USING CLASSICAL THEORISTS TO RECONCEPTUALIZE COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

Jonathan H. Turner and Norman A. Dolch

ABSTRACT

In this paper the ideas of three classic theorists of community—Tönnies, Durkheim, and Mead—are examined with an eye toward what they can contribute to contemporary analyses of complex social systems. Contained within their theories, we argue, are the theoretical leads for understanding the dynamics of community formation in a world system were virtually all things and symbols are commodified, where space-time have been forever changed by virtue of information and transportation technologies, and where differentiation has altered the material basis for societal integration. These early theorists all recognized that community is not a place, but a relationship to systems of symbols; and in particular, Durkheim and Mead have provided theoretical models for how individuals in highly differentiated social systems can create and sustain viable community formations.

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A concern with "community" among both intellectuals and the general public appears to arise with dramatic transformations in the social order. Indeed, sociology was born as a self-conscious discipline during the initial phase of modernization. For the transformations of the agrarian-based social order to one increasingly organized around machine-based industrial production, market-driven distribution, urbanization of settlements, rationalization of bureaucratic structures, and other features of modernity raised concerns among intellectuals about how to construct a new basis of social solidarity in the face of the differentiation engendered by modernity. The notion of "community," or the form of connections and attachments of individuals to each other and cultural symbols, was often seen as the central problem of order. How were individuals to remain attached to the collectivity in the face of the centrifugal forces of modernity? Was the state, legal system, and invisible hand of markets sufficient to sustain a community in which individuals feel some sense of identification with, attachment to, and consensus over the symbols of the larger collective?

Many of those posing these kinds of questions held highly romanticized views about rural communities, where consensus, harmony, stability, custom, and other presumably associative processes were seen as promoting a benign solidarity. Such portrayals ignored the conflict, resentments, inequalities, jealousies, and oppression of smaller-scale, agrarian communities; and they ignored the obvious fact that, as soon as possibilities for escape emerged, people fled to the supposedly pathological urban-industrial system that was emerging. Yet, romanticism aside, the early theorists in the sociological canon posed a legitimate question: if the dynamics of agrarian-based communities ceased being the core integrating force of social organization, what force or forces were to hold populations together as a coherent and viable whole?

The answers to this question have, in essence, constituted the substance of sociological theory in the twentieth century. Sociological theory has thus been about the effects and consequences of modernity on the nature of community and, by implication, on social solidarity. Similarly, whether we want to portray the dramatic transformations of the present era as sufficiently fundamental to constitute a "postmodernity" or as merely the inevitable extensions of modernity, a renewed concern with "community" can be found within the sociological literature

(see Critchfield 1995; Selznick 1992). For as long as hyper-differentiation, hyper-rationalization, and commodification of all things and all symbols, as well as globalization of markets, mobility patterns, and information networks continue to accelerate, such transformations raise questions about the nature of community and its capacity to operate as an integrating force in society.

The sociology of community has thus been reinvigorated beyond narrower concerns with spatial patterns, particularly urbanization, and back to its original connotation as a solidarity-generating force of human organization. In assessing new research and theory on community, it is often wise to pause and examine how the early figures of the sociological canon conceptualized community and its place in the transformations wrought by modernity. In this paper, we will examine three important figures in the early canon—Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim, and George Herbert Mead—to see if their ideas still have relevance for examining the nature of community at the close of the twentieth century. Without reviewing the vast new literature on community, which is a task beyond the modest goals of this paper, an examination of early theories will underscore, we believe, the foresight and continued relevance of classical theory to contemporary concerns.

THREE CLASSIC STATEMENTS ON COMMUNITY

Tönnies on Community

Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, published in 1887, served as the cornerstone for most of Tönnies's later writings. In this classic work, his focus was on the ideological forces or beliefs influencing the social order, and he saw such systems of symbols as emanating from the "essential will" of persons (Cahnman 1995, p. 87). Translated "community" (Sorokin 1928, p. 491), gemeinschaft is characterized as a social order exhibiting a consensus of wills and a legal system comprised of well understood, enforceable norms rather than written law. These norms are unambiguous and powerful influences on the actions of persons and are manifest in their minds, hearts, conscience, and religious commitments. Gemeinschaft is thus not an entity but rather an orientation toward social relations intrinsically and inseparably intertwined with family life, land ownership, rural habitat, and village or town life (Loomis 1957, pp. 223-231).

