

Constructing Community: Notes on a Slippery Concept

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If there is a ‘work in progress’ in contemporary philosophy, it is undoubtedly in work on community – on the common, communism, communitarianism, being-in common, being-with, being-together (Nancy 2016: 7)

The concept of community has been at the centre of much discussion about its definition. The persistent questions ‘what *is* community?’, or ‘how might *a* community differ from *the* community?’, have prompted many different answers and have assumed that there are obvious explanations and clear paradigms out there. The concept of community has been of particular importance to the sociological field, where it originated. However, many other writings, especially in philosophy and political theory have sought to answer this question. This chapter has two aims: one, to enquire into the discussion of the nature and possibility of community; and two, to outline expressly political interpretations of those concepts of community that have been at the heart of political action and solidarity.

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The two main bodies of writings discussed come from the philosophical and sociological fields. The first part of this chapter looks at writings from the philosophical field, in particular at the debate between Jean-Luc Nancy and Maurice Blanchot and their respective concepts of ‘inoperative’ and ‘disavowed’ and ‘unavowable’ community. This is followed by a consideration of Giorgio Agamben’s idea of ‘the coming community’ espoused in his eponymous book. The chapter concludes by suggesting that his reading of community could be adopted to understand the ‘impossibility’ of mediated community. The second discussion looks at how key sociological texts that followed Marx’s writings, namely work by Tönnies, Weber and Durkheim, set the distinction between community and society (*Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*) and whether their interpretations are still useful models for the understanding of community today.

The choice of writings on community for this discussion is dictated by a perceived link between them on the utopian potential of community and their undoubted connection, sometimes explicit and sometimes less so, with Karl Marx’s critique of capitalism. Many others have been interlocutors in the debate about community, but this chapter can only make a passing reference to them, without implying their lesser relevance in the sociological and philosophical discussion of the concept of community.¹ In recent years, the term has been adopted to accompany many different social and cultural phenomena, and it has gained a pride of place in the politics of identity and, more recently, in network politics. In this process it has often been hollowed out of its utopian potential and separated from its twin etymology of communalism and communism.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF COMMUNITY? BLANCHOT, NANCY AND AGAMBEN

The starting point for Blanchot’s and Nancy’s reflections on community posits a different question: *Why community?* The terms of this question were initially set by the French surrealist philosopher, Georges Bataille. While his own answers to this question were often aphoristically obscure, the way he posed it has proved productive for later commentators on community. For Bataille’s method of labyrinthine thought requires an open-ended, open-minded commitment to challenging any taken-for-granted, naturalistic approaches to community. Instead, it proposes a kind of ‘disorientation’, a way of looking anew—by looking askew—at the whole multifarious notion of community. In sum, it asks how is the

notion used to define people's values, beliefs and aspirations? How does it relate to people's experience of simply 'being' in the world?

All these questions have been taken up by Maurice Blanchot, a French philosopher and literary theorist, and close friend of Bataille, in his short book *The Unavowable Community* (1988), which is composed of two parts: 'The Negative Community' and 'The Community of Lovers'. The answer Blanchot gives is deceptively simple, because of "the principle of incompleteness" and, continuing to draw on Bataille's work, he argues about the "insufficiency at the root of each being" and the need for the other and plurality in short communion. These "existential exigencies", he argues, are also community/communist exigencies that cannot be ignored:

Communism, by saying that equality is its foundation and that there can be no community until the needs of all men are *equally* fulfilled (this is in itself but a minimal requirement), presupposes not a perfect society but the principle of a transparent humanity essentially produced by itself alone, an "immanent" humanity (says Jean-Luc Nancy). (Blanchot 1988: 2)

Blanchot, explicitly refers to the "flaw in language", which the words community and communism contain, that refers to the preoccupation of how we get to communism (and hence community) when the "ability to understand community seems to have been lost" (ibid.: 1). In an opaque form of phrasing, resembling Bataille's mode of thought, he argues at the same time that this is not about the necessity for completion or recognition, but about a necessity for contestation that we could read as the possibility of community: "A being does not want to be recognized, it wants to be contested; in order to exist it goes towards the other" (ibid.: 6). Blanchot uses the word 'summon' to address both singularity and community, as ultimately one and the same:

The existence of every being thus summons the other or a plurality of others...It therefore summons a community: a finite community, for it in turn has its principle in the *finitude* of the beings which form it and which would not tolerate that it (the community) forget to carry the *finitude* constituting those beings to a higher degree of tension. (ibid.: 6, italics in the original).

