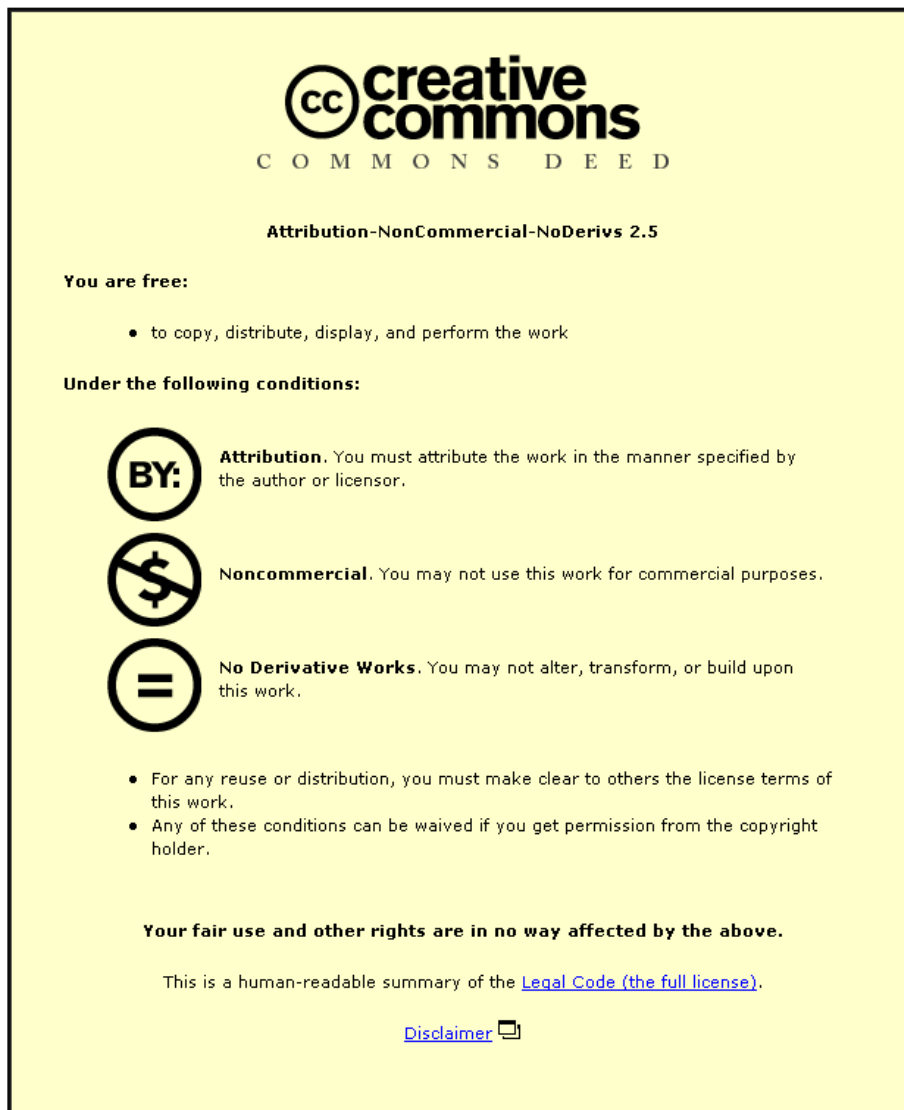




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Recovering the social: globalization, football and transnationalism

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Abstract

In this article, we place the social and football (as a sporting realm) at the heart of social scientific analysis of globalization processes. Our theoretical framework sets out, in turn, the concepts of glocalization, with particular reference to what we term the 'duality of glocality'; transnationalism, notably its socio-historical aspects; connectivity, with particular reference to its antonym, 'disconnectivity'; and cosmopolitanism, with strong focus on what we term its 'thick' and 'thin' variants. We explore the interplay of these concepts and processes within three broad domains of the 'football world': supporter subcultures, sport journalism, and Japanese football culture. We conclude in part by arguing for greater exploration of sport's role in regard to global processes and of the interrelationships between the duality of glocality and the thick/thin variants of cosmopolitanism.

Keywords GLOCALIZATION, TRANSNATIONALISM, THICK/THIN COSMOPOLITANISM, CONNECTIVITY, THE SOCIAL, FOOTBALL

Since the early twentieth century, across Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia football has provided perhaps the strongest form of cultural life through which easy sociability has been practised. Particularly among males, the game has long been a crucial subject for breaking the ice between strangers or recreating 'phatic communion' between friends and fellow citizens.

Social relations in association football acquire particular significance in transnational circumstances. Devoid of a common language, individuals have established forms of friendship and interpersonal trust by swapping, in heavily accented terms, the names of favourite football players, especially those belonging to the interlocutors' nations. The 'world memories' of heavily

mediatized international fixtures – notably major football tournaments like the World Cup finals – provide a substantive *lingua franca* that sets international peoples talking.

Leading international politicians inside and outside football suggest that this international sociability flows easily into a social universalism. For President Chirac of France, the game poses no threat to cultural or linguistic autonomy: ‘Today, football speaks all languages. Everywhere it spreads, it adapts to the local culture, it bonds with national and popular traditions, it transcends social distinctions.’¹ The former FIFA President João Havelange, elided the notorious corruption and rigid stratification within the game in his native Brazil, when he opined, ‘Football is not just a sport. It is the only universal link there is. It is the most democratic of all sports, we all talk to each other in a football stadium; everyone is equal. This feeling of democracy in the game is very important since football belongs to everybody’ (*FIFA Magazine* April 1998: 3).

Notwithstanding their rather utopian elements, these and many other such observations by key decision-makers do provide sociologists with implicit reminders of the need to consider the *social* aspects of globalization in reference to the general cultural domain. In this discussion, we explore how football’s contemporary social elements are constructed in transnational contexts, through processes of glocalization, with increasingly cosmopolitan consequences.

