

Civilisation, Culture and Police

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We live at a time when the use of the word 'culture' is ubiquitous when it comes to describing those flourishings in which human beings engage as members of communities or societies. The impetus behind this paper comes from the awareness that the word culture is not the only word that we could use to describe these flourishings, and that it does matter what word we do use. That is to say that words are not innocent; they have histories and associations. To use a word such as culture is to choose one particular path of understanding while at the same time to leave others not only unexplored but also excluded from the map of exploration itself. In other words a term such as culture aids our understanding of the sorts of phenomena it seeks to describe and explain, while at the same time placing boundaries and limits on that understanding.

There are other terms for discussing culture and the use of these alternative terms opens up other possibilities for comprehending the phenomena that we usually place under the heading of culture. The most common term that is used as an alternative is 'civilisation'. It is, for example, the preferred term of Fernand Braudel, as in his *A History of Civilizations*. Historical sociologists such as Michael Mann and John Hall also use civilisation as a way of classifying human societies. What Braudel, Mann and Hall share is a universalistic approach to the study of humanity, which is to say that they are concerned to grasp the development of human society as a whole.¹ Civilisation possesses a civic dimension that is largely absent from culture, and one would perhaps have expected that the

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recent revival of the ideal of 'civil society', occurring as it has at a time of a growing emphasis on the international connections linking countries together, would have led to a revival of civilisation as both a way of classifying human societies and an ideal emphasising our common humanity. This does not appear to have happened, at least in Australia. Instead, recent developments have demonstrated the need to add an extra term to civilisation and culture, and that word is 'police'. Braudel, along with Norbert Elias and Lucien Febvre, note that police was the word that was used to mean the same thing as civilisation during the middle of the eighteenth century, only to be supplanted by civilisation by the early nineteenth century.² As we shall see, police implied a much more controlled social order than civilisation does.

Police is, I believe, a useful term for understanding particular developments that have occurred in the modern state and modern society, just as civilisation and culture can be used to explain and describe other developments. In other words these three terms represent different ways of organising and explaining the same phenomena, three different perspectives on how the flourishings that take place in human societies are, and should be, organised. It is the argument of this paper that these three terms can be understood as embodying particular moments in the coming of modernity and that they are related to the process of state formation in Europe, and the European world, since c.1500. According to this model, police is related to the growth of the absolute state, civilisation to the development of a liberal/commercial order, and culture to the emergence of the nation state. In political terms, police implies a bureaucratic regulative order, civilisation links in with liberalism, while culture is most closely related to some form of social liberalism or social democracy.

This is not to say that police–civilisation–culture should be understood as successive steps related to different stages of state development, although it is true that the words did appear in that order. Rather they should be viewed as distinct moments of that development that can be occurring simultaneously, and the movement from police to civilisation, for example, does not at all imply the end of bureaucratic paternalism in the modern state.

Another, more useful, way of conceptualising the issue is to consider Charles Tilly's model of the development of the modern European state. Tilly argues that the growth of the modern European state cannot be viewed simply as the development of the nation state, and that until quite recently three forms of state — nation state, city state and empire—co-existed in Europe. At the same time it is worth pointing out that no single political form dominated European state development. Republics continued to co-exist with monarchies, just as there were regimes, such as England, that seemed to combine the two. Tilly isolates two factors as being of crucial importance in the development of the modern European state, and these are coercion and commerce. In some states coercion, in particular the need to organise the state to maximise its capacity to conduct war, played the crucial role, while in others the development of commerce matched or surpassed the rise of the military in stimulating the growth of state power.³ The idea of police, or *polizei* in German, was of much greater significance in those states in which coercion played a central role in state formation such as Prussia.⁴ It exists in France where it was successfully challenged by civilisation and, although rare in English, it is not unknown.