In the second part of the book, on "The Community of Lovers", Blanchot's model is decisively that which is generated in a voluntary association, such as lovers of two or more, again inspired by Bataille's writings on eroticism, and that this also distinguishes it from traditional communities,

which are normally involuntary and imposed. This interpretation of community also resonates with earlier writings by Hannah Arendt and her conception of community as friendship (Arendt 1998 [1958]; Nixon 2015).

Like Blanchot, the text by Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* (1991), continues the discussion by exploring the idea of community in relation to its past history, its mythical element and what we are to do with it today. In the first lines he states that, “the gravest and most painful testimony of the modern world, the one that possibly involves all other testimonies to which this epoch must answer...is the testimony of the dissolution, the dislocation, or the conflagration of community” (Nancy 1991: 1).

The ‘loss’ of community is traced in the Christian tradition right up to the modern idea of the “desired or pined for” community, which he sees in many thinkers from Rousseau to Marx (ibid.: 9). In particular he considers Jean Jacques Rousseau one of the first sources of thinking about community, in the sense of something to return to, after modern society (and the loss of the divine) has wrought havoc on human experience: “Until this day history has been thought on the basis of a lost community—one to be regained or reconstituted” (ibid.: 9).

The idea of the loss of community, or at least of an original community, is a theme that accompanies much of contemporary philosophical writings, and in some philosophical quarters, especially in communitarian thought, it has been reintroduced as a necessity for returning to small and traditional communities of shared culture and values. Nancy demolishes the nostalgic element of community in the chapter “Myth Interrupted” by tracing its mythic element embedded in the stories we tell ourselves: “We know this scene well. More than one storyteller has told it to us, having gathered us together in learned fraternities intent on knowing what our origins were” (ibid.: 44).

On another level, although research generated from a sociological examination of community is not often explicitly mentioned in philosophical writings, we find that Nancy takes up the *Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft*’s dichotomy and sees it as unrelated, he comments that the first has not been replaced by the second, as it is a mere “projection” on our part of something that has never taken place, he feels that there was no “communitarian minimum” in traditional social ties: “*Society* was not built on the ruins of *community*. It emerged from the disappearance or the conservation of something—tribes or empires—perhaps just as unrelated to what we call ‘community’ as what we call ‘society’” (ibid.: 11, italics in the original).

For both Nancy and Blanchot community transcends the historical, it is about the here and now and it carries no normative ideal. In fact, even experientially it can only ever be impossible and/or absent. In a recent attempt to tackle the idea of community, and in response to Blanchot's "avowed community" of thirty years earlier, he offers a renewed reading of the political in our time and its ongoing insecurity when attached to community. The discussion in this latest effort to tackle the idea of the community, departs entirely from the received notion that it is a phase or a final stage in a historical continuum or a concrete form of belonging, political or otherwise (Nancy 2016).

Agamben, similarly to Nancy and Blanchot, in his *The Coming Community* (1993), takes the idea of community further along the idea of possibility or impossibility and along the non-ontological continuum of 'being' or what he calls "the coming being is whatever being" (*qualunque* in Italian) in the very first line of his text. This is written in short 'thought-bursts' with insights that allude to hundreds of years of human communication and spans from early philosophical thought, to the society of the spectacle, to the commodification of society, which he describes as "the alienation of language itself, of the very linguistic and communicative nature of humans" (Agamben 1993: 79).

So, what is the community to come and where, if anywhere, do we need to look for it? Not in common property or identity or belonging, but in the first instance in 'being-in-language' and only subsequently in singular community. It is the idea of the singularity of community that Agamben shares with Nancy and to a lesser extent with Blanchot. Like them, he contemplates that there is no return to nostalgic or mythical ideas of community but he is more obviously concerned with the idea of communion in language.

Elliott argues that Agamben shares with Nancy the tendency "to reduce the political theory of Marx to a merely residual sense of potential future change" (Elliott 2009: 901) leaving it open to the criticism of indeterminacy and relinquishing the pursuit of social justice. Yet, Agamben's text reads as Marx's does on the fate of the petty bourgeoisie, what he calls "planetary petty bourgeoisie" and the "form in which humanity is moving towards its own destruction" (Agamben 1993: 64).