Our focus on the social reverses some recent trends in modern sociological theory. Some analyses of late modern Western societies have produced, in our view, rather ‘asocietal’ interpretations by reifying individualistic cultural obsessions with the self, personal identity, and autobiography (Giddens 1991; cf Robertson and Chirico 1985). Other analysts pronounce the ‘death of the social’, as executed by the advent of a media or information age. Lash (2002: 26–7), for example, states that a ‘global information culture’ procures the disintegration of the social, notably in institutional and structural terms. Harnessing Tönnies (1957, orig. 1887), he contends that the social realm (or *gesellschaftlich*) has been supplanted by cultural life (*gemeinschaftlich*); hence, in regard to religion, we witness the death of (social) churches and the rise of (cultural) sects. Most notoriously, Jean Baudrillard proffers a brazen insistence on the social’s demise. Our hyperreal and simulated culture, Baudrillard (1983) imagines, implodes the social. The old social class structure disintegrates, to be replaced by the amorphous, asocial masses, the ‘silent majorities’, more preoccupied with cultural distraction than political emancipation. Baudrillard refers illustratively to the occasion when French citizens were far more absorbed by football than the politically controversial extradition of a German lawyer (Baudrillard 1983: 12–13). Thus, as

the social dies, so too does its scientific contemplation, in the form of sociology (cf. Kellner 1989: 84–7).

Our reluctance to accept these and other premonitions of the global–social’s demise is founded on analytical and methodological grounds. First, analysts such as Lash and Baudrillard do require us to reflect critically on how the social emerges from the interrelationships between information/media, globalization and ‘postmodernity’. Yet, as Maffesoli (1996) has observed, the outcome may be the transmogrification and revitalization of the social (such as through neo-tribal sociality) rather than its generalized abolition, as Lash and Baudrillard separately submit. Other analysts, notably Knorr-Cetina (2001) and Wittel (2001), have made important contributions towards theorizing the nature of sociality and post-sociality within networked environments. Second, there may be methodological rather than epistemological reasons for the relegation of the social in relation to the economic, cultural and political aspects of globalization. However, field work by anthropologists and scholarly fora such as *Global Networks* have aided the offsetting of this process through highlighting the everyday social construction and consequences of globalization.

In this article, we aim to contribute to the recovery of the social within globalization debates through very detailed reference to football. Our discussion locates the global–social with reference to the lodestar concept of ‘glocalization’, and through related sociological notions of cosmopolitanism, transnationalism and connectivity. We advance a relatively sociocultural reading of globalization that is attuned to the unevenness and complexity of global processes. Our discussion is separated into two general parts, beginning with a substantial theoretical statement, and followed by an empirical elaboration of these ideas within specific transnational football realms.

Theoretical framework

Glocalization

The concept of ‘glocalization’ underpins our analysis, and has been applied elsewhere to explain the globalization of football (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2006, 2007). A conflation of globalization and localization, the term glocalization is derived from the Japanese word *dochakuka* (meaning ‘global localization’ or ‘localized globalization’) common in business circles since the late 1980s (Dicken and Miyamachi 1998: 73). The term has been conceptually substantiated in two general social scientific fields: among cultural social scientists, primarily by Robertson (1992,

1995; Robertson and White 2004); and among political economists and critical geographers, notably by Swyngedouw (1992, 2004). Notwithstanding significant divergences, analysts in both fields agree that glocalization encapsulates the quotidian complexity of local–global or universal–particular relations in the context of intensified global compression and transnational change.

We understand glocalization to refer to ‘real world’ endeavours to recontextualize global phenomena or macroscopic processes with respect to local cultures (Robertson 1992: 173–4; 1995). Glocalization critically transcends the banal binary oppositions associated with globalization, and so registers the societal *co-presence* of sameness and difference, and the intensified *interpenetration* of the local and the global, the universal and the particular, and homogeneity and heterogeneity.

Glocalization promotes critical sociological reflection on the axial principles of globalization, notably the interdependency of the local and the global. For example, some analyses assume that the global and the local are mutually exclusive, oppositional terms. Hence, it is assumed, globalization *a priori* involves the rejection or annihilation of ‘local’ cultures; if national cultures are sustained, then it is contended that globalization has somehow been ‘repudiated’ (cf. Rowe 2003). Conversely, we argue that globalization has been characterized in part by the global thematization of locality and nationality, by the global spread of differentiation along local and national lines. Otherwise stated, ‘the local’ is not simply a pre-given antinomy of the global, but is better understood as a transitional outcome of globalization (Robertson 1995: 40). As its etymological roots would suggest, glocalization highlights also the global visions and globalization projects of *non*-Western cultures, such as Korea, Japan and China. We may say that the projects of glocalization are now so advanced that they have become ‘the constitutive features of contemporary globalization’ (Robertson 1995: 41).

These observations have serious ramifications for the historical dimensions of globalization. In prior work, while recognizing that processes of proto-globalization have been apparent among ancient civilizations, Robertson (1992: 58–60) has identified five phases of globalization since the fifteenth century, culminating in the fifth ‘uncertainty’ period from the late 1960s to recent times. We would suggest that, since around 2000, the world has entered a sixth phase of globalization, which is chiefly characterized by this intensified local–global interpenetration, but whose broader features we are unable to expand upon within this specific context.²

Some analysts have associated glocalization with processes of sociocultural heterogenization (cf. Ritzer 2003, 2004). Such an approach has served the useful purpose of countermanding more

reductive arguments regarding global homogenization, such as in simplified variants of the Americanization thesis. Nevertheless, glocalization is a dichotomous term that encapsulates the empirically verifiable interdependency of homogenizing and heterogenizing trends in globalization *tout court*. In that sense, we may talk of the *duality of glocality*. Sports such as football provide some basic illustrations.

In terms of heterogenization, the term 'football' refers not just to the sport of 'association football' or 'soccer', with which we are concerned here, for it applies further to various national sporting codes, such as 'American football' or 'Canadian football' in North America, Australian Rules football, Gaelic football in Ireland, and even rugby union or rugby league in parts of the British Commonwealth. Nor are these diverse football codes territorially sealed. Many have existed side-by-side since the late nineteenth century; intensified transnational migration since the mid-twentieth century has merely redoubled at least the heightened status of these games in different contexts. Moreover, despite its 'global' accolade, football has had a secondary sporting status within many public cultures, such as in the Indian sub-continent, Australasia and North America. Football also showcases technical and aesthetic heterogenization, as specific teams, regions and nations interpret and play the game in significantly varied ways.

