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Pre-modern glocalization and ancient texts in the online 21st century: explorations in and between translations, communications, and inter-civilizational encounters

David Inglis*

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Examining some very old things using social-theoretical thinking can shed new light on some very recent ones. This paper argues that the movement into and through digital environs of ancient texts of religious, spiritual, and other forms of significance in recent years is just the latest iteration of very long-term glocalizing processes. These involve specific types of intricate and crisscrossing intra-and inter-civilizational modes of communication and mediation, namely translation practices. The paper sets out an account of inter-civilizational encounters in history, focusing on how texts often taken by many people today as direct expressions of the divine are in fact the results of the activities of those glocalizing actors known as translators. Studies of 21st century digital glocalization, virtual religion, and related areas will benefit from further considering textual translation practices, as these are embedded within the long-term history of contacts between civilizational constellations. The historical unfoldings of ancient texts, when these have been subjected to glocalizing inter-civilizational processes, are more akin to online forms of communication than one might think. Thinking through such matters generates more capacious accounts of historical and contemporary glocalization and the glocality of civilizations.

KEYWORDS

glocalization, globalization, translation, religion, texts, civilizations analysis, inter-civilizational encounters, internet

Introduction

The analysis of the very long-term and interpenetrating histories of translation and of inter-civilizational dynamics involves the examination of how ancient texts were created and re-created over hundreds and thousands of years between civilizational complexes. This sort of endeavor seems to have little or nothing to do with those apparently most hyper-modern phenomena of our own age, namely ICT-driven and-mediated forms of globalization and glocalization (Roudometof, 2016a, 2023). But consider this. If you were to type some words into a search engine and click a link, within a second or two you can have on your computer screen the whole of a very major religious text, such as the English language translation of the

Christian Bible known as the King James version.[1] One may then immediately read on the screen the deeply sonorous language of this Bible translation, one of the most influential texts in world history (Stine, 2011).

Today there is a massive presence of religious texts, both more ancient and of more recent provenance, in digital environments (Obadia, 2020). Tens of millions of people engage with such online religious resources every year, and so they constitute a very major part of internet-based communications today (Cowan, 2007; Campbell, 2010, 2017). As religious creeds change, or resist change, over time, their presences in internet and other mediated forms play potentially large roles in shaping how they mutate, as religions that have gone online intersect with online religions, which are novel modalities of religious expression created in and by information communication environments themselves (Krueger, 2004). This is part of a much wider nexus of the ongoing and massively complex interplay between oral and textual traditions and cultures, and their respective technologies, on the one side, and between them and electronic environments, on the other. These are issues tracked at length by Foley (2012), who theorises such matters in terms of the interactions between three 'agoras' (verbal marketplaces), where the oral and the electronic tend to be particularly characterised by cultural emergence in comparison to the textual. Yet, as will become apparent below, religious text-based traditions and cultural worlds are also subject to processes involving multiplicitousness, alteration, and slippage, albeit usually in slower, less obvious, and more subtle and hidden ways than in the oral and electronic communication realms.

Thus the ways in which electronically mediated religious textual resources are made sense of and put to work in multiple, diverse, often creative, and sometimes unpredictable, ways by the multitudes of socially and geographically located persons who engage with these texts, constitute a major form of religious glocalization—or the glocalization of religion—of the present time (Roudometof, 2014, 2018). The massive amount of such texts available online, and the rapidity with which they can be brought into the purview of anyone equipped with even rudimentary internet access, is a very significant facet of early 21st century digital communications overall (Grant et al., 2019; Siuda, 2021; Zaluchu, 2024). In some cases, easy access to chunks of ancient texts can inflame religious and political sentiments, such as when some people perceive others to be using quotations from those texts in unorthodox or blasphemous manners (Frøystad, 2019).

When someone reads online today the King James Bible, or some major religious text from within Christianity or from some other creed, then if they are reading a translation of an earlier original—or often more likely, originals in the plural—which sort of entity is it that they are actually engaging with? They may well think that they are thereby coming into a direct relationship with divine words, as these were spoken by a deity, or words at least recorded by a uniquely privileged human intermediary playing the roles of interlocutor with the divine and of assiduous note-taker (Bratcher, 1979). That certainly has been the long-standing and widely circulated cultural framing of the King James Bible and other texts like it. Thus, for more than four hundred years, many English speakers have experienced the King

James translation of the Bible as the genuine words of God, speaking to them in unmediated form (Barnstone, 1993).

Even apparently minor divergences from the accustomed text, phrased in the antiquated language of 17th century England, in favor of rephrasing the Biblical passages into some sort of more modern language, might well be taken by more conservative believers as a matter of grave offence. This could lead to serious disputes about the baneful imposition of modernising trends into established forms of religious ritual, corrupting and undermining the forms of language that make these possible and through which they are expressed.[2] Changing the long-established language of religious practice can be variously irritating, scandalous, or even heretical. Such often visceral disputes play out these days online, as well as within face-to-face meetings of religious organizations, each domain of dispute affecting the other (Harrison, 2007).

From a secular scholarly point of view, which will be pursued in this paper, while religious believers and practitioners may often experience religious texts as direct expressions of divine revelation, the historical truth of these texts is that they are a particular form of mediated communication, namely *translations*. The script facing us today, whether in physical book form or in some digital format, is usually the outcome of multiple preceding processes of mediation and intermediation (Genette, 1997; Nolan, 2013). Often over very long periods of time, translators have created new texts, rendered into new languages out of older texts expressed in other languages. This has happened both within and between diverse religious traditions, and therefore often between different cultural groupings and civilizational constellations too. The history of the translation of given texts may become forgotten over time, or it may be more deliberately suppressed, in favor of interpretations that hold the resulting translations to be unmediated expressions of the divine. Yet it remains the case that the translations should be seen as glocalized products, their translators as glocalizing actors, and their activities involved in setting in play a series of interpenetrating *encounters*. These variously operate between the following factors: between older and newer versions of texts; between translated and target languages; between the broader cultural horizons those languages are embedded within; and, in some cases, between different civilizational constellations (Inglis and Thorpe, 2020).

