Article

Communitarianism in the Globalized World

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Abstract: This paper aims to examine the communitarian concept of community in the context of globalization. The assumption is that globalization has eliminated space as a factor in social relations, creating a degree of interconnectedness and interdependence that extends beyond the borders of states and nations. The problem is that communitarianism is often identified with parochialism, exclusivity, and traditionalism, features of community that are deemed contrary to the values of globalization. By examining the history and different strands of communitarianism, this paper will show that not all strands of communitarianism necessarily have an anti-globalist character. Its political strand, in particular, recognizes that constitutive elements of community can exist at the global level, such as interdependence, shared knowledge, and common concerns. This paper concludes that global social interactions may not constitute a full-fledged global community that communitarians find in domestic social interactions, but it exists as a thin global community with varying and "limited" degrees of community.

Keywords: communitarianism, social theory, liberalism, global community

INTRODUCTION

The early communitarians are accused of being parochial and traditional in articulating a social and political theory. They have also been criticized for endorsing old-fashioned and authoritarian communities that try to dictate how their members should live. However, many contemporary communitarians argue that they are not the same as traditional communitarians and do not want to return to such communities. They recognize that the old types of communities are prone to conservatism, authoritarianism, and rigid practices that can be discriminatory towards minority members. They are rather interested in constructing communities emphasizing open participation, debate, and ideals that all members share. Linda McClain, a critic of communitarianism, confirms this when she writes that some of the communitarians do "recognize the need for careful evaluation of what is good and bad about [any specific] tradition and the possibility of severing certain features . . . from others."[1] Bruce Douglass also observes that "unlike conservatives, communitarians are aware that the days when the issues we face as a society could be settled based on the beliefs of a privileged segment of the population have long since passed."[2] Henry Tam argued that the normative core of communitarianism is the nature of the human relationship, whose goal is "to transform social and political aspects of community life so that everyone can participate responsibly as equal citizens in shaping decisions that affect them."[3] This 'new form of communitarianism' aims to build strong and sustainable communities and establish an effective democracy. According to Tam, communitarianism seeks to give an alternative to individualism and authoritarianism so that social practices can be reformed and contribute

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[1] Linda McClain , "Rights and Irresponsibility," *Duke Law Journal* , Vol. 43:5 (1994), 992. <DOI.org/10.2307/1372879>.

[2] Bruce R. Douglass, "The Renewal of Democracy and the Communitarian Prospect." *Responsive Community*, Vol. 4 no.3 (1994): 55.

[3] Henry Tam, *The Evolution of Communitarian Ideas: History, Theory And Practice* (Palgrave, Macmillan, 2019), 156.

more significantly to establishing sustainable forms of community life. New communitarian theorists envision a fusion of community values and liberal principles of freedom and equality in a democratic society. The claim here is that there is eventually no consistency regarding what communitarianism means in the literature. It can be a critique of liberalism, a political and moral reform movement, a social ideology, or simply an advocacy for an old-fashioned form of collectivity.

Contemporary political communitarians acknowledge the reality of globalization and its repercussions on communitarianism. They agree that nobody can ignore the interdependence and interconnectedness of nations and states across the globe, especially in economic, ecological, and political matters. As a result of the advancement of technology and communications, diverse global populations move more often and pose a challenge to local community borders and spheres of influence.[4] People from all parts of the world come together to live and work in all places where they actively engage in civic life. They form various types of communities inside and outside of physical space and adhere to various rules and values that shape their views about the world around them. More and more forms of social relations and dynamics of existence between communities, states, and nations, emerge due to the growing cross-border personal ties and the increasing integration and interdependence in economic and social affairs. With these developments, communitarian theorists are confronted with the task of re-examining their doctrines on the nature and scope of community to determine whether communitarians can go beyond the limits of local and nation-states paradigms.