On the other hand, football's homogenization is evidenced transnationally by isomorphic forms and institutional structures. For example, world sporting heterogeneity is reduced by football's global spread and the correlated displacement of many local games. Football is contested according to universal rules, and its systems of governance and administration are internationally standardized. Since the 1970s, there has been a general convergence in football tactics, as many teams use a 'classic' 4-4-2 formation and safeguard their competitiveness through standardized defensive play.

The social aspects of football display trends towards international homogenization and heterogenization. Among players, most cultures adhere to basic behavioural standards and ritual practices, such as handshakes after matches, respectfully observing anthems, and heeding the instructions of coaches. Greater cultural diversity is evidenced in terms of levels of 'acceptable' aggression, responses to being challenged or fouled, and in relations with referees during play. Such differences are magnified within transnational contexts. For example, in the UK, regular criticisms are voiced by migrant players from the European mainland about the excessive aggression or 'violence' in club football, while various stakeholders in the host society's game criticize the 'diving' or 'feigning injury' of these 'foreigners'.

Transnationalism

Despite some analytical limitations, the concept of transnationalism is particularly helpful for recovering the social in the analysis of globalization.³ Transnationalism is at heart a processual sociological term, and tends to be applied in regard to processes of migration and mediatization (Al-Ali and Koser 2002; Parreñas 2005; Purkayastha 2005; Smith 2006). Our focus here is on these dual, often interdependent processes, despite transnationalism's other, sometimes secondary applications (for example, regarding corporations or religious networks). We understand transnationalism in straightforward terms, as referring to processes that interconnect individuals and social groups across specific geo-political borders.

The period from the 1870s to the mid-1920s has been termed the 'take-off' period of globalization, when transnational relations expanded massively (notably through transport, trade, communications, education and migration), and the world underwent intensified 'sociocultural compression' (Robertson 1992). Illuminating this process, modern sports such as football underwent a very rapid transnational diffusion, notably in regions like Australasia and South America with 'homophilous' characteristics, in terms of sharing British or European languages, religions and cultural values (Rodgers 1962). These sports contributed significantly to the greater social and societal transnationalization of non-European peoples through stronger connectivity within the 'international community' (Holton 2005).

Transnational social relations became routinized within football, initially as British workers and settlers taught the game and established competitions among indigenous peoples. British teams such as Southampton, Everton and the Corinthians travelled to South America to contest challenge matches against local opponents while being hospitably entertained by Anglophile elites. South America established the football world's first continental governing body – the Confederación Sud American de Fútbol – in 1916 and numerous international tournaments were contested in the region. In turn, South American teams started to contest fixtures in Europe, notably through Uruguay's victories at the 1924 Olympics in France, and a year later when three club sides from Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina toured the continent (Mason 1995: 30–4).

Since that time, transnational processes in football have increased massively through intensified migration and advanced mediatization. Most football clubs have greater interconnections with other nations, such as through the recruitment of migrant players and the attraction of foreign fans. In terms of electronic media, the World Cup has reached larger cumulative global television

audiences, rising from 13.5 billion in 1986 to 33.4 billion in 1998. Crucial to that advance is connectivity, a twin process to that of transnationalism.

Connectivity

The concept of connectivity registers the social ‘electricity’ of globalization. Indeed, Tomlinson (1999: 2) defines globalization in terms of ‘complex connectivity’, featuring ‘the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that characterize modern social life’. An equally important feature of globalization is expanding global consciousness (Robertson 2007).

Connectivity is a Janus-headed facet of globalization; it is highly uneven, and serves to index major sociocultural differences and inequalities. First, it captures the routinization of transnational communication, such as through media, transport, and imagination. In football, it describes the intensification of transnational relations between football teams, such as through the expansion of tournaments like the World Cup finals, from 13 teams contesting 18 games in 1930 to 64 in 2006, or the European Cup/Champions League, from 29 fixtures in 1955/6 to 237 in 2002/3. Connectivity captures the elite socio-political transnationalism that has emerged among football officials. For example, during his 25-year FIFA Presidency, João Havelange claimed to have visited 192 nations at least three times, and to have spent around 20,000 hours on a plane; in one single year, his successor, Sepp Blatter, visited 50 nations (*FIFA Magazine*, January 2005).

Second, heightened connectivity gives rise to new and more acute forms of global *disconnection*. Indeed, *underdevelopment* was identified as the obverse of *development* during the ‘uncertainty phase’ of globalization, which ran from the 1960s to the 1990s (Nettl and Robertson 1968: 29; Robertson 1992: 59–60). We noted earlier the emergence of a sixth phase of globalization since about 2000. During this era it is possible to identify a similar antinomy, which involves *connectivity* and *disconnectivity*. Disconnected societies are unable or unwilling to establish many receptor points for global flows. In many instances, these societies have endured structural crises arising from neo-liberal economic reforms or downturns in commodity markets. In football, disconnection has been manifested in different ways. At club level, the political hegemony of the richest Western European clubs has resulted in the relative disconnection of sides based in smaller nations or in Eastern Europe. In the developing world, poverty, unemployment and forced migration have disconnected large populations from their sporting facilities and outlets. In some nations, ‘structural adjustment’ reforms have led to the privatization of state

corporations and cutbacks in assistance to football sides that had previously enjoyed strong national and international competitiveness. In regard to televised access to elite football fixtures, peoples in the developed world easily establish such connectivity, whereas those in the developing world may be experiencing greater disconnectivity due to the excessive costs of pay-TV stations.⁴

Finally, a vital element of disconnectivity is reflexivity wherein the relevant communities, or at least their elite representatives, have an awareness of the heightened connectivity that arises elsewhere. Thus, the disconnection of many European clubs and nations from full competitive engagement has occurred while these competitions have acquired greater transnational exposure. Moreover, the developing football continents of Africa and Asia have been in recurring conflict with FIFA since the mid-1960s over their restricted allocation of qualifying places for the World Cup finals, just as the tournament's global popularity has soared.

