

Rival Patterns of Standardization: Authenticity and Algorithmization in the Age of Globalization

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Abstract. *In my paper, I argue that the patterns of globalization should be interpreted as a functionally enclosed structurally linked locality system whose prevailing environment is represented by the global flow of symbols. My research results suggest that authenticity and algorithmization are not rival concepts of cultural reproduction. On the contrary, different localities are able to ride the waves of globalization that combine complementary strategies of algorithmization and authenticity in a standardized form. Thus, these localities adapt to the challenges of globalization that produce and combine standardized-algorithmic and standardized-authentic patterns.*

Keywords: *globalization, authenticity, algorithmization, standardization.*

Introduction

Social scientists have interpreted our times in many ways. Some say that modernity favors phenomena that are impersonal, centrally controlled and predictable (Weber 1958, Horkheimer and Adorno 1972; Foucault 1977; Ritzer 2004; Boltanski and Chiapello 2007). Others, on the contrary, believe that the age in which we live is the era of individual self-transcendence and creative world creation (Inglehart 1977; Masuda 1981; Toffler 1980; Florida 2012; Himanen 2014). In line with this the impact of globalization on local cultures has been interpreted in similar ways by researchers. According to the two most remarkable rival hypotheses: 1. Globalization stimulates the reproduction of (substrate-dependent and authentic) local cultural patterns; 2. As a result of globalization, local cultural patterns are overwritten by substrate-neutral, predictable cultural patterns. Thus, the study seeks to answer two central research questions: 1. What are the cultural patterns that can be successfully globalized? and 2. How are localities able to respond to the challenges of globalization?

In my argument, I use the central concept of Ritzer and Taylor's work to model rival paths of globalization. By using the extracted concepts, I argue that the reproduction of cultural patterns is not a matter of content, but of formal aspects. On one hand, I will show that the reproductive ability of a given cultural phenomenon does not depend on whether the relationship between input and output is determined, but on the degree of standardization. On the other hand, using meme theory, I will argue that any substrate-dependent cultural pattern may be able to reproduce in another cultural context. Thus, every substrate-dependent pattern is able to become substrate neutral, and each substrate-neutral pattern is able to mutate to substrate-dependent form.

Globalization: Key Concepts

In this section, I am not taking upon myself to systematically arrange the discourse on globalization, I just outline a few basic motives that create a relevant context to my paper. In the analysis of the processes of globalization a possible framework can be traced through the drastic transformation of space and time experiences (Appadurai 1996; Giddens 1990; Castells 1996, 460–499). According to this concept, in the case of more or less closed communities, space and time were locally defined. The meaningless homogeneous space-time was formed to be meaningful in the rites (communicative acts) of the tribes (Durkheim 1995; Habermas 1981). The locally defined and replicated space-time system of the neighborhoods was first overwhelmed by the universalist demands of the nation states (Appadurai 1996, 149–156).

The space-time structure of national cultures localized, centrally generated and defined by state borders has been restructured and increased by the impacts of information technology – by the global flow of capital, labor and symbols, in the context of which the idea of a universal world culture (Lechner, Boli 2008) and the idea of new (cross-border) localities (Appadurai 1996) was born. The former describes a vision of universe floating over neighbors and nations, which further enhances the universalist aspirations of national cultures, and the latter seizes the neighborhoods of the global world, regardless of physical space and time, determined and reproduced localities. On the other hand, the shift from well-defined local spaces through nation states through global villages (McLuhan 1989) to the space of flows (Castells 1996, 146), in which neither space nor time can be localized with complete security, will result a necessary growth of interdependence between the actors. It fits well with Giddens's classic definition of globalization: „globalisation is the intensification of worldwide social relations

linking distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many thousands of miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990, 64).

