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## CIVIL SOCIETY IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALISATION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALISATION

*This essay offers an analysis of arguments by Ernest Gellner, Jeno Szucz and George Shopflin. Considering civil society as a historical phenomenon, these authors attempt to clarify its essence by tracing the emergence of civil society in Western Europe, and then by employing comparative method, to explain its 'weakness' (or even its failure 'to emerge') in East Central Europe. The essay questions the efficiency of this type of analysis for understanding the phenomenon of civil society. It argues that the inefficiency of macro- and meso-scale analysis of civil society calls for a micro-scale reconsideration and a greater historical contextualisation of sociological and theoretical enquiries, and for a more informed dialogue between history and theory of civil society.*

The problem addressed in this essay, is that of the appropriate 'scale' of analysis relating to the concept of civil society as a social phenomenon.

In its most general form, the definition of civil society relates to: an area of non-prescriptive social

actions and relationships; the social space located between the prescriptions imposed by the state, and those imposed by kin and kin networks, and between the formal institutions of the state and the individual. Its existence is closely associated with

liberalism — the limited state, the rule of law and a market economy associated with private property — and strong associational culture [1]. The other aspect of such linkage is the identification of civil society as a prerequisite for stable democracy [2] that denotes the prescriptive, nominal aspect of the concept, as an ideal of how society should work in order to be liberal and democratic [3]. Many authors also tend to assume that civil society is a historical phenomenon, which is not universal, but a product of European (or to be precise, western European) history (however, with no unilateral agreement as to when it was indeed "civil") [4]. In the latter case, one can justifiably question the flexibility of the analytical concept which is constructed on the basis of or derived out of certain historical reality, and the validity of this concept for describing or analysing social phenomena in other historical and geographical settings.

These multiple meanings attached to the notion of civil society can partly be explained by the very circumstances of its resurrection from a predominantly late eighteenth — mid-nineteenth century political philosophy [5], which brought it back to the core of scholarly disputes. Among them were the concern with the quality of social life, the decline of civic activity and the debate on the role of welfare state in the West, and social and political transformations in the other parts of the world, in particular East Central Europe. Here the crisis of "real socialism" as an experience and ideology, motivated the search for the conceptual alternative to the type of social order produced under the Soviet party-system which was identified with the idea of civil society.

Similar incentives have also inspired scholarly searches for the historical roots of civil society, and the origins of its 'weakness' or 'absence' in East Central Europe that presumably made this region a favourable ground for the emergence of 'totalitarian' or 'Soviet-type' regimes after the Second World War.

This essay offers an analysis of arguments by Ernest Gellner, Jenő Szűcs and George Shopflin. Considering civil society as a historical phenomenon, these authors attempt to clarify its essence by tracing the emergence of civil society in Western Europe, and then by employing comparative method, to explain its 'weakness' (or even its 'failure to emerge') in East Central Europe. The purpose of this essay is to assess the efficiency of this type of analysis for use in understanding the phenomenon of civil society.

Ernest Gellner's *Conditions of Liberty. Civil Society and Its Rivals*, is often referred to as an influential philosophical and sociological account of civil society in an historical context. The very

nature of the work that brings together the analytical concept and the empirical evidence and identifies the normative appeal of the concept, makes its comprehensive interpretation complicated. Therefore only those points, which seem essential and most relevant for the purposes of this essay, will be selected and included.

Gellner initially characterises civil society as something that existed in the liberal states of the northern Atlantic society since at least 1945, and as something non-existent and therefore acutely aspired to in East European societies, which were until recently characterised by a single political-economic-ideological hierarchy, 'high centralisation of all aspects of life', and 'compiled of atomised individuals' [6].

Moreover, Gellner identifies the essential features of civil society in Western Europe in comparison with its historical predecessors (pluralist, non-centralised, but socially oppressive, traditional agrarian societies, and authoritarian centralised monarchies) and "ideal typical" rivals (so-called Muslim and Marxist "ideocracies" with atomised societies and all-empowered state). Finally, he traces the historical origins and preconditions for civil society.