At the end of the pages "Without Classes", he envisions a prospect for change: "Selecting in the new planetary humanity those characteristics that allow for its survival, removing the thin diaphragm that separates bad mediated advertising from the perfect exteriority that communicates

only itself—this is the political task of our generation” (ibid.: 64). Agamben’s musings on the coming community are actually invaluable for understanding how the media, and what we improperly call media and/or online communities, expropriates us of our sociality:

The extreme form of this expropriation of the Common is the spectacle, that is, the politics we live in. But this also means that in the spectacle our own linguistic nature comes back inverted. This is why (precisely because what is being expropriated is the very possibility of a common good) the violence of the spectacle is so destructive; but for the same reason the spectacle retains something like a positive possibility that can be used against it. (ibid.: 79)

The positive possibility mentioned here is somewhat prophetic but perhaps it is about openness, about language and human beings’ ability to overcome the violent being-in-the world that comes from borders and camps. Where do we go from here in relation to community? We may want to return to Nancy’s more recent work previously mentioned, *The Disavowed Community*, in which he is prospecting the need to save for ourselves, if not the idea of community, at least the idea of the common (Nancy 2016), as the only way to ensure that it is not about belonging as that would be a betrayal of the “community of all human beings” (ten Bos 2005: 27).

MARX AND COMMUNITY

Marx’s idea of community is scattered across many of his writings, and is a recurrent theme in what Carol Gould termed Marx’s social ontology or the ontology of individuals-in-relations; in other words, the idea of individuality in Marx is not just based on the liberal construct of individualism but is conjoined with the idea of community, “individuals cannot be understood apart from their relations” (Gould 1980: 3). In her fourth thesis on Marx’s social ontology, Gould claims that “for Marx a just community is required for the full development of free individuality. Further, the value of free individuality and the value of community are consistent with each other” (ibid.: xiv). In addition these individuals-in-relations are themselves formed and embedded in the different stages of historical development, of which capitalism is one, albeit a fundamental one, in the transition to communism.

Marx wrote about three historical stages of development (especially in the *Grundrisse*). Stage one, the primitive community, is not only “self-enclosed” and “stable” (Megill 1970: 385), but also formed by dependent individuals characterised as relations of domination, as master–slave relations and as belonging to a greater whole; usually (there are exceptions) based on an economic order tied to “the soil and tools”: “The aim of production in these pre-capitalist forms is the reproduction of the individual in his or her specific relation to the community” (Gould 1980: 10–12).

In fact, it is the community itself, both in terms of place and relational entity that determines their unfolding as driven by the force of tradition and which makes it appear as natural and capable of internal unity. This unity can only be forced apart by external relations, that is through exchange with other communities and subsequently through the rise of the worker in industrial capitalism, whose only property is his/her labour, which brings about the dissolution of the traditional community. Marx’s stage two replaces dependency with freedom of exchange but at a price, human beings’ communal nature is denied.

Again Gould argues that “the objective dependence that emerges in capitalism takes three forms: the objectivity of money/exchange; of capital; of the machine” (ibid.: 16). These are also three moments that move individuals away from their personal relations (as we have seen in pre-capitalist forms) and into entities of value in the marketplace. Specifically with the first, the symbolic form of money changes the concrete form of use value into an abstract and universal medium. Labour power then becomes capital power (the domination of labour by capital) in two distinct ways: one where the commodity of labour power produces surplus value and hence increases (only) the value of capital; and two, the worker’s labour is objectified as a result, which brings about the confrontation with ‘alien power’ and individuals’ exploitation.

Gould aligned the three stages (pre-capitalist formations, capitalism and communal society) with various forms of social relations in turn, community, individual and external sociality, and communal individuality (ibid.: 5). She also posited that “the third moment of objective dependence” (ibid.: 19), that is, the dependence on the machinery, is central to workers’ recognition of the alienation and objectification and is a necessary passage to the third social stage, which for Marx will be realised in a community of the future: “in the third stage Marx anticipates the reestablishment of a community of social individual, but now as concretely free” (ibid.: 22).

The better known *Thesis on Feuerbach* goes some way in giving answers to the abstract-concrete dialectic on the third stage. Thesis six in particular states that “the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations”. Thesis eight declares that “Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which lead theory astray into mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice” (Marx 1998: 64–65).

