Ulrike Schuerkens

Social Transformations Between Global Forces and Local Life-Worlds: Introduction

During the last decade, the activities of our Research Committee 09, 'Sociology of Social Transformation and Social Practice',[1] have concentrated on micro-sociological analyses of socioeconomic, political and cultural transformations of local life-worlds through the continuing and intensifying processes of globalization. Our regional focus has been particularly on the non-western world, but it has also included a western comparative perspective. In the emerging contemporary world, two processes of social transformation increasingly and inextricably intertwine. On the one hand, there are universalizing processes of modernization and globalization, mostly of western origins, that are spreading all over the world. On the other hand, there are tendencies to maintain traditional life-worlds, attempting at keeping up the authenticity of their cultures. The interaction of these processes results in varying forms of implantation of and adaptation to western modernity and culture, crystallizing in differing mixtures and hybrid modes of western modernity and non-western traditions, various forms of reaction and resistance to the imposition of the western model, or various forms of dissolution and destruction of traditional life-worlds through the impact of the western civilization.

In order to present the recent activities of our Research Committee to a wider sociological and anthropological public, we bring together in this monograph issue of *Current Sociology* and in the book in the SSIS series theoretically informed case studies and empirically based theoretical reflections within this research framework. These research activities are of interest to a relatively specialized public of sociologists and anthropologists, students and professional researchers. We think moreover that the topic will interest a wider public in the countries of the South, such as university institutes, NGOs and offices of governments.

It seems actually that there are no comparable books in English in spite of the fact that this topic has interested several researchers during the last years. In German, there are two interesting books on similar topics: Dieter Neubert et al. (1999) *Gemeinschaften in einer entgrenzten Welt* and Helmut Buchholt et al. (1996) *Modernität zwischen Differenzierung und Globalisierung. Kulturelle, wirtschaftliche und politische Transformationsprozesse in der sich globalisierenden Moderne.* Focusing on the countries of the South, another book exists, edited by Hans-Peter Müller (1996), *Weltsystem und kulturelles Erbe. Gliederung und Dynamik der Entwicklungsländer aus ethnologischer und soziologischer Sicht.* On a more theoretical level, a book from Jonathan Friedman (1994) is also related to our topic: *Cultural Identity and Global Process.* The book *Global Culture, Island Identity: Continuity and Change in the Afro-Caribbean Community of Nevis,* by K. F. Olwig (1993), represents a case study. In French, a small introduction to the topic by an ethnologist exists: Jean-Pierre Warnier's (1999) *La Mondialisation de la culture.* Moreover, Centre Tricontinental published a book in 2000 with the title *Cultures et mondialisation. Résistances et alternatives*, where some interesting case studies on cultural glocalization can be found written by scholars and practitioners from different parts of the world. Though some theoretical and a growing number of empirical studies exist, there is no comprehensive collection of theoretically informed case studies either in English, or in German or French.

Our publication is divided into three parts: (1) an introduction and a historical overview on the topic, empirical methods and theoretical approaches; (2) a systematic part focusing on comparisons across empirical case studies; and (3) an empirical part containing studies of the topic in different world regions. The composition of this collection of articles is based on the participants' contributions to the activities of our Research Committee 09. The common theme is the link between global forces and local life-worlds. In this introductory article, we briefly present the current glocalization debate and research agendas and introduce, within this framework, the core topic and the individual contributions of this publication.

The core topic or *leitmotif* is the issue of glocalization. Some of the social and cultural phenomena we are confronted with at the beginning of the third millennium are rather new in the history of humankind. There are three basic reasons for this fact: first, an increasing part of human beings all over the world are interconnected with each other; second, the cumulative effects of human actions and interactions are leading to, for instance, global ecological problems; and, third, the resulting increasing complexity of the world. All this means that our disciplines have to investigate globalizing interactions between nation-states, economies, societies and cultures. However, globalization is not simply dissolving local life-worlds in their traditional local structures and settings, but is interacting with them in a sort of localization, or

'glocalization' as some scholars name this hybrid mix. As sociology and cultural anthropology analyse the conditions of humankind in a global age, local changes resulting from the impact of global forces mean a new form of interdependence of cultures. Thus, nationally constricted approaches such as modernization and dependence theories have lost their explanatory power. Instead, new theoretical and analytical approaches are needed to study social tranformation in various world regions under conditions of globalization.