Cosmopolitanism

Transnational processes and forms of connectivity facilitate intensified levels and kinds of cosmopolitanism. The ubiquity of discussions regarding cosmopolitanism in recent years suggests that this particular keyword is endangered by possible 'banalization'. Cosmopolitanism, like glocalization, is a portmanteau of the Greek words *cosmos* and *polis* (Beck 2004: 16). In contemporary culture, cosmopolitanism and localism have become a somewhat facile binary, often characterized misleadingly in class and national terms to differentiate a 'vacuous' worldliness from chauvinistic solidarities (Eagleton 2006). Such a standpoint ignores the analytical and empirical interdependencies of the two terms, rather in the same way that their sometime respective philosophical 'champions' (in the shape of Kant and Herder) have had their conceptual differences invented and exaggerated by subsequent commentators (cf. Dallmayr 1998). Cosmopolitanism has become a highly popular term in contemporary social science, and its understanding has acquired greater sophistication and maturity through some recent important conceptualizations that explore in part its diverse and non-European manifestations (Appiah 2006; Fine and Cohen 2002; Vertovec and Cohen 2002).

We understand forms of cosmopolitanism in two basic senses, in 'thin' and 'thick' terms. Both categories signify our agreement with various analysts on the complex interrelations between cosmopolitanism and glocalization (Beck 2004; Roudometof 2005; Tomlinson 1999). Indeed, the cosmopolitan outlook is essentially a glocal one, in terms of being able to reconcile the universal/global with the particular/local.

'Thin cosmopolitanism' involves a rudimentary politics of recognition, whereby the relatively 'equal-but-different' status of other cultures and social relations is acknowledged, though usually by implication rather than expression (Honneth 1995; Taylor 1994). Here, social actors rather instrumentally glocalize specific aspects of these other cultures, with the dialectical process heavily skewed towards sustaining the axial principles of the host culture. 'Thick cosmopolitanism' registers a decidedly more universalist orientation towards, and engagement with, other cultures. Here, social actors actively embrace and 'learn from' other cultures within the glocalization process, though local groundings and attachments remain evident.

Like Beck (2002, 2005), we have suggested the term 'banal cosmopolitanism' to describe the increasingly mundane nature of transnational social life (Giulianotti and Robertson 2006, 2007). In football, banal cosmopolitanism arises in multifarious ways: in the media, notably through the exponential growth of televised international games since the late 1980s; in employment, through routine transnational migration of players; and in general social interaction, through international travel, communications and friendships among supporters. In these and many other instances, a 'thin cosmopolitanism' is increasingly implied, as social actors routinely encounter other cultures according to particular circumstances. Longer-term trends towards 'thick cosmopolitanism' are possible, but not inevitable, through the cross-fertilization and hybridization of social practices across a transnational terrain.

However, just as we would argue that globalization is not incompatible with the strengthening of the nation-state, so banal cosmopolitanism does not eradicate more particularized forms of civic, ethno-national, ethno-linguistic or ethno-religious identification. Even in the most polyethnic 'world cities' (such as New York, Vancouver, Toronto, London), where visitors encounter a cornucopia of cosmopolitan experiences, we still find that very strong elements of ethno-national and ethno-linguistic identity are intrinsic to everyday life for residents, in terms of distinctive neighbourhoods, restaurants, bars, schools and social clubs. In football, this arises through the establishment of ethnically distinctive teams and clubs within these neighbourhoods. Moreover, most cities and nations still have special occasions and periods when forms of civic and national identification are strongly and routinely promoted. During major international football tournaments, for example, it is increasingly common throughout England to find banners and flags in support of the national side decorating homes, cars, businesses, major thoroughfares and other public spaces. In South American nations, support for the national sides remains intensive, particularly given the massive out-migration of players to European teams, which means that it is

only during international fixtures that supporters may watch their greatest talents performing on home soil.

Despite their common binary juxtaposition, consideration of football identities highlights close interrelations of the local and the cosmopolitan. For example, supporters of most teams are socialized into a cosmopolitan commitment to appreciating the aesthetic qualities and possibilities of the game itself, even if these are realized by direct opponents in crucial fixtures. Such cosmopolitanism can have striking social irruptions, in what appear to be highly unlikely settings: witness, for instance, the applause of many Manchester United fans for the spectacular three goals scored against their team by Real Madrid's Ronaldo in April 2003; or the appreciation of Real Madrid fans for the brilliance of Barcelona's Ronaldinho at the Bernabéu Stadium in November 2003. On the other hand, football followers routinely profess that it is difficult to enjoy matches fully without having or developing some specific interest in the result or empathy for one team over another.

Indeed cosmopolitanism itself, by its own definition, will incline football followers to favour sides that best embody a cosmopolitan ethic. Moreover, as we noted in relation to glocalization, the local itself must be understood as an increasingly glocalised (and, by implication, cosmopolitan) entity. For example, the most avowedly localist of all clubs is replete with cosmopolitan influences, in terms of utilizing players, coaches, tactical systems, marketing methods, supporter practices that 'originated' previously in other cultural locations. Crucially, as social processes, cosmopolitan exchanges have some basic hermeneutic prerequisites regarding intelligibility and comprehensibility. If no such fusion of horizons occurs, then even thin cosmopolitanism becomes socially intangible.

Overall then, the concepts of glocalization, cosmopolitanism, connectivity and transnationalism enable us to explore a broad range of processes in the globalization of football. These concepts are particularly germane to our endeavour to elevate the social dimensions of globalization within debates on global processes. To explore their interrelationships more fully, we examine three substantive realms of the game that illuminate the social complexity of globalization. First, we discuss the most prominent subject over the past two decades within the international social scientific analysis of football: supporter subcultures. We divide this section into two parts to explore in turn the broad transnational relations of supporters and the particular case of diasporic fan communities. Second, we examine an important professional grouping within football that has been relatively under-explored by social scientists: sport journalists. Third, by

drawing upon secondary sources, we provide a short study of Japanese football culture. Our discussion illuminates the close relationship of the national game to indigenous values and customs within the global context; it also returns the concept of glocalization to its point of origin, to explore how the Japanese themselves 'glocalize' with football as a case study. The sections on supporter subcultures and sport journalists draw significantly upon our primary research (notably participant observation, interviews and textual analysis) with these groups in the UK and overseas, most recently while undertaking an ESRC project on football and globalization.⁵

Football Worlds

Supporter subcultures 1: transnational relations

'Militant' or 'hardcore' supporter subcultures are established at almost all professional clubs in Europe, Latin America and Asia. These formations, as with most football crowds, tend to have informal, relatively open, social characteristics, while displaying a duality of glocality. In terms of homogenization, these groups are transnationally isomorphic, in having collective names and song repertoires that prioritize the favoured team. Alternatively, self-identifying hooligan groups converge upon a collective commitment to competing successfully and violently with rival peers.