For most communitarians, a community should have a common bond that unites its members, such as tradition, common identity, or shared understanding. MacIntyre, for example, is known for his emphasis on the small and local community, arguing that "morality is rooted in the

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[4] Lee Trapanier and Khalil M. Habib (eds.), *Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Globalization, Citizens without States* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky 2011), 4.

life of a specific real community – a village, a city, a nation, with its idiosyncratic customs and history."[5] For Sandel, a "community must be constitutive of the shared self-understandings of the participants."[6] He claimed that communities and social relations shape our identities and life's goals. Walzer argued that a community is political and should be understood as a national community.[7] Rather than abstract, it should be anchored in specific situations, traditions, and cultures of particular historical and cultural contexts. Taylor claims that a genuine community must possess some consciousness of itself as a community."[8] This aspect of collective existence is provided for by what he calls common meaning, which refers to inter-subjective meanings that a given community possesses and knows itself to possess and provide a touchstone for its life as a community.[9] While contemporary communitarians have distanced themselves from authoritarian and conservative conceptions of communities, critics consider their concept of community as unsuitable for a globalized world.

SOURCES OF COMMUNITARIAN THOUGHT

Before delving into communitarian doctrines and their concept of community, it is essential to make a distinction between the casual and formal use of the term "communitarian." The casual use of the term can refer to pretty much anything about the idea of community. A publication

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[5] Alasdair MacIntyre, *"Is Patriotism a Virtue?"* (The Lindley Lecture, University of Kansas, March 26, 1984).

[6] Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice,* 2nd ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 179.

[7] Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 312-313.

[8] 'Charles Taylor, "Why Do Nations have to Become States," *Reconciling the Solitude: Canadian Federalism and Nationalism* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 56.

[9] Charles Taylor, *Interpretation and the Sciences of Man, Philosophical Papers II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 45.

or lecture, for instance, that extolls the value of community can be considered communitarian. The formal use of the term, however, refers to the principles and values embedded in communitarian literature expressed by recognized communitarian thinkers. The values found in its various strands show how they can vary from a historical, generic, and theoretical perspective.

In general, at least five strands of communitarianism can be found in the literature. The first refers to the experimental lifestyle of utopian socialists and some idealists living a unique communal way of life. This strand is associated with the works of British reformist Robert Owen in his community-building programs, cooperative organizations, and community education during the first half of the 19th century. Owen's communitarian projects highlighted the importance of the environment, education, and cooperation.[10] He argued that creating collaborative communities that value and respect their members would give more freedom and opportunities to local communities. He criticized capitalist practices, fought for communal alternatives, and encouraged laborers to pursue the happiness of everyone rather than the happiness of a few. The term "communitarian" became synonymous with the advocacy for small and face-to-face communities such as neighborhoods, villages, or towns.

The second strand refers to interdependence as a way of life that characterize African communities. African communitarianism highlights individuals' dependence and deep attachment to the community where they were born and raised. It shows that the shared bond within the community is more important than any individual claim or conflict inside it. African communitarianism advocates compassion, humanity, solidarity, dignity, and reciprocity as primary virtues in society. The most notable communitarians in this strand include Placide Tempels *(On Bantu Philosophy, 1959),* John Mbiti (*African Religions and Philosophy*, 1989), and Ifeanyi Anthony Menkiti (*Person and Community in African Thought*,

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[10] David Owen, "Review of A New View of Society, by Robert Owen," *The Canadian Historical Review*, 31:3 (1950), 324-325, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/623825>.

1984). They commonly claim that community has an epistemic and ontological priority over the individual. In the words of Mbiti, "the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries."[11] Like him, Menkiti believes that "the reality of the communal world takes precedence over the reality of the individual life histories."[12] African communitarianism claims that the realization of the individual as a person and human being can only be achieved through the community.

The third strand refers to *East Asian Communitarianism* in the 1990s, which has also been labeled as *Authoritarian Communitarianism.* Political commentators and scholars employed the pejorative term "authoritarian" to designate the social philosophy that prevailed in authoritarian regimes such as those in China, Malaysia, and Singapore. They argued that these nations valued social responsibilities and the common good and emphasized individual rights and autonomy less than Westerners. They accused Asian leaders like Mahathir Mohamad, Lee Kuan Yew, and other Asia authoritarian leaders of having used the debate over *Asian Values* to embrace non-democratic forms of government. They justified the suppression of their political opponents and the violation of human rights by claiming that human rights are not universal nor part of Asian values. They also ignored much more fundamental and vital issues such as human rights, the rule of law, and democracy in favor of focusing on specific institutions that look incidental to a functioning legal or political system. Although the *Asian Values debate* did not last long, the identification of East Asian authoritarianism with communitarianism was so strong that many western communitarians distanced their work and themselves from the label.