The different articles of this publication are linked systematically to the general framework. They are presented in a few words. In the second introductory article written by Ulrike Schuerkens, the historical-intellectual origins and the theoretical aspects of the glocalization debate are systematically developed in order to outline in a global era, a new sociological and anthropological approach to social transformation in non-western world regions and the geographic South. An alternative theoretical framework to approaches such as the westernization of the South, the theory of endogenous development and the world-system theory is developed in the form of contemporary characteristics of modernity between global and local forces.

On this basis, the first article systematically presents the current sociological and anthropological debate on globalization and localization, summarizes the research agendas and findings, and outlines a number of topics for further research. In particular, it is argued that the mapping of global cultural flows is still at an impressionistic stage and should be complemented by a systematic methodology of empirical enquiry outlined in our collection of articles. This can lead to a more differentiated assessment of the often assumed processes of global cultural homogenization. It allows for empirically based solutions to several theoretical problems such as cultural convergence, non-western globalization and alternative modernities. A cross-culturally valid notion may thus help to conceptualize and analyse cultural exchanges that circumvent 'the West'. Finally, the core question of whether humanity is gaining or losing in the globalization process calls for further empirical investigations.

Langman's article about the link between culture and transformation shows that globalization processes create forces that both homogenize and differentiate identities. He demonstrates how global consumerism fosters ludic identities that sustain the hegemony of the global system. His thesis is exemplified by American football games, which provide males with a sense of empowerment and implicitly reinforce their gender privileges and their feelings of superiority. Langman recalls that the Superbowl's mass spectacle in the USA began in the era that gave rise to modern feminism and globalization. The game has become intertwined with global consumerism insofar as, for several years now, football games appeal to men all over the world. Even if the games in different regions of the world are a little different from the Superbowl of the US, the fundamental idea – domination through

violence – seems to be the same: the football player acts out the erotic/aggressive fantasy desires of many male spectators. In these celebrations of male performances, aggressive male identities are confirmed and constantly renewed. The otherwise disciplined behaviour in the marketplace or in bureaucracies can be preserved by the participation in ludic activities which permit one to maintain the rational order of the global economic model.

Even if Langman only analyses American Superbowl, football has been considered, like Christianity, as something which was good for the countries of the South (see Brown, 1998: 27). The mission of European countries was to develop the game in the farthest regions of the globe. Today, we see that this mission has been realized with the Football World Cup being held in South Korea in 2002 and the participation of Latin American and African countries in the games. In the countries of the South, the game has been adopted as the people's game and as one of the most potent symbols for the assertion of national identity. Football has become a political and cultural transnational practice with effects not only on ludic culture, but on conceptions of masculinity, too. In this sense, football can be seen as a powerful factor spreading patriarchal conceptions all over the world. The support which these games find with political elites, who do not hesitate to be linked to them and who officially sanction successes and failures of their national teams, witnesses the social and cultural importance of the ideology which football conveys.

Another example from Langman tackles body modifications which consist in permanent transformations of the body of young people who reject the repression and conformity intrinsic to postmodernity. In order to allow the current consumerism of large parts of the world to flourish, the ludic spaces which Langman describes allow the repressed to return. The author furthermore describes how the globalized spectacle of the local Carnival of Rio de Janeiro attracts tourists and emphasizes an inversion of the social order and a realization of individual desires. He shows that the local touristic spectacle is influenced by tourists who introduce western habits, western meanings and customs. The countries of origin of these tourists are most often the western industrialized regions, which contributes to the fact that the local attraction becomes more and more linked to global factors: tourists and the global system of international tourism influence the transformation of local socioeconomic structures. As Langman demonstrates, tourism can be seen as an important element of the intertwining of human beings and their 'cultures'. The link between the global and the local via tourism thus represents a powerful inflow of external cultural elements.