In terms of heterogenization, significant variations are evident. 'Militant' fan identities in northern Europe, notably the UK, have been relatively more associated with subcultural hooliganism. In southern Europe, *ultras* are more formally institutionalized (such as through having headquarters and social clubs), have more complex friendships or rivalries with other fan groups, deploy more spectacular displays of support to their team, cherish stronger loyalties to their *curva* (or stand) where they gather, and often have more uniform (sometimes extremist) political identities. In Latin America, supporter subcultures such as the *hinchas* (or *barras bravas*) in Argentina and Uruguay share many of these characteristics, but also have more complex historical conflicts with security forces and relatively closer socio-political relations with club officials.

There are also dual forms of heterogenization and homogenization in the transnational experiences of supporter subcultures. We may consider the Tartan Army, which follows the Scotland national team to fixtures overseas, as a case in point. In terms of heterogenization (or variegated cosmopolitanization), overseas fixtures attract greater numbers of Scotland fans, from a wider geographical spread, than in the previous decades, enabling more opportunities for

transnational social engagement. The disintegration of the Soviet complex has created many new football 'nations', such as the Baltic Republics, for Scottish fans to visit. Intensified transport and telecommunications connectivity ensures that diverse social friendships are more easily sustained. Some Scottish fans are more socially universalistic, in initiating charitable exercises to assist needy local people.

Yet some long-term participants in the Tartan Army indicate that increasing homogenization (or standardized cosmopolitanization) in transnational social experiences is more evident. For example, older fans in the Tartan Army perceive a convergence in the social spaces encountered abroad. Supporters congregate typically in standard 'Irish' pubs and interact mainly with English-speaking and Anglophile locals. The adventurous risks of foreign trips have been greatly reduced: flights and hotels are readily booked through the internet; visas are rare or easily accessed; the post-Communist East harbours fewer 'unknown' qualities; and mobile phones generally ensure that getting lost in incomprehensible surroundings is almost impossible.

The banal cosmopolitanism of football fan subcultures has intensified significantly since the late 1980s. Thin cosmopolitanism is routinely facilitated by varied, more intensified connectivity, such as transnational travel to European fixtures or increased television coverage of foreign leagues. Thick cosmopolitanism is more evident in the voluntaristic transnational practices of network-building militant fans. Thus, for example, militant groups at leading European clubs often reciprocally 'host' transnational visitors associated with other fan subcultures.

Thick cosmopolitanism helps to describe the significant kinds of transnational glocalization that have occurred since the 1960s in regard to supporter styles and social practices. In Europe, stronger forms of connectivity were established from this time, in terms of migration, transnational club fixtures, and mediatization. Northern Italian supporters established the *ultras* subcultural identity at their various clubs during the 1960s, and this fan form quickly spread across Italy, then into southern France, Yugoslavia, and (following democratization) Portugal and Spain. The *ultras* borrowed significantly from UK fan styles, in terms of singing, congregating at ground 'ends', and displaying team colours; but they further 'glocalized' these traditions to create more organized, systematic and visually spectacular modes of support.

In the UK from the late 1970s onwards, the connections of militant fandom with violence were hardened, as self-identifying hooligan groups came to evolve the 'casual' style, which was particularly distinctive for disporting relatively upmarket sportswear and branded fashions. Followers of the casual style drew variously from continental Europe in utilizing fashion outlets

(for example, Sergio Tacchini, Lacoste, Armani), borrowing from the Italian *paninari* youth style, and visiting (or raiding) department stores during sorties abroad. In turn, at the 1990 World Cup finals in Italy and afterwards, the *ultras* style influenced some non-hooligan fans in the UK. Some transnational friendships were established between particular supporters; connectivity intensified as UK television and football magazines paid increasing attention to Italian football and its popular culture. To inject fresh atmosphere into stadiums, some UK fan formations borrowed directly from the *ultras* to create more colourful and raucous modes of support for their teams.

As these glocalization practices confirm, football fandom continues to display very strong forms of civic, regional and national pride. Such differentiation is promoted by security practices within stadiums, as supporters are segregated into ground sections where they may only intermingle with followers of their own team, thereby serving to heighten forms of collective identification and effervescence.

In line with the categorizations of Georg Simmel, we may say that some fan subcultures construct their own globalisms in the shape of 'world forms'. These higher forms arise when 'the main type of formative capacity of the human spirit is able to shape the *totality* of contents into a self-contained, irreducible world of experience' (Levine 1971: xvii). 'Worlds' are ideal types, and constitute 'great forms' 'through which, as it were, each particular part of the content of the world can, or should, pass' (Simmel 1959: 288). Religious belief systems, for example, serve to organize all experiences and to locate the human condition within a totalizing vision. In Wittgensteinian terms, these world forms appear as highly cultivated 'language games' that absorb all content.

We would suggest that some world forms occur in football when supporter formations seek to establish global identity and statuses for themselves or their teams. Fans of specific club or national teams seem to construct a global ideal in their own collective images, for example by consciously portraying themselves transnationally as 'the world's best supporters' (for example Brazil's 'carnival' fans, or Scotland's 'Tartan Army'). Similarly, some fan cultures have emerged organically out of particular 'world forms', wherein very strong kinds of shared ethno-national or ethno-religious identity provide a critical orthodoxy for collectively interpreting the world. In this way, specific supporter groups (such as some Scottish/Northern Irish Protestant-Unionists following Rangers from Glasgow, or some Basques who follow Athletic Bilbao) develop their football-ethnic habitus into worldviews that enable critical and homologous understandings to arise regarding national and international politics (for example the Middle East conflict).