As we noted earlier there was a period during the second half of the eighteenth century when police and civilisation were both used to describe an ordered community. Police is used, for example, by Adam Ferguson in *A History of Civil Society*, published in 1767, the very work in which civilisation makes its first English appearance. Ferguson, in discussing the development of human societies, talks about the progress of the arts and policy. Rousseau, when describing what we might call a civilised people, terms them *a peuple policé*. And yet by the beginning of the nineteenth century police had assumed its modern meaning. Lucien Febvre suggests that this was one of the reasons for its demise: how could police be used to mean something akin to civilised when it was associated with repression? There can be little doubt that the emergence of a liberal commercial order rendered the term police redundant because of its association with the regulation of human society. Adam Smith, for example, attacked the police of the French grain

trade, and argued in favour of the free movement of grain. Nevertheless, in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, first published in 1759, Smith speaks of a patriot exerting himself for the improvement of the 'public police', and writes of the 'perfection of police' as a 'noble and magnificent' objective. Indeed it was the advocates of sweet commerce who were to raise civilisation and civilised to become the terms that described the positive effects of the progress of humanity as it emerged into the commercial stage of development.⁵

The 'age of commerce', however, was not conceived merely as that stage of development that succeeded agriculture. It was also the age of peace that followed the age of war. 'War then comes before commerce', claimed Benjamin Constant. 'The former is all savage impulse, the latter civilised calculation.'⁶ It would be appropriate to see police as the product of the age of war, of that period of state development that was stimulated by military conflict and which sought to mobilise the state for war. Until the end of the eighteenth century, state growth was largely related to the growth of military expenditure and activity. Hence the principles on which police sought to organise the activities of society had its ultimate justification in the creation of a state able to wage war effectively.

It is worthwhile discussing the idea of police in a little more detail. According to Gerhard Oestreich, police meant the creation of civil organisation through 'the regulation, discipline, and control of a community'. Its objective was to create a thriving, prosperous community whose members would flourish and in which there would be nothing to prevent or hinder the attainment of the common good. The aim was a well-ordered community; Oestreich states that police meant the same as regiment and a well-ordered people would be one that was regimented. Through the regulation of both public and private life all those potential social disorders that threatened the public good would be combated. Oestreich quotes as an example of police an ordinance issued in Strasbourg in 1628. Amongst the matters it wanted to regulate were Sunday observance, sorcery, blasphemy, the upbringing of children, expenditure on weddings and christenings, sumptuary regulations and the limitation of funeral celebrations.⁷

The model for police was the army, a disciplined unit capable of working together to achieve a common goal. The same principles could be applied to society in general to achieve similar goals in the civilian sphere. Police would both overcome the conflicts that had racked Europe as the result of religious differences and create states capable of waging warfare in an efficient fashion by maximising both the individual and the public good. By living in a secure and ordered environment, individuals would have the opportunity to increase their material well-being. By directing these individuals in patterns of behaviour that benefited the well-being of the state, the state could grow both prosperous and militarily powerful. There are interesting resemblances between this idea of police and Benthamite utilitarianism; in both cases there is a desire to maximise the utility of both the individual and the collective, and a willingness to override individual rights and constitutional limitations to achieve that goal.

Police has no place for the idea of human rights or for the niceties of limited government. It did not believe that state and society were separate entities but instead set about intruding the activities of the state into every aspect of everyday life. As Franz-Ludwig Knemeyer puts it, 'there was no area of political, economic, social and cultural life which was not subject to this all embracing passion for order'.⁸ Who then was to impose this order on the members of the state? This was to be the job of the administrative corps whose task it was to ensure that the state maintained social tranquillity while achieving its maximum strength. These administrators were university educated and devoted to the public good, and sought through administrative techniques to achieve the goal of a strong and prosperous social order. The theory underlying the creation of 'good police' was that of cameralism. In cameralism, claims Keith Tribe, 'we are presented with governing activity without any clear reference to human interest, rights, or nature'. Social order is created through the process of governing, and the members of a state are considered simply as a "population", a subject mass to be regulated, enhanced, and supervised'.⁹ 'Good police' was to be achieved through increasing regulation of the behaviour of the members of a state,

and no aspect of human existence could be excluded from that regulation.

