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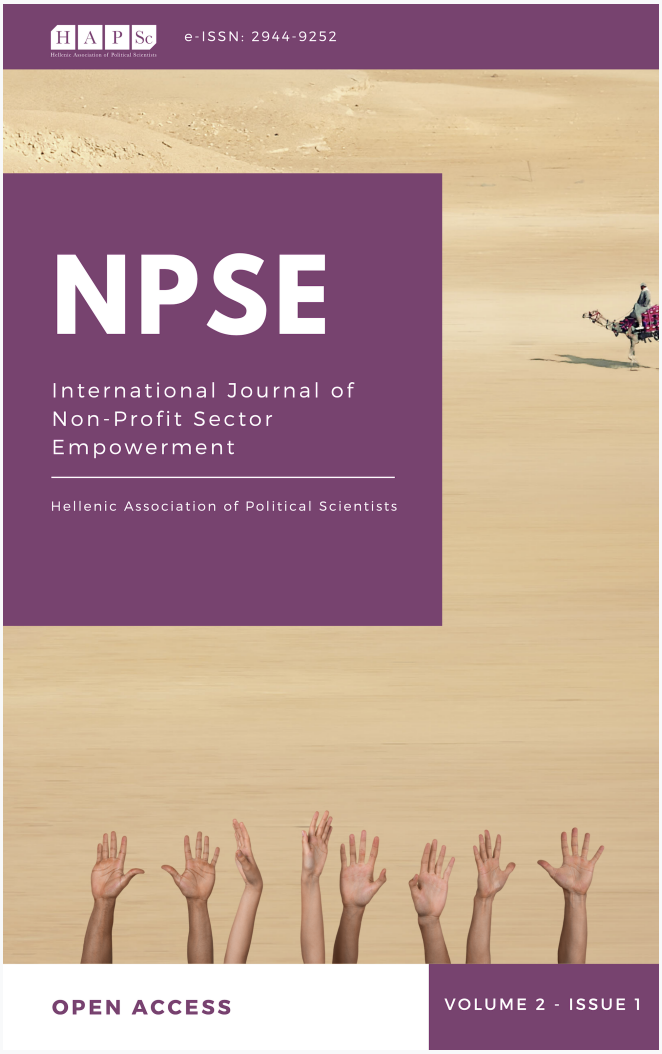

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Theodoros Fouskas

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Unravelling the Concept of Community in Diaspora: The Role of Greek Immigrant Associations in the United States since 1900

Theodoros Fouskas
Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health Policy, School of Public Health, University of West Attica, Greece.

Abstract
The history of Greek overseas migration takes place between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The USA became a pole of attraction for Greek labourers aiming at starting a new life across the Atlantic, considering "America" as a place of opportunity and prosperity. This article examines the concept of community in diaspora and the role of Greek immigrant associations in the United States since 1900. The first organizations created by generally low-educated and unskilled immigrants until the beginning of the 20th century were expatriates from the same region in Greece (hometown associations). Among the main reasons that push immigrants to create ethnic community associations were the adaptation to the foreign environment and protection of their rights and the preservation of the national identity of language and traditions.

Keywords: Diaspora, Greek Immigrants, Community, Immigrant Associations, Immigration, United States

1. Introduction: The Concept and the Definition of Community

The concept and the definition of community is one of the most interesting subjects that puzzle the social sciences. Immigrants in all industrialized societies affirm their ethnicity, religion, origins/location, et al., via participation and membership in communities and collectivities. The definition of community is often disregarded by social scientists, used only occasionally, with vague generalities, especially when discussing immigrant populations. People apparently believe in the concept of community giving it a meaning either as a reality or as an ideal, symbolic or pseudo construction of collectivity (Cohen, 1985), despite the fact that it is an unfeasible state in modern societies. Therefore, what should be considered is how the relationships between people, their identities, or their interaction with each other and with the rest of society are affected. The research and this chapter do not examine the entire spectrum of the notion of community nor are they an exhaustive theoretical examination of the term. Today all sociological research identifies the problem that the key features of community seem to be absent. That is, the characteristics and cohesive elements

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(Cantle, 2005) that create collective forms of action, everyday living, identity, work, etc., are missing; so, one cannot talk about community in the full meaning of the term but can only observe new collective attempts.

The main issue that concerns the academic community is the role of wage labour, the capitalist labour market and the new forms of employment, the splintering of traditional community values and the relations of solidarity. Immigrant communities do not function as real ones in the traditional community sense, but rather have a symbolic or metaphorical significance for the immigrants. The term community in this case does not reflect the congregation of people in a common existent place but rather an imaginary one in the society of reception, through recollections. Advocacy/voluntary immigrant associations emerged as a counterbalance to the hard times in the early years of settlement and to facilitate life in the host society. The core for their formation is the symbolic place in their memory which refers to home, family, village, place, kinship, ethnicity, language, culture, religion and tradition, ties that constitute a common and specific identity. Between the 19th and early 20th century in the United States and Europe, community associations were formed based on religion, ethnicity, occupation and place of origin, but lacked many of the traditional bonds. The limits of these communities are symbolically constructed because the immigrant populations, are clustered around memories of homeland and village communities in a new environment that does not allow territorial restrictions or retaining of ties. However, new forms of community associations are shaped, associations that have a reference to the place of origin but often lack cohesive elements since the immigrants who participate are in a precarious status. This leads to a community organization which is fleeting, temporary and mobile, with no roots and no connections to communities of the past. These populations, on entering wage and precarious work in low-status jobs, search for community solidarity; due to the frame of low-status services where immigrants are employed, disorganization and individualistic attitudes develop among the immigrant workforce. Important elements that affected this research on community associations of the immigrant workforce are examined.

1.1. “Community”: Definitions of an Imagined Notion?