Supporter subcultures 2: diasporic formations

A further subject for increasing consideration in regard to transnational fandom concerns those diasporic supporter communities who live away from their team's home nation.⁶ For example, leading club sides from Europe, Mexico and South America have large worldwide followings that can exceed 50 million. There are two general kinds of these transnational formations. First, 'self-inventing transnational fandoms' are comprised of followers with little or no biographical attachment to the team and its home city or nation. Yet these followers adopt a thick cosmopolitan social relationship to the team, enabling its particular habitus to shape significant aspects of their personal identities. Such fandom is facilitated principally by media connectivity (for example satellite television coverage) or indirect socio-symbolic ties, such as when a favoured player joins this specific club. Leading European clubs in the wealthiest national leagues (notably England, Spain and Italy) cultivate this fandom through their integral presence in the banal cosmopolitanization of football, in terms of competing regularly in the world's biggest tournaments, signing or developing 'celebrity' players, conducting summer tours of new fan 'markets', capitalizing on strong transnational television exposure, and heightening their historical mythology.

Second, 'diasporic self-sustaining communities' are comprised of supporters living abroad with long-standing biographical attachments to the team or its associated region and nation. While some allegiances may have abated during emigration, global media connectivity has furnished greater opportunities for rekindling their 'long-distance love'. Such fandom is particularly strong at leading clubs from large migratory societies, such as Italy, Turkey, Greece and Mexico.

Our research has considered Scotland's leading football sides – Celtic and Rangers, both from Glasgow – which have large transnational supporter networks, primarily across the main seats of British colonization and Irish migration, such as North America, Australasia, Singapore, and South Africa (Giulianotti and Robertson 2006, 2007). The two teams (but primarily Celtic) have over 120 supporters' clubs sprinkled across North America, which are largely comprised of migrants who arrived between 1960 and 1980. Many clubs were founded in the late 1990s with the express intention of combining their members to receive live satellite coverage of their team's football fixtures from a small network provider.

These supporters' clubs operate in transnational contexts where banal cosmopolitanism is very evident: in the Toronto area, for example, there are over 150 nationalities with diverse linguistic, culinary and sporting traditions. Yet strong forms of civic, national and ethno-religious identity

are nurtured by diasporic fans, as evidenced by the very existence of these clubs, and the members' keen retention of their Scottishness.

The supporters' clubs display significant degrees of transnational homogenization and heterogenization. Each club is formally instituted with office-bearers, has a 'home' location where members congregate, and is affiliated to a continental supporters' association. Yet the clubs diverge in various ways: in terms of scale, member demographics, and frequency of gatherings; the nature of their general relationships with supporters of other teams; and the kinds of social ties between members. Most club members maintain strong transnational ties with Scotland, through friends, family and 'home-based' fellow supporters.

Two major transnational processes threaten the long-term future of many clubs. First, the ageing membership is not being replenished by their more assimilated children or grandchildren, or by new Scottish migrants. Second, the greater availability of internet football may encourage members to stay at home to watch live games. In response to the latter, however, many club members insist that they do not intend to lose the Simmelian sociability of watching transnational games in familiar social surroundings, where club members congregate and construct match-day atmospheres, by wearing team colours and behaving as they would inside Scottish football stadiums.

While the transnational transmission of Scottish football fixtures has obvious benefits in terms of connectivity, some major new forms of disconnectivity also arise. A 'digital divide' is opened transnationally in cultural not class terms. Fans of smaller Scottish clubs report their frustration at receiving only irregular television or internet coverage of their teams when based overseas. Yet Celtic and Rangers fans too are aware of their underprivileged Scottish status. Many express frustration at the exclusion of their teams from the more glamorous European leagues and competition, which receive intensive coverage by global media corporations. In part consequence, many Celtic and Rangers fans in North America would favour their club moving to join a revamped English league.

Football Media

In regard to the media's relationship to globalization processes, research by Hannerz (2004) has demonstrated the importance of examining the practices of foreign correspondents. An equivalent point might be extended to include sport journalists when addressing the social

aspects of football and globalization. The social transnationalism of sport journalism is dependent upon three factors: *context*, *contacts* and *content*.

First, in terms of context, there are two inter-related processes at play, within football and its media. Football has become increasingly transnational, in terms of player migration, team competitions, supporter association, and the educational backgrounds and global connectivity of football's various stakeholders. The game's media has become similarly transnational for various reasons. Transnational media corporations provide the technical and business infrastructure for the global flow of football information, and for the exponential increase in specialist television channels and magazines devoted to the game. Interconnecting ties between football clubs, associations and media broadcasters have become increasingly complex since the late 1980s. Yet clubs are increasingly equipped to establish their own media outlets – notably television channels and websites – to control information outputs and reach directly their global audiences. Again, this precipitates forms of disconnection, as smaller clubs or weaker national teams cannot sustain sophisticated websites or television stations to reach their fan bases.

Second, the banal cosmopolitanization of football is indexed chiefly by its far greater volume of exposure in the mainstream mass media. Hence, football journalists are required to produce far greater volumes of reporting to fill these column inches or television schedules. In turn, these journalists are able to assume higher levels of thincosmopolitanization among their audiences, in terms of harbouring far stronger 'stocks of knowledge' and empathetic orientations regarding transnational football.

Third, in terms of contacts, the transnational social networks of football journalists have multiplied in recent years. Many contacts are developed informally at international fixtures, as journalists establish reciprocal relationships with foreign reporters. Player migration encourages transnational ties, so that stories from one nation are communicated to journalists in another. These stories incline towards thin rather than thick cosmopolitanism, in terms of communicating gossipy information to home audiences rather than promoting deeper transnational interrelations. For example, in the UK, foreign players find to their chagrin that, if they conduct frank interviews with journalists at home, transnational contacts allow British journalists to obtain and 'spin' the story in more sensationalist tones for UK audiences. Additionally, many UK media outlets employ multilingual journalists who can access information about star foreign players from transnational sources.

The duality of glocality is evidenced through aspects of social homogenization and heterogenization in the football media. Thick cosmopolitanism among UK football audiences, regarding growing interest in the game overseas, has facilitated significant forms of heterogenization, for example, as more transnational social ties are made with players and journalists. Trends towards significant homogenization are apparent in the relatively isomorphic banks of specialist 'foreign' journalists, who typically specialize in nation-specific stories and cultural knowledge, and in the select list of freelance UK reporters who have migrated to nations like Spain and Italy. The latter are particularly busy during peak thin cosmopolitanism periods, when self-interested UK audiences have direct concerns with these nations, such as prior to European fixtures against overseas sides, or whilst transfer speculation links specific players to UK teams. One significant element of heterogenization concerns the journalists' identification of significant sociocultural differences between UK and other international football media. European journalists, notably those in the north, are under significantly less editorial pressure than their UK counterparts to obtain background stories on players and to fill vast numbers of pages on a daily basis.