Whatever misgivings one may have regarding the ideals of police, it is not difficult to see why it meant something akin to civilisation. To be a *peuple policé* was to live in an ordered, peaceful social order devoted to creating prosperity and pursuing the public good. It was adopted by states attempting to overcome the social strife created by religious divisions and the claims of private judgement. With its emphasis on the primacy of the public good to which individuals should be subordinated, it was not incompatible with republicanism or with that form of 'ancient liberty' that Constant argued was the form of freedom compatible with a state in the age of warfare. Under ancient liberty, claimed Constant, 'the laws regulated customs, and as customs touch on everything, there was hardly anything that the laws did not regulate'.¹⁰ Ancient liberty meant no more than active participation in collective power. Constant was correct in seeing in Jacobinism an attempt to revive ancient liberty in the hope that it might be possible to regulate the people into virtue.

It is on this issue of ancient liberty versus modern liberty that civilisation moves beyond, and triumphs over, police. Constant defined modern liberty as

the right to be subjected only to the laws, and to be neither arrested, detained, put to death or maltreated in any way by the arbitrary will of one or more individuals. It is the right of everyone to express their opinion, choose a profession and practise it, dispose of property ...¹¹

This is the liberty of a commercial as opposed to a military order. It has been argued that this conception of Constant and his circle was novel and striking in its belief that it was possible for 'the mass of "peacefully selfish men" [to] fulfil their destiny apart from public events', and in its emphasis on the values of both individuality and privacy.¹² I would argue that this belief in an individuality that is independent of the social order is far more fundamental to European development, and is derived from the rise of that radical inwardness that Charles Taylor has argued lies at the root of the modern identity.¹³ The roots of this inwardness,

argues Taylor, lie in Augustine, just as Fustel de Coulange argued that modern liberty had its roots in Christianity. It was this inwardness that police attempted to suppress through its imposition of discipline and the regulation of human behaviour.

Discipline and authoritarianism were not the only answers to the fanaticism and conflict that the wars of religion had created. It was equally possible to argue for what might be termed a 'culture of consent', founded not on discipline but on the capacity and willingness of individuals to pursue the public interest. What is the antidote to fanaticism? Not discipline and punishment but laughter and good humour, reasonableness and toleration, not 'police' but civility. As Shaftesbury put it, 'Good humour is not only the best security against enthusiasm, but the best foundation of piety and true religion'.¹⁴ Moreover, it is this good humour and the spirit of benevolence that forms the foundation of public order:

To love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper that we call divine.¹⁵

A similar position was advocated by Francis Hutcheson, who argued that 'we have Senses and Affections leading us to publick Good, as well as to private; to Virtues, as well as to other sorts of Pleasure'.¹⁶

It was in the years after 1688 that the tradition of reasonableness, toleration and conscience established itself in England.¹⁷ It abhorred enthusiasm and attachment to dogma and erected in its place a respect for rationality and reasonable behaviour. Its mouthpiece was the new magazine *Spectator* and its primary literary genre the essay. This is not to say that this 'culture of consent' meant that the disciplinary practices characteristic of police were absent from English society or that it was in some way a cause of the emerging commercial order. Rather, as Taylor points out, the development of these modes of self-understanding was 'connected with a wide range of practices—religious, political, economic, familial, intellectual, artistic' and they 'converged and reinforced each other to produce it'.¹⁸ In other words the sense of identity that Taylor describes had what John Hall and others

have called an elective affinity with the emerging commercial order of Britain, just as police had an elective affinity with the coercive practices that went into the making of states in central and eastern Europe. Thomas Ertman has recently argued that it was Britain alone in the eighteenth century that managed to combine a bureaucratic order with a system of public finance based on parliamentary accountability.¹⁹ This emphasis on consent was the secret of British power.

The ideal of police emphasised the primacy of the collective over the individual through the denial of the public significance of individual inwardness. The 'culture of consent', and the liberal tradition that was built on it, emphasised that a public order could be constructed on the basis of that individuality, and that at the very least any public order had to respect the integrity of the individual. What this implied was that individuals were the bearers of rights that they held regardless of the social order in which they happened to live, that society and the state were separate entities and that there were limitations placed on the capacity of the state to direct either the individual or social groups. John Hall has emphasised that only on such a basis could a viable commercial order emerge in Europe because it was the limitations placed on the state that prevented it from plundering and disrupting the flow of commercial enterprise.²⁰ Just as police envisaged a particular relationship between the regulating state and the population it sought to direct, so in a 'culture of consent' respecting the integrity of the individual there was a need to renegotiate this relationship. The ideal of civilisation was part of that process of renegotiation.