In the course of this analysis Gellner shows a double — analytical and normative — function of the notion.

Thus, from an analytical point of view, civil society presents a distinct form of social organisation based on the separation of economic and social spheres from the political, with pluralism placed in the political sphere, thus preventing the domination of the state. The state establishes limits relating to 'extremes of individual interests' in economic spheres, and pluralism in autonomous economic sphere provides the check to the activities of the state [7].

At the same time, the notion of civil society helps in clarifying social norms. In Gellner's view, it is markedly superior to the notion of 'democracy', which does not include and explain the social pre-conditions of the effectiveness of general consent and participation, specific states of mind, or the social organisation or external circumstances under which this form operates [8]. Civil society is a more realistic notion as it specifies and includes its own preconditions [9].

Civil society can only emerge in the conditions of steady economic growth and intellectual or ideological pluralism. These conditions are closely interrelated [10]. Sustained economic growth relies on the progress of science "which is incompatible with a cognitive picture of the world, which is socially sustained, enforced and endowed with a priori authority" [11]. Yet another demand of eco-

conomic growth is a generic education, which prepares the individual for different specialities. This in turn leads to growing cultural homogeneity and egalitarianism, thereby producing "a secular, free-choosing individual, unhampered by social or theological bonds and able of reaching some agreement concerning social order with his fellows" [12].

Thus, Gellner identifies cultural homogeneity and individualistic rational ethos as pre-conditions and functional requirements of civil society. However, he admits that neither civil society as a form of social organisation nor its cultural and economic pre-conditions constitute an inherent attribute of the human condition. Therefore he attempts an inquiry into their historical roots.

Ancient cities gave origins to participatory democracy — the non-centralised and plural rule. Yet, they were socially oppressive, as they ascribe the individual his identity (as a member of a family clan and religious community) [13]. The so-called absolutist (effective and centralised) state that did not atomise the rest of society, with its respect for law and property, had already prepared the ground for the civil society which was completed by the modern democratic state [14].

Gellner gives special attention to the role of Christianity — the Christian idea of separation of religion and polity that made individual liberty thinkable [15] and the contribution of Protestantism to establishing the ethos of civil society. This ethos' origins can be traced back to the birth of the practice of toleration, at the end of the religious wars in post-Reformation Europe. Firstly, political defeat of Protestants caused the routinisation and diminution of their "religious enthusiasm", based on concern with personal salvation. As a result, they were pushed to exercise it in economic activity. This in turn made them acceptable to the power holder, and they engendered "that work ethic and sustained accumulation which produced modern economy". The toleration found in the political and economic sphere laid foundations for economic growth [16]. Secondly, Protestantism "laid on each individual the enormous burden of being his own priest and internal judge. *Whether this ethos engendered or followed an economy increasingly oriented towards individualism is a much discussed question*" (italics added — O. K.). Concern with virtue "led a man to a disinterested pursuit of interest" and "individual commitment to contract not status", thus producing individualistic, self-policing, modular ethos of civil society [17].

This historical conjuncture was further accomplished with a commercial revolution that initiated economic growth, and in due course was complemented by industrial and scientific revolutions that made that growth permanent and stable [18].

Thus, civil society emerged first among the Protestant "nations of shopkeepers" — the Dutch and the English — when their "...internal organisation and ethos had shifted away to production and a measure of intellectual liberty and genuine exploitation of nature, became richer, organised in relatively liberal polities and more effective militarily than the societies based on and practising the old marital values, and dominated by aristocracies" [19]. For Gellner, their example demonstrated that booming economic activity is a better path to wealth than domination and made civil society a pattern to be followed by other European nations. It also gave birth to the notion of "underdevelopment" among the intellectuals of those countries that were willing to 'catch up' with their northern neighbours and to search for theoretical solutions to this goal.