The concept of community consists of the fundamental issues that concern sociology and social sciences. It is a sociological vague term, conceptually and differently defined and is generally used in everyday parlance (Gillette, 1926; Hillery, 1938; Watson, 1980). Many studies mention that one of the sociological tools to investigate and highlight the features and differences of the industrial capitalist society is to parallel it with feudal society and traditional social organization. The research interest for the community and its characteristics began in the 19th century. The perceptions of community are

strongly influenced by Romanticism and view the changes of progress and modernity through the use of science and rationality with distrust. The classic work of Tönnies (1887/1957), who compared modern society (Gesellschaft/association) with the traditional close community (Gemeinschaft/community), has deeply affected international literature and research. Tönnies' distinction can be summarized in: on the one hand, community is found in rural environments and is identified as small scale and stable, with a sense of familiarity, based on mutual, traditional and intimate relations and on religion, and on the other hand, society is found in urban environments (Harvey, 1985; Castells, 1977) characterized by a large and unstable scale, with scientific, self-centered and individualistic attitudes (Sennett, 1998), based on rationality (Anderson, 1983 Zaimakis, 2002; Rodger and Herbert, 2007). Trying to examine the changes resulting from the Industrial Revolution and to describe key stages of social development, Tönnies (1887/1957) developed a typology of social relations, according to which there are two types of social bonds: the community and the society. The community is a standard natural bond, a natural product that will be derived from blood ties (common ancestry), close partnership, joint action and common settlement. The close community-type relations are by extended coherence, emotional intensity and connection with traditions and customs that were passed through the generations (Black and Simey, 1954; French, 1969; Elias and Scotson, 1994). This type of sociality develops at the level of family, kinship, friendship, neighborhood and group. In the community people are associated with emotional bonds and togetherness, forming dense networks of interpersonal relations through which they try to satisfy a variety of purposes and collective goals (Nisbet, 1967, 1968). In contrast, the society refers to the logic of the company and corporation, based on logical thinking, organization and interest and is characterized by impersonal, contractual, utilitarian, instrumental and specialized relationships for individual goals. In society people seek individual purposes through a rational agreement of interests. The society occurs in the large urban city, to interest groups, corporations and the State; it is the area of balance of interests and compromise.

The vision of Tönnies (1887/1957) is characterized by a romantic disposition and is basically pessimistic, as the transition to a rationalized and organized world is dominated by impersonal monetary and personal interests, individualism and selfishness that destroy the foundations of community life, solidarity, emotion and mutuality and detach man from nature (Nisbet, 1967, 1968). The work of Tönnies (1887/1957) was the starting point for the community studies and also helped to shape other typologies, such as the distinction of Durkheim (1893/1984) between organic and mechanical solidarity. Durkheim (1893/1984) ran through a dichotomous analytical shape to compare previous and contemporary types of social relations. Mechanical solidarity is the type of social

relations that characterizes traditional societies. In these societies collective consciousness strongly dominates and takes precedence over individual morality and perception. Although collective consciousness is expressed through people, it has a separate existence and durability. In modern societies, the development of the social division of labour contributes to the growing interdependence of elements of social life and sociability in the type of social relations entitled organic solidarity. The more the organic solidarity is enhanced, the more the collective consciousness is weakened. In addition, perspectives of the community can be found in Durkheim's study of suicide (1897/2005). Moreover, Comte was interested in the restoration of community due to the splintering and disorganization of the traditional forms of collectivization (Nisbet, 1967, 1968). Le Play was concerned about how the familial types and relations (stability, tradition and safety) as well as their relation with community bonds are affected (Nisbet, 1967, 1968). Marx (1867/1976) was interested in the community in terms of solidarity of the working classes and Weber in the nature of social action and social relations of solidarity which makes the fundamental distinction between communal and associative relations (Weber, 1974). Simmel (1950) was particularly concerned with the historical transition of Europe from the cohesive and traditional forms of community to an anonymous urban-industrial social environment.

Early attempts of community studies by sociologists and anthropologists date back to the 19th century. The focus of these works was both the small rural communities and the more complex urban societies. However, the first systematic presentation of community studies was done in the 1920s by the Chicago School. These studies were characterized by theoretical and ethnographic fieldwork innovations of the sociologists of the school. They focus on certain phenomena such as racial segregation, family disorganization, work and marginal occupations and deviance, et al. The sociological issue raised by the studies of the Chicago School beyond differences of community in the village and the city, is the spatial organization of the life of the weakest classes in the city, their relationship to the economy and the labour market on the basis of cultural values that dominate, categorize and reproduce social inequalities. The modern city, as the natural development environment of the capitalist system, is based on and supports social inequalities through spatial segregation and through ethno-racial, gender and economic norms and stereotypes. The Chicago School has contributed significantly to the theoretical and empirical investigation of the question of whether there is or can be a community in the environment of urban society (Wirth, 1938). This discussion returned to the concerns of social scientists in the postwar period, when the recognition of the effects of capitalist development, urbanization and industrialization in cohesive rural communities led to the search of standard communities, whose members were characterized by homogeneous experience and high degree of co-

operation, solidarity and collective action. These studies compare natural, small, socially and culturally cohesive entities of rural community to individualized, heterogeneous and fragmented areas of industrialized urban city (Fisher, 1972; Lee and Newby, 1983; Savage and Warde, 1993). In many works the small communities were identified by distinction, uniformity, small size and self-sufficiency. Community dominates the sense of "we" and solidarity networks. In contrast is the urban community, which is characterized by complex social relations, fragmentation, alienation and segregation (Crow and Allan, 1994).

The conceptual definition of community concerns many social scientists, using many interpretations, e.g., place, social interaction and community bonding, land and local element, social interactivity and community bond, close interpersonal relationships, emotional ties, moral commitment, social cohesion, continuity over time (Komninou and Papataxiarchis, 1990; Delanty, 2003). Community is defined as is a group of people forming a social entity based on common homeland, culture and the sharing of common activities and interests. There are three basic meanings of community: first, the geographical community which refers to the feeling of people that have something in common, and this is a place/locality, a geographical area. The community consists of people who know each other, live together and often work in the same area and have a sense of belonging (Cohen, 1982; Cohen, 1999; Sayers, 1999; Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman, 2005). Usually, community members share similar interests and develop joint activities. The occupational community which is defined as a form of local social organization in which the working and nonworking lives of the people are identical to their professional attribute (Mack, 1956; Salaman, 1974), must be mentioned here. Place has special meaning, is a symbol and a value for residents. The second meaning is the community of interest. This does not require the existence of a distinct geographical area for the cultivation of a sense of community. For example, a Nigerian immigrant community can be dispersed in Greece and are brought together through shared bonds and mutual characteristics (Willmott, 1963; Savage and Warde, 1993). Members of these communities are connected via features such as common place, national roots, religion, employment, leisure time and culture. In some cases, geographic communities and communities of interest coincide. A third meaning is the community of spirit and refers to the feeling of a distinct collective identity which develops through collective action (Castles and Davidson, 2000; Mason, 2000). These communities are characterized by shared beliefs and ideas.

