CHAPTER 3

THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PLANNING: THE RISE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

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In the late 1940s and early 1950s, when I was still a student of planning at the University of Chicago, the common understanding was that the freshly minted planner would go out and work for the state. The state itself, whether national or local, was thought to be beneficent, responsible for and final guarantor of the public weal. My intellectual mentors, Rexford Guy Tugwell and Harvey S. Perloff, were firm believers in social democracy, the legacy of the Rooseveltian New Deal: they espoused the ideal of a vigorous, interventionist state. For Tugwell in particular, New York patrician and admirer of Thorsten Veblen, planners were to rise above the backstage dealings of the vested, corporate interests that usually prevailed, to articulate, defend and uphold a public interest. Standing above the hubbub of politics, planners would somehow discover and give voice to the broad interests of people in a long-term future perspective. A development or master plan would enshrine this populist vision and, if sanctioned by the relevant political body, become the legal basis for shorter-range plans and capital budgets that, in a descending cascade of documents, would implement its vision (Padilla 1975).

Tugwell's was perhaps an extreme form of enlightened statism, but in the early postwar years, with the consolidation of Mr Attlee's welfare state in the United Kingdom and the specter of the Great Depression still vivid in memory, his views on the role and functions of the state and, in particular, of the federal state were widely shared.

Our present understanding of the role of government planning has undergone a sea-change since those halcyon days. A major turning point came with the civic struggles of the 1960s, when a number of social planners, led by Paul Davidoff, turned from being advocates of a presumptive public interest to advocacy of the disempowered sectors of our cities. Negotiating with City Hall and the Feds, they tried to become spokespersons for poor, inner-city neighborhoods (Peattie 1968).

In Western Europe, Latin America and the United States, urban social movements were being celebrated as a progressive force, reshaping cities and their provisioning for the poor and other marginalized groups. Generated from within working-class ethnic and racially distinctive communities, as well as by dispersed groups of women, gays and lesbians, the homeless, the frail and the disabled, these were valiant, but notably disarticulated, efforts to reclaim the city for themselves. Foreshadowing what would become an important theme of public discourse in the

1990s, Manuel Castells referred to them as citizen movements (Castells 1983 part 5). Planners were beginning to turn from their master visions of the city to spontaneous action in the streets (Piven and Cloward 1979).

A second turning point was the cyclopean process of economic restructuring that began in the mid-1970s and taught us a whole new vocabulary – deindustrialization, globalization, flexibilization – that would become central to our revisioning of the city. Planning academics were among the first to point out what was happening (Bluestone and Harrison 1980; Friedmann 1988; Storper and Walker 1989; Sassen 1991). But the restructuring process was merely the material expression of an underlying political change in the constellations of power, as capitalism shifted into a new phase of capital accumulation. At the ideological level, this meant, at least in the English-speaking world, an about-face to the rhetoric of nineteenth-century Manchester liberalism with its doctrines of rugged individualism, the minimal state and the uninhibited worldwide movement of capital and commodities, if not of labor. The Thatcher and Reagan regimes set the ball rolling for privatization, deregulation, welfare reform, decentralized government and, most recently in the United States, the mantra of the balanced budget.

It seemed that the state, even at local levels, was going to get out of the business of planning altogether. It was this general retreat of the state from the twin onslaughts of restructuring and global accumulation that gave impetus to the voluntary, non-governmental sector of the economy, supported by private charities and foundations, though public funds were also important. In Los Angeles alone there are now hundreds of such organizations which, in one way or another, address the vast social needs of the city, many of them generated by the restructuring process itself. On a worldwide basis, their number rises to tens of thousands. As one might expect with this type of development, a new typology evolved to distinguish among them: community-based organizations; first-, second- and third-generation NGOs; intermediary organizations, and more (Korten 1990; Friedmann 1992; Carroll 1992). Voluntary organizations come in all shapes and sizes. Only one generalization can be made of them with assurance: however hard they may try, and some try very, very hard indeed, their collective efforts inevitably fall far short of the problems with whose symptoms they engage.

This, then, is what we have come to in four decades of planning, starting from a credo in a centralized, benevolent state which was assumed to have a far-sighted and comprehensive vision of the public good to the present welter of a triumphant market economy driven by global competition, an emasculated national state in retreat, a plethora of social movements vying for our attention and support, and a burgeoning sector of voluntary organizations competing fiercely among themselves for private and public resources that are becoming ever more scarce.

Although some would argue that this situation precludes any meaningful role for planners, this is not my view. The market economy doesn't solve urban problems; it creates them. Its pathetically narrow vision for the future comes down to the one syllable, "more." More is better than less. Growth is mandatory. Consumption is a civic obligation. But, in fact, the materialism of the consumer society has very little to do with the good life, which is rather about the quality of human relationships. As I see it, then, the challenge for us as planners is to redefine ourselves and our profession in ways that will make our work congruent with what I take to be the

hallmark of the new political economy, the reemergence of civil society as a collective actor in the construction of our cities and regions, in search of the good life.