One of such solutions, 'the Enlightenment project', resulted in French revolution and its subsequent terrors, as it ignored 'constraints inherent in the very nature of social order'. This message was, however, disregarded by the Marxist project, which culminated in the Russian revolutions. It demanded total mobilisation and subjection of society to the ideocratic state, leading ultimately to atomisation of society. This project collapsed on the basis of an unsatisfactory economic performance, which was hardly comparable to that experienced in the West [20].

The 'normal' path of establishing the civil society in other parts of Europe (their "Westernisation" or "liberalisation"), as described by Gellner, occurred in a 'diffusionist' mode and roughly described, proceeded as follows [21].

The industrialisation of societies led to homogenisation of culture (as a functional demand of occupational mobility) within certain political units, and consequently to nationalism as a demand for congruency of the boundaries of man's own culture, and the boundaries of the political units he lives within. This occurred in successive stages. Their description here is unnecessary; though paradoxically enough, they correspond not to economic development (as the model suggests) but to political events — wars and revolutions — through which different European "time zones" pass with a certain time lag. The main point is that on the threshold of the First World War the main obstacle to the emergence of civil society in the third time zone, East Central Europe (roughly corresponding to the European territories of former Habsburg and Ottoman empires), was ethnic nationalism.

Gellner asserts that ethnic nationalism emerges here because of region's multinational composition and non-congruence of cultural and political boundaries. However, numerous ethnic minorities inhabiting smaller political units that emerged after the

collapse of these empires were either expelled, or assimilated or even exterminated — partly due to Hitlerist and Stalinist policies. This led to greater cultural homogenisation of the region making it more "prepared" for the emergence of civil society after a delay caused by its temporary submission to the Soviet rule after the Second World War. The last, fourth zone — Eastern Europe (former Russian empire) — would probably have followed the same pattern of development if it was not temporarily "frozen" by the earlier establishment of the Soviet regime. Therefore, following Gellner's logic, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, here the task of bringing into being the economic and political aspects of civil society, makes mandatory the strength of ethnic feelings and nationalist rivalry, with subsequent ethnic cleansing leading to homogenisation of culture, within recently established political units. Thus nationalism presents a major threat to the emergence of civil society in Eastern Europe. At the same time, in the first, Westernmost zone of Europe, as a result of "industrialism", the intensity of ethnic feelings diminished proving the Tightness of the "convergence thesis", in that industrial cultures eventually come to resemble each other. Finally, Gellner predicts a similar path of development for Europe in its entirety — the degree of cultural affinity will grow [22]. Thereby the coming of civil society to Eastern Europe is presented as being possible after a period of time — as an outcome of sustainable economic growth, if only the rise of nationalism does not halt it.

Consequently, Gellner turns to "historicist" optimism by proclaiming the sustainability and diffusion of civil society as an "irreversible verdict of history". Although he admits that it *"may or may not be"* (italics added — O. K.) the unique corollary of the kind of scientific-industrial mode of life" it seems linked to our historical destiny "since any of the visible alternatives to it are unlikely to be compatible with it" [23]. Civil society has justified its own existence by its economic performance [24].

Here we have approached the core contradiction of Gellner's argument. On the one hand, his civil society is an outcome of unique corollary of events (as indicated by the passages we have highlighted above). It has Western European historical roots and its preaching across cultural boundaries seems to be pointless [25]. He emphasises the importance of cultural and social pre-conditions and a long-term historical development of certain "liberal" institutions and practices — such as 'industrialism', 'rational ethos' and 'homogenised culture' — and considers them functionally dependent and inexplicably linked. On the other hand, he suggests that civil society is achievable in Eastern

Europe through "positive endeavour" because of its "cultural proximity" to Western Europe [26]. 'Following the pattern' of 'industrialisation' will ultimately homogenise the society and make it "rational". Paradoxically, ethnic cleansing appeared to work for the cause of civil society as soon as homogeneity is considered as its precondition.

Many critical comments concerning Gellner's theory of nationalism seems relevant to his account of civil society [27]. Firstly, his model is rather abstract and a-historical. Gellner lays the stress on necessary and sufficient condition for the emergence of civil society rather than on actual historical causation and historical facts.