The fourth strand of Communitarianism comes from the United States, designated as *Western Communitarianism.* This strand is

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[11] Ibid., 106.
[12] Ibid.

represented by Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, and Michael Walzer. These four philosophers have shared a "communitarian" critique of Rawls's version of liberalism and his concept of an unencumbered self in the *Original Position*. They accuse Rawls of ignoring the manifest ways an individual is embedded in the community and the importance of community in the social formulation of the good.[13] It should be noted that these communitarians did not apply the label to themselves because of the conclusions or associations others may draw from it. Sandel, for instance, was suspicious of the term communitarian because the term can suggest majoritarianism, a doctrine that can mean uncritical conformity to hierarchy and tradition. [14] What Sandel advocates in a society are a stronger sense of community and mutual responsibility, and he argues that moral principles and policies have nothing to do with numbers or statistics. MacIntyre also categorically denied being a communitarian and identified himself as a Thomist.[15] With some reservations, Taylor admitted that he is a communitarian only at the ontological level.[16] He does not necessarily reject the values the liberals endorse, so he is reluctant to be identified with either side. Walzer also identifies himself as a liberal, but his critics consider his insights communitarian. Despite their objections to the label, they were labeled as such by their critics mainly due to the value of community and the social nature of man they have emphasized in their writings. Aside from their rejection of Rawls' liberal theory, they have not offered a systematic or fully developed communitarian theory.

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[13] Amy Gutmann, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 14: 3 (1985), 308-22, <www.jstor.org/stable/2265353>.

[14] Michael Sandel (ed.), *Liberalism and its Critics,* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1984); Michael Sandel, Democracy's Discontents (Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press, 1996).

[15] Alasdair MacIntyre, "*A Partial Response to My Critics,"* in J. Horton and S. Mendus (eds.), After MacIntyre (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994), 302. Cf. Alasdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, 3rd Edition (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), xiv.

[16] Charles Taylor, "Cross purposes: the liberal-communitarian debate", in *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. N. Rosenblum (Cambridge, Mass : Harvard University Press, 1994), 250.

The fifth strand refers to a group founded by Amitai Etzioni and William Galston in 1990 called *"responsive" communitarianism.* The group elaborated and transformed communitarian ideas into a political program and published them in books, periodicals, academic journals, and their online platform, *The Responsive Communitarianism.* Their central thesis is that the common good and autonomy are two major sources of normativity in society, neither of which enjoys precedence over the other. In the UK, political communitarianism is advocated by Henry Tam, who argues that communitarianism should go beyond the left and right divide and formulate an integrated theory with practical application for political reform. He proposed a model of inclusive communities based on his formulation of three communitarian principles: cooperative inquiry, mutual responsibility, and citizen participation.[17] He advocated for a more active community engagement and advanced a more inclusive, deliberative, and participatory community in government agencies, commercial organizations, and nonprofit organizations. Towards the end of the twentieth century, Tam argued that communitarian ideas began to converge toward a theory of a political philosophy that addresses the critical development of community life and the underlying problems in multiple layers of human relationships.[18]

THE COMMUNITARIAN QUEST FOR COMMUNITY

Communitarianism serves as an umbrella term for a range of theories that affirm the social context of one's identity and the relevance of community in political and ethical life. These theories are so diverse that the only common feature they have is the prominent role of community in the development of the individual. Its overarching claim is that an individual can only achieve his realization as a person in the context of a community.

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[17] Henry Tam, *Communitarianism, Communitarianism: A New Agenda for Politics and Citizenship* (London: MacMillan Education UK, 1998), vii.
[18] Ibid., 23.

Communitarians regard community as essential for human fulfillment, a fundamental human need, and the highest form of human existence. It is the framework within which individuals can pursue a set of goals, live with others, and have a common life. Community does not simply refer to any group of people but people with common public goals, not just congruent private ones. When people join a community to share their goals and ideals with others, they think of themselves as members of the group, and their values begin to be seen as the group's values. This leads to the formation of communities due to people wanting to share their goals and ideals with others.

