REFRAMING HETEROGENEITY AS AN INHERENT OUTCOME (NOT A PRESUMED TRAIT) OF GLOBALIZATION

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The contemporary study of globalization is a product of disparate scholarship across myriad disciplines. Given the eclectic nature of such cross-disciplinary pursuits, the vital labor of critically unpacking certain fundamental analytical concepts can too often be neglected. The treatment of heterogeneity – and manifestations of individual agency – across the global landscape presents a case in point. Juxtaposing the structural determinism of hegemonic global forces with the dynamic, creative impulses of local agency presents a familiar and long-standing riddle. While this global/local paradox may not have originated with the study of globalization, its enigmatic features are made especially salient via analyses of the contemporary global era. Those framing globalization as a multi-layered process of heterogeneous particularization provide especially compelling perspectives in this regard. It is argued here, however, that proponents of global heterogeneity have become mired in circular, tautological arguments. Our aim is to re-ground such theories with an analytical-conceptual framework in which the conditions for local heterogeneity (and agency) emerge from concrete social actions and are no longer inserted as a priori premises of the theory itself. The purpose of this paper is thus two-fold. First, we examine the failed reasoning that buttresses the prevailing heterogeneous interpretations of globalization. Second, we introduce an analytical-conceptual framework that results in rationale independent of a priori premises for resolving the global/local paradox and for positing heterogeneity as an inherent outcome – and not a mere feature (or presumed trait) – of the current era of globalization. To illustrate, we apply this framework to an analysis of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique.

Keywords: *glocalization, hybridity, global flows, ontology.*

Introduction

The nature of global/local entanglements has long been a focus of those interested in the trajectories of globalization. The matter, put simply, is this: Over time, do global forces subsume local agency or does local agency preserve its autonomy in the face of powerful global forces? We refer to this general line of inquiry as the global/local paradox. Some contend that these global/local entanglements have produced increasingly homogenous economic, political, and/or sociocultural practices across myriad localities (Fukuyama 1992; Herman and McChesney 2001; Iyer 1988; Latouche 1995; Mattelart 1983). Others assert the dogged retention of local heterogeneity (Appadurai 1996a; Cowen 2002; Escobar 2003; Kraidy 1999; Nederveen Pieterse 2009; Robertson 1992; Sampaio Silva 1994). For our part, we believe (and accept as a premise for this paper) that the empirical record and scholarship supporting heterogeneity over the past two decades is quite compelling and overwhelming – at least for now. There are legions of

accounts of such heterogeneity across the economic and political spheres alone (Czarniawska 2002; Martinez-Díaz 2009; Matusitz and Leanza 2009; Perreault 2003; Randeria 2003). Nonetheless, it is the study of sociocultural phenomena that has produced the greatest volume of such examples and has directed our attention most explicitly to the analytical-conceptual nature of the global/local paradox (Appadurai 1996b; Crothers 2013; Escobar 2008; Mensah 2006; Nederveen Pieterse 2009; Robertson 2005). It is apparent from this literature that tremendous local heterogeneity persists. Less clear is why this is so.

If the empirical record confirms competing accounts of heterogeneous globalization – whether depicted as glocalization, hybridity, global flows, or other imagery – it becomes difficult to distinguish between such accounts regarding their theoretical value, acumen, or heft, and thus difficult to generalize to further cases. The common missing element for each of these accounts is an explicit ontological grounding. Consequently we are left wondering: Does heterogeneity follow from certain peculiar and inexplicable properties of the global system, of localities, or of some combination of these? To this end, great store is routinely placed in some notion of reciprocal relationships between global forces and local actors. But the simple assertion of reciprocal relationships is but a modern day version of other long-abandoned theories, such as vitalism or phrenology, and leaves us equally uninformed. The reciprocal relationships between two pebbles, for example, are rather limited and this follows from the modest ontological content of a pebble. In the case of global forces and local actors, therefore, our task is to grasp – beyond simple assertion – from whence rise these supposed reciprocal relationships. In this way, we can ground the claims of heterogeneity as a feature of the global/local paradox and provide rationale for why globalization has generated this heterogeneity and how one might (at least provisionally) generalize these findings to further phenomena.

Part I: The Global/Local Paradox and the Muddled Case for Heterogeneity

Three (Incomplete) Accounts of Global Heterogeneity

Though the literature affirming global heterogeneity is vast, the conceptual work of a small set of scholars has proven particularly influential. Here we consider the contributions of Roland Robertson, Jan Nederveen Pieterse, and Arjun Appadurai. The work of these scholars has been instrumental in shaping how many others understand and represent heterogeneity as a central feature of globalization.

Roland Robertson and Glocalization

It has been the conscious aim of Roland Robertson over the past decades to counter homogenizing representations of globalization by redirecting our attention to the broad manner of reception, adaptation, and reconceptualization of cultural forms by local communities. He captures this with his notion of glocalization. '[G]lobalization is marked by processes of "glocalization", whereby local cultures adapt and redefine any global cultural product to suit their needs, beliefs, and customs' (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004: 546). For Robertson, the contemporary period of expanding and intensifying global linkages has promoted the retention and continuing production of local difference and heterogeneity alongside a creeping homogenization. Indeed, for him heterogenization and homogenization are 'complementary and interpenetrative' (Robertson 1995: 40). The dual mechanisms by which globalization upends one-way interpretations of homogenizing processes are 'the universalization of particularism' and 'the particu-

larization of universalism' (Robertson 1992, 1995). The former suggests that within any system (global, regional, or national) there festers a universal expectation that local (or particular) communities will retain unique identities and characteristics, notwithstanding each community's participation in certain pan-community (or universal) arrangements and relationships. That is, a premise of submission to the edicts of some larger entity (universalism) is that those who submit do so as diverse particulars who actively work to retain and reify their uniqueness. The 'particularization of universalism' refers, on the other hand, to the adoption/adaptation of universal norms and standards across local conditions or the universal 'being given global-human concreteness' (Robertson 1992: 102). The adoption of standard weights and measures across societies is an example. However, Robertson equally emphasizes the emergence of a conscious awareness of globalization by the members of local communities as a measure of the particularization of universalism. Hence, the local (or particular) can no longer remain discretely parochial.