The opposite of a gemeinschaft orientation to social relations is gesellschaft, translated as "society" (Sorokin 1928, p. 491), where the social order exists not from common understanding and time-honored customs but rather from the negotiation of rational wills. Persons enter into agreements or contracts for specific types of interaction with one another, and these contracts or agreements become part of a legal system of written law enforced by the power of the state. Family and land ownership are increasingly replaced by trade and commerce as the focus of social relationships among persons. Individuals become isolated from others and, indeed, view them as potential adversaries. This shift away from a stable collective orientation is highlighted by the role of public opinion that forces the state to respond to the transitory demands of unstable collective opinions rather than to stable definitions of right or wrong and to established traditions and customs. Gesellschaft is intrinsically and inseparably intertwined with the development of cities, capitalism, and conflicts among opposing classes (see Loomis 1957, pp. 223-231); and as these forces come to dominate, a gemeinschaft orientation toward social relationships decreases and gesellschaft orientation increases.

Tönnies is a bit vague on the issue of ultimate causation, which is population growth and increased competition for resources. These are accelerated by the driving forces of capitalism and markets pushing individuals toward self-interested calculation, toward individualistic as opposed to collective calculations of costs and benefits, and toward views of others as instruments or means to ends rather as ends in themselves. Though Spencer (1898) and Marx (1967), with opposed evaluative conclusions, posed much the same image, Tönnies typology of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft has framed much of the subsequent debate about the transformation of community.

Durkheim on Community

Durkheim (1947) enveloped the concerns of Tönnies in a more encompassing discussion of the evolutionary transition between societies based on mechanical and organic solidarity (Cahnman 1995). From the French philosophe tradition, Durkheim focused on the nature of the "collective conscience." He viewed populations as differentiating as alternative bases of organic solidarity replaced those

Table 1. A Comparison of Tönnies and Durkheim

Features	*Tönnies on*		*Durkheim on*	
	Gemeinschaft	*Gesellschaft*	*Mechanical Solidarity*	*Organic Solidarity*
Size/characteristics of population	Small, homogeneous	Large, differentiated	Small, homogeneous	Large, differentiated
Basic organizing structures	Kinship, village and town, religion	City, state, law market-oriented economic actors	Kinship, village, religion, punitive law	City, state, restitutive law, market-oriented economic actors
Basic mode of relations among actors	Harmonious, dominated by shared commitments to common symbols	Competitive, dominated by exchange and contract	Harmonious, dominated by shared commitments to common symbols	Competitive, but mutual interdependence through exchange, contracts
Basic unifying force among actors	Common symbols, infused with religious content	State, markets, contracts, and public opinion	Shared symbols of high ritual intensity and determinateness, infused with religious content	Shared abstract symbols, systems of more specific symbols among actors in shared activities, contracts and law, and mutual interdependence
Fundamental problem of order	None	Lack of shared symbols, isolation of actors, hostility and conflict, rampant public opinion shifts, arbitrary state actions	None	Isolation of actors (egoism), lack of regulatory symbols (anomie), poor coordination of relations among actors
Ultimate cause of societal change	Population growth, competition over scarce resources, and differentiation of economy		Population growth and concentration, competition over scarce resources, and differentiation of economy	

typical of mechanical solidarity. Durkheim's views are not radically different from those of Tönnies, but they are dramatically more sophisticated—which is, of course, why we still read Durkheim and not Tönnies. Table 1 compares Durkheim's and Tönnies's typologies, emphasizing their convergence for the sake of arguments to be developed later.