Against this background, the diagnoses of the cultural patterns of globalization essentially deepen two opposing interpretations in social sciences. Simplified, the patterns of globalization help intercultural interaction, and conversely, homogenize the essential differences between cultures. Representatives of the first track try to capture current processes with the term of the glocalization (Robertson 1995). The term is created by melting the words globalization and localization, and describes a dialectical process in which the interaction between local and global patterns creates new unique local structures. According to this concept, the global flow of cultures can be described as a series of interactions in which the local culture, by integrating, transforming other global or local patterns, adjust to its own cultural horizon as a new unique local pattern. In this framework, globalization can be interpreted as creative processes that produce new unique socio-cultural patterns by reorganizing the existing order.

Conversely, there are those who say that the processes of globalization result in the disappearance and marginalization of local cultures. Ritzer introduces this process by the term of glocalization, which is created by melting the words “growth” and “globalization” (Ritzer 2004 79–95). This thought has Marxist roots, according to which the driving force behind the capitalist (world) economy is to maximize profits (Marx 1867). With Luhmann’s (Luhmann 2012) term, the capitalist mode of production can be conceptualized through the profit/loss value dual. In the reality of a goal-rational, organized, profit-maximizing world, only those social forms remain that are capable of continuous-growth. Ritzer not only interprets patterns of production and consumption within the conceptual framework of glocalization, but gives a general description of the process that focuses on the modern need and necessity of continuous growth. The glocalization “focuses on the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like, and their desire and need to impose themselves on various geographic areas. Their main interest is in seeing their power, influence, and, in many cases profits grow (hence the term glocalization) throughout the world” (Ritzer 2004 79).

Globalization of Nothing vs. Ethics of Authenticity

As we saw in the previous section, the assessment of the cultural patterns of globalization basically deepens two rival interpretations in

humanities. The first is that globalization (and typically modernity) is the scene of homogenization and unification of the world, in which locally defined substantive differences become empty. The representatives of the other track, however, interpret globalization (and typically modernity) just as the dialectical reality of the substantive differences of heterogeneous localities, in which the global flow of cultures results the flowering of local cultures.

One of the decisive representatives of the first course is George Ritzer, who, in his work *Globalization of Nothing*, presents a possible diagnosis of age. He argues that globalization favors those patterns which do not have substantive differences. That is why he thinks that our era (and our future) is determined by the spreading of nothing. He defines nothing as a “social form that is generally centrally conceived, controlled, and comparatively devoid of distinctive substantive content” (Ritzer 2004, 3). On the contrary, something is a “social form that is generally indigenously conceived, controlled and comparatively rich in distinctive substantive content” (Ritzer 2004, 7).

Strewn along the axis of the nothing-something concept, a number of intermediate states can be manifested, however, according to Ritzer, patterns of consumption are increasingly shifting towards the consumption of nothing. To expand the concept of nothing-something, Ritzer’s four-component model in which he seeks to capture the four subtypes of nothing and something is a good basis. According to this, Ritzer distinguishes places and non-places, things and non-things, persons and non-persons, services and non-services. Thus, the ideal-typic nothing is kind of social form which implies consumption of non-things at non-places provided by non-people and non-services. As example of this, McDonald’s restaurants all over the world, in every city, in every district and in every street look more or less the same. Big Mac in each McDonald’s is made from the same ingredients, it has the same taste, size, and smell. The employee’s person is irrelevant, no matter whether Jane or John serves you, as a subject, he/she does not add to the act of consumption. The biggest advantage of the McDonald’s franchise lies in the fact that the algorithmic operation of McDonald’s as a functional system is completely predictable. In contrast to a customer who goes nowhere, the customer entering somewhere needs to consider a number of things, for example, if he likes the design of the restaurant, if the food will be seasoned well, if the waiter will be nice and if the service will be good. The “nothing” has a big advantage over “something” in predictability and functional efficiency. In conclusion, according to Ritzer, the age in which we live favors patterns that can be predicted, centrally controlled and not bound to an explicit substrate.

Thus, summarizing, according to the presented diagnosis of age, globalization favors algorithmized predictable patterns. Our slogan: **Be algorithmized!**

Let us now capture a different age diagnosis from Charles Taylor's work. Along with the increasing algorithmic aspirations of modernity, another path can be captured, which also influences our self-experience, production and consumption patterns with the same force.