From this perspective clearly the liberal theorists of the early nineteenth century extolling the significance of the individual were in revolt against police and the view of the social order that it advocated. In *The Limits of State Action* Wilhelm von Humboldt argued that individual liberty stood in opposition to state regulation and that 'the freedom of private life always increases in exact proportion as public freedom declines'. Humboldt distinguished between ancient and modern states. In ancient states attention had been devoted to developing the virtue of their members and

to this end they imposed oppressive and dangerous restrictions on the individual as they sought to mould his inner life. Modern states were primarily interested in the comfort, productivity and prosperity of its members. To this end modern state theorists had developed the idea that the state should provide for the whole physical and moral well-being of the nation by directing a whole range of activities including agriculture, handicrafts, industry, business and the arts. By these theorists Humboldt had in mind the cameralists and their ideal of 'good police'.

For Humboldt both of these models of state interference and regulation stood in opposition to individual self-development. The true end of man, he claimed, was 'the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole'. This aim required both freedom and variety. As the state was concerned with maintaining the comfort and well-being of its members, it not only denied them freedom but also sought to impose uniformity on them. State interference designed to secure the positive welfare of the citizen was therefore harmful to the development of individuality because it sought to substitute comfort, ease and tranquillity for variety and activity; it was irreconcilable with a 'true system of polity'.²¹

Benjamin Constant also saw comfort and ease as a feature of the modern world but did not associate this desire for repose and comfort with the state, but rather with the nature of modern liberty. Modern liberty is the product of an age of commerce and peace, in which war has lost its appeal; the impulse of war has given way to the calculation of commerce. Ancient liberty had been founded on the desire for the state to achieve the maximum amount of power in its struggle against other states in war. To this end, claimed Constant, 'the laws regulated customs, and as customs touch on everything, there was hardly anything that the laws did not regulate ... among the ancients the individual ... was a slave in all his private relations'.²²

Modern liberty has liberated humanity from this close supervision of everyday life because commerce does not require that individuals be closely supervised to achieve happiness and personal fulfilment. As commerce became the normal state of

things individual independence came to replace 'active and constant participation in collective power' as the normal state of freedom. Modern liberty required no great sacrifice or heroic endeavour on the part of individuals and to an extent Constant looked wistfully back on what had been lost, much in the same way as Walter Scott in *Waverley* could nostalgically reconstruct the world of the Scottish highlands in its clash with the new commercial society of eighteenth-century England. But modern liberty was not without its appeal. 'To be happy', claimed Constant, 'men need only to be left in perfect independence in all that concerns their occupations, their undertakings, their sphere of activity, their fantasies'.²³

Under modern liberty individuals were free to follow their inclinations and develop their powers as they pleased. One implication of this liberty was that these interests could not be limited by state borders; the flow of goods and ideas could overcome that narrow minded hostility towards other peoples that was a product of ancient liberty. A second implication was that morals could no longer be regulated by the state but would instead become much more dependent on public opinion. Finally, for Constant, the growth of the sphere of private freedom created by commerce need not result in the pursuit of narrow, selfish interests. As with Humboldt, he was primarily interested in the implications of freedom for individual intellectual development. It was thought that was the basis of all forms of progress and the foundation of intellectual advance was the individual. The individual was thereby enabled not only to use modern liberty to achieve fulfilment through intellectual activity but also to assist in the progress of humanity. In this way modern freedom was essential to the advancement of humanity; attempts by arbitrary power and despotism to restrict intellectual freedom were to create those conditions under which 'morality will be less healthy, factual knowledge less exact, sciences less active in their development, military art less advanced, industry less enriched by discoveries'.²⁴ In other words arbitrary state intervention was a recipe for national degeneration and a weakening of society.

Both Humboldt and Constant reversed the model on which

police was based. Under police, social order was created by the state through the regulation of the practices of its members. For both Humboldt and Constant the individual is the primary unit of the social order, and the role of the state is to provide space for them to develop their capabilities. In this way not only are individuals provided with the opportunity for self-development but humanity in general benefits from their activity; progress can occur. In other words, any modern ideal that sought to explain the flourishings of human beings would need to include a place for individual development, and this is precisely what civilisation did.