What distinguishes Durkheim's analysis from Tönnies is, we believe, not so much the dichotomous nature of each portrayal which, as Table 1 perhaps overemphasizes, are much the same, but rather the manner in which Durkheim develops an ecological model about the forces involved in the transition from mechanical to organic solidarity. As is well-known, Durkheim (1947, pp. 266-267) analogized to Darwinian selection along the following lines: (1) population growth (through in-migration and rising birth rates), (2) increased material density or spatial concentration (caused by population growth, especially when constrained by natural or sociocultural barriers), and (3) increased moral density or contact among actors (caused by not only increased density but also by advances in communications and transportation technologies which, in turn, reduce the "space" among actors) all increase competition and "struggle" which, then, cause differentiation as actors seek new resource niches. And as such differentiation occurs, the collective conscience generalizes so as to accommodate the diverse experiences and interests of actors (raising the potential specter of "anomie"). Differentiated individuals become less attached to societal-level groupings (presenting possibilities for "egoism"), and relations are increasingly built on competitive exchange and mutual interdependence (potentially causing problems of coordination). These pathologies are, however, countered by integrative forces (Turner 1990, 1984): (1) development of less general collective consciences or systems of symbols among those in subsectors and subgroupings of economic activity (e.g., "occupational groups"), (2) emergence of normative and legal agreements for regulating exchanges within and between sectors, (3) expanded networks of mutual interdependence made possible by market exchanges as well as communication and transportation technologies, and (4) the continued ritual "effervescence" (i.e., emotional arousal, development of shared symbols) created by those who are co-present and interact within and between subgroups.

This last integrative force is, of course, emphasized in *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1954), where Durkheim sought to discover the micro-foundations of the macro-level social order described in *The Division of Labor in Society* (1947), but it is a critical force that, when combined with others emphasized by Durkheim, provides an interesting theory of community formation—as will be explored shortly.

George Herbert Mead

Mead is not normally considered to have made a contribution to conceptualizing the dynamics of community, but Mead borrowed ideas from one of the German founders of psychology, Wilhelm Wundt. Wundt (1907, 1916) employed the term "mental communities" to emphasize the idea that individuals identify with diverse collectivities and use the standards of these collectivities to guide conduct. Wundt emphasized that these mental communities can vary in their cultural expectations and their scope, but he saw the process of gesturing, speech articulation, and demeanor as influenced by the configuration of mental communities with which actors identify.

Mead (1934) transformed this idea, which is obviously very close to Durkheim's (1947) conceptualization of the collective consciousness, into the concept of the "generalized other" by which he meant a "community of attitudes" that individuals use as a frame of reference for self-evaluation and for guiding their mental deliberations as well as their overt behavior. This conception was, of course, to become the springboard for reference group theory, but we want to stay closer to Mead's original discussion because it bears on the question of how complex societies remain integrated at the level of community formation.

The implications of Mead's discussion of the generalized other for societal-level processes are often overlooked because it initially appears in the portrayal of socialization and the stages of the self (Mead 1934, pp. 152-164) and because its macro-level implications are only portrayed near the end of *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934, pp. 317-336) where Mead turns to the structural properties of societies which he visualized in terms of their "scope" and "complexity." His macrostructural views are presented in a discussion of "obstacles and promises of the ideal society" which, though highly philosophical, converge with Durkheim's portrayal of integration in differentiated

societies. For Mead, differentiation inevitably generates a wide variety of generalized others, or "communities of attitudes," and social order is only possible when: (1) individuals role-take with relevant communities and use these as a frame of reference for minded deliberations, self-evaluation, and overt behavior; (2) communities of attitudes exist at diverse levels of generality, or scope, with some being highly local and tied to particular interaction contexts and with other communities being more general and successively expanding in scope to include an entire population; (3) individuals can avoid role-taking with different, or even incompatible, communities of attitudes, in their face-to-face transactions; and (4) communities of attitudes reveal some degree of hierarchical integration with the abstract premises of those with great scope being successively specified in the ever more narrow generalized others of local subgroups. Under these conditions, Mead argued, large-scale, differentiated societies can remain integrated because the conventional symbols so fundamental to the gesturing, the role-taking and mutual awareness of likely courses of action by others so essential to interpersonal cooperation, the minded deliberations so critical to selecting appropriate lines of conduct in a situation, and the moral standards so central to self-evaluations can all be guided by the appropriate "community"—from the one with the greatest societal-level scope down to the most localized.

