grossey earthy mixture, the unreflective beliefs of everyday life. Nonetheless there is a tension here. We should return to Kenneth Grahame's Rat who on his first appearance seems to stand for unlimited acquiescence in the everyday world of the river bank. As the story draws towards its conclusion, however, a more troubled Rat emerges. Disturbed first by the departure of the swallows to Southern climes, he then encounters a seafaring rat who regales him with tales of the colourful and vibrant world beyond the river bank. The Rat is mesmerized. His eyes, normally 'clear and dark and brown', turn to 'a streaked and shifting grey'. He is about to set out for the South with stick and satchel in hand, and has to be physically restrained by the Mole, who gradually leads his thoughts back to the everyday world, and finally leaves him writing poetry as a kind of sublimation of his wandering instincts.

The Rat's earlier refusal to contemplate the Wide World, it emerges, was a wilful repression of a part of himself that was dangerous to acknowledge. Something of the same dilemma confronts the philosophical nationalist. He feels the pull of national loyalties, and he senses that without these loyalties we would be cast adrift in a region of great moral uncertainty. Yet he is also alive to the limitations and absurdities of his and other national identities. He recognizes that we owe something to other human beings merely as such, and so he strains towards a more rationally defensible foundation for ethics and politics. There is no solution here but to strive for some kind of equilibrium between the everyday and the philosophical, between common belief and rational belief, between the river bank and the Wide World. But, as the cases both of the Rat and of David Hume in their different ways demonstrate, this is far easier said than done.

The problem of citizenship and pluralism is easy to state but very difficult to solve. Its premise is the cultural fragmentation of modern states. Members of these states are in the process of adopting an ever more disparate set of personal identities, as evidenced by their ethnic affiliations, their religious allegiances, their views of personal morality, their ideas about what is valuable in life, their tastes in art, music and so forth. In all these areas there is less convergence or agreement than there once was. Yet at the same time the individuals and groups having these fragmented identities need to live together politically, and this means finding some common basis or reference point from which their claims on the state can be judged. Citizenship is supposed to provide this reference point. Our personal lives and commitments may be very different, but we are all equally citizens, and it is as citizens that we advance claims in the public realm and assess the claims made by others. Yet if fragmentation is as far-reaching as the premise implies, how is it possible for us to share a common identity as citizens? We may share a common legal status, a formally-defined set of rights and obligations, but how can we agree about what it means to be a citizen, what rights and obligations ought to be included in the legal status, and beyond that how we ought to behave when occupying the role of citizen? The very state of affairs that makes common citizenship so important to us seems at the same time to expose it as a pipe-dream.

This view of citizenship as a unifying force in a divided world has appealed recently to political thinkers both of the centre-right and of the centre-left, although the underlying motivation has been somewhat different in the two cases. The new-found enthusiasm of conservatives for
the idea of citizenship arises from a belated recognition that the individualism associated with the free market is not a sufficient basis on which to hold a society together. If the role of the state is cut back, and each person encouraged to behave as a self-sufficient individual, two problems may arise. One is that people cease to take an interest in the welfare of those around them in the local community, so that those not able to stand on their own feet in the marketplace will have no means of assistance when state support is withdrawn. The other is that individualism may take the form of criminal activity, whether common-or-garden crime of the kind revealed in the steadily rising figures for burglaries, car thefts and so forth, or the more sophisticated activities of insider dealing on the stock market, corporate raiding and the like. What is needed in both cases, conservatives will argue, is a reaffirmation of moral values and social responsibility, and the citizen is portrayed as a person who sticks to the rules of the economic game while at the same time performing acts of public service such as charitable work in his or her local community.

For the centre-left, by contrast, the rediscovery of citizenship has coincided with the gradual dissolution of the working class as a potential majority basis for social-democratic politics. If it is no longer possible to appeal to the interests of a unified working class to defend redistributive economic policies, or the provision of social welfare, then other bases is needed. Citizenship is the obvious candidate: economically our positions may be increasingly divergent, but we are all citizens, and as such we are entitled to provision by the state of a minimum income, health care and so forth. Moreover an appeal to citizenship is needed to weld together the array of social groups that are now looked to in order to secure the election of a social-democratic government — the residual working class, welfare claimants, ethnic minorities, radicalized women, etc. It is not possible to create a political platform simply by appealing to the special interests of each group. There have to be some general principles which can both incorporate and harmonize the demands of these constituencies. The idea of citizenship, it is hoped, will provide just such a set of principles.

This coincidence of interest between right and left has created a climate of enthusiasm for citizenship as a political concept, which in the British case peaked in the late 1980s: this led to the establishment of a cross-party Commission on Citizenship which came up with a set of recommendations for, as its report was entitled, *Encouraging Citizenship* (London, HMSO, 1990). Among these were proposals for citizenship education in schools, and proposals to encourage and co-ordinate volunteer activity on a nation-wide basis. But as a number of commentators at the time pointed out, agreement that citizenship was a Good Thing may have been bought at the cost of ineradicable vagueness about what precisely the idea was supposed to mean. If the brief diagnosis offered above is correct, quite disparate conceptions of citizenship were invoked in the course of party-political debate. So we are left with two major problems: one is to see whether there is indeed a single core idea of citizenship that is being invoked by the various camps, or whether we should instead think in terms of different conceptions of citizenship; the other is to see whether any of the available conceptions can cope with the problem of pluralism — whether they can provide an understanding of citizenship that can accommodate the kind of radical cultural disagreement I gestured towards at the beginning of the chapter.