Others have characterised Marx’s philosophy of community in similar ways by looking at the ontological status of community. For example, Megill also argued that the third stage is “the community as a way of being. Man as a communal animal who can only achieve his complete existence through community” (Megill 1970: 384). At the same time, a nexus is introduced between democracy and community, where the latter is understood as “a democratic form of association which replaces the state” (ibid.: 384). He also goes on to say that Marx’s democratic community “would be universal, historical, classless and scientific” (ibid.: 393). Marx’s writings were certainly behind the sociological research on community that followed, whether explicitly acknowledged or not, which I am going to discuss next.

TÖNNIES, DURKHEIM AND WEBER ON COMMUNITY VS. SOCIETY

Community turned into a central concept with the rise of a new field of study of sociology and as the nineteenth century came to a close. This section discusses the pioneering work of classical sociologists who investigated the origins and nature of community; and in their separate but linked trajectories theorised on the enormous changes brought about by industrialisation and modernity and the impact these had on the fabric of social relations.

The earliest sociological study that specifically concerned itself with the social and cultural dimension of community was by German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies. When Tönnies first wrote about community in 1887 it was very much in the context of a new horizon emerging in social relations which went beyond the immediate proximity, whether familial, geographical or in class terms. The title of the book translated into English more than a half a century later as *Community and Society* cannot do justice to the nuance of the German title *Gemeinschaft und*

Gesellschaft, which has been retained in many of the following discussions of community and society.

Tönnies' argument posited various antinomies between the two types, organic and mechanical, rural and urban, natural and rational (will). In particular *Gemeinschaft* is described as composed of many different categories, which are all interrelated and linked by human will, whether it is the "*Gemeinschaft* by blood, of Place, of Mind, Kinship, Neighborhood, Friendship". According to Tönnies the first three imply the latter three: "It is... possible to deal with (1) kinship, (2) neighborhood, and (3) friendship as definite and meaningful derivations of those original categories" (Tönnies 1963: 42). These foundational categories of community have been revisited, as well as contested, at many points of crisis in twentieth-century history.

In the discussion that followed from his definitions, illustrations of concrete examples are given. Peasant life is recognisable in the detailed description of the home, the fields, the village and even in relation to the town, what are titled in the English translation as the "complementary poles" of town and country and the ensuing "exchange mechanism" outside monetary value which it instigated between farmer, artisan and trader. In the *Gemeinschaft* model, "a brotherly spirit of give and take will remain alive in the relationship of town and country" (ibid.: 56).

This was not so dissimilar from Marx's own formulations and definitions of community as a primitive form of association but, as we will see below, for Marx this is only the first stage of human development and what is crucial is that this early historical condition is followed by two further stages in which the primitive community undergoes a transformation as a result of the development of the capitalist economic system to become a true community once it reaches its final stages of development, that is to say the community as a way of life. For Tönnies there is no dialectical process, no concrete human essence, once community is abandoned and the utopian ideal is precisely encapsulated in *Gemeinschaft* only.

In an examination of *Gesellschaft*, the opposite is true, there is no such thing as brotherly spirit and the human will is isolated and even renders any individual action socially ineffective and against a spirit of unity: a separation has taken place; common values no longer exist, although they can be brought back by an act of "fiction on the part of the individuals, which means that they have to invent a common personality and

[his] will, to whom this common value has to bear reference” (Tönnies 1963: 65). The description of *Gesellschaft* moves away from Marx’s idea of a communal human nature, which remains recognisable even when subjected to the transformation from human-centred ontology to a value-centred one with its objective quality.

Even at the time of Tönnies’ writings there was considerable criticism of his distinction, in particular from Durkheim, who turned Tönnies’ argument on its head. Durkheim was a contemporary of Tönnies (and Weber) and, like them, was a central figure in the development of the field of sociology, in fact more consciously so than either of them, who in their work never openly talked about sociological method, although it was often implied. Durkheim also took up the challenge of providing an explanation for the changes that were taking place with industrialisation and modernity and, for our purpose here, his particular interpretation of the relationship between community and society.