Finally, many journalists report that they have generally far weaker social relationships with players than in the past. In large part, this is attributed to the proliferation of players from overseas, who have a more instrumental relationship with the domestic football culture. Alternatively, it is easier for journalists to develop long-term social ties with home-grown players and coaches, who are considered to be more approachable for interviews, and to have a more homologous habitus in terms of recreational tastes, senses of humour, and cultural and political viewpoints.

Football in Japan

As the etymological cradle of glocalization, Japan reflected the duality of glocality *avant la lettre*. Modernization of Japanese society occurred during the Meiji period (1868–1912), the principle philosophy of which was encapsulated in the implicitly glocalist aphorism, *wakon yosai* ('Japanese spirit, Western learning'). Japanese football reflects a similarly glocalist relationship to *gaijin* influences.

The game's initial diffusion was facilitated by increasing transnational connectivity, enabling immigration of British workers and settlers who played football. Japanese responses to the game were glocally ambivalent, with local college students enjoying participation while many teachers considered football's roughness contrary to civilized social mores (Guttmann and Thompson

2001: 70–1). In the post-war period up to the 1990s, Japanese football was globalized further as a reflection of the state corporatist economic model. Company teams were founded and established a national league in 1965. Thick cosmopolitanism was indexed by Japan's emerging football system establishing football links with world leaders, notably West Germany and then Brazil, through conducting tours, hiring coaches, and sending players to training camps (Horne with Bleakley 2002; Moffett 2003).

Increasing media and competitive connectivity during the 1980s and 1990s underpinned Japanese senses of relative disconnection to football's globalization, notably through the national team's failures to qualify for the ever more global World Cup finals. As football's corporate support and mass audiences increased, a fully professional league – the J-League – was launched in 1993, featuring ten clubs. In terms of homogenization, J-League marketing borrowed heavily from North American sports, notably the NFL. J-League clubs followed standard practice in world football by substituting their corporate nomenclature with civic titles. Yet, in terms of heterogenization, the distinctly creolistic practices of Japanese society were also actuated, as team names blended local and transnational signifiers:

Nissan FC became Yokohama Marinos, using the Spanish word for sailor, because Yokohama was a port. Yomiuri Football Club called its first team 'Verdy' from *verde*, Portuguese for green, because they played in green and had several Brazilian players. Gamba Osaka came from the Italian word for leg, which also sounded like the way Osakans say *ganbaru*, a Japanese word for 'try hard'. And Sumimoto Metals FC became Kashima Antlers, as Kashima literally meant 'Deer Island'.

(Moffett 2003: 23–4)

The most transnational name belongs to Yokohama AS Flügels. Flügel is the German for 'wing', reflecting the club's backing by the All Nippon Airways (ANA) group. But the 's' at the end is an English, not German, plural. The 'AS' refers to the names of the club's owners (ANA, and the Sato Kogyo construction firm), but in football these abbreviations have other connotations, such as to Italian clubs like AS Roma (Moffett 2003: 54).

Japanese teams looked strongly to South American and European stars, notably Dunga and Zico of Brazil, to accelerate national football development, homogenizing the indigenous game to transnational standards. Since the early 1970s, several Brazilborn players have become naturalized Japanese citizens and represented the Japan national team, for example Ruy Ramos, Wagner Lopes and 'Alex'. Around 40 Brazilian players join Japanese clubs annually, and a similar number is spread across the J-League's 18 teams.

The continuing heterogenization of Japanese football is largely underpinned by the concept of *nihonjinron*, which points towards the alleged uniqueness of Japan that is strongly cultivated by the Japanese themselves. In a variation of modernization theory, overseas coaches and players complain, for example, that individual Japanese players are technically advanced, but unable to homogenize their competitive practices and psychology to a global level. Asian social hierarchies, deference to authority, commitment to harmonious relations, and preference for collectivism over individualism, are viewed by foreign professionals as distinctive indigenous values that are inimical to competitive success. In some instances, for example, age stratification can mean that players refuse to eat, share accommodation or give passes to younger, technically superior teammates. Similarly, Japanese coaches have been criticized for their corporatist reluctance to discard senior players, and for failing to instil a highly competitive psychology in their teams. Intense public criticism can be directed at Japanese players such as Hidetoshi Nakata who reveal strong individualism through assertive and self-orientated opinions.

Japanese fan culture displays similar glocal mixtures of indigenous and transnational processes. Early J-League fan groups borrowed from the traditional *oendan* spectator culture, which had originated in Japanese college sports and later moved into baseball.⁷ Unlike most other football cultures, J-League fans typically applauded the endeavours of both teams, refused to rebuke their team for poor performances, and even staged post-match congratulatory displays for their team when it lost, to the bemusement of overseas players and coaches (Birchall 2000: 59–60). J-League club officials tended to be far more influential than their European or South American counterparts in shaping the practices of ‘militant’ fan subcultures.

In transnational terms, both club officials and supporters examined closely and selectively copied the fan practices in European and Latin American stadiums. Yet, as in baseball, it would be wrong to assume that Japanese football crowds ‘conform too neatly to certain stereotypes about an alleged Japanese character of mindless collectivism’ (Kelly 2004: 83). From the mid-1990s onwards, fans at club and national levels were involved in fractious and disorderly incidents that still reflected, in part, particularly Japanese responses to match events. On some occasions – notably the 1997 defeat of Japan in Tokyo by the United Arab Emirates – serious public disorder and rioting occurred. In other incidents, some club fans have demanded more respect or apologies from their players following poor performances (Nogawa and Maeda 1998: 231–3; Satoshi 2002).