In particular, he implies that nation and state are congruent, which is a generalisation based on the West European model of nation-state. His admission of the fact that the major problem to the emergence of civil society in Eastern Europe is the ethnic heterogeneity results from uncritical acceptance of this paradigm.

In addition to that, Gellner's theory rests on cultural and materialist premises, therefore, it appears to lack a sustained and developed sense of political. He assumes that there is a simple choice between nationalist homogenisation through assimilation, and nationalist secessionism that produces another nationalist homogenisation. In other words, he asserts that homogeneous nationalism is the most stable outcome desirable for the modern state. Yet, as the political practice of the contemporary world has proved, political integration of diverse people often occurs without full-scale cultural assimilation. More importantly modern political entities have also developed strategies for managing national and ethnic differences to counteract the potency of nationalist homogenisation. The key issue is that Gellner's theory too readily assumes that the general case is, that the political nation and the cultural nation must be one and universal tendency.

One more critical point stems from Gellner's underestimation of the role of power-politics in explaining which cultures become nations, and which nations create their own states. These processes even regarding Western Europe cannot be explained only in terms of material (industrial) transformation, without taking into account political development — the creation of the modern state and European warfare. Gellner also ignores the role of the factors, other than economic one, in the genesis and maintenance of civil society. Thereby he reduces civil society to a pragmatic economic practice and institutional arrangement and to rationalisation of the man's action resulting from the rationalisation of growth-oriented economic activity.

However, the principal weakness of Gellner's story is that it links the analytical concept to a par-

ticular historical reality and type of social system, that makes it hardly applicable as an analytical tool for the investigation of social phenomena outside this peculiar social reality. At the same time his account says little about civil society itself as particular form of social relations, because of its 'Western' and 'functionalist' bias. For Gellner, civil society and its preconditions emerge in the course of the development of the modern, industrial society that generates within itself the conditions in which it flourishes. Thereby, civil society becomes one more functional element of Western modernity, an 'export stamp' for assessing the degree of some society's fit within this model.

Seemingly different approaches concerning the historical roots of the weakness, or failure of civil society to emerge, which in turn are interpreted as a pre-condition to the emergence of totalitarianism in East Central Europe, are taken by those scholars who employ a kind of *longue duree* cultural-historic-geographic model. Its early variant emphasises the continuity of development and "civilizational" difference [28] between Eastern and Western Europe, understood in terms of religious and cultural traditions that resulted from the adoption of different version of Christianity — Western Roman or Eastern Orthodox — and dates back to the Early Middle Ages. The more elaborated versions emphasise the emergence of dissimilar social and legal structures, and consequently, political cultures.

Probably the most influential proponent of this approach is a Hungarian historian Jenő Szűcs whose work owes to some ideas of another Hungarian — sociologist and historian István Bibó [29]. Szűcs examines some aspects of the birth of modern civil societies and aims to clarify the extent to which the modern European division between society and the state was conditioned by prior historical development, which varied geographically [30].

In Szűcs's view, East Central Europe constitutes a hybrid development, a combination of the features of the two other European regions — Western and Eastern. The latter (roughly embracing the European territories of the Russian empire — "between the Poles and the Urals") seceded from the European structure in the end of the Middle Ages and took shape under the influence of Byzantine "caesaropapist" state and religious traditions. The Western part of Europe was principally different. It was distinguished by "structural — and theoretical — separation of "society" from the "state", [31] and managed to develop, in Bibó's terms, a "democratic way of organising society", or, in Szűcs's view, civil society, the roots of which can be traced back as early as to Middle Ages. "Western feudalism" with political and social fragmentation of society based on private ownership of land, with

fragmentation of sovereignty and contractual nature of vassalage, with respect for human dignity (which was also theorised by Church) and legal rights of the individual, with plurality and balancing nature of "small spheres of freedom" (one of which was autonomous city) — created favourable conditions for organisation of political functions "from below" that prevented a concentration of power and facilitated the birth of society as an autonomous entity [32].