Defining Civil Society

In their important study, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, Cohen and Arato (1992) speak of the "contemporary revival of civil society." Civil society was first used in its modern sense by Hegel in his *Philosophy of Right* (1821) and, in a less philosophical manner, by Alexis de Tocqueville in his classic study, *Democracy in America*, published a decade later (Hegel 1967; de Tocqueville 1969). As with any concept in the human sciences, civil society refers to something we claim to perceive in the observable world that may serve us as a lens through which to view and interpret phenomena that otherwise would appear disconnected from each other. In that sense, the concept of civil society has heuristic value. While its specific meaning has remained fluid, as observers across a broad political spectrum began using it, its core meaning has remained constant. Civil society designates those social organizations, associations and institutions that exist beyond the sphere of direct supervision and control by the state. It is this core meaning that most often figures in the accounts of conservative critics. Basing themselves on Tocqueville's early observations of Americans' propensity to form themselves into a plethora of voluntary associations, these critics see civil society as essentially composed of institutions – neighborhood, family, church and voluntary associations – that "mediate" between the individual and the state (Berger and Neuhaus 1977). Intellectual radicals, on the other hand, such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985), emphasize political mobilization and active resistance to a hegemonic discourse rather than Tocquevillian mediations. The Left, accordingly, dwells on social movements, self-management and the practices of direct democracy (Keane 1988a).

When civil society was first introduced into theoretical discourse, it served primarily to argue for the preservation of a sphere of freedom against a potentially despotic state (Keane 1988b:35–72). And it was popular resistance to dictatorship that led to its current revival. Although most contemporary authors point to the Polish Solidarity movement and the Lutheran Church in former East Germany as catalysts in the popular struggles to bring down communist regimes during the 1980s, it was earlier resistance movements in South America, especially in Brazil, Argentina and Chile, which first led to the reappearance of civil society in the sociological literature. As we shall see, however, important as the theme of resistance is, the discourse of civil society has not been confined to it but has been expanded to include such topics as participatory democracy (Barber 1984), the social meaning of citizenship (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1995) and justice in postmodern society (Young 1990).

Planners have held themselves aloof from these debates. At the same time, many of us have been at the front lines of the actual struggles for greater citizen participation, community-based development, and for the aims of new social movements, from feminism to ecology. This very activism on the part of our

profession may have prevented us from seeing the larger picture and from taking part in the theoretical debates. Being so close to the action, we have failed to recognize the new configurations of power within which we will have to reset our sights and learn to be different sorts of planners from the professional self-image we have promoted in the past.

At this point, I feel obliged to set out my own take on civil society, and how I propose to use the concept in the remainder of this chapter. I will therefore ask you, at least for now, to see the world from my particular angle of vision.

Literature on civil society is informed by two very different philosophical presuppositions. The first, derived from a critical reading of the Scottish Enlightenment – Francis Hutchinson, Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith – centers civil society in the individual human being who is endowed with reason, including a capacity for moral reasoning. Some proponents of this view argue that the Enlightenment's synthesis of the individual and society fails us today because contemporary urban societies have replaced trust in institutions and interpersonal relations with mutual suspicion: the apparent solidarity which was once believed to have existed has come unravelled (Seligman 1992:168–70). A more generous reading is given by the British anthropologist Ernest Gellner (1994) who sees individual liberty guaranteed by civil society *against* Leviathan. The epistemological core of both these analyses is the individual as an abstract, self-interested, reasoning being.

The second position starts with the given of the individual person's social nature. We are born into a group – the family, the clan – which we need for our physical survival, and we become individuated only gradually, learning to speak and act as we become conscious of ourselves and others to whom we relate in a variety of ways. As social beings, we are communicative beings. This position leads us away from liberal philosophy towards a thinking that regards social relations as primary. We find this thinking in the young Karl Marx, in Antonio Gramsci, and in the recent work of Cohen and Arato (1992). My own position follows in this tradition (Friedmann 1979; 1989).

Accordingly, civil society appears as one of four partially autonomous and overlapping spheres of action and valued social practices, and it can only be grasped in relation to this ensemble.[1] Civil society's "opposition" to the state is central to this understanding and was already present, one might say, at the hour of its birth, when the two social and political revolutions that marked the final decades of the eighteenth century broke out in the North American colonies and in France. But civil society must also be seen as standing in "opposition" to the corporate economy, the sphere of capital writ large which, over the course of the nineteenth century separated itself from civil society to become a distinctive sphere of action and valued social practice of its own (Polanyi 1957). The sphere of capital has become essential to economic growth; at the same time, its relentless commodification of all social relations threatens to undermine the very foundations of civil society. The fourth sphere of action, finally, is the political community or the terrain of political conflict and struggle which, as a social construct, we need for our common understanding of democracy where civil society reasserts its sovereignty from the state. This is the terrain of political parties, clubs, social movements and the like, which represent the public face of civil society. When

these four overlapping and intersecting spheres of action are inscribed within territorial bounds, they may be said to constitute a social formation.

