Civicness and Civility: Their Meanings for Social Services

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Abstract Civicness and civility are discussed as intertwined notions. To the degree they flourish, societies can be seen as civil societies. Providing some reflection on them may make a difference to the usual civil society and third sector debates. These concepts are not based on or confined to a specific sector like the third sector; basically all social sectors can contribute to and be marked by them, depending on their constellations and interplay. Therefore, a mediating public sphere and democratic governance have a key role to play. However, beyond an overlapping consensus, civicness and civility can mean different things and the dominant meanings change over time. This is discussed with respect to changing discourses on welfare as they have crystallized in the field of social services. Despite the contested meanings of civility and civicness shown here, introducing these points of reference could help to enrich concerns with the quality and overall designs of personal services in a civil society.

Résumé Civisme et courtoisie sont discutés comme des notions étroitement liées. Jusqu'au point où elles prospèrent, les sociétés peuvent être vues comme des sociétés civiles. Arborer quelques critiques peut faire la différence entre la société civile habituelle et les débats sur le bénévolat. Ces concepts ne sont pas basés sur ou limités à un secteur spécifique comme le bénévolat; fondamentalement tous les secteurs sociaux peuvent contribuer et être marqués par ces concepts, en fonction de leurs constellations et interaction. Par conséquent une sphère publique médiatrice et une gouvernance démocratique ont un rôle clé à jouer. Cependant au delà d'un consensus superposé, le civisme et la courtoisie peuvent signifier différentes choses et les significations dominantes changent dans le temps. Ceci est discuté avec respect pour les discours changeants sur le social du fait qu'ils ont cristallisé dans le domaine des services sociaux. En dépit des significations contestées de courtoisie et

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de civisme montrées ici, introduire ces points de référence pourrait aider à enrichir les préoccupations avec la qualité et les concepts généraux d'activités profession- nelles dans une société civile.

Zusammenfassung   Bürgerschaftliches Engagement und Zivilität sind als mitein- ander verschränkte Begriffe zu verstehen. Von ihrer Geltungskraft hängt es ab, inwieweit Gesellschaften als Zivilgesellschaften angesehen werden können. Eine Reflektion dieser Begriffe kann zur üblichen Diskussion von Zivilgesellschaft und Drittem Sektor einen Unterschied machen. Beide Topoi können nämlich nicht auf Entwicklungen in einem spezifischen Sektor wie dem Dritten Sektor zurückgeführt werden, sondern alle gesellschaftlichen Sektoren können bei der Entwicklung der beiden Elemente bedeutsam sein, in Abhängigkeit von ihrer jeweiligen Konstellation und entsprechenden Interaktionen. Deshalb sind auch Öffentlichkeit und demokrati- schen Formen von Governance mit ihren Vermittlungsleistungen von so zentraler Bedeutung. Aber jenseits eines konsensualen Kernbereichs können die Verständnisse von Aktivbürgerschaft und Zivilität durchaus verschieden sein und die dominanten Bedeutungszuschreibungen sich im Lauf der Zeit verändern. Gezeigt wird dies am Beispiel veränderte Diskurse zu sozialer Wohlfahrt und der Art und Weise, wie sie sich im Feld sozialer Dienste auskristallisiert haben. Trotz umstrittener Bedeutungsgehalte von Engagement und Zivilität, die dort sichtbar werden, ist es hilfreich sie als explizite Bezugspunkte einzuführen. Der Katalog von Fragen der Dienstleistungsqualität, von Kultur und Design persönliche Dienstleistungen wird damit bereichert.

Resumen   Se habla del civismo y la civilidad como dos conceptos interrelacionados. Se consideran sociedades civiles a aquellas que prosperan. Si nos detenemos a re- flexionar sobre ellas, vemos que hay una diferencia en los debates usuales sobre la sociedad civil y sobre el tercer sector. Estos conceptos no se basan ni se limitan a un sector específico como el tercero: básicamente todos los sectores sociales pueden contribuir y estar marcados por ellos, dependiendo de sus constelaciones e interac- ciones. Por tanto, una esfera pública que actúe de mediadora y el gobierno democrático están llamados a desempeñar un papel fundamental. Sin embargo, más allá del con- senso común, civismo y civilidad pueden significar cosas distintas y el significado imperante cambia con el tiempo. Esto se analiza a la luz de los discursos cambiantes sobre el bienestar, según han ido cristalizando en el campo de los servicios sociales. Pese a que se cuestiona el significado de civilidad y civismo aquí mostrados, presentar estos puntos de referencia puede ayudar a enriquecer las opiniones a través de la calidad y los diseños generales de los servicios personales en una sociedad civil.

Keywords   Civicness · Civility · Social services · Social welfare · Civil society

Introduction

It may be both a strength and a weakness that the widespread discussion of civil society is seldom explicit about what the term "civil" actually means, and that definitions and assumptions vary. On the one hand, this ambiguity enables a debate

which escapes the usual state-against-markets discussions. On the other hand, excessive ambiguity may render the debate on civil society inconclusive and unconvincing. In this paper, we will try to make the definition of the word "civil" in the term "civil society" clearer. To this end, two issues will be discussed: civility and civicness. The use of the term "civicness," usually associated with citizens and the state formed by them, already indicates that the author rejects a narrow definition of civil society which equates civicness with the third sector—linking it primarily with "social" and civil behaviour and divorcing it from the public and political sphere and people's role as citizens. It will be argued here that it is necessary to re-include the public sphere, politics, and state institutions in the debate on civil society. It is therefore not only civility, but the twin notions of civicness and civility which are considered in this attempt to bring the term civil society into sharper focus.