Robertson builds a convincing descriptive case for both the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism, drawing on a wide range of phenomena, such as football as an international sport.

> Within the context of international football tournaments or other cultural competitions, and no matter how polyethnic a single society may be, its individual members are each expected to identify with a specific national team. At major international tournaments, thousands of different supporter groups commingle, with each nation displaying distinctive kinds of dress, song, music, and patterns of behavior. Thus, cultural relativization turns the global game into the 'glocal game'. Conversely, 'the particularization of universalism' arose as the world acquired a 'socio-political concreteness'. This establishes extensive political chains of global connectivity, and serves to order nations for example through their specific constitutional frameworks, calendars, and positioning within world time zones (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004: 547).

At the same time, with regard to the universalization of particularism, it is not especially evident why local actors will continue to desire particularity or why global actors will continue to permit this. At times Robertson alludes vaguely to a universalization of 'expectations' or 'aspiration' for the retention of particularism (Robertson 1992: 102; 1995: 34; Giulianotti and Robertson 2004: 547). As a psychological urge this may or may not be true. In any event, our deeper understanding of why this is so remains cloudy at best. Nor are the drivers of the particularization of universalism elaborated with any precision. They persist because they persist. Thus, any forecasts for their continuity/discontinuity or their strengthening/weakening remain baseless.

Importantly, though Robertson does not present an explicit ontology for glocalization, he does offer a conceptual schema of a highly interdependent world comprised of societies, individuals, an international system of societies, and humankind. 'It is around the changing relationships between, [the] different emphasizes upon, and [the] often conflicting interpretations of these aspects of human life that the contemporary world as a whole has crystallized' (Robertson 1994: 43). That he does not more explicitly integrate (or ground) his vision of glocalization with this global/local schema is unfortunate. Consequently, notwithstanding his many important insights into the global/local paradox, this omission lends a degree of abstractness to his work.

Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Hybridization

For Jan Nederveen Pieterse, as cultural forms move out across borders, local recipients do not simply adopt these items whole and unspoiled. Rather, borrowing language from postcolonial scholarship (syncretism, creolization, mélange), Nederveen Pieterse describes an inventive process whereby, in a deliberate and calculated fashion, local populations essentially reverse engineer select cultural forms to suit local tastes, beliefs, and values. With this in mind, he sets out to develop an original perspective on globalization and, in particular, the global/local paradox.

> Globalization and localization have become new prisms through which virtually everything is being re-viewed. What seems to be particularly important is conceptual renewal, so that we accommodate the momentum of newness and, for instance, recognize globalization as more than the 'nation plus' and localization as more than the 'nation minus'. There is a limit to trying to achieve this purely on a general level, in theoretical abstract arguments such as [Roland] Robertson's 'universalization of particularism'. Grounding the argument in specific circumstances may contribute to conceptual renewal (Nederveen Pieterse 1998: 75).

Consequently, for several decades now Nederveen Pieterse has cataloged a vast inventory of hybrid forms across societies and cultures around the world.

A central theme driving Nederveen Pieterse's work is what he believes to be the central place of modernization and nationalism as paradigmatic-ideological frameworks shaping (and distorting) the predominant globalization narratives. Modernization and nationalism, he argues, tend to frame cultural forms as the reductive products of societies, states, or civilizations. Given such assumptions, the export of cultural forms from more-developed to less-developed societies results in an inevitable cultural transformation of the latter, whereby the less developed merely mimic the more developed. For Nederveen Pieterse, hybridization provides an important counter-narrative to such distorted representations of globalization. His inventory of hybrid forms thus serves the empirical purpose of documenting his case and the ideological purpose of disrupting a homogenizing narrative that forecloses disparate cultural outcomes and denies local agency.

One of the challenges introduced by the concept of hybridization is deciphering its origins or driving rationale. The current era of globalization is effectively treated as an episode of acceleration and/or intensification of hybridization. Hybridization itself, however, long predates this era. Consequently, the specter of hybridization – as a primordial condition – infecting all societies and cultures presents an ironic antidote for overturning essentializing modernization narratives. Furthermore, if hybridization simply exists as an eternal condition that can be described but not explained, then the trap of circular reasoning seems inevitable. And this is not lost on Nederveen Pieterse. '[I]t follows that if we [were] to accept that cultures have been hybrid all along, hybridization is in effect a tautology' (Nederveen Pieterse 2009: 88). See also Kraidy (1999: 472–73) on this point. Furthermore, it follows that those cultural forms exported by more developed societies are themselves hybrid and so even their wholesale adoption would (nonsensically) signal a type of hybridization. Thus, failing to address the origins and rationale of hybridization is no minor matter.

Lastly, there are occasional hints in his work of a fledgling ontology. This surfaces in particular when Nederveen Pieterse discusses a possible disciplinary shift in sociolo-

gy from a narrow focus on the nation-state to a global sociology framed around 'social networks, border zones, boundary crossing, diaspora, and global society' (Nederveen Pieterse 2009: 87). Much like Robertson's multi-level world schema vis-à-vis the universal and the particular, this suggests a possible opening for grounding hybridization ontologically that, alas, lingers largely unexplored.

Arjun Appadurai and Global Flows

In the mid-1990s, Arjun Appadurai began outlining a framework for grasping globalization that offered great promise for unraveling the global/local paradox. His work is organized around three inter-related notions. First, the current era of globalization is characterized by a quantitative (and qualitative) acceleration in the scale and volume of global flows of people, capital, goods, technologies, ideas, and media across borders. This resonates with a growing deterritorialization. Over time, these flows erode and undo long-standing structures (such as nation-states) and conventions that have provided stable and predictable networks and channels for cross-border contact. To capture the multi-faceted nature of the content comprising these global flows, Appadurai frames these as ethnoscapes, financescapes, technoscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes – inferring the increasingly fluid, shifting, and non-isomorphic nature of these flows (Appadurai 1996a: 37).