Before beginning to tackle these problems, it is worth noticing that uncertainty over the meaning of citizenship is not confined to members of the political elite. There is some interesting research by Conover, Crewe and Searing on how members of the public in the US and Great Britain think about their rights, duties and identities as citizens. 

I shall not attempt a full summary of their findings, but the following points are worth noting here. First, although understandings of citizenship in both countries were shaped by the existing legal status of citizens in each, people did not on the whole think of citizenship as defined entirely by their legal rights and obligations — they recognized an ethical element in citizenship as well, an idea of what it should imply for social and political practice. Second, there was substantial disagreement about what citizenship amounted to — some understanding it primarily in terms of a liberal notion of civic rights, others having a more communitarian understanding of citizenship as entailing responsibilities to promote the common good through active participation in the community's life. This suggests that, although citizenship may not be a word on everybody's lips from day to day, it has a certain political resonance — when asked to say what it means (in this case in the context of an open-ended group discussion) people are able to give fairly elaborate accounts. It also suggests, as we might have anticipated, that theoretical disagreement about the meaning of citizenship is reflected in popular understandings of the idea.

### The liberal conception of citizenship

In order to tackle this disagreement, I am going to distinguish three conceptions of citizenship, which I shall label liberal, libertarian and republican. These are not the only possible ways of understanding citizenship, but what unites them for present purposes, as I shall try to show, is that each can claim with some plausibility to accommodate pluralism of the kind described at the beginning of the paper. I begin with the liberal view because it seems to me the dominant understanding,
both in the literature of political theory and in public opinion as revealed by the study cited above. However it runs into difficulties when faced with the challenge of pluralism, and this paradoxically may lead one towards either the libertarian or the republican view. The main lines of the liberal conception can be seen in the classic statement by T.H. Marshall. Citizenship should be understood as a set of rights enjoyed equally by every member of the society in question. In Marshall's analysis these are classified as civil rights, political rights and social rights. When fully developed it embodies an idea of social justice: everyone is to enjoy entitlements which stand apart from and to some extent conflict with the outcomes of a market economy driven by considerations of efficiency. Citizenship carries potentially redistributive implications; citizens are entitled to benefits such as free health care and free schooling for their children which they might not be able to afford out of their market earnings. (Marshall stresses, however, that there is a definite limit to the equalizing tendency of citizenship.) It is not seen as involving any particular pattern of activity. Although citizens enjoy equal political rights, nothing is said about how zealously they are supposed to exercise them. Marshall presupposes that the bundle of rights constituting citizenship is, or at least has become, a matter of common agreement. Writing in the relatively homogeneous Britain of 1950, he is preoccupied with the relationship between citizenship and class inequalities, and can assert confidently that 'Citizenship requires a bond of a different kind, a direct sense of community membership based on loyalty to a civilisation which is a common possession.' This common civilization would set the standard for, in particular, the social rights of citizenship; it would define a minimum level of education, income, housing and so forth that citizens must have as part of their common heritage.

Marshall's view runs into difficulties, however, once the idea of a common civilization is challenged by the emergence of radical cultural pluralism. If there is no longer a shared 'common heritage' or 'way of life' by reference to which citizens' rights can be defined, how are we to arrive at the conception of social justice that defines citizenship? It is from this perspective that I am going to consider the work of John Rawls, whose recent writing in particular can be seen as an attempt to develop a conception of citizenship in response to what he calls 'the fact of pluralism' - the fact that the diversity of comprehensive religious, philosophical and moral doctrines found in modern democratic societies is not a mere historical condition that may soon pass away; it is a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy. In the light of this fact, Rawls aims to delineate a political conception of justice which will specify a point of view from which all citizens can examine before one another whether or not their political institutions are just.... Questions of political justice can be discussed on the same basis by all citizens, whatever their social position, or more particular aims and interests, or their religious, philosophical or moral views.

It may not be clear in what sense Rawls's theory of justice represents a conception of citizenship. In his earlier presentations of the theory, most especially A Theory of Justice, justice is identified as the set of principles that rational individuals could endorse to fix the terms of social cooperation. Although the principles include rights of citizenship, it seems that the parties who make the hypothetical contract are simply human agents advancing their individual conceptions of the good life. In later presentations, however, Rawls signals that the principles of justice are developed for people who are already citizens of a liberal-democratic state: they are supposed to think of themselves as citizens, and Rawls aims to show them what they are more concretely committed to when they adopt this perspective. One sign of this shift of approach is that Rawls in his later writings always uses the language of citizenship: whereas in A Theory of Justice the subjects of his theory are 'persons', 'men' or 'parties', now (as in the above quotation) they are always 'citizens'. More substantially, the theory of justice is no longer regarded as being a complete account of what people can justly demand of one another in their social life, but as a specifically political conception of justice, where this implies not only that its subject matter is a society's political arrangements (as opposed to its social or domestic arrangements) but also that it is addressed to people who have taken up the role of citizen. The arguments that Rawls advances for the theory presuppose that this perspective has already been adopted.