The first part of this paper discusses the meanings attached to civicness and civility and shows that the two topics are complementary. However, the meaning and impact given to the two items vary—in theory and in politics. We will therefore speak in plural terms about their meaning. The second and main part of the paper will demonstrate in more concrete terms how the emphasis on certain meanings attached to these two notions varies. This is done with respect to a policy field in which third sector organizations (TSOs), which are often seen as key agents for a more civic and civil society, play a major role—social services in health and education, child and elderly care, or in labour markets. Reference will be made not to any country-specific history but to discourses in which social services are conceived and handled in specific ways and in which—mainly implicitly—civicness and civility are attributed with different meaning and effects. Finally, we will show that today it is not simply the weight given to civicness and civility in the debate on welfare and social services that counts, but also the meaning that discourses attribute to them. A call for active citizens and more civil behaviour can have quite different meanings and therefore the political and analytical task is not only to bring civil society back in, but also to determine which position and role it is given.

On the Meanings of Civicness and Civility

Distinct but Overlapping Notions

In approaching this question, one may begin by identifying what is most associated with the notion of civility in both academic contributions and public debates. When civility is mentioned, the associated qualities are usually phrased in terms of the virtues and manners of individuals—tolerance, self-restraint, mutual respect, commitment to other people, social concern, involvement, and responsibility. Likewise, there is much agreement about what constitutes the antithesis of civility: selfish behaviour, indifference towards others, the inability to curb aggression in conflicts, irresponsible behaviour, a low level of internalization of general moral rules, and so on (Anheier 2007; Calhoun 2000; Forni 2002; Shils 1997).

As far as civicness is concerned, the associated qualities differ in some respects and overlap in others. Civicness, unlike civility, tends to be associated with the

state, citizenry, and citizenship, the degree to which people identify themselves as citizens, or, vice versa, the degree to which public state institutions reach out to individuals as citizens. One could argue that on the one hand civicness is associated with qualities which approximate Marshall's (1950) concept of citizenship (personal, political, and social rights), and on the other hand to active citizenship: voicing claims and needs, defending freedom, and respecting duties. Civicness would thus seem to have simultaneously objective, institutional, and subjective features.

As for the link between civicness and civility, it is often presupposed that civic action is (or should be) realized in civilized ways. Civicness in the form of active citizenship would then presuppose or help to foster civility. Unlike civility, however, civicness is more tightly and directly associated with public institutional settings: public spaces to be guaranteed by state-power, forums for dialogue, and coping with conflicts. As phrased in the introduction to this special issue with reference to social services, "a central question when asking about the 'civic culture' … would then be to analyze the mutual links of institutional settings on the one and the behaviour of politicians, professionals, and users on the other hand. Civicness is the quality of institutions, organizations, procedures, to stimulate, reproduce, and cultivate civility."

In contrast, when it comes to civility the emphasis is usually on forms of behaviour and a much broader range of processes and institutions are mentioned, notably the family and—amongst the state-based institutions—the educational system. Many indirect factors are also mentioned: institutions that allow for participation, or call for learning to cooperate with others. In a study on civility, social capital, and civil society in Asia, Pye (1999) deals—for example—with a typically broad notion of civility as critical both for private personal relationships and for relationships of power and authority. In the famous work on civility by Norbert Elias (1982), mention is made of a broad range of public and private factors, and all spheres of society—the economic, social, cultural, and political—effectively have an impact.

This may lead us to a first tentative definition of civility and civicness: while civility is a set of forms of learned behaviour which cross the boundaries of the public and the private, and enable both spheres to live together peacefully in spite of differences, civicness is associated predominantly with the public realm—people's identities and roles as citizens and the respective public institutions which foster such behaviour and where it can be put into practice. One could argue that civility and civicness are located at the intersection of political culture and wider, general culture. While civility is associated with both spheres, civicness is more associated with political culture.

Moreover, civility and civicness are contested issues. What actors and groups associate with these qualities today often differs from yesterday and continues to change over time. "A concern for genuine civility might lead us to critically reassess social norms of civility" (Calhoun 2000, p. 267), and similarly the norms of civicness. A liberal perspective on civility may, for example, prioritize tolerance, while a conservative one may insist on more self-restraint. With respect to civicness, a liberal perspective will prioritize negative freedom and people's protection from

state intervention, while a republican perspective will underline the need for mutually acceptable compromises between those in power and the citizens, with the latter being ready to take up not only rights but also duties. Civility and civicness may thus come into tension and conflict with one another. One such tension is between respecting individualism and requiring people to behave as "good citizens"; different images of "the good society" and national cultures of civicness will involve their own concepts of how to balance these two elements—some prioritize the toleration of diversity and non-engagement, while others tend to associate civil behaviour with conformity and civicness with active compliance with rules and norms which are confirmed by public authorities.

Which Spheres and Institutions Play a Role?

While it seems obvious that there is a special link between state–public institutional settings and civicness, the role played by other social sectors is less clear. What is the role of the family, communities, and public associational life or the market sphere, in bringing about civility? This question only makes sense if one remembers that all these systems interact and influence one other—family life in an open democratic society means something different from family life in an autocratic system; and with respect to markets we should bear in mind that their "social embeddedness" will affect the role they play.

Nevertheless there are more questions than definitive answers. Does an institution like the family contribute to civility? Do communities with their special inner ties contribute to civility? Or does this depend on the degree to which they open up to civil society and interact with public institutions such as school services that represent a public concern? To what degree is civility, as encountered in the private realm and the personal relationships within that realm, the product of the monodirectional influence of public values on community and family? And to what degree have communities themselves—which have proved more persistent in modern societies than liberal modernization theory would have had us believe— been an essential ingredient in the processes that generate the complex co-product of civility and civicness?