It was noted earlier that in his account of the history of civil society Adam Ferguson identified two components: policy and the arts. It was these two elements that were to form the foundations of civilisation: on the one hand the conception of political and social order bequeathed by police or policy, on the other hand those activities associated with the new ideal of individuality. What tied them together was the faith in progress and the belief that it was possible to reconcile individual and collective development. The classic exposition of this ideal of civilisation is to be found in François Guizot's *The History of Civilization in Europe*. For Guizot civilisation is a fact, a 'fact of progress, of development'. Like Ferguson he identified the two key elements of that progress as involving the organisation of social relationships and the 'development of the individual, internal life, the development of man himself, of his faculties, his sentiments, his ideas'. Civilisation involved the 'progress of society and the progress of humanity'. On the one hand it meant the improvement and amelioration of the social conditions in which human beings lived; on the other hand it meant encouraging individuals to develop their intellectual and creative capacities to the fullest. Most importantly, civilisation as envisaged by Guizot implied that it was necessary to find a balance between the social and the individual as these two elements fed off each other. Only by maintaining a proper balance between them could real progress take place.²⁵

If civilisation was a reaction against police in the name of

individual liberty then culture can be viewed as a response to the perceived deficiencies of civilisation in the name of intellectual and spiritual integrity. Constant had argued that individual liberty was necessary for intellectual progress and that without such liberty there was a tendency for social degeneration. From Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Matthew Arnold it was argued in England that the free unfettered growth of civilisation also tended towards degeneration because there was no guarantee that it would progress in the right direction. Allow individuals liberty and they may very well abuse it, pursuing private social goals and neglecting the claims of the common good, or preferring to be satisfied with mere information or opinion rather than going in search of truth and science.

There was a need to re-establish authority, but it could no longer be the authority of police, authority that simply regulated the populace so that they attained the common good. The need was to create a conception of authority that recognised the role and place of the individual and reconciled the need for individual self-development with the demands that a social order follow the 'correct' path and pursue the common good. Culture was the answer to that need. Culture was another means of reconciling the individual and the social whole and, like civilisation, it could not ignore the necessity of placing its foundations in the individual will. Nevertheless, as Hunter and his associates have argued, it would not be entirely wrong to see an element of police in culture, particularly as education was to be the path through which culture was attained.²⁶

Coleridge argued that civilisation was 'but a mixed good', and that a progressive civilisation required that it be grounded in *cultivation*, 'in those qualities that characterise our *humanity*'. Coleridge allocated this role of guarding the nationality of society, which involved the tasks of preserving the past treasures of civilisation and building on them for the future, to the church that he believed constituted an estate of the realm. It was the place of the National Church 'to secure and improve that civilization, without which the nation could be neither permanent nor progressive'. As an estate of the realm the National Church was

not a narrowly religious institution but included all of those people devoted to the task of 'nationality', from schoolmasters to clerics to university professors. The primary task of its clerics was not religious instruction but the inculcation of what Coleridge termed civility in the populace. By civility Coleridge meant 'all the qualities essential to a citizen'. As the guardian of nationality the church ensured that civilisation had a positive effect, because what the members of this church, the clerisy, were protecting were those ideals of citizenship that go towards constituting the common good. The cultivation practised by the Church ensured that the individualism encouraged by civilisation could be directed along fruitful paths, not in the direction of selfishness but into channels that sought the true while protecting the national good.²⁷

A similar concern to reconcile the pursuit of individual perfection with right reason and the common good can be found in Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. For Arnold the objective is to find a means for achieving harmony between the desire for self-perfection, much in the fashion of Humboldt, and the demands of right reason, so that the anarchy inherent in the individualism of 'doing as one likes' can be overcome. Culture, 'which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail ... the study and pursuit of perfection',²⁸ is the source of authority that allows him to attain this goal because it reconciles individual liberty with truth. There is a very powerful ideal of personal self-development in *Culture and Anarchy* and this relates to Arnold's vision of culture as a process in which individuals freely participate.