To put this another way, Rawls now sees the members of liberal democracies as having a double identity. In their personal or private capacity they are seen as holding a conception of the good, a view about what a valuable life consists in, which may include, for instance, their personal tastes or their religious beliefs. This conception is pursued in day-to-day life and forms the basis of the many voluntary associations that flourish in a liberal society. Rawls assumes that these conceptions of the good are radically divergent, and there is no prospect of people coming to agree about what is of ultimate value to them. In their capacity as citizens, by contrast, people are capable of reaching agreement on principles of justice which will then govern their political arrangements - the constitution and so forth. Moreover, Rawls claims, citizen identities should take precedence over personal identities in the sense that people will agree to confine the pursuit of their conceptions of the good within the bounds prescribed by the principles of justice. Thus my religion may demand that, say, no commercial activity should take place on the Sabbath. My co-religionists and I will respect this norm ourselves, but we will
not attempt to pass legislation making it mandatory for those who do not share our beliefs. We think of ourselves as citizens first, and as citizens we implement only measures which we can justify to others who do not share our personal conceptions of the good.

Clearly Rawls's task is to explain why it is reasonable for all of us to give citizenship this sort of priority. Before examining his account more closely, I should explain why I regard it as the paradigm of a liberal theory of citizenship developed in response to the challenge of pluralism. What, for Rawls, does it mean to be a citizen? It is first of all to adopt a certain perspective on the world, and then to govern one's behaviour in accordance with principles derived from this perspective. The perspective is to see oneself as one among many free and equal individuals and to acknowledge that the political society to which these individuals belong must be governed by principles that all can potentially accept. In other words, I acknowledge that each other person (a) has his or her own conception of the good life and (b) is as capable as I am of reasoning about principles of justice, and I then ask what principles we could all accede to. Having arrived at the principles - if Rawls is right, the famous two principles of justice - I then comply with them in my day-to-day life, respecting others' rights to free speech, for example, or according them equal opportunities in the assignment of jobs.

It may strike us straight away that this is a particularly cerebral view of citizenship. A citizen is just someone who subscribes to a certain set of principles. Rawls appears to assume that citizens are always citizens of some national society - this is what determines membership - but this assumption is kept well hidden in the background, presumably for fear that if it were to be brought out into the open, it might cause trouble for the distinction between justice and conceptions of the good. Equally a citizen is not conceived as being an active participant in politics: although political rights are included as part of the first principle of justice, so by definition a citizen is someone who has the right to participate, all that is actually required of him or her is acknowledgement of the principles of justice. So long as one can adopt the citizen perspective in thought, one may live an entirely private existence. Rawls makes this clear when he argues against a strong version of civic humanism which holds that we are political beings 'whose essential nature is most fully realized in a democratic society in which there is widespread and vigorous participation in political life', and defends the division between politically active citizens and the rest as good for society 'in the same way as it is generally beneficial that people develop their different and complementary talents and skills, and engage in mutually advantageous co-operation'.

Participation is required only insofar as it is necessary to protect people's basic rights and liberties.

Liberal citizenship and pluralism

How successfully can this liberal conception of citizenship deal with pluralism? Let us begin by observing that the citizen identity to which Rawls wishes to attach priority is an unencumbered identity in the following sense: it is part of that identity that people should regard their private aims and attachments as contingent and open to revision. This is made clear when Rawls states that citizenship embodies a conception of the person as having the moral power not only to pursue but also to revise their ideas of the good life. 'As free persons, citizens claim the right to view their persons as independent from and as not identified with any particular conception of the good, or scheme of private ends.' But it also conceives that people's private identities may be encumbered ones. 'They may regard it as simply unthinkable to view themselves apart from certain religious, philosophical, and moral convictions, or from certain enduring attachments and loyalties.' In other words people who, say, belong to a certain church or are members of an ethnic community may not see these memberships and the value-commitments that go with them as even potentially open to revision - they are definitive, for these people, of their personal identity. The problem is to see why people whose identities are encumbered in this way should give priority to an unencumbered citizen identity which, as we saw, entails restricting the pursuit of their private goals within the bounds set by the principles of justice. Why shouldn't the principles of justice themselves be made responsive to the demands of an (encumbered) personal identity?

We can look at the problem in the following way. In a liberal society there are likely to be many people whose personal identities are themselves unencumbered: they regard themselves as freely choosing a plan of life according to their own tastes and preferences without being inhibited by their ascriptive characteristics or other unremovable attachments. For these people adopting the citizenship perspective costs nothing, because the view of the person they are required to take up is more or less the one they already hold (as Rawls would put it, their 'comprehensive' doctrine of the good life already supports the political conception of justice). But there will also be people whose personal identities are encumbered, who see themselves as tied to a particular ethnic group, for instance, and here to adopt the citizen perspective is already to concede a good deal, because it means bracketing off all political claims that cannot be expressed using the language of liberal citizenship. You cannot, for instance, advance arguments that rely on the truth of a certain religious belief, even though your personal identity depends precisely on that belief's being true.
Has Rawls any response to this problem? He invokes the ideal of a society which is based on free public reason, where we live under a set of institutions that each of us can justify to the rest, using forms of argument that the others will find acceptable. But to make this the basis of his argument is either to make an empirical claim about what is overwhelmingly important to people — in which case it is surely dubious — or else it is simply to restate the liberal position. Once you adopt the liberal conception of citizenship, as Rawls understands it, then you are committed to a certain way of justifying social and political institutions, but our problem was to see why people whose personal identities did not support the liberal view spontaneously could be induced to give it priority. Face with someone belonging, say, to a fundamentalist church who argues that religious moral standards should be inscribed in law (that homosexuality should be criminalized, for instance), the liberal may say: as a citizen first and foremost you must see that the law must be based on principles that every citizen can accept. But the reply is equally obvious: why should I see myself as a citizen first and foremost? My first duty is to God, and my personal activities must fit in with that primary commitment.