This aspect is important, as physical proximity or sharing common interests does not necessarily ensure collective action, ethics, solidarity and reciprocity, all of which are considered necessary for the formation of community identity (Arensberg, 1955; Green, 1964; Arensberg and Kimball, 1965;

Sanders, 1966; Minar and Greer, 1969). Summarizing the above, some characteristic components of community can be identified: first, it is a social construct, less delimited by the outside world, which is located between the primary structures of social organization (kinship, friendship) and larger abstract entities; second, it is a set of individuals experiencing a sense of belonging to a distinct social and cultural construct; third, it is a model of social relations that are organized around interactions and ties and are based on certain common characteristics such as the local neighborhood, ethnicity, cultural identity and interests, and fourth, it is a symbolic unity, which is composed of symbols and values that allow community members to construct meanings and form community consciousness and collective identity (Arensberg, 1955; Lee and Newby, 1983). The meanings of community help in the classification of different forms of communities (Pahl, 2005; Adamson, 2010). The most common classification is spatial communities and communities of interest. The first are those formed by people living and possibly working in the same geographical area. In the same category fall communities enrolled in a particular social or administrative area. The second category consists of persons who, whether they live in the same geographical area or not, share basic interests developed in a particular culture and identity, as in the case of ethnic minorities (Schrover and Vermeulen, 2005; Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; Vermeulen, 2005, 2013; Schrover, 2006; Vermeulen, Minkoff and van der Meer 2014).

1.2. Overview of Immigrant Community Associations

Immigrant associations have always featured in the analysis of scholars. From the initial settlement in a new place, the need of migrants to organize their collective life in communities is created. The immigrant community organization usually takes the form of an association based on ethnic or cultural ties and characteristics, with main objectives to preserve and reproduce the traditional collective identity of the immigrant community, with reference to hometown, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, et al., bonds. Through these associations, immigrant workers in the host society seek to solve the problems associated with immigration, e.g., access to information, employment, housing, legal documents, education, rights, representation, etc.

Du Bois (1899) focused on forms of collective organization of Negroes in Philadelphia: the Negro Church, the Secret and Beneficial Societies and Co-operative Business (secret societies, beneficial societies, insurance societies, building and loan associations and labour unions), and the Negro Institutions. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918-1920) referred to the organization of Polish immigrants in America and mentioned their collectivities: the family system, the parochial school, the mutual benefit society, the community centre, the parish and the boarding house. Anderson (1923) examined the attempts to organize the homeless and migratory casual workers in Chicago in the 1900s and the

promotion of co-operation and brotherhood. Rex and Moore (1967) analyzed the basic characteristics of various immigrant groups that were organized differently: the Irish (sense of Irishness, shops, streets), the Indians (absence of their own institutions, unable to deal with problems, e.g., discrimination), the Pakistanis (Pakistani Welfare Association, Bengal Film Society, Pakistani Sports and Welfare Association). Wirth (1928) referred to the creation of collectivities of Jewish immigrants in Chicago between 1800s and 1900s (institutions of communal life like burial society and the synagogue). Verdonk, et al., (1987) examined the associations of Spanish immigrants in the Netherlands and Switzerland between 1950 and 1980, offering important parameters to be considered in the examination of immigrant associations: location, equipment, history, function, membership, network of relations and activities. Josephides (1987) focused on associations of Greek Cypriots in Great Britain who had Orthodox Churches and many associations including: community centres, educational/youth associations, Churches, village associations, local-cultural associations, political parties and groups, unions and professional associations, action groups, women's groups and miscellaneous associations. Jaakkola (1987) focused on the association of Finnish immigrants in Sweden (1725-1984). Hily and Poinard (1987) studied the associations of Portuguese immigrants in France. In their study of Turkish immigrants in Germany, Gitmez and Wilpert (1987) categorized the organizations in: general associations, leftist associations, other political associations, rightist associations and religious-oriented associations, and religious and religious-political associations.

Sachar (1993) examined the collectivities of the Jewish immigrants in America underlying the role of landsmanshaft (which extended to labour specialties, societies of businessmen, national federation), the charitable and social associations that maintained ties with cities of origin. Knights (1996) in her study notes that among the Bangladeshi community in Rome, patron-client relationships emerged. Moreover, when the organizations of Bangladeshis in Italy began to compete amongst themselves, fragmentation in the community began. Campani, Catani and Palidda (1987) examined the associations of Italian immigrants in France offering typology in: religious centres, para-consular centres and organizations, associations of war veterans, sports associations, cultural associations and associations for the promotion of language, Franco-Italian associations, national associations linked with Italian parties and regional associations. Moya (2005) offered an extended historical review of the spread of the phenomenon and an important categorization of immigrant voluntary organizations to: secret societies, credit, mutual benefit, religious, hometown, political, cultural and work associations. There are multiple examples of the formation of immigrant advocacy/voluntary associations globally. All of these organizations offer a sense of home (Omari, 1956; Strauss, 1962; Wilmott, 1964; Winder, 1967; Schoeneberg, 1985; Wong, Applewhite and Daley, 1990; Nyhagen, 2008). Immigration is usually a

difficult, dangerous and distressing experience because it is accompanied by ruptures of cohesive bonds of the individual: primary and secondary relations of solidarity such as family, community and friendship ties that make up the traditional identity of immigrants and are unifying elements in the society of origin. As the immigrants encounter new social and work conditions, the need to establish community associations emerge. The immigrant family is unable to maintain the distinct characteristics and identity of the immigrants away from their homeland community, it cannot balance the influence of the host society's culture, nor can it meet frequently to solve complex problems in the host society. The immigrant community can be considered the condition which pushes the individuals with same bonds, values, dialects and traditions to be gathered with others with the same characteristics, in an unknown or dangerous environment (Herreros and Criado, 2009; Chimienti and Solomos, 2011). A community advocacy/voluntary organization/association transcends any boundaries of homeland, village community and family and contributes comprehensively and efficiently to the development of networks of communication, solidarity and support of immigrants. Crucial reasons that push migrants to create community associations are:

The need of immigrants to adapt to the environment of the host society and to safeguard the social rights of their community comprises a crucial reason. As immigrants usually come from the lower economic and educational strata, they do not know the language and culture of the host society and are at risk of exploitation and prejudice from both foreign employers and their own countrymen. Moreover, turning to the host society's organizations is impossible for them (O'Day, 2005; Sun and Cadge, 2013). In order for the immigrants to adapt to the new society as painlessly as possible, the reconstruction of certain cohesive elements is needed, based on their needs and their distinct traditional identity (Kelley, 2013). Thus, immigrants form their own communities and voluntary/advocacy associations based on solidarity and mutual support, help and protection to facilitate and ease their transition into the host society's environment and to address the problems arising from immigration (Rex and Josephides, 1987; Smith, 1997; Hamidi, 2003; Waldinger, Popkin and Magana, 2008; Baker, 1999; Caselli, 2010).

Apart from the importance of traditional and cultural elements, an important reason for the creation of immigrant community associations is the immigrants' need to contribute to the socio-economic development of the place of origin (e.g., remittances, equipment, construction of provincial roads, Churches, etc.). Another reason is to protect and preserve their ethnic identity and ties, their language, customs and traditions in the host society. The entrance and effort of immigrants to adapt to a new environment causes tensions that make connections to the homeland and community important for the

formation and maintenance of individual and collective identity (Wakeman, 1972; Yans-McLaughlin, 1977; Joly, 1987; Layton-Henry, 1990Jacobs, Phalet and Swyngedouw, 2004). A community associations' objective is the planning of cultural events for the preservation and enhancement of ethnic identity and the creation of a social infrastructure for socialization. The immigrants themselves seek to adapt to the new environment, either through their own collective organizations or through informal social networks of friends, acquaintances, relatives and compatriots. To achieve this, the need for organization of community life in associational frame (formal or informal) is created, which will keep alive and reinforce community traditions and will help to validate a particular, distinctive identity (self-organization, self-identification). The existence of immigrant community associations is essential for immigrants to maintain internal cohesion and national and cultural differences (local customs and traditions) and aid not only in their smooth integration into the host society but especially uneventful coexistence (Znaniecki 1967; Zucchi, 1988; Vertovec, 1999; van Amersfoot and van Heelsum, 2007). One could expect that the oldest and most populous immigrant communities are the best organized in association level, but the newer and smaller ones also have, on several occasions, organized associations – however a detachment from collectivities can be observed. Immigrant community associations are a visible indicator of the cohesion of a community, because the meeting places define the contours of an immigrant community. Thus, community associations are important both for the organization of the immigrant and the reaffirmation of his identity (de Tocqueville, 1954; Moya, 2005; Brettell, 2006; Orozco and Rouse, 2007).

Immigrants are members of an association not only because they have the feeling and hence the need to belong to this collectivity, but also because they believe that through this group, they will be able to accomplish the aim that they desire. The purpose of the association is to promote the interests of its members, so the aim that the members wish to achieve is the promotion of their interests (Olzak and West, 1991; Metress, 1995; Myrberg, 2011; Boels, Verhage and Ponsaers, 2013). If the association cannot advance the interests of their members, then they have no reason to exist anymore. These interests may initially be on an individual level, i.e., each association member feels that his individual interests are represented; achieving these individual interests has a collective impact (Schoeneberg, 1985; Dietz, 2004). Immigrants use memory of the homeland to abstractly reconstruct their cohesive elements. The home or homeland is one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced people (Mohiuddin, 2009). The symbolic construction of community through the development of community organizations with regular meetings, the use of specific local languages and symbols and the preservation of traditional customs and structures, does not mean that the place or home ceases to have any real effect on immigrants' everyday lives (Kantowicz, 1975; de Marco,

1981; Bodnar, et al., 1982; Ownby and Heidhues, 1993; Hopkins, 1995). They are, however, important efforts that promote the creation of a community among dispersed individuals throughout the new reception city (Bloemraad, 2005; Hooghe, 2005; Chung, 2005; Caponio, 2005; Sardinha, 2009; Ross, Pilon and Savage, 2011; Takle, 2013).

The formation of advocacy/voluntary associations in the countries of reception to protect and promote the national interests of the homeland is another important reason (de Leon, et al., 2009; Strömblad and Adman, 2010; Però and Solomos, 2010). However, there are many obstacles such as legal loop holes and suspicion of the host society and also among the immigrants. But the principal obstacle to creating immigrant community associations seems to be the social, legal and work instability and precariousness for the majority of members. In order to accomplish the above and other purposes, immigrants formed several types of communities: national, hometown/local/regional, general, athletic, mutual assistance, credit/loan/beneficiary, multi-purpose/function, educational, student, professional, work, occupational, secret societies, artistic, scientific, religious, political, veterans', youth, women, etc. Some features that promote the establishment of advocacy/voluntary associations in the host countries are common for all immigrant associations (Caglar, 2006; Zhou and Lee, 2013). First, ethnicity and ethnic origin. Other connecting features are common socio-cultural ties, language, experiences, etc. Second, characteristic of these immigrant groups is their orientation towards the country of origin (home, hometown/local/regional). In most community associations a preservation of tradition and culture is observed, with ethnic, religious celebrations, music, dance, food, theater, etc. (Sassen-Koob, 1979; Bodnar, et al., 1979; 1991). Third, religion-based community associations, which are designed to practice the religion that one belongs to in the host country. The co-operation of immigrants takes place through community associations. These cohesive elements comprise the link which leads them to the organization of community associations (Beito, 2000; Koopmans, 2004). The recording and classification of the immigrant community associations is not easy especially when there is little information on their functioning and when many have multi-purpose functions (e.g., not only to shape closer ties with the homeland but work as an organization of mutual aid and adaption in a host society). There are many such formal and informal community associations (Tillie, 2004; Togeby, 2004).