Possibly the most controversial debates concern the role of the market. For some, the market represents a necessary evil which contributes to civility only in very indirect terms as a source of wealth creation; according to this perspective, markets require strong politics to set limits on their effects and thereby civilize them "from the outside" by re-embedding them (Polanyi 1978). Furthermore it could be argued that marketed services are of limited interest in terms of civicness because in "private markets," the link to the "public realm" and people's roles as citizens is in many ways weaker than in public and third-sector-based service areas. However, throughout history, others have made repeated claims about the civilizing effects of *doux commerce*, the ability of trade and commerce to mitigate conflicts and to convert them into peaceful competition (Hirschman 1977). In that sense, markets should limit the impact of civicness but might well contribute to civility.

A More Civil and Civic Society: Going Beyond the Third Sector

Given what has been said, it is clear that there is a strong but by no means exclusive link between civicness and civility on the one and third sector associations on the other hand. As Edwards (2004) similarly asserts, I would argue that the competing definitions that try to locate the "civil" in society have all their shortcomings; but they may complement each other.

In the case of those, who (alongside Habermas) identify civil society with the public sphere they may overlook that civil society is not only made up by debating citizens but also by associations and solidarities with social and economic purposes as represented by many TSOs. Whilst those who identify the civil society with the third sector (see, e.g., the notion of a "civil society sector" as coined by Salamon and Anheier 1997) have difficulties in proving why the contributions of (state) politics and state building should be less important, be it in terms of guaranteeing the respective legal and material basis for the third sector or be it by the scope to learn civility and civicness that come with a democratic state. As to other spheres and "sectors" such as markets, communities, and the family it has been already argued, that they can also contribute to civility.

In sum, civility, like civil society, is not a matter of any particular sector, but it is a quality-dimension of society as a whole, mirroring the impact of civic and civil values across sectors. They all may—depending on the given historical constellation—make their own contributions; but many of them depend on interactions across the sectors and the degree to which a lively public sphere enables this. Civic and civil values are then co-products of historical processes, in which various sides and "sectors" have cooperated and coped with each other (Cohen 1999; Edwards 2004; Evers and Laville 2004; Gosewinkel and Rucht 2004; Kocka 2000).

Civicness and Civility in Discourses on Welfare and Social Services

Having sketched what we should understand by civicness and civility we now turn to attempt to show how civicness manifests itself in one particular field—the field of welfare and personal social services. I will endeavour to show how the influence of various notions of civicness and civility has grown or diminished, how they have changed in emphasis, and how they are interlinked.

This will be done by making reference to a number of distinct discourses in societal and social policy. It would also have been possible to choose labels such as political concepts or ideologies; however, the notion of discourse (Howarth 2000; Laclau 1993) has been chosen here because it embraces both concepts and practices. A discourse takes shape in the public realm; it exists in opposition to other discourses, and there is rivalry among the various discourses for dominance—this has been said, for example, of the "neoliberal" discourse. (This paper does not, then, use "discourse" in the sense of Habermas's rational public deliberation beyond force and narrow interest.).

Our argument builds on a stylized picture of these discourses in the field of social policy and more specifically in personal social services. It is assumed that the

diversity of voices can be reduced to four discursive formations that have had and continue to have a significant impact. As shown in Table 1, each of these discourses will be sketched by referring to the same key issues: the *Leitbild* (strategic vision) of personal services through which they operate; their understanding of the addressees of these services, the role of the professionals, and the citizenry at large. A brief sketch will be made of what each discourse implies for the idea of governance and of the role of the third sector. Finally, I will touch on which ways these ideas relate to civicness and civility, since according to our approach, they should all have an impact on these two notions.

Traditional Welfarism

Viewed over the longer term and in the light of other more recent discourses on welfare and personal services, the classical welfare discourses are impressive in the power they have developed over decades. And even though the different variants have had to assume an apparently defensive position over the past decade, the central issue they have sought to address, that of social inequality, is again of increasing relevance today.

In the area of personal services, the point of convergence of most welfare regimes has been to create services that were public and social—open to all with a strong equalizing effect; this has certainly been the case in the two key areas of health and education. Health and education have long set the *Leitbild* for other service areas that developed later—and to a different and lesser degree—labour market services, child and elderly care. Health and education systems assigned social rights to all as basically equal citizens. What is to be studied here are the links between a service system based on universal social rights and matters of civicness and civility. Michael Walzer (1997, pp. 133ff) notes that the basic and integrative value of a public education system is not to be found in the utopian dream of giving everyone the same degree of qualification, but in the fact that—at least for a short time of their life—all young citizens participate in the system on an equal basis and have to learn to interact with each other in civilized ways across class barriers.

The addressees of the services were predominantly people in need, threatened by one of the evils portrayed by Beveridge, such as illiteracy and illness. The services were to offer protection and repair, in the case of the health system, or the basic means to participate in the labour market as well as in broader public life, in the case of the educational system. The logic of coping with deficiencies and protecting those in need has characterized public social services from the outset. This is encapsulated in the seminal notion of the addressees as clients. The flipside of this is found in the image of the service providers—professionals, the special group that developed alongside the continuing expansion of personal services such as public and social services: doctors, nurses, teachers, and social workers.