In his book *The Division of Labor*, he argued, amongst other things, that modern society was developing forms of “civic” responsibility that were far more “organic” than the “collective consciousness” of traditional small rural communities in pre-modern society, as argued by Tönnies. He arrived at this conclusion by undertaking a similar analysis to Karl Marx’s, at least in the sense that he was also concerned with the relations of the individual to society, as well as with the transition of pre-modern to modern society. The fundamental difference, however, was that he did this not explicitly in reference to the workings of capitalism but rather adopting a “theory of social evolution”, in which he argued that the increase in population, towns and transport increased contacts and communication, and therefore caused a competition for resources; the division of labour is the social instrument by which individuals need not fight for their survival. According to Royce, “the striking originality of Durkheim’s contribution” is that “he shifts the focus from the economic significance of the division of labor to its moral significance” (Royce 2015: 76).

Durkheim’s introduction and interpretation of the concepts of mechanical versus organic solidarity is an exact opposite to Tönnies’. For Durkheim, in pre-modern society the common system of beliefs and values produces a mechanical solidarity, in other words the individual is subordinate to the system to which he or she belongs, a kind of “mechanical” community (in a fixed social order). On the other hand in modern society, which at the time of Durkheim’s writing was still in the

early stages, the idea of “organic” solidarity is precisely generated by the unique configuration of the division of labour.

The postulate of organic solidarity remains, however, abstract and somewhat marginal (and perhaps even in contradiction) to his overall analysis of modernity’s condition evident in anomie, egoism and injustice; in particular he links the idea of egoism to his study of suicide, a first of its kind, and points towards the evaporation of the collective ties that sustained individuals in the past. He specifically mentions that the absence of communal ideals and the moral void this engenders reduces society to a “pile of sand”. Egoism is but one of the developments of modernity, anomie is another, again with its implicit question of disrupted moral order, but this time linked to economic development. And, following on from that, is injustice, which is again described as a pathological phenomenon dictated by an abnormal “forced” division of labour, class conflict and unequal conditions of exchange and opportunity.

Durkheim is not as concerned as Marx to dissect the capitalist economic system in order to unravel its contradictions, but is rather more concerned with the necessity of instituting moral and legal regulations in the process of industrialisation and market exchange. Paradoxically, in spite of the perceived similarity with Marx’s formulations about class conflict, alienation and inequality, Durkheim does not consider it an intrinsic problem of capitalism, or of the process of industrialisation, or of the rise of a market economy: “the problem is not the economic system per se, but a *disorganized* modern economic system” (Royce 2015: 142).

In terms of our theme of community it is important to note Durkheim’s introduction of relations in terms of occupational and professional bodies, organisations which stimulate the collective spirit of people in the same work but which are separate from the state and private interests, or rather, that they stand at the crossroads of state and individual to safeguard self-interested developments. Traditional institutions (family, church, the state) are no longer adequate collective formations for an industrial society and Durkheim sees in occupational groups, which are traceable in history—for example in the form of medieval guilds—as solutions to injustice.

There is a sense, however, that by introducing this new categorisation of community, the community of the modern industrial age, the mechanical/organic solidarity dichotomy is undermined by these

organisations, which “reincorporates mechanical elements in his notion of organic solidarity” (Thijssen 2012: 467). Nonetheless, Durkheim’s occupational associations are undoubtedly behind the idea that tradition is no longer a central factor in the formation of community and communal identity. Royce goes as far as to say that he “defends modernity against the backward-looking proponents of traditionalism” (Royce 2015: 69).

Durkheim’s modern community with its moral purpose has been behind much of communitarian thought that has looked at the normative ideal encapsulated in Durkheim’s moral force and his emphasis on the survival of the spirit of community within, and in spite of, the divisive modern economic system. As already stated, it is the connection of the latter to a moral framework that also distinguishes his analysis fundamentally from that of Karl Marx.

Weber, like Tönnies, adopted the community versus society dichotomy in his description of social relationships. However, Weber’s distinction between communal and associative is more akin to Durkheim’s formulations; he also introduced the idea that community need not necessarily be exclusively defined in terms of locality (the rural) and/or close-knit relationships (neighbourhood/friendship). In an unfinished essay on the theory of community in one of his volumes on *Economy and Society* he offered an exhaustive discussion of many different types of community, ranging from the private to the public sphere but all tied to capitalist economic development, thus moving away from the idea of community as involuntary and bringing about an analysis of the rational basis of a community intimately tied to the rise of capitalism. Capitalism undoubtedly transformed relationships previously rooted in tradition and affective closeness, but at the same time it provided the basis for a different type of community, which he termed as associative, based on “rational agreement by mutual consent” and associational ties that are just as likely to generate exclusion and conflict as inclusion and solidarity.