As to locating translation practices within a typology of wider forms of 'inter-civilizational encounter', to my knowledge no systematic typology yet exists, although many scholars have demanded such a thing (e.g., Eisenstadt, 2007), in the context of understanding how globalization, glocalization and civilizational dynamics intersect, today and across history (Frank and Gills, 1993; Hopkins, 2002; Bayly, 2002; Bentley, 2006; Gills and Thompson, 2006; Inglis, 2010). In this paper, inter-civilizational encounters are modeled as being carried out primarily by specific sorts of actors, whether alone or in tandem with other actor-types, and whether in more face-to-face or more mediated ways. For example, primarily economic encounters have been carried out by such persons as merchants and sailors. Primarily political encounters have been enacted by diplomats and soldiers. Primarily religious encounters have been indirectly pursued out by translators

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1   See, e.g., https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org.

of sacred texts and more directly by missionaries. The primary type of actor involved will strongly influence how peaceable or bellicose, physically or culturally, the encounter was, both at the time and later. This modeling of inter-civilizational encounters takes inspiration from the accounts of the making of historical forms of globalization, and by extension glocalization, offered by Holton (2005) and Chanda (2007).

Within this broad analytic context, the paper will examine text-based, translation-driven 'inter-civilizational encounters' that have been operative between Judaic, Greek, Christian, and Islamic cultural worlds, and the diverse intellectual sub-worlds located within them (Inglis and Thorpe, 2020). It is important to emphasize that, in line with contemporary civilizational analysis, the paper takes civilizational constellations, both historical and contemporary, to be the opposite of self-enclosed and homogeneous. Instead, they are understood as relatively loose, flexible, constantly mutating, internally diverse, frequently internally conflictual, entities with permeable boundaries, and open to inputs from other constellations, even at times of erstwhile hostility between them (Arnason, 1988; Arnason, 1995; Arnason, 2003; Arnason, 2004; Arnason, 2006b; Arjomand and Tiryakian, 2004; Arnason et al., 2005).

Appiah (1995, p. 55) makes a key point eloquently:

> The Greece to which the West looks back was at the crossroads of cultures of North Africa and the Near East; the Spain that began the conquest of the New World had been deeply shaped by Islam; the Renaissance rediscovery of ancient learning owed a great deal to the Arabs who had preserved that tradition through the European Dark Ages; and the economic basis of modern capitalism depended on the labour of Africans, the gold and silver of the New World Indians, and the markets of Asia … The West acquired gunpowder—at the military heart of the modern European state—from China and the astronomical data on which was based the beginnings of the Scientific Revolution from the ancient Near East.

It is within the complex and profoundly glocal contexts of world history that we can place translators and their translations. Such actors of previous times have very much helped to create a religious textual infrastructure that exists in our own time, and which today has massive online presence. Translated religious scriptures inherited from the past and generated by translators, those glocalizing historical actors *par excellence*, are greatly present in the digital communication environments of the early 21st century. The translators who worked within and on these texts correspondingly are present too, but mostly in covert, subterranean, and unacknowledged manners. This paper demonstrates that these communication specialists of the past have long engaged in glocalizing activities, the effects of which are still very much alive and with us today, including in the complex contexts of online religion-centric activities.

The historical material I will present draws upon the research of translation studies scholars who have come at the theme of inter-civilizational encounters in terms of tracking both more apparent and more hidden activities of translation and interpretation as these have operated between civilizational complexes. Much scholarly work in this regard is driven by cosmopolitan impulses, involving the discernment of historically existing instances of productive inter-civilizational communication and peaceful mutual exploration and comprehension, a corrective to destructive and inaccurate talk of 'clashes of civilizations' (Cox, 2002).

In pursuing the analysis of historical translation practices and inter-civilizational encounters offered here, I am inspired by the sociology of the late Roland Robertson, if not by the letter of his writings, then certainly by their overall spirit and the general substantive and analytical thrusts of them. This is because Robertson brought together, albeit in incomplete ways, the comprehension of various inter-related phenomena, which still require further analytical connection. These are: the general conceptualisation of glocalization and glocality; the development of the historical sociology of globalization; the understanding of how previous forms and modes of globalization impact on present-day expressions of globalization and complex conditions of globality and glocality; the study of the globalization and glocalization of religions; the interplay of civilizational complexes with globalization and glocalization processes; and the adumbration of different but empirically inter-related types of inter-civilizational encounters (Robertson, 1987, 1992a, 1992b, 2006, 2011, 2014; Robertson and Garret, 1991).

The analysis offered here as to these various interpenetrating phenomena is also cognisant of Roudometof's (2016b) ground-breaking accounts of the analytical autonomy of the glocalization concept, and of how the concept may be used to understand in deeper fashions than hitherto the history and present-day forms of religion (Roudometof, 2014, 2018). It also takes into account the ways in which other scholars have deployed Roudometof's conception of glocalization, understood as the local refraction of the global, in the comprehension of historically existing religious constellations (Van Alten, 2017), thereby pushing the general sociological study of globalization and religion in novel directions (Beyer, 2013). Just as Peer (2023) has drawn upon glocalization concepts to reconsider the nature of ancient visual imagery, I seek to bring the study of ancient texts further into the purview of glocalization analysis, and vice versa.

The paper begins by outlining what it means by 'inter-civilizational encounters'. It then presents an account of inter-civilizational textual translation practices (Petrilli, 2021). It proceeds by considering some illustrative cases of glocalizing inter-civilizational translations. It argues that a historical consideration of ancient texts that today still possess religious and other forms of significance illustrates that these are often profoundly *glocal* entities. It is shown that the movement into and through digital environs of such texts in recent years is just the latest iteration of very long-term glocalizing processes, encompassing intricate, crisscrossing forms of intra-and inter-civilizational communication and mediation.[3] The paper ends by calling for more scholarship that can generate deep accounts of the historical and contemporary glocalization and glocality of civilizational constellations, a direction already indicated by Roudometof (2013).

Conceiving of inter-civilizational encounters

In this section, I lay the foundations of the subsequent analyses, by considering how to conceptualize 'inter-civilizational encounters', within the context of globalization and glocalization thinking.

In the early 1990s Roland Robertson (1992a, p. 137) argued that inter-civilizational encounters had come to 'constitute an almost

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3   For the complexities of defining the relations between 'cultures', 'societies' and 'civilizations' within different theoretical vocabularies, see Arnason (2017).

globally institutionalized and thematized phenomenon', and that a research program to map the nature of them, historically and in the present day, was now a pressing necessity. Such a program could both draw upon and deepen his brand of historically sensitive and culturally nuanced globalization theory. As Arnason (2006c, p. 46) has noted, no such programme yet exists in historical sociology. Such a programme would have to examine both pre-modern and modern inter-civilizational encounters. Arnason (2006c) has also noted that the analysis of pre-modern inter-civilizational interactions remains one of the least explored areas of civilizational analysis.