Second, Appadurai maintains that the content and character of these global flows are given form by processes that are disjunctive and contradictory. These flows proceed along varying axes at different speeds and follow disparate trajectories. Their points of origin and the conditions greeting their arrival, likewise, vary. Hence, there can be disjunctures between the movement of ethnoscapes and ideoscapes in a given locale that creates the illusion of a broader clash of civilizations or pattern of cultural imperialism. For Appadurai such surface-level judgments are plainly myopic and decontextualized. He rejects concepts that presume a regular and uniform convergence of cultural forms (nefarious or otherwise) based on cross-border contact. Chaos and uncertainty, thus, reign at the expense of simple causal models. '[I]n a world of disjunctive global flows, it is perhaps important to start asking [traditional questions of causality and contingency] in a way that relies on images of flow and uncertainty, hence chaos, rather than on older images of order, stability, and systematicness' (Appadurai 1996a: 47).

Third, Appadurai explores how the production (and reproduction) of locality in the current global age has transformed how we understand and experience the idea of locality. He characterizes the production of locality as an ongoing, evolutionary project in which the notion of change (including radical change) long predates the arrival of globalization. 'The large body of literature on the techniques for naming places, for protecting fields, animals, and other reproductive spaces and resources, for marking seasonal chance and agricultural rhythms… is a record of the spatiotemporal production of locality' (Appadurai 1996b: 180). Importantly, Appadurai further distinguishes between locality and neighborhood. Locality constitutes the contours of one's broader social life (*e.g.*, a tributary system) that shape our opportunities and ingrain our daily experiences with meaning. Neighborhoods generate concrete social forms (*e.g.*, a football club) via which we engage in our lived experiences. It is through the intentional and productive activities of community members that a neighborhood is reproduced in dialectical rela-

tion with the conditions comprising a given locality. Locality both results from the practices of persons in neighborhoods and contextualizes these practices. 'Thus neighborhoods seem paradoxical because they both constitute and require contexts' (Appadurai 1996b: 186). The complexities of this dialectic between neighborhood and locality are only intensified in the current global era.

It is via this analysis of the production of locality in combination with disjunctive global flows that Appadurai provides a possible ontological vision for addressing the global/local paradox. 'Locality – material, social, and ideological – has always had to be produced, maintained, and nurtured deliberately. Thus, even small-scale, customary societies are involved in the "production of locality" against the corrosion of contingencies of every sort' (Appadurai 1999: 231). Elsewhere, he tantalizingly adds a further layer to this ontological puzzle by bringing the individual into his schema. '[T]he individual actor is the last locus of this perspectival set of landscapes, for these landscapes are eventually navigated by agents who experience and constitute larger formations, in part from their own sense of what these landscapes offer' (Appadurai 1996a: 33). Unfortunately, this notion of the individual as the 'last locus' – its logic or mechanisms of action – is not pursued in great detail.

Robertson, Nederveen Pieterse, and Appadurai provide complex and multi-faceted interpretations of the current era of globalization and the global/local paradox. Nonetheless, there remains the notable and gnawing absence of explicit rationale for the origin or perpetuation of our contemporary global diversity. Does today's heterogeneity mark the final moments for a variegated world destined for extinction – alongside so many discarded indigenous languages – at the hand of some future suffocating homogeneity? Robertson's notion of homogeneity and heterogeneity as interpenetrating dynamics – the universalization of particularism alongside the particularization of universalism – is compelling and effectively eschews reducing local phenomena to global forces in inventive fashion. Ultimately, however, these remain only blanket assertions resting on no compelling rationale. Nederveen Pieterse's impressive documentation of hybridization across localities in the current global age, likewise, is both exhaustive and persuasive. Nonetheless, this depiction of local hybridity – however vivid and imaginative – does not address why this is so. Again, it may well be that we are simply in an early phase of global homogenization and that the future of globalization yet portends an inevitable cultural imperialism (Mattelart 1983; Tomlinson 1991). Appadurai's analysis of disjunctive global flows combined with the dynamics underlying the production of locality provides both a compelling model for sustaining local autonomy vis-à-vis global forces and a plausible interpretation for why this might be. However, this plausibility once again follows only from the conceptual premises built into the analysis. Consequently, notwithstanding certain moments of theoretical ingenuity the argument for heterogeneity over homogeneity or local cultural particularity over global universality, in each case, flounders and becomes caught up in circular, tautological reasoning. It is so because it is asserted to be so. To move beyond this we must carry forward (and build upon) the work of these and other scholars to more securely ground their heterogeneous interpretations of globalization. To do so, we first turn to several key paradigms that harbor

basic – though often unexamined – ontological assumptions underlying current interpretations of the global/local paradox.

Paradigms Shaping Interpretations of Global-Local Relationships
Depictions of glocalization, hybridization, global flows, and other representations of global heterogeneity rely, on a more fundamental level, on a formal representation (or paradigm) that details the presumed nature of global-local relationships. Three paradigms in particular have cast conspicuous shadows across debates over the global/local paradox. We refer to these as a systems paradigm, a transcendental paradigm, and an abstract-relational paradigm. Each is distinguishable from the others, in part, due to its distinct ontological premises. Importantly, it is not that individual scholars are wed to any one paradigm. Analyses of globalization, in fact, tend to move quite freely between paradigms – often within the same analysis. This can be both a point of strength as well as weakness depending upon one's degree of self-awareness when migrating between paradigms. Our aim in presenting each as a distinct and separate paradigm is thus largely a heuristic exercise setting the stage for our expanded analysis below.