Central to the organization of civil society, and the basis of all other forms of social organization and collective action, is the household whose moral economy, like that of civil society as a whole, works primarily on the basis of reciprocity and trust, though compulsion is also part of it (Cohen and Arato 1992 n 81:724). In a wider sense, it is also the blood line – the family or clan – whose members do not share life under the same roof, but are linked by descent or marriage. Despite deep intrusions by both the state and corporations and its general fragility, the household may still be viewed as a relatively autonomous sphere of action and valued social practice, and its work is essential for the production (and reproduction) of the life and livelihood of its members. Linked to households are religious organizations – tabernacles, churches, synagogues, mosques – to the extent that they are not part of the state apparatus, as well as all manner of formal and informal associations, clubs, fraternal orders, cooperative ventures and similar social bodies that animate the life of civil society and are largely beyond the reach of the state.

Along with the other spheres of action, civil society is lodged within the territorial limits of a state, region, city or neighborhood, but its linkages and networks extend increasingly beyond these boundaries to the rest of the world through electronic media, the migration of kin and friends, and associational bonds. Another caveat is that civil society must under no circumstances be read as a homogeneous sphere. Deep divisions run through it, creating an internal dynamic that is based on social class, gender, religion, ethnicity, so-called race, access to household resources and other social markers. These divisions are major sources of conflict both within civil society and on the wider political terrain. The discourse on civil society as such takes us only a few steps into a better understanding of political economy. Beyond them, we need to particularize and refine our observations.

Finally, I want to draw a distinction between *organized* and *mobilized* civil society. What I have described so far – households, associations, churches – constitutes, so to speak, the basic scaffolding of civil society. This is the private domain of our lives. Mobilization, on the other hand, always occurs around a specific purpose that, by its very nature, is political in a sense quite different from the politics of everyday life. All social movements may be seen as mobilizations of certain sectors of civil society, whether for protest or some other limited purpose in the public domain. Social mobilizations are necessarily of finite duration and occur, so to speak, in the interstices of organized civil society. They are not part of its structure. It is also important to note that mobilizations may be directed not only against the state but also against segments of civil society itself. This, for example, is the case with current American debates on "family values" and the "right to life," in which militants from different sides of these issues join battle over "right conduct" in American civil society – the political community – as a whole.

THE ROLE OF HOUSEHOLDS

Let me turn to what I would argue is the primary social role of households, the daily (re)production of life and livelihood. This may seem unexceptional to you, but it is,

in fact, contested by the contrary assumption (promoted by corporate capital) that households are best understood as units of consumption or, more precisely, as loose aggregates of self-interested age- and gender-graded individuals who are out to maximize their individual utilities as soon as they can speak and act for themselves. Certain consequences flow from this contrary assumption. First, under what I shall call the consumer hypothesis, poverty is treated as a condition of insufficient income or low spending power. Second, and as a correlate to this, anti-poverty measures should aim at raising household incomes through direct transfers and/or pushing so-called welfare dependants into low-paying jobs. Although it would be foolish to deny the importance of monetary income, it would be similarly mistaken to reduce households to the essentially passive status of consumers instead of seeing them as being engaged in the production of their own life and livelihood.

Some feminists have been extremely skeptical of taking patriarchal households as units for any reason, consumption or production, preferring to see them as a terrain of conflictive relations of power between men and women. I wouldn't for one moment wish to deny the reality of the patriarchal order and the need for an emancipatory politics. But however biased actual household and other relations of power may be, favoring men, the prior claims of life and livelihood must be acknowledged. Household relations, especially among the poor, take place largely outside the exchange economy, and in this sense they may be called moral relations that, in the last instance, are based on reciprocity and trust (Ekeh 1974; Lomnitz 1977). The moral economy of the household does not preclude the existence of a gendered division of labor in which women are tethered to domestic tasks. Nor does it deny the possibility that the actual bonds that tie members of households to each other are, to some degree, based on material necessity, exploitation and fear of physical violence. All this notwithstanding, relations of reciprocity do exist within most households. They are based on dyadic, face-to-face transactions, and a measure of unspoken trust and dialogue is their specific mode of transaction. The moral economy, we can venture to say, makes possible the exchange economy. It extends outwards from households through networks of close personal relations into the world of work, including those voluntary activities in the community without which civilized life would be unthinkable.

Poor people's households are especially dependent on keeping the moral economy in working order. They must draw each of their members into the tasks necessary for life and livelihood. They depend on multiple sources of income, including the monetary contributions of all income earners within the household and remittances from family members living elsewhere. But poverty cannot be reduced to a mere condition of low income (Wratten 1995). In structural terms, it is also a result of low access to resources necessary for household production. I call them the household's *bases of social power* (Friedmann 1992), and they include a secure life space (roughly equivalent to housing), "surplus" time over and above the time required for the reproduction of life and livelihood, social networks, knowledge and skills of appropriate kinds, information, social organizations, good health, instruments and tools of domestic production, and finally also financial resources, including both income and credit. Unless household access to these resources, including both income and credit. Unless household access to these bases of social power can be improved, poor households will continue to be disempowered; poverty will be perpetuated.[2]

Planners engaged in anti-poverty work are directly involved in improving household access to these structural bases of social power, and they frequently choose to work in local neighborhoods, attached to both community-based and non-governmental organizations to accomplish their task. But access to household resources on a societal scale depends to a great extent on provisioning by the state. Poor people's politics has therefore focused on struggles for low-cost housing, rent control, affordable mass transit, childcare, cooperative banking, the clean-up of their immediate environments, the provision of conveniently located health facilities and similar household resources. Planners involved in these struggles at municipal, county, state and federal levels have often had to perform the triple role of community activist, technical expert and political strategist.