In a passage about community formation, Neuwirth states that

In order to achieve this objective [limit the number of contenders] one segment of the competitors may seize upon an easily ascertainable and differentiating characteristic of any potential and actual contenders – such as local or social descent, racial or ethnic origins, lack of property or educational qualifications – and use it as a pretext for excluding them from competition. (Neuwirth 1969: 149)

Community formation read in this light takes on a very different meaning; an increase in solidarity is not about sharing outside the delimited community but about monopolisation, resource limitation and exclusion. Community formation as a result is followed by community closure at both economic and political levels: “Successful monopolization of economic and/or political advantages is accompanied by claims of corresponding social esteem” (ibid.: 150).

Within these categories of formation and closure of community Weber introduces a further concept of ‘status communities’, which is discussed in the better-known text ‘Class, Status, Party’, and “it constitutes one of Weber’s three dimensions of stratification” (ibid.: 151). The dominance of status communities determines in turn the “negatively privileged status groups” that Neuwirth applies in her study of the ‘Dark Ghetto’ and ethnic minority community formation in the United States. Weber’s analysis of closed and open relationships is very useful for a critique of online mediated communities that are closed communities in spite of claims to the contrary.² In particular, the way he looked at the process in the light of economic and political analysis brought about the realisation that members of community could be separated by interests other than those explicitly attached to their regular interactions. Similar studies applied to online communities would unearth similar results as to the nature of contemporary media communities.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has hoped to offer some insights into the complex thinking that has accompanied the concept of community, in its very many binary readings of possible/impossible, past/future, singular/relational. Community remains a much contested concept although paradoxically it has been adopted in many different settings and situations, as if the term which may more accurately describe our times (i.e. society) was exhausted.

Identifying traits and types of communities has become “a major undertaking”, certainly in ethnographic media research and the word has even been “tagged” to the Internet generational numbers (Brabazon 2012). The communication and media sphere has often turned to the notion of community in search of a perceived collective imaginary or unity, especially since Marshal McLuhan launched his idea of a global village whose model was based on community; discourses and representations of community have not sought necessarily to look beyond the surface when looking at,

for example, network and online communities, television communities, cinematic, and so on; or what are more generically referred to as digital communities. That is to say, the positivist idea of community has come to pass.

The question ‘*why* community?’, rather than ‘*what is* community?’, has a bearing on present-day discourses, along with an exploration that involves bringing in the related spatio-temporal considerations of ‘*where* community?’ and ‘*when* community?’. This is necessary, because so much of the thinking around community has always contained the utopian elements of past golden ages, which have been lost, or of looking forward to future fully ‘communitarian’ societies still to be realised. All this may well be about “melancholic” cravings for community (ten Bos 2005: 22).

It is worth noting, by way of a conclusion, that not all writings on digital culture have adopted the concept of community ‘no questions asked’. For example, Gere (2012) has suggested that a digital community is “a community without community” as its very essence is about “separation, gap and distance”, which makes the idea of coupling digital with community problematic, at least in the sense of beings-in-relation. The questions of possibility/impossibility of such relations and collective identity in the digital and non-digital world would have to be at least asked, if not given a final answer. Definitional issues are central to the study of media communities and of their discourses and representations.

Finally, what I hope has surfaced in this chapter, is the ongoing preoccupation with the task of defining community, the sense that it is unlikely to reach a final destination any time soon or even an agreed working construct. Problematising it is a necessity because its adoption in many different walks of life has often signified its departure from radical politics and the kind of ‘coming together’ we want to see in the future. As Nancy’s citation at the beginning of this chapter states, this semantic family is still very much a work in progress.

NOTES

1. For a comprehensive account of all the different writings about community (see Delanty 2003).
2. “A social relationship is called ‘open’ to outsiders if and insofar as participation in it is not denied to anyone who wishes and is able to participate. A relationship is ‘closed’ if and insofar as the participation is subjected to limiting conditions. Both communal and associative relationships can be characterized as open or closed” (Neuwirth 1969: 161).

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Representing Communities

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