The historian Bentley's (2006: 28–9) illustration of the outlines of such a project resonates strongly with Robertson's calls in this direction. It depicts a shared orientation for both civilizational analysis and a more genuinely historically aware set of globalization theories: 'world-historical factors such as rising human population, expanding technological capacity, and increasing interaction between peoples of different societies have profoundly shaped the experiences of almost all human societies and … have worked collectively like a triple helix to reinforce one another with powerful effects throughout history'.

The work of the American historian William McNeill (1991a, 1991b) had already taken some pioneering steps in this regard. The latter's earlier account of world history, first published in 1963, stressed that inter-civilizational dynamics had occurred from early history. His later account goes further, stressing that long-lasting inter-civilizational 'ecumenical world-systems' have existed in Eurasia since about 1700 BCE, and that the post-1850 CE globalized world-system is but the latest in a line of such systems that have pulled different civilizations into systematic relations with each other over most of the past four thousand years. Regardless of the empirical veracity of these claims, as Delanty (2006: 47) argues, the work of McNeill remains an important source for accounts of very long-term globalization processes.

The American sociologist and medievalist Benjamin Nelson (1973, 1974, 1981) developed a notion of inter-civilizational encounters in tandem with a pluralistic conception of the internal dynamics of civilizational complexes. Nelson's civilizational analysis was explicitly formulated in order to grapple with contemporary globalization processes (as we now call them), involving 'the precipitous shrinking of a world now forced into anguished conjunctions in the midst of abrasive contacts' between civilizational complexes, leading to profound changes 'in the structures of consciousness and conscience' (Nelson, 1973, p. 80). Thus 'civilizational structures and complexes which were once in infrequent contact are now in one another's back yard', with the effect that 'heightened feelings of threat, ecstasy, even vertigo' are characteristic of the contemporary global condition (Nelson, 1973, p. 81). Such a conceptualization of the present-day conditions of overlapping, intertwining, mutually dependent civilizational complexes and the world-visions they give rise to, very much chimes with the ideas of Robertson mentioned above.

Nelson was an early—if now rather under-unacknowledged— proponent of the view that sociology must be global in orientation (Nelson, 1974, p. 135), possessing 'a planetary sense of civilizational patterns and conflicts of civilizational complexes' (p. 139), and an acute awareness of how the global field, to borrow Robertson's phrase, induces ongoing 'variabilities in the mixes of economic, political, social, [and] cultural elements' within particular civilizational complexes (p. 141).

If Nelson's diagnosis from the 1970s chimes with how civilizational analysis in the present day can engage with globalization problems, so too does his account of pre-modern inter-civilizational interactions suggest ways in which civilizational analysis has already gone some way toward conceiving of pre-modern globalization [or proto-globalization, if 'globalization' is held to be a purely modern set of phenomena (Inglis and Robertson, 2004, 2005)]. Arnason (2006c) has noted that research in this area must connect specific instances and types of inter-civilizational contact to schisms and disputes going on *within* the civilizational complexes involved in the interaction.

Nelson already made some significant steps in this direction. For him the archetypical condition of a complex civilization involves ongoing 'civil wars in the structures of consciousness and conscience', and constant 'struggles over competing definitions of world, group and self' (Nelson, 1974, p. 102) are the motors of change within any given civilizational complex. The emphasis made by Nelson on the condition of a multiplicity of possible cultural viewpoints and the struggles within a civilization between different groups holding them, as itself deriving from contacts with others from 'outside' the civilization. Nelson's work directs attention toward the possibility that, at certain points in history, wider universes of shared discourse and association can be created in the spaces that exist between, and which overlap across, civilizational complexes (Gittleman, 1974, p. 82).

Cultural borrowings, adaptations, syntheses, and challenges to tradition all figure prominently in Nelson's account. In that sense they may give a renewed orientation to how civilizational analysis deals with pre-modern civilizations. This would involve seeing the latter as being (at least in certain historical periods, and at least in part) constituted in and through inter-civilizational interactions (Mandalios, 2004, p. 406; Mazlish, 2004, p. xii), the very dynamics that can be seen to make up pre-modern (proto-)globalization processes.

Yet, despite the very promising and suggestive nature of his work, Nelson did not create that which we might have expected him to create, that is, a typology of different sorts of inter-civilizational interactions that could serve as the initial basis for empirical research. What we do have in this regard is still scattered and inchoate. Although some work in this direction has been carried out in this area by civilizational analysts (e.g., Tiryakian, 1974; Arjomand, 2001; Collins, 2001), the theme has mostly been analyzed by world-historians, such as Bentley (1999) and Curtin (1998). Their work can be seen as a potential bridging point between the historical-sociological scholarship of civilizational analysis and globalization theory's focus on connectivity. In this body of work, the types of inter-civilizational encounter that have been identified range from commercial forms of integration, religious expansion, and imperial conquests, through to different civilizational complexes providing both models for others to emulate (a key focus for Robertson) and negative exemplars for others to avoid and to define themselves against (Arnason, 2006a, p. 237; 2006c, p. 40).

There have been repeated calls for globalization—and therefore also glocalization—analyses to be brought into systematic connection with the study of civilizational complexes and the relations between them (e.g., Eisenstadt, 2007; Hobson, 2007). Some analytical progress has been made in this direction (O'Hagan, 2017; Rossi, 2020). Yet to my knowledge only Roudometof (2013, 2014) has provided a fully-fledged vocabulary—describing processes of vernacularization, indigenization, nationalization and transnationalization—that captures some of the specifically religious dimensions of intra-and

inter-civilizational dynamics. This approach also has the benefit of systematically connecting more specific processes to a broader conceptual panorama of glocalization dynamics in general.

The inter-civilizational history of textual translation

We will now turn to consider how some ideas and emphases taken from the study of historical civilizations can be put to work in understanding a particular subset of inter-civilizational encounters, namely translation practices. I will primarily focus on religious texts, but some reference will be made to scientific and medical texts too.