But beyond the specifics of local action and the politics surrounding household resources is a level of politics that raises fundamental questions of rights or entitlements: human rights in their most universal dimension (including, importantly, the rights of women and children) and, more specifically, citizen rights. I would like to speak briefly to the latter.[3]

CITIZEN RIGHTS

Citizen rights derive from full membership in a distinct political community (Kymlicka and Norman 1994). And, as Michael Walzer reminds us, "the primary good that we distribute to one another is membership in some human community: . . . it determines with whom we make . . . choices, from whom we require obedience and collect taxes, to whom we allocate goods and services" (Walzer 1983:31).

The question of citizenship and its attendant rights (and reciprocal duties) has recently been revived in countries as far apart as Brazil, Germany and Australia. In Brazil, which threw off the yoke of a long period of military dictatorship with a new constitution in 1988, current debates about citizenship concern primarily grassroots participation in political decision making. They are largely about the political meaning of citizenship. Rebecca Abers tells us about one significant Brazilian experiment, the process of participatory budgeting in the southern city of Porto Alegre (Abers, this volume). From this it is only a small step before other demands, grounded in the idea of citizenship and especially local citizenship, are made. A booklet issued in 1991 by FASE, a Brazilian NGO, contains a critical analysis of the government's plans for the environmental clean-up of the Baixada Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro's vast, insalubrious periphery. It is subtitled: "*Direito à cidade, direito à vida* (Right to the city, right to life)" (Florêncio et al. 1991). Four years later, in another FASE publication, the authors subtitle their collection of essays reporting on seven years of popular struggle "*Cidadania e Gestão Democrática* (Citizenship and democratic management)" (Florêncio et al. 1995). Their report uses the term citizen in a dual sense, referring both to membership in the political community of all Brazilians that guarantees them the right to voice, and to residence in a locality – the state and city of Rio de Janeiro and, more specifically, of the Baixada Fluminense – which confers legitimacy to their claimed rights to a clean environment, to rivers whose floods are contained, and beyond

that to basic urban infrastructure and services, and last, though not least, to decent, wage-earning jobs.

The theme of local citizenship in this sense is also taken up in a series of pronouncements concerning the status of foreign immigrants in Frankfurt, Germany. Since German citizenship is automatically passed on through the blood line, and naturalization is difficult, the third of Frankfurt's population that is "without a German passport," while clearly making its full contribution to the economy, is politically excluded. Foreign workers and their families, regardless of their period of residence in Germany, lack citizen rights. Although various initiatives have been afoot at the national level to extend German citizenship to long-term immigrants on easier terms than in the past, it is the local rhetoric that I found particularly compelling. Under the leadership of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the member of Frankfurt's city council who was in charge of multicultural affairs for the city, a campaign was waged over a period of years, beginning in the late 1980s, to extend the "right to the city" to the Turkish, Greek, Moroccan, Italian, Croat, Bosnian, Sri Lankan and other non-German immigrant families and individuals. Though legally without the right to vote in public elections, they eventually gained the right to representation in the city council, thus gaining both visibility and voice (Friedmann and Lehrer 1997). It seems to me that this extension of the meaning of citizenship to the local, regardless of nationality, has much to commend it in an era of hypermobility and vast international popular movements, an era that is marked by the "hollowing out" of the national state and the concomitant rise of virtual city-states conducting the world's business among themselves in networks of dense urban clusters that extend from the shores of the Rhine to China's Pearl River Delta (Jessop 1994; Taylor 1995). Local citizenship also recalls Walzer's principle of political justice: "that the processes of self-determination through which a democratic state shapes its internal life, must be open, and equally open, to all those men and women who live within its territory, work in the local economy, and are subject to local law" (Walzer 1983:60).

Curiously, it is Australia, itself an archipelago of city-states – Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth – which has begun an official inquiry into the meaning of citizenship (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia 1995). A working paper commissioned by the Parliamentary Committee charged with the inquiry distinguishes between a legal or formal meaning of citizenship and a broader social meaning. It is the latter which is the inquiry's main subject and turns on four issues:

1. the quality of full membership and active participation;
2. in a just and mutually supportive political community;
3. including the individual and collective rights and responsibilities – legal, social, economic, cultural and environmental – that go with such membership; and
4. the public and private policies and resources needed to sustain it (Parliament 1995:5–6).

This strikes me as an unusually broad conceptualization. It stresses *active participation* in a political community that is *just and mutually supportive* and embraces all sorts of *rights and responsibilities*, including cultural and

environmental. This holistic approach to citizenship which, in the final analysis, is the right to have rights, represents an attempt on the part of the committee to respond to what it called the "excesses of economic rationality and small government . . . and a reassertion of the importance of communitarian values against the official rhetoric of competitive individualism" (Parliament 1995:45).

