

Practicing Community: Outline of a Praxeological Approach to the Feeling of We-ness

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Abstract

Community, once a backbone of the social sciences as well as the study of folklore, has lost its status as a framing concept. My aim in this article is to argue for the analytical value of community for the study of expressive culture and the everyday. Based on assumptions of practice theory, especially the work of Theodore R. Schatzki, I propose to understand community as a feeling of we-ness that evolves and transpires through bundles of practices and arrangements among participants of these practices. The praxeological perspective allows comparing communities of different types in order to gain general insights into aspects of boundaries as well as spatial and temporal orders of communities.

Music played in the distance. I entered the district through a leafy graveyard. It was a hot summer day and immediately I missed the shadow I had been enjoying for the last few minutes. The streets around me—with their brick stone buildings, their small shops, bars and cafés on the main street, the allotments, the church and the school in the near distance—make up a small neighborhood in Stuttgart, a city in the southwest of Germany. The neighborhood is part of my fieldwork; the fieldwork is part of my research on the feeling of home and diversity in multi-ethnic neighborhoods. The neighborhood is commonly called Nordbahnhofviertel—literally translated ‘North Station Quarter’.¹ It was built for railroad employees toward the end of the nineteenth century, in conjunction with a newly constructed freight station. At the beginning, the district was still located outside of the city boundaries, and it was built exclusively to accommodate railroad workers. Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, these were mainly people from the rural lower class, who were mainly Catholic, in contrast to Stuttgart’s Protestant population. This, and the location on the periphery of Stuttgart, meant that in comparison with the rest of Stuttgart, a socially homogeneous district separate from the (Stuttgart) community arose. After the Second World War large numbers of people moved into the district from the neighboring state of Bavaria. However, the federal railroad company increasingly hired foreign workers during the 1960s to cope with the labor shortage in the post-war period.² The immigrants were initially housed in three railroad residential homes on the edge of the district, but during the 1970s they started moving into apartments in the district itself. This was possible because many of the district’s inhabitants had started to leave toward the end of the 1960s due to the poor standard of accommodation. More than 60

percent of the 4301 people living in the district today have an immigrant background.³ The largest group among them consists of individuals with Turkish origins.⁴

The first thing people told me when I introduced myself to residents, politicians, and social workers was that I should come to the annual street festival. I was told that the street festival was the perfect opportunity to get to know a lot of people and to get an impression of the community. So I followed one of the streets that led to the main street and wound down a small hill. Walking along the street I heard the music grow louder and at the end of the street I saw a small group of stalls. They were set up in the open area in front of the social worker center. The center has organized the street festival for over 30 years. It has been called *International Street Festival* to reflect the changes the district has gone through by means of immigration since the 1950s.⁵ The street festival is intended to provide a platform for different (immigration) associations, enabling them to present themselves and their work. Aside from selling foods and drinks at the respective stalls they put on stage performances. The nationality represented by the stall near the entrance to the festival is readily identified by the large Portuguese flag beside it. Viewed from the entrance, the stalls formed a semi-circle opposite a stage. Between the stage and the stalls there were rows of benches and tables. In the background, a DJ played taped music. I walked along the stalls. Each of them represented a different country. Not every stall was identifiable by a flag; some could be identified by the language of the menu and the types of food on offer: pizza from the Italians, tea and Gözleme from the Turkish, steak and sausages from the German allotment association.

Almost immediately, I thought of the World's Fair where every nation presents itself in a clear and distinct manner. And indeed, the observation that each nationality tends to remain separate is a repeated feature of description of the *International Street Festival*. This assessment of a common, but nationally separated form of coexistence is a basic perception in the district. In various following discussions with the district's residents, the street festival would often be taken as a starting-point for talking about community and coexistence. Later Erwin Neuer,⁶ a resident and one of my interlocutors, for example, would emphasize that while it is nice for everyone to get together, everyone eventually ends up sitting at individual tables according to nationality:

Germans are sitting at one of the tables, and at the other table there is sitting that group and at another table a third group. You won't see Germans, Italians and Turks sitting at one table together. And every group has its own folkloristic performance. I like those but again, unfortunately, every group remains for itself. (Neuer [pseud.] 2010)

For Paolo Vernandez, another resident, this separation is above all evident in behavior. He described the festival to me in the following manner: "If you are an Italian, you go there and eat pizza and everything from Italy, for example, and when the Turkish group goes on stage, all the Turks will get up to dance" (Vernandez [pseud.] 2009). In our later conversation, Vernandez described belonging as expressed by means of participating, by joining specific collective activities.

"Acting in common makes community," Dorothy Noyes wrote around twenty

years ago in an article in *The Journal of American Folklore* (Noyes 1995, 468). Her article was part of a special issue on keywords for the study of expressive culture wherein she states that community emerges in performance. I agree with that idea. However, I conceptualize community as practiced and in doing so part ways with Noyes' approach. Community is an important idea that structures people's everyday life, as for instance the residents' comments above have shown. What is more, *community* can be a valuable analytical concept.⁷ For different reasons, which I will discuss later on, community has functioned as a descriptive rather than an analytical term within the study of folklore.⁸ My aim in this article is to show that *community* as a concept in the study of expressive culture offers a possibility to understand processes of boundary making as well as temporal and spatial orders of different communities in a better way than other related terms, such as "group". Motivated by practice theory, this article sets out to provide a more precise concept of *community* for the study of expressive culture. I will develop *community* as a feeling of we-ness that evolves and transpires through bundles of practices and arrangements among participants of these practices.⁹

I will develop my argument in the following three sections. First, I briefly summarize different ideas and understandings of community in the social sciences. Second, I abstract the main assumptions of practice theory and discuss a definition of practice based primarily on the work of Theodore R. Schatzki. Finally, I promote *community* as an analytical concept. Taking the work of Etienne Wenger as a starting point and my own fieldwork example of the *International Street Festival* introduced above, I sketch out research questions, advantages, and empirical implications.

Community: A Matter of Commonality

Going through my field notes I wonder how one analytical concept might be able to integrate all the different notions of community I came across at the street festival and in discussions about it afterwards. To understand and to structure their everyday life, the residents use the concept of community. It describes and expresses differences between Italians and Turks. It distinguishes inhabitants of the neighborhood from people living elsewhere, immigrants from autochthones and people taking part in community activities from those who do not. By what means is it possible to approach these everyday notions of community? Is there one community divided into several sub-communities? In other words: does the neighborhood, with all the people of different nationality and ethnicity—or both—living there, describe a community? Or is it the other way around, with nationality and ethnicity as the base of community and the neighborhood just a place where those meet and interact? Or is it even more complex, with people belonging to various and multiple communities that intersect all the time? How to study this with the help of one single concept?

In her article in *The Journal of American Folklore*, Noyes develops a concept of group instead of a concept of community. She distinguishes between a cultural aspect of group—that is, "networks of interactions in which culture is created" (ibid.)—and an identity aspect of group, that is, community—which she then locates within performance: "The community exists in its collective performances: they are the locus

of its imagining in their content and of its realization in their performance” (469). Consequently, group is the term that facilitates a dialogue between these two aspects. As I will show later on the distinction between an institutionalized pattern of social interactions (i.e. networks) and an imagined belonging to a collectivity (i.e. community) has two shortcomings. On the one hand, orders as well as meaning actualize within practices. On the other hand, belonging is not imagined. People do belong to a certain social entity—that I call a *we* here—by means of participating in practices. Moreover I am not convinced that group holds more analytical value than community. In contrast to Noyes, I prefer the term community instead of group because firstly, community holds a spatial and temporal connotation that is highly relevant for the study of expressive culture and secondly, because of its (etymologically) implication of commonality as the basis of (shared) identity. The question is: what is it that people have in common?