In this sense, cultural elements contribute to stabilize the dominant order of our globalized world. The different cultural elements he describes are characterized by global and local elements: the Rio Carnival attracts global tourists, Superbowl is a game which has parallel meanings all over the globe,

body modifications can be found in rather different world regions, even if their sense as a means of rejection or acceptance of the dominant society is dependent on further cultural factors, such as religious worldviews.

Helmuth Berking underlines in his article the increasing importance of the ethnicization of cultural identities in a world characterized by globalization. He argues that the globalization of production, commodity markets and financial markets is increasingly breaking territorial links and is seeking autonomy from national rules. Moreover, services and rights guaranteed by states are no longer dues only to citizens but to all people – a fact which feeds the hate and the xenophobia of autochthonous groups. Berking underlines that neither global flows of cultures nor transnational migrants stop at the borders of nation-states. He is surely right to suggest the growing influence of ethnic groups who begin to become an important factor of social inequality in western countries, and also between the North and the South, a factor which causes struggles for recognition and fights for territorial presence in numerous non-western and western regions of the globe. The importance of the ethnic dimension in international relations is obvious, too, if we consider the hierarchization of states, as it is established by UN organizations: a colour structure can be found with overall white nations at the top of the ladder, coloured nations occupying the middle levels and black nations at the bottom of the ladder. This ethnic inequality, which was first evoked by Wallerstein and Balibar some years ago, currently influences life-chances, social relations, the direction of international migrations, and political relations between states. Since September 11, these ethnic and/or cultural factors of international relations have arrived at the foreground of the political agenda. Conflictual situations in the geographic North are now often linked to ethnic belongings which may have their origins in the geographic South. In the geographic South and East, war or warlike situations have become more and more frequent. A new form of racism has emerged, which has become widespread in some European countries with the growing political importance of extreme right-wing parties. However, for the time being, the nation and its culture are not replaced by transnational cultures. Instead diasporic, transnational ethnic cultures are emerging which may contribute to the enlargement of political associations between different nation-states, as the example of the European Union suggests.

The article by Willfried Spohn analyses a phemonenon which has become important since the events of September 11. The author suggests that in the last two decades, an enormous revitalization of nationalism and religion can be found, often combined in the form of religious nationalism. This development is characteristic for almost all continents: the revolution in Iran and the rise of religious fundamentalism and religious nationalism in the Islamic countries, the radicalization of Hinduism in Southern Asia, the revival of nationalisms and Christian – Catholic and Orthodox – religion

with the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, the development of sectarian Protestantism in Latin America as well as the rise of Protestant fundamentalism in North America. Following these movements, the predominant classical sociological modernization paradigm *cum* secularization thesis has been increasingly replaced by globalization theory with its perspective on the revitalization of nationalism and religion as structural consequences of globalization. Within this theoretical controversy, the author develops a historical-sociological comparative approach (on the basis of Shmuel Eisenstadt and David Martin) that argues for multiple modernities combining specific religious types and secularization patterns, which are characteristic not only for the 'modern age', but also the 'global age'. This core thesis is theoretically developed and exemplified by a variety of empirical case studies on religion and nationalism from different world civilizations and regions.

The article by Ulrike Schuerkens shows the structural change of societies of the South due to their often colonial past. She argues that the interaction of societies of the South and the North meant a globalization and westernization of important elements of the social, economic, cultural and political systems of these societies. The study of colonial and neocolonial development policies and of the resulting interactions between autochthonous societies and European colonial societies lets appear a gradual integration in a world system, not only of economies, but of politics, social systems and cultural systems, too. The author underlines the universality of several structures beneath the diversity and multiplicity of possible developments. Ulrike Schuerkens suggests that local particularities are accepted, yet that the actual tendency is one of an existing universality, which is difficult to demonstrate because of large local differences.