Let it be noted that the Australian inquiry is not only about rights – important as these are – but equally about an ethics of responsibility. "The ethical content of citizenship," write the authors, "the idea of civic duty, is crucial. Without individuals and organisations prepared to participate and take responsibility, without a concept of the public interest, without the values of tolerance and compassion, and some sense of solidarity and belonging, citizenship would be impossible and 'democracies become difficult to govern, even unstable'" (Parliament 1995:69). To illustrate the inquiry's exploration of the extended meaning of citizenship, and its effort to recover a sense of the public good rooted in daily life, here is a partial listing of a suggested code, incorporating 18 points of what the report calls "The duties of the good citizen" (Parliament 1995:67):

- To nurture, love, and educate one's children.
- To moderate one's own demands and consumption in the interests of the broader community.
- To pay one's taxes as fairly assessed without artificial avoidance.
- To vote in elections.
- To look after the environment.
- To be tolerant of differences within society.

Though not intended to be prescriptive, these so-called duties do suggest a much wider meaning of citizenship than is common in the United States. The Parliamentary Committee hopes to open up a public debate about what it means to be a responsible member of a multicultural political community, to be an Australian "citizen" in these terms. It spells out one possible version of what I have called the valued social practices of the Australian community in the political sense.

What strikes me about this list of citizen duties – and I have cited only 6 of its 18 mandates – is, first of all, their implicit hope for some agreement on "valued social practices" and therefore the formation of an inclusive national political community beyond ethnicity, "race," regional loyalty or any other social division and, second, the grounding of so many "duties" in the life space where our everyday lives unfold. Citizenship, I would agree with James Holston, is multiple, ranging from membership in the human community and the national polity down to city and neighborhood (Holston 1995). These several citizenships are layered; they confirm specific rights but also impose multiple responsibilities, which is their ethical content. When ethical imperatives conflict, as they often do, we are obliged to choose. Choice is unavoidable, often difficult, and its results are frequently ambiguous. Only one thing we cannot do: step outside the human and political communities that fill the world in a seamless web of valued social practices. Stepping outside them, we become as outlaws.

CIVIL SOCIETY: INSURGENT AND FOR ITSELF

In a recently published essay, James Holston introduces the term "insurgent urbanism" to describe a mode of practice by sectors of civil society (Holston 1995). He writes:

> when citizenship expansions and erosions focus on urban experience, they constitute an insurgent urbanism which informs this development in several ways. First, they present the city as both the text and the context of new debates about fundamental social relations. In their localism and strategic particularism, these debates valorize the constitutive role of conflict and ambiguity in shaping the multiplicity of urban life. In a second sense, this heterogeneity works against the modernist absorption of citizenship in a project of state-building, providing alternative possible sources for the development of new kinds of practices and narratives about belonging to and participating in society. This "working against" defines what I called an insurgent citizenship, and its spatial mode of insurgent urbanism. This insurgence is important to the project of rethinking the social in planning because it reveals a realm of the possible that is rooted in the heterogeneity of lived experience, which is to say, in the ethnographic present and not in utopian futures. (Holston 1995:48)

Throughout this extensive passage, it is worth noting, Holston avoids the currently fashionable term "resistance." Civil society, which is a society of citizens, is engaged in something larger than sporadic rearguard actions against Leviathan. According to Holston, it is engaged in "providing alternatives, possible sources for the development of new kinds of practices, narratives about belonging to and participating in society." Civil society does, indeed, resist, protest, make demands on the state and stake out new claims. It also struggles against the corporate Leviathan when it pressures Hollywood to reduce the violence of its films or the tobacco companies to make their advertising less appealing to children. But more important than any possible resistance, civil society is simply engaged in being "for itself."

Traditional Marxist terminology doesn't capture this moment of being for itself. It speaks of the work of households as social reproduction, meaning the reproduction of labor power, as though the whole truth of households were exhausted by their functional relation to capital. But surely we are not victims of "false consciousness" when we celebrate anniversaries, hold street parties, watch Little Leaguers slide into first base, or organize, as did the working-class women of Lima, Peru, in the 1980s, a city-wide "daily glass of milk" campaign for their children (Pease García 1992:168-9). *Civil society is ultimately for itself.* Within the constraints of structural imperatives, it is in its attention to small things that the quality of our life is found. We make the city serve our needs by molding the physical appearance of streets into distinctive neighborhoods. In less visible ways, we mark it on cognitive maps of historical landmarks that commemorate sites of insurgent citizenship. Moira Kenney (1994) has recently drawn such a map for the gay and lesbian community of Los Angeles. Dolores Hayden's book, *The Power of Place*, is also relevant here (1995). Some of our neighborhoods are a result of forced segregation. But others, like San Francisco's Castro District or Los Angeles' Koreatown, are better understood as affinity environments where particular cultural rituals can be freely celebrated. They are districts that, to a considerable

extent, are shaped by the very people who live in them, who lend them their distinctive character and who, over the years, have left a residue of memories behind. Are they insurgent spaces in Holston's sense? Perhaps. But they are also the work of civil society when it is working "for itself."