The failure of Rawls's argument here appears to leave a liberal with only two alternatives. The first is to retreat to a pragmatic defence of liberal institutions. Given the deep-seated nature of the cultural pluralism that formed our starting point, there is never going to be universal or even perhaps majority consensus on any comprehensive doctrine of the good life. In order to avoid open conflict between groups, the only option is to adopt liberal institutions which, while limning at least groups politically, at least gives them the security of knowing that their personal identities are protected from invasion by other groups. Since we cannot get the whole loaf, each of us must settle for half, which in this case means a set of rights and liberties that gives each group at least some chance to pursue its own conception of the good life. Rawls calls this a modus vivendi. It is plainly a less satisfactory defence of liberal citizenship than the one that he aims for, appealing as it does to political prudence. Moreover, as Will Kymlicka has argued, it is not clear that this defence will necessarily lead to liberal institutions: it might instead point towards a segmented society in which each group is given the authority to regulate the affairs of its own members within a general framework of law. Kymlicka cites as an example the millenium under the Ottoman empire, which was pluralist and stable, but illiberal in so far as the various communities that co-existed under the system were allowed to impose severe restrictions on the freedom of their members, in matters of religious belief especially.

The second alternative is to go on the offensive, admit that liberalism is a distinct and morally contestable way of life, but declare that it is valuable and worth defending politically. This strategy abandons any pretense of neutrality. Everyone is to be treated as a liberal citizen, and political claims and demands which do not conform to the liberal model are simply ruled out as inadmissible. Moreover it is legitimate to attempt by non-coercive means to channel people's identities in a liberal direction — so for instance the liberal may insist on everyone's participating in a liberal form of education which lays emphasis on choice and autonomy. In this way, it is hoped, pluralism of the sort which initially posed problems for the liberal view of citizenship can be converted into a benign form of pluralism in which everyone agrees to treat their conception of the good life as a merely private matter, to be pursued by non-political means.

Militant liberalism of this type has the virtue of honesty, but its solution to the problem of pluralism amounts in effect to declaring war on those groups who are not prepared to accommodate themselves to the liberal understanding of citizenship, since it no longer tries to give reasons for liberal institutions which these groups might accept. Members of such groups will inevitably feel alienated from the political realm; their citizenship remains simply a formal status. Moreover liberals underestimate the difficulty of 'liberalizing' non-liberal identities, they cannot see how much has to be given up if people are going to see their conceptions of the good life as freely chosen and revisable. Communities whose identities are encumbered will fiercely resist liberalization and, as the American example shows, this resistance can be successful over several generations even in the context of a society permeated with liberal values.

The libertarian conception of citizenship

For these reasons the liberal conception of citizenship does not constitute a fully adequate response to pluralism, and we should explore the alternative conceptions to see whether either of them provides a better solution. What I shall call the libertarian conception has not to my knowledge been articulated in the definitive way that Marshall and Rawls have articulated the liberal conception, but its outlines will I think turn out to be reasonably familiar to anyone who has followed recent political debates. I believe, that is, that something like the libertarian conception of citizenship lies behind various proposals emanating from the New Right which aim to alter the relationship between the individual and the state so that it becomes explicitly contractual. This will become clearer as I proceed.

The easiest way to introduce the libertarian conception is to ask why, from this perspective, citizenship is needed at all. People seek to satisfy
their preferences and values through private activity, market exchange and voluntary association with like-minded individuals. The need for a common framework arises only because there are generally desired goods that cannot be obtained in these ways. Citizenship is not valued for its own sake; we are citizens only because we demand goods that require public provision. The citizen, to put it briefly, is a rational consumer of public goods. As far as possible his activities as a citizen should be modelled on his behaviour in the economic market, taken to be a paradigm of rationality. In its most extreme version, this means that the state itself should be regarded as a giant enterprise and the citizens as its (voluntary) customers. This view is expressed in Robert Nozick’s *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, where the state is seen as originating in the competition of protective associations to provide their customers with rights-enforcement services. More commonly, however, it is recognized that the state must have a monopoly in the enforcement of basic property rights, and the citizens are seen as parties to a universal contract which gives it that authority. The picture is quite different, however, with all the other goods and services that the state may provide. Here consumer sovereignty can be implemented by two means: contract, so that the citizen who feels that he is not getting the service he is entitled to can take legal action to oblige the agency in question to provide it, and choice, so that the citizen who feels that he is not getting the service he is entitled to can turn to some alternative provider, thereby creating a quasi-market in the service in question. And this allows the libertarian to respond to pluralism. If citizens differ in their conceptions of value, through contract and choice each can gain access to his or her preferred bundle of public goods. Provided the state responds efficiently to the demands of its customers, the citizens, there is no need to reach agreement *in principle* about what the rights of citizens, beyond the minimum set, ought to be.