In recent times, intensified connectivity has enabled Japanese league and international football to enter the banal cosmopolitanism of global audiences. The self-understandings and ambitions of Japanese football are increasingly dominated by this global looking-glass and transnational relations. Qualification for the 1998 World Cup finals enabled ordinary Japanese to suspend their patriotic ambivalence, and to celebrate intensively their national identities. Co-hosting the 2002 tournament with Korea enabled Japan to cement its global football status. The 'mega-event' accelerated the thin cosmopolitanism of Japanese football followers, for example in measuring transnationally their players' standards, such as by monitoring the fortunes of national players in European leagues. Moreover, the 2002 World Cup placed Korea and Japan – with their long histories of political conflict and Japanese military occupation – in a more integrationist and universalist political location, by being popularly illustrative of football's capacity to promote peace and social reconciliation between divided societies.

Concluding Comments

To sum up, we have sought to demonstrate here that football is the cultural form *par excellence* for tracing the social electrification of contemporary global processes. Detailed consideration of supporters, journalists, and football in Japan provided the highly relevant empirical domains for elaborating our analysis. The discussion has built significantly upon our earlier work on football and globalization (see, for example, Giulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2006, 2007). We have advanced a variety of fresh thinking and arguments: for example, by forwarding the concept of the 'duality of glocality'; by differentiating 'thin' and 'thick' forms of cosmopolitanism; by developing the connectivity–disconnectivity couplet; and, by focusing concertedly upon the social and transnational aspects of globality. While football has provided the critical sociocultural focus for discussion, other sporting realms would be equally suitable venues for the deployment and elaboration of our theoretical claims. Additionally, our analysis may be extended historically to examine global processes in sport since at least the nineteenth century.

More specifically, we have endeavoured to illuminate three main aspects of social globalization. First, we understand the duality of glocality as capturing the complex and highly variable interrelations between homogenizing and heterogenizing impulses in globalization. In general terms, homogenization is commonly associated with societal forms, while heterogenization is more evident in regard to sociocultural content. For example, homogenization is evident in the technical thresholds and coaching of Japanese players, the formal identification of supporter subcultures, or the national-based professional statuses of 'foreign correspondents' in the

football media. Heterogenization is evident in the creolized styles of team names and supporter practices in Japan, the diverse transnational social relationships established by football journalists, and the varied cultural politics of supporter subcultures.

Second, cosmopolitanism is characterized by thick and thin variants, and has become increasingly mundane or banal in recent times. Thick cosmopolitanism is evidenced, for example, by supporter subcultures whose institutional forms or chief social practices are largely inspired by transnational influences. Thin cosmopolitanism is evidenced by the national newspapers which utilize overseas sources to gain stories on imported players. Banal cosmopolitanism is evidenced by the increasingly routine accessibility of Japanese and other international football for Western television audiences. Cosmopolitanization does not abolish 'the local', but germinates more varied relations with forms of particularity, as illustrated, to pick one example, by diasporic communities of club supporters. Cosmopolitanization also facilitates periodic irruptions of identity-differentiation, such as during major international fixtures.

Third, the twin processes of transnationalism and connectivity are highly uneven, and thus give rise to disconnectivity, which is understood and experienced in relational terms. Connectivity is most obvious in regard to the transnational communication channels of contemporary football media. Disconnectivity is a principal pathology of the current phase of globalization. It is evidenced in football through stronger senses of social exclusion, such as in regard to non-participation in major tournaments, or relatively weaker access to the benefits of digital or satellite communications.

Our analysis has two principal intentions in regard to social scientific analysis of globalization. First, there remains the importance of locating sport, and especially the global game, at the heart of sociological scrutiny of globalization. Football, as we have argued, is a core feature of transnational social relations. During the World Cup finals in particular, we find that exceptional levels of global connectivity arise while forms of disconnectivity become ever more acute. In recent years, sport has been harnessed by transnational corporations, international NGOs and governing institutions, to play a highly important role in promoting social universalism, such as in war-torn regions and impoverished societies. In the longer term, as glocalization becomes more intensive, football's significance to globalization processes will intensify.

Second, the interrelationships between glocalization and cosmopolitanism warrant closer empirical and analytical examination by social scientists. Our initial comment is that cosmopolitanism is one of many outcomes of glocalization processes. The social empowerment

and engagement of everyday actors serve to determine the kinds of thick or thin cosmopolitanism that are evident in their glocalization projects. In accordance with the duality of glocality, the banal variants of cosmopolitanism must be counterpoised with the continuation of mundane forms of civic, regional and national identity.

Some analysts have advocated a normative fusion of cosmopolitanism and glocalization. For example, Tomlinson (1999: 194–5) argues for an ‘ethical glocalism’ that transcends local chauvinisms, while Ritzer (2004) believes that ‘glocal’ cultures may be a final refuge from the oppressive omnipresence of ‘nothing’ cultural products (cf. Beck 2004; Roudometof 2005). Our emphasis is on the complexity and uncertainties of glocalization *qua* cosmopolitanism. We observe too that glocalization is perhaps more diverse than these analysts would suggest, giving rise to forms of homogenization and heterogenization, and to universalism and chauvinism.

Football provides one crucial venue for considering normatively the potential outcomes of cosmopolitan glocality. There is great scope for critically scrutinizing the utopian universalism that often surrounds the game, as set out by Havelange and Chirac at the start of our discussion. In this regard also, we need to examine the everyday potentialities of football in facilitating stronger social relations within difficult circumstances.

Notes

¹ See http://www.elysee.fr/elysee/anglais/speeches_and_documents/2004/address_by_mr_jacques_chirac_president_of_the_french_republic_on_the_occasion_of_the_decoration_of_mr_joseph_s_blatter_president_of_fifa_and_the_centennial_year_of_fifa.1904.html

² Robertson is now proposing that the present phase be conceptualized as the *millennial* phase.

³ Certainly, the term harbours important analytical limitations. It may become a very widespread term, applicable to so many international processes, to the point that it appears somewhat meaningless. Its usage tends to be in relation to post-1945 global processes, but that obscures the fact that transnationalism, and globalization in general, have far older and more varied histories (Kennedy and Roudometof 2002: 2–3).

⁴ The social uses and consequences of internet connectivity, particularly in facilitating diverse products and niche markets, are highlighted by Anderson (2006).

⁵ UK ESRC award number R000239833.

⁶ On diasporas in general, see Cohen (1997).

⁷ *Oendan* in educational institutions were highly organized, being strong on internal stratification, choreographed displays of support, and uniform attire. *Oendan* were primarily male, but also featured some pom pom girls (Moffett 2003: 53).

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