There is a darker side to this story, however, when civil society turns against itself in its rage against difference within its own ranks. This is the tragic litany of racism, intolerance, terrorism and persecution of those who are judged to be different from us by some arbitrary distinguishing mark, whether of birth place, language, skin color, sexual practice or religious belief. Driven to excess, intolerance of difference leads to the marginalization of whole groups of people, to apartheid, ethnic cleansing, genocide and, worst of all, the Holocaust.[4]

We cannot say, then, that civil society is inherently "good" or, for that matter, inherently "bad." But wherever they are found, intolerance and evil must be resisted. Ethnic cleansing is evil. Social and political exclusions are intolerable. People must be held to the valued practices and ethical standards of the nested communities to which we all belong. Human rights – to the extent which we can agree what they are – take precedence over all other rights; they are foundational (An-Na'im 1992). The political and civic rights enshrined in the American Constitution take precedence over specific social rights or entitlements by virtue of its people's membership in a political community. But social rights in the United States are still very few. Essential for the flourishing of human life, they constitute an agenda of political struggle: the right to a decent standard of living, the right to housing, to education, to the highest standards of physical and mental health, and the right to work.[5]

These and any similar rights must apply to all who belong to a given political community. Democratic citizenship does not give us license to exclude from the enjoyment of its privileges anyone with a legitimate claim to membership. It does give us license to pursue a civil, that is, a civilized life. In the final analysis, this is the aim, if indeed it has an aim, of civil society.

POST-EUCLIDIAN PLANNING

I have tried to portray civil society as a collective actor in the public domain, particularly on the urban terrain, which is the domain of planning. And while the old planning, which I have called Euclidean, was linked directly to the actions of the state, the new post-Euclidean planning is no longer so confined but can be found within any of the four spheres of action and valued social practice, and especially at their points of intersection and overlap (Friedmann 1993). The old Euclidean tradition was suited to a static world in which urban change would be carefully controlled – the preferred term was "guided," as in "societal guidance" – by the state. This was a modernist conceit (Etzioni 1968). Planners can no longer afford an Archimedean perspective. Perspective views are multiple now, and the world cannot be lifted off its axis. To speak with Habermas, the metropolis, which is our world, has become *unübersichtlich*, incapable of being seen as a whole in all the relevant detail.

Planners find themselves working increasingly for agents of civil society where they focus on specific project undertakings. They no longer pretend to have a comprehensive, single-eyed view of the city, though master plans continue to be produced. Their work is geared to the short and medium term, with an emphasis on real-time transactions.

Post-Euclidean planning has not yet received the scholarly attention it deserves. Allan Heskin's case study of planners working for the Route 2 housing cooperative in Los Angeles comes to mind as an exception (Heskin 1991). From it, we learn of the mismatch between professionals and community board, with planners finding it difficult to subordinate their professional judgment to a board, a majority of whom lacked tertiary education. Heskin's study intimates, but does not propose, a new kind of planning education that, among other things, acknowledges the limits of professional knowledge, allowing for a variety of equally valid, and equally limited, ways of knowing.

But why stop there, on the epistemological threshold? Why limit planners' education to just a techno-scientific role? If civil society enters the fray of community and city building, as it has done; if it becomes increasingly politicized, with social movements seeking to remove structural constraints to exclusion; and if all significant change in the urban environment results from negotiation among the interested parties; if, moreover, planning involves creating new institutional arrangements, inventing financial strategies and helping to influence public opinion; and if planners find themselves working for private developers as readily as for community-based groups, voluntary organizations, politicians and the state bureaucracy, then we shall need new sorts of expertise beyond the technical. Technical competence, of course, will still be expected from a planner, and to acquire it calls for a deep knowledge of the socio-spatial processes that, together, produce the urban habitat: urbanization, regional and interregional economic growth and change, the political economy of city building, cultural differentiation and change, the transformation of nature in the urban habitat, and urban politics (Friedmann 1996). Tools of analysis will also still be required, particularly as they are linked to particular specializations. But what else? What sort of work will planners find once they leave school for the apparent chaos of the city, particularly if they search for a meaningful engagement within civil society? Let me suggest some work that would benefit from a background in planning:

- organizing and mobilizing work in the community;
- ideological work: theory, social critique, policy work;
- fund raising;
- networking and coalition building across civil society;
- political liaison;
- legal work;
- media and publicity work.

Underlying these types of work that remain virtually untouched in planning curricula is a range of generic skills that would prepare young people for a professional career in post-Euclidean forms of planning. Some, like legal and financial management skills, will probably require a double degree, respectively

with law and business. Other skills might be acquired in special workshops, such as mediation and negotiation, labor–community organizing, public writing and speaking, and group dynamic skills. Planning education, in short, is due for a big overhaul. Let us quietly bury the modernist planning paradigm together with all its trappings and replace it with an educational model that is congruent with the very different realities with which we have to live today.