But this formulation begs a number of important questions. One has to do with what the demands of citizens actually are. Clearly if the state provides everyone with an amenity such as a free health service or a road system, it is possible to deduce from the use made of the amenity that it is of *some* value to citizens. But we cannot say on this basis alone how much value is being provided, either to one particular person or to the collectivity of citizens; we cannot tell, for example, whether they would like more of the budget to be spent on health care or more on roads. Again, introducing choice into the system may provide evidence about particular features of the service being provided that are liked or disliked, but it fails to resolve the issue of overall value. If female patients when given a choice of doctors overwhelmingly prefer to be treated by women, this gives state officials good reason to encourage more women to train in medicine, but it tells us nothing about the general level at which medical services ought to be provided.

In the case of goods and services which are not public in the technical sense – goods that are excludable like schooling or health care, or goods like roads whose users can with technical ingenuity be identified – one solution is to charge their consumers a fee which covers at least a part of the cost of providing them. As soon as someone’s use of a good or service can be quantified, a market or quasi-market can be introduced to provide it, with successful suppliers being rewarded with fee income. Either the state can hand over provision of the goods to private firms, or public agencies can be set up in competition with one another with their budgets being made dependent on their success in attracting customers.

But let us note the limitations of this solution. If the consumers of public goods are to be made into genuine customers, this implies that access to such goods will depend upon market-determined incomes. In other words, the redistributive character of citizenship is entirely lost: no longer do free citizen entitlements serve partially to offset the inequalities of the market, as they do under the Marshallian conception. Now a hard-bitten libertarian may well argue that this is no criticism, since the kind of rights which would lead to redistribution under Marshall’s scheme – social rights, rights to housing, education, health care and so forth – have no standing on libertarian principles. Even someone who stuck in this way to a strict Nozickian definition of rights might however be moved by the observation that people generally have an altruistic desire that their fellow citizens should enjoy living conditions that meet certain minimum standards; they should not have to live rough on the streets, for instance. If that desire is to be respected, access to public goods cannot be made to depend entirely on market income.

The other equally obvious limitation of the citizen-as-customer approach is that it cannot apply to cases where citizens want goods that really are non-excludable. Many cultural goods are of this character. People want their society’s way of life to have a certain character: they want it to be non-violent, or to respect religious beliefs, or to validate collective identities. As we saw when considering the liberal conception of citizenship, to say that such values can be pursued in private or through voluntary association is not an adequate response; it will not satisfy someone who thinks that pornography is harmful to women to tell them that the decision to use pornography is a private choice, nor can an animal rights activist be assuaged by the observation that everyone can choose to be a vegetarian. The demand in this case is for a good which is necessarily public: the society must be pornography-free or respectful of animals’ rights. I am not here endorsing such demands, which may eventually turn out to be impossible to satisfy, but simply underlining
the point that there are certain goods which necessarily cannot be provided if we install the libertarian conception of citizenship.

Faced with these problems libertarians may look to a second way of ensuring that citizens have access to the public goods they want, an alternative to the fee-paying approach. This is to suggest that the society should encourage the formation of enclaves within which people are supplied with a package of goods and services and pay a local tax to cover the cost. The idea here is that people should exercise choice by moving to the enclaves whose package best answers to their preferences. Thus someone who wants to live in a community where moral or religious standards are enforced can choose to do so; someone who prefers moral laissez-faire can live elsewhere. One area might have high taxes and a high level of environmental protection and amenity; another might reverse these features; and so on. Citizens here would exercise consumer choice by moving from enclave to enclave, and they could thereby express preferences even for non-excludable public goods insofar as their provision could be limited more or less to particular geographic areas.

We can readily recognize tendencies in contemporary liberal societies which point to something like this conception of citizenship. But it faces some obvious difficulties. There is first of all a simple question of feasibility. Most people do not have the option of upping sticks and moving to a new neighbourhood because they find the public goods package on offer there more attractive. They are tied by job and by family connections more or less to one particular locality. Furthermore, mobility chances are generally much greater for more affluent citizens. One illustration of this is the much-remarked flight of the middle classes from the inner cities to suburbs and leafy villages. This certainly reveals the value people attach to the essentially public good of living in a safe and attractive physical environment; but the price of obtaining this can only be paid by a minority of the population.

More serious than these practical issues is the question whether a society in which citizenship meant nothing more than the right to choose a local enclave whose package of goods and services suited you best could possibly be stable. Citizens cannot in the end confine their demands to the local package. For one thing there are certain to be spillover effects. The vegetarians in enclave A, where meat-eating is banned, cannot be indifferent to the fact that when the wind is in the West, the fumes from the abattoir in enclave B blow over their territory. Other concerns extend by definition to all the members of a particular society (or even beyond this), such as the concern that they should not read books which blaspheme against your religion. Moreover, even if we think that some public goods problems can be solved by allowing citizens to express their preferences by physical mobility, this must depend upon a common framework of entitlements covering such things as rights to education and social security. Without such a framework people who cannot supply themselves with such basic goods by market exchange will converge on enclaves with relatively generous schemes of provision, creating a classic problem of adverse selection. (This problem was illustrated by the Elizabethan Poor Laws, where in order to prevent parishes offering more adequate levels of poor relief from being overwhelmed by vagrants, it was necessary to pass laws confining paupers to the parish of their birth.)