What may seem at first glance like self-enclosed cultural and civilizational entities are in fact more mixed than they may seem (Appiah, 1995). One way to describe the history of globalization—and thereby glocalization too (Roudometof, 2016b)—is to say that it is the history of different socio-cultural entities coming into contact, and new entities being created in the process. Such situations are made possible in and through translations between languages, both those that are more explicit and, perhaps more often, hidden and subterranean (Lefevere, 1992; Inglis, 2010).

'Translation' has (at least) two meanings. First, something more general—ideas and cultural influences from some groups are adopted, adapted and transformed by others, all processes that Robertson advocated engagement with. Second, something more precise—the adoption, adaptation and transformation had to operate somehow through linguistic means. Translation practices have been the means through which different groups, located in and between civilizations, have influenced each other, and have thereby created new, hybrid entities, the mixed nature of which has sometimes been subsequently denied (Tymoczko, 1999; Tymoczko and Gentzler, 2002; Cronin, 2003).

At a basic level, inter-civilizational encounters can be of a more economic nature (e.g., trading connections), or of a more political type (e.g., imperial conquests, and resistance to those by the colonized), or of a more cultural sort (e.g., religious conversions). It is likely that some or all these types will be intermingled in any given real-world case (Holton, 2005). Each type of connection, and how they may mix with each other, is made possible by, and depends on, associated translation processes. For example, different groups can only keep trading with each other, and so bring their parts of the world into economic connection, if they work out some sort of way of communicating, involving translating between two or more languages. The history of economic globalization (or as some scholars would prefer to say, the economic facets of globalization) is full of instances of 'pidgin' languages being created to allow trading relations to operate.

Likewise, what we can call political globalization (how different political units, such as nation-states or empires, relate to each other) is dependent on translation practices. An invading army needs interpreters to speak with the local population, to gain crucial information and co-opt local knowledges. A conquering power will need to find ways to communicate with the conquered, and to impose its own language upon them in some ways, such as by demanding that official business be conducted only in the conquerors' language, and by rendering place and street names into the dominant language. Yet conquerors may also live in fear of the potential duplicity of native translators, who might feed the masters faulty information (Cronin, 2000).

Religious globalization (which primarily involves the spread of belief systems across territories) partly relies on missionaries being able to talk with potential converts in ways that the latter understand (Chanda, 2007). Conversion often means the converted adopting the language of the missionaries and therefore of the holy texts that they venerate. The same sort of point applies to other types or facets of globalization. Cultural globalization (the spread of ideas and imageries across space) and social globalization (the creation of new sorts of social relationships across distances, including between people who were previously disconnected, in whole or in part) also rely on translation practices (Chanda, 2007).

A focus on the individual persons who have done the actual translation and interpreting work in and between civilizations is a useful way to concretize the study of inter-civilizational encounters (Cronin, 2003; Holton, 2005). Those we can call 'interpreters' are generally a much less studied group than translators. This is partly because, often working in spoken rather than written language, and for everyday pragmatic reasons rather than for scholarly purposes, they have left behind far fewer visible traces than have the translators (Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006).

Yet despite their relative invisibility to us (Venuti, 1995), interpreters are some of the most important, if unsung, makers of globalization processes. In addition to doing on-the-spot oral translations, they also produced 'texts, most of them, of a pragmatic, matter-of-fact condition, which … [for a very long] time have been present almost daily at school, at court, at church, in monasteries and chanceries, on routes of pilgrimage, at ports, harbors, and interstate frontiers' (Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006, p. 16). In so doing, interpreters have significantly created the everyday fabric of globalization across the centuries, helping to forge day in and day out the sorts of linkages and connections that the umbrella term 'globalization' refers to.

Translators of various sorts, as well as interpreters, have often been migrants, sometimes possessed of multiple and/or hybrid identities (Cronin and Simon, 2014). Sometimes they have taken on more passive or more active roles in inter-language brokerage (Demirkol-Erturk and Paker, 2014). Some have been in a position not only to traverse, but also to transgress, linguistic and cultural boundaries (Meylaerts and Gonne, 2014). They have come from, and occupied, both higher and lower social positions, ranging from the honored translator of sacred texts through to the humble servant or slave who interprets for their master (Koskinen, 2014). Translators and interpreters have often come from outsider or nomadic groups, such as the Jews (Steiner, 1996), or those who have been displaced by political and economic circumstances, such as the Huguenots and Irish Catholics (Cronin, 2000).

Historians of translation practices know that translation has occurred in relation to, and as part of, many other sorts of transfers and exchanges (D'hulst, 2012). Much translation and interpreting work throughout history—and therefore throughout the history of inter-civilizational encounters—was done not by professionals, but instead improvised by those engaged primarily in other occupations which required linguistic interchange. The list here would include people like traders, businesspeople, financiers, soldiers, sailors, political administrators, diplomats, spies, priests, missionaries, and other types of persons (Chanda, 2007; Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006; Cronin, 2000; Roland, 1999; Kartunnen, 1994). These are the often anonymous and unacknowledged actors (Serres, 1993) who have 'made' globalization over the centuries (Holton, 2005). These

linguistic mediators have been characterised as the 'anonymous heroes' of cross-cultural communication (de Certeau and Giard, 1983). Their actions were always at least two-fold in nature, combining their primary activities with their translation and interpreting practices, the former necessitating the latter, and the latter making possible the former.

The linguistic elements of translation processes encompass both understandings and misunderstandings (Vlasova, 1999), 'dialogue, exchange, [and building] bridges', as well as verbal domination and exclusion (Veit, 2008, p. 417). Those engaged in inter-group and inter-civilizational translation have been involved variously in the production of mutual intelligibility between groups (and sometimes mutual unintelligibility too), as well as the constructive creation of recognitions of difference by different groups, and the destruction of difference in the favor of more powerful parties (Ribeiro, 2004).

Translation is usually both multivalent and ambivalent, even in situations where the dominant apparently hold all the advantages (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986). In more negative cases, translators of various sorts have helped to construct and corroborate dominant groups' senses of their own superiority, thereby devaluing, ignoring, silencing, and reducing the words and values of the less powerful (Frow, 1995). Language imposed upon a conquered group, forcing them to speak in the language of the conquerors, can involve total or partial cultural assimilation, or even annihilation. Translations may be licensed by authorities, or seek to undermine those authorities (Lefevere, 1990). Representatives of conquered, subordinate or marginal groups might adapt, parody or otherwise subvert the linguistic pretensions of the dominant.