PLANNING IN A TRANSACTIVE STYLE

Life as a post-Euclidean planner is not what we looked forward to when many of us – men and women of my generation – still expected to be absorbed into the "iron cage" of Weberian bureaucracy. Today's planner, by contrast, is engaged as a partisan, working with groups about whose projects she cares. Her work calls for a transactive, dialogic style. But if this is the emerging reality, it also raises a number of troubling questions:

1. Do planners have to be linked "organically" to the communities with and for which they work?
2. How can the community's trust be maintained even as planners retain their ability to "interface" and negotiate solutions with antagonistic outsiders?
3. How shall planners from one cultural background learn the valued social practices of other groups that are unlike their own in the multicultural setting of the metropolis?

Let me speak to each of these questions in turn; first, with regard to the "organic" connection to the communities with and for which we choose to work. If, for example, you work for a labor union to forge labor–community linkages, do you have to be a blue-collar worker? If you work in an African American community, say, on Chicago's South Side, do you have to be black? If you work in Los Angeles' Pico Union neighborhood, do you yourself have to be a Central American refugee? Given the current identity politics that swells to particular intensity on the metropolitan campuses of our universities, these are not idle questions.

In fact, they are grounded in epistemology: if you haven't had the experience of standing on the assembly line or of doing janitorial work in a downtown office tower, can you work effectively as a planner under contract to a labor union? If you haven't had the experience of being black in white America, can you be trusted to work with an African American community? If you haven't faced death squads, "coyotes" and INS agents, can you be an economic development planner for, say, El Rescate, one of the largest Los Angeles-based voluntary organizations working with Central American, especially Salvadorean, refugees?

Some would respond with an unambiguous no to these questions. Planners working for and with civil society must be "organically" connected. I should like, however, to leave the issue at least partly unresolved. Organicity is not a matter of birth right, class origins, race or whatever. I have known planners who have managed to "cross over" as a result of a prolonged learning process through community activism. Ultimately, the question of an organic connection concerns

empathetic knowledge, cultural affinity and an ability to communicate effectively, all of which can be learned, rather than a simple criterion that posits a correlation between group membership and professional performance.

Closely related to the first is the second question about the contradiction between trust and negotiation on behalf of group interests. Working with and for civil society, planners enter a world where capitalist exchange – work for wages, a fee, a retainer – fails accurately to circumscribe the relation of professional to community. Community planners enter a world where the moral economy based on face-to-face relations, reciprocity and trust counts for a good deal more than one's salary which, in any case, isn't going to be high. Although shared experience serves as an important foundation for trust, it is only the first and not necessarily the most important basis. Trust develops in the course of working together, and it goes along with a demonstrated solidarity of planner with the community with which she has chosen to work.

But a planner's work cannot remain exclusively turned inwards on community; more and more, it takes place on the community's perimeter, where solutions are worked out between corporate interests, agencies of the state, politicians and special advocacy groups. Negotiations are often complex, drawn out, obscure to outsiders, difficult to explain and with a delicate dynamic of power. On the part of all participants, they require some degree of empathy for positions other than one's own and a keen assessment of relative positions of power and of what is realistically attainable. Under these conditions, can planners be trusted to negotiate on behalf of the community or even to be involved with such negotiations?

I suppose that this is ultimately a question of how completely we trust anyone to speak and negotiate on our behalf. We would want the negotiator to be accountable to us, to follow instructions, and we would want to reserve final approval. But these things are easier to accomplish in a bureaucracy whose order is hierarchical than in the more loosely structured neighborhood groups and voluntary organizations, with their strong horizontal networks and the ambiguities and divisions of their moral economy.

If planners in civil society need ultimately to be accepted by communities for which they work, they must also learn to speak the "languages" of others in our multicultural metropolis. I don't mean by this that we must learn to become fluent in Tagalok or Mandarin. Knowledge of these and other languages may be desirable but not essential when your community is, say, of Korean origin. But the need to speak other languages does point to the need for a readiness to be open to cultures and valued practices other than one's own. Whether we like it or not, all of us live in a multicultural world increasingly linked into networks through the so-called information highway that annihilates time. After some delay, Marshall McLuhan's "global village" has finally arrived. Superficially, it may give an impression of global sameness, as we move from one cyberspace location to another, but deep down our collective differences still divide us. The old saw about the United States being a "melting pot" may no longer hold true even into the third generation. The numbers of transnational migrants with multiple passports is growing. The still dominant West European strain in American society is on the verge of becoming minoritarian; it is already so when measured on the scale of the billions of non-Europeans who constitute the population of the Asia-Pacific region. I believe that we have little

choice but to remain open to other ways of being in the world, and that includes all of us, black, white, brown, Asian, whatever. And what I mean by "openness" goes far beyond the politics of color. Because of where I was born and raised, I am particularly receptive to the mixed cultures of Vienna and, more broadly, Central Europe. But my classmates chased me through the streets of my Vienna neighborhood because my name was Jewish, and I have an affinity, though not an identity, with Jewish culture in the diaspora. I then learned, as an immigrant, about my new home, which was the United States. But my profession took me for many years abroad, to Chile and Brazil, whose languages I eventually also learned, and today I translate poetry from Spanish, Portuguese and German. The label Caucasian, then, doesn't describe my identity which, when it is described at all in culturally relevant terms, is a complexly layered and, to me very important, unfinished whole.