The professional discourses were and remain powerful insofar as they set the central standards for the service systems and the ways in which professionals and users encounter each other there. In the best cases, professional knowledge mirrored and intertwined various components, such as pedagogics—the science of learning—as well as ideas about learning, growing up, and rights and duties in a society. But

Table 1 Civicness and civility in the current discourses on society and social services

Elements Discourses	Service Leitbild	Addressees	Governance	Role of third sector	Civicness and civility
Traditional welfarism	Public services as social rights	Needy citizens and clients to be protected and compliant	Hierarchical structures of command and control towards uniform standards, often in corporatist settings	TSOs gap filling/complementary/part of corporatist public provision	Giving people a basically more equal status by strengthening social citizenship
Empowerment and participation	A rich diversity of enabling and locally embedded services	Users empowered to become co-producers	Public policies open for voice; power decentralized towards local people, active citizens and communities	TSOs taking lead in advocacy, voice, well-tailored provision and innovation for new needs	Requiring active citizens and a civility that is more sensitive to personal needs and diversity
Consumerism	Personal services meeting individual preferences	Competent consumer citizens	Regulating social markets for choice-led personal services	TSOs adding up to service choice as providers, giving consumers a voice as lobbies	A minor role for civicness, collective and state action in bringing about civility in service cultures
The activating social investment state	Properly allocated and managed services that help to produce human capital	Activating and supervising the productive citizen	Systems of co-governance, negotiation and persuasion, aiming at public and private actors' support for the government	TSOs as providers to be contracted in and as organizations that intermediate public policies	Strengthening notions of civicness that involve obligations, and notions of civility that involve proper self-conduct

there was also a negative side—such as in medicine—where a historically-bound scientific discourse on persons to be "repaired" predominated, with scant knowledge of citizens and users as social beings. Examples from the field of pedagogy and medicine show that professional discourses can both support and restrict notions of civility. Given the generally weak position of the clients in need of services, welfare professionalism always involved a degree of paternalism, requiring what is known in medical services as "compliance" (for changes in professionalism see Kremer and Tonkens 2006).

Historically, the public service sector has made use of a tool which characterizes public administration: hierarchical decision-making. However, later the systems of private industries and the market sector also left their mark. The classical hospital in fact mixes elements of administrative bureaucracy and Taylorism. Nevertheless, the standardization of services and their products has not only occurred along the lines of the standardization of marketed mass-products, but also with the idea of safeguarding equality within the service system and the aim of providing the same service and the same rights irrespective of location and circumstances.

On the other hand, such a universalistic concept of a public service also has its limits when it comes to respect pluralism, an aspect of civility that is much more prominent in today's society. As far as civicness is concerned, this was enhanced by a welfare state with democratic institutions and a great deal of public power over service systems. The governance of the service system, though, has taken place by and large through state or municipal officials. Possibilities for realizing aspects of civicness that were not represented by the democratic welfare state but by participative processes have been limited.

The ways in which third sector organizations in the social service field have co-shaped civicness and civility have also varied. Arrangements have depended on the compromises between the state and churches, the impact of a self-confident bourgeoisie, and the orientation of the labour movement. The role of TSOs has ranged from a marginal, gap-filling role in a republican system like France, to the complementary role taken by charities that were seen as preparing the extension of public welfare as in England, to the corporate welfare states like Germany (Zimmer 1999), The Netherlands, Austria, or in parts Italy. The different degrees of embeddedness of TSOs not only concerned the system of governance but also the status of users. They were addressed as citizens in some branches (such as education and health) but much more as members of a specific milieu, religious, or ideological camp in others (as in Catholic church-based versus municipal kindergartens). Given the diversity of actors and links, it is hard to generalize about the impact on civicness and civility. Some social movements, like the labour movement, promoted both; other movements and organizations such as charity or church-based welfare may have contributed to more decent and civilized ways of living, but they were far from addressing people as active right-claiming citizens. Yet, notwithstanding the different forms of TSOs and their embeddedness, they created channels for active participation. In early welfare systems, however, participation was throughout a matter for experienced officials at the top of umbrella organizations or on corporatist boards. Participation had little to do with the daily life of ordinary citizens and service users, who were left with little room to negotiate their role.

In the emerging democracies and welfare states between the two world wars, as in Germany's Weimar Republic, in Britain, France, or the Scandinavian countries, it is the political system rather than the single service unit that is characterized by democratic values and, therefore, by some degree of civicness.

How do we sum this all up with regard to civicness and civility? Political democracy was a first stride towards establishing a public of citizens and eliminating the class-limits of the concept of a civilized person. But it was the welfare state that, by guaranteeing some degree of social security for all and universal access to services like health and education, helped to widen the basic norms of civility and standards of community living. However, the classical welfare approach towards service support has also had its limits. The ordinary citizen, once they had access to such services offers, experienced a service that was rather prescriptive and uniform. It was not concerned with personal rights and aspirations (a dimension of civility to be taken up later). In retrospect, the repercussions for civicness were more positive; a strong welfare state created "social" services as a matter of public interest and concern, and the administration of welfare services provided enormous scope for people to organize and make their voice heard through various forms of TSOs. Participating in the politics of services had interrelated civic and civilizing effects. It called for developing the art of balancing conflict and cooperation, activism and self-restraint.

Empowerment and Participation

It was not only economic crises such as the oil crisis and later on the labour-market crisis that shook the well-organized world of welfare of the *trentes glorieuses* in the 1970s. Student revolutions and new social movements (Castells 1983) were the culmination of cultural transformations which still reverberate today. Both life conditions and life styles, both needs and aspirations, had changed. This had repercussions on both the inherited systems of TSOs and the social services representing key issues for lifestyle and life expectations on behalf of health, education, or care.