Events such as the death of Diana Princess of Wales, the Olympic games and acts of terrorism show that a global present exists, that communication flows permit local events to spread in a globalized world where people have the possibility to know more and more about each other, even if opportunities to move physically are still limited to a restrained number of people, which has nevertheless grown extensively in the last 20 years.

Ulrike Schuerkens argues that the acceptance of fundamental elements of western models allows increasing groups of people to communicate and understand each other. A way of life has been introduced in former colonial societies of South America, Asia and Africa which allows movement beyond local boundaries in a globalized world. Ulrike Schuerkens uses the example of the labour system to demonstrate these processes of appropriation of new forms of behaviour, new ideas, new meanings of local life-worlds introduced by global elements. Sure, these possibilities are not accessible to the entire population of a country. Due to diversities of different orders, such as life-chances, gender, or geographic origin, the access to globalized life-worlds is limited. Yet it is obvious that mass media, tourists and migrants contribute to

the fact that local people have begun to accept more and more elements of globalized life-worlds. Often, these elements are looked for, a fact which rejoins strategies of transnational enterprises and international organizations (see Sklair, 2001). Consumerism as part of the neoliberal economic model is spread all over the world and leads people to accept material consumer goods, even if the meaning of these goods is still influenced by local cultures and may be different according to geographic regions (see Miller, 1994). Common economic and political models are implanted in various regions of the world. Market and democracy are institutions which the dominant order tries to establish all over the world. The challenge of the 21st century may thus be no longer the globalization of a hegemonic structural model, but the unequal distribution of participation chances in our globalized world. The anti-globalization movements assemble parts of these groups who put up with the more or less negative aspects of the globalized world. Even if these movements are not able to stop processes which have been initiated by powerful institutions and structural models, they will emphasize problems inherent in the globalization project. Forgotten groups, such as peasants of the agrarian societies in the South who are still forced to adapt to challenges by focusing on 'traditional' mechanisms, poor city dwellers in overcrowded urban areas, populations exposed to natural disasters, all these people risk not being included in the globalization project. Members of these groups may be accessible to forces which the world knows since September 11. In this sense, we have to observe critically the globalization project. It is surely not a garden of Eden for every human being, but it is a powerful project which may permit humanity to resolve common problems. Global conferences and transnational events let a new era appear, which explores new challenges.

The article by Shalini Randeria addresses the issue of law by examining the interplay between the World Bank, NGOs and the state at federal and regional level in India. Her article shows the intertwining of traditional norms, national law, World Bank standards and international human rights. The author discusses current conflicts around natural resources and the right to livelihood in western India. She displays in several case studies some of the contradictory effects of World Bank policies and projects. The monopoly of the state with regard to law is challenged by a diversity of state, supra-state and non-state actors at the local, national and supranational level, as Shalini Randeria shows. However, law remains an important but ambivalent issue, whose regulation is questioned by NGOs and social movements who constitute important interfaces between state, international institutions and local groups. The article demonstrates strategies of the state in the face of attempts by civil society actors and international organizations. The connections between local actors and global discourses reveal that globalization is locally experienced, that transnational social movements link local actors to global discourses, that World Bank loans have an impact on local risks of

impoverishment and displacement. In this sense, Shalini Randeria's article contributes to the growing debate in social and cultural anthropology, which challenges its former tradition as a localized discipline. Instead, she shows the international and transnational links of local groups in the face of conflictual issues.

The article by Christine Müller shows the organization of women at local, regional, national and transnational levels. She argues that the interesting point today is the interconnection between women. Since the UN women's world conferences, the knowledge of the local life-world is transformed on a global level into common strategies and programmes. A worldwide permanent collaboration and global networking structure in a North–South as well as in a South–South relationship has been established. Müller underlines that local interactions are still based on face-to-face communications, but this knowledge flows across distances, common meetings and mutual visits; it circulates from the urban to the rural parts of countries, but also from the rural to the urban context. Global discourses are brought down to the local level by acts of translation embedded in local issues. Moreover, local and global institutions react by changing their structures and their policies.