In more positive cases, which some scholars today might label as historical instances of 'cosmopolitan encounters' between groups, including those coming from different civilizational traditions, each side of a translation process may have begun to see themselves through the eyes of their interlocutors, then possibly coming to incorporate the linguistic Other partly in their own self-image, perhaps prompting new forms of self-reflection and interrogation of their own identity and culture (Bielsa, 2014). That is why translators have not only been *go-betweens*, but sometimes also have been *get-between*s, challenging cultural assumptions, especially of the dominant groups involved in interchanges, and creating new, more mixed and hybrid words, ideas and worldviews (Ribeiro, 2004). Sometimes translations have operated as transformations, subversions and hijackings of orthodoxies and hegemonic linguistic and cultural dispositions (Koskinen, 2000), a thematic highlighted by Benjamin Nelson, as we saw above.

Translation and interpretation have typically taken place in certain sorts of places, opening-up—or closing down—certain sorts of socio-cultural spaces. Pratt (1991) notes that large cities have throughout history in all parts of the world been crucial 'contact zones' between different cultural and linguistic groups. In other words, they are the major sites of glocalization processes. Metropolises, major harbors, entrepôts and trading centres have acted as cosmopolitan crucibles of translation and interpretation practices. If it is the case that throughout most of history 'no city is monolingual' (Meylaerts and Gonne, 2014, p. 133), with linguistic plurality being the general historical norm, then we would expect to find within them the enactment of all manner of relations between languages and language groups. Such relations encompass socio-cultural struggles and shifting, linguistically mediated power relations on the one side, and mutual influence,

interpenetration and instances of trans-community understanding and appreciation on the other.

The former, more negative, sorts of processes have been dramatically illustrated in the cases of long-standing multi-lingual cities like Thessaloniki and Vilnius, which were linguistically purged at specific times in their history by new ruling groups intent on imposing novel monoglot regimes. Such trends have often been motivated by conservative factions in the ruling group regarding the large city as corrupted, both linguistically and otherwise, and as the antithesis of small town and rural heartlands where monolingual purity is apparently a dominant virtue (Cronin and Simon, 2014).[4]

The more positive kinds of phenomena alluded to above can be seen in instances of 'in-between' cities, where multiple major languages have both co-existed alongside, and have informed, distinctive local dialects and patois. In multiple language cities, the works of translators have often been particularly complex and subtle. There may be indefinite borderlines between source and target languages, with authors often engaging in acts of self-translation, such that it becomes ever more unclear - to both participants at the time, and to later observers—which is the 'native' and which the 'non-native' language, both of a given author and of the city in which they lived (Demirkol-Erturk and Paker, 2014).

Glocalizing inter-civilizational translations

We will now examine some historical cases of translations between civilizational traditions that were results of, and contributions to, glocalization processes. To understand these, we must first note that a modern mindset tends to separate supposed original 'authors' from apparently derivative 'translators', according most or all of the literary and aesthetic glory to the author (Barnstone, 1993). This certainly applies in the case of the long-standing and widely held belief that Homer was the first genuine *auteur* in the so-called 'Western' tradition. But in fact, Homer was an editor, compiler, and re-teller of tales which he gathered from around his cultural world, and which he may have translated from other linguistic sources beyond his native Greek.

This point raises further issues about how translation processes, now partly or wholly occluded to our view today, were responsible for creating literary works which were subsequently construed as the essential flowering of self-enclosed literary and cultural communities. Given the widespread presence of Greek language in the East, especially through the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE, it may be that at least parts of the *Ramayana,* the great Sanskrit epic which is one of the great poems of ancient India, may owe some debt to Homer. In a reverse cultural and linguistic flow, this time from East to West, the major work of Roman propaganda, Virgil's *Aeneid*, which was explicitly modeled on Homer's Odyssey, was partly influenced by the *Mahabarata*, the other major Sanskrit epic (Frankopan, 2016). These literary works may be regarded as the partial results of the

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4 There is a tendency for tourist industries today either to continue and extend older processes of erasure of the polyglot history of a city, or conversely to highlight and celebrate previous situations of linguistic complexity and heteroglossia in the lived urban fabric of the past (Sywenky, 2014).

cross-cultural and trans-linguistic flows promoted by those pan-Eurasian trade networks that some scholars would put under the heading of Eurasian proto-globalization (Nederveen Pieterse, 2012).

The case of the Aeneid is particularly interesting, as the Romans seem to have been remarkably uninterested in direct and explicit translating from any other language than Greek. There seem to have been almost no translations from Eastern languages (Barnstone, 1993). Even when engaged in Greek translations, Roman literati were notably uninterested in retaining any kind of fidelity to the original, adding in present-day concerns to older texts and often erasing altogether the names of the original authors. Yet at the same time it was Roman culture which eventually passed on to its 'Western' inheritors the major works and ideological concerns of both the Greek and Judaic worlds, with very long-lasting effects not just on Europe but on the whole world (Brague, 2002).

One of the major elements that Rome passed on to later societies was the form of Christianity that first took shape within the eastern part of its empire. Both the Torah and the Koran are still today read in their original languages (Chanda, 2007). The Christian Bible is a very different case, with translations into most of the world's languages today. Here we can discern a fundamental ambiguity in Christianity. On the one hand, there is a two millennia-long set of fears about linguistic entropy, translation of the (variably defined) 'original' being scorned, as it seems to involve loss or perversion of initial perfection, leading in turn to denunciations of translation as heresy and bans on vernacular versions of the holy writings. The Catholic Church banned vernacular translations of the Bible over a remarkably long period, from the 4th to 16th centuries CE, throughout its vast sphere of influence (Moore, 2014).

On the other hand, there is a contrary tendency toward the evangelizing need to speak in - and therefore to render the Bible into - the language of potential converts, to be able to win them over to the true path. Monoglot and polyglot tendencies once again are at war with each other. Translation figures as part of both the construction of canonical religious texts, and their transformation and therefore potential destabilization (Barnstone, 1993).