First of all, the idea of services as a universal system for what some saw as increasingly middle-class societies was irrevocably undermined. With greater pluralism and cultural heterogeneity, differences in location, circumstances, and aspirations, *Leitbilder* for services also had to be thought of in more pluralist terms. Since then, any realistic *Leitbild* of social services has had to deal with a plurality of services, some of them locally-embedded in communities, some self-organized and self-governed; it is no longer possible to talk exclusively about one public service in the singular. By this increasing pluralism of forms of ownership a situation took shape in which a large spectrum of services are civic insofar as they are publicly debated, but in which the role of civicness differs depending on the degree to which they are publicly controlled; only a part of them are "public services" in the traditional sense of being provided by the state or the municipality. There are increasing numbers of "gliding zones," such as between the municipal hospital, self-help groups, and the fitness clubs, or between the school diploma and the training course offered by a private provider. Civicness counts here insofar as

nonprofits as well as commercial services are likewise issues taken up in public debates even though possibilities for state-regulations differ in both cases. One could thus say that civicness was no longer a matter linked exclusively to the public sector. Professionals were confronted with the manifold dangers and potentials of such changes. On the one hand, its basically anti-authoritarian character threatened their power of definition and called for an approach in which cooperation and negotiation would play a greater role. On the other hand, the struggle for better services, especially for minorities that had been neglected in the past, offered professionals the opportunity to become pioneers of innovation and to develop professional discourses that involved less normalization and assimilation and more respect for the claims and needs of their addressees, empowering them to become active and critical citizens.

As far as the addressees were concerned, the new middle classes whose skills and human capital had been to a large extent created by the welfare services now became the challengers of these same services. They became more outspoken in voicing demands within movements and NGOs and—when it came to individual services—insisting on negotiating and having their own perspectives and experiences taken into account. In many respects, civility was not what was guaranteed by state-professionals but what had to be claimed from them. Civility underwent a transformation in meaning, with "respect" becoming a much more personal notion with more impact, for example. Likewise, in the climate of social movements and solidarity, the weaker strata of society and the socially disesteemed groups were given much more attention. Standards of civility were claimed for hitherto neglected groups or lifestyles, such as homosexuals and ethnic minorities. And the fact that social work and services were not just about providing for them but also about enabling and empowering them, added to the changing impact and meaning of civility. Gartner and Riessmann (1974) encapsulated the spirit of that moment when they hoped for a service society as a basically less authoritative society, given the fact that personal services—unlike mass consumer products—only work with the active consent of the users. With users changing from clients into co-producers, professionals either needed to seek "informed consent" or adopt an approach that over time enabled addressees increasingly to become service-partners (Kremer and Tonkens 2006).

The principal tools used to improve personal services were, then, the more widespread use of dialogue, decentralization to the street level, and the introduction of ways of working that increasingly addressed groups and communities rather than simply addressing individuals in isolation. Participation was also installed at the level of single organizations and providers (such as parental participation on school boards). A whole new generation of ideas of user involvement (Evers 2006), participative planning, policy networks, community development, or boards, which opened up to new actors and TSOs, played a similar role. Such strategies for organizing in terms of civic and community action were quite often linked with charismatic leaders of organizations and movements like Saul Alinsky in the US (Horwitt 1989). In terms of governance, it is, however, important to note that the movements of the 1970s, though culturally important, often remained politically

weak. Some built new nationwide interest groups and NGOs, but these were mostly weaker than long-established organizations.

As far as the third sector was concerned, the late 1970s saw the birth of many of today's associations that are rooted in various communities of the civil society; their main aim was to debate and construct alternatives to the service routines that had been established by the welfare states. Maybe the greatest success of the new cultural and social movements came at a time when the peak of their activity was over: since the late 1980s, a semi-academic, semi-public discourse has developed that translates much of the experience of the past into a kind of general policy and governance mode. On the more academic side, there were the influential studies about the "civil society" as an "active society," and about ways of acknowledging the "moral economies" (Bode 2007) of non-state and non-market resources. A tendency took shape that was critical of the welfare state but within a new progressive perspective. According to this line of thinking, society had proved to be ready to administer itself in many areas; politicians should hand over much more power to citizens and their associations, partly because the latter know better, and partly because they had a stronger "morale," a more original voice untainted by political considerations and niceties (as an example for this kind of "participation-ist" thinking in the Anglo-Saxon realm, see Beresford 2002).

From such a perspective, the third sector could easily become the very incarnation of the civil society, of what is civic and civil. Politicians can either support it, or they are to be seen as the enemies that try to assimilate and distort it. This split between the social and the political, the "good society" and the "dubious state," has been further strengthened by the version of the concept of social capital, as popularized by Putnam (2000). There, as many critics have remarked (Evers 2003; Mouritsen 2003), one can find a strong claim that what should be built up outside state politics—social capital in the social realm, brought about by associations—is not one component besides others but the *foundation* for the possibility of a new, democratic politics. The sector of associations is stylized as encapsulating the genes for the flourishing of a civil and democratic society.

To summarize these observations in relation to the civicness and civility one can say that the new cultural and social movements represented something that was both opposite and complementary to the welfarism that predated them. Welfarism strengthened civicness and civility within the framework of political democracy mainly by establishing social rights and equality through universal services. In the new movements of personal liberation, social and political claims in various forms, issues of personal rights, respect, and democratic patterns within service institutions came to the fore. Issues of inequality and social rights were articulated differently in that services had to meet the needs and claims of hitherto neglected groups and minorities. The underlying concepts for service reforms were not so much based on universal and all-encompassing welfare, but more with regard to new specific needs and claims of situational groups: single mothers, ethnic minorities, gay commu-nities, or workless youngsters in decaying urban zones. What united them was a call for services built on respect. It is no wonder that these were developments that gave great impetus to third sector research, because TSOs, as providers, innovators, and advocacy groups seemed to be the ideal agent for bringing about this kind of

change. Much of the today's debate on the third sector still draws on these past claims for the self-administration of the social, even though the general political and social climate has changed considerably.

Consumerism

It would be untrue to say that the basic concept of consumerism—measuring public services according to the criteria for quality as they have developed on consumer markets—is merely the rational outcome of neoliberal thinking. Consumerism should also be considered as an attitude to be found among service users themselves. From the Second World War until the end of the twentieth century, welfare state services had been losing their original link with class distinctions; they had become universal services for most of the population. This was true of the hospital and the primary school, the kindergarten and the nursing home. However, the ways in which these services operated were now viewed against the background of the fully-fledged consumer society, in the light of experiences of private markets and the constant presence of the mass media. Today, services have to survive in a society in which the key words are choice, quick and full service, and customer orientation (Hood et al. 1997). In the light of such aspirations and promises, the performance of many public services was inevitably found lacking.