The immigrants who settled in Greece in the late 1980s realized the need to organize immigrant communities to transfer their communal life and traditions, thus organizing the particular collective structures. In Greece there is no adequate or updated record of immigrant community associations (Fouskas, 2012a, 2012b, 2014). These community spaces are basic social networks for physical and

emotional survival and solidarity. Connected with their ethnic and cultural identity, these associations seem to be the focus of the community life of immigrants in Greece (). The first attempts led to the foundation of community associations with cultural character in order to develop relations between them and Greek society as well to help in problems of their compatriots and to promote their integration into Greek society. The creation of immigrant associations in 1988 was based on judicial decisions; hence the establishment of immigrant advocacy/voluntary associations with an administration board of their own composition was permitted. Although the first collective immigrant associations appeared as informal, they later acquired a more official form or became part of private initiatives (Iosifides, Lavrediadou, Petracou and Kontis, 2007; Triandafyllidou, 2009). The associations' organization did not yield the expected results as they were more oriented to primarily cultural rather than mutual support objectives which would appeal to the majority of immigrants. When the migratory flows multiplied, especially after the 1990s, there was a need to re-organize their communities and re-define their aims. The legalization of a large percentage of immigrants played a decisive role in the foundation and expansion of the role of associations (Lazarescu; 2010; Maroufof; 2010; Nikolova; 2010). The purpose of advocacy/voluntary associations is to strengthen the cultural identity of ethnic groups and to stabilize their confidence so that they can be successful in dealing with conflicts encountered within the new environment, improve their work and living conditions and to be able to express and promote their interests. However, this has been unsuccessful in many cases. Moreover, there are numerous cases of immigrant community associations with low membership (Fouskas, 2013, 2021a) that were created in order to claim funds from the European programs, others to cooperate with political parties or non-governmental organizations, or to serve the ambitions of a few elite immigrants, ignoring the problems of their compatriots or damaging their community's reputation with their actions and their involvement in irregular activities.

In many immigrant community associations, chairmen have held the same position for over ten years, and many immigrants are non-active members or do not participate all, declaring that many of the spokesmen do not actually represent the community. On the one hand, orientation towards the country of origin may be difficult to integrate into the host society, as it distracts them from solving problems encountered in their host countries (Nikolova and Maroufof; 2010; Lazarescu and Broersma; 2010; Papadopoulos, Chalkias and Fratsea; 2013; Fouskas, 2014). On the other hand, these advocacy/voluntary associations attempt to help and lead their members towards integration in the country of reception (Romaniszyn, 1996; Antoniou, 2003; Fouskas, 2012a). Also, a severe splintering of immigrant communities is obvious, with the formation of multiple associations of the same nationality, even in the same region (e.g., Albanians, Pakistanis, Palestinians, Bangladeshis, et al.). In

many cases, instability characterizes immigrant community associations. Some associations function while others cease operation or change premises without notice or warning; some are authorized while many operate informally (e.g., in a dwelling). The function and membership of immigrant associations is affected by the ephemeral and temporary nature of the work and living conditions that the immigrants are experiencing.

Therefore, it seems that it has not been possible until now to monitor the validity and operation of immigrant community associations through actors dealing with immigrant issues (ministries, institutions, NGOs, foundations, etc.). Meanwhile, a mere attempt to record the associations would not have been sufficiently reliable, since previous efforts showed that the immigrant community associations, even on the 2009 records, do not exist or are not operating. Specifically, reports, guides, manuals, lists, reports or electronic information material and studies of these bodies, reproduced contact and other information (e.g., name, address, representatives, phone numbers, etc.) on immigrant community associations from late 1980 to early 1990 data, are without verification. It should also be noted that some immigrant work associations (Fouskas, 2012b, 2014, 2021a) do not appear on these lists at all or with their full official title. Informal meetings or gatherings in Churches and mosques draw many participants. In Greece, although every immigrant group has one or more immigrant community associations, there is also a marked move away from community associations. Due to the deficiencies of the immigration policy, the crucial problems of immigrants and the inherent weaknesses of immigrant associations, immigrants shape practices and strategies towards more effective ways of survival and integration in society. These means and practices are hamstrung by individualistic strategies, social networks and social relations at local level. However, informal social networks of friends, acquaintances and compatriots provide casual guidance and information on issues of employment, housing, document acquisition, support in the problems of everyday life and sharing of common activities. Churches or mosques, plazas and squares, cafeterias or shops and informal gatherings in residences, operate as meeting places where immigrants seek friends and countrymen in order to keep in touch and to find help and support in coping with the vicissitudes they encounter. Association offices are used in the same selfish and materialistic way for acquiring information or meeting compatriots who could guide them. Social events and national and religious holidays are used as a means of socializing, however all around a mentality far from participation in community associations.

2. Immigration to the United States from Greece since 1890

The history of Greek overseas migration takes place between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. It lies within the wider context of overseas migrations from Southern Europe, mainly to the USA, Canada and Australia, along with other destinations in the world. The push and pull factors that caused the transatlantic Greek migration are directly linked to the development of a global labor market, which at the beginning of the 20th century, attracted millions of immigrant workers to the developing countries (Vertovec, 2005, Portes and Rumbaut, 2014; Bergquist, 2008) (see Picture 1).

Picture 1: Immigrants onboard S.S. Patricia arriving in Ellis Island, New York, 1905

Source: E. Levick (1905), Library of Congress. Photograph taken by the author on 19 April 2022 at the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc./National Park Service, New York, USA. Library of Congress - Author's personal collection, April 2022.

International migration of global restructuring at a social and financial level, along with government policies, have led to the development of economic activity which impelled this mobile workforce outside the margins of formal occupation and labour markets (Piore, 1979; Portes, Castells and Benton,

1989; Baldwin-Edwards and Arango, 1999). Immigrants became a part of a labour force reserve (Burawoy, 1972; Braverman, 1974; Phizacklea, 1983; Martiniello, 1993; Cohen, 1997a, 1997b) that is continually renewed and enters low-status occupations according to a division of labour based on gender, race, way of entry in the country and ethnic origin. As opposed to previous workforce migrations, these immigrants facilitate adjustable production, low par technical intervention as well as personal and emotional contribution into the work effort (Psimmenos and Kassimati, 2006). All migration, sociological and other relative studies on immigrants in the labour market reveal that they are more likely to be unemployed and over-represented in low-status occupations and services and not in the sectors of development, with longer work hours, under poor conditions, and lower wages (e.g., piece-rate/day labour) than natives. In most reception countries, regardless of their legal status, immigrants are pushed to employment in low-status services. The problems thereby caused are connected to the work culture of the immigrant worker in the reception society. A large number of jobs for people without specializations are generated within the services sector (manual labour, farming, construction, manufacture, textile works, crafts, food services, housework, cleaning services, personal care, itinerant trade etc.). The majority work irregularly, through payment-in- hand, lacking social security and receiving minimum wages. Precarious, low-status jobs provide employment (e.g., self or multi-share employment and over-employment or unemployment and underemployment or full and part-time employment) with low-wages and limited or no National Health Insurance coverage within an isolated, self-employment context. The bulk of this informal service employment is also underpaid, lacks organization and exists within an informal frame, in the sectors of construction and technical work (e.g., painters, builders, gardeners), crafts, restaurants (e.g., broilers, pot-boys), garment and textile industry (e.g., tailors), street vending and personal care (e.g., live-in/out domestic workers, carers, nurses, cleaners). This workforce has been cut off from community and solidarity networks both at origin and in the host society. The services industry, especially, is based on the transfer and entrapping of the workforce, distanced from family and migratory associational and collective networks, which could potentially provide information and solidarity.

In Greece, the multiple socio-economic crises e.g., in the raisin market, extended unemployment, public health issues and the inability to stabilize the development in sectors of economy at the end of the 19th century, pushed thousands of Greeks to the United States of America (USA). The USA became a pole of attraction for Greek labourers aiming at staring a new life across the Atlantic considering “America” as a place of opportunity and prosperity (Saloutos, 1964; Leber, 1972). The letters of correspondence with family and community members who had already migrated to the US, the emergence migration agencies in Greek cities and villages, the development of chain migration

movements, all contributed to forming strong networks of communication between the homeland and the diaspora migration communities and encouraged new immigrants (Daniels, 2002; Pappas, 1950). The migration of Greeks to the USA began in the second half of the 19th century. Greek immigrants settled in States on the North and Central Atlantic coasts, while a significant portion of the early immigrants headed to the Mid-western states and California as mine labourers and railroad workers (Thomas, 1970; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982; The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012). The multitude of Greek immigrants who arrived in the USA between 1890 and 1924, like most immigrants, originally belonged to the working class and can be divided into the following main groups who went:

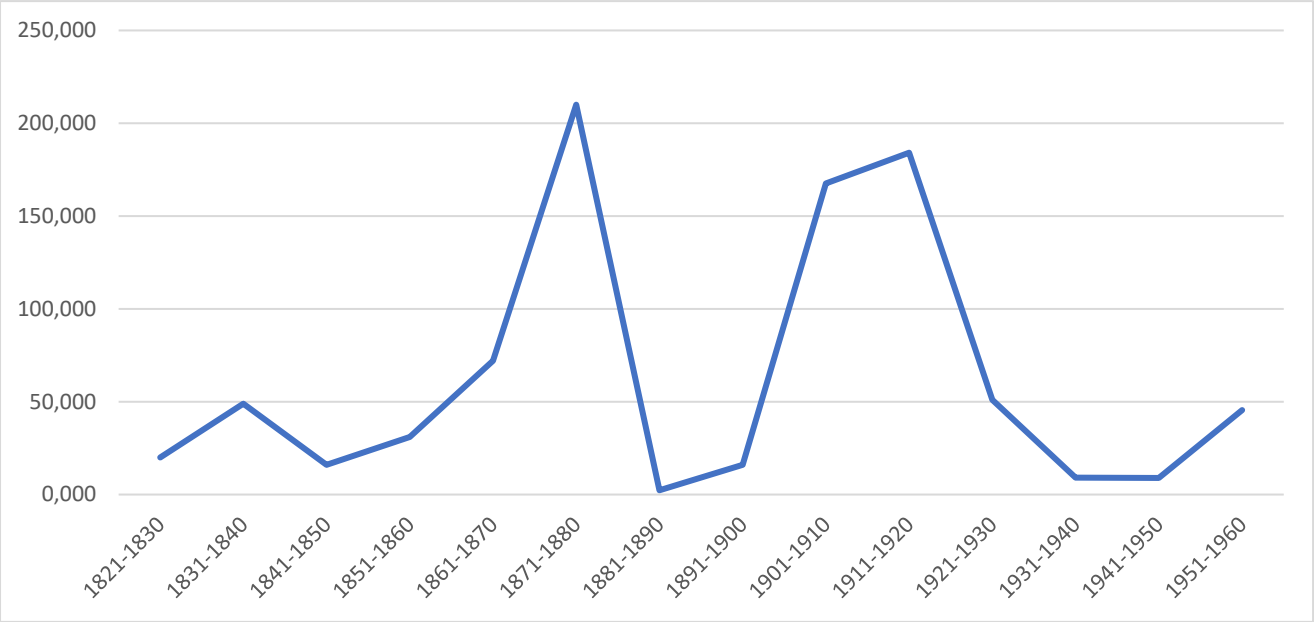
Western States	railroads / mines
New England cities	textile / shoe industries
Northern cities, e.g. New York and Chicago	factory work / clothiers / peddlers / dishwashers / meatpacking
Florida	divers in the sponge harvesting industry

Source: The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012

During the 1890s, immigration increased, mainly because of the many economic opportunities that existed in the US, but also due of the difficulties faced by Christians in the Ottoman Empire, the Balkan wars and World War I. Between 1890 to 1917, 450,000 Greek immigrants arrived in the USA and another 70,000 from 1918 to 1924 and as in 1900 there was an increase, as the US authorities removed entry restrictions on Greek immigrants (Vailakis, 2022, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012) (see Tables 1 and 2).

Though Greeks migrated as manual laborers, they moved into the middle class early on. Even before World War I and after the 1920s, many left the mines and railroads to set up and become owners, bars, candy stores, hotels and other businesses like Greek coffee shops and also turned to fishing and shrimping (Vailakis, 2022, Leber, 1972, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Kontis, et al., 2002). They remained blue-collar workers, but the arrival of Greek women led to a conventional lifestyle and the emergence of a Greek American middle class (The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Thomas, 1970; Kontis, et al., 2002; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006).

Table 1: Greek immigrants to the United States



Source: Leber, 1972.

Table 2: Periods and arrivals of Greek immigrants to the United States

Period	Arrivals of Greeks	Period	Arrivals of Greeks	Period	Arrivals of Greeks
1821-1830	20	1911-1920	184.201	1984	2.865
1831-1840	49	1921-1930	51.201	1985	2.579
1841-1850	16	1931-1940	9.119	1986	2.512
1851-1860	31	1941-1950	8.973	1987	2.653
1861-1870	72	1951-1960	47.608	1988	2.458
1871-1880	210	1961-1970	85.969	1989	2.157
1881-1890	2.308	1971-1975	56.191	1990	2.742
1891-1900	15.979	1976-1982	43.897	1991	1.760
1901-1910		1983		1992	1.790

Source: Kontis et al., 2002.

Also, despite the difficulties caused by the Great Depression of the 1930s, most turned to business activities. Gradually, Greek neighborhoods were formed in the large cities of the USA with Greek businesses (e.g., restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores) appearing everywhere (The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Laliotou, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Large numbers of Greeks began to migrate to the USA after 1945 due to the economic recession in their country following World War II, as well as the Civil War that ensued (The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Laliotou, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Approximately 500,000 Greeks had reached the United States

prior to the Second World War II (Vailakis, 2022, Leber, 1972, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Between 1946 and 1982 around 211,000 Greeks immigrated to the US. Over the years, the Greek diaspora in the USA rose financially and socially and in the 1960s, many second and third generation Greek-Americans entered the political life of the country. After 1970 and 1981 and the entry of Greece into the European Union, the numbers of immigrants to the USA decreased greatly (Vailakis, 2022, Leber, 1972, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002).

2.1. The Role of Greek Immigrant Community Associations in the United States

In the 20th century, the attitude towards immigrants, including Southern European immigrants, was negative, immigration often being defined as a social problem (Thomas, 1970; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982; Moskos, Moskos, & Dukakis, 2017; Alexiou, 2013; Dounia, 2014; Karpathakis, 1999). Adversaries of immigration often relied on racial opinions, that immigration from Southern Europe would alter the racial characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon American nation and lead to a decline in the cultural features of the United States (Saloutos, 1964; Leber, 1972). These anti-immigrant advocates pushed towards restrictions on immigration of "inferior outsiders" (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Their political influence and mobilization led to the enactment of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Laliotou, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Xenophobia and racism intensified during the World War I which manifested in generalized suspicion towards foreigners (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006). The activation of racist organizations, like the Ku Klux Klan, led to violent outbreaks of violence against immigrants (Thomas, 1970; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982; The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Kontis, et al., 2002). In the early 1920s, the organization American Hellenic Progressive Association (AHEPA) and the Greek American Progressive Association (GAPA), aiming at the mass naturalization of Greeks and the achievement of a cultural identity which would ensure their smoother integration into American society, offered numerous donations (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Also, both were formed within the Greek communities to counter racist attacks and exercise pressure for the assimilation of the first Greek communities in the USA (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002).

Daily and immediate information about what was happening in their home country was considered vital, and in 1915 the Greek newspaper "National Herald" was published in New York proving "expatriate's irresistible desire to take root in America, the new homeland, but at the same time to keep his identity intact". Greek-language publications in the US included newspapers and magazines

(Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Saloutos, 1964; Leber, 1972; Petropoulos, 1985). The diaspora used various newspapers and local radio stations of limited range that broadcast information in Greek and English (Daniels, 2002; Pappas, 1950; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). The creation of Greek schools, the teaching of the Greek language in American schools, the publication of newspapers in the Greek language and the insistence of organizations of the diaspora to use this language was an effort to preserve the "Greekness" of expatriates (Thomas, 1970; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002).

The majority of the first immigrants were men, but the number of women immigrants increased throughout the interwar period, an increase that particularly contributed to the formation of Greek communities and the creation of the conditions for the permanent settlement of Greeks in the USA (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Moskos, Moskos, & Dukakis, 2017; Alexiou, 2013; Dounia, 2014). As Petropoulos (1985) mentioned, faced with a new and often hostile environment, the conditions for the establishment of ethnic associations and organizations were formed. Among the main reasons that push immigrants to create ethnic community associations were: a) Adaptation to the foreign environment and protection of rights: the ability to integrate the immigrant and not assimilate, was a difficult task for immigrants, especially of the first generations due to facts like immigrants came from the lower economic and educational strata, did not know the foreign language, and culture, had no substantial pre-education, faced the risk of exploitation and prejudice, etc. (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). Thus, they gathered in their own communities of help and support in order to facilitate and ease their transition to the foreign environment (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Moskos, Moskos, & Dukakis, 2017; Alexiou, 2013; Dounia, 2014). However, the development of social services and trade unions in the host countries as well as the ascending social economic status of the immigrants resulted in the weakening and shrinking of ethnic mutual aid associations (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). b) Preservation of national identity: the creation of ethno-organizations for resistance to assimilation, and the preservation of the national identity of language and traditions (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012). The network of associations aims in the planning of cultural events to strengthen the national identity as well as in the creative infrastructure for mutual acquaintances, interactions and the reproduction of our nationality abroad (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Saloutos, 1964; Leber, 1972). Identity, however, was problematic in remote

areas where few Greeks gather, especially after the end of the migration movement (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Daniels, 2002; Pappas, 1950). c) Development of the homeland: the ethnic-hometown organizations also contributed to the socio-economic development of the place of origin (e.g., building hospitals, country roads, churches, etc.) (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012). d) Protection of national interests: the creation of new ethnic-homeland associations abroad or the mobilization of existing associations is the protection and promotion of the national interests of the homeland, whether these interests concern internal issues such as the restoration of democracy, or external geopolitical issues. such as Cyprus and the Aegean, or finally, they concern external economic issues such as Greek tourism and exports (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982).

The community was the most important point of contact for the emigrants. Many local unions and associations were formed for people who were very likely to move to another area (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Laliotou, 2006). The community aimed to create a stable and permanent organization in the new homeland. Its establishment was usually carried out on the initiative of believers of the Church, whose smallest organic subdivision is the parish (Petropoulos, 1985; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Leber, 1972). The main objectives of the community were the mutual assistance of the expatriates, the construction of churches, the creation of Greek schools and the realization of community projects (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Alexiou, 2013; Dounia, 2014). The great importance of the community and its close relationship with the Church is also emphasized by the practice of appointing priests mainly on the initiative of the community and not of the church (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Saloutos, 1964; Leber, 1972; Daniels, 2002; Pappas, 1950). The evolution of the organizations was proportional to that of the occupational composition of the emigrants (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Thomas, 1970; Psomiades, Scourby & Zenelis, 1982; The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012). The first organizations created by the generally low-educated and unskilled immigrants until the beginning of the 20th century were expatriates from the same region of their place of origin in Greece (hometown associations) (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Moskos, Moskos, & Dukakis, 2017; Alexiou, 2013). They were therefore mainly ethnic-hometown, that is, they were organized in a region of the US or at the secondary level of organization and across the country based on the place of origin of the emigrants (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, &

Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002; Laliotou, 2006). It is reported that in 1905 there were 30 Greek organizations operating in New York with new ones constantly being created mainly by newly arrived immigrants. It is estimated that in 1991 their number had exceeded 117 (Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). It is also reported that in the early 1990s there were 215 associations operating throughout the country, most of them ethnic-hometown (Vailakis, 2022, Leber, 1972, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). The rise of the average educational and professional level of the diaspora contributed to the creation of cultural, educational and scientific societies, such as the "Politeia of Plato" and "Aristotle", as well as mixed Greek-American student associations by educational institutions in the region, occupational-trade unions and cultural-artistic associations (Vailakis, 2022, Leber, 1972, The Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC, 2012; Chasiotis, Katsiardi-Hering, & Abatzi, 2006; Kontis, et al., 2002). However, older associations became inactive and were eventually dissolved.

Conclusions

The debate on community is significant when placed in the context of contemporary social and cultural conditions (Cnaan, and Milofsky, 2008). It is widely accepted that the conditions of life and organization of modern society have important peculiarities compared to previous models of social organization. Although in relative literature we see many different approaches to the content of these peculiarities, which are reflected even in the name of that era (late modernity, post-modernity, information society, post-industrial or post-capitalist society), there are some common features which are recognized by everyone (Bell and Newby, 1971, 1974; Savage and Warde, 1993; Cohen, 1999).

These are the internationalization of markets, the rapid technological development, the fragmentation and complexity of modern life, the expansion of the media, the universal dissemination of cultural models and the expanded social and geographical mobility. These contemporary conditions, with the rapid changes brought about in everyday social life, tend to limit the sense of small traditional community with the characteristics of self-sufficiency and the relative autonomy and isolation that accompany it, which is described by researchers and devotees for its regeneration. However, the emergence of communitarianism (Etzioni, 1998) and the frequent reference to the community as a reason for certain social movements, suggest that it is premature to talk about its elimination; although in the modern world the need and quest for the lost community is observed (Savage and Warde, 1993; Adamson, 2010). Based on contemporary approaches, the term community is used to describe complex

sociocultural formations which, contrary to previous ones, do not result from inactivity/static and isolation but from within a context of social and geographical mobility.

Exploring contemporary forms of communities, one can identify that communities emerge from economic immigration and new geopolitical upheavals, and which organize their world in a foreign and often hostile to them environment, e.g., communities of immigrants, refugees, minority groups (Fitzpatrick, 1966; Papastergiadis, 2000; Zaimakis, 2002, Fouskas, 2021b, 2021c). Moreover, these communities are based on cultural differentiation from the dominant culture, common leisure activities and discrete characteristics. Others are established through Government intervention or community networks and have specific purposes, like communities of worship, which aim to answer an existential impasse in modern society. Modern communities are not static or immobile (Zaimakis, 2002). The establishment of a community requires the existence of a difference, e.g., race, nationality, religion, place of origin, which is located in the core of socio-cultural formation and is strengthened by external meanings of the society of reception and formation (Savage and Warde, 1993; Cantle, 2005; Cohen, 1985). Community members invest ideologically and symbolically in this difference forming a distinct collective identity, which is negotiated with the outside society. Contemporary approaches of community tend to exceed the perceptions of a closed geographical community in order to show the emergence of new types of communities based on common interests, characteristics and habits. Benchmark for the traditional community and static communities of the past was the need for their revival in new conditions (Bell and Newby 1976; Savage and Warde, 1993; Bauman, 2001a).

The community is now established as an idealized image of another reality that motivates the imagination and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of individuals and seeks to return to the warmth and safety of a lost paradise or utopia (Redfield, 1960Bauman, 2001a, 2001b); an imagined community of ties and belonging (Anderson, 1983). For immigrants, life in the urban environments of reception countries is characterized by isolation and segregation from solidarity and social networks, the severing of community and familiar bonds and social disorganizations being in a precarious condition concerning social, work and residence status. However, one can observe the efforts of immigrant groups to form a community in the society of reception based on hometown, voluntary and mutual support associations.

These collectivities are attempts to re-establish a sense of belonging and companionship – using common bonds as identification mechanisms, e.g., place of origin, locality, tribe, religion, culture, traditions, etc. – which require mutual and active participation not only to endure but also to achieve community and collective action in the new urban environment. In order to achieve co-operation and

solidarity, individuals who face common problems that can be dealt with individually are needed. However, the instability of the community as well as the impact of work, severely affect these collectivities.

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