A Systems Paradigm

A systems paradigm conceives of globalization as encompassing a single whole (or system) that is broadly comprised of many parts of varying scale (*e.g.*, global, national, regional, and local). This spatially differentiated totality is held together by multi-level sets of rules for interaction (cooperation) and by multi-level uses of force (coercion). The ongoing propagation and enforcement of rules combined with the recognized threat (and occasional use) of force reflect disproportionate loci of power linked to one's position in the system. Rules and force thus contribute in this way to the maintenance of a complex system with global reach. The notion of a singular scalar structure built on cooperative and coercive arrangements and comprised of varying types of parts allows disparate proponents of a systems paradigm to bring attention to assorted elements of globalization. These include the consequences of spatial location for actors within the global system (Wallerstein 1974), the role of extra-national institutions as rule-makers and enforcers (Giddens 1999), and the machinations of geopolitical instruments of hegemony (Arrighi 1994). Importantly, conflict (such as anti-systemic movements or protracted litigation) tends to be an inherent feature of a systems paradigm precisely due to the nature of the whole/parts relationships. Otherwise, coercion and other displays of differential power would not play so central a role in maintaining the system. The global/local paradox thus presents itself as a whole/parts predicament from this paradigm. Local actors (or parts) stand in relation to a global system (or whole) and it is the governing principles giving coherence and order to that system that define the options for local actors as a condition of their location within the global system.

> On the one hand, the capitalist world-economy was built on a worldwide division of labor in which various zones of this economy (that which we have termed the core, the semiperiphery, and the periphery) were assigned specific economic roles, developed different class structures, used consequently different modes of labor control, and profited unequally from the workings of the system. On the other hand, political action occurred primarily within the framework of states which, as a consequence of their different roles in the world-economy were structured differently, the core states being the most

centralized… [These] developments were not accidental but, rather, within a certain range of possible variation, structurally determined (Wallerstein 1974: 162).

The ontological implications of a systems paradigm are that the global/local paradox takes the form of rule-bound, whole/parts interactions. Rules are set and enforced on varying spatial levels with particular attention paid to that which maintains the whole. Local actors, meanwhile, at times engage in anti-systemic activities which thus disrupt a static and narrowly functionalist interpretation of a systems paradigm. However, in general, the emphasis remains on the structural system and not local actors.

A Transcendental Paradigm

A transcendental paradigm imagines globalization as a supra-spatial force bringing local actors (and actors at other levels) into conceptual-abstract unity with one another (Crothers 2013; Scholte 2005; Tomlinson 1999). By virtue of occupying the same hyper-connected world, local actors are necessarily interconnected, though the degree of this connectivity (and its consequences) can vary widely across locations. This global hyper-connectivity is held together by certain economic, political, and sociocultural imperatives that seep through borders via a range of instruments, including financial markets, diasporic migrations, and Hollywood distribution strategies. It is recognized that rules of state interaction are essential for such 'instruments' to initially transgress borders. However, once the process of border crossing has begun, it is argued that its continuation and expansion follows a certain (metaphysical) logic that takes on a life of its own. The logic of choice driving these movements – be it capital accumulation, cultural diffusion, or conspicuous consumption – generally reflects a scholar's home discipline. Whereas a systems paradigm emphasizes interactions at (and across) the local, national, and regional levels that comprise the global, a transcendental paradigm emphasizes interactions that supersede the limits of spatial-territorial designations.

> Globality in the conception adopted here has two qualities. The more general feature, transplanetary connectivity, has figured in human history for many centuries. The more specific characteristic, supraterritoriality, is relatively new to contemporary history. Inasmuch as the recent rise of globality marks a striking break in territorialist geography that came before, this trend potentially has major implications for wider social transformation. Globality in the broader sense of transplanetary relations refers to social links between people located at points anywhere on earth. The global field is in these cases a social space in its own right. The globe, planet Earth, is not simply a collection of smaller geographical units like regions, countries, and localities; it is also a specific arena of social life… Unlike earlier times, contemporary globalization has been marked by a large-scale spread of supraterritoriality (Scholte 2005: 60–61).

Supraterritorial modes of interaction include global markets, INGOs, global media, and global culture icons such as Psy (Crothers 2013; Herman and McChesney 2001; Matusitz and Leanza 2009). Consequently, there is greater emphasis on globalizing structures and processes and less emphasis on – though not a blanket dismissal of – local actors, stable state-based rules, or the coercive force of hegemonic state actors. On-

tologically, the global/local paradox is thus less about a rule-bound, whole/parts structure and more about theoretical supraterritorial forces (*e.g.*, global financial markets) that bring the global and the local into relation with one another. Such forces operate via channels that, by definition, beyond any orbit of control for local actors.

An Abstract-Relational Paradigm

An abstract-relational paradigm presents globalization as a pattern of spatial-temporal integration that reflects a multi-level set of dialectical relationships between global and local actors (Appadurai 1996b; McMichael 1990; Robertson 1992). The dialectical nature of this paradigm follows from treating globalization as an artifact of the cumulative interactions of global and local actors. The global world itself is constituted by these interactions. For example, Robertson's universal-particular relation, Appadurai's production of locality, or Philip McMichael's incorporated comparison introduces not a global system nor a global governing logic but a portrait of dynamic holistic interactions. The abstract-relational paradigm thus offers an inventive attempt to reinsert a degree of local autonomy by means of emphasizing the role of local actors in giving shape to global/local relationships. Central to this effort is the notion of reciprocal relationships, wherein neither the local nor the global is held to rule over the other. However, this notion merely asserts itself as an abstract premise without ontological foundation. While we hear a great deal about how reciprocal relationships supposedly operate, we learn little about why they should operate in this manner.