Given this ambiguity, much contemporary scholarship sees the Bible as a radically unstable entity, with both the text itself and the meanings conveyed by it changing according to specific translation practices (Barton, 2019). The contents and sub-titles vary according to the denomination which has commissioned or uses any given translated version. But each faction usually presents its version of the text as pure, definitive and simply the direct expression of the Word of God. Many 'Westernized' versions disguise the Eastern roots of the source texts, which ultimately were originally the linguistic products of Jewish scholars, and in the case of the New Testament, Hellenized ones who operated across Greek and Jewish linguistic and cultural domains. Much of the Old Testament, and most of the New Testament, are in fact disguised translations, and they should not be seen at all as mono-linguistic and mono-cultural products. Translation processes have hidden likenesses and connections between the Judaic and other religious traditions, but with traces of these connections left in the texts for expert readers to discern (Barnstone, 1993).

For example, in the Old Testament, the Judaic conception of God derived from the Canaanite deity El, who through complex mediation processes became the Hebrew Elohim. In the Hebrew text, the name retains a sense of ambiguity: is God one or many? Sumerian and Babylonian elements were also suppressed but left hanging obliquely

in the Old Testament texts. El's offspring Baal, one of God's other incarnations, eventually became Beelzebub, God's antagonist (Barnstone, 1993). These textual traces bear witness to the fact that in the ancient Near East, individuals and groups moved about incessantly, ideas went with them and became mixed with those of other groups, and new scriptures were as a result created, at the same time as denials were enacted of any cultural and linguistic impurities in the texts. The central and influential Septuagint translation into Greek of Hebrew-Aramaic texts was aimed at Greek-speaking Jews living in the broadly Greek-speaking world of the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. It was quoted more in the New Testament scriptures than the Hebrew version as more Jews spoke Greek than Hebrew by that time, reflective of broader cultural and political processes in the region (Moore, 2014).

The New Testament is also a hybrid production. The texts were translated into Greek mostly from lost Aramaic sources, possibly oral as well as textual, which were presented as the original Gospels. Successive translation processes purged Jesus (originally Joshua), his mother (originally Miryam), his family and his disciples of their 'Jewish' characteristics, rendering them mysteriously unaffiliated persons of no specific ethnicity or language. A major ideological shift occurred as a result: Christianity was no longer framed as a dispute *within* Judaism, but as a rift between two novel groups, 'Christians' and 'Jews', the latter ever more defined as morally lacking or wholly wicked. Translation has again and again over time concealed itself, creating a new and original product, which gives the appearance of literalism and of being the original itself. Successive Greek, Latin, English and German translations - to name only a few major target languages - of Old and New Testaments have been claimed as authoritative by those with vested denominational interests in presenting them so (Barnstone, 1993).

Perceptions of textual purity occlude the actual history of inter-textual influences that are themselves expressions of inter-cultural processes. Understanding this involves reconstructing the movements of translators across cultural boundaries and along highways of cultural influence, which in turn were made possible by political, military and trading routes. Thus the 4th century CE evangelist Ulfila worked in both Bulgaria and Constantinople to translate over the course of 40 years the Greek translation of the Christian scriptures into the Gothic language, further spreading Christianity into that cultural world (Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006). In the 5th century CE, Armenian scholars were sent by religious authorities to Constantinople, to gain access to Greek translations of the Bible, so as to improve existing Armenian ones. As Cronin (2003, p. 26) remarks, repeatedly the 'product of one translation process becomes a tool in the commencement of another'. The more translations there are into more languages, the more potential sources of conflict there may be, as well as greater reach into new regions. Serious disputes over Bible interpretation accompanied the spread of Christianity, as texts moved from Syriac into Greek, and when the Eastern church spread into Arabia and central Asia in the 6th century CE, in turn creating the need for more translation work (Frankopan, 2016).

Over subsequent centuries, as the Bible was translated into languages like Armenian, Georgian and Coptic, sometimes preserving subsequently lost originals along the way, the translational route was often 'long and devious, from Greek into Syriac or Hebrew, thence into Arabic and thence into Latin, often with Spanish as an intermediary' (Haskins, 1979, p. 281). Within such processes, both translations and translators traveled, over often long distances. For

example, Irish monks re-evangelized major parts of Europe, where Christian belief had fallen into desuetude or had never existed, throughout the 6th to 8th centuries CE. Moving through France, the low countries, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, they promoted education in Latin and produced Latin translations of Greek works (Cronin, 2003).

Relations between the various Christian churches and the newly ascendant religious and political power of Islam involved multiple and complicated translation practices. As far as we know, between the 7th and 10th centuries CE, only one Western book was translated into Arabic, but large numbers of other, more prosaic kinds of documents flowed both ways at this time (Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006). Translation was an important practice in the various Islamic centres of learning, involving various sorts of inter-cultural influence. In late 8th century CE Baghdad, the dynamic nature of translation processes can be seen in the fact that knowledge of algebra, a new discovery, inflected the translations made of earlier, pre-algebraic Greek mathematicians (Cronin, 2003). In the same city in the 9th century, important translators like Abû Utmân al-Jâhiz and the Arab Nestorian Christian Hunayn ibn Ishaq were at work; the latter translated key texts from Greek into Syriac and Arabic. The Baghdad-based Persian mathematician Al-Khwarizmi introduced Hindu numerals and the concept of zero to Arab mathematics, which were then subsequently introduced by Latin translators to Europe in the 12th century (Chanda, 2007). Al-Hasan ibn Suwâr al-Hammar translated Aristotle into Arabic around 1,000 CE (Santoyo Mediavilla, 2006).

In the 10th century CE, within the Abbasid and Mughal empires, translations of texts that were meant to facilitate better societal administration, were very expressive of linguistic and cultural heterogeneity. In Abbasid Baghdad, translations aimed at reviving and reworking ancient Arabic, Sanskrit, Persian and Greek knowledges, with the resulting translations building a common way of communicating in a strongly multi-lingual context (Selim, 2009). Scholars from these linguistic groups and others were invited to participate in the translating process. Often the translations made at this time are the only ones left to us today, the originals (or in some cases, earlier translations) having been lost. The Umayyad rulers of Spain sent agents across the Islamic sphere of influence, to Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus and other locations, to buy books in multiple languages and to attract scholars and translators. Eventually the rich libraries of Islamic Spain would be crucial resources for the scholars and translators of the so-called 'European' Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries. Muslim translators were also linchpins connecting their world to other civilizational complexes, notably India. Located in the relatively peripheral location of Afghanistan, in the early 11th century CE the polymath Al-Biruni learnt Sanskrit, wrote an influential account of the subcontinent, and translated and transmitted works of classical Indian literature to the Muslim world (Chanda, 2007).