The discussion on community has started long ago. Here, I will just briefly summarize the main figures related to the concept and sketch out some general arguments that I will return to later in this paper.¹⁰ The first significant and well-discussed contribution is Ferdinand Tönnies’ (2001) differentiation between community and association in his 1887 book *Community and Civil Society*. This differentiation is based on the distinction between nature and culture; while community is a natural or organic relation between people, association is cultural and mechanic. In Max Weber’s 1922 work *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (2005), he avoids the nature-culture division by focusing on processes. In this chapter on basic sociological terms he speaks of communal relationship (*Vergemeinschaftung*) and associative relationship (*Vergesellschaftung*) instead of community and association.¹¹ Still, Tönnies’ ideas remained influential. In the 1920s, Robert E. Park and the Chicago School expanded Tönnies’ conception and asked whether collective belonging persists in urban societies. Fifty years later Gerald Suttles (1972) directed his attention to the structural characteristics of urban societies, such as administration and government policy. He offered an approach on community based on utilitarian considerations and circumstantial consociations. After this structural interlude, ideological approaches became the central interest. In line with the cultural turn, attempts like Anthony P. Cohen’s *The Construction of Community* (1985) shifted the attention from formulating structural models of community to those focusing on meaning. With his work *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson (1991) coined the correspondent term that illustrates this change of perspective.¹² Most recently, Robert Putnam (2000) approached community by analyzing the change of social capital in the United States.

These approaches differ in their definition of commonality. Whether commonality is defined by place, identity, or interest is still highly debated. The idea of a shared place privileges face-to-face interaction and co-presence. In line with that, globalization, mobility, and migration lead to a loss of community due to their decreasing effects on co-presence. This conception of commonality has been criticized in at least two ways. First, sharing a place does not mean to have social connection. Second, social connections transgress places. People claim that they belong to a certain community although they do not have face-to-face interactions with all its members. Common

interest and common identity does not require co-presence; take, for instance, nations, ethnic communities, occupational communities, or religious communities. From the end of the 19th century until today the concept of community has lost its emphasis on locality, place, and co-presence. Anderson's *Imagined Communities* can be seen as an example of this development, wherein the author asks why people who have never met feel they belong together.

The idea of commonality in terms of place, however, has not disappeared in total. Locality matters in everyday life and community ties often have a strong local component (cf. Macdonald 2011; Crow 2011). The strength of *community* is that it combines ideas of sociality and place.¹³ Admitting that communities are often geographically dispersed, they still share certain places and spaces. These places, although dispersed and not the same, are similar, as for instance places of worship among religious communities.¹⁴ In this regard place or locality can be thought of as an arrangement through which community transpires. The question then is how place promotes social connection. And how does community materialize in place and space?

The idea of shared place has triggered a third criticism. Especially the thesis of loss or persistence of community by means of globalization and migration reveals a romanticized view and normative perspective. Here the question is not only what a community is but also what it should be. Community often is described and qualified by harmony and solidarity, or both. But religious and national communities, for instance, show harmony as well as conflict. Hence, harmony and solidarity cannot be assumed, they have to be explained.¹⁵ The normative implications of community caused folklorists (for example, Bausinger 1999 and Feintuch 2001) to question the analytical value of the concept. However, I advocate that the normativity of a useful term should not lead to its abandonment. On the contrary, normative implication can function as a useful starting point for research: why do we associate harmony and solidarity with community, why do we assume that there is longing for community (Feintuch 2001) and, most importantly, which role do folklore and expressive culture play so that the feeling to be part of a we becomes "value-laden" (ibid. 150)? To conceptualize *community* as a feeling of we-ness offers perspectives to understand the term beyond normative implications.

Despite the arguments against *community* as a concept, I consider it—especially for the study of folklore and popular culture—of analytical value. Moving forward, I see practice as the commonality that qualifies *community*. In this vein, I understand community as a group of people sharing a feeling of we-ness. This feeling transcends times and spaces and embraces different scales (colleagues, family, nations, and societies). In this regard, community is a state of mind (cf. Shore 1993). The assumptions of practice theory offer a new and valuable perspective on mind and thereby on the conception of a feeling of we-ness.

Practice Theory: New Vocabulary and New Perspectives

Andreas Reckwitz (2008)¹⁶ sees the advantages of practice theory¹⁷ in its new social-theoretical vocabulary. Practice theory decenters the common sociological approaches

of the social. In the following I will briefly name the main assumptions of practice theory which I am going to discuss later in relation to Schatzki's concept of social practices and my account on practicing community. Thereby I will develop a praxeological conception of we-ness.

The idea of practices centers on terms like relationality and positionality, locality and actuality, as well as contingency and emergence. Thus practice theory is an attempt to transcend dichotomies in social theory such as individual and society, thinking and acting, individualism and wholism/objectivism, inner and outer. In practice theory a recursive relation between those concepts is assumed. Hence, these concepts are understood as dualities instead of dichotomies. Practice theorists set themselves against a hyperrational and intellectualized picture of human agency and the social. They reject essentialist beliefs. Instead, practice theorists understand identity as determined by contextual relations and shift bodily movements, things, and practical knowledge to the center of the socio-theoretical vocabulary. Although practice theory emphasizes the local production of the social it claims that situations do not exist for themselves. Practice theory understands the social as effect of the enactment of practices. Thus, practices are the location of the social as well as the smallest unit of social analysis. In this regard, Reckwitz defines practices as follows:

A "practice" (*Praktik*) is a routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, "things" and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. A practice [...] forms so to speak a "block" whose existence necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, and which cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements. Likewise, a practice represents a pattern which can be filled out by a multitude of single and often unique actions reproducing the practice (Reckwitz 2005, 251-252).

A shorter and frequently cited phrase defines practices as a "nexus of doings and saying" (Schatzki 1996, 89). Yet, in its short version this citation abridges his approach in a critical way. In Schatzki's view a nexus of doings and sayings that constitute a practice is linked through (a) practical understanding, (b) explicit rules and principles, and (c) teleoaffective structures "embracing ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods" (ibid.). Later Schatzki adds general understanding—for instance, religious convictions—as a forth type of linkage (Schatzki 2002). On the basis of Wittgenstein's insights into practical understanding, Schatzki criticizes the theoretical assumptions of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens as over-intellectualizing accounts.¹⁸ Schatzki identifies practical understanding—in Bourdieu's terms the practical sense located in the habitus and in Giddens' terms the practical consciousness of rule following—as the basic concept of the two accounts. Following Wittgenstein, Schatzki argues that it is impossible to formulate practical understanding exhaustively in words. Hence, practical understanding is not analyzable. For this reason, a definition of practice cannot solely be based on practical understanding. What is more, practical understanding in

the sense of *knowing how to* does not determine action overall. Therefore, Schatzki adds explicit rules, teleoaffective structures, and general understanding as co-determinants to his definition of practice.¹⁹ Intertwined with arrangements of human and non-human elements, practices form the (site of the) social. The arrangements themselves are characterized by causal, spatial and intentional relations, presuppositions as well as meanings/identities (Schatzki 2002).

How can a feeling of we-ness—that is the feeling of being part of a larger group, to belong to a certain social entity—be conceptualized within this framework? Schatzki entitled his first book *Social Practices*, although he acknowledges the tautological aspect of this title. Every practice is a social practice; there are no such things as individual practices. In this regard sociality of practices has two meanings: first, a practice is carried out by different people at different places at different times (cf. Reckwitz 2008, 252); second, a practice never belongs to a single individual. In *Frames of War*, Judith Butler (2009) addresses this fact with the development of a social ontology that is based on an ontology of the body. According to her, what someone or something is is based on presuppositions:

The “being” of the body to which this ontology refers is one that is always given over to others, to norms, to social and political organizations that have developed historically [...]. It is not possible first to define the ontology of the body and then to refer to the social significations the body assumes. Rather, to be a body is to be exposed to social crafting and form, and that is what makes the ontology of the body a social ontology. In other words, the body is exposed to socially and politically articulated forces as well as to claims of sociality—including language, work, and desire—that make possible the body’s persisting and flourishing (Butler 2009, 2-3).