THE CONCEPTUAL LEGACY OF THESE CLASSICAL STATEMENTS

What, then, do these classic statements offer in the conceptualization of community? One clear implication is that "community" is less a geographical unit than a symbolic one (Calhoun 1991). Though the two can correspond, these theorists all emphasized that, at the core, community is a system of symbols that is used by individuals for common reference, for guiding conduct, and for self-evaluations.

A second implication following from the view of community as a system of symbols is that the boundaries of community can become highly fluid, depending on other forces such as the rates of mobility among population members, the nature of transportation technologies, the level and distribution of communication (information) technologies, the rigidity of structural partitions that

differentiate a population (by occupation, region, class, ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.), the particularism of the symbols associated with structural partitions, and the degree of compatibility or incompatibility among systems of community symbols.

A third implication is that, while none of these classic theorists could envision the formation of global-level communities via information networks, they all recognized that the scale and scope of community would vary, some being general and cutting across large sections of a population and others being more localized and particularistic. Indeed, their conceptualizations emphasized that as a symbolic force community is only limited by the capacity to extend interaction and by humans' cognitive capacity to plug themselves mentally and emotionally into the symbolic universe of diverse communities.

A further implication of these theorists' analyses is that the critical force that separates community from place and location is structural differentiation which, in turn, is caused by a combination of population growth, competition for resources under conditions of material density, changing technologies, new systems of production, market mechanisms of distribution, and new forms of consolidating power. Differentiation operates in two contradictory ways on community, however. On the one hand, it partitions activities and the symbols used to regulate activities, thereby proliferating the number of symbolic communities, whereas on the other hand, differentiation generates selection pressures to somehow create new kinds of symbolic communities that cut across all, or significant portions, of the more localized communities created by differentiation. Just how these meta-communities are created can vary considerably: states can seek to consolidate their power by cultivating or imposing a civic culture, complexities and instabilities in market transactions can force those involved to institutionalize contracts and other binding agreements, conflicts can force parties to seek compromises and common symbolic ground, or alternatively conquest and other forms of domination can lead to the imposition of new communities on the old. What all theorists recognized, or at least worried about, was the problem of articulation among differentiated symbolic communities.

A sixth implication that follows from these theorists' concerns about the effects of differentiation on community is how to reconstruct a *system* of communities in ways that avoid the

pathologies of the disassociation of community from place and local structures like kinship (e.g., problems such as anomie, egoism, isolation, lack of coordination, inequality and conflict, and so on). Indeed, the central problem of order for these theorists revolved around creating viable symbolic communities under conditions of rampant differentiation, high rates of mobility, increasing formalization, commodification, and self-interested exchange. Phrased in this way, the concerns of these early classical theorists of modernity and more recent theorists of postmodernity are not very different. The major difference is the optimism that at least Durkheim and Mead possessed about the capacity to reconstruct new systems of general and local communities, which stands in contrast to the cynicism of postmodern theories about the possibilities for creating viable communities in a social universe that is decentering, globalizing, and fracturing. Thus, the old and the new concerns about community center on the question of whether or not new configurations of community can be reconstructed in ways that integrate symbolically large, even world-level, populations.

A final implication of these theories, especially those of Durkheim and Mead, is that macro-level integration of communities is very much related to micro-level interpersonal processes revolving around significant gestures, reflective deliberation, role-taking, ritual, and self-evaluation. Thus, for all of the failed attempts in recent work on linking micro- and macro-theory, early theorists' efforts to understand the micro-foundations of community may provide some clues about macro-level integration of society.

With these considerations in mind, our attention now turns to suggesting how current theory and research can make best use of the leads provided by these early theorists. In following up on these implications we will move well beyond their works, but stay, nonetheless, within the tradition that they continue to inspire.