> An alternative to a preconceived concrete totality [a systems approach] in which parts are subordinated to the whole is the idea of an emergent totality suggested by 'incorporated comparison'. Here totality is a conceptual *procedure*, rather than an empirical conceptual premise. It is an imminent rather than a *prima facie* property in which the whole is discovered through analysis of the mutual conditioning of parts. A conception of totality in which parts (as relational categories) reveal and realize the changing whole overcomes the rigidity of world-system theory and builds on its insights… As a method of inquiry, a world-historical perspective conceptualizes 'instances' as distinct moments of a singular phenomenon posited as a self-forming whole… It is an alternative perspective because it views comparable social phenomena as differentiated *outcomes* or *moments* of an historically integrated process… (italics in the original, McMichael 1990: 391–392).

Proponents of an abstract-relational paradigm view local actors as neither passive victims swept under by homogenizing global forces nor heroic resistance fighters able to bend the forces of globalization to their will. In this sense, what we know as globalization results from an ongoing and complex contestation/adaptation whereby local actors resist and acquiesce, while attributing their own meanings to myriad global influences in their lives. Consequently, depicting forms of local adaptation that result from interactions with global processes and institutions represents a priority for those working – implicitly or explicitly – within an abstract-relational paradigm (Czarniawska 2002; Escobar 2008; Jijon 2013; Kraidy 1999; Martínez-Díaz 2009; Mensah 2006; Samman 2011). Again, this focus on the dialectical relationships between the global and the local, contra the spatial-structural properties of the global and the local or supraterritorial linkages uniting the global and the local, should be understood as a contrasting

point of emphasis and not a categorical dismissal of these aspects of a systems or transcendental paradigm. From the standpoint of an abstract-relational paradigm, the global/local paradox thus reflects an ongoing process of resistance/adaptation whereby local actors strive to meld the imperatives of globalization – across economic, political, and sociocultural spheres – to fit the contours of local conditions.

Each of these paradigms harbors a singular, fatal flaw. Each begins with certain *a priori* assumptions – either the structural-spatial assumptions of a systems paradigm, the metaphysical assumptions of a transcendental paradigm, or the conceptual assumptions (*e.g.*, reciprocal relationships) of an abstract-relational paradigm. Consequently, insofar as the rationale for one's conclusions ultimately lie in one's original operating precepts, each set of assumptions suffuses one's analysis with circular reasoning, as seen above in our consideration of glocalization, hybridity, and global flows. Too often, the cunning of theoretical exposition and modeling is allowed to stand in for the underlying veracity of our findings. We turn then to an alternative paradigm for resolving the global/local paradox via methods that remedy a reliance on implicit, *a priori* ontological assumptions for one's analysis.

Part II: An Alternative Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Heterogeneity and the Global/Local Paradox

A Concrete-Relational Paradigm

To begin, it bears repeating that the argument here is not that the paradigms outlined above are misguided or wrong. It is only that, as formulated, the conclusions they reach fall in upon themselves due to inherently vacuous rationale. A concrete-relational paradigm aims at providing an alternative method for interpreting globalization and deciphering the global/local paradox by explicitly confronting the underlying rationale. There are two points of difference that distinguish a concrete-relational paradigm from those above in this regard. These are, first, how one understands the global and the local as spatial dimensions and, second, an ontological framework positing social action as the progenitor of global/local (reciprocal) relationships. Insofar as one's treatment of space is a defining feature of the current era of globalization, all notions of globalization begin from certain assumptions about the local and the global. Within a concrete-relational paradigm, the global and the local as analytical-conceptual categories (and the relationships between these) are not introduced prior to analysis but emerge from the investigation of specific phenomena. For an extended consideration of this paradigm see Baronov (2014). As discussed below, this entails beginning with the ontological premises that permit any analysis of globalization to proceed. Insofar as the spatial-analytical categories of 'global' and 'local' when unexamined present us with empty abstractions, we must begin with some concrete content to give form and substance to these. Appadurai, in fact, hints at this with his introduction of 'neighborhood' as a spatial-analytical category. He does not, however, ultimately explore this sufficiently to tease out its ontological consequences for the global and the local as abstract categories. Conventionally understood, the local is a spatial-scalar dimension that provides an arena for various forms of community-level social action (broadly construed). The scale of the arena permits persons to come into direct contact with one another. (We do not address the notion of virtual communities here.) The local, however, does not *precede* social action. Rather, it is a concrete social action that brings the local (a sense of place) into being – imbues it with form and substance.

Consider a church congregation. When the members of a community take steps to form a congregation this brings these community members into relation with the members of other communities who have formed their own congregations. In this manner, however trivial the example, social action contributes to the ongoing production of locality. The local, thus derived, is no abstraction or empty supposition. Rather, it is a manifestation of the direct lived experiences of particular community members who through their actions *constitute* the local. This notion of the local as an arena for social action via ongoing forms of direct contact, in turn, distinguishes it from other spatial-scalar dimensions, such as a region. Insofar as a particular collection of locales (*e.g.*, villages between the Dnieper River and the Russian border) stand in relation to other collections of locales (*e.g.*, Ukrainian villages west of the Dnieper River) the members of the former communities may come to believe that they belong to a common and distinct region (*e.g.*, Eastern Ukraine). This, of course, resonates with Robertson's notion of global consciousness vis-à-vis his depiction of the particularization of universalism. Importantly, it is only via a sense of affinity among community members *at the local level* that the concept of a region emerges. Beyond this it has no concrete manifestation, only symbolic representations (flags, army posts, language, customs) that convey a sense of regional identity among persons at a local level. Similarly, it is only via some sense of affinity by community members at the local level that the national or the global emerge as scalar dimensions. Hence, for a concrete-relational paradigm, the regional, the national, and the global are, perforce, abstract suppositions. At best, they can be conceived of as pan-local (imagined) spaces, insofar as certain social actions in one locale may reverberate across other locales (*e.g.*, a separatist protest in a village east of the Dnieper River). The distinction remains simply this: The local is a space that is constantly being produced and reproduced through concrete social action; the global is an abstract supposition whose imagined spatiality reflects the local interpretations of community members regarding the impact of interactions between far-flung locales on one another. Globalization, in this sense, refers to the extension and intensification of inter-local contacts across economic, political, and sociocultural spheres of life. Any apparent eliding here of the considerable impact of global and regional developments on the lives of community members in this all too succinct summation is addressed below, meanwhile, in relation to HIV/AIDS and Mozambique.