For this reason, to ask what something or who someone is means to ask about the operations of power.²⁰ Bourdieu developed the concept of symbolic power and violence to address this issue. Symbolic power describes the imposition of categories and categorizations of thought and perception such as gender, ethnicity or nationality, usually by agents who hold more symbolic capital upon social agents who hold less symbolic capital. The dominated agents tend to take the social order as natural, legitimate and just. Moreover, with her idea of sociality Butler emphasizes that every *I* is unthinkable without a *you*.²¹ The “constitutive sociality of the body” (Butler 2009, 54) makes body and mind on the one hand, capable of desire and on the other hand, subjected. Body and mind are always in place, part of environment and circumstances. To say that body and mind exists within an environment therefore is not enough; there are no bodies and minds without environment:

There is no life without the conditions of life that variably sustain life, and those conditions are pervasively social, establishing not the discrete ontology of the person, but rather the interdependency of persons, involving reproducible and sustaining social relations, and relations to the environment and to non-human forms of life,

broadly considered (Butler 2009, 19).

Butler's social ontology holds concrete implications about how to address issues of the social. Practices are social means. Hence, they are public and observable.²² That is, doings and sayings are seen to be understandable to potential observers (cf. Schmidt 2012, 226-62). Moreover, practices might be intelligible for a wider public—although wider public here does not mean general public. To be intelligible means to be recognized as similar, to be part of a *we* (cf. Schatzki 1996, 117).²³ In other words, intelligibility is the basis of a *we*. Hence, intelligibility qualifies what I named here a feeling of we-ness.²⁴ The question then is: in which ways do body and mind materialize and thereby exist? Butler's approach of the social by means of a new ontology of the body illustrates how practice theory and its assumptions offer new perspectives on body, mind, things, knowledge, discourse, and agency.

Every practice is actualized at a certain locality at a certain time. Therefore, it makes sense to understand practices as repetition instead of routine. The difference between routine and repetition addresses the question of stability of practices and the reproduction of the social. Hilmar Schäfer (2013) discussed the aspect of in/stability in practice theory in a very fruitful way. Inspired by Derrida's reflections on iterability he understands repetition in a post-structural sense: As mentioned above, every practice is repeated under already altered circumstances, that is, by means of time, space, and agents or all three at the same time. Thus every repetition is different. A practice reappears but it is never exactly the same; practice as repetition then is the "reappearance of the dissimilar as a similar" (Waldenfels 2001; translated by the author).²⁵ If the variation is small enough, it makes no difference to the practice in general. If the variations are recognized, they reveal that a kind of script exists that is usually followed.²⁶ This idea is comparable to Richard Bauman's approach to retelling. Assuming that every performance holds a potential to failure, he states: "Viewed both as recontextualizations and recontextualizations, such retelling offer an especially illuminating vantage point on the classic problem of variation" (Bauman 2012, 112).

If the commonality of a community is conceptualized as a shared feeling of we-ness—as I suggest here—and we-ness is defined as a state of mind, then practice theory sheds new light on our understanding of community. In proposing we-ness as a state of mind I do by no means follow an individualistic approach. Neither do I focus on the inner with demarcation of the outer. The body in practice theory is not only a tool one uses to express inner states of mind. According to practice theory, the mind cannot be separated from the body. How we consider who and what we are is related to the ways we treat and use our body and vice versa. Thus, it is more appropriate to speak about mind/body than of mind and body.

How are meaning and identity applied to and enacted by bodies/minds? Schatzki, like Bourdieu and Giddens, draws on a Wittgensteinian approach to meaning. In contrast to (neo-)Saussurian understandings, meaning does not derive from difference but from usage and activities:

Once again, differences are results, not determinants, in this case of actual activities.

It follows that meaning does not, as a general matter, arise from difference. Rather, it arises from *actuality*: actual relations among entities, and what these entities actually do. Because, moreover, semantic difference presupposes meaning, it, too, is a product of actuality (Schatzki 2002, 57).

In *The Site of the Social*, Schatzki defines identity as a subtype of meaning saying “entities with an identity are entities that have an understanding of their own meaning” (Schatzki 2002, 47).²⁷ In this regard a person’s identity has two analytically distinguishable and possibly divergent components: a person’s meaning and that person’s understanding of his/her meaning. Schatzki’s notion of meaning/identities resembles conceptions of subject positions, as developed by Foucault and Butler.²⁸ Consequently, having a position is something like being intelligible as such and such: “Meaning and identity arise (in part) from where an entity fits into the mazes of relations that characterize the arrangements of which it is a part” (Schatzki 2002, 53). Thus, meaning/identity and position are distinguished but co-dependent. Someone or something holds a position within a practice-arrangement-bundle by means of participation. Hence, an actor²⁹ is a participant of a certain practice. Schatzki is not quite clear on that. For him, “being a participant is a factual matter” (85). In my view, a participant can be defined as someone who takes part, relates and understands his/her acting as part of a practice. A participant recognizes other participants of the practice because their doing and saying are intangible for him/her. Thus, s/he feels a specific relation that I call a feeling of we-ness.³⁰ An individual, in contrast, is a person who participates in multiple practices. Hence, an individual enjoys a multitude of *wes*.³¹ The practices cross each other in the individual. For this reason, it is useful to distinguish analytically between meanings/identities of participants and of individuals. The identity of a participant of a practice is bound to the practice. The meaning/identity of a participant is the position he or she holds within the practice-arrangement-bundle. An individual, on the contrary, can participate in many practices. Consequently, individual identities/meanings are emergent, labile, and manifold phenomena. Even though an individual’s meaning/identity is multiple, most often individual identities/meanings are organized around central axes. Individuals vary in the degree to which their identity is centered and in how many centers their identity holds. Nevertheless, I follow Schatzki in his assumption of a chief identity in the sense of what a person understands himself or herself principally to be.

If identity/meaning is actualized by means of participating in a practice, the following question arises: how does participation lead to a feeling of we-ness, that is, to be part of a community? In *Community of Practice*, Etienne Wenger (2008 [1998]) develops an understanding of community by drawing on assumptions of practice theory and coins a term that recently has become popular among social scientists. He positions his concept within a social theory of learning³² and defines a community of practice as follows:

Over time, this collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of

a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore, to call these kinds of communities *communities of practice* (Wenger 2008 [1998], 45).

Communities of practices are characterized by social and intentional relations: a certain group of people shares an interest for a specific issue and works along this issue.

Wenger puts emphasis on the negotiation of meaning within practices. Members of a community of practice constantly negotiate meaning by means of participation and reification. They embody meaning in the process of participation; artefacts of practice embody meaning in the process of reification. Similar to assumptions in practice theory, participation and reification as duality to the human experience describe ongoing processes. Hence, stability of meaning and of the community of practice cannot be assumed. Instead, stability must be explained. Being an active participant in the practice of a social community means to construct one's identity in relation to this community: "Such participation shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do" (Wenger 2008 [1998], 4). Individuals develop competences by means of participating. Competence here can be thought of as *knowing how to* and is comparable to Bourdieu's practical sense, Giddens' practical consciousness, and Schatzki's practical understanding. In this vein, dimensions of competence become dimensions of identity. To participate in the practice of a social community means on the one hand to get involved and engaged and on the other hand to recognize and acknowledge others as participants of the same practice. In this regard, Wenger emphasizes that membership varies according to the position—for instance, at the core or at the periphery of a community—of the participant.