The strength of the libertarian position is that it takes pluralism seriously. It assumes that people have radically different conceptions of the good life, and argues that the way to cope with this is to depoliticize citizenship, to convert the public realm into an ersatz version of the market. People should exercise consumer choice either through individual contract with public agencies, or through voting with their feet, moving to the place which gives them the best kind of collective life. It founders on the fact that citizenship at its core concerns common rights and goods enjoyed in common. If we try to privatize or localize the provision of goods that are not in the core, in other words to pare down the rights of citizenship to the minimum, the effect may be to weaken people's sense of citizen identity, and to erode the core itself. If I can avoid the problems of inner-city crime by moving to the suburbs, why continue to pay for the extra levels of policing necessary to protect the rights of those left behind? The libertarian view in the form I have presented it is finally unstable: either it embarks on the kind of utopian fantasy that you find in the last chapter of Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, where nothing remains to citizenship but the right to contract into the community of your choice, or else it pulls back to something like the center-right position identified at the beginning of the chapter, which tries to compensate for the paring down of rights of citizenship by morally exhorting people to be 'good citizens' through volunteer activity and the like.

The republican conception of citizenship

The republican conception of citizenship conceives the citizen as someone who plays an active role in shaping the future direction of his or her society through political debate and decision-making. It takes the liberal conception of citizenship as a set of rights, and adds to it the idea that a citizen must be someone who thinks and behaves in a certain way. A citizen identifies with the political community to which he or she belongs, and is committed to promoting its common good through active participation in its political life. Now it might seem that this conception is simply obsolete in the face of contemporary pluralism. Whereas both
liberal and libertarian views can be seen as originating in the fact of disagreement about questions of ultimate value - liberalism springs, as has often been argued, from the ideal of religious toleration which emerged in the aftermath of the European wars of religion, and libertarianism simply takes this ideal to its furthest point - republicanism conjures up the image of a small homogeneous society with common traditions, a shared civil religion and so forth - fourth-century Athens or fifteenth-century Florence as mirrored through Rousseau's Social Contract. Insofar as the republican conception appeals to something akin to the notion of a general will - the idea that citizens through debate and discussion can come to an agreement about what ought to be done politically - it appears to be defeated by pluralism of the kind I have been considering. Pluralism excludes genuinely voluntary agreement of this kind; the appearance of agreement can be obtained only through force or manipulation whereby some groups are induced to limit their claims within bounds established by the stronger groups in the polity. This is certainly the charge laid by critics such as J.M. Young against the republican view. Young argues that, like liberals, republicans are committed to an ideal of impartiality which acts to the disadvantage of those groups in society she identifies as oppressed, including women and ethnic minorities. She claims that the ideal of the civic public excludes women and other groups defined as different, because its rational and universal status derives only from its opposition to affectivity, particularity and the body. Republican theorists insisted on the unity of the civic public; insofar as he is a citizen every man leaves behind his particularity and difference, to adopt a universal standpoint identical for all citizens, the standpoint of the common good or general will. In practice republican politicians enforced homogeneity by excluding from citizenship all those defined as different and associated with the body, desire or need influences that might veer citizens away from the standpoint of pure reason.21

Young concedes that contemporary republicans (she cites Benjamin Barber and Jürgen Habermas) no longer wish formally to exclude such groups from the public sphere. She claims, nevertheless, that participation in that sphere is governed by an idea of reason that will exclude claims based on the particular needs and desires of women and other groups.

The issue we must address, therefore, is what conception of reason or rationality lies behind the republican idea of a general will. Republicans claim that a citizen body can, through open discussion, reach a substantial degree of consensus on issues of common concern. To justify this claim is it necessary to appeal to a strong ideal of impartiality such that a citizen, upon assuming that role, sets aside all his or her particular aims and preferences and reasons from a completely universal standpoint, as Young alleges?22

Whatever the views of particular republicans, such as Rousseau, on this question, the answer seems to be negative. All that is necessary in order to embark on political dialogue is a willingness to find reasons that can persuade those who initially disagree with us, and one cannot say a priori how abstract those reasons will have to be. Suppose a group comes into a political arena bearing a proposal that springs from the particular circumstances and needs of that group - say women demanding a change in the terms and conditions of maternity leave. The first requirement of deliberation is simply that the reasons behind the proposal must be elaborated, which might simply mean explaining why the existing rules were burdensome to women and the proposed ones less so. Beyond that it would be necessary to connect the reasons given to more general reasons that others were likely to accept, but this requirement again might not be a very arduous one. Suppose, for instance, that the maximum period of maternity leave had already been agreed, and the proposal was to introduce greater flexibility into its timing. Supporters could argue that the new proposal would be likely to place no greater financial burden on employers or the state than the old - appealing by implication to the premise that the existing arrangement was fair, and that the new one would not change this materially.

Of course few political arguments are as simple as this. In most cases engaging in political dialogue involves both moderating the claim that you might initially wish to make and shifting somewhat the ground on which you make it.23 Consider the case of a pacifist engaging in a debate on nuclear weapons. Her 'maximalist' position would presumably be the complete abandonment of all weapons of destruction, and she would argue for this on the grounds that no one might legitimately engage in acts of violence towards another person. Seeing, however, that this position commanded little support, she might limit her claim in the present context to nuclear disarmament, and argue for this on the grounds, for instance, of the indiscriminate nature of the damage inflicted by nuclear weapons - a reason which might appeal to many. Young does not deny that initial claims may have to be moderated in this way in political contexts. She distinguishes between demands stemming from self-interest and those stemming from justice and says that 'the test of whether a claim upon the public is just or merely an expression of self-interest is best made when those making it must confront the opinion of others who have explicitly different, though not necessarily conflicting, experiences, priorities and needs'.24 Indeed it would be absurd not to make such concession. Since no group can hope to win in political argument all of the time, unless it is willing to moderate its demands in
search of agreement, and to appeal to reasons which are generally accepted in the political community, it cannot expect other groups to reciprocate. In this way a weaker kind of impartiality emerges spontaneously from the search for agreement itself.24