The 'renaissance' of the 12th century involved intensive translation activities, dispersed across key centres in Western Christendom, such as the earliest European universities like Salerno and Bologna. The various phenomena of this renaissance have been treated to systematic civilization-analytical treatment (Arnason and Wittrock, 2004). From that viewpoint, it can be regarded as an 'ecumenical renaissance' (Wittrock, 2001), at least on the general lines that Benjamin Nelson viewed it, as a meeting point of Western Christian, Byzantine, Jewish

and Islamic civilizational complexes that had great ramifications for how Catholic Christendom was culturally reoriented over time and how eventually it came to conceive of itself (Nelson, 1973, p. 96–7). At the same period, the Norman rulers of Sicily developed the island as an intellectual entrepôt, commissioning original scientific works in Arabic, as well as translations of Arabic science into Latin, thereby illustrating the central role of translation practices in the creation of what can refer to as cosmopolitan inter-civilizational interaction (Takayama, 2003).

The historian Janet Abu-Lughod (1989) has argued that in the 13th century CE, the Middle East, the Indian Ocean area, China and Europe were becoming ever more integrated by the connection of major trading hubs linked by sea and land trade routes. This was in large part made possible by the vast expansion of the Mongol empire across much of Eurasia. Santoyo Mediavilla (2006, p. 16) makes the point that at that time 'not a single book seems to have been translated between Mongolian and any European language, Latin included'. Nonetheless, 'the chronicles of the mutual relations' between Westerners and Mongols abound with 'messages, letters and documents which went to and fro in the hands of successive emissaries (William of Rubruc, friar Giovanni di Pian del Carpine, and friar Ascelino of Cremona among them), translated from Mongolian into Latin, from Latin into Russian, Persian, or Mongolian, from Greek into Mongolian, from Latin into Arabic or Syriac, and so forth'. The constant movement of translators and translations, usually done on-the-hoof while multiple sorts of people moved along the trade routes, is a key feature of pre-modern Eurasian globalization.

Universities as social institutions began to flourish around this time. They have been institutions where translation practices have very often been concentrated throughout history. The role of languages in universities has oscillated over time between two poles. Just as in the broader case of cities, so too in the case of universities does the historical record attest to the ongoing and complicated interplay of more monoglot-hegemonic and more polyglot-cosmopolitan dynamics (Inglis, 2010).

On the one side, religious and state officials and evangelists have at times sought to suppress the use of specific languages in universities in favor of specific dominant ones. Language has been used in more parochial and instrumentalist ways, with teaching being greatly oriented toward languages and knowledges directly useful to a given university's sponsors, such as European students being inculcated with Latin for the purposes of religious and political administration (Bleich, 2008).

But the opposite situation has also applied too, with the flourishing of cross-cultural communication through translation also being an important element of university life at many points in time (Bleich, 2008). Pre-modern universities were often, if not indeed always, transnational rather than localized in nature and orientation. They have operated in and through the great international languages of their times and places, such as Latin and Arabic. These sorts of languages, which were used and understood across great swathes of the planet, were deployed in the pedagogy and scientific endeavors of the universities, being used as highly convenient and productive *lingua franca* (Lo Bianco, 2014).

This was as much the case in India as the Arabic and Latin worlds, with universities in the subcontinent in the medieval period attracting people from vast cultural areas, just as their counterparts did in places

like Cairo and Paris (Lo Bianco, 2014). These processes point to broader trajectories of Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic cosmopolitan orientations within their respective civilizational constellations (Pollock, 2006; Euben, 2008), which of course merit quite as much scholarly attention today as do Christian/European versions of cosmopolitan thought and quotidian practice.

Medieval universities across different parts of Eurasia were in some ways quite as 'global' in their functioning as those today. They gathered up scholars from all over the extensive geographical area covered by the language(s) they operated in, as well as those from outside those culture areas, to allow for the comprehensive study of issues that were defined to be of truly 'universal' significance. Such study was often defined as requiring scholarly adeptness in multiple languages, at least those deemed to contain or express significant forms of learning. The 'discovery of Greek and Arabic texts provided a qualitative change in Europe's intellectual atmosphere that motivated students to look into how these texts might affect canon law, civil law, and religious practices' (Bleich, 2008, p. 501). Students from all over Europe subsequently came to such places of learning to learn about the new knowledges created from translations of ancient texts. It was often Jewish translators, placed between different cultural worlds and living in places where different groups and languages met, who provided the translations (Haskins, 1979).

Translations from Arabic coming out of Spain yielded the west European (re)discovery of Aristotle, some of whose works became available about 1,200 CE, along with Galen and Hippocrates. It was often accidental whether the version of a text that came into wider circulation was taken from either a Greek or Arabic version of it. But the glosses provided by Arabic scholars on the Greek originals often had a major impact on how Western scholars took up and made sense of those originals (Bleich, 2008).

This was also the case with the development of medical ideas. In medieval Europe, these mostly ultimately derived from ancient Greek medical knowledge. The texts of Hippocrates, Galen, and other ancient luminaries were widely taken as authoritative writ, and were models followed for centuries. But this knowledge generally reached the West indirectly through translations into Arabic from the Greek, these translations then themselves being translated into Latin and European vernacular languages. Original Arabic scientific and medical texts, influenced by earlier Greek models, were also translated into the European languages (Lo Bianco, 2014).

As with religious tracts, we are confronted with a palimpsest of lost or unreachable originals, being edited, excerpted, and copied, and translated, then re-translated, often multiple times. The upshot of all these processes of mediation was paradoxical. A late antique or medieval physician may have experienced their knowledge of medical authority figures like Aristotle, Galen, or Hippocrates as deriving directly from the latter's writings, and therefore directly from their personal thought patterns and modes of speech (Chanda, 2007). But the ideas they were working with were subject to many cross-cultural mediations over time, and the technical terms they were conversant with had been subjected to multiple shifts in meaning and nuance as the texts passed between translators and through time and space. Moreover, the Greek 'originals' themselves drew upon earlier sources, including Ayurvedic and Egyptian medical schemas (Peters, 2020).