The case studies from different regions of the world illustrate the very differentiated outlook we discuss in the theoretical chapter written by Ulrike Schuerkens. The article of Eric Popkin discusses the topic of transnationalism, which occupies an important place in glocalization studies, insofar as transnational migrants maintain strong links to their home country and their country of residence. These relations have social, political, religious, economic and organizational forms. The process of transmigration means an increasing inflow of cultural elements in the regions of origin, but in the regions of arrival, too. Migrants bring their lifestyles, their knowledge, their values, their goods, also their culture or parts of their culture to other geographical regions. Furthermore, due to mutual visits, return migration, contacts by phone, post or email, an intense flow of goods, consumption patterns, values, representations and information takes place. Countries of origin thus acknowledge a large inflow of external cultural elements. Long (1996: 49) writes: 'migration networks also function as important conduits of information and opinions about the "world outside" and disseminate the latest fashions in dress, music and films'. In the country of residence, cultural elements penetrate such as different eating habits, religious beliefs, healing methods and different fashions, which all contribute to an enrichment of the often western cultures. Moreover, parts of the elites of countries of origin and residence, working in embassies, in universities, in transnational companies contribute to a transnational professional culture which is often influenced by western values of social contacts, fashion and cuisine. These transnational cultures are created by deterritorialized activities and connections of their

members. The transnational culture is a hybrid and syncretic culture influenced by different communities. As Hannerz (1993: 43) argues, 'cultures travel . . . when people travel'. Travelling across frontiers signifies a growing cross-cultural (in)flow of cultural elements. In a second step, migrants integrate their new social and cultural surroundings in their local life-worlds and let multicultural situations emerge, which I described for African migrants in France (Schuerkens, 2000, 2001). Processes of transnational migrations thus contribute to a growing deterritorialization of cultures.

In her article, Nina Bandelj analyses the foreign direct investment flows in Slovenia and puts the question how such an amount of global capital impacts on economic practices in local settings. She displays that foreign direct investment as a key indicator of economic globalization is embedded in a process of continuous negotiation between global pressures and local interests. Even if initially after the independence of the country Slovenian policy favoured domestic owners over foreign investors, since 1997 provisions have been put in place which have given domestic and foreign investors equal rights to enter and exit business. Since 1999, free transfers of profits and the repatriation of capital have been permitted. The idea that foreign direct investment can contribute to the economy's restructuring and development has entered the official political discourse. Since its independence in 1991, Slovenia joined more and more international organizations which strongly advocated the opening of borders to foreign direct investment. Insofar as these organizations propagate worldwide models of economic action, they exert formal and informal pressures on new member states to align their legislation with neoliberal institutions, which promote worldwide convergence processes in economic policies. However, the adoption of formal arrangements has not meant that network ties, political alliances and cultural affinities between investors and domestic hosts have disappeared. Actually, Nina Bandelj shows that prior business contacts and similar cultural practices provide an impetus for the majority of Slovenian enterprises to invest. Nevertheless, the rather short period of international economic contact does not permit a final answer. Even if global processes encourage today convergence *and* divergence, institutional globalization may be decisive for further processes of economic globalization initiated by transnational enterprises.

Marina P. Temudo and Ulrich Schiefer's article presents the case of an agrarian society confronted by a war situation. The authors show that the agrarian society of Guinea-Bissau did not lose its potential for reconstruction because of the fact that its production did not depend on the secondary economy of development aid. They demonstrate the capacity for reconstitution of this agrarian society by analysing its exchange of work, its produce and its system of loans. The authors demonstrate the complex web of social rules of solidarity and reciprocity which allowed relatives and urban refugees to do harvest work in the fields. Change in the work organization and in

resource management permitted the majority of the urban population to survive war inside the agrarian societies of Guinea-Bissau. During this period, relief aid was rather limited and the construction of refugee camps was not necessary. After the war and with the return of refugees to urban areas, the relationship between city dwellers and rural groups underwent important changes. The return of the displaced urban population means that the newly created networks may give young rural people a better chance to migrate to cities. The outcome of these processes can currently only be presumed.