Although I agree with many of Wenger's arguments—especially with his ideas on peripheries, centers and boundaries of communities—our approaches part ways at his limitation of *community* to engagement. According to Wenger, the intentional aspect, the object of interest, qualifies a community of practice: "By associating practice with community, I am not arguing that everything anybody might call a community is defined by practice or has a practice that is specific to it; nor that everything anybody might call a practice is the defining property of a clearly specifiable community" (72). In Wenger's view, neighborhoods and playing the piano are not communities of practice. Engagement is one mode of belonging apart from others such as imagination and alignment. A TV audience or newspaper readership therefore forms different kinds of communities, which he suggests we call communities of taste, experience, or proximity. In consequence, Wenger's concept of *communities of practice* seems to be close to an idea of practice that is based on the dichotomy of thinking (mind) and practice (body). His differentiation between communities of practice and of taste or experience is closer to a definition of practice as human activity (opposed to thinking) than to Schatzki's definition of practices as "temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings" (Schatzki 1996, 89). In line with the latter definition, it is more appropriate to speak of *practiced* or *practicing* community instead of *community of practice*. And both terms, again, are tautological because within practice theory a community without practice is not possible. Following Schatzki's assumption

that teleoaffective structures with their tasks, projects, and ends are one dimension of practices, every practice can be thought of as directed towards something. This means that every participant of a practice has at least one intentional relation with another element of the arrangement the practice transpires through. Communities with a strong intentional relation form a specific type of community. In line with that, I propose to understand *community* as qualified by a feeling of we-ness by means of participating in a practice instead of intentionality. Every feeling of we-ness evolves through participation in practice and every practice has the potential to evolve a feeling of we-ness among its participants.

I began this section by noting that practice theory can be understood as a current within cultural theory. Practice theory, however, transgresses cultural theories in the sense that it shifts the focus from social constructivism and the metaphysics implied to ontology (cf. Butler 2009, 168).³³ Ontology in this sense is not to be understood as a fundamental structure of being beyond social and political organization. To make practices the main locus of social or cultural analysis means to analyze events and situations instead of perspectives or representation. Or, as Annemarie Mol puts it, it is not about talk (Mol 2002, 25-29). To understand and to research community as a phenomenon of the everyday then means to leave a reconstructive approach that focuses on talk and discourse in the sense of writing about different perspectives of communities. Instead, community should be researched by taking into account all the different events or situations people describe and live. Consequently, events with all their elements must be the focus of our analysis. Adele E. Clarke (2005) has developed a fruitful way to analyze events and situations.³⁴ I will proceed to exemplify how community as an emic phenomenon can be grasped by means of *community* as a concept based on practice theory. Therefore I shall—motivated by the methodology developed by Clarke and Mol—discuss the example of the *International Street Festival* introduced at the beginning.

Practicing Community: Boundaries, Membership, and Space

Before returning to the festival, I am going to exemplify my idea of a practicing *community*. For two reasons, I will do so by taking on a different example than the street festival, namely the practice of study and the community of students. First, the student example is complex enough but not too complex to illustrate my idea of community. Second, I am going to use this example later on in order to contrast aspects of the street festival. The example might be straightforward, but it opens up a perspective of community that is fruitful for other types of community (e.g., ethnic and religious communities, national communities, or gender communities).

How is community practiced? Drawing on assumptions of practice theory as presented above, I understand identity as enacted by people in practices, that is, in the repetition of bodily doings and sayings. Imagine a lecture hall: Going to the university and sitting in a large hall in which the chairs are directed to the front, listening to someone in the front, taking notes of the things she or he says, perhaps in order to prepare for an exam, is enacting oneself as a student by means of taking part in the

practice of studying.

Schatzki's concept of practice-arrangements-bundles and Clarke's situational analysis offer a good starting point to depict how a community of students is enacted in a lecture hall. The arrangement (in this particular case, a lecture hall and the university as a whole) consists of non-human elements such as chairs, tables, walls, a blackboard, maybe a projector, paper and pencils, and human elements, such as the lecturer and the students. Usually, the majority of people in a lecture hall sit close to each other, directed to the front, looking at someone who is usually alone. This is an aspect of the spatial relation that, according to Schatzki, exists among every arrangement. The students are there because they have to be due to study guidelines; this describes a causal relation. The study guidelines, even if not present at the very moment, are another element of the arrangement. The students' attention is directed toward the lecturer or the things she or he says; here one can speak of an intentional relation. The material elements allow for sitting and writing, for displaying pictures and graphs but they make it difficult to do experiments and less feasible to have discussions in small groups on a subject; thus the material arrangement presupposes action.

Let's have a look at the practice of studying.³⁵ The following is observable: The students do similar things; they take notes, listen to the person at the front, look at pictures and slides displayed at the front, or have conversations about the party last night because of boredom. In Schatzki's terms these are the doings and sayings. The practice of studying involves knowing how to take notes, that is, how to listen and to write simultaneously, how to deduce what is relevant information given by a lecturer, how to prepare for an exam, and so on. It also involves knowing how to (the practical understanding) behave during a lecture—for instance, when to be silent or when to talk. The action here—that is, the doings and sayings—is not only determined by practical understanding. Studying is regulated by explicit rules, for instance, by study guidelines and by module plans which prescribe when to attend which lecture. Moreover, the doings and sayings of studying are linked by orientations toward ends and how things matter for the actor; studying is composed of taking notes in every lecture (tasks), preparing for an exam (project), and effectively graduating (end) as well as the motivation to gain knowledge or to get a better starting position for a future career, or both.

The person at the front is enacting him/herself as lecturer because she or he is doing something different from the rest of the people in the room. So we got a close proximity between a lot of people doing similar things and a distance to someone doing something else. The feeling of we-ness and otherness is at hand in this very situation. Commonality in the sense of mentality and practical intelligibility, according to Schatzki, is a dimension of human coexistence: "Commonality exists when the same understanding, rule, end, project, or emotion is expressed in different people's actions or when the same action makes sense to different people to perform" (Schatzki 2002, 147). In line with that, we can speak of a community of students here. Besides, we can also assume a community of lecturers or members of the faculty. Even though there is only one present in this situation, the individual knows that there are other people

who have done what she or he is doing now or who are doing the same things at the moment.

The spatial aspect of the arrangement does not confine itself to questions of distance and proximity. Arrangements can also be thought of as *spaces of practice*. Lectures are usually—but not always—held in lecture halls, seminars are given in seminar rooms, and studying at a university requires a material arrangement that is this university.³⁶ Enacting oneself as a student and being part of a community of students then is to use these spaces regularly. Having said that, I would like to emphasize that the practice of studying is carried out in various arrangements. Sitting in a seminar, having discussions with a group of fellow students, sitting at home reading books and papers to prepare for a seminar or an exam, a student enacts him/herself as such by performing similar doings and sayings, following similar rules and understandings, and in line with a similar teleoaffective structure. As part of various arrangements participating in the practice of studying means to take up the position as a student opposed to a lecturer or reader or a librarian or a textbook. This position is actualized anew in this very arrangement.

The relevance of the elements lies in their relation to each other. The different elements gain meaning by means of holding a position within this arrangement. As I mentioned before, every arrangement and consequently every practice too is localized. Actualization differs according to locations. In each of those locations the relations and meaning of the elements (may) alter. With this alteration of relations, the meaning/identity might change as well. Giving a presentation on a subject in a seminar is enacting oneself as a student; giving a presentation on a subject in a lecture hall is enacting oneself as a lecturer. Doings and sayings as well as tasks might look the same for the observer but they can be part of different practices.³⁷ The aspect of actuality does not mean it is impossible or invaluable to speak or write about practices and their arrangements on a more general or abstract level. Bruno Latour addresses this issue nicely in his inverse proportionality of reduction and amplification: an increase in comparability, standardization, and relative universality just leads to a decrease in locality, particularity, materiality, plurality, and continuity (Latour 1999, 24-79).

After spending so much time in the academic realm it might be time for us to leave and get back to the street festival. In this final section I will unfold the concept of community as a practiced feeling of we-ness by posing a series of questions: How are we-ness and otherness practiced? How are community as an emic concept and *community* as an etic concept related? What is membership? How do communities relate to place and space?