Let us turn then to the ontology of concrete social action at the local level across these spheres. It is consideration of this in particular that allows a concrete-relational paradigm to ground interpretations of the global/local paradox (and of heterogeneity) in a more substantive rationale then those paradigms above. To better bring this into focus let us consider an early morning scene in a small fishing village.

> *Men begin arriving at the dock and putting their nets, hooks, and bait in order before pulling on their boots and other gear and entering an area where they have paid a fee to dock their boats. They stow their commercial fishing licenses and permits and review the latest weather service bulletin. A cleric moves among the docks blessing the boats and crew members and the men's wives hand off food they have prepared along with colorful beaded wristbands. As the boats set off, the younger fishermen are expected to allow the older fishermen to take the lead. The women wait along the dock until the boats disappear into the mist, while a handful of indigenous peoples – forbidden, like the women, to work on the boats – clean and repair the docks. As the boats*

clear the inlet to the bay, the fishermen knead their beaded wristbands to ward off poor weather before signaling their departure to a worn and tattered coast guard post. The day has begun.

There is much to gather from this account and, for this, our observations can be distributed across three categories of ontological content. First, there is the physical environment (the bay and shore) and the physical items that the fishermen make use of, including the boats, nets, hooks, bait, docks, boots, and food. We refer to such items as the material content. Second, there are those phenomena that invoke some type of political, economic, or social institutional forms, including the fee-based dock, the commercial fishing licenses and permits, the coast guard post, and the weather service bulletins. We refer to this as the social-political content. Third, there are those phenomena that invoke some type of symbolic-cultural beliefs and practices, including the cleric's blessings, women preparing the food and seeing the men off, older fishermen leading younger fishermen out of the bay, the use of beaded wristbands to avert poor weather, and discrimination against the indigenous population. We refer to this as the symbolic-cultural content. The material content, the social-political content, and the symbolic-cultural content thus comprise three ontological spheres.

Two critical features of this content stand out. First, the ontological spheres are interdependent. On the one hand, each is necessary for a complete understanding of the scene above. Omitting either the material, symbolic-cultural, or social-political content from our representation of the fishing village would inevitably leave us a partial and distorted understanding. On the other hand, insofar as a change to any one sphere impacts the others, each enters into reciprocal relationships with one another. For instance, as weather bulletins improve, this can alter the role of beaded wristbands. As women enter the workforce, this can alter their early morning role on the docks. As laws ban discrimination, this can alter attitudes toward the indigenous population. As the safety of boats progresses, this can alter the role of the coast guard. These multiple ontological spheres are thus embedded with one another and cannot be understood when treated as discrete. Second, we have access to the content of each ontological sphere only via particular instances of concrete social action. We are aware of the social role of women on the dock due to the specific actions (and treatment) of women. We are aware of ethnic prejudice due to specific, observable acts of discrimination. We are aware of certain metaphysical beliefs due to the use of beaded wristbands. In each instance, human beings are bearers of this material, symbolic-cultural, and social-political content via their concrete actions. This account of the multiple, embedded ontological spheres comprising social life is essential for grounding a heterogeneous interpretation of the global/local paradox. Hence, within a concrete-relational paradigm, interpretations of the global/local paradox must allow the concrete ontological content constituting such practices and beliefs to provide the bases for the preliminary positing of any analytical-conceptual categories – such as the global and the local. In this sense, our explicit ontological premises necessarily precede (and thus make possible) both our empirical findings and our theoretical assertions.

HIV/AIDS in Mozambique

To illustrate the implications of multiple, embedded ontological spheres and the construction of locality through concrete social action let us apply a concrete-relational paradigm to an analysis of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. As in the case of daily life in our fishing village above, HIV/AIDS in Mozambique must be approached vis-à-vis its spe-

cific material, symbolic-cultural, and social-political content. Furthermore, as a physical ailment that persists only by attaching itself to a human body, our only access to HIV/AIDS in Mozambique is via the bodies, lives, and experiences of particular persons. Consequently, at a minimum, our account necessarily entails three elements: some aspect of its material content such as a physical body which is a bearer of the symptoms and physiology of HIV/AIDS; some aspect of its symbolic-cultural content such as the experiences of a person living with HIV/AIDS that reveal prevailing attitudes and discrimination by community members; some aspect of its social-political content such as the biography of a person living (or having lived) with HIV/AIDS which describes the life circumstances (or social context) which placed him or her at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. Consider the following cases. These have been adapted from Baronov (2014).

Patient X and the Material Content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique

To access this material content we rely upon the body of some person living with (or having lived with) HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. Here we have Patient X.

The body of Patient X – bearing the symptoms and physiology of HIV/AIDS – was first examined and diagnosed in a regional clinic in Beira, Mozambique by doctors trained in biomedicine. The body initially presented with certain symptoms consistent with HIV/AIDS, including severe fatigue, an emaciated frame, and discoloration of the skin and bruising. Blood work confirmed significant levels of HIV in the body's bloodstream. Further diagnostic tests later revealed the full progression of the ailment attached to this patient's body.

From the perspective of Western biomedicine, HIV/AIDS is a disease whose clinical diagnosis and (ideal) treatment are invariant and universal across all societies (Essex and Mboup 2002; Greene 1991; Pantaleo *et al.* 1993). Given the predominance of biomedical influence reflected in this account, it appears that the Mozambican medical interpretations of this ailment (depictions of its material content) are decidedly filtered through a strong Western gaze. In this sense, the patient's body contributes to our understanding of – and mediates between – the complicated relationships between Mozambique and Western medicine. Hence, Patient X links Mozambican medical care and Western biomedicine. And it is, in part, via the body of Patient X that we have a concrete instance of this relationship.