A larger integration of these agrarian populations in an international division of labour, as is the case in other African rural areas involved in production for the world primary goods market, may become a political target (see McMichael, 1996: 66ff.). Temudo and Schiefer show that, for the time being, the agrarian societies of Guinea-Bissau are still capable of activating their own resources, even under extreme pressures. Their conclusion on the widening gap between urban and rural areas in this country shows the fragility of agrarian societies in Africa, which still strive to restore their traditional mechanisms in a continent where agrarian societies are often involved in the global labour division. The authors argue that rural development policy seems to be interested in these social processes which permit urban dwellers to find acceptable solutions in difficult situations.

Jo Schmidt shows in her article that the Samoan gender framework as a whole has reacted to Samoa's increasing westernization. The work that the *fa'afafine*[2] do is gendered, but the product of labour – the money they earn – is rendered gender neutral. The increasing influence of the western culture has led to an emphasis on appearance and bodily expression as a marker of gender. Other clothing habits have been introduced and a move towards concepts of individual expression can be found. This means for the fa'afafine that to be feminine is now centred on who one has (or would have) sex with and no longer on the labour one performs. Samoan understandings of gender have intertwined with western discourses of sexuality which consider gender to be fundamental for self-identity. Sex between a man and a fa'afafine did not threaten the man's heterosexuality insofar as creating families was seen by Samoans as a central social imperative. Jo Schmidt distinguishes the existence of the fa'afafine 50 years ago from the present generation where marriage is seen to be a contradiction to the sense that fa'afafine have of themselves as feminine. She argues however that, in Samoa, a marked disapproval of homosexuality exists until today. The fa'afafine begin nevertheless to identify themselves as gay and fa'afafine at the same time. In this way, they are adapting to the globalized western discourse on gender and sexuality without abandoning their tradition.

The article by George Morgan explores the attraction of autochthonous traditions both for Aboriginal people in Australia and for the broader public.

He shows that the autochthonous identity of most Aboriginal people living in cities is not something which is invented or contrived. Aboriginal culture is forced to adapt to the pressures which are placed on it. The everyday significance of inherited forms of ancient rituals, spirituality and connections to land recedes. The author argues that these phenomena continue to be forms that serve to constitute Aboriginal solidarity, but Aborigines currently produce emergent cultures from the material available through global cultural flows. For instance, young people appropriate the symbolism of black American protest and youth cultures. Already 30 years ago, Aborigines had adopted afro hairstyles. Today, they embrace the styles of hip-hop and rap, and young men have been inspired by the politics of Malcolm X and Louis Farrakahn. Thus, Aboriginal people adopt motifs which receive local significance, but acquire a subcultural meaning different from the original setting.

George Morgan underlines that ancient symbols continue to provide people in urban dwellings with a point of anchorage against the pressures to assimilate to an Australian global modernity. Living around European population centres in often difficult social situations, they support a political culture based on recovering aspects of the past. His article shows furthermore that there is a growing contemporary interest in autochthonous traditions by middle-class citizens and counter-cultural movements. Their romanticism reflects, as George Morgan demonstrates, a popular disillusion with western rationality and modernity and reveals a yearning for fulfilment through a connection which what is considered as natural. This movement witnesses the links of the local Aborginal culture to cultural expressions in other parts of the globe, often situated in western countries.

What can we conclude from these different contributions on the problematics of glocalization between globalization and local life-worlds? The different case studies show multiple facets of the interaction of the local and the global, which I outline conceptually in the theoretical introduction. One of the research findings of this publication is certainly the image of a global world linked to local life-worlds all over the world. Today, we can no longer accept the existence of distinct cultural units which are circumscribed by a geographic territory. Instead, we are currently confronted with cultures which are influenced by migration, tourism, international communication flows, transnational enterprises and international organizations. The image of an isolated culture which was the main interest of social and cultural anthropology and ethnology some years ago, can no longer be the main focus of this discipline. Our selection of articles shows that most of their authors are working as social and cultural anthropologists, and as sociologists. In fact, the combination of these disciplines allows one to analyse current problematics of non-western countries situated between global processes and local life-worlds. Certainly, social anthropology still permits a better