Boundaries: We-ness and Otherness

Back at the festival, I got myself Gözleme and a piece of pizza. I sat at one of the tables in front of the stage; the show was about to begin. There was a Spanish flamenco group, a Turkish dance group, and a Portuguese drummers' association. A characteristic shared by all these groups was that they each wore their respective traditional costumes. The countries of origin of the stage performances were as easily spotted as the countries of origin of the stalls. One might describe what went on here as processes

of self-ethnicization using folklore. One might analyze the people's perception of their neighbors as attributions of nationality and see the process of self-ethnicization and attribution as mutually self-reinforcing. In this regard, the public presentation of traditional dances and typical national foodstuffs, one might say, creates symbolic loyalty (to various groups in a "foreign" environment).³⁸

Leaving this mere reconstructive approach aside, I looked at the event itself and the descriptions—not the perspectives and interpretations—given by the residents through the lens of community as feeling of we-ness. Consuming food and taking part or joining in dance performances at the *International Street Festival* is observable. Likewise, it would be possible to survey these doings and evaluate people's motivations and dispositions.³⁹ In talking about the *International Street Festival*, the residents exemplified their notions on communities by talking about food and dance performances. Doing different things or doing things differently for them describes different communities. Every community has boundaries (even if those are blurred and unclear). The concept of *community* as we-ness implicates a degree of exclusiveness. As a social entity community expresses dimensions and processes of social divisions and togetherness. It defines insider and outsider. Those boundaries are constantly negotiated. The sense of belonging varies in its intensity as well as the commitment of its members required by the community (cf. Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011). The line between we and the other is drawn here by means of doings and sayings.

At the stall of the garden allotment association I saw Franz and Ina Becker, a couple I interviewed before. The two pensioners have been living in the neighborhood since the 1950s. Ina came from Bavaria, Franz immigrated from the German Democratic Republic. During that interview the two associated a loss of community with the group of foreign immigrants that had grown as the years went on. They mentioned that there was above all a loss of community due to language differences and the tendencies of various groups to become compartmentalized. To experience a feeling of we-ness one has to understand the actions of the people one identifies with, that is, those actions have to be intelligible, as mentioned above. Language might be one of the most plausible examples to illustrate this fact. Then, Ina Becker complained, "Now there are hardly any Germans living here. You cannot have a chat with anyone anymore" (Becker [pseud.] 2010). She felt surrounded by people whose language she did not understand, whose speaking was not intelligible to her. This sets a border that defines we and the other, at least concerning language (and to language related issues like nationality⁴⁰).⁴¹ I waved a hello to them and thought about the things they said about language differences in the neighborhood—not so much because that is the first thing I associated with them but because I was confused listening to the people sitting at my table. While I was eating the Gözleme a group joined me at the table. The group consisted of four people: three women, two with headscarves, and a man who introduced himself later as Erwin Neuer. They brought some food from the stalls with them and while waiting for the show they had a lively conversation. Erwin Neuer especially caused me confusion because I could not make out what language he was speaking. Later I found out that it was Turkish and German (with a strong accent of the

Ruhrpott region). Erwin Neuer is German, married to a Turkish woman and moved to Stuttgart because he works for the Deutsche Bahn (the German railroad company). He speaks Turkish and would later tell me that he likes Turkey a lot. He and his wife have a holiday home in the southeast of Turkey. But neither does Erwin Neuer identify himself as a Turk nor does he express feelings of belonging to the community of Turks. Likewise, not everyone who has eaten pizza identifies him or herself as Italian or as Portuguese because she or he has clapped to the rhythm of the Portuguese drummer group. Their doings and sayings are similar but their orientations toward ends as well as how things matter for them—that is, their teleoaffective structures—differ. For the man sitting next to me, speaking Turkish is part of his practice of being part of a family, with a Turkish wife and Turkish relatives. For the people around me, eating non-German food is part of their identity as cosmopolitans or as their longing for Spanish food or as their way to remember the last holiday (cf. Jackson 2010; Möhring 2010). This can also be illustrated by two quotations on the shops in the district that have been taken over by immigrants during the years and started to sell different food. “No, I did not go there to buy anything,” explained Margarete Jakobi to me and went on “Why should I, I mean they [the immigrants; the author] did that for their people. There was nothing I would have liked to buy” (Jakobi [pseud.] 2013). Hildegard Immenhofer took up a different stance when she talked to me about the shops and eating “non-German” food: “Of course, we went to these shops. I mean, the vegetables and spices and so on reminded us of our vacation, for example in Italy. So we went there” (Immenhofer [pseud.] 2013).

At least two conclusions can be drawn from the example of the street festival so far. First, not every community experiences itself as such. This issue has been addressed first by Karl Marx with his differentiation between class *in* itself and class *for* itself. As I have intended to show, there is no community without practice and every practice leads to feelings of we-ness. Whether these feelings are expressed and articulated is a different matter. Someone who knows how to play the piano, to take one of the examples of Wenger, might not consider himself or herself as a member of the community of piano players until he is asked. Or a person might say that she or he is not the best and there are many people who have better skills at playing the piano. Here Wenger’s differentiation of center and periphery concerning communities is a beneficial perspective. To discern between community in itself and for itself opens the possibility to clarify the relation between community as an emic concept and community as an etic concept. To articulate one’s belonging to a certain community, to express feelings of we-ness, means to choose one practice and one position within an arrangement over multiple others—they choose one of many possible “we”. As folklorists and cultural anthropologists, we are able to identify many communities based on our studies of practice. One of the most interesting questions—at least in my view—is why people articulate specific belongings. Or, to rephrase a question of Anderson (1991): why are some people willing to die and to kill because they consider themselves as part of a larger we? Here, I relate to politics of belonging in the sense of articulated collective mobilization (cf. Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011).

Second, we are living in a world with presuppositions. We might struggle with them and try to fight them but they are a matter of fact. They can be thought of as frames, in the way Butler (2009) does or as classifications in Bourdieu's account (1984). At the street festival, people might join the Portuguese drummer group because it is part of their enactment as Portuguese. But they might also eat Turkish food because it reminds them of their last holiday and not because they enact themselves as Turks. Hence, Schatzki's differentiation between meaning and identity is very useful here. It is about the difference of being seen and seeing oneself. And this is a differentiation highly relevant for empirical research. If we define the element of an arrangement and its meaning/identity we need to take into account where, how, and why meaning and identity fall apart. Boundaries are negotiated and reified every time people follow practices, namely practices that either define who someone understands him- or herself to be or that define who someone else understands someone else to be. These two aspects of boundaries and exclusiveness point to relations of power and make community a valuable object of critical analysis.⁴² To put it simply, the question is: who is allowed to participate and what does participation include?⁴³ This requires a relational social ontology as put forward by Butler. What counts within this social ontology is not only the relation between we and others—between *I* and *you*—but also within *wes*. Participation in terms of membership is a strong metaphor to grasp this relation. What is more, the metaphor of membership leads us to questions about time and stability of practices and communities.

Endless Becoming? Time and Stability of Membership

As I talked with the people at my table, the stage performances began. The first act was a Turkish dance group consisting of ten people. Their costumes were orange, black, and gray, and decorated with golden sequins. I recognized Hatice as one of the male dancers from an earlier meeting; I met her in the social worker center. But now it was not her on the stage; not in the sense the grammatical gender the personal pronoun implies. While performing, she was actualizing a male position. Later she explained to me that they were short of people. So she had to put on the male costume and dance the male part in order to have an equality of male and female dancers. Here the above-mentioned differentiation between participants and individuals becomes useful. As a participant of this specific dancing practice Hatice enacted herself as a male dancer. As an individual in the everyday, Hatice enacts herself as a woman. On this afternoon her male identity lasted for about five minutes, whereas her female identity will (probably) last her whole life.