One of the communitarians' fundamental tenets is that a political community does not transcend the borders of nations and states. They assert the Hegelian teaching that the state is the biggest form of community where people can realize their identity and freedom. It is where individuals are free to meet and gather with others bound together by a shared interest or thought. According to Hegel, "the activity of civil society prepares individuals to recognize that their particular and subjective interests include the universal and objective aims of their political communities."[19] Communitarians, thus, regard the state as an autonomous entity with its own constitution that embodies the peculiarities of its history, customs, and traditions connected with its ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) or its presence as a specific political society. For them, there are no universal standards that apply to all nations and cultures. Such universal principles only make sense if anchored in a specific culture and historical context.

Daniel Bell identified three broad categories of communities that summarize the communitarians' concept of community.[20] The first is the *communities of place*. It is the word's traditional meaning, usually associated with geographical location. A *community of place* is usually

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[19] Sara MacDonald, Patrick N. Cain, Stephen Patrick Sims, and Stephen A. Block (eds.), "Hegel and the Civil Society of Imagination," *Democracy and the History of Political Thought* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2021), 331.

[20] Daniel Bell, *Communitarianism and Its Critics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), 183-189.

linked to a certain locality, such as a small village or big city. While some scholars claim that location-based communities don't matter much due to increased connectivity and mobility in the globalized age, ushering in an era of placelessness, others argue that geographical proximity still matters, taking into account the role of local politics and religious institutions in the local area, the incidence of poverty, and the existence of local and social resources.[21] It is still uncertain which features of community life are still influenced by location or place, even though some academics suggest that liberals would only succeed in generating increased social and geographical marginalization in rural areas.[22]

      The *second is communities of memory.* It refers to a group of individuals who have a common history. Sometimes, it is referred to as *imagined communities* whose shared history goes back several generations. Besides their common history, they share common ideals and aspirations for the future, seeing their efforts as a significant factor in determining the common good. Nation and language ethnocultural groups exemplify this type of community. Drawing on Robert N. Bellah's *Habits of the Heart*, Ketelaar remarks, "[c]ollective identity is based on the elective process of memory, so that a given group recognizes itself through its memory of a commonty past."[23] Common history is not something that one can take or disown arbitrarily. It is imperative for belongingness. This shared history is not only genealogical or traditional, something that can be disregarded. There is also a moral imperative for community membership. Continuity, cohesion, and coherence are derived from a community's shared history, which has been maintained over time. To be a community, a profession, a religious group, etc., one must be rooted in the

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[21] Matthew L. McKnight, et. al., "Communities of Place? New Evidence for the Role of Distance and Population Size in Community Attachment," *Rural Sociology*, 82:2 (2016), 291, <DOI: 10.1111/ruso.12123>.

[22] Thomas F. Gieryn, "A Space for Place in Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26 (2000), 463. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/223453>.

[23] Robert N. Bellah et. al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 153.

past and, accordingly, in the memory texts in any form, written, oral, or physical, that mediate that history.

The third is called *psychological communities*. It is characterized by face-to-personal interaction of its members who have a sense of shared ends, trust, and cooperation. They do not simply interact with one another but engage with the community's norms and practices in fruitful collaborations. They also have a psychological sense of togetherness and shared ends. They do not necessarily live in the same locality, distinguishing them from communities of place. Compared to communities of memory, psychological communities are more natural since they have a face to face interactions at some points. Their size is usually limited. This kind of community includes families, small work organizations, or schools founded on trust and social cooperation.

These categories fall short when scrutinized in the context of a contemporary global society. There are online and virtual communities, for instance, whose relationships among members are based on information exchange about specific topics or involvement in common activities such as entertainment or sports. They don't necessarily have a common location, shared history, or collective ends. Communities now can also refer to several organizations or villages in different parts of the world that have decided to unite and form a single community. It can be a collaboration between several organizations, institutions, cities, or even countries. Hence, there should be a broader definition of community that can accommodate various forms of communities in today's world.