Although Western absolutist state for a time subordinated society to itself, in practice it rather "administered freedom than annihilated it". Thus, various political autonomies and "freedoms" were not eliminated, and modern "national society" freed itself from absolutism considering itself a real source of sovereignty and then could control the state in practice [33].

Under the 'Eastern model', where absolutism developed earlier, lasted much longer and served as the fundamental framework for all subsequent developments, the nation was forged from imperial absolutism ("the absolutist state 'nationalised' society"). In terms of its social character, it still remained the society of subjects, "a social framework subordinated to the 'freedom of the state' " [34]. East Central Europe, lying between these two models "...crossed the threshold of modern times amidst newly developing 'Eastern European' conditions, but with defective 'Western-like' structures". The attempt to preserve these medieval structures in the era of absolutism led older political nations in the region either to subordination to the empires (in the Polish case), to the "hybrid model" of absolutism (Prussia—Germany) or even the persistence of the old empires, unable to cope with modern national demands (Habsburg monarchy) [35]. The state structures of East Central Europe were shaped by the strength of social power groupings, by the introduction of the so-called "second serfdom" and the preservation of a predominantly agrarian economy, and also by geopolitical factors — the impact of the waves of historical events pounding this area from the expansive neighbouring (Western and Eastern) regions and constant threat of invasion from Asia Minor [36].

George Schöpflin's essay *The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe* [37] owes a great deal to Szűcs's typology, while developing his main lines of argument beyond the nineteenth century. In Schöpflin's view, Eastern Europe (which corresponds to Szűcs's East Central Europe), is located between "the Western tradition of the division of power and the Eastern tradition of concentration of power", and not only entered contemporary history with the power of its society weaker, and the power of the state generally stronger than in the West, but

also attempted to "Westernise" in the "backward mode".

The weakness of the native institutions and political traditions (partly due to its earlier indigenous development and partly to foreign rule) as well as the weakness of central principles of reciprocity and autonomy of law, further reinforced the all-empowerment of the state. The role of the latter as the initiator of a political-military-administrative modernisation based on Western models ensured its continued pre-eminence and discretionary power in strategic fields of taxation and military organisation. Society was too weak to exercise control over these areas, whereby it could not sustain its autonomy vis-a-vis the state [38].

For Schopflin, the attempt of Eastern European modernisers to replicate the Western European model was only formal and superficial. It could not appreciate "...the generations of development in values and attitudes" that lay behind Western political development" [39] and the role of comparatively strong autonomous spheres and centres of power, on which new modern political systems relying on civil society were based in the West. Their absence or weakness in the case of Eastern Europe, involved the state in contradiction of having to construct civil society from above, and in doing so favoured etatist solutions and bureaucratic management instead of entrepreneurial initiatives, participatory politics and a general redistribution of power. As a result, the rise of several East European states after the First World War was not accompanied by a significant development of autonomous civil society [40].

Among other factors contributing to the underdevelopment of Eastern Europe, Schopflin emphasises "a dearth of urbanisation", that entailed the lack of autonomous centres of political and economic activity and social integration and also hampered the development of a stable national bourgeoisie. The noble origins of cultural, professional and political elites in some parts of the region explain, in Schopflin's view, their hostility to "modern" entrepreneurial ethos and its carriers — entrepreneurial social groups, usually of "alien" ethnic origin. This hostility was one of the elements in the overlapping ethnonational and social fragmentation of society [41].

Schopflin's analysis of these social structures reinforce his general thesis that on the eve of the communist take-over East European societies, although undergoing "slow, halting modernisation" were yet incapable of achieving the level of political maturity, self-organisation, and functional complexity typical of Western Europe. He suggests that without Soviet presence they would have probably moved in the direction of greater pluralism and wider political participation, yet their political sys-

tems would have been more etatist, with a certain kind of collectivism and corporativism as a "near-ineradicable component of reigning political ethos" [42].