There is a real sense in which the idea of the roots of culture lies in the tradition that has come down from Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists. Arnold claimed that only two works were needed to train an Anglican cleric—the Bible and (Cambridge Platonist) John Smith's marvellous discourse 'Of the Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion'.²⁹ For Smith, True Religion is not a question of dogma and a set of propositions, 'a mere Mechanical and Artificial Religion'; it is 'a participation of the divine Nature'. True Religion has a transforming effect on the individual, it 'widens and enlarges all the Faculties of the Soul',

‘begets the greatest serenity and Composedness of Mind’ so that ‘we may be able to see Divine things in a Divine light’.³⁰ Smith treated religion as a spiritual process, as rational and non-dogmatic, in which the goal is to become as alike to that spiritual perfection that is God as possible. The discipline required to attain this perfection is internal; it relies on the conscience and that element of the divine implanted in every human being to guide it towards its goal. Divine knowledge is not propositional in nature, it is not ‘pharisaick righteousness’; it is the practice of religion guided by one’s participation in the divine nature.

Arnold’s view of culture as that which transforms human nature in the quest for perfection has clear affinities with Smith’s ideal of religion. In seeking culture one seeks a harmonious perfection of one’s nature, ‘a human nature complete on all its sides’, ‘absolute inward peace and satisfaction’, ‘increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy’. At the same time he characterised culture as ‘the eternal opponent of the two things which are the signal marks of Jacobinism—its fierceness, and its addiction to an abstract system’. Culture is inward, transforming, rational, non dogmatic and spiritual. It is a process. It is this transforming self, guided not by abstract dogma but by ‘the mainstream of human life’, which lies at the centre of culture. It is a self brought to right reason, an individual who does not abuse the liberty that is part of his individuality but uses the authority of culture to guide him to the true. In seeking culture the individual disciplines his liberty by bringing it into accord with right reason, and his reward is ‘sweetness and light’.

When Arnold advocated the state as the ‘centre of light and authority’, he did so on the basis that the state is an expression of ‘our best self’.³¹ The state grows out of the perfection of the individual; it is not a mechanism to perfect the individual in its own name. Hence the state is central to culture but it is not the disciplinary coercive state of police. It is a state that has been willed by individuals who, having pursued culture, have reached a condition in which they are ruled by reason. Once one has achieved one’s best self, it is possible to will the common good and thus to reconcile, and achieve harmony between, free individual activity

and the common needs of society. Culture makes sense in the light of T. H. Green's statement that 'will not force is the basis of the state'.³² Like police it seeks authority and discipline, but it recognises that discipline cannot be imposed in a coercive fashion; it must be chosen freely by individuals as they pursue their individual goals.

It was under the inspiration of this ideal that the universities became the bastions of culture in the nineteenth century, fortresses of spiritual power that would ensure that the progress of civilisation did not lead to degeneration and corruption. They also sought to reconcile authority and discipline with individual self-realisation. Universities were meant to enable individuals to realise their individual gifts, but they were to do so by subjecting these individuals to the discipline of rigorous study. In turn those who passed through the universities would form a corps who constituted the bearers of right reason and moral authority in the wider community, those who would ensure that the progress of civilisation would be leavened by cultivation. There are elements of police in this ideal of culture but it must be emphasised that the authority of culture was not to be grounded in culture but in the wills of those who participated in it and who voluntarily chose the path of 'right reason'.³³

There are reasons for associating civilisation as much with cosmopolitanism as with the rise of the nation state in Europe. Most certainly liberal theorists such as Constant emphasised that modern liberty went beyond a narrowly focused patriotism. Culture, however, as the defender of nationality, is much more closely linked to the nation state and to the need to establish the common good within that state. In this sense I believe it is possible to say that culture has an elective affinity with social liberalism and social democracy as it seeks to constitute the moral and intellectual order of a particular society, while ensuring that such an order, its right reason, is compatible with the individual aspirations of its members. Hence when culture is invoked it is invariably in relation to particular states, in much the same way as police, whereas civilisation has much stronger extra-national associations. I think that it can also be argued that the authority

element in culture has, over time, grown at the expense of the ideal of culture as something willed by individuals. This has particularly been the case since the appropriation of culture as an anthropological concept and since the development of close associations between culture and nationalism. In both of these cases culture becomes something fixed and given that the individual either accepts or rejects but is not free to participate in and re-create. In this way culture moves closer to police.