In an attempt to formulate a definition of community that fits the contemporary world, Amitai Etzioni proposes a definition with two parts: first: "a web of affect-laden relationships... that often crisscross and reinforce one another;" second, "a commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity—in short, a

particular culture."[24] His definition moves away from geographical proximity as the basis of community by recognizing that various forms of communities, such as scientific, professional, religious, etc., which are geographically dispersed, can exist with members alongside non-members. In addition, Etzioni thinks of community in the contemporary setting as a web of communities whose members are regulated by freely enacted contracts, voluntary agreements, regulations, and a thick layer of culturally generated mores and shared values. He also adds a third feature that characterizes a true community, *i.e.*, responsiveness. A responsive community excludes social entities that oppress their members. A community for Etzioni is considered partial when it responds only to some members or subgroups of the community. It is inauthentic when it caters to the members' fake needs rather than their actual needs. Although Etzioni recognizes the broader implications of his definition, the type of social ties he envisions is not the weak ones fostered by voluntary associations but by the stronger attachments of communities based on particular ethnic, racial, religious, and residential factors. It shows that his preferred concept of community is still local and not global in character. His call for a "community of communities" is not really a call for world federalism but simply for intercultural and inter-communal dialogue among local and national communities.

Furthermore, Etzioni emphasizes that most contemporary communities are new and interconnected as part of a more diverse network. People are members of a number of communities at the same time, including residential, professional, and a variety of other groups. They can use these multi-memberships to shield themselves from overwhelming pressure from any one community, and they do so regularly. They also have a limited but significant capacity to select the communities in which they work and live. Thus, it is helpful to think of communities as

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[24] Amitai Etzioni, Michael T. Gibbons (ed.), "Community," *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. , 2015), 620, <DOI: 10.1002/9781118474396.wbept0185>.

being nested within one another, with each community existing within a larger overarching community. As a result, neighborhoods are components of communities that are larger in scopes, such as suburbs, cities, or residential areas. These, in turn, frequently connect with or are a part of broader communities of a certain ethnicity or race. In addition, the majority of communities are considered to be part of the national society. While most communitarians claim that strong links and the genuine nature of communities are mostly found in relatively small communities where individuals know one another, globalist and cosmopolitan theorists claim that people's ultimate goal is to establish a global society that would include all individuals.

IS GLOBAL COMMUNITY POSSIBLE?

People in the political and academic world use the phrase global or international community, referring to the people or nations of the world that are thought to be tightly connected by globalization's economic, social, and political forces. The idea suggests that   "global connections have developed to the point at which the awareness of economic and other links with distant strangers has become a central feature of everyday life."[25] Globalization connects and integrates people, businesses, and governments across the globe, affecting their environment, culture, political systems, education, economic development, and prosperity. Numerous debates deal with how this new global environment will operate in a world where forces from all over the world attempt to undermine the concept of the nation-state and the supremacy of territorial sovereignty. It has been argued that globalization has undermined national frontiers and the possibility of coherently employing the concept of the nation-state, but most social scientists still prefer to use "national" or "statist" analytical paradigms.

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[25] Andrew Linklater, *Critical Theory and World Politics Citizenship, Sovereignty and Humanity* (New York, NY: Routledge 2007), 2.

Traditional communitarians do not subscribe to the idea of a global community. They lean on a thick conception of community as having a common bond, shared meaning, tradition, shared history, etc. New communitarians, however, recognize that globalization has produced new forms of communities that don't have the full prerequisites of community in the communitarian sense. Phillip Selznick, for instance, claims that communities can exist in various ways and degrees. He argues that community "groups are more or less -full-blown communities, and they can be communities in different ways."[26]   Some communities are formed through proximity and kinship, while others are through shared ideas or a joint enterprise. Thus, instead of asking, "Is this a community?" one should ask, "how far and in what ways do the members of this group experience the bonds, benefits, and deficits of a community?"[27] Since social relations are everywhere, the values associated with the community could be sought, with different strategies and varying success, be it in local, national, or international settings. Bellah also advanced a communitarian theory that is implicitly open to the concept of a global community. Bellah emphasized the notion of "complementary association," which denotes the communitarian's commitment to all social groups like the family, local community, religious business groups, city, and nation-state. He argues that from the principle of "complementary association," every individual belongs to multiple communities, from small communities to bigger ones, including the world seen as a community.[28] He also claims that consensus about values and goals is not required to have a community.[29] A healthy community is one where there can be debate or disagreement on the

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[26] Philip Selznick, *The Communitarian Persuasion* (Washington, D.C., MD: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1993), 20.