Szycz's and Schopflin's essays provide a corrective to the somewhat superficial view of the distinctiveness of East Central or Central Europe based on primarily religious and cultural factors, and, by contrast with Gellner's view [43], pay more attention to specific features and continuity of social and political structures as favourable or unfavourable to the development of civil society. However, their accounts share with each other some considerable flaws.

In the first place, none of the authors questions the validity or usefulness of the concept of the historical region for their analysis. The unity of a certain area through time (and hence through change) is assumed rather than reflected upon. In the attempt to examine the distinctiveness of East Central Europe, Western European history is treated as having an obvious character and unity of its own while disparities characterising that area are ignored or passed over. The negative aspect of this perception of an idealised and generalised Western Europe, is that its example is used as a model and a yardstick against which the history of the rest of the geographical area of Europe is to be measured and assessed. In this approach, the distinctiveness of East Central Europe often amounts to a "lack of, or a "worse replica" of those features that apparently characterise the Western European model without exploration of their nature. Yet, whatever the historical explanation of an 'insufficiently Western development', the basic implication of the idea of an 'East Central Europe' is the region's proximity to, and inevitable connection of its future development, to following the 'real' European — Western 'option'.

The analysis of the arguments presented above, suggests that attempts to synthesise the past and present in a master-narrative of civil society, even if offering some useful substantive generalisations, remain context insensitive and overlook substantial differences in its operation in specific historical settings. They rather present more refined versions of theories of development and underdevelopment.

A more context-sensitive studies of civil society — at the level of associational culture within a particular community or, at maximum, a particular country, suggest that its proper understanding can be produced not by using the concept of civil society as a simple pass/fail test, but rather by differentiation between types and degrees of civil society, by historicising the quality of associational life and the extent of tolerance, pluralism, and self-regulation at work within and between social groups and societies. For, as argues Frank Trentmann [44],

associations and civility can pull in different directions, and non-coercive voluntary social relations can take different forms. Therefore, there is a good reason to be sceptical of the conflation of civil society with the "modern" and European path only, and with a particular social constituency (bourgeoisie or middle classes) and particular ideology (liberalism).

All these arguments call for a "micro-scale" reconsideration and historical contextualisation of sociological and theoretical enquiries, and for a more informed dialogue between history and theory of civil society; for adding complexity to the sometimes abstract picture painted by some theorists, and suggesting new ways of looking at an old term.