Is there any reason to think that impartiality of this kind disadvantages groups whose claims depend upon particularity, i.e. groups whose claims arise from and refer to features that are specific to them, such as women's claims to maternity leave? Very broadly we can separate two kinds of claim that may be advanced in political debate. On the one hand there are claims that appeal at base to an interest common to all the citizens of a particular country, such as an interest in security from attack. On the other hand there are claims that reflect the interest of a particular group and whose satisfaction would typically impose some costs on other groups. In the second case but not the first, in order to reach agreement an appeal has to be made to a norm of justice, such as a principle of equal treatment. However, this does not necessarily mean that claims in the second category are more difficult to advance than claims in the first. The norm itself may be relatively uncontroversial: the problem may be to convince hearers that the group in question really does have a case under the norm, which may be a matter of drawing attention to facts that have hitherto gone unnoticed. In both cases the degree of difficulty will depend on how extreme (relative to others in your political community) your views are: as I suggested earlier, if you are a pacifist you may have to shift your ground quite radically in order to persuade your fellow-citizens even where there is no disagreement about the ultimate end – a conflict-free world. Equally if you are a radical feminist who believes that every act of heterosexual intercourse is equivalent to rape, you won't be able to rely on that premise in a debate about criminalizing rape within marriage – but again that reflects the extreme nature of your views, not the fact that the issue concerns the body.

It is fair to say that republican citizenship cannot accommodate everything that passes under the name of 'the politics of identity'. If the public sphere is regarded as essentially a means whereby various group identities are given legitimacy through public recognition, then at certain points this will inevitably collide with the ideal of decision-making through open debate sketched above.25 Group identities are recognized in the sense that all groups are given access to decision-making forums, and there are no barriers to the claims and demands they may make. If presence and the making of demands are sufficient for recognition, the republican view can provide it.26 But there can be no guarantee that any particular demand will win acceptance, no matter how strongly the group making it feels that the demand is integral to its identity. Everything will depend on whether the demand can be linked to principles that are generally accepted among the citizen body, such as principles of equal treatment. So, for example, in a context in which the state already supports Christian and Jewish schools, Muslims arguing for similar support for Islamic schools may validly claim that the status quo unfairly privileges some religious identities at the expense of others, and demeans Muslims. But on the other hand, if existing policy were to be based on the principle that all formal education must be secular in character, the claim that Islamic schools were essential to Muslim identity would have to be assessed on its own merits, and might well be rejected in a democratic forum. For a group to insist that only the full recognition of its demands can respect its identity is to reject the very essence of republican citizenship.

The republican conception of citizenship, then, places no limits on what sort of demand may be put forward in the political forum. It does not discriminate between demands stemming from personal conviction – say demands for animal rights – and demands stemming from group identity – say demands for religious schooling. In all cases the success of any particular demand will depend upon how far it can be expressed in terms that are close to, or distant from, the general political ethos of the community. It requires of citizens a willingness to give reasons for what they are claiming, but not that they should divest themselves of everything that is particular to them before setting foot in the arenas of politics.

A second claim made by Young is that the republican ideal relies on a public/private distinction which again serves to discriminate against those whose concerns have traditionally been seen as private matters. What are we to make of this?

There seem to be two places at which a public/private distinction emerges within the republican conception. First of all there is certainly a distinction between a person acting in his or her private capacity and as a citizen, as evidenced by the different arguments that may be used in the two contexts. A person trying to persuade his fellow church-members to engage in some charitable work will typically reason in different ways from the same person trying in a public forum to persuade his fellow citizens to increase welfare expenditures. I have argued already that there is no a priori way of drawing the boundary here; nevertheless there will typically be arguments that can legitimately be deployed in the first context but not in the second. Secondly, a public/private distinction will emerge from public deliberation, in the sense that there will be matters that it is agreed should be confined to the private sphere. This may be done for reasons of principle – for instance, it may be felt that there are areas of each citizen's private life in which it is illegitimate for the state to intervene – or simply on the grounds that substantive political agreement on some issue is impossible to achieve, so the fairest course is to let
citizens pursue their own preferences by voluntary means (thus if we cannot agree about which kinds of state support for the arts are justifiable, we may decide to leave arts funding entirely to the market). No doubt wherever the line between public and private is drawn there will be some groups who would like it drawn in a different place, but there is no reason to think that the groups identified by Young as oppressed will automatically be the losers.

Might it be argued that the republican ideal of citizenship rests upon a conception of the human good which may conflict with the private conceptions held by individual citizens? There is not much doubt that the republican tradition has upheld the active and virtuous citizen as a model, valuing the life of public participation above the various forms of private life that citizens might engage in. Once again, however, we need to distinguish what (some) classical republicans have said from what the republican view of citizenship actually requires. What it requires is something weaker: that it should be part of each person's good to be engaged at some level in political debate, so that the laws and policies of the state do not appear to him or her simply as alien impositions but as the outcome of a reasonable agreement to which he or she has been party. This is consistent either with regarding political activity as intrinsically fulfilling or with regarding it as a necessary precondition for other activities which do have intrinsic value, just as gourmets may regard eating as intrinsically worthwhile, whereas the rest of us may regard it merely as providing the sustenance which enables one to engage in other pursuits. This difference will be reflected in the structure of republican politics: some people may be engage in it on a full-time basis, while others may listen to the arguments being presented but only become actively involved from time to time, when major issues are being decided. One need not, then, regard political activity as the summum bonum in order to adopt the republican view, but can hold the more modest position that although politics is indeed a necessary part of the good life, different people can be expected to give it a different weight according to their own personal values.