[27] Ibid., 21

[28] Robert N. Bellah, Karen Christensen and David Levinson, (eds.), "Democratic Communitarianism," *From the Village to the Virtual World* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 225.

[29] Robert Bellah, "Community Properly Understood: A Defense of "Democratic Communitarianism," *The Responsive Community* (Winter 1995/96).

meaning of the common values and goals and the method of their implementation in day-to-day activities. Community is not about having a unanimous agreement but a way of life that is intelligent and reflective in which there is an agreement that may be questioned and revised over time – frequently in a gradual manner, but occasionally in a significant one.

One of the main theoretical questions raised in this new concept of community is its compatibility with difference, that is, how to acknowledge the diversity of the individual and community life while avoiding a focus on cohesiveness and unicity. William Corlett observed that the concept of community without unity should be emphasized rather than harkening back to a time when people shared interests in a vanished wholeness. Corlett's argument, which is based on Derrida's theory of community, states that community can only be expressed through the encounter with diversity.[30] Derrida provides a completely original and innovative perspective by going well beyond any conventional ideas of community. It is a view of community in which all dichotomies and oppositions are resolved through mutual respect for one another's unique qualities. Following Foucault and Derrida, Corlett argued against the primacy of subjectivity and open communities in favor of an approach that is neither individualistic nor collectivist but rather is founded on sharing. In doing so, Corlett moves beyond the liberal and communitarian divide that perpetuates the duality of the individual versus the collectivity.

The new forms of community in the globalized world prompt communitarian theorists to examine the possibility of an emerging global community. Three elements of community can be used to argue for a conception of a global community, namely interdependence, shared knowledge, and common concern. They're not strictly part of the communitarian conception of community but can be found as essential aspects.

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[30] William Corlett, *Community Without Unity: A Politics of Derridian Extravagance,* (1989; rep. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 22.

1. *Interdependence*

Perhaps the strongest argument can come from the fact of interdependence. Globalization has made the world an interconnected and integrated network of nations and states, creating economic, environmental, political, and technological interdependencies. In this globalized world, no nation-state is fully independent, and no single state possesses all the resources it needs to be self-sufficient. Every nation and state recognize their dependence on other nations and states and that their actions affect one another. As elements of daily life and expression of culture are becoming moral global in scope, people of the world are becoming more aware of their connectedness and interdependence with other people of the world. Such global forms of interdependence can be seen in economic cooperation between nations and states, defense treatises, environmental protection agreements, global alliances for vaccines and immunization, and many others.

Interdependence creates communities, be it individuals or communities interacting with one another because of a common thread such as resources, needs, beliefs, etc. Interdependence reveals the scale, solidarity, and reach of practices that recognize our fundamental and inescapable need for one another. In *Division of Labour in Society* (1893), Durkheim claims that a community based on interdependence emerges from the complementarity and specialization of work in modern society. In contrast to mechanical solidarity based on homogeneity, this organic solidarity arises from the performance of different tasks and out of the needs for another's services. Interdependence is not a choice but an inescapable fact of life. All other parts of life, whether positive or negative, are built upon and supported by it. If properly organized, it provides the framework and support for every facet of a worthwhile existence—one life among many.

