

## What can be a conclusion

This rethinking of community not only marks a turn in the way we might conceive of the constitution of the idea of community, but also a shift in the way in which we might mobilise community. Community as an active idea thus calls for a refusal, an unworking of the very terms upon which this idea is constructed.<sup>75</sup> It requires a continual unworking of totalising and exclusionary myths of collectivity upon which community is formed. Community calls for the opening up of other possible and potential networks of relations, of living and being with others. In that sense, as an activity, community can be conceived as a process, a battle or struggle to establish linkages, connections and relations even though the very impossibility of categorisation, of communities, continues to haunt the activity of community.<sup>76</sup>

Revisiting the assessment stated earlier in the essay “community as a design object”, and contemplate about the ways that can be infiltrated by this “unworking” idea of the community, we can start imagining this idea of the community **as a craft**.

Nothing makes meaning for itself, as words acquire the meaning we give to them. As Donna Haraway has beautifully stated “It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories”.<sup>77</sup> What I’m suggesting here, is instead of an object with a given form, the active community requires a different understanding, as a formless substance taking shape in the hands of those involved with it. The community as craft greatly disturbs the body-mind distinction mentioned in the beginning of this dissertation, and adds more nuances in the current notion of agency in the communities existing in the online realm.

I would say that the formulation of community through social media has the potential to realise this interruptive idea of community that acts more as potential networks of relations, as it’s a community concerned with the relations that are formed across the categories of race, sexuality etc. That means though that we are referring to a community

without identity, “an absolutely unrepresentable community”<sup>78</sup>

But as categorisation is a fundamental factor for the sustainability of the platform – as moderation and data collection work explicitly in line with categories – we once again end up in a non-operative resolution.

We end up in a paradox. Social media perpetuate a concept of community that fails to reach the promised expectations, therefore we end up disillusioned with a distorted idea of community. On the other hand a reformulated concept of community is almost impossible to be actualised through the social platforms – as that would mean a community without an identity, hence not subjected to categorisation and thus surveillance, and the platform will no longer obtain the control of it.

So, in this equation of community and platform, the only thing that remains and can be shifted – as the other two would be impossible to modify – is our own perception. Is it possible to detach community from certain preoccupied definitions and concepts, and not perceive them as fixed and concrete conceptions to be able to re-engage and re-design the meaning?

As I’ve presented above, illusions can be created by both cognitive and non-cognitive procedures. In optical illusions we let our brain be deceived in order to experience a temporary enjoyment. Following the questions raised earlier, we need to think whether the illusion of community is a deception we allow to happen or not, whether we can gain control of it. As I’ve argued, our perception of community is similar to the phantom limb sensation. Unlike the other illusions that I’ve presented, phantom limb in some severe long lasting cases requires treatment, which varies from a range of medications, to alternative therapies like electrical nerve stimulation, massage, mirror box and more. Does the illusion of community require a treatment then? The illusion of community could become more like the falsity of touch, where we are reconciled with the idea of impossibility, or even the optical illusion where we consciously accept it.

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<sup>75</sup> Devadas, V. and Mummery, J., 2007. Community Without Community. *Borderlands e-journal*, [online] 6(1). Available at: <[http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol6no1\\_2007/devadasmummery\\_intro.htm](http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol6no1_2007/devadasmummery_intro.htm)>.2007, [http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol6no1\\_2007/devadasmummery\\_intro.htm](http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol6no1_2007/devadasmummery_intro.htm) (journal)

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Haraway, D., 2016, Staying with the trouble : [Making Kin in the Chthulucene](#), Duke University Press, p.12

<sup>78</sup> Agamben, G., 1993. *The Coming Community*. U of Minnesota Press, pp.24-25.

In this context, I believe it's relevant to make a reference to Federico Campagna, and his idea of "magic" as an **alternative therapeutic reality**, as he observes the crisis of our very sense of reality, and a paralysis of our ability to act and to imagine.<sup>79</sup>

What I'm suggesting here is to challenge the truth/illusion dualism, and the existing systems. In this respect, the question can be revised : Is it possible to use the illusion as a tool of resistance ?

To answer this question and leave room for contemplation, I chose this quote from Campagna for the end:

“Regardless of the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves to live, and even if we are completely hopeless about our power to modify the balance of forces on a macroscopic scale, **we are always capable of modifying our own reality-settings** - thus giving to ourselves a different reality, a different world and a different existential experience within it. **Is it pure illusion?** Not any more, or any less, than any other reality or any other world that is hegemonic enough to impose its own social institutions over a specific historical period.”

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<sup>79</sup> Campagna, F., 2018, *Technic and Magic*. Bloomsbury Academic, London, p.116