) Civil society and the transformation of the political in the contemporary era. Opening Lecture, Conference on European Civil Society (Berlin: WZB), 14 November 2002 (unpublished manuscript).
7. For greater detail on this see J. Kocka (1993) The European pattern and the German case. In J. Kocka and A. Mitchell (Eds) *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Berg), pp. 3–39.
8. For a more in-depth discussion of the 19th century see G.-F. Budde (2003) Die Familie als zivilgesellschaftliche Kerninstitution. In A. Bauerkämper and M. Borutta (Eds) *Die Praxis der Zivilgesellschaft. Akteure, Handeln und Strukturen im internationalen Vergleich* (Frankfurt/M: Campus).

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About the Author

Jürgen Kocka is Professor of History at the Free University of Berlin and is Director of the Social Science Research Centre Berlin. He is a member of the Academia Europaea.

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