USING THE EARLY CANON

Let us begin with a restatement of the problem of order: under conditions of hyper-differentiation, hyper-rationality, escalated individualism and self-interested behavior, globalization of production and markets, and commodification of material and life-world processes through the ever-widening extension of market

forces, how is social order to be sustained? Macro-level theories will stress such forces as the consolidation and centralization of power, the institutionalization of an autonomous legal system to regulate both market as well as non-market transactions and behaviors, the construction of extensive webs of interdependencies created by exchange and emerging mutual dependencies among exchange partners, and the creation of new generalized systems of symbols. Micro-level theories will stress the production of local solidarities, alignments, and symbols from a list of interpersonal processes (e.g., ritual, role-taking, ethnomethods, emotional alignment, framing, etc.). All of these forces are, no doubt, crucial for sustaining a viable social order, but they all converge, we feel, on the issue of how to produce a system of symbolic communities that, on the one hand, can provide sufficient symbolic resources for local interactions to prove viable, if not rewarding, while on the other hand, that can cut across differentiated sectors of macrostructure and still be relevant to localized encounters. This is, in essence, the issue posed and partially answered by these classical theories. The goal should now be one of suggesting how to improve upon their insight.

Macro-Level Leads From the Classical Theorists

Starting from the macro-level, it is clear that many of the very forces involved in differentiating and disassociating community from place (if not time) also operate to create the broader meta-communities so necessary for connecting entire populations, and large segments thereof, to each other. For as all these theorists recognized, community operates as a force by attaching individuals to common symbols, thereby giving them shared orientations. Small geographically-based, village communities organized around customs, kinship, and religion did this with much greater intensity because of the micro-level forces to be examined shortly. But large-scale processes also operate as a force to forge shared symbolic communities, even under the conditions listed in stating the problem of order. To consolidate power, for example, polity must develop and propagate a civic and political culture to legitimate itself effectively; and in so doing, obviously with varying degrees of success, the use of power creates one kind of common community in which large proportions of the population can participate.

As another example, to extend markets, even at the cost of commodification and invasion of older symbolic communities (Marx 1967; Habermas 1976), creates a common community for a wider range of important human behaviors, from selling one's labor through buying all important life-sustaining commodities to purchasing the symbols and signs of another community (e.g., badges, clothing, music, art, literature, and even demeanor cues). This power of markets to reach communities and commodify their symbols is often decried by critics, but it is one of the most important integrative forces in large-scale populations for breaking down local communities, or at least weakening their particularistic barriers, while at the same time providing a set of common symbols (revolving around the culture of money, price, and market transactions) for conducting transactions and for guiding behavior among members of societal populations and, increasingly, the world population (Turner 1995). Critics are, we feel, too eager to dismiss this process of commodification for invading life world processes, but in fact it represents a force for creating the very kinds of community necessary for macro-level societal and world integration.

To pursue yet another example, the creation of an autonomous legal system (Luhmann 1982) operates much like markets to break down the particularizing effects of tradition and custom, while imposing a more universalistic orientation on actors toward those rules that proscribe and prescribe their behaviors (Parsons 1971; Turner 1995). When a legal system is also able to remain somewhat autonomous from the state, adjudication and enforcing laws independently of the state's capacity to coerce, it can potentially provide a community of symbols that reaches all members of a population, cutting across the local and particularistic symbols of subgroupings. Since Weber, critics have worried about such rational-legal forces as they break down old forms of community, but they have failed, we believe, to appreciate the new, more global community revolving around the symbols of legal rights, obligation, and procedures.

As yet another example of how macro-level forces engender new community forms, differentiation must generate webs of interconnections and mutual dependencies—if it is to operate effectively. For differentiation is only viable when diverse units can exchange their resources and develop patterns of mutual dependency. If this exchange is regulated by the symbolic communities created by the market and legal system, while being supported by the civic culture propagated by the state, then distinct symbolic communities are pulled together by the construction of interdependencies, thereby providing entire populations with a common meta-community that organizes virtually every aspect of their daily transactions.