2. *Shared Knowledge*

Another constitutive element of community found at the global level is shared knowledge. The concept of "information society" has been developed over the last four decades of the twentieth century, in which technological development and the accumulation of knowledge boost global interdependence. Through technology and modern means of communication, globalization allows knowledge to be widely and easily shared, creating the world as a " global community of knowledge."[31] People can know so much about what is happening in people's lives in other parts of the world through the news, social media, and personal communications. Knowledge of the situation and circumstances of other people provides us with the basis for a shared understanding which, for Walzer, is a basis of community. Such knowledge is also necessary for the world's solidarity, where we share a common perspective with others' concerns becoming ours too.[32]

Henry Tam argues for a communitarian principle of cooperative inquiry where anyone making a claim must be evaluated in light of how well-informed participants would agree after thoughtful and unforced dialogues. Any interim agreement made by one group of people must, in turn, be subject to examinations carried out with input from other groups and be open to potential adjustments. Any truth claim's ultimate viability depends on its propensity to withstand the critical examination of ever-widening circles of skeptics. Since ignorance and errors can result from various circumstances, they cannot be fought with a single source of information that covers all topics. Only collaborative research at the national and global levels will effectively reduce it. In globalization,

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[31] Dirk Messner, "World Society: Structures and Trends," in Paul M. Kennedy, Dirk Messner & Franz Nuscheler (eds.), *Global Trends & Global Governance* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 22.

[32] Paul M. Kennedy, Dirk Messner & Franz Nuscheler (eds.), *Global Trends & Global Governance* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 158.

knowledge can be enriched, refuted, or verified in light of evolving evidence by scholars, academicians,   and scientists in many parts of the world. Knowledge, as a process, is social and global. It is carried out by people who work together and talk to each other. It does not recognize borders and continues to be shared locally and globally.

3. Common Concerns

Part of shared knowledge in the globalized world is the increased understanding of the risks that we share as human beings. It belongs to our shared interest to address the threats such as global warming, pandemic, climate change, ecological denigration, terrorism, *etc*. To address these problems, people from all countries should think and cooperate with one another. In this perspective, globalization creates what is called a "community of risk"[33]A sense of community develops from the simple awareness of shared dangers. However, even having shared risks does not guarantee community. It is how people collaborate and work together to address these risks. It is important, though, that such mutual interests exist and are acknowledged as such. This creates conditions that are more conducive to increased cooperation, which can result in a sense of shared purpose in overcoming these challenges.

        While people may have similar interests and traits as human beings, communitarians will claim that it is not enough to unite us as one community. To put it another way, one can say that communitarians would accept that there is some sort of global society made up of groups with self-interests. Still, they would distinguish it from the actual "community," which requires more. Communitarian principles need all community members to take responsibility for enabling each other to pursue common values. They believe certain values have stood the test of time across different cultural variations. David Miller claims that "these are insufficient

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[33] Messner, "World Society: Structures and Trends," 24.

to constitute a global community. They do not create a shared sense of identity or a common ethos."[34]

THIN GLOBAL COMMUNITY

In his prominent work *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887), Ferdinand Tönnies categorized human associations into two fundamental forms, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft.* Gemeinschaft – loosely translated as community – refer to small communities based on traditional rules, face-to-face interactions, and a strong sense of common identity. *Gesellschaft*, loosely translated as a society, is typified by a modern cosmopolitan city with large industrial organizations, bureaucratic government, impersonal relations, formal organization, and the absence of common and binding norms. While these two categories exist, Tönnies emphasized that *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* are rarely seen in exact or pure form and are not mutually exclusive. They are usually mixed up in real life as both forms of social order are present in one's social setting. In this perspective, global social relations may be interpreted as a mixture of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft,* where communities can be embedded in society and vice versa.

A different approach is taken by Mark Olssen, who claims that the world is a thin global community.[35] He considers global social relations as a "thin" form of community because, compared to Hegel, MacIntyre, and the rest of the philosophical communitarians, his concept of community does not require an organic unity or shared system of values beyond what is necessary for man's survival. Olssen argues that what matters in a community is the continuation of life, not any shared bond or tradition. He defines community not as a bounded and static totality but "a constantly

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[34] David Miller, "Justice and Global Inequality" in Andrew Hurrell & Ngaire Woods (eds.), *Inequality, Globalization, and World Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 190.
[35] Mark Olssen, *Toward a Global Thin Community, Nietzsche, Foucault, and the Cosmopolitan Commitment*, (New York: Routledge, 2010), 147.

