

Complexity in social and cultural integration: Some analytical dimensions

Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Abstract

Although the term complexity¹ is often drawn into debates and research on migration and ethnicity, it is rarely examined – unlike the term culture, which has been scrutinised extensively. This article, which is theoretical rather than empirical, sets out to do two things: To distinguish between different meanings of complexity, and to show how complexity – a seemingly fuzzy term – can be operationalised in research on contemporary majority – minority relations. Arguing that a multi-dimensional approach is necessary, the author distinguishes between majority and minority perspectives, between enforced and chosen processes of integration/segregation, and between social and cultural dimensions. It is only if all these dimensions and their interrelationships are taken into account that a sufficiently nuanced (complex) description is possible.

Keywords: Complexity; society; culture; integration; majority-minority.

Complexity in some versions¹

In his eponymous book, Hannerz (1992) avoids defining cultural complexity – ‘it is about as intellectually attractive as the word “messy” (Hannerz 1992, p. 6) – but instead, he uses it as a means to talk about culture as something which cannot be characterized ‘in terms of some single essence’ (ibid.). Hannerz then distinguishes between three dimensions of culture: ideas and modes of thought, their forms of externalization (public communication), and their social distribution. In this way, both the symbolic realm and its social correlates can be studied simultaneously. This book, like most of Hannerz’s anthropological work, is concerned with the *organization of*

diversity rather than the *replication of uniformity* (Anthony Wallace's terms), and argues against the classic perspectives in cultural anthropology which held that cultures must be coherent or which – as in the case of Edward Sapir – made a distinction between real and spurious culture where the latter was more superficial and more poorly integrated than the former. In Hannerz's analysis of contemporary cultural flows, their 'moving interconnectedness' (p. 167) do not at any point lead to anything resembling a fixed form. In a later paper, Hannerz (1996) argues, in a friendly critique of Gellner (1983), that the homogenizing processes associated with industrial-society nationalism were counteracted in the late twentieth century by the dissipating and heterogenizing forces of globalization. While Gellner had spoken, metaphorically, about the replacement of the Viennese artist Oskar Kokoschka's (1886–1980) complex, colourful mosaics with the Italian Amedeo Modigliani's (1884–1920) calm, monochrome surfaces, Hannerz argues that the world of Kokoschka seems to have been given a second chance with the fluxes and flows, juxtapositions and creolizations of the global era.

Many other anthropologists have had their say about complexity (e.g. the 'plural societies' school, cf. Smith 1965, and the Manchester school, cf. Gluckman 1964), but few have tried to operationalize it. One who has is Fredrik Barth, who once (Barth 1972) proposed a generative model of societies based on the degree of complexity in task allocation and social statuses. But it is especially in his later studies from Oman (1983) and Bali (1989, 1993) that Barth tries to specify how different cultural 'streams' which impinge on and intermingle in cultural universes and life-worlds, relate to one another. In the case of Bali, Barth identifies five such 'streams': Balinese Hinduism, Islam, Bali Aga culture (indigenous, pre-Hindu villages), the modern sector of education and politics, and 'a sorcery-focused construction of social relations' which appears to operate fairly independently of the other traditions or 'streams' (Barth 1989, p. 131). While noting that this kind of cultural complexity cannot and should not be conflated through homogenizing statements about 'the Balinese', Barth also acknowledges that there are certain templates for thought and behaviour which are shared by most Balinese. However, neither in his monograph (1993), which includes a generative model of plurality, nor in his articles about Bali, does Barth explore hybridity: he describes the streams in relation to each other, but not their mixing.

In a similar but not identical vein, the sociologist David Byrne (1998) shows, in his book about complexity and the social sciences, the limitations of monocausal accounts. In an attempt to make chaos and complexity theory from physics relevant in the social sciences, he shows, through examples, how 'small things make for big differences, and lots of things are out to play, together' (p. 18; cf. also Thrift 1999;

Urry 2003). Applying technical terms like attractors, bifurcation and fractals to topics in the social sciences, Byrne makes a good case for complexity theory in urban studies. Recognizing that a disease like tuberculosis [TB] is a result of the interaction of several causal factors – diet, housing conditions, ethnic relations, class – he then goes on to argue the necessity of moving beyond mere complex causation and look at the interaction of different systemic levels. TB, then, is ‘a disease of societies which are in the attractor state for societies of being relatively highly unequal’ (p. 118), which means that urban planning, welfare systems or the lack of them, and the overall class structure of a society need to be taken into account, and (this is where the term attractor comes into its own) that there is no simple determinism involved.

There is much more to be discussed in Byrne’s bold programme for a sociology of complexity, but what is notable here is that Byrne, a quantitative social scientist, recognizes the importance of the researcher’s analytical apparatus for observation (a post-positivist stance), and is concerned to understand not only the interaction of a great number of major and minor causal factors, but also the relationship between systemic levels. In doing this, he proposes a methodological programme which almost exactly mirrors research strategies devised in qualitative research, notably anthropology (see §3 below).

Three kinds of complexity

Complexity can be described in at least three different ways in the social sciences.

1. Complexity amounts to a great number of relationships, mutually influencing each other

This view, founded in methodological individualism, would insist that the totality can *in principle* be described as a result of the dynamics of individual parts, and that it is possible to deduct the character of the individual parts and their interactions from the totality. The generative models developed by Barth (1966) fit this description, as does his later (Barth 1972) partial typology of societies based on complexity in statuses, ranging from ‘elementary’ (bands) via ‘replicating’ (Australian) and ‘involute’ (Indian) to ‘contract’ (modern industrial) societies, where the number of mutually defined status sets is almost infinite. It should be noted that any growth in the number of mutually defined statuses leads to a greater complexity than the number of additional statuses might indicate at a first glance. To give an example: When my wife and I were childless, our family consisted of one relationship. When we had our first child, the number

of persons grew by one, but the number of relationships grew by two. When our second child was born, the number of persons again increased by one, but the number of relationships went from three to six.

Butterfly effects, where tiny changes at an early stage in a process lead to huge deviations later, also belong to this category, where the constituent elements are not only known, but where their relative mutual impact can, at least in theory, be gauged.

2. Complexity is an irreducible property of human worlds

The image that comes to mind is that of a cake. The ingredients may be known if one is in the possession of a recipe, but the finished product (the totality) cannot be unbaked, nor can the ingredients always be deduced from the cake: Different combinations of factors may lead to identical results. Typical examples from the literature on complexity and chaos are the stock exchange and the global climate, which, it is often argued, can only be simulated through themselves. This kind of complexity also recalls Borges's very short story 'On exactitude in science' (Borges 1999 [1946]). Here, Borges, quoting a fictitious source, describes an empire where

the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it.²

To return to the cake metaphor briefly, Brian Morris (1994), in his book on the anthropology of self, discusses what it takes to produce a human being. Likening it to baking a cake, he mentions four sets of factors: A recipe (DNA), ingredients (soma, the substances that make up the body), an oven (the environment, social and non-social), and a baker (human subjectivity). Thus the shortcomings of any attempt to reduce humanity to either social or genetic forces.

3. Complexity is the outcome of a way of looking at the world

Unlike mainstream scientific perspectives, which are analytic and strive to isolate entities in order to discern the relative significance of carefully circumscribed things and processes, the gaze which explicitly aims to describe, rather than unravel, the inherent complexity of its object will never rest contented with a single-factor account, but will always be on the lookout for additional forces and new angles. The aim

of the resulting description is richness rather than parsimony. Complexity thus becomes the outcome of an imaginative and creative process, since the researcher is aware that a 'full description' of a given phenomenon is impossible.

It is chiefly this third sense of complexity that I shall explore here. An excellent example of its deployment is Edgar Morin's account of sacrifice (Morin 2001, p. 37ff.). While elegant Darwinian, structural-functional, structuralist and culturalist descriptions of 'the true nature of sacrifice' are readily available in the literature, Morin (2001) identifies no less than seven distinct aspects of signification in sacrifice:

- (i) Sacrifice alleviates anxiety or uncertainty through making an offering to gods;
- (ii) it confirms obedience to the terrible demands of the same gods;
- (iii) it denotes reciprocity (at the symbolic level) vis-à-vis other groups;
- (iv) it amounts to a magical exploitation of the regenerative force of death;
- (v) it transfers evil, in a purifying way, to an exorcizing victim;
- (vi) it channels violence in a safe and controlled way; and
- (vii) it reinforces the integration of the community.

Morin insists that none of these 'levels of signification' can be reduced to any of the others. In other words, the complexity is not only many times greater than supposed in simple causal accounts, it is of a different order. This is not to say that monocausal or reductionist accounts are necessarily wrong, nor that they are not useful, but only that if we want to understand a phenomenon, a single-factor account is at best a beginning. This is why contemporary anthropologists, who tend to be steeped in the virtues of complexity, are prone to exclaim that 'it is more complicated than that!' when faced with the robust and often elegant reductionisms of economists, materialists and Darwinists.

Yet we need to do better than that. Notably, it is necessary to specify in which ways 'things are more complex' than often assumed, and what the consequences are for research. This is not least important when the line of research deals with the irreducibly complex issues of social integration in diverse and often turbulent societies.

Complexity in social and cultural integration

In the context of group identities, a main implication of this view of complexity is not merely that each of us has 'many statuses' and thus belong to different groups (a trivial fact, which nevertheless bears repeating), but also that different kinds of groups or collectivities can be constituted on various grounds or principles. Thus researchers on ethnic

and cultural diversity who place their bets on both horses – parsimony and richness – often oscillate, in their writings, between dividing their field of study into ethnic or religious groups, and denying or at least relativizing the significance of ethnic or religious divisions. Groups exist from a certain point of view, but from another point of view they vanish. From a perspective accepting the complexity of social life, both descriptions may in fact be true, but should not be allowed to stand alone. As Gregory Bateson famously entitled a chapter in his *Mind and Nature* (1979, p. 67): ‘Two descriptions are better than one’.

This much said, it is time to move towards the substantial issues of ethnic and cultural complexity in contemporary West European societies. This complexity is often commented upon in academic debates and research, but it has scarcely been seriously discussed at the conceptual level. This is a serious omission in so far as many of the debates, academic as well as non-academic, gravitate around the notion of ‘integration’. Minorities, it is often tacitly assumed, ought to be ‘integrated’ into the host society, for their own benefit and that of greater society. However, since there are very important differences between the adaptations between individual immigrants, ethnic and religious immigrant groups, and between majority individuals, groups and greater society, some clarification is needed. What exactly is it that we are talking about when we say ‘cultural complexity’?

The answer usually has something to do with polyethnic societies and quickly shifts to the urgent problem originally formulated as that of the ‘plural society’ (Furnivall 1948; Smith 1965): How much, or how little, can people have in common at the cultural level and still retain a sense of solidarity, equality before the law and a sufficient degree of equal opportunity to remain loyal?

To be even more specific: *What are the criteria of exclusion and inclusion in a given social environment?* This question, which takes complexity as a premise not an answer, must initially be asked at two societal levels and from two analytical angles.

First, we need to ask which forms of exclusion are practised in greater society, and which are the requirements for inclusion. Are minorities treated differently or discriminated against on the basis of colour, language, religion etc. – and does exclusion primarily take place in the labour market, in the housing market, in the educational system etc. (Is unrest about Islam and the West or about a segregated labour market?)

Conversely, it is necessary to investigate the criteria of inclusion in the minority. Who is a member, and on what grounds; is it possible to change group membership or to relinquish it altogether, and what are the resources associated with group membership?

Raising these questions may enable us to find out to what extent it is possible for members of minorities to satisfy some or most of their

needs within the community – without being fully ‘integrated’, in other words – and to what extent the majority/minority boundary is fixed or more like a semi-permeable membrane.

The two levels of integration emerging from this way of raising the issue are those of society (*Gesellschaft*) and community (*Gemeinschaft*). One can be a full member of either without properly belonging to the other. The members of a transnational Somali family in Oslo may have extensive links with Somalis elsewhere in Europe and in Somalia, ties of reciprocity and economic support, religious activities and so on, without even knowing the rudiments of the language in the society (*Gesellschaft*) in which they live.³ Conversely, one may be a perfectly well-functioning member of a *Gesellschaft* – a tax-paying, law-abiding voter – without knowing anybody.

The next set of questions, which follows logically from these, pertains to the kind of group identities that emerge following these dynamics of inclusion and exclusion at the societal and group levels. The kinds of group that become strongly incorporated need to be feasible and either beneficial to their members, beneficial to some of them (e.g. community leaders), or enforced by greater society. Class-based organization is widely and probably correctly perceived as chosen and beneficial to the members, whether it is a case of working-class trade unions or informal elite organizations. Ethnic or religious organization, be it formal or informal, is more difficult to classify. It may be enforced (as in South Africa under apartheid, or indeed in Western societies with a positive attitude towards multiculturalism), but it may also arise from an opportunity situation where ethnic or religious solidarity may channel resources towards and within the group. With ethnic elites (Chua 2003; see Cohen 1999, Chapter 4, on Lebanese and Chinese diasporas), the benefits of tight ethnic incorporation are easy to see; but even members of relatively under-privileged groups may for complex motivations, including self-esteem, opt for ethnic incorporation. This has been the case with Sami in northern Scandinavia, although there are many Sami, or people who could have chosen a Sami identity, who decide to let other kinds of group membership (regional, gender, class, occupation) overrule their ethnic identity.

It is a sociological truism that social groups are closed and open in different ways, and that the degree of group incorporation varies. No group or collectivity is entirely closed; no group is completely open; in a complex society, no group offers its members everything they need, but it is equally true that no group offers its members nothing. Yet, it is important to understand why it is that some groups or other kinds of collectivities are more open to new recruits than others.

Cultural and social dimensions

An implication of this argument is that external and internal pressures must be taken into account simultaneously if we are going to understand the dynamics of majority/minority relationships, why certain groups emerge while others do not, and the possibilities for participation in greater society for minorities. It should be noted that it is not necessarily in the interest of minorities to become 'integrated'. Some opt for the highest possible degree of autonomy, while others thrive through transnational networks where the nation-state in which they reside is largely irrelevant.

Moreover, I have suggested a simple contrast between chosen and enforced processes of inclusion and exclusion. Of course, in real life this is always a debatable distinction: it cannot be answered conclusively, but the question can and should always be addressed. Why – to use a tired example – do so many Muslim women wear hijabs in the early years of the new millennium? If asked, some say that they do it to assert their freedom from pressures to conform. Others say that their father or husband tells them to. Again others say, simply, that it is a religious obligation which they obey without asking questions. From the dominant perspective of the majority, it is the *community* that chooses the hijab for its women, while the individual *women* are not free to choose. Some social analysts may argue that *au contraire*, the majority has enforced the hijab onto the Muslim minority women through its denial to include Muslims as equals in their *Gesellschaft*, thereby spurring a counterreaction of identity politics. All of these perspectives need to be taken into account in a complex description of the phenomenon of hijab-wearing.

Yet, the enforced/chosen contrast is a necessary analytical device, but it is a model not to be confused with reality.

So far, I have distinguished between the perspectives of the *minority* and those of the *majority* (granting internal diversity), and between *enforced* and *chosen* processes.

A further necessary distinction, often overlooked, is that which separates *cultural* from *social* aspects. By cultural I mean symbolic universes of mutual intelligibility and shared references; while the social refers to activities, statuses (roles) and institutions. In a study of ethnicity in Mauritius and Trinidad, I once argued that it is perfectly possible to imagine a society where the level of cultural cohesion is high (people 'speak the same language') but where ethnic segregation is deep – and that, in fact, both of these island-states in some, but not in other, respects come close to such a characterization (Eriksen 1992). The young V. S. Naipaul wrote bitterly of his native Trinidad that, 'Superficially, because of the multitude of races, Trinidad may seem

complex, but to anyone who knows it, it is a simple colonial philistine society' (Naipaul 1979 [1958]).

This kind of society is socially complex in the sense of there being a number of distinctive, more or less endogamous groups and their anomalous permutations (people of 'mixed' origins, often even 'mixed' identities), but culturally simple in the sense of not harbouring a wide range of value systems and distinctive cosmologies. In Naipaul's view, all Trinidad was basically permeated by a petit-bourgeois morality. Be this as it may – in my view, Naipaul underestimates the cultural complexity of Trinidad – the point is that such a society, which combines social diversity with cultural uniformity, is perfectly conceivable. Vice versa, one can also imagine a society with considerable cultural variation but with a high degree of social cohesion. This would arguably be the case among the majorities of West European societies, where for example attitudes and practices relating to religion and sex vary enormously, yet the social integration at the *Gesellschaft* level is consistently high.

Naturally, the discussion does not stop here, even if we remain at the level of models. For one can be socially integrated in certain respects and not in others: the children of Pakistani immigrants in Oslo, for example, are integrated in the Norwegian educational system, but experience great difficulties in getting jobs afterwards.

In order to elaborate the contrast between social and cultural openness and closure, let us consider the following model (Figure 1):

I hasten to add that the examples in the figure are mere evocations, and that it would lead to a great deal of further complexity if one were to deal with them as reality. To say that France is a 'socially open' society *tout court* sounds odd following the November 2005 riots.

Figure 1. Two dimensions of openness and closure

Socially open		Socially closed		
Western individualism		Elite minorities		Culturally open
Melanesia		Germany		
Religions of conversion		Sects		Culturally closed
France		Ethnic groups during apartheid		

What is meant is simply that it is relatively easy to achieve French citizenship; French society is open at the level of formal inclusion. Describing France as 'culturally closed' is also a huge oversimplification, which refers to the elite cultural hegemony so well described by Bourdieu, and the purist ideology of language. The point about the figure is nevertheless to say something, in an abstract way, about different logics of inclusion and exclusion. Religions of conversion (notably Christianity and Islam) are socially open in the sense that anyone can in theory join; but they are culturally closed in the sense of not accepting the hybridization of their sacred texts or the equal status of competing sacred texts. Religious or political sects may, similarly, be both culturally and socially closed, sometimes self-recruiting, in that membership may be extremely difficult to obtain. When Germany, moreover, is described as culturally open but socially closed, I refer to the same dimensions as in the case of France, only with the opposite values. Melanesian societies, further, are known to anthropologists as being culturally syncretist and socially accommodating even to the extent of adopting visiting anthropologists as temporary kinsmen under the right circumstances. With elite minorities, their cultural flexibility tends to be considerable in that they appropriate local language and some customs, whereas at the same time they are nearly always endogamous.

Ethnic groups under apartheid and western individualism are posited as opposites along both dimensions, one is closed-closed, one is open-open. Interracial marriages were illegal during apartheid, and ethnic groups were actively encouraged (sometimes forced) to guard the borders of their culture jealously. With western individualism, the supreme value is the free agent, and anyone who subscribes to this particular notion of personhood is free to join (although, it may be pointed out, since the notion precludes community, there isn't much to join). The entrance ticket is not free, but as long as the individualist conceptualization of personhood is accepted, it is compatible with a great cultural variation, including permutations, in other respects. This is clearly why it is so much easier, for the majorities in Western Europe, to accept immigrant food and immigrant music than immigrant family organization and gender roles.

It is easy to see that the four-field diagramme above, notwithstanding the empirical complications that arise immediately upon examination, is simplistic. It does not discern between majority and minority points of view, nor does it specify which aspects of cultural and social processes are taken into account. Moreover, the figure does not even attempt to suggest where decisions are taken and by whom, or who dictates the terms of discourse.

Let us consider, then, a more complex figure, which distinguishes between openness and closure in the social and cultural realms, which

distinguishes between that which is perceived as enforced and that which is perceived as chosen, and which restricts itself to majority perspectives.

Figure 2, containing twice as many boxes as Figure 1, is more than twice as complex, since it implies a dynamic relationship between all possible positions and several possible combinations of views. For example, in any West European society, there are bound to be people who argue in favour of cultural openness and social closure – allow their music, food and films into the country, but keep the people out. The opposite attitude is also perfectly viable (and is often associated with French public opinion): Allow the people in, but make them assimilate. At the height of the 2005 riots, President Chirac said, addressing ‘the children of the difficult suburbs’, that ‘no matter your origins, you are the sons and daughters of the Republic’ (*Le Monde* 15 November 2005), thus defining France as a non-ethnic nation.

The figure contains boxes which endorse state policies and which oppose it. Those that regard the state of affairs as chosen tend to see state policies as expressions of democratic will; those that see changes as enforced tend to regard the state as an enemy of the people. All eight positions and their various combinations are common and can be supported empirically in most West European countries, a fact that shows the necessity of taking complexity as a premise for research, not an outcome.

If we apply the template from Figure 2 to typical or widespread attitudes among minority members, the result might be something like Figure 3.

Anyone who wants to make sense of, say, social unrest or variable unemployment rates in different minority groups, might do worse than start with an examination of the relationship between these possibilities.

Figure 2. *Typical majority perceptions of minority issues*

Social		Cultural		
Chosen	Enforced	Chosen	Enforced	
Generous immigration policy	Being flooded by immigrants	Enriching syncretism and stimulating impulses	Americanisation Islamicization	Open
Saving the welfare state by restricting immigration	Repressive nationalist policy	Keeping cultural heritage alive	Censorship Conformism Cultural nationalism	Closed

Figure 3. *Typical minority perceptions of their place in greater society*

Social		Cultural		
Chosen	Enforced	Chosen	Enforced	
Allowing children to marry natives	Forced to become "integrated"	Enriching syncretism and stimulating impulses	Forced to take e.g. language course; Pressure to relinquish traditional family values	Open
Keeping traditional social structure, kinship system, networks etc. going	Barred from public arenas because of racism/discrimination	Keeping cultural heritage alive	Conformism Authoritarian community leadership Lack of openness in majority	Closed

Restricting myself to perceptions in Figures 2 and 3, I have avoided raising questions of underlying causes, yet any comprehensive answer to an empirical problem would have to take them into account – e.g. educational achievement, language proficiency, jobseeking patterns, gender roles, transnational ties and so on. Attitudes are not *sui generis* and needs to be explained; what is of interest here is, as in Figure 2, that different combinations of views are possible. One may be favourable to cultural integration but opt to remain distinct socially (a typical preference among some elite minorities); or – arguably the more common view among immigrants in Western Europe – be favourable to social integration (jobs, education, political equality) but critical of cultural integration (seen as a recipe for moral decline, selfishness etc.).

A notable difference between Figures 2 and 3 is that the content of the boxes in the latter alternate between state (external) and community (internal) processes. Generally, the processes perceived as enforced are associated with the state/greater society, but the last box indicates that coercion may well take place within the community as well. In fact, in a more fleshed-out form, the 'social, closed, enforced' box would include, as an additional factor, domestic practices restricting personal liberty.

A complementary perspective on the issues would instead divide factors into internal and external ones, perhaps like this:

With a framework of this kind, one may then move on to identify substantial features of the chosen society or community. Research following from premises of this kind (Figures 2, 3 and 4) could be both quantitative and qualitative. A quantitative project might look for causal links (typical hypotheses might be e.g. that an inclusive labour market encourages competitive individualism among minorities; or that external pressure to assimilate encourages withdrawal and

Figure 4. External and internal factors in minority integration

	Culturally open	Culturally closed	Socially open	Socially closed
Internal factors	Ambitions of mobility Elite status	Religious zeal Cultural estate	Competitive individualism Meritocracy	Hierarchy Gender inequality Elite status
External factors	Pressure from mass culture + state	Stigmatising ideology Discrimination	Inclusive labour market	Segregated labour market and housing

cultural conservatism among minorities). A qualitative project might try to describe the range of life-worlds inhabited by both minorities and majorities, followed by an attempt to connect these subjectively experienced life-worlds to objective features of both society (*Gesellschaft*) and community (*Gemeinschaft*).

Concluding remarks

The point I have tried to make in this article, which amounts to little more than a sketch, is that in order for studies of minority-majority relationships to progress, we need a research methodology which (i) neither ignores nor takes for granted the existence of ethnic/religious communities and their variable relevance for people who belong to them (or refuse to do so); (ii) acknowledges that cultural and social dynamics can be studied independently of each other, and (iii) incorporates both majorities and minorities in the research design.

Differentiating between social and cultural factors, and acknowledging that 'minorities' do not speak with one voice, may be necessary for an understanding of many current issues. Let us take the widespread culturalization of the minority debate as an example. There has, in the last couple of decades, been a general shift from social to cultural factors in both popular and academic discourse about minority issues and immigration to Europe. Rather than addressing jobs and education, the public debate has typically concentrated on hijabs and Islam. The term identity crops up even in connection with obviously class-based events like the French riots. (Jacques Chirac spoke, on 14 November 2005, about *une crise d'identité*.) Questions about what it means to be British, Norwegian, Dutch etc., moreover, are raised with unprecedented fervour. An outcome of this kind of situation may be largely enforced cultural assimilation and social segregation. To many immigrants, this entails the worst of both worlds. To others, it means that trust is to be placed

only within the group, and that one can have a full life without too much contact with the majority society. This situation may thus confirm the analytical point that one may be socially integrated in *Gemeinschaft* without being integrated in *Gesellschaft*.

As a result of culturalization, cultural difference or a group-based cultural identity is widely seen as a fact, and occasionally as a resource within the group. One possible outcome could be fragmenting identity politics, with ever new minority groups appearing as political actors and laying claims to rights. This would again lead to a heightened tension within the minority, deepening generation gaps and forcing individuals to choose between this and that identity – without addressing the fundamental social questions relating chiefly to class and the availability of work. In sum, in order not to talk about culture when one ought to have talked about class, the unfashionable distinctions between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, and between society and culture, must be resuscitated.

Notes

1. There exists a considerable sociological literature on complexity, much of which relates to Niklas Luhmann's work, which I do not engage with here as it is not necessary for the ensuing argument. For similar reasons, complexity theory relating to the physical world is not discussed either.
2. In the Lewis Carroll story that inspired this fable, 'Sylvie and Bruno', the citizens eventually abandon the map made on a scale 'of one mile to one mile', using the country itself as a map and noting that 'it does nearly as well'.
3. The issues of transnationalism and the deterritorialization/outourcing of the nation-state, huge and relevant as they are, have to be left out of this paper, which concentrates on modelling forms of complexity in the state under its territorial mode. (See Vertovec 2004 for an updated discussion of contemporary migrant transnationalism.)

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THOMAS HYLLAND ERIKSEN is Professor of Social Anthropology and research director of the programme 'Cultural Complexity in the new Norway' at the University of Oslo.
ADDRESS: PO. Box 1091 Blindern, N-0317 Oslo, Norway