Moreover, extended networks generate other kinds of integrating communities by creating, for example, congeries of regular equivalence among actors (both individual and collective) in similar locations of diverse networks; and as research on equivalence documents (Sailer 1978; White, Boorman, and Breiger 1976), those in similar positions tend to orient themselves and act in convergent ways. Such convergence can occur without direct interaction among those at equivalent positions; and as a result, symbolic communities need not always rely on direct communication among their members to operate effectively.

Another effect of expanding networks is to generate more weak-tie connections and less overall density among the ties of a population; and as Granovetter (1973) emphasized, weak ties break down particularism and the local symbolic boundaries that accompany dense, local networks. Thus, as market forces pull individuals into long webs of direct and indirect ties, the proportion of weak ties increases among the actors of a population, thereby creating a more cosmopolitan orientation of actors away from local communities to more global ones being generated by other macro-level forces.

Thus, from these examples we are pursuing what Durkheim saw, perhaps in less detail: the macro-level forces of modernity and, if one insists, postmodernity break down older forms of community but they also generate the conditions facilitating newer forms of community that are more effective in integrating large, complex, and differentiated societies. Of course, these same macro-level forces unleash some of the disintegrative potential, often held in check by gemeinschaft community forms, of inequality as well as divisions by ethnicity, region, and religion (Turner 1995). Conflicts arising from these sources are likely to produce more particularistic and gemeinschaft-like communities within large-scale societies. Thus, to the degree that these localizing forces can be mitigated, the more general community forms—those that are of wider "scope," in Mead's terms—can operate.

What is curious, to us at least, is that these older forms of community have often been extolled as virtuous in classical and contemporary theories, whereas the forces producing the more global and cosmopolitan and, no doubt, less intensely involving communities have been the subject of critical commentary. From our view, the reverse would be more appropriate; and if the community-generating effects of those macro-level forces accompanying modernization are recognized, then the classical theories can help us analyze the new community forms that are providing an answer to the problem of order. Theory and research in community should shed the last vestiges of the romanticism contained in Tönnies's gemeinschaft for two reasons: first, these were not necessarily very happy places because of the constraint and control that they demanded; and second, nostalgia for past forms of community organization can blind us to the new forms of community that are emerging, or even worse, can make us critical of these new forms because they do not reproduce our romanticized and nostalgic sentiments about Tönnies' gemeinschaft.

Micro-Level Leads From the Classical Theorists

Turning now to micro-level forces in these classical theories, especially those of Durkheim and Mead, some of this tension between older local and more recent meta-community forms can be better understood.

Durkheim more than Mead understood that attachment to a community was, to a certain necessary degree, an emotional process. This is why, of course, he turned to the study of the origins of religion (Durkheim 1954). In this analysis, Durkheim sought to see how humans create a sense of the sacred and form attachments to embellishment of, these religious beliefs—the ultimate sociocultural backbone of mechanical solidarity. What Durkheim recognized is that co-presence of individuals, per se, can generate emotional arousal when rates of interaction escalate and that this arousal leads to the construction of collective symbols having a sacred quality and bringing about negative sanctions for failure to acknowledge these symbols and positive sanctions for identification with these symbols. Moreover, to the extent that behaviors toward others and collective symbols can be ritualized, enactment of the rituals call forth the emotion associated with the symbols and sustain collective

identification with these symbols. The ritual theories of Goffman (1967) and Collins (1988) are, of course, built on this profound insight, but for our purposes, the insight helps us understand one of the critical interpersonal mechanisms by which individuals identify with the symbols of a community. To the extent that local interactions can be ritualized in ways that evoke the larger community systems of modern societies, the more viable these communities become in providing societal-level integration. The key variable is to the degree to which local encounters are penetrated by the symbols of meta-communities. This penetration is possible only if the macro-level forces have broken down the gemeinschaft-like qualities of local communities. That is, unless such often criticized events as "colonization of the life-world" (Habermas 1976) and commodification (Marx 1967) actually occur under the impact of macro-level forces examined earlier, interaction rituals will reproduce local, particularistic symbols which work against individuals' identification with the symbols of new community forms. Thus, without the broader symbolic communities generated by the state, markets and money, autonomous legal systems, congeries of structural equivalence, and formation of extensive weak-tie networks, micro-level rituals produce and reproduce older community forms that cannot integrate modernizing societies. Indeed, such rituals will Balkanize a society into potentially conflicting communities.