changing set of practices that resist unity and closedness."[36] Such a definition does not require unity between the individual and the collective but only the minimum structure of norms, regulations, agreements, and understandings for social difference and individual agency to exist. Olssen assumed that significant commitments have already been made to particular ways of life that have been chosen. These ways of life are determined by historical choices ingrained in traditions, customs, ways of thinking, beliefs, and institutions. When individuals arrive on the scene, he believes these things are already in place. These commitments do not aim to integrate nor unify the existing social structures. Instead, they aim to construct a particular way of life within specified boundaries. They are tolerant of the myriad of varieties and variations that come hand in hand with this way of life. Olssen, for one, argued that the concept of community should transcend the way it is typically thought of as a closed and bounded totality. He conceives community as an all-encompassing arena without fixed borders or unity. He claimed that a community is a dynamic collection of behaviors that opposes closure and unity. Even if every action has a cultural and political background, every action also differentiates, perpetuating and changing the patterns already in place. Olssen is very articulate in his description:

A thin global community does not mean that the local communities and the states are giving up their ability to exercise sovereign authority. National communities are still differentiated by their idiosyncrasies in custom, history, and practice, but they have some defining qualities in organization and worldview that are interconnected within and across them. In this sense, the limits of community do not correspond to the borders of any one nation-state. It acknowledges overlapping communities where people might simultaneously identify with various ethnic, religious, political, and social groups. Identity in a globalized society is more nuanced, and the attachment processes to identities cannot be limited to a

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[36] Ibid.

single territorial state. In addition, thin global communitarianism acknowledges that people acquire their identities from communities they do not voluntarily select to be a part of. All societies have certain common goals and, from this vantage point, create a "community of communities." and common good for humankind conveys the essence of these values and the requirements of humanity. The necessity of the good's objectivism is more obvious in modern times as communitarianism can harbor some.

A theory of thin global communitarianism endorses an approach to globalization grounded in realism. It is not an attempt to deny the presence of global trends, but it tries to address the conceptual challenges that this reality presents. It recognizes that while globalization is producing big shifts in society, the communities' function continues to evolve and play a vital role in various domains, such as the economy, social welfare, education, and the armed forces. Communities at the local level are still the most powerful agency and maintain a hierarchical position compared to all other constituents present inside a certain zone with clearly delineated boundaries. It is not a truly novel phenomenon. It is more affected by international pressures and interconnectedness in the twenty-first century than in earlier centuries. It is the case because of increased globalization. Local, national, and supranational levels and public and commercial sectors have all been given specific responsibilities. This is the direct result of globalization. Globalization is showing domestic society to be an insufficient community that cannot guarantee the general well-being of its members on its own, resulting in a higher level of community as part of a collective effort to ensure well-being, according to a distributive perspective.

CONCLUSION

Globalization has made the concept of community more complex. New forms of human interactions emerge, and social connections tend to extend to a global scope. Due to the increasing importance of mediated or indirect

relations,   communities now operate like a network which are interconnected at many levels ranging from the neighborhood to the nations to the world, some of which overlap. However, because there are more possibilities to join and leave the networks of community, there is a greater risk that, over time, a community will lose its continuity.

In global relations, we can see the constitutive elements of a limited global community. It can be said that globalization is creating a new global identity consisting of interdependence, shared knowledge, and common concerns. It does not mean that a global community has emerged fully developed with the depth and dynamism of the local community. At the moment, a global community is still a vision and not a sociological reality with respect to various spheres, institutions, or groups of social interactions inside the global social space. It is not clear the amount or degrees of community required to speak of "global community" in the strict communitarian sense, but we can speak of "limited global community."

Over the years and in reaction to shifting social, economic, and political conditions, communitarianism has continued to evolve. It has always emphasized fostering reciprocal relationships and the growth of inclusive communities as its primary areas of concentration. It needs to occur on all levels of social existence, from the most local to the most global. Every new generation has a responsibility to their community to be brought up to be intelligent contributors, which requires a stronger commitment from this point on to the strategies outlined for education, government, economic management, etc. There has always been an alternative vision of community life, which, through ebbs and flows, has been realized to notable degrees due to its ideas being convincingly presented and its proposed practices being tried, tested, and adopted. Communitarianism has been a motivating force in the past, and it continues to be influential in emerging thinking now, not only at the local but global level.

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