1. *Morris R. J.* Civil Society and the Nature of Urbanism: Britain, 1750—1850 // *Urban History*.— Vol. 25 (3).— 1998.— P. 290; *Kumar, Krishan.* Civil society: an inquiry into the usefulness of an historical term // *The British Journal of Sociology*.— Vol. 44 (3).— 1993— P. 375—401; *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* / Ed. John A. Hall.— Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995.
2. *Robert D. Putnam et al.* Making Democracy Work: Civic Tradition in Modern Italy.— Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
3. *Kumar, Krishan.* Civil society: an inquiry into the usefulness of an historical term; *Bryant, Christopher G. A.* Social self-organisation, civility and sociology: a comment on Kumar's «Civil Society» // *The British Journal of Sociology*.— Vol. 44 (3).— 1993 — P. 397—401; *John Keane.* Introduction // *Civil Society and the State. New European Perspectives* / Ed. John Keane.— London, New York: Verso, 1988 — P. 25—29.
4. See for instance: *Gellner, Ernest.* Conditions of Liberty. Civil Society and Its Rivals.— London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994; *Hall, John A.* In search of civil society // *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*.— P. 3—7.
5. A. Ferguson, D. Hume, A. de Tocqueville, F. W. Hegel, K. Marx, and a twentieth-century political thinker, A. Gramsci.
6. *Gellner, Ernest.* Conditions of Liberty. Civil Society and Its Rivals.—P. 1, 13.
7. *Ibid.*— P. 210, 212.
8. *Ibid.*—P. 211—212.
9. *Ibid.*— P. 184—185, 188.
10. *Ibid.*—P. 31.
11. *Ibid.*—P. 211—212.
12. *Ibid.*— P. 73—77.
13. *Ibid.*—P. 9.
14. *Ibid.*—P. 94.
15. *Ibid.*—P. 10.
16. *Ibid.*—P. 48—50.
17. *Ibid.*—P. 77—78.
18. *Ibid.*—P. 72—75.
19. *Ibid.*— P. 33.
20. *Ibid.*—P. 33—42.
21. *Ibid.*—P. 103—116.
22. *Ibid.*—P. 119—123.
23. *Ibid.*—P. 213—214.
24. *Ibid.*— P. 197—199.
25. Gellner seems to accept that Oriental societies could be omitted from the "sphere of influence" of civil society because of their cultural difference (Muslim societies) and partially because of their satisfactory economic performance (East Asian societies). Thereby he acknowledges that economic performance is achievable even in societies having little in common with individualistic ethos of civil society. It is important in the context of his claim that it is the economic growth that makes social order acceptable.
26. It is interesting that elsewhere Gellner states that Marxism was "tailor made for Russian soul" with its "messianic and populist yearning" (p. 36).
27. See for instance: *McCrone, David.* The sociology of nationalism. Tomorrow's ancestors.— London, New York: Routledge, 1998.— P. 64—84; *O'Leary, Brendan.* Ernest Gellner's diagnoses of nationalism: a critical overview, or, what is living and what is dead in Ernest Gellner's philosophy of nationalism? // *The State of the Nation. Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism* / Ed. John Hall.— Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
28. One of the earliest statements of this view is: *Halecki, Oskar.* The Borderlands of Western Civilisation.— New York, 1952.
29. *Szűcs, Jenő.* Three Historical Regions of Europe. An Outline // *Keane, John.* Civil Society and the State. New European Perspectives.— London, New York: Verso, 1988.— P. 291—332 (Hungarian version — 1981).
30. *Keane, John.* Introduction // *Keane, John.* Civil Society and the State,— P. 16—17.
31. *Szűcs, Jenő.* Three Historical Regions of Europe... — P. 295.
32. *Ibid.*— P. 294—308.
33. *Ibid.*— P. 318, 322.
34. *Ibid.*— P. 323.
35. *Ibid.*— P. 322.
36. *Ibid.*— P. 323—330.
37. *Schopflin, George.* The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe // *Daedalus*.—Vol. 119,— 1990.—P. 55—90.
38. *Ibid.*—P. 61—62.
39. *Ibid.*— P. 64.
40. *Ibid.*— P. 84—85.
41. *Ibid.*—P. 83—86.
42. *Ibid.*— P. 87—88.
43. This can partly be explained by Gellner's view that in modern societies culture rather replaces the structure than underlies it. Therefore he did not attach significance to analysing social structures that are supposed to dissolve and to be replaced by occupational status in 'industrial society'.
44. *Paradoxes of Civil Society. New Perspective on Modern German and British History*/ Ed. Frank Trentmann.— New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000.— P. 3—40.

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## ГРОМАДЯНСЬКЕ СУСПІЛЬСТВО У ЦЕНТРАЛЬНО-СХІДНІЙ ЄВРОПІ: МІЖ ТЕОРЕТИЧНИМ КОНЦЕПТОМ ТА ІСТОРИЧНИМ КОНТЕКСТОМ

У статті проаналізовано роботи Ернста Геллнера, Єно Сюча та Джорджа Шопліна. Розглядаючи громадянське суспільство не тільки як аналітичний концепт, але й як історичний феномен, ці дослідники намагаються з'ясувати сутність громадянського суспільства, простежуючи його виникнення й передумови в Західній Європі, і, застосувавши порівняльний аналіз —

*пояснити причини його «слабкості», «недорозвиненості» (або й навіть неможливість його виникнення) у Центрально-Східній Європі. Автор статті ставить під сумнів ефективність використання історико-географічного регіону як одиниці аналізу для розуміння феномену громадянського суспільства і висловлюється на користь більшої історичної контекстуалізації соціологічних та теоретичних досліджень, а також більш поінформованого діалогу між: історією та теорією громадянського суспільства.*