In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson (1991) highlights the importance of the concept of empty time for communities or, in his particular case, for nations. Thinking about the street festival, the reader may wonder what being a student and being a German, a migrant or a Catholic have to do with each other and whether they are comparable at all. These different kinds of community are comparable and especially the comparison opens new perspectives.⁴⁴ The most obvious difference between students and ethnic identities is the aspect of time. Whereas being a student can be thought of as a phase of life with a definite start and an ending, being German or being male or female is

usually not thought of as a phase of life. To become part of a community requires phases of orientation as well as of initiation. New students, for example, are shown around at the library, get used to how to enter a building, where to go for advice, how to use the library catalogue, and how to make notes during a lecture. Like performing oneself as a student, Butler and subsequent studies based on her assumptions have shown how sex and gender are performed. Concerning Hatice, it is not simply about putting on a male costume. In this case for instance to enact a position as a male dancer means knowing the steps associated with that position, to dance with a female counterpart and to be acknowledged by the other dancers as well as the audience as a male dancer.⁴⁵ The term “naturalization” for the process of becoming a citizen of a different country than that of origin neatly points to the fact that identities assumed to be natural are not everlasting.⁴⁶

But what happens if we change the perspective? What about ending? What about terminating membership to a community? In her essay on the social base of folklore Noyes reminds her readers of the ambivalence of community:

Where belonging is thick, with a rich imaginary reinforced by dense interaction among community members or strong external pressures, individuals are likely to feel an almost sacramental strength of meaning in everyday actions that is not free of claustrophobia. Community can be a painful inheritance and it restricts individual freedoms (Noyes 2012, 25).

To conceptualize *community* as a feeling of we-ness offers ways to think *community* beyond communitarian imaginings, that Noyes (ibid.) criticizes, and to draw attention to the leaving of communities as well. Transgressing is often understood in terms of becoming something new but seldom about ending. Graduation marks the moment when someone ends his / her membership of being part of the student community. How do people leave communities? How do they end to be part of a nation, to be black or white, to be part of a specific sex or gender? How do people create those phases where the feeling of we-ness stops?⁴⁷ And what remains? When is multiple membership possible and when is it not? And for what reasons might it be impossible? If we consider the body in line with practice theory, then we face a trained body, a knowing body. Ends are never fully complete. To draw on Wenger’s wording, what effects does the history of learning have on the individual? The metaphor of the palimpsest is fruitful to understand the remains which will still be there after being member of different communities. The palimpsest points us to the effects of embodiment; layers of embodiments individuals gained by means of participating in various practices.

Concerning the aspect of time in communities, we may distinguish between short-term and long-term communities and the effects of participating in them for the individual. A long-term membership might be more important concerning its centrality for the individual. Is it possible to speak of a community of festival participants? It is, because the festival is a practice-arrangement-bundle where people could consider themselves as part of the festival and experience a feeling of we-ness with the other people, although they might not express this feeling directly. Moreover this festival,

this event, is also part of a long-term community, that is, the neighborhood or the district, respectively. It is an event where people actualize their relation to the district and get involved with the district, whether as neighbors, as politicians, or as social workers.

This feeling of we-ness in terms of relation to the neighborhood is evoked by Gökay Sofuoğlu, the director of the social worker center at that time. He was on the stage and greeted some of the local politicians and started his speech as follows: "Intercultural relations can be tough and hard work but at the same time they are wonderful." In an interview he later told me: "The festival is about bringing people together, to see what the others are doing and to learn from each other." In a local newspaper article, he said, "Especially for the children it is about exploring the similarities across national differences and to overcome fear of contact" (qtd. in Muzenhardt 1997, translated by the author). On stage, he articulated a feeling of we-ness. Being at the street festival was an opportunity for the residents to actualize themselves as being part of this special community. The people that take part in the festival enact themselves as part of a community despite all their differences. Elke Winter, a former social worker in the district, stated during our interview that this was the initial idea of the festival. She remembered a sentence from one of the residents with whom she established the festival over twenty years ago: "Our work is done as soon as everyone is dancing here on the streets. If we manage to effect that, then we got Europe in a nutshell" (Winter [pseud.] 2013). The same goes for national celebration and holidays, religious festivals or family activities. Short-term communities can function as actualizations of long-term communities (cf. Damsholt 2009). Although he felt an uneasiness to call some musicians a community, Feintuch's conclusion to this article perfectly fits my ideas of short-term and long-term communities: "But in the course of making their music, they have also managed to create a social space that is moral, and despite its contingent and ephemeral qualities, this allows them to feel the kind of connections long associated with community, however fleeting the experience" (Feintuch 2001, 159). The loss of those events affects the long-term feelings of we-ness. To study communities by means of analyzing events in terms of performance therefore is a valuable perspective for folklore studies and cultural analysis (cf. Kapchan 1995).

Spaces of Practice as Spaces of Community

I talked about boundaries of community. One of those boundaries is drawn between those that take part in the festival and those that do not. The festival is an opportunity for people to talk about community and cohesion as well as the decrease of community they experience. It is about the festival as a community and moreover about the community of the neighborhood, about a neighborhood that has changed due to immigration in terms of nationality, ethnicity, religion, and structure of age. The street festival, thus, can be thought of as an important space for the community of the district. And this space enjoys a specific location. For Aliyah Yilmaz, another resident, the experience of a decrease in community is related to the location where the street festival used to take place. It moved from the main street to the periphery of the district. This addresses

another important aspect of communities: the question of space/place.

As mentioned above, the street festival has been organized by the social worker center from the beginning. The social worker center itself used one of the three railroad residential homes when it was founded in the 1980s. The space became available after the labor migrants moved into the flats in the district. The railroad residential home was located where I entered the district at the beginning of this text. Next to a Protestant church and on the main street with different shops, cafés and bars, it was situated in the center of the district. Due to a restructuration program at the end of the 1990s the social center moved into a new and bigger building. The new building was less than 300 meters away from the former location of the social worker center but it was located at the periphery of the district. During our conversation Aliyah Yilmaz mentioned wistfully the period when the festival took place on the main street. She described the way all the surrounding streets used to be closed and the whole district came together for the festival: “I really miss those times. [...] At that time [twenty year ago, the author] the people cared more about those things, it was really crowded. All the surrounding streets were closed and there were people everywhere. The whole district came together for the street festival. It was a warm-hearted atmosphere then” (Yilmaz [pseud.] 2009). I said earlier that in order to be part of a community of students one needs to use the space/place that is called university regularly. Nations are related to geographical territories. Religious groups are related to places of worship and holy places. Occupational communities are related to occupational spaces. Those places/spaces evolve through practices and practices transpire through them. The street festival is a way to experience community and because the community comes together, drinks, eats, dances, and enjoys performances the street festival exists. These spaces/places are material. Bourdieu emphasized that the material/objective circumstances lead to class specific habitus. Becoming a member of a community then is to start using specific spaces/places and to get used to them. To end being a member means to leave those places/spaces and to not use them anymore. Paolo Vernandez takes a similar view on the fundamental loss of the sense of community and cohesion in the district, but in particular connects the relocation of the street festival with a declining participation of the German population. He reported that people from the local allotment association are now the only Germans who come: “When the festival took place on the street [next to the church, the author] I think everyone was keen on taking part. But when they decided that the festival should take part next to the new building down the road, participation decreased. Just a few Germans are coming now, mostly members of the allotment garden association because they got their own stall” (Vernandez [pseud.] 2009). Other Germans, in his view, are not part of the community of the district anymore because they are not coming to the street festival anymore. Being part of a community means to take part in community activities, respectively practices.