Taylor calls this the ethics of authenticity following Lionel Trilling (1972), which focuses on the image of a personal identity that is mine and only I can find myself (Taylor 2003). According to Taylor, this idea was born in the 18th century from a concept which says that human beings have a kind of moral sense, intuition to distinguish between good and bad (Taylor 1996 and 2003). The first significant theorist to construct this idea was Rousseau, who believed that we act as moral beings, relying on our inner morality, listening to the "voice of nature" (Rousseau 1762; Taylor 1996 and 2003). However, this intimate morality must be discovered by ourselves. So „our moral salvation comes from recovering authentic moral contact with ourselves" (Taylor 2003, 27). According to Taylor, the idea of authenticity becomes decisive in Herder's philosophy. Herder argues, the man himself has to seize the authentic, only valid path or "measure" by which he can shape his life and moral actions. So, a human being can't build his identity as a "floating rationality", but must find the unique, only "model" that he or she can live on. Consequently, the concept of loyalty to ourselves is fulfilled, according to which I must be faithful to my own path, the essential feature of my "destiny", to the call that I must fulfill. The investigation about our own way of life as a life program, that can not be extrapolated from society, leads to the birth of a modern idea of authenticity, to the popular concepts of self-fulfillment and self-enchancement.

Analyzing the decisive trends in production and consumption, the idea of authenticity can be captured in the purest form in the concept of "experience consumption". In 1970, Alvin Toffler drew attention to the future tendency to outgrow the current simple processing procedures, predicting the revolutionary expansion of industries whose output is not a product or a traditional service, but a pre-programmed unique experience (Toffler 1970, 219–238). While the commodities of industrial society have primarily fulfilled functional and material needs, in today's (post-material) societies the focus is on the experience-centered consumption in which the uniqueness of a product or service transcends the consumer from the immanent, rational framework of their life. Similarly, Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that in modern societies there is a tendency to shift from the service-based economy to the experience-based economy. However, as the authors explain later,

consumers are not only looking for experiences but ultimately changing their selves through customizable products and services (Pine and Gilmore 1999 and 2007). In short, customers today want a personalized unique experience from the consumed products and services.

The modern need for authenticity – which, at least in part, derives from the psychological effects of the program of romantic – defines the patterns of modern consumption similarly to the Protestant or enlightened rooted program of algorithmization. It's a slogan: **Be unique!**

Summing up, our findings suggest that our modern approaches to the world can be captured through two seemingly opposing age diagnoses. One of the slogans is “Be algorithmized!” And the other: “Be unique!” According to “Globalization of Nothing”, algorithmic patterns are the ones to survive, and according to the “ethics of authenticity” it's those who are capable of producing unique patterns.

At the end of the section we synthesize what exactly are the features of authentic (something) and algorithmic (nothing) social phenomena. We are dealing with opposing concepts like something, authenticity, uniqueness and creativity on one side, and nothing, uniformity, predictability, algorithmization on the other side. However, in my opinion, the fundamental differences can be traced in two dimensions. Based on the patterns shown, one of the features of authentic-something is that it is bound to individuals, places, communities, i.e. to a specific substrate. In contrast, the algorithmic-nothing is independent of all of these, so it can be implemented independently of the substrate.

The other, essential difference is that while in the case of authentic-something the input-output relation is not fixed, in the case of algorithmic nothing this assignment can be clearly determined. Authentic phenomena are linked to the person's intrinsic structure. In other words, these are the specific expressions of the agent's internal autonomy, in which the agent expands the horizon of the designer-space with the possible implementations that appear beyond the functionally closed operations. In contrast, algorithmic phenomena act as impersonal, functionally closed systems, whose operations are determined.

TABLE 1. AUTHENTICITY AND NOTHING

	Authentic-Something	Algorithmic-Nothing
Relation to substrate	Substrate-dependent	Substrate-neutral
Relation of input and output	Deterministic	Non-deterministic

Authenticity, Algorithmization and Standardization

In the previous section, I presented the rival concepts of the ethics of authenticity and the globalization of nothing.