Orienting the *Leitbild* of public services towards that of privately provided ones had already been made easier by the cultural changes of the 1970s. These had led to the perception of increasing pluralism in terms of coexisting bundles of service images that were no longer parts of all-encompassing systems. In fact, the notion of giving the individual what they wanted abandons the educative approach always linked with public services that are meant to be equal for all but as well to make their addressees more equal. The various meanings of empowerment shifted from issues of "voice" to issues of "choice"; they now range from giving a group more specifically what it wants or needs to "making the customer satisfied" (Starkey 2003). If a school system, for example, is to be made more responsive to individual talents, preferences, and needs, then why not give parents more choice over the educational facility and arrangements to be used?

The *Leitbild* of consumerism is, in essence, about personal services that meet individual and group preferences to a greater extent by putting the users in command as consumers—or making them "Queens" as Le Grand (2003) puts it, adopting the language of chess. Issues of inequality then take a secondary position. Such a *Leitbild* also affects the status of the professionals; to the extent that their services increasingly become a matter of choice for their customers, the imperative of satisfying these customers may well threaten their professional power and autonomy (Foster and Wilding 2000). Even if they think they "know best," they can only follow their own professional vision insofar as this vision can successfully be "marketed."

Clearly, this challenge can be justified as an opportunity rather than a threat if one has an optimistic idea about the addressees, the skills of the users as consumers (Baldock 2003). They are expected to be able to acquire the respective knowledge about services offered. The civility of social services provided through private

markets, however, stays to some degree a public matter. Ongoing public debates surrounding the markets for services will have an impact on consumers' choices, but unlike in traditional welfare concepts these debates do not automatically translate into fixed rules for the services. This means that the addressees are not only consumers, but educated, concerned people, citizens that participate in a public debate, or through the action of consumer groups. But on the other hand they are likewise and foremost consumers. They are "consumer–citizens" as Clarke et al. (2007) put it, still retaining basic rights and with varying degrees of influence as in other markets. Against this background, a programme that seeks to substitute the citizen–client with the consumer–citizen weakens the civicness of services and makes their civil qualities harder to influence through state action or collective negotiations. With the consumerist approach, the accent is increasingly on choice and to a lesser degree on voice. Yet, for the individual, such an approach may still contain a liberating and enabling promise since it can mean less power for the type of professional that "knows best," as more power shifts to the individual consumer.

When it comes to governance, the preferred tools of consumerist strategies in the realm of social services are quite well known. First of all, the voucher has traditionally been espoused as the ideal instrument. The voucher allows choice, as in private markets, but equally takes into account the fact that this consumer power is funded by the taxpayer and so choices can be limited. If one gives up this limitation and the sole aim is to initiate or promote the use of a service, then tax policies and public marketing may be the preferred tools. So far, however, the prevailing forms of a more market-oriented governance of services have brought little change for consumer–citizens, because the introduction of "quasi-markets" (Brandsen 2004) still centres mainly on the public authorities. It is they who are the "purchasers" and select their preferred provider through public competition. In the governance of service markets, the overall quality of the services remains strongly dependent on the authority retained by regulatory public policies and the influence of public-opinion at large.

From an optimistic point of view, it is hoped that public authorities could gain new powers both by setting appropriate rules for social markets and by strengthening the ability and rights of consumer–citizens through consumer protection and activation—through the creation of an infrastructure of rights, advice, and opportunities for consumer groups to participate in regulation. The increased impact of such dimensions of civicness could turn consumer-citizens into citizen–consumers (for the tension between the roles of consumer and citizen, see Malpass et al. 2007). From a more pessimistic point of view, the consumerist reforms will inevitably weaken the impact of public and political elements and hence the civicness of services. Moreover, as Clarke (2004) argues on the basis of empirical studies, people are not happy to be treated as consumers given the fact that the civil qualities of the state and nonprofit service institutions such as trust-based service relationships are brushed aside.

For various reasons, third sector organizations face a considerable loss of influence and attention under the consumerist approach. It is not collective self-organization and voice but informed and discerning individual choice that is the preferred tool for obtaining the best possible service. Furthermore, in an era of

decreasing free time due to the pressures of work, "ready made" service offers and packages that save time may easily become more attractive than TSOs that call for time-consuming participation. In service markets, TSOs have to survive increasingly or even exclusively on reimbursements for specified services, just like their commercial competitors. It is therefore no longer up to them to define what a quality service is, but this is up to the public authorities and/or the markets.

In the context of marketized personal services, the claim to civicness and civility can only to a far lesser degree build on the civil society in terms of a third sector where TSO-based services cultivate such values; it has to build increasingly on the other dimension of a civil society—the impact of the public sphere and of debates where tastes and preferences are not only shaped by the promotion of the suppliers in the mass media but also by the voices of the consumer citizens. From a consumerist perspective, the future of TSOs lies not so much in their role as distinct service providers but as NGOs, lobbies, and advocacy institutions within social markets.

Summing up with regard to civicness and civility, this brief outline of the consumerist discourse has shown that, like the empowerment and participation-oriented discourse of the 1970s, consumerism is about self-determination and individual rights. Yet this time, these elements of civility are articulated differently. Reference is not made primarily to the voice of citizens but to the choice of consumers. However, before dismissing consumerism as purely detrimental to civicness and civility, we should remember what Hirschmann argued as early as 1970: choice *and* voice can be a means of claiming respect to be used simultaneously. After either condemning or glorifying the effects of market mechanisms on the quality of services, Hirschman's position seems to be of new relevance. Indeed, to the extent the argument for market-means is not made in the name of efficiency but aims to create a space for individual autonomy, consumerism may contribute to a contemporary notion of civicness. It is the role of the voice of organized citizen–consumers and of TSOs as advocacy and consumer organizations—the impact of civil society as a public sphere—that will determine what scope remains for civic and civil concerns on social service markets.