Where does this leave people whose conceptions of the good categorically exclude political participation, for instance religious believers who hold that trafficking with the secular world compromises their faith? Clearly from a republican perspective such people cannot be regarded as full citizens, even though there will usually be sufficient grounds to extend to them the formal rights of citizenship (one good reason is that we cannot predict how the thinking of such groups may develop, or what their individual members may choose to do). Does the republican view alienate some groups from citizenship in much the same way as the liberal view? The relevant difference is this. On the liberal view to be a citizen just is to accept a certain set of principles, and to regulate your private conduct within the boundaries set by those principles. This means that the liberal has nothing to say to someone whose own conception of the good is non-liberal except that he must set that conception aside for political purposes. Groups who wish to influence the parameters of politics, but attempt to do so by appeal to conceptions of the good that are not already tailored to liberal requirements, are personae non gratae in this perspective. Thus fundamentalists whose political arguments appeal to the truth of certain religious doctrines are excluded a priori from citizenship on the liberal conception. The republican view makes no such prior demand; the only demand it makes is that each citizen should try to persuade the others of the rightness of her cause, and not, say, resort to violence to impose it. There is no set limit on the kind of argument that can be advanced. Each person will in practice be forced to shift to a more impartial standpoint, but this comes about precisely because of the need to reach agreement. So here the only groups who are excluded from citizenship are those groups who voluntarily exclude themselves because their beliefs prohibit them from taking part in affairs of state (anarchists, for instance, or religious groups such as the ultra-orthodox Jews who live in Jerusalem but do not recognize the state of Israel as legitimate). And although from a republican perspective this may be regrettable (and republicans may want to take steps to discourage the formation of such groups), it is difficult to see that the excluded groups themselves have any grounds for complaint. Unlike groups who wish to be politically active but are deterred from participating under the terms and conditions of liberal citizenship, these anti-political groups cannot regard their exclusion as diminishing their dignity or self-esteem.

Although liberal and republican conceptions of citizenship diverge at the level of principle, in a society which exhibits a high degree of pluralism, they are likely to converge substantially in practice. For the reasons given earlier, what will emerge from public discussion, in a plural society, will be a liberal constitution, and broadly liberal policies on what we might call the enforcement of specific conceptions of the good. There are, moreover, reasons internal to the republican conception of politics for having a formal constitution that places some limits on what decision-making majorities can do. I am thinking here of the idea that a constitution represents a desirable form of self-binding which is likely to enhance the quality of democratic decision-making in the long run. Thus it is not true that republican citizenship gives minorities no assurance that their rights will be protected in the face of majority will. The contrast between republicanism and liberalism is not that the liberal recognizes the value of entrenched rights whereas the republican does not, but that the liberal regards these rights as having a pre-political justification while the
republican grounds them in public discussion. One institutional corollary is that liberals will seek to make the judiciary the supreme arbiters of constitutional rights - in effect the interpretation of liberal citizenship is entrusted to them - while the republican gives this role to the citizen body as a whole. Thus the constitution will have a different status in a republican regime. It will constrain everyday politics, but will itself be open to amendment if the rights and liberties it protects are judged, following public discussion in which all have opportunities to participate, to stand in need of revision. There will be constitutional politics and not merely, as the liberal would want, constitutional interpretation by judges.

Contrary to what one might suppose, then, the republican view has resources to deal with the question of pluralism. I do not wish to claim that citizenship in this mode can cope with radical disagreement about the very existence of the state of the kind which gives rise to separatist movements. Faced with such disagreement, it is very unlikely that the conflicting groups will be sufficiently motivated to search for political agreement on the basis of reasons that all can accept. For this reason, as I have argued elsewhere, a common sense of nationality is an essential background to politics of this kind. The pluralism which forms the starting point of this chapter is not of the sort which puts the continued existence of the state in question: it is pluralism in personal identities and conceptions of value of the kind that is endemic in liberal societies even where problems of nationality are not at stake.

Conclusion

The liberal view of citizenship set out by Marshall and Rawls is presently the dominant view, but it is also recognized to be under strain. We have seen that it embodies a conception of justice whose underpinnings may be unacceptable to some groups, and to these groups no reasons (other than pragmatic ones) can be given for accommodating themselves to liberalism. In the face of disagreement, the libertarian alternative is to fragment citizenship so that, over and above the minimal core, each person is to choose his or her own package of 'citizen rights'. This we saw to be a recipe for social disintegration, albeit one to which liberal societies seem increasingly drawn in practice. The republican solution involves, paradoxically, the search for a higher level of agreement between individuals and social groups, but it aims to achieve this in a more pragmatic way, through the give and take of politics. It does not require participants to subscribe to any fixed principles other than those implicit in political dialogue itself - a willingness to argue and to listen to reasons given by others, abstention from violence and coercion, and so forth. If a plural