Some of the translators transforming Greek texts into Arabic were medical experts themselves. They included the hugely influential 11th century Persian polymath Ibn Sina, known in the

West as Avicenna. His great work entitled *The Canon of Medicine,* a summation of all medical knowledge known to him, was used throughout the Christian and Arab worlds, a striking instance of epistemological cosmopolitanism during times of otherwise bellicose relations between the two religious blocs (Shanks and Al-Kalai, 1984). Similar processes of translation and inter-civilizational exchange were at work in what was probably Europe's first medical school, at Salerno. By the 11th and 12th centuries, it was a major and vibrant location for trans-cultural medical investigation. Part of its expansion was due to its scholars taking-up new Arabic medical doctrines culled from translations made by Constantine the African and Jewish scholars located in Toledo (Byrne, 2004).

Both in Christendom and the Muslim domains, Galen's work on the 'humours' of the body underpinned much medical thinking. Galen's ideas were translated from Greek into Arabic by Nestorian Christians in Baghdad as early as the 9th century and thereafter were established deeply in Muslim medical practitioners' assumptions (Selim, 2009). As in Europe, the major assumption was that many diseases resulted from miasmas, corrupted forms of air. Muslim scholars were influenced in this regard by translations of Hippocrates and Galen, or by the versions of their work set out by authoritative Islamic doctors, including Ibn Sina/Avicenna (Shanks and Al-Kalai, 1984).

There is an ongoing debate among historians about the more immediate and longer-term consequences of the Black Death of the mid-14th century, which killed up to 200 million people in western Eurasia and North Africa (McNeill, 1976; Alfani and Murphy, 2017). The very high mortality rate involved the deaths of 'many practitioners of the art of writing, thus producing immeasurable rifts in the transmission and generation of the written record as we have inherited it' today (Chouin, 2018, pp. 15–16). Moreover, many scholars working in Latin perished. The ensuing scarcity of teachers of Latin could have been a factor in the rise of school and university instruction in vernacular languages, with long-term consequences for the development of new 'national' forms of self-consciousness stimulated through writing (Herlihy, 1997). Running parallel to that process was the steady usurpation of the centuries-long hegemony of ancient medical authors and texts, a process bound up with newer medical works being published not in Latin but in the emergent national languages, a tendency which helped to encourage more scepticism toward ancient authorities, medical and otherwise (Gottfried, 1983).

Contemporary scholarship often re-narrates phenomena that have for a long time been understood to be products of self-enclosed cultures, especially so-called 'European' ones, in light of broader, trans-regional processes, including pan-Eurasian dynamics. For example, the so-called 'European' Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries CE is better described as a trans-national cultural movement. This is partly because it involved Ottoman Turkey as much as it encompassed locations we conventionally associate it with it, notably Italy (Inglis and Robertson, 2005). It is also partly because it involved the discovery and putting to use of translated texts preserved by Arab scholars, many of which were the only surviving copies of the original works of Greek authors. But such translations from Arabic into the various early modern European languages were presented in ways that created spurious direct relations between the Greek texts and the target languages, cutting Arabic out of the transmission story, and

therefore out of the history of the 'Renaissance' itself (Cronin, 2003, p. 39).

Conclusion: very old glocal texts in very new glocal communication flows

Glocalization processes of many varieties today occur within, across, and in relation to, a myriad of different yet overlapping digital environments (Roudometof, 2023). A very major domain of contemporary digitally-enabled glocalization dynamics involves people variously accessing, interpreting, debating, and quarreling, sometimes acrimoniously, over ancient texts of religious, spiritual, and other forms of significance. Both those texts, quotations from them, and more conventional and unconventional interpretations and uses of them, endlessly circulate in and through cyberspace, spilling out in multiple ways into mundane social contexts, all the while blurring and reconfiguring the domains or oral, textual, and electronic communications (Foley, 2012).

What is at stake in many of these dynamics is the defining of, and the gaining of access to, divine insight and revelation. Some are taken to convey the words of God in direct and unmediated fashions. Therefore the words contained in very old texts can be immensely powerful in the 21st century. This is in part because their capacities to shape people's imaginations and actions have been both altered and augmented by the easy accessibility made possible through their virtual presences.

Yet, as this paper has sought to demonstrate, a historical consideration of such texts shows that oftentimes they are *glocal* entities through and through. They have been generated by and through inter-civilizational encounters in general, and by a particular species of them more particularly, those involving the translation of texts from one language and cultural context to another, in seemingly endless refractions of 'originals' into newer versions. Sometimes such practices have been bound up with violent relations between civilizational constellations, meaning that the indebtedness of texts and cultures of interpretation surrounding them to other civilizational heritages was often obscured, denied, or almost completely erased. But translation of significant texts has also under specific circumstances encouraged modes of peaceful, productive, and creative engagement between people coming from, and speaking in the presumed name of, differing civilizational traditions. Paradoxically, when translators have operated as glocalizing actors, they have generated religious and other sorts of texts that are frequently deeply glocal in nature, but very often not perceived as such, either by themselves or by most of the subsequent cohorts of readers, interpreters, and exegetes.

The movement into and through digital environs of such texts in very recent years is just the latest iteration of very long-term glocalizing processes encompassing intricate, crisscrossing forms of intra-and inter-civilizational communication and mediation. Foley's (2012) conceptualisation of three 'agoras' (verbal marketplaces)—involving oral, textual, and electronic modes of communication—regards the first and last of these as very similar, both being highly emergent, shifting, and non-linear. Pre-modern speech-based worlds seem highly congruent with late modern or post-modern electronic environments. Text-based communication seems markedly more constrained and linear. The preceding analysis has demonstrated that even religious text-based traditions, which are core components of civilizational traditions, and which we might expect to be particularly prone to tendencies of disciplining, reification and ossification, are also strongly characterised by multiplicitousness and movement. Historically, this has tended to be in less obvious and generally slower manners than in the oral and electronic communication realms. Still, religious texts of the sorts considered here have not been unchanging entities that were suddenly made more multiple and fissiparous when they recently went online. They have usually been so, even in what we take to be distant pre-modern times, ages the often deeply glocal contours and dynamics of which we underestimate at our peril.

I suggest to scholars of 21st century digital glocalization, virtual religion, and related areas, that their analyses can be augmented by being rooted in consideration of textual translation practices, embedded within the long-term history of contacts between civilizational constellations. Such contacts have both driven and themselves express complex modalities of glocalization. By carrying out such studies, scholarship can help to generate more capacious accounts of the historical and contemporary glocalization and glocality of civilizations and civilizational traditions than have hitherto been written. The future lineaments of these accounts can already be glimpsed in the comments of Robertson and now more deeply in the ongoing work of Roudometof (2013).

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

Author contributions

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