Community issues are sometimes carried out in terms of territorial power—the right to be there (cf. Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011).⁴⁸ The two women with the headscarves next to me were members of the local mosque. The mosque is not situated within the

district. The Islamic community rented an old baking factory at the periphery of the district in the early 2000s. In 2010 the community wanted to buy a house within the district. This was followed by a lot of protest among the residents (not only the ones of German descent). Eventually, the baking factory was up for sale and the Islamic communities bought it. There was a lot more space. Parking space as one of the major arguments against the mosque in the neighborhood therefore was no longer an issue. Even though the community had been using the baking factory as a mosque for ten years, there were still protests by the surrounding residents.⁴⁹ Dignitaries of the local Catholic and Protestant churches argued for the mosque and claimed that the Islamic community had a right to establish a building at this particular place. Because the Islamic community took responsibility for the community of the district by means of offering help with homework, organizing free time activities for children, and taking part in interreligious activities they were part of the community. To be conceived as a member of a *community* means to be recognized as taking part actively in the places/spaces of that *community*.

It might be easy to define place/space for occupational communities, religious communities, even for LGBT communities, but what about ethnic communities or the feeling of we-ness among gender communities? The last two are interesting because they do not belong to a specific arrangement, to a specific space of practice, but to many. Schatzki discerns dispersed practices from integrated practices. Following my argument on the relation between practices and communities so far, the following questions arise: Might it be useful to distinguish between dispersed and integrated communities as well? Are there differences between communities that are enacted in a specific space of practice like occupational communities (as for instance the scientific community) and those communities that are enacted in different spaces of practice as ethnic communities and gender communities? The two women next to me use different spaces within the mosque than the men do. Hence, there are spatial differentiations concerning dispersed communities. Recently, Stefan Hirschauer (2014) argued that it is necessary to look at when and where differentiations between human beings become important. If we take the feeling of we-ness as practiced and assume that a person can hold multiple memberships in different communities then it might be interesting to ask how those membership belongings actualize in different arrangements. Wenger's ideas on overlapping practices, on brokers and boundary objects, on peripheries and centers could be very inspiring if we transfer those from occupational communities to communities in general.

Outlook (instead of a Conclusion)

My aim in writing this article was to outline a praxeological concept of community, a concept that is of analytical value for the study of the everyday. Motivated especially by the work of Schatzki, I have proposed community as a feeling of we-ness that evolves and transpires through bundles of practices and arrangements among participants of these practices. Moreover, I have suggested to understand everyday notions of community—community for itself—as articulations of any possible practiced

community—community in itself. To use community as one analytical concept facilitates asking for the differences and similarities of a variety of everyday phenomena. To contrast the we-ness among women with the we-ness among claim processors might shed new light on the one, on the other or on both. Taking my fieldwork of a street festival as a point of departure to think about *community* as a concept, I have drawn attention to aspects of boundaries, space and time as well as proposed metaphors such as membership and palimpsest for future research. The example of the street festival, furthermore, has shown that on the one hand the concept of community is a valuable perspective for folklorists and on the other hand how folklorists with their experience in the study of public and expressive culture can make a contribution to the development of practice theory.

On my way going back and forth between the festival and the literature I have probably raised more questions than given answers. I will leave it at that, noting that it reminds me of a wonderful description—I cannot remember where I came across it—of what science is about: the essence of study and research are not answers and facts but everlasting doubts and questions.

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Notes

- 1 For the history of the district, see Kurz (2005).
- 2 The first recruitment agreement was signed with Italy in 1955. During the following years, further agreements were signed between the Federal Republic of Germany and the sending countries Greece and Spain (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965), and Yugoslavia (1968). During the 1973 oil crisis, the German parliament agreed to cease this type of recruitment and dissolved the agreements.
- 3 In Germany, the term “immigrant background” (Migrationshintergrund) has been adopted in official statistics in recent years as the description of individuals with foreign origins. Everyone who has moved to the territory of today’s Federal Republic of Germany since 1949, as well as all foreigners born in Germany and everyone born in Germany with at least one parent who moved to Germany or was born there after 1949, is described as having an immigration background. A concept of ethnicity such as that used for example in the United Kingdom or the U.S. is not used in German official statistics.
- 4 All of these data are as of 2014, see Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart (2015).
- 5 Developments in the district are also reflected in the associations. Some groups that

existed in the early period are no longer there, as the members have all moved away; a Spanish and a Turkish association, for example, whose members returned to their home countries or spend most of their time there after reaching retirement age. Only a few of the first “guest-worker generation” settled in the Nordbahnhofviertel permanently. For many of them, it is visits to their children and grandchildren that are now their main reason for visiting Stuttgart again.

- 6 The names of the residents have been changed and are marked as pseudonyms when cited. However, the names were changed according to national and ethnic equivalence in accordance to the real names. The translations of the German quotations are mine.
- 7 In order to discern between an emic and etic usage of the term, “community” as an analytical concept will be written in italics.
- 8 This might also be the reason why the term is absent in disciplinary reference books such as *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (Simpson & Roud 2000), *American Folklore. An Encyclopedia* (1996), *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art* (1998) and a *Companion to Folklore* (2012) while it is listed in sociological works of reference (see annotation 10).
- 9 Performance can also be understood in terms of performativity as for instance developed by Judith Butler. Her approach of performativity has much in common with practice theory. In folkloristics, however, performance is usually referred to the works of Kenneth Burke. In order to avoid confusion I will use performance and perform here in the way they are usually used in folklore and instead use enactment and enact to relate to practice theory. For the difference between performance and practice theory in Folklore and Folklife Studies see Bronner (2012); for performance as concept for the study of expressive culture see Kapchan (1995) and Bauman (2012).
- 10 For an overview of the term and concept of community see for instance Amit (2004), Crow (2011), Gebhardt (2014), and Shore (1993). For a detailed and extensive analysis of the term and its usage in social sciences see the *Connected Communities Project* (Crow and Mah 2012).
- 11 Talcott Parsons chose communal and associative relationships as translation for *Vergemeinschaftung* and *Vergesellschaftung*. In a new version of *Economy and Society*, Keith Tribe translated *Vergemeinschaftung* as formation of community and *Vergesellschaftung* as formation of association. For a detailed discussion on the translation see Swedberg (2005, 11-12 & 43-44).
- 12 Although Imagined Community became a symbol of an approach on community based on social constructivism, Anderson, taking on a Marxist perspective, discussed meaning in relation to economic developments and material aspects and thereby grounded the symbolic construction of community.
- 13 This might be the more apparent for German speakers as the German language differentiates between *Gemeinde* (place, locality) and *Gemeinschaft* (sociality).
- 14 Schatzki, with reference to geographical approaches, proposes the terms “activity space” and “activity-place space” to address the spatial relations of practice-arrangement-bundles. (Schatzki 2002, 42-44) For a discussion of the spatial aspect of *community* see the third section of this essay.
- 15 On the contrary, conflict and discussion enjoy the potential of fostering community in

terms of negotiation. Moreover, to be able to criticise is often based on belonging; see for instance the example of a migrant in Switzerland given by Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka: “Your homeland is where you are allowed to criticise” (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011, 206).