The Activating and Social Investment State

Much of the trend towards consumerism was accompanied by a neoliberal discourse that was less about freedom and more about efficiency and rapid wealth creation. As far as the latter is concerned, it has lost much of its glory and recent years have therefore seen something of a come-back for the state, which should, however, not be confused with the return to the welfare state. The continued focus of a managerial state (Clarke and Newman 1997) on competitiveness and effectiveness and the attempt to use public policies to achieve this end in fact imply a move away from both welfarism and consumerism.

Today, welfarism is criticized as a system of public services that is oriented mainly towards rights, protection, and social consumption, adding little to growth and being unwilling to install the means for the effective management of resources, as have been developed in business. The limits of consumerism and market-based

mechanisms are shown by the fact that public authorities are only in control of the resources they allocate for the use of personal services; they have no control when it comes to general public benefit and clear-cut policy priorities. The American health system, for example, performs well as an industry but badly as a place for targeted public investment as a means of achieving a more productive social fabric.

While managerialism and public management, with their goal of getting more out of public money, may to some extent be in line with consumerism as far as (market) *means* are concerned, they are at odds with a consumerist agenda insofar as they retain the states' task of setting explicit *ends*—to ensure the most efficient and effective use of public money with respect to goals and outcomes that go beyond the target group. Much of the discourse concerning the social investment state and good public management refer to a renewed idea of the public good. However, in times of harsh international competition such ends are not primarily about welfare but economic concerns. Welfare is secondary—an accepted instrument for a more effective economy, a cohesive society, and competitiveness in global markets. This calls for public investment that complements private investment (for example, investing in families for economic and demographic purposes). The notion of social investment or the social investment state (Esping-Andersen 2002; Giddens 1998) has thus come increasingly to the fore in recent years.

However, such new policies for an investing state are also about a return of the citizen, of civicness and civility. Modernizing governance (Newman 2001) on terms like "the enabling state," "activating policies," or the concept of a "preventive welfare state," recently coined by the German social democrats, focuses on participation, the public and private behaviour of citizens, and "civic virtues." However, civility and civicness get a different meaning here. People should behave well, enhance their own employability, help to preserve public order, show an active readiness to learn, and adapt to new challenges and environments. Labour market services are a good example—they are neither about rights nor about choice in the first place, but about activating a sense of duty and action among the unemployed. Something similar can be said about the politics of prevention in health that call for a healthier lifestyle and the willingness to follow individual health care plans (managed care). While the focus is on individual behaviour, collective and community action may also be involved. Public policies invite people to take part in campaigns to restore their neighbourhoods, where public and private investment is meant to complement the active self-help of the inhabitants.

As far as the *Leitbild* of personal social services is concerned, this combination of activating and social investment perspectives reconstructs a strong notion of public services, which are different from private commercial services. But this difference is set out within a new framework. It is not like the welfare-state tradition of a guaranteed right to a resource, presupposing that the user will make wise use of it. The new conceptual framework is a contracted working plan that links rights and duties, investments and outcomes. Public services are about "contracts for cooperation" within pre-formulated visions of a productive social and working life. Such an approach is also well suited to strengthen once again the role of professionals, which had been weakened under the consumerist and especially the participatory grassroots movements. As "case-managers" it is up to them to decide.

All this entails a different perspective on the addressees of service systems. The "citizen" is once again valued, but this time by appealing not so much to rights as to duties and active participation. In such a context, choice means extending personal responsibility and being ready to accept the responsibility for the negative consequences of wrong choices. Such perspectives frame users as responsible risk-takers. As such, they act in service systems like health and education which give out strong messages about what choices and types of behaviour are expected and make it clear that it is users' personal interest to cooperate. The extent of the civility of such arrangements is then very much dependent on their policy-context and on the status of the co-producing citizen. An individually tailored and managed health plan negotiated respectfully with an ordinary middle-class person may bring out the best side of a contracted and interactive co-produced service relationship. An integration plan for someone who is long-term unemployed, on the other hand, may entail all kinds of enforced conformity and humiliation (Berkel and Valkenburg 2007). There is only a thin line between an enabling service and a prescriptive one, between encouraging and enforcing service patterns.

Turning to the governance, this means that new organizational forms and modes have appeared such as networks, partnerships, deliberative forums, and government-led programs that seek to activate broad alliances. All this has, not coincidentally, led to a considerable revival of Foucault's (1991) concept of analyzing personal services and their governance as systems of outside introduced "self-guidance," part of a new historical form of "governmentality." However, "activating" society and communities to reach out for a new road to social cohesion (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003) also raises questions about the scope left for conflict and debate, for individual and collective autonomy. The activating social investment state basically seeks to include everybody as "in"; however, non-cooperation can quickly mean being completely "out." The concept of an all-encompassing differentiated system of cooperative governance with active individual and collective participants from civil society, who are at all times good citizens and willing followers, recognizes no adversary except inefficiency and "red tape." But, as Mouffe has argued (2005), these kinds of politics in search of a very broad mainstream, where no alternatives are provided for, may in fact tend to corrode the democratic quality of politics, which depends on the possibility of reaching out for different methods and solutions.