Nussanema Samuel and the Symbolic-Cultural Content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique

We have access to this symbolic-cultural content through the experiences of persons living with HIV/AIDS. Consider the story of Nussanema Samuel as reported in *IRIN PlusNews* on 6/13/2009.

> 'I lost my home. My family isolated me and even went so far as to separate the utensils I used; they were afraid of becoming contaminated', said Nussanema Samuel, 28. She has had to build a new life since she revealed her HIV-positive status to her family and friends in Machaze, in the south of the province, three years ago. 'My friends abandoned me and I would go for as long as two days without bathing because there was no one who would help me. I became sick because of discrimination', she told IRIN/PlusNews. 'The prejudice is worse when it's a woman', said Samuel. 'When a woman re-

veals that she is HIV positive, society vehemently condemns her, but when men publicly reveal they are HIV positive, society accepts it more easily.'

Nussanema Samuel is a bearer of the grave stigma, prejudice, and misogyny attached to HIV/AIDS in Mozambique – social attitudes that have been well corroborated (Matsinhe 2008; Talja 2005; UNESCO 2002). It is via her daily experiences that these social attitudes are made manifest. At the same time, the material content is also present insofar as community members are responding, in part, to the sight of her frail and ravaged body. The content of each ontological sphere thus informs the other and Nussanema herself mediates between the two.

Xolisile Gwatura and the Social-Political Content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique

We have access to this content via the full biography of a person living with (or having lived with) HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. The following account is a composite sketch and not an actual person.

Xolisile Gwatura was a 30-year-old Zimbabwean soldier who had arrived in Mozambique to assist government forces to battle anti-government rebels in 1985. He first felt ill in 1990, while stationed in Chimoio in the central province of Manica. Like most of his fellow Zimbabwean soldiers, Xolisile had lived an adventurous life in Mozambique. Intermittent bouts of heavy drinking, a series of semi-regular girlfriends, and rounds of brutal fighting with anti-government rebels proved both exhilarating and exhausting. Doctors could not pinpoint when or how HIV/AIDS may have first become attached to his body. However, along with his promiscuous lifestyle, he had suffered a serious shrapnel accident in 1988 and this had required a number of blood transfusions. At the time, few had ever heard of HIV/AIDS. Xolisile had grown too weak to travel home and he was sent to rest at a government military post where he received palliative care for several weeks before succumbing. After he died, rather than returning his body to his home village in Zimbabwe, his remains were burned for fear of contagion.

From this brief sketch we learn several things. The primary factors placing Xolisile at risk for HIV/AIDS were an anti-government insurrection in Mozambique with regional participation; a war zone promoting multiple sex partners and heavy drinking; and the dangers of blood transfusion and poor medical treatment early in the epidemic in Mozambique. The widespread devastation of such factors in Mozambique has been well documented (Abrahamson and Nilsson 1995; Collins 2006; O'Meira 1991). Again, we come to know these things only through the concrete life experiences of Xolisile. His life and death is a bearer of this ontological content and, by extension, a bearer of the larger social-political content that this entails – relentless South African attacks on the Frontline States, the role of proxy wars throughout the Cold War, and North/South geopolitical relations more generally.

These accounts of the ontological content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique provide a glimpse of several elementary features of the concrete-relational paradigm. These include the embedded nature of the multiple ontological spheres constituting phenomena, our dependence on concrete manifestations for access to this ontological content, and the essential mediating role of the concrete. As with the fishing village above, the material, symbolic-cultural, and social-political content are embedded and interdependent. For example, discriminatory actions are triggered, in part, by physical markings of HIV/AIDS on the body. At the same time, as changes in the material content

have reduced it from a deadly disease to a chronic illness (not depicted here), the stigma has altered to reflect this. Similarly, with the end of the foreign-sponsored insurgency in the early 1990s the major modes of disease transmission shifted, altering aspects of the material content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. At the same time, in each account it is only by means of some concrete expression (*e.g.*, Nussanema's mistreatment) that we have access to any ontological content. Thus, the symbolic-cultural content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique – forms of stigma and prejudice – only exist for our consideration at the level of a concrete individual. Ultimately, HIV/AIDS in Mozambique serves as an abstract concept invoked by the members of particular communities across Mozambique to designate a certain phenomenon that is made manifest via a concrete ontological content that is given form and substance by individual human beings. This in fact is true for all social phenomena across all societies. And it is in light of these characteristics of the multiple ontological spheres constituting all social phenomena – their embeddedness and the manner whereby individuals (as members of communities) become bearers of this content through their concrete actions – that we are able to ground interpretations of the global/local paradox in rationale that are not mere assertions of presumed traits.

Let us bring the global/local paradox more fully into focus with regard to our understanding of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. A common misstep within accounts of heterogeneity and the global/local paradox is to neglect the embedded nature of the ontological content constituting a given global phenomenon. When one isolates (or treats as cumulative rather than embedded) aspects of the material content (the symptoms and physiology of HIV/AIDS), the symbolic-cultural content (forms of stigma and discrimination), or the social-political content (a foreign-sponsored insurrection), there is a tendency to focus on the narrow attributes of that ontological content so as to derive a set of generalizable principles. For example, it is common to focus on manifestations of HIV/AIDS as a disease in Mozambique (its physiology) as though these underlying properties are invariant and thus primary – a dependent variable vis-à-vis certain independent variables such as culture or poverty. Consequently, one obscures consideration of how local community members understand and interpret this material content which could reframe this content to represent not a primary constant variable but one integral aspect both constituting HIV/AIDS in Mozambique as well as mediating global/local relationships. Hybrid explanations that result from the former approach cannot, therefore, account for local contributions to ongoing developments beyond superficial descriptions of hybrid sociocultural forms. Let us further consider the implications of this.