Durkheim's theory of ritual also stressed that certain structures, such as schools but also including civic festivals and voluntary associations, can become critical sites for enacting the kinds of rituals that plug individuals emotionally into these broader community cultures. Though Durkheim could not foresee the development of the media, he did recognize that communication technologies cut the space among individuals and increase their moral density; and so, it is not an unreasonable extension of Durkheim's ideas to view visual media as important sites for somewhat vicariously enacted rituals that attach individuals to communities beyond their immediate interaction networks. And while, once again, media are often criticized by intellectuals for their banality and appeals to the lowest common denominator, they nonetheless expose populations to similar symbols; and even with the proliferation of cable channels, the same symbols are often recycled (via reruns) across even these specialized channels. In this programming are the symbols of the civic culture of the state, the culture of money and markets, the culture

of law, and other more cosmopolitan communities. We can imagine that Durkheim would have seen great potential in the media for enactment of rituals creating and sustaining identification with the more abstracted collective conscience of differentiated societies.

It might be argued that the rituals of the media, as well as those school and other public sites, are less intense than those that drove gemeinschaft or the segmented units of mechanical solidarity. This lower intensity is, in fact, a virtue because emotions are dampened in ways that avoid the ritual fanaticism of local, particularistic communities or of mass mobilizations for narrow political or religious ends. The subtle, "cool," and somewhat detached nature of the rituals generates identification without the rigidities of high intensity emotions, thereby allowing the symbols of these broader communities to be altered and changed without causing a mass uproar or inviting mass defections. For as rapid change becomes the only constant with advanced modernity or postmodernity, the symbols of communities must be sufficiently general, abstract, and flexible to accommodate change; and they must penetrate local communities in ways increasing the capacity of these local communities to adapt their symbols to changing circumstances. For if neighborhood, family, religion, region, ethnicity, and other less global communities remain entrenched in a set of symbols, unaffected by the more abstract and flexible symbols generated by the macro-level forces of modernity, the intense and arousing rituals of these local gemeinschafts can become sources of rigidity and potential conflict, mobilizing intolerance and thereby working against societal-level integration.

Mead's (1934) analysis of generalized others offers additional texture to Durkheim's seminal insight. Humans can, Mead implicitly argued, use a wide variety of "communities of attitudes" as a frame reference. Individuals can, for pragmatic purposes of cooperation, adopt the symbols of diverse communities and use these to role-take, to assess alternatives, and to get along with others. Thus, under conditions of ever more cosmopolitan socialization outside direct kinship (in schools, media, and occupational contexts, for example), individuals learn about many communities of attitudes to which they never identify or in which they never participate, but they have knowledge of these communities and can, if called upon, use the symbols of these communities for minded deliberations, role-taking, and perhaps even self-appraisal. This capacity to carry the symbols

of both the broad, society-wide generalized others as well as those of communities outside individuals' own local reference groups gives these individuals the ability to act in diverse and changing situations, thereby breaking down barriers and partitions among differentiated sectors and subgroups. And adding a Durkheim twist, if they can also engage in the rituals of these other communities, even in a perfunctory manner, they will increase their capacity to identify, for the pragmatic purpose of cooperating, with many diverse others and groups in hyper-differentiated societies. Such micro-level behavioral capacities become a critical force in using communities as a basis for macro-level societal integration.

CONCLUSION

Our message is, we hope, clear: the early theorists, especially Durkheim and Mead, provided some important conceptual leads for analyzing communities. Some of these leads have been followed by present-day research; others have been rediscovered; and perhaps some have yet to be fully appreciated. Our goal in this paper has been modest: to suggest and illustrate how attention to the classic statements can still inform and guide both theory and research on community. For the recent increase in sociological interest in community takes us right back to the problem of order which implicitly guided the early theorists of modernity. This is still the basic problem for theorists of postmodernity as well as for research on communities as we near the turn to the twenty-first century.

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PART III

NEW IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES