GLOCALIZATION, EMBEDDING, ANCHORING: ON THE COGNITIVE IMPACT AND EXPERIENCE OF GLOBALIZATION

MIGUEL JOHN VERSLUYS (ID)
Leiden University (The Netherlands) ROR
m.j.versluys@arch.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract: This essay discusses globalization and glocalization as crucially important concepts for the Social Sciences and Humanities, thereby distinguishing between globalization/ glocalization as research methodology (hermeneutics) and as historical process unfolding through time. For many SSH scholars the term globalization evokes historical processes that likewise spanned the globe and were (apparently) directed from above, such as imperialism, Westernisation and modernisation. Defining globalization as glocalization, which it is by nature, might help to overcome this (incorrect) association and make it into an important instrument of the (decolonial) SSH toolbox. After discussing the content of the *Handbook of Culture and Glocalization*, edited by Victor N. Roudometof and Ugo Dessì (2022), to show what glocalization entails and how the concept is fruitfully used over a variety of fields already, I focus on the idea of "arrival" as a next step in our research agenda. Glocalization, I argue, is very much about the impact of globalization, in local contexts, in cognitive terms of experience. Increasing global dynamics demand embedding practices to make globalization work on the ground, in the lives of people, as glocalization. To a successful outcome of these inherently difficult processes, often fraught with anxiety and friction, anchoring is key.

Keywords: globalization, glocalization, embedding, anchoring, experience.

INTRODUCTION: "WIR DÜRFEN NICHT AN DIESER STELLE STEHEN BLEIBEN"

Although the global turn is developing into an ever more far-reaching and enduring change of direction within the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) (Darian-Smith, McCarty 2017), the study of the globalization phenomenon is still bothered by the term itself. That is to say that, not infrequently, SSH scholars seem to be hesitant to fully embrace it as a conceptual framework for their field as they struggle, or so it seems, with both constituents of the concept: the "-global" and the "-ization". The first (-global) immediately raises suspicions about the position of and attention to the local and the localities where most SSH scholars' "critically important archives reside" (Appadurai 2010: 12); they would intuitively understand the global as being in opposition to those. The second (-ization) is suggestive of the overarching, top-down grand narratives that, for good reasons, we have come to dislike, because, as has been convincingly demonstrated, such -ization (and -ism) denominators tend to mask a much more complex, bottom-up formalised reality on the ground. All in all, for many SSH scholars the term globalization is reminiscent of historical processes that likewise spanned the globe and were (apparently) directed from above, such as imperialism and Westernisation (the latter being usually understood as modernisation). The (postcolonial) critique that globalization is just a different way to describe (Western) imperialism or even mask the unequal power relations that characterise it by opting for a more "neutral" term, can indeed be found all over the SSH disciplines (see the excellent and important work of Walter Mignolo 2021 for this debate). This skepticism has seriously hampered its application as a conceptual framework so far.

In this respect, "globalization" suffers the same fate as "cosmopolitanism", which is frequently associated with incomplete and even abusive understandings and usages in the past, instead of being judged on its various intentions, merits and possibilities (Inglis, Delanty 2010; Papastephanou 2024). In an important recent essay, Seyla Benhabib (2024) has shown how, because of such misconceptions, postcolonial perceptions of

these central concepts within Global Studies have developed into what she refers to as a *herméneutique du soupçon*. This term, a hermeneutics of suspicion, was coined by Paul Ricoeur (1965) (see Scott-Baumann 2009) to criticize the kind of (cynical) deconstruction that, in our case, is exemplified by the critique that concepts such as globalization and cosmopolitanism would (be put in place in order to) mask power dynamics and unequal power relations. Ricoeur argued that there is more to the interpretation of concepts than just that. Benhabib argues for the necessity, methodologically as well as ethically, to move beyond this hermeneutics of suspicion, calling upon postcolonial studies to move forward and add to the global turn, forcefully exclaiming: "Wir dürfen nicht an dieser Stelle stehen bleiben" (Benhabib 2024, 36; see Bachir Diagne 2024 for a similar manifesto). Instead of a *herméneutique du soupçon*, therefore, SSH scholars should rather try and work with the "principle of charity" (*benigna interpretatio*) in studying the globalization phenomenon and change their a-priori attitude towards it. If we want to move on, as Benhabib and others urge us to do, we should try and maximise the sense of interpretation that globalization and cosmopolitanism can provide us with; and think harder about the purpose and intensity of our (continued) criticism (Sluiter 1998 for the "principle of charity" and its importance for SSH research). In Benhabib's view, postcolonialism already took a crucial step towards a different understanding of the course of world history with the deconstruction of the colonial worldview; now it should move on and try to reconstruct differing narratives beyond the categories of that colonial worldview – a point to which I will come back below. Benhabib maintains that globalization-thinking can and should be an important part of the postcolonial toolbox (as I argued, for instance, for the field of Roman archaeology in Versluys 2021). Does it then simply need a name change or rebranding, as glocalization, to get there?

It is interesting to note that the concept of cosmopolitanism (see above) already went through a similar development, which resulted in the addition of the qualification rooted. The idea of cosmopolitanism entails the entanglement of the local and the global. That double stemma is perfectly clear from the

term itself since it includes both the global *cosmos* and the local *polis*, as Ulrich Beck (2003) reminded us in a book about the cultural consequences of globalization. Nowadays, however, "cosmopolitan" is most often perceived as referring to a state of estrangement from, opposition to or even hostility towards the local, and therefore frequently valued in either (uncritically) positive or (uncritically) negative terms. Kwame Appiah (2005; see also Appiah 2006 and 2018) therefore proposed the idea of "rooted cosmopolitanism", the qualification "rooted" being a useful reminder of the true meaning of "cosmopolitan". Appiah's concept of "rooted cosmopolitanism" seeks to underline that human history is always about local-global interplay and should therefore be analysed in non-dichotomous terms. This would enable us to do away with the either/or-logic of identity politics and culturalist approaches, not in order to deny that the local and the global can be (perceived as) oppositions, but to make us aware of the fact that the one does not necessarily exclude the other. Such a multiscalar approach allows us to tell different stories, stories of specific localities as stories of interconnectedness – and is therefore significant from an analytical as well as an ethical perspective (see Kruijer, Versluys, Lilley 2024 for a recent contribution to the conceptual development of the concept of rooted cosmopolitanism, in terms of heritage and belonging). Like (rooted) cosmopolitanism, the globalization phenomenon, therefore, can do double duty for the SSH discipline. One the one hand it provides us with a conceptual framework to study our data, functioning as a hermeneutics. On the other hand, globalization is a historical process that, moreover, characterizes human history from its earliest beginnings: we have always been global (Hodos et al. 2017; Zinkina et al. 2019). For methodological clarity it is important to distinguish between these two.

GLOBALIZATION AS GLOCALIZATION

The great merit of the important and timely *Handbook of culture and glocalization*, edited by Victor N. Roudometof and Ugo Dessì (2022) is that it eliminates all the convenient

misconceptions about globalization, both the historical process and the research methodology, as they circulate within (parts of) the SSH at present. Moreover, it provides (something of) a rebranding by stating that globalization always is glocalization. This is not a new insight within Globalization Studies, but one that has been known and used for a long time, particularly through the influential work of Robbie Robertson, starting with his 1994 and 1995 publications. It is to be hoped that a wider use of the concept of glocalization, which includes the notion of the local and recognizes the bottom-up, creative agency of localities, once and for all recalibrates the *herméneutique du soupçon* regarding the globalization phenomenon. This is why the *Handbook* is a must-read for all working in this field. Let me, to illustrate that and to provide some background to what the concept of glocalization entails and can achieve, go through the book's chapters.

The introduction by Victor Roudometof and Ugo Dessì summarises both historiography and state of the art, mentioning the (problematic) link between globalization and modernisation and underlining how, already for scholars such as Émile Durkheim, culture was the outcome of integration on a world scale (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 2). Glocalization, they argue, allows us to make room for the interpretation of "processes of cross-cultural interaction in a manner that acknowledges local agency" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 8). Robertson himself, for instance, identified processes of relativisation, accommodation, hybridisation and transformation as (what he called) strategies of glocalization (see Giulianotti, Robertson 2007), a concept he understood as the adaption of panlocal developments to local circumstances (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 4). Roudometof (2016) similarly defined glocalization as the various refractions of the global through the local. Terms such as "adaption" and "refraction", and many other comparable concepts, would later be brought together under the umbrella of "cultural translation" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 7-8; see also Bachmann-Medik 2014). Yet another concept to indicate the same processes of objectification, incorporation and transformation of "things from outside" for which the *agens* of the local context is key is appropriation (Hahn 2004, see Versluys 2024). Appropriation

was already theorized as *oikeiosis* (the recognition of something as one's own; familiarization) in the Stoic philosophy of the Hellenistic world and therefore has a long pedigree (Algra 2003). The concept, however, seems to have fallen out of favour at present, due to recent debates where it is only perceived in negative terms, as an unjustified takeover or even a form of stealing. This may be the reason that "appropriation" does not figure prominently in this volume. This is, I think, erroneous, despite the importance of the backlash against "appropriation" from an ideological perspective. As a form of cultural translation, appropriation is what makes the global circulation of people, goods and ideas cognitively possible, as glocalization. This has again been illustrated in a splendid recent article by the anthropologist Jos Platenkamp (2022). Towards the end of this essay, I will discuss the interrelationship between these and other, comparable concepts, arguing that they all seek to elucidate what happens in the process of global-local refraction in terms of what we could call "embedding", or "anchoring".

A crucial point made in the introduction is that, ultimately, both "global" and "local" refer to processes and not (spatially limited or circumscribed) physical locations (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 6, see further below). From such a perspective it is indeed true that the notion of translocality is only a "*supposedly* rival concept,*" since it is meant to indicate the same processes (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 6, my emphasis; for its use as a rival concept to globalization, see, for instance, Hoo 2022). Using "translocal" instead of the concept of globalization, then, seems to be an attempt to move away from the supposed deficiencies of the latter, similar to what I described above. Such strategies can be explained through what Roudometof and Dessì identify in the most general terms as "[…] a certain enduring tendency to identify the overall theme of globalization with the effect of western modernization" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 9). The notion of "translocality" thus seeks to do what "glocalization" does (and, for that matter, "rooted cosmopolitanism"): present the local and the global as deeply entangled; one could perhaps even say, as manifestations of each other. Without mentioning the concept of glocalization as such, Arjun Appadurai (2010: 12) succinctly summarised this idea as follows:

To really meet the challenge of comparison in a context characterized by high degrees of connectivity and circulation […] we need to understand more about the ways in which the forms of circulation and the circulation of forms create the conditions for the production of locality. I stress locality because, in the end, this is where our critically important archives reside. Localities […] are temporary negotiations between various globally circulating forms. They are not subordinate instances of the global, but in fact the main evidence of its reality.

The *Handbook* is divided in four parts. Parts I, II and III (entitled Humanities, Social Sciences, and Communication and Media respectively) each contain six chapters; part IV (New research frontiers) has five. The volume thus covers a large variety of subjects and approaches, which is useful because glocalization is applied and understood in rather different ways over a variety of academic fields. Being familiar with the debates within the Humanities and the field of Archaeology myself, I learned a lot from the examples and perspectives debated in the other chapters. Cross fertilisation is key to the volume as a whole and many of the chapters (though not all) directly or indirectly engage with each other.

Part I (Humanities) starts off with a chapter by Matthew Adem Cobb on "globalization and glocalization across the globe (2000 BCE-1500 CE)". This is, in fact, an important and very welcome (editorial) statement, because it serves to underline, right at the start, that globalization/glocalization has a deep history. This is particularly relevant in the case of a series ("Handbooks on Globalization") like this, focused, as most research on global dynamics still is, on the present and what is called "the modern period". Jack Goody (2006) would see the latter as an example of "the theft of history": the Western claim that it invented, for its own exclusive benefit, all the major institutions that make our modern world possible, thus constructing a "great wall" dividing not only the West from the rest, but also Modern from Ancient (see Versluys, Sluiter 2023: 38-39). Recent research is now breaking down that wall, as exemplified by important companions such as *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization* (Hodos et al. 2017) and *A big history of Globalization. The emergence of a global world system*

(Zinka et al. 2019), which both provide a truly deep history of globalization/glocalization. Among the many insights revealed there is the prime importance of objects, things, for understanding how the processes of globalization/glocalization work and fostering an awareness of the relevance of the deep history of material culture for the present. Connections between people and things are instrumental in shaping the pathways of change. The influx of new objects leads to new practices, new socio-cultural configurations and new imaginations. Humans, therefore, are far more embedded in material things than we had previously realized. Moreover, these things with which we are entangled are far more dynamic and creative than we had once understood (LeCain 2017). This theoretical perspective, variously characterised as, for instance, "material cultural history" or even "object-oriented ontology", is seriously underplayed in the volume. Although objects play a role in many chapters, they most often do so as representations of people and their ideas alone. This *Handbook*, therefore, is very much about the "global turn" within SSH, but certainly not about "the material turn". Bruno Latour's *Actor Network Theory* is only mentioned once (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 67), for instance. As Arjun Appadurai has shown throughout his work, however, combining the two yields the best picture (Appadurai 2013), and for a deep history of globalization/glocalization it is simply a necessity. For most of world history and many places around the globe, we only (or mainly) have objects at our disposal to reconstruct these processes. And even when we do have ample data, we better understand globalization/glocalization when involving objects as *agents provocateurs* of historical change (Versluys 2014 illustrates this for the study of the Roman world; see Versluys 2017 and Pitts/Versluys 2021 for how such a methodology looks in practice). This is what Cobb demonstrates as well when he identifies heterogeneity, the re-embedding of local culture and deterritorialisation as hallmarks of globalization/glocalization for his period and context (for these (and other) hallmarks, see Hodos 2020). In more general terms, he concludes that it is easier for scholars to identify the local than the global. This reminded me of an important observation made by globalization scholar Jan Nederveen Pieterse: "you cannot live in the global"

(see Nederveen Pieterse 2021). Could this (also) explain the continued preference for the local at the expense of the global from the side of SSH scholars (for this debate see recently Riva, Mira-Grau 2022 contra Hodos 2022)?

The next chapter, by Sandhya Rao Mehta, deals with (the idea of) world literature and its "glocal moment". In her view glocalization is "a constructive way to negotiate between global forces and local applications, ideally ensuring a more equitable participation of different parts of the world" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 45). Here, interestingly, we have the promise of globalization/glocalization as a tool to decolonise the field that Benhabib (2024) and Bachir Diagne (2024) allude to as well. Quoting Roudometof, Mehta compares the concept to Hindu deities who are seen as manifestations of a single entity, although they take multiple forms simultaneously and thousands of them exist (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 45). In describing her data, she follows Robertson, who argued that there is an "inevitable necessity for things that are spreading [...] to accommodate themselves to a particular historical context" (quoted in Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 46), referring to a process I shall describe as "embedding" or "anchoring" below. She perceives glocalization as refraction and as having much in common with ideas about cosmopolitanism (for which see Inglis, Delanty 2010; Inglis, Robertson 2011). She usefully underlines, moreover, how concepts such as hybridity, transnationalism, and third space are only one step in the right direction since they focus on the *fissures* between the local and the global, whereas what we need are concepts that describe and clarify the many ways in which they are (simultaneously) *connected* as well. This is also the critique I articulated in the introductory paragraph above.

The next chapter by Bruce Janz, about philosophy, I found particularly insightful in this respect. He shows that local and global are not places on a map, but rather concepts, which we can align, for instance, with the classic distinction made in sociology between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. "The local raises further questions, about place, home, people, heritage, tradition and so forth. The global, likewise, raises further connections, to the earth, the world, the universe, the cosmopolitan and mondialization" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 64). Local and global, in

other words, are mirror images; (relative) perspectives defined by your cognitive point of departure. The study of globalization/glocalization is therefore, according to Janz, part of the field of mereology, the study of the relationship between wholes and parts. The main point, also in Janz' analysis, is that there is no dichotomy. Global developments tend to activate a host of different ways of being local, "allowing a new form of individuality to emerge" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 66). Janz therefore sees the tension between the two as a "creative or productive space, rather than just a space of mutual cancelling, negation or subsumption of one under the other" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 71). Living in that space, however, is not always easy. Janz here speaks of anxiety: "The anxiety of the glocal is the anxiety of potentiality, of being required to create in order to live both in the global and the local" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 72). This situation has already been brilliantly analysed and discussed as "friction" by A. Lowenhaupt Tsing in a study she characterises as an "ethnography of global connections" (Tsing 2005, cf. Versluys 2021). In order to deal with this anxiety, people often opt for one side or the other, Janz maintains, that is: they either choose the local or the global. There is, in the first instance at least, comfort in taking sides. "Far more difficult, though, is the requirement of being both of these at once, without reducing one to the other" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 72). In betweenness, we might conclude, thus brings anxiety as well as innovation. In other words: as cultural translation, appropriation always is, at least in part, a creative process of change (see above), which necessitates breaks with the past and its traditions. The notion of creative destruction (Cowen 2004) may be relevant in this context, and important for the debate.

In his chapter about law and globalization, Salvatore Mancuso alludes to the concept of grobalisation, which we should understand as the negative, imperialistic interpretation of what globalization might be – as the negative outcome of the friction produced by the global-local interplay (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 82, cf. also Riedel 2018).

The next chapter by Nikos Papastergiades, entitled "Cosmos *from* the global south", is a rich and important plea to explore decolonial perspectives on art through concepts such as

globalization and glocalization. The author is well aware of the terms' problematic genealogies ("Is it possible to imagine cosmopolitanism without imposing […] an epistemic framework that conforms to the European Enlightenment's vision of modernity, secularism and rationality?", Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 92). Fortunately, however, instead of again flogging the proverbial dead horse, he advocates the investigation of what the global-local "tool", as he calls it (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 93), can bring. He reminds us that the concept of the glocal does not operate in a neutral field (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 93) – no concept does. Papastergiades first of all perceives "glocal" as a critique of processes of homogenisation (which ties in with what we have seen above). In somewhat more general terms, he defines it as "a complex nexus between place-based practices and abstract processes" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 95). He then discusses the concept of the decolonial as understood by the Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (1991), to look if there is a future for cosmopolitanism from a decolonial perspective (for this question see also "rooted cosmopolitanism" as discussed above). For Quijano and other scholars working in this decolonial tradition, indigenous ontologies are crucial in order to escape from the colonial structures and patterns of thought that pervade our scholarly interpretations and to formulate alternative worldviews. Many indigenous cultures cherish cosmic visions of the world in which the binaries established by the colonial order play no role whatsoever (see Bachir Diagne 2024). Taking such ideas seriously, therefore, implies overturning the binaries constructed by Western thought and rethinking the way culture and identity are defined. Decolonisation, one could say, thus calls for a serious "reevaluation of the status of difference" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 97). Papastergiades righty points out that other disciplines, such as gender studies, came to the same conclusions around the same time. All this would develop into a philosophy of experience, which Sara Ahmed (2006) later characterised as a "queer phenomenology" – "queer" in the sense of representing a disorientation in relation to the ingrained (Western and Enlightenment) worldview(s) we have come to see as the universal truth. Decoloniality thus brings two important insights to the debate.

First of all, it shows that there are alternatives to the (rather specific and peculiar) Western way of conceptualising the relation between culture and identity, and, accordingly, the relation between global and local. Secondly, it demonstrates that the element of the cosmic, the cosmopolitan, the universal (i.e. the global) is not at all absent from indigenous ontologies; on the contrary. Here lies an important difference between postcolonial theory as commonly (mis)understood within the SSH and the notion of the "decolonial". Many scholars view the postcolonial approach in terms of a refocussing on the local, the indigenous, the subaltern. This was, is, and remains an important change of perspective and of crucial importance from an ideological and political point of view. In the process, however, the categories of colonial thought (including the local-global dichotomy) have often (unconsciously) been upheld. The preservation of colonial frames of reference may lead to a tunnel vision, and I think it often does. The notion of the "*de*colonial" works much better in that it not only aims at deconstruction, but also, as a crucial second step, seeks to do away with colonial ontologies altogether. The result is not a vision of the local as functioning independently of (and being, through its indigeneity, superior to) the global, but a different conceptualisation of the relation between the local and the global. This, I would argue, is where "glocalization" comes in. The globalization/glocalization debate should become an important part of a truly postcolonial (i.e. decolonial) approach. As Papastergiades puts it illuminatingly: "The decolonial turn does not seek to substitute one master abstraction with the other. By exposing the wilful ignorance of the colonizer, it does not permit the revenge of the colonized" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 101).

The next chapter by Franciscu Sedda and Simona Stano, on food and glocalization, is important because of the subject (in globalization studies, food functions like a kind of guide fossil) and because of its theoretical exploration of the subject. Sedda and Stano see globalization as "the encounter among already hybridized and heterogeneous systems" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 105), with glocalization being "an ongoing and multilayered process of intercultural and intersemiotic translation, concurrently involving 'national', 'religious', 'ethnic', 'class' and

other semiospheres, as well as asymmetrical relations of power" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 106-107). The introduction of the concept of semiospheres, as coined by Juri Lotman, is important for the globalization/glocalization debate, since it involves discussion on different worldviews and their perception of the local-global entanglement (see above). The authors do not explore that issue itself, unfortunately, but they provide a wonderful interpretation of the Columbian exchange in terms of glocalization, distinguishing processes of exclusion, purification, naturalisation, and incorporation (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 106-109). All of this strongly resonates with analyses of the process of appropriation in terms of objectification, incorporation, and transformation (see above).

I will deal with the other parts and chapters more briefly. Part II (Social Sciences) has chapters on glocalization in relation to tourism, religion, urbanism (a field that sees cities as the global-local nexus *par excellence* and regards glocalization is in terms of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation), crime, education and sports. I found the chapter on glocalization and the religious field, written by Ugo Dessì, particularly useful for the theoretical debate. The field of religious studies has, already for a considerable time, been developing (case-study) data on the glocalization phenomenon from their perspective. As a result, the conceptual debate on what glocalization is and how it works, is well advanced and quite refined in that field, and the findings could benefit other disciplines. Religious Studies understands the dynamics of glocalization as part of the globalization of culture and often focusses on "the creative adoption and use of global resources by religious actors at the local level" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 138). It is in this way that localities are produced (Appadurai 2010, see above). The field distinguishes hybridisation, creolisation, and bricolage as the main strategies used within this local-global interplay. Dessì underlines that repositioning (at home, locally, and abroad, globally) is an inevitable outcome of these processes, and points out that invention or reinvention of traditions usually plays an important role here.

It is important to note the parallel between glocalization as the "invention of locality" and the idea of "invention of

tradition", as famously formulated by Hobsbawm and Ranger. Robertson, in fact, already recognized this parallel in 1995. What other scholars might describe as "cultural translation" or "appropriation" (see above), Dessì defines as "embedding" and "re-embedding". Where other scholars assess the result of the application of the above-mentioned strategies in terms of innovation and creation (and also, as has been suggested above, as creative destruction), Dessì speaks of "resonances".

Part III (Communication and Media) has chapters about glocalization in relation to digitisation, organisations, Korean pop culture, cinema and film, and news production (including a chapter on Netflix in Italy that describes glocalization as an "effective strategy", Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 316). The historical perspective is almost absent here and most chapters are case study based and focussed. All give valuable insights into how glocalization ("the processes, accommodations and ruptures involved in producing, reproducing and sometimes altering local contexts and local subjects in a globalizing world" as Barrie Axford – Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 218 – defines it,) works and develops. They illustrate how the dialectic of sameness and difference pervades all social life, how these processes may be disruptive and creative at the same time (Janz' "anxiety" and Lowenhaupt Tsing's "friction", see above), and how "glocalization is a model feature of all global systems" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 221).

Part IV, titled New Frontiers in Research, conveniently takes up some of the most important themes and perspectives emerging from the previous chapters. It also provides several additional comparative concepts and discussions. Victor Roudometof and Victor Carpentier contribute a useful conceptual exploration of the relations and differences between glocalization and translocality, concluding that the one is the "mirror image" of the other (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 328, see also above). Translocality, originally understood as "the moment when the local is stretched beyond its borders, whilst still remaining situated in the local" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 325), is a much-used concept in spatial studies and the spatial turn. Like glocalization, but for a different domain, it brings the transformative qualities of movement and connectivity into

sharper focus. Where, in my view, the authors go wrong, however, is in their contention that there is a difference between the two "insofar as 'glocalization' means top-down influences and 'translocality' means bottom-up influences" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 330). This, I feel, contradicts much of what has so far been said in the volume (including its introduction). As we have seen, glocalization is, as a matter of fact, very much about local agency and bottom-up influences, but from a global perspective. This is why I would favour "glocalization" over "translocality". With the latter the emphasis is on the local as (fixed) point of departure, instead of on the local-global entanglement.

Ultimately, however, I believe this is largely a semantic discussion. In his *The global condition* from 1980, William H. McNeill argued that (what he called) "the career of the webs of communication and interaction" constitutes the overarching structure of human history and he urged us to try and understand the past and the present from that perspective. This is what, in spite of differences in definitional finesse, the application of concepts such as globalization, glocalization, and translocality aims to achieve. In the next chapter, Ravit Mizrahi-Shtelman and Gili S. Drori deal with the relations between glocalization and World Society Theory (or World Systems Theory). In the next, important and self-reflective, chapter, Giampetro Gobi analyses what he describes as the challenges of methodology in a glocal world. His contribution nicely dovetails with the chapter by Papastergiades on decolonialism and the search for alternative worldviews of the local-global interaction. In Gobi's view, scholars who want to pursue this path have three methodological options: indigenisation, glocalization and creolisation. He explores all three of them, with illuminating examples, and concludes that creolisation probably works best. Vincenzo Cicchelli and Sylvie Octobre deal with Korean glocalization. Their chapter focusses on pop culture, but they analyse it from a different perspective than an earlier chapter of the book in Part III.

The final chapter, by Vivian Riegel, is, I think, not only ill placed, but would also have profited from editorial intervention. Riegel approvingly summarises some aspects of globalization that I (and many contributors to the volume) consider traditional,

false stereotypes, before arguing "for a post/decolonial perspective of glocalization" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 395). For me, however, one of the main conclusions of this *Handbook* is that glocalization represents a decolonial perspective. This is also forcefully argued by, for instance, Papastergiades and Gobi in their chapters.

Another important conclusion of the volume, in my opinion, is that, in order to gain more insight into globalization/glocalization as a (historical) process, we need to investigate how, from the perspective of local agency, people deal with it and try to make sense of it. We tend to talk about the local-global interplay in very abstract terms. When we say, for instance, that global developments activate a host of different ways of being local, allowing new forms of individuality to emerge (my formulations draw on those in the chapter by Janz, see above), we often neglect the element of time. In other words, we tend to analyse global beginnings and local endings (and vice-versa) but fail to pay attention to what happens in between and, as a result, to what makes the process of glocalization possible in the first place. Above I already advanced a quote from Robbie Robertson, the intellectual hero of this volume, who argued that there is an "inevitable necessity for things that are spreading […] to accommodate themselves to a particular historical context" (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 46). And Sara Ahmed (2006, 40) stated: "An arrival takes time, and the time that it takes shapes 'what' it is that arrives". This is what I myself consider an important new challenge for research; and I will therefore deal with the issue in the next and final section of this essay.

GLOCALIZATION AS A PROCESS OF EMBEDDING AND ANCHORING

Let me start with an example that is discussed in the chapter on food and glocalization (Roudometof, Dessì 2022: 108-110). The European conquests of large parts of the world from the period of 1400 CE onwards led, amongst many other things, to dramatic and enduring changes to the European diet. However, it took a long time for American produce such as tomato,

potato and corn (maize) to genuinely transform Europe's agriculture and cooking; this process mainly took place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Novelties such as coffee, tea, chocolate and sugar, on the other hand, glocalised much more quickly. Processes of cultural translation (see above) have been shown to play an important role in that respect. The tomato, for instance, was initially seen and used in Europe as an ornamental plant. It could only become part of the European food sphere, and thus pass the threshold from Other to Self, when it had crossed that semiotic border. This is what is meant by "semiotic translation". In the case of the tomato, it is possible to document the different steps of this translation process. It progressively became Self, and thus real food, by first being used as a salad (still very much in the botanical domain), then as an ingredient in sauces (passing the threshold towards food), and only after that became "proper food". Currently, the tomato is so emblematic of Mediterranean cuisine that few consumers are aware of its American origins. Passing such semiotic borders is part of the process of arrival.

Many scholars, perhaps intuitively, saw the importance of investigating this interval of arrival and therefore tried to dissect what exactly was going on during the period in question. They, consciously or unconsciously, investigated what glocalization looks like in practice; how humankind is able to deal with the global circulation of people, ideas and objects and shape their locality accordingly; how they manage, cognitively, to make sense of the global-local refracting (Roudometof 2016) they are living through. Among the general terms for this process in the *Handbook* we find translation (Roudometof and Dessì, see Bachmann-Medik 2014), (re-)embedding (Cobb), accommodating (Rao Mehta) and indigenization, or creolisation (Gobi). Janz' chapter is more specific in describing what happens and speaks of "the anxiety of potentiality", which is akin to the idea of (creative) friction (Lowenhaupt Tsing 2005). In this connection, Robertson spoke of strategies of glocalization and identified relativization, accommodation, hybridization and transformation as the most important ones (see Giulianotti, Robertson 2007). The theory of appropriation makes a similar tripartite distinction: objectification, incorporation and transformation

(Hahn 2004, see Versluys 2024). The chapter by Sedda and Sano sees the process as intersemiotic translation and mentions exclusion, purification, naturalisation and incorporation as potential outcomes. Dessì uses the terms (creative) adoption and (re-)embedding and identifies hybridisation, creolization and bricolage as main strategies, adding the concept of (re-) invention of tradition.

Compiling this (non-exhaustive) overview, based on chapters in the *Handbook*, was interesting for two reasons. It showed that scholars use the same or similar terms but often fail to discuss this group of concepts as a whole or the variants and their meanings in relation to each other. It also illustrated that no distinction is made between seemingly (interpretative) definitions, or rather paraphrases, of glocalization and analyses of its precise functioning. If we look for an umbrella term for the latter, perhaps the notion of embedding encapsulates best what glocalization looks like in practice and how, as a process, it unfolds and works. Its application within the Social Sciences, where it is sometimes also described as domestication, always shows the importance of local traditions and knowledge structures for the innovation that embedding the global into the local can provide (Presholdt 2008; Sheikh 2017 with earlier bibliography; Versluys 2025).

As the theoretical development of the concepts of embedding and domestication has remained relatively limited whereas including the notion of time is indeed crucial for a better understanding of the impact of globalization and the question how glocalization works ("An arrival takes time, and the time that it takes shapes 'what' it is that arrives.", Ahmed 2006: 40), it may be useful to introduce yet another related idea, the notion of "anchoring". There is a sound body of scholarly literature on this concept with both theoretical explorations as well as methodological applications for a variety of SSH domains (Sluiter 2017; Sluiter, Versluys 2022; Versluys, Sluiter 2023 and, more in general, the book series *Euhormos. Greco-Roman Studies in Anchoring Innovation*). Moreover, using the conceptual framework of anchoring often results in more specificity about (and thus a better understanding of) the cognitive motives for "embedding" and "domestication"; explaining, so the speak, their

mental role in the life of humans in terms of experience (Flohr 2024 calls this anchoring as a moment of transition). Let us therefore first briefly look at the relation between glocalization and cognition, before presenting the notion of anchoring as a fruitful concept to investigate this.