What, then, does "remaining open" mean? It means not only to be respectful of difference, though this is certainly a good beginning. It also means a life-long posture of learning about other modes of being-in-the-world, empathy for lifeways that are different from those to which we have grown accustomed. It implies a willingness to engage others in dialogue that assumes the seriousness of what they have to tell us even if we can't completely understand the intended message. It means to get to the unarticulated structures of meaning and concern even when they are obscured by an incomplete mastery of the English language. I am not sure that all, or indeed any, of this can be taught in school. But it is a posture that every post-Euclidean planner should strive to attain. The going may be hard, and your own convictions may have to be suspended, at least temporarily, to enable you to listen to and hear the voices of those with whom you have to interact as planners, even when these voices speak to you from another socio-cultural reality.

TOWARDS A POLITICS OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

If post-Euclidean planning requires passionate commitment, we may well ask to what cause or causes such commitment should be made. What is the actual politics of civil society?

Allow me to confine my discussion to the local scale, extending from neighborhood and district to economic region. These are the spaces where most of our life is spent in its diurnal rhythms. They don't exist in a vacuum, of course, but have political, economic, cultural and personal links to other cities and regions, as well as to the nation. Still, if democracy is to work, it must first of all be strong at the local level, and the politics of civil society is nothing, unless it aims at a more perfect form of democracy. In fact, the furtherance of a democracy that values difference with social justice is our primary concern (Young 1990).

The politics of civil society is emancipatory in a double sense: first, to enlarge the space for the workings of the moral economy based on relations of trust, reciprocity and dialogue, which is its sphere of autonomy; and second, to make its multiple voices heard and respected through active participation in decisions that affect its conditions of life and wellbeing through political empowerment.[6] Autonomy encourages the active engagement and self-management of the myriad of local organizations of which society is constituted; it calls for a countervailing politics of

resistance to the commodification of life, those insistent efforts by corporate capital to turn us all into hedonistic consumers singularly mindful of our individual, ephemeral pleasures.[7] Consumption is an essentially passive occupation as distinct from doing things for yourself in association with others, because production is an inherently cooperative practice, from sports to music, from handicrafts to neighborhood improvements, from learning and education to religious worship.

Political empowerment, on the other hand, implies a turn from the essentially private concerns of civil society to the sphere of political community. Here, the politics is a struggle for inclusion, an opportunity for self-development, and a form of social justice that acknowledges the different priorities and needs of different groups.

Inclusion addresses the shocking fact of the very large and growing numbers of our young people, many of them people of color, who have little hope beyond a working life that remains stalled at the minimum wage without any form of security. This is a population at risk for whom social citizenship is meaningless. And when their social rights as citizens are not acknowledged, we should not be surprised that corresponding duties – for example, those suggested by the Australian inquiry into good citizenship – are also not fulfilled. You cannot expect the moral bond to hold when there is no expectation of reciprocity.

Creating opportunities for self-development forms a politics that aims at the removal of artificial obstacles that limit each person's chances to develop her or his innate abilities to the fullest possible extent. Those limits were addressed by affirmative action programs, but we know that these programs are increasingly being questioned, and we shall need to find alternative ways to achieve the same purpose. In our society, color, poverty and being a woman have been among the primary grounds for discrimination, and the struggles to remove these constraints will continue for a long time to come.

Social justice which acknowledges difference is a formulation identified, in theoretical writings, with the work of Iris Marion Young. Young (1990:190) makes the powerful argument that different groups have different needs, that universal remedies have unequal results, and that a politics of justice must create a heterogeneous public "where participants discuss together the issues before them and come to a decision according to principles of justice. Group representation . . . nurtures such publicity by calling for claimants to justify their demands before others who explicitly stand in different social locations." Young articulates a principle of political representation that is based on the concept of a social group, that is, "a collective of people who have affinity with one another because of a set of practices or way of life; they differentiate themselves from or are differentiated by at least one other group according to these cultural forms" (Young 1990:186).

This is not the place to examine critically Iris Young's vision of formal group representation, or her idealistic assertion that open political discourse necessarily leads to decisions based on "principles of justice."[8] But her basic insight that justice calls for acknowledging difference is an important contribution which clears the way for a theoretical justification of the actual and ongoing politics of identity which has propelled civil society as a force into the political arena.

I see urban planners being passionately engaged in a transformative politics for inclusion, opportunity for self-development and social justice. It is a politics driven

by the energies of a civil society that is beginning to reassert itself in all of its diversity. Its vision is for a social formation where no one is excluded from the rights and duties of full citizenship, where the old principle of social justice – from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs – finds its fullest expression, and where the path to human flourishing is not blocked by arbitrary rules that discriminate against people of color, women and any other group which might be singled for exclusion. Neither reformist nor revolutionary, it is a transformative politics for the long haul. It is to this vision that we can rededicate our professional and personal lives and become passionately committed.