In the following, we will first examine the part of Ritzer's hypothesis on authentic phenomena. According to Ritzer, authentic phenomena (some-things) are inextricably challenged by algorithmic-nothing, since the spirit of the era is favorable to the phenomena whose operation can be clearly predicted. Although this idea may seem perspective, I believe it is important to examine the specific distortions of Ritzer's methodology, for he argues that not all forms of authentic phenomena disappear. Some, such as gourmet restaurants, will remain, others, such as local canteens, will disappear.

In a misleading way, the various examples (Ritzer 2004 39–55 and 63–65) in his work, which is opposed to the manifests of “nothing”, are usually high-quality goods and places such as “Culatello hams” and “Gourmet restaurants”, which makes them seem to be “unconsciously” valuable things, that would be sad to lose. In reality “something” is often (and typically) the opposite: unique-tasted bad foods, rude waiters, bad service. The problem is deepened, as I have already mentioned, by the fact that, according to Ritzer the quality versions of “something” won't disappear: “Of course, places, things, people and services survive, but it is more on the margins of the social and economic world. They tend to continue to exist for the elites who can afford the high premium” (Ritzer 2004, 68). He suggests that these consumer goods were available to almost everyone, except now, it is only available to the elite. However, this naive romanticism of traditionalism is highly doubtful. In reality, the traditional production processes were unstandardized, and the outcome of each operation was much more uncertain. An excellent example of this is the distilling of brandy or pig slaughtering, which is more or less implemented in a traditional way in the Hungarian countryside nowadays too. Different families have their own method of producing these items, as result of this the outcome is not always the same. Some brandy and sausage made by family traditions are unpalatable, and they do not even reach or even approve the quality of the products bought in the shop, so they do not meet with maxim of quality (cf. Kollár 2009). It is clear that while Culatello hams and Gourmet restaurants meet certain quality requirements, bad sausages and dirty local canteens do not, even though they can all be considered as something. If we assume and accept Ritzer's assertion that something of the former is preserved, while the latter will disappear, it follows then that the propagation of “nothing” is an extrapolation of the increasing demand for standardization.

However, standardization is not equal to algorithmization. The idea of this conceptual separation can be read from Max Weber's works. Weber tries to describe the evolution of world history not by the increasing dominance of instrumental rationality but by the interactions of certain spheres of life. According to Weber, certain spheres of life (e.g., science, religion, economy, eroticism, politics) have their own rationality, their own internal logic. Although the contradictions between spheres can be resolved from time to time (e.g., Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism), they cannot be reconciled definitively. Embedded in a historical frame, it can be said that the sphere of religion functioned for a long time as an external reference framework for the other fields of life. However, the instrumental rationality that arises in the robe of the religious sphere has, in the end, marred its own transcendental roots. As a result, it was accompanied by the diversity of rationalities operating according to one's own internal logic, in addition to, and above all, one's universal rationality (Weber 1946, 129–156). Subsequently religion as a universal rationality has been replaced by a variety of rationalities. Although these spheres become more systematic and standardized in the course of history, they produce patterns that are different from the algorithmic method of instrumental rationality. (cf.: Kippenberg 2011, 13–14). Thus, it is not about the domination of the instrumental rationality, but about the increase of the internal consistency of the individual spheres that operate according to their own logic. The process of increasing internal consistency is what I call standardization.

In the following, I will analyze the relationship between concepts (authenticity, algorithmization, standardization) that have been expounded before. However, firstly, I find it important, because of the common terminology, to distinguish the concept of standardization from the concept of algorithmization. We call *standardized* those social forms which indicate compliance with certain qualitative and quantitative criteria, and we call *algorithmized* those social forms which denotes a deterministic relationship between a given input and output. Consider algorithmic phenomena as nothing and authentic phenomena to something. In the following, I present the relation between the concepts of algorithmic (nothing) – authentic (something) and standardization – unstandardization. Although apparently the standardization and nothing, and the unstandardization and something modes are similar, the two concepts cannot be treated as equivalent. Illustrating these modes in the following matrix provides us a frame to catch the explicit differences.