understanding of some of the aspects of cultures studied here. Yet a socio-
logical approach to these cultures is essential to understand some of their
global aspects. The notion of 'global cultures' suggested by Featherstone
(1995: 10) helps in understanding these processes of differentiation between
local cultures all over the globe influenced by global factors. It seems that
research on cultures of the southern hemisphere can only continue to play a
societal role if we accept that we must tackle influences originating from the
global system on these societies. Some years ago, ethnologists still manifested
a silent denial of studies which tackled global systems. Currently, these eth-
nologists are becoming a minority, with younger students and scholars who
will not accept any longer being restrained to research topics which they
consider as belonging to the past. Concepts as 'endogenous' and 'exogenous',
which described research endeavours of the disciplines some years ago, are
more and more replaced by notions such as global and local, which are more
adapted to current situations.

Different articles underline the fact that the link between global forces
and local life-worlds cannot only be explained by structural transformation
but also by agency. This means that, for instance, political commitment may
emphasize either the long-term perspective of globalization, or the diversity
of national or regional life-worlds. The topic which we tackle touches
important social values and policy issues, even in the scientific community
where research on this issue is done. But there is a general avoidance to recog-
nize the problem of incongruence between processes of globalization and
localization. The principle of 'unity in diversity', which we can find in the
discourse of ethnologists, does not specify if it concerns particular elements
of a system or if it is understood as the integration of some cultural systems
into a larger one. It seems that the declaration of values, such as 'we must
preserve diversity . . . acts as a substitute for the analysis of the actual changes'
(Mlinar, 1992: 168). As Mlinar underlines with a similar example, the right to
be different tends to be directed towards global forces, while the right to
underline unity tends to be directed towards local life-worlds. Globalization
is achieved by the domination of a given system element at the expense of
others, or by a common acceptance of global standards. Distinctive localiz-
ation is achieved by the preservation as an item of folklorization, by a widely
shared (globalized) element, or by the (re)construction of a particular
surrounding. Our case studies show that we cannot dissociate global forces
from local life-worlds as they are linked by mutually dependent processes.
Thus it is not coherent to promote globalization without differentiation of
'local' communities. Globalization may not provide long-term protective
mechanisms for localized identities without more or less changes in the
context of global economic, political, social and cultural flows. In the long
term, global forces may induce far-reaching transformations in local life-
worlds as some of our case studies underline; in the short term, protective

mechanisms may contribute to the survival of several aspects of local life-worlds. Thus it seems important to acknowledge the necessity of a notion such as glocalization which tries to include aspects of both sides: global forces and local life-worlds which can no longer be considered as separate entities.

Today, people are confronted by transnationals, global images, markets. They try to get to grips with these external elements. We can no longer speak of the globalized world in terms of 'centre–periphery', which implied asymmetries in economies, politics and culture. Instead the current globalization implies a form of homogenization and diversity: globalization is linked to localization. As our case studies show, we have to analyse the ways in which local systems, values, social relations are reworked in interaction with global conditions. For several decades, we have found the creations of new local social forms as an answer to the process of globalization. In order to be meaningful to social actors, these new social meanings must build on existing cultural schemes. It becomes obvious that this sort of reinvention of tradition and creation of new meanings is different from persisting local traditions. Thus glocalization permits the opening up of a new theoretical understanding of social transformation and change.

The implication of this conception is that large aspects of current economic, social and cultural relations need to be explored by insisting on global and local processes. This opens up numerous questions in various fields of research which go further than what has been possible in this publication. It is now even possible to suggest another research agenda. We need more studies on the treatment of global dimensions in various local life-worlds, enterprises, politics and counter-movements. Further theory-oriented, comparative and micro-sociological empirical research on social transformation and development has to take account of the understanding of glocalization which we try to pursue in the present publication.

Notes

1   The name of RC 09 will probably soon be changed to 'Sociology of Social Transformation and Social Development'.
2   The Samoan fa'afafine are biological males who express feminine gender identities.

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