- 16 For an English-language discussion of the development, assumptions, and currents in practice theory, see Reckwitz’ article in the *European Journal of Social Theory* (Reckwitz 2002).
- 17 To speak of one single practice theory is impossible. In reference to Sherry Ortner (1984), I will, however, use the term in the singular as a symbol for a variety of theories and methods that share basic assumptions. None of these different approaches will be outlined and discussed in detail. Rather, I will highlight specific aspects and dimensions of practice theory insofar as they are related to my conceptualization of *community*. For an exhaustive discussion see for instance the works of Reckwitz (for instance 2002 and 2008).
- 18 Schatzki lays out detailed discussions of the concepts of Bourdieu and Giddens in his book *Social Practices* (Schatzki 1996); his article in *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* gives a shorter version of this discussion (Schatzki 1997). For Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, social fields and capitals see for instance Bourdieu (1977; 1984; 1990), for Giddens theory of structuration see Giddens (1984).
- 19 According to Schatzki, practical understanding, rules, teleoaffective structures, and general understanding do not cause action in the sense of an abstract mental or real apparatus. As “aspects of how things stand or are going for someone ongoingly involved with persons, objects, and situations” they make up “conditions of life” that “articulate what makes sense to people to do [...]” (Schatzki 1997, 303).
- 20 Butler sets a strong emphasize on norms, and the iterability, heterogeneity, and contingency thereof. This means that a norm is an ongoing process of negotiation. In line with that, Butler argues for an account of performativity instead of construction that offers a perspective on ontological effects and the process of materialization (Butler 2009, 168).
- 21 The idea of an individual or a group as being defined by others has been introduced to folklore by Kenneth Burke writing about the “paradox of substance.” Referring to Spinoza, Burke (1969, 23) states: “the word ‘substance,’ used to designate what a thing *is*, derives from a word designating something that a thing *is not*,” highlighting thereby the relevance of the context of a thing for the meaning/identity of the thing. This conception is in line with (neo-)Saussurian approaches on meaning, as for instance Bourdieu’s, where meaning derives from difference. However, this conception stays in opposition to an approach based on Wittgenstein, where the meaning/identity of a thing derives from actuality (see my argument below).
- 22 For Bourdieu, for instance, dispositions are public and hence observable. Therefore, they function as object of analysis.
- 23 Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka’s concept of belonging is very close to this notion of intelligibility: “Belonging together [...] means sharing experience and the tacit self-evidence of being, of what goes without saying; means jointly taking things for granted, and sharing common knowledge and meanings” (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011, 204).
- 24 One might see my idea of we-ness as comparable to the concept of *communitas* as developed by Victor (e.g. 2000) and Edith Turner (2012). Although the term *communitas*

derives from the Latin word for community, it gained a specific meaning in the writings of the Turners' and subsequent studies. Compared to their concept of *communitas* my idea of community differs in two important ways. First, in the Turners' approach *communitas* emerges within liminal periods, usually although not limited to ritual processes. That is to be in the state of *communitas* is situational, immediate, concrete and spontaneous. Although the authors claim the possibility of the conversion of *communitas* into norm-governed relationships and broaden the focus from events to everyday occurrences (E. Turner 2012), *communitas* describes a condition beyond the ordinary structure—or in Turners' words anti-structure. In contrast, my focus of *we-ness* highlights the ordinary or unquestioned feeling of belonging. Moreover in the Turners' approach at the moment of the *communitas* *you* and *I* become one. Therefore in comparison to my approach of *we-ness* one could speak of their concept of oneness. This differentiation is important as my idea of *we-ness* implies social relations in two ways: on the one hand relations of *yous* and *Is* among the *we* and on the other hand relations between the own *we* and other *wes*; that is on the one hand to be intelligible and acknowledged as similar and on the other hand to be intelligible and acknowledged as other. Second, in line with the former argument, my concept of *we-ness* is not normative whereas the approach of the Turners' assumes an overall longing for *communitas*. Especially Edith Turners' last writing on *communitas* highlights the humanitarian idea of the concept and thereby neglects conflicts that derive from feelings of belonging as well as the possibility of uneasiness with being part of a *we*. I will draw especially on this issue in the section on boundaries.

- 25 *Die "Wiederkehr des Ungleichen als eines Gleichen"* (Waldenfels 2001, 7).
- 26 See, for example, the breaching experiments of Harold Garfinkel (1967) and Erving Goffman (1963 and 1971). Two recent accounts on the change and dynamics of practices can be found in Schatzki (2013) and Shove et al. (2012).
- 27 With this distinction, Schatzki overcomes the differences and hierarchies between humans and non-humans by means of leaving open whether non-humans have an understanding of themselves.
- 28 Although Schatzki broadens Foucault's (early) focus on discourse and defines people's meaning/identity as practiced phenomena with linguistic aspects. In contrast to Butler, Schatzki focuses to a lesser degree on norms.
- 29 Within practice theory the concept of an actor is widened, taking humans as well as non-humans into account as actors insofar as they make a difference. Whether there is a symmetrical or asymmetrical relation between humans and non-humans is still highly debated.
- 30 For the status of the participant in *The Site of the Social* (Schatzki 2002), see Jansen (2005).
- 31 See also Pfaff-Czarnecka's ideas on simultaneous and changeable belonging, situational multiplicity, and diverse horizons of belonging (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011, 210).
- 32 Lave and Wenger (1991) introduce the term "community of practice" in their study on situational learning. Lave and Wenger were interested in finding out how newcomers to groups become established members by means of learning through participation. In *Community of Practice*, Wenger (2008) develops the term with a focus on identity. Eventually, Wenger and others (2002) shifted their attention to aspects of knowledge

- management. For a history of the term and concept, see Cox (2005).
- 33 This does not mean that meaning, as the core of cultural theories, is abolished from practice theory. But the status of meaning within practice theory is different. Where constructivism is about representation, knowledge and perception, practice theory is about enactment, embodiment and performance. See, for instance, Mol's (2002) book on ontology in medical practice.
- 34 The importance of the situational context is also put forward in Bauman's approach to performance as entextualization and contextualization (Bauman 2012).
- 35 In this example to study is solely related to a university context. I will leave the various other meanings the verb possesses aside here. Schatzki (1996, 91-110) distinguishes dispersed practices from integrated practices. In line with that, studying as depicted here describes an integrated practice.
- 36 By declaring the practice of studying requires a university, I do not claim that the university as arrangement has to be non-virtual. But a virtual university requires materiality as well.
- 37 Giving presentations during seminar sessions is a good example to show the complexity of the relation between practices and arrangements. In seminars, students as well as lectures are giving presentations. Both *know how to* do that. But according to rules and teleoaffective structures their practices differ.
- 38 For such an analysis, see my article on the same festival (Klückmann 2013).
- 39 In this sense, practice theory offers also ways to transgress the boundary between quantitative and qualitative research. Both Giddens and Bourdieu make an attempt to overcome this opposition in social research and aim at combining quantitative and qualitative methods of research; see, especially, Bourdieu (1984).
- 40 To associate specific words with specific assumptions or naming are examples for repeated sayings respectively discursive practices.
- 41 Mastering a language is often an important aspect of nationality and ethnicity and language courses are one of the most frequently offered activities by immigrant organizations in order to foster national identity.
- 42 While I started writing this article, the case of Rachel Dolezal was widely discussed. Rachel Anne Dolezal is an American civil rights activist and was president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Dolezal identifies herself as black. This became subject of controversy after her parents stated that she had lied about her racial identity. Her case illustrates two things: first, there are certain rules, understandings, ends that need to be followed to be black, and, second, there are others that have to acknowledge a certain person as part of the community. Neither the practices Dolezal followed nor the acknowledgement she tried to reach were within her own power. It would be interesting to look closer at the arguments brought forward to reject her identity as a black woman. Yet, Dolezal's case is not only about becoming a member of a community; it is also about stopping to be a member of a different community. For a summary of the debate and Dolezal's biography, see the article on Wikipedia (2015).
- 43 Compare from Pfaff-Czarneckas argument, that it can be as difficult to leave a community as it is get to get access to a community (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011, 211).

- 44 For a very well elaborated argument for explorative comparison see Schmidt (2012, 99-129).
- 45 For example Richard Ekins (1997) has displayed how men start to become women and how this is about learning to master techniques of being a woman, including imagining oneself as a woman.
- 46 In naturalization processes, rituals, ceremonies, and performances enjoy a high significance concerning the transformation of the self. See, for instance, Damsholt (2009).
- 47 In *Frames of War*, Butler (2009, 183–184) argues that the subversive potential of iteration lies in its opportunity to reach for the (emergency) brake, to stand still for a moment in the stream of endless becoming. It may be fruitful to have a closer look at cases where people do exactly that.
- 48 The “right to be there” points to Noyes (2012) remarks on the subaltern (body). To ask for the spaces of communities, is a way to trace the subaltern and reveal the social constraints it is subjected to.
- 49 That indicates that the arguments against the mosque within the district could not have been about parking space alone.

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