Compared to consumerism and some of the welfare traditions, third sector organizations are basically welcomed in such a context, and this manifests itself in the call for compacts, contracts alliances, and other forms of cooperation. Aiming to mobilize all resources and influencing "soft" factors, such as attitudes and expectations, there is new support for community activity, civil society, volunteering, and the third sector, for addressing people and TSOs as partners. However, within public–private-partnerships that network state action, community participation, and private firms, many TSOs rightly fear a loss of autonomy and the reduction of their special role to one of translating and intermediating public policies which have been created ex ante, largely without any contribution or criticism from them.

To summarize with respect to civicness and civility, it is important to note first that in many European countries reference to a more civic society and civicness has

become an explicit part of the rhetoric of public policy, largely regardless of the ideology that currently dominates. However, this renaissance of the discourse of the active citizen and its "virtues," and of the potential for public policies to foster the active citizen through special activation programmes and invitations to participate is deeply ambivalent. On the one hand, such policies are a way of upgrading and enriching notions of citizenship and civicness as well as components of civility such as self-reliance and self-restraint, by making more reference to what is called the public good, common purpose, and participation by activation. On the other hand, to the degree that future cooperation is defined in terms of economic battles without alternatives and citizens are addressed mainly as citizen–workers, citizen–performers, or citizen–entrepreneurs, such a discourse may get perverted into a sometimes coercive and top-down concept of civicness and proper civil behaviour. It is not wrong in itself to seek to create "good citizens" and to promote civicness and civility in terms of a readiness to follow and adapt, but what of other ingredients—such as a respect for dissent and diversity?

Summary and Conclusion

It has been shown that contemporary meanings of civicness and civility rest on the separation of state and society, the public and the private. Their meaning is also influenced by the experience of democracy. While civicness concerns the impact and qualities of the collective action of citizens and the role of public institutions that provide a space for these actions, civility is a much broader notion that may be encountered in both private and public settings—something that is less about institutions but primarily about forms of behaviour and mutual recognition in a plural society where strangers may have conflicts but also depend on one other. Civicness and civility are intertwined. Restricting civicness will harm civility, and a lack of civility will affect civicness adversely. It has been argued that a civil society depends, then, on the possibilities across sectors of building such value orientations and forms of behaviour, something that underlines the key-role of a public sphere. The importance attached to the respective contributions of state politics and the third sector may differ in the academic debates, but it would be misleading to equate the third sector with civil society.

   However, civicness and civility may mean different things to different people. For some, civicness is more about rights and for others more about duties; and when it comes to civility some will emphasize a readiness to adapt while others will stress the ability to resist. This has been illustrated and shown in some detail above. In the various discourses on welfare and social services that play a role today, civicness and civility are given different places and their impact and meaning varies. Obviously, the discourses we have dealt with are kind of ideal-types. In real politics one will find mergers, some of them more refined and reflective, others due to the attempt of party politicians to catch the sign of the times and a wider electorate.

   As for civicness, in traditional welfare state discourses it is mainly linked with the ability of public institutions to plan and maintain social services with the aim of securing social rights. In contrast to the heyday of welfare, the social movements

that strive for empowerment and participation associate civicness less with the presence of state planning but much more with the active citizen. Under consumerist orientations, civicness with all its meanings plays a relatively small role. The public institutions and politics only have to guarantee service offers that are not defined by citizens but consumers, not by collective choices but individual choices. The impact and meaning of civicness is once again different in the activating social investment state. Here, civicness is awarded a position of prime importance, but in terms of the role it plays in driving citizens to take their duties rather than rights.

As for civility, in traditional welfarism it is associated mainly with people's readiness and ability to adapt to and identify with collective settings and agreements—whether this is as workers to be taught and trained or as a client. The discourse on empowerment and participation, meanwhile, promotes civility more in terms of respect for individualism and diversity. The empowerment and consumerist movements both call for mechanisms that set people free through their individual actions or choices and demonstrate greater toleration for diversity. The discourse on activating social investment in human capital, however, takes a different stance. The insistence on civicness in terms of a broader set of duties for citizens soon becomes a moral discourse on civility—this time in terms of "good people," being industrious, willing to take more responsibility for one's own circumstances, health, and employability and for keeping one's neighbourhood in order.

Clearly behind the different impact and meaning of civicness and civility that springs from each of the discourses, there is also a different idea and reality of civil society and of what it requires. While, for example, the empowerment and participation discourse will emphasize the tensions between state power and the needs and expectations of society and call for more autonomy vis-à-vis the state, the discourse on the activating investment state promises to build a state that takes a lead role in strengthening a world of cooperative citizens and TSOs. In conclusion, it is clear that a simple reference to civicness, civility, and the values of civil society do not automatically make a clear difference. Various and even quite contrary discourses can refer to these topics because beyond an overlapping consensus they will emphasize different aspects and meanings.

All in all such critical reflection on the contested notions of civicness and civility could make a difference both to the debate on civil society and the third sector and to the debate on the future of welfare and personal social services. With respect to the debate on civil society the kind of reference to civicness and civility that has been suggested may help to get rid of simplistic concepts that still largely identify a more civil society with a flourishing third sector and with strategies to curb the shortcomings of markets and state-policies mainly by its enlargement and influence. As has been argued, the notions of civility and civicness tend to emphasize other additional sources for a civil society—the impact of the public sphere and of democratic governance on both the state and the market sector (as well as the degree to which civicness and civility have an impact on the third sector itself).

When it comes to the debate on welfare and social services such reference points as civicness and civility help to overcome traditional restrictions towards issues of security, equality, and needs by introducing a larger set of quality issues. By

referring to civility, contemporary notions of the human qualities of service-systems such as showing respect to the users and their networks, inviting them to dialogue, and to develop their own capabilities, would come into focus. Moreover, since civility and civicness are not restricted to a (public or third) sector; the private sector of personal services could also be included in debates on the future of personal services at large.

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