Over the past few decades, cognition has become an important subject within the SSH. This development started with the insight that the mind does not operate in isolation. The Cartesian mind-body dualism, expressed in the famous adagium *Cogito ergo sum*, ultimately proved untenable. Instead, the awareness gained ground that the mind was embodied (literally), embedded (in its various contexts), extended (to all kinds of tools and devices such as lists, catalogues, canons, and the smartphone) and enactive (which is to say that it is vibrant and future-oriented). These "4Es" allow us to investigate questions about "the way in which human agents acquire knowledge of their environment and negotiate their place within it" (Budelmann 2023 for the phrasing as well as a general introduction into cognitive humanities/classics). This definition immediately makes clear where the importance of cognition for questions about glocalization lies. We have seen that, as a historical process unfolding in time, glocalization is about embedding, about literally domesticating new elements in a changing environment. The experience of the impact of globalization, the awareness of changes within one's environment as a result of an increase in connectivity, is a cognitive process, and so is negotiating your place within it. Within the process of glocalization, therefore, all "4Es" are crucial. Local traditions and knowledge structures always play an important role since we cannot embed *ex nihilo.* We embed the new into something and use the familiar anchor of that something to make sense of the new (cf. Bijker 2024). And that brings us to anchoring.

Anchoring is a concept which describes the process or activity through which relevant social groups connect what presents itself to them as new to something they deem familiar (Sluiter 2017; Sluiter, Versluys 2022; Flohr 2024). It enables people to perceive forms of continuity within change and helps them to accommodate and absorb new inventions, practices, objects, and ideas. As such, it is a necessary ingredient of

successful innovation processes. The importance of anchoring is demonstrated by the example of the arrival of the tomato discussed above. We saw that it took a long time for the tomato to become local; other things "arrived" much more quickly. Compare, for instance, the extremely slow appropriation of the tomato with the extremely quick appropriation of the turkey. Why did it take the tomato three centuries to conquer Europe while it took the turkey only a few decades? The simple answer may be that for the turkey there were no semiotic thresholds to pass; it was experienced in a different way. Large birds, such as storks, swans and peacocks, had been part of the aristocratic menu for a long time, so the turkey, which was large and decorative as well, could easily be embedded. As it tasted much better than most large European birds, it soon became the more popular fowl. One of the results of this change is the emergence of a turkey bioindustry; another that we no longer eat storks, swans and peacocks. The concept of anchoring thus allows us to better understand why it is that the old can serve as a launch pad for the new.

Glocalization, I conclude, is very much about the impact of globalization, in local contexts, in cognitive terms of experience. Increasing connectivity demands embedding practices to make globalization work on the ground, in the lives of people, as glocalization. For a sustainable outcome, anchoring is key.

REFERENCES

S. Ahmed (2006), *Queer phenomenology. Orientations, objects, others* (Durham: Duke University Press).

K. Algra (2003), *The mechanics of social appropriation and its role in Hellenistic ethics*, in "Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy", 25, pp. 265-296.

A. Appadurai (2010), *How histories make geographies: circulation and context in a global perspective*, in "The Journal of Transcultural Studies", 1, pp. 4-13.

A. Appadurai (2013), *The future as cultural fact. Essays on the global condition* (London-New York: Verso).

K.W. Appiah (2005), *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

K.W. Appiah (2006), *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: Norton&Company).

K.W. Appiah (2018), *The Lies that Bind. Rethinking identity* (London: Profile Books).

D. Bachmann-Medick (2014), *The trans/national study of culture. A translational perspective* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter).

S. Bachir Diagne (2024), *Universaliser. L'humanité pars les moyens d'humanité* (Paris: Albin Michel).

U. Beck (2003), *Rooted Cosmopolitanism: Emerging from a Rivalry of Distinctions*, in N. Sznaider, R. Winter, U. Beck (eds.), *Global America? The Cultural Consequences of Globalization* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), pp. 15-29.

S. Benhabib (2024), *Kosmopolitismus im Wandel. Zwischen Demos, Kosmos und Globus* (Berlin: Mandelbaum Verlag).

W. Bijker (2024), *Anchoring innovation as a form of social construction of technology*, in M. Flohr, S.T.A.M. Mols, T.L. Tieleman (eds.), *Anchoring Science and Technology in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill), pp. 31-38.

F. Budelmann (2023), *Introduction*, in F. Budelmann, I. Sluiter (eds.), *Minds on stage. Greek tragedy and cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 1-20.

T. Cowen (2004), *Creative destruction. How Globalization is changing the world's cultures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

E. Darian-Smith, P.C. McCarty (2017), *The global turn. Theories, research designs, and methods for Global Studies* (Oakland: University of California Press).

M. Flohr (2025), *From ashlar to brick. Anchoring and innovation in Roman building practice*, in M. Flohr, S.T.A.M. Mols, T.L. Tieleman (eds.), *Anchoring Science and Technology in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill), pp. 90-114.

R. Giulianotti, R. Robertson (2007), *Forms of glocalization. Globalization and the strategies of Scottish football teams in North America*, in "Sociology", 41, pp. 133-152.

J. Goody (2006), *The theft of history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

H.P. Hahn, (2004), *Global goods and the process of appropriation*, in P. Probst, G. Spittler (eds.), *Between resistance and expansion. Explorations of local vitality in Africa* (Munster: Lit Verlag), pp. 211-229.

T. Hodos, A. Geurds, P. Lane, I. Lilley, M. Pitts, G. Shelach, M. Stark, M.J. Versluys (eds.) (2017), *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization* (London: Routledge).

T. Hodos (2020), *The Archaeology of the Mediterranean Iron Age. A Globalizing World c. 1100-600 BCE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

T. Hodos (2022), *Balancing macro- and micro-scales in global-context understanding*, in "Archaeological Dialogues", 29(1), pp. 21-23.