Police, civilisation, culture: it is the argument of this paper that these embody different ways both of understanding the relationship between the individual and the social order and of conceptualising those flourishings and activities in which human beings participate as members of societies. Whereas police sought to solve the problem of individualism and private judgement through state regulation, civilisation recognised that in an order founded on commerce and modern liberty the crucial role of the individual as a willing agent had to be recognised. Culture equally attempted to understand the social order as one created by the will of individuals, even as it sought a new source of authority to guarantee the common good. Police, civilisation and culture are all attempts at self-understanding by individuals caught up in the emergence of the modern European state. That multiple self-understandings exist is a consequence of the fact that the development of the state was a complex process. In particular it has been the relationship between coercion and commerce that has been most important in determining which mode of self-understanding has been significant in particular places.

Nevertheless, in all European states all three modes have been of some consequence. I have attempted to demonstrate that there are themes that link police, civilisation and culture together. Just as police attempted to suppress individual self-determination in the name of the common good, so in liberating the individual civilisation incorporated the ideal of social order from police. Equally, culture accepted the individualism of civilisation even as it attempted to reconstruct a notion of authority and the common good that had its roots in police. Considered in this light, police, civilisation and culture can be understood as moments in the self-

understanding of the coming of modernity in the European world. Each provides a perspective on that process, while none of these three terms provides the whole picture. In any modern society whose roots derive from Europe, elements of each of these three modes of understanding can be detected. Consequently, in understanding the flourishings of such societies it is inappropriate to use one of these terms to the exclusion of the others, such as has happened in recent years with the hegemony of culture. To allow this to happen is to sacrifice insights that are crucial to the self-understanding of modernity.

Notes

- 1 Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilizations*, trans. Richard Mayne, Harmondsworth, 1995; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume 1: A History of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge, 1986; John A. Hall, *Powers and Liberties: The Causes and Consequences of the Rise of the West*, Harmondsworth, 1986.
- 2 Braudel, p.4; Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, Oxford, 1994, p.32; Lucien Febvre, 'Civilisation: evolution of a word and a group of ideas,' in his *A New Kind of History*, ed. Peter Burke, trans. K. Folca, New York, 1973, pp.226–34.
- 3 Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European states, AD 990–1992*, Oxford, 1992.
- 4 On the idea of police see Keith Tribe, 'Cameratism and the Science of Government', *Journal of Modern History* 56 (June 1984): 263–84; Franz-Ludwig Knemeyer, 'Polizei', *Economy and Society* 9 (1980): 168–96; Mack Walker, 'Rights and Functions: The Social Categories of Eighteenth Century German Jurists and Cameralists', *Journal of Modern History* 50 (June 1978): 234–51; Keith Tribe, *Governing economy: The reformation of German economic discourse 1750–1840*, Cambridge, 1988; Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the early modern state*, Cambridge, 1982.
- 5 Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. Duncan Forbes, Edinburgh, 1966, Part III; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts*, Paris, 1971, p.39; Febvre, p.228; Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, eds D. D. Raphael & A. L. Macfie, Indianapolis, 1984, p.185; Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, 'Needs and Justice in the Wealth of Nations: an introductory essay,' in *Wealth and Virtue, the shaping of political economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, eds Hont & Ignatieff, Cambridge, p.13 ff.

- 6 Benjamin Constant, 'The Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation and their Relation to European Civilization', in Benjamin Constant, *Political Writings*, trans. and ed. Biancamaria Fontana, Cambridge, 1988, p.53.
- 7 Oestreich, pp.155–58.
- 8 Knemeyer, p.139.
- 9 Tribe, *Governing economy*, p.28.
- 10 Benjamin Constant, 'The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns', *Political Writings*, p.311.
- 11 Constant, 'The Liberty of the Ancients', p.310.
- 12 Martin Thom, *Republics, Nations and Tribes*, London, 1995, pp.91–95.
- 13 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge, 1989.
- 14 Antony, Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. John M. Robertson, Indiana, 1964, p.17.
- 15 Shaftesbury, p 27.
- 16 Quoted in Taylor, p.263.
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