

Civil Society Before Democracy: Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe



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Bringing together historians and political scientists, this unique collaboration compares nineteenth-century civil societies that failed to develop lasting democracies with civil societies that succeeded. Much of the current literature on the connection between civil society and consolidating democracy focuses exclusively on single, contemporary polities that are ever-changing and uncertain. By studying historical cases, the authors are able to demonstrate which civil societies developed in tandem with lasting democracies and which did not. Contrasting these two sets of cases, the book both enlightens readers about individual countries and extracts lessons about the connections between civil society and democracy in contemporary times. Above all, the authors ask the vital but under-researched question, OHow and why does democratic civil society develop?O

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