The material content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique depicted above reflects the viewpoints of a community that has adopted a Western biomedical interpretation of disease. Consequently, the body of a person living with HIV/AIDS in Mozambique, in part, mediates between the medical beliefs and practices of community members in Mozambique and Western medical science. It is via the diagnosis of bodily symptoms that we become aware of the degree of penetration of Western medicine into Mozambique or into Africa more generally. It is via the treatment of this body that we may learn of hybrid medical practices that extend and transform the insular Western understanding and applications of biomedicine. HIV/AIDS in Mozambique reveals that Western biomedicine has not only transformed medical beliefs and practices in Mozambique. In addition, Mozambique has transformed Western biomedicine via its syncretic beliefs and practices. *Western* biomedicine has become *global* biomedicine. And it is the beliefs and practices of local community members that act as the agency for this transformation of Western

medicine (Baronov 2008, 2009). The local and the global enter into reciprocal relationships and they do so not as a tautological premise, but as a *necessary* condition of the multiple, embedded ontological spheres constituting HIV/AIDS in Mozambique. That is, one cannot isolate the material content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique from its symbolic-cultural and social-political content. When one is present all are present. Hence, depicting Western scientific medicine and indigenous medical practices as parallel and separate ontological content precludes grasping the emergence of hybrid medical beliefs and practices in Mozambique. First, hybrid medical practices in Mozambique are no less biomedical than Western scientific medicine. These constitute an *intentional* Mozambican variant of Western biomedicine. Second, such hybrid beliefs and practices equally reflect forms of cultural resistance and ongoing political battles. That is, the responses of local actors to global influences and pressures comprise a condition for the material content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique to come-into-being. This can only be explained by the manner by which HIV/AIDS is necessarily constituted by concrete expressions of its multiple, embedded ontological spheres. Concrete expressions confer local agency. The embedded nature of these spheres, likewise, confers an inherently unstable phenomenon that is ever subject to change. This then provides a basis (and rationale) for global/local forms of interaction more generally – grounded in the conditions under which the global and the local come-to-be – whereby local agency plays an indispensable role.

No less mistaken are efforts to treat the symbolic-cultural content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique as an ontological content that is separate and apart. Many factors shape the interpretations of HIV/AIDS by local community members. Global health campaigns disseminate educational materials that associate the transmission of HIV/AIDS with sex and illicit drug use. This is designed, in part, to assure people that they need not fear casual contact with persons living with HIV/AIDS. However, the reception of this information is filtered through local customs and beliefs pertaining to the behaviors identified in these campaigns. Consequently, abhorrence for certain deviant practices (especially for women) is often transferred to persons living with HIV/AIDS. Disgust replaces fear. Hence, the stigma and prejudice directed toward these people results from hybrid cultural forms that again mediate between the cultures and beliefs of a local community in Mozambique and a (primarily) Western understanding of disease transmission as culturally neutral. The global/local nexus in this case is revealed by concrete and finite acts of discrimination and stigma. And the agents determining how this global/local link is made manifest at the local level are community members. The symbolic-cultural content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique is thus a bearer of global/local connections and absent local, concrete instantiations (such as hybrid forms of discrimination and stigma) we would have no knowledge of such connections or of hybridity. The reciprocal global/local nature of the symbolic-cultural content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique – and the resulting hybridity – is thus again not a tautological premise but a *necessary* condition for such local instantiations to come-to-be.

Lastly, the social-political content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique described above can be traced, in part, to a foreign-sponsored insurrection and the attendant Cold War politics. In this sense, this content (the life and death of Xolisile) is a bearer of regional and global geopolitics. In point of fact, we only know the details of this geopolitics via the life and death of Xolisile – or that of some equivalent person. Xolisile is thus, in part, a bearer of this insurrection and of internecine Cold War politics. And it is only through the details of his life and death that we have a concrete manifestation of the relationships between Mozambique and various regional and global actors. In this re-

spect the autonomy and self-determination of the social-political content of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique resides in a single individual as the member of a local community. It is via the social-political circumstances leading to his contact with HIV/AIDS that the foreign-sponsored insurrection is made manifest for us. It is via these circumstances that we are given a glimpse of the role of Mozambique in Cold War geopolitics. Hence, it is only by means of certain concrete expressions of its multiple, embedded ontological content – such as the body of Patient X, the abuse of Nussanema, or the life and death of Xolisile – that we are able to grasp HIV/AIDS in Mozambique as an instance of the global/local paradox and a manifestation of heterogeneity. In this way, Patient X, Nussanema, and Xolisile help constitute what we know and what can be said about globalization itself as a theoretical-analytical concept and the global/local connections that flow from this.

Conclusion

As noted above, for Appadurai, the individual emerges as the 'last locus' within his account of disjunctive global flows, set just beneath the local and the neighborhood (Appadurai 1996a: 33). Within his general schema, this suggests a problematic resolution for the dilemma of infinite regress when moving below the level of the local. After all, one can always find a further segment between two ungrounded points along an infinite axis. Moreover, aside from some fictive version of Robinson Crusoe, any individual serving as the last locus remains him/herself the member of a particular community (or neighborhood). Nonetheless, though not fully developed by Appadurai, this insight about a last locus, does contain a kernel of truth bedeviling those accounts of the global/local paradox framed within a systems, transcendental, or abstract-relational paradigm. That is, the need to locate the origin of their conceptual premises in concrete and purposeful social action – and not in *a priori* assertions such as reciprocal relationships. Resolving the global/local paradox is a matter of first recognizing that the global and the local (and the relationships between these) are constituted by intentional social actors who can only act as members of local communities. Heterogeneity is not a trait, not a description, and certainly not a premise of globalization. It is an inherent outcome resulting from the concrete actions taken by local actors responding to their world and, thereby, giving form and substance to a great range of phenomena constituted by multiple, embedded ontological spheres.

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