M. Hoo (2022), *Eurasian Localisms, Towards a translocal approach to Hellenism and inbetweennes in central Eurasia, third to first centuries BCE* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag).

D. Inglis, R. Robertson (2011*), From cosmos to globe. Relating cosmopolitanism, globalization and globality*, in M. Rovisco, M. Nowicka (eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to Cosmopolitanism* (London: Routledge), pp. 295-311.

D. Inglis, G. Delanty (eds.) (2010), *Cosmopolitanism* (London: Routledge).

L. Kruijer, M.J. Versluys, I. Lilley (eds.) (2024), *Rooted Cosmopolitanism, heritage and the question of belonging. Archaeological and anthropological perspectives* (London: Routledge).

T.J. LeCain (2017), *The Matter of History. How Things Create the Past. Studies in Environment and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

A. Lowenhaupt Tsing (2005), *Friction. An ethnography of global connection* (Durham: Duke University Press).

W. Mignolo (2021), *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations (on Decoloniality)* (Durham: Duke University Press).

J. Nederveen-Pieterse (2021), *Connectivity and global studies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

M. Papastephanou (2024), *From the root of cosmopolitanism to rootless parasites: the politics and normative complexities of rooted cosmopolitanism*, in L. Kruijer, M.J. Versluys, I. Lilley (eds.), *Rooted Cosmopolitanism, heritage and the question of belonging. Archaeological and anthropological perspectives* (London: Routledge), pp. 15-41.

M. Pitts, M.J. Versluys (2021), *Objectscapes. A manifesto for investigating the impacts of object flows on past societies*, Antiquity, in "A review of world archaeology", 95, 380, pp. 367-381.

J. Platenkamp (2022), *Cultural appropriation. A social-anthropological critique*, in R. Hardenberg, J. Platenkamp, T. Widlok (eds.), *Ethnologie als ausgewählte Wissenschaft. Das Zusammenspiel von Theorie und Praxis* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag), pp. 327-346.

J. Prestholdt (2008), *Domesticating the world. African consumerism and the genealogies of Globalization* (Oakland: University of California Press).

P. Ricoeur (1965), *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud* (Paris: Seuil).

S. Riedel (2018), *Commagenian Glocalization and the Matter of Perception – an Innovative Royal Portrait from Samosata*, in "Istanbuler Mitteilungen", 68, pp. 87-142.

C. Riva, I. Grau Mira (2022), *Global archaeology and microhistorical analysis. Connecting scales in the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean*, in, "Archaeological Dialogues", 29, 1, pp. 1-14.

R. Robertson (1994), *Globalization or glocalization?*, in "The Journal of International Communications", 1, pp. 33-52.

R. Robertson (1995), *Glocalization. Time-space and homogeneity-heterogeneity*, in M. Featherstone, S. Lash, R. Robertson (eds.), *Global modernities* (London: Sage), pp. 25-54.

V.N. Roudometof (2016), *Glocalization. A critical introduction* (London: Routledge).

V.N. Roudometof, U. Dessì (eds.) (2022), *Handbook of Culture and Glocalization* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing).

A. Scott-Baumann (2009), *Ricoeur and the hermeneutics of suspicion* (London: Continuum).

I. Sluiter (1998), *Metatexts and the Principle of Charity*, in P. Schmitter, M. van der Wal (eds.), *Metahistoriography. Theoretical and methodological aspects* (Leiden: Leiden University Press), pp. 11-27.

I. Sluiter (2017), *Anchoring innovation. A classical research agenda*, in "European Review", 25, pp. 20-38.

I. Sluiter, M.J. Versluys (2022), *Anchoring*, in V.P. Glăveanu (ed.), *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of the Possible* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

M.J. Versluys (2014), *Understanding objects in motion. An archaeological dialogue on Romanisation*, in "Archaeological Dialogues", 21-1, pp. 1-20.

M.J. Versluys (2017), *Exploring Aegyptiaca and their material agency throughout global history*, in T. Hodos, A. Geurds, P. Lane, I. Lilley, M. Pitts, G. Shelach, M. Stark, M.J. Versluys (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Globalization and Archaeology* (Routledge: London), pp. 74-89.

M.J. Versluys (2021), *Romanisation as a theory of friction*, in O. Belvedere, J. Bergemann (eds.), *Imperium Romanum. Romanization between Colonization and Globalization* (Palermo: Palermo University Press), pp. 33-48.

M.J. Versluys (2024), *Triumphus and the taming of objects. Spoliation and the process of appropriation in late Republican Rome*, in I. de Jong, M.J. Versluys (eds.). *Reading Greek and Hellenistic-Roman spolia. Objects, appropriation and cultural change* (Leiden: Brill), pp. 27-45.

M.J. Versluys (2025), *Embedding global diversity in the Hellenistic and Roman Near East: setting the agenda*, in R. Raja (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Hellenistic and Roman Near East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 29-49.

M.J. Versluys, I. Sluiter (2023), *Anchoring: a historical perspective on frugal innovation*, in A. Leliveld, S. Bhaduri, J. Nehru, P. Knorringa (eds.), *Handbook on frugal Innovation* (Cheltenam: Edward Elgar Publishing), pp. 28-42.

J. Zinkina, D. Christian et al. (2019), *A big history of Globalization. The emergence of a global world system* (Berlin: Springer).