TABLE 2. STANDARDIZED AND UNSTANDARDIZED – SOMETHING AND NOTHING

	Authentic (Something)	Algorithmic (Nothing)
Standardized	Gourmet restaurant	McDonald's
Unstandardized	Bad local canteen	Mike shoes (bad quality fake)

Standardized – Authentic (something): A social form that meets certain quality and quantity criteria and it is bound to persons, time, space, and services.

Standardized – Algorithmic (Nothing): A social form that meets certain quality and quantity criteria and it isn't bound to person, time, space or services.

Unstandardized – Authentic (something): A social form that does not meet certain qualitative and quantitative criteria and it is bound to persons, time, space, and services.

Unstandardized – Algorithmic (Nothing): A social form that does not meet certain qualitative and quantitative criteria and it isn't bound to persons, time, space or services.

Standardized-authentic (something) and standardized-algorithmic (nothing) satisfy certain quality and quantity criteria against unstandardized something or nothing. The standardized and the unstandardized algorithmic (nothing), at least theoretically, are social forms whose operations can be fully predicted, so the relationship between the input and output is determined. In contrast, the standardized and the unstandardized authentic something – at least theoretically – are social forms whose operation cannot be predicted, so the input and output relationships are influenced by the autonomous acts of the agents.

Let us now go a little bit back to the way in which standardized and unstandardized concepts work. In my argument, the two are distinguished by the fact that the former corresponds to certain quality criteria, while the latter doesn't. What are these quality criteria? A good starting point for this is provided by Kollár (2009) who extended the concept of the McDonaldisation by integrating the Grice maxims (Grice 1975). According to Kollár, the basic characteristic of the standards is that they meet the quantity, quality, relevance and the maxim of the mode. The difference between the gourmet restaurant and the bad local canteen is that the gourmet restaurant is typically a maxima follower – the food matches the quantity (the number of portions) the quality and relevance (you get what you ordered)

criteria – whereas the local canteen is typically offensive – the amount and quality of the food are insufficient.

Although seemingly both the standardized gourmet restaurant and the unstandardized Mike shoe can be predicted, there is an essential difference between the two cases. In the former case, only compliance with certain quality criteria can be predicted, but the particular events are not determined, in other words, whether John or Jane is preparing my scallops in accordance with their own unique recipe it will comply with the quality criteria, however, the flavor of the two dishes can be completely different. Mike shoes, however, do not meet the quality criteria regardless of whether John or Jane is the one selling them – each piece is made algorithmically and will be the same bad. Thus, the main difference between these two concepts is that in the case of standards we can predict the form, and in the case of algorithms we can predict the content.

Summarizing the above, standardization indicates compliance with certain quality criteria for the internal consistency of a given structure. In contrast, unstandardization describes the non-compliance with certain quality criteria, the inconsistency of a particular structure.

Authenticity, Algorithmization and the Case of the Substrate

In the previous section, I argued that a given social phenomenon, regardless of whether it determines a deterministic relationship between input and output, can reproduce proportionally with its internal consistency (standardization). In the following, I will examine the second half of Ritzer's hypothesis. According to which those social phenomena can be successfully globalized, which are not bound to explicit substrate.

The ideal-typical example for the substrate-neutral pattern is the math equation, and for the substrate-dependent pattern it is the sacred place. Which phenomena can be globalized more successfully? At first glance the assignment seems to be clear: What can be expanded regardless of space and time? Obviously, the answer is mathematics: the statements in the language of mathematics will be true everywhere, every time. And what can be interpreted in a specific space-time context? Surely, it's the sacred place, because the essence of the sacred place is that sacredness manifests itself at a certain time and at a specific place.

The mathematical equation, as we have previously described, is substrate neutral, so its truth value does not depend on individuals, places or times. In contrast, the sacred place is a substrate-dependent pattern that can

not be taken elsewhere, and more importantly, it has only meaning among its certain carriers. In other words, it is conceivable that a place is considered sacred to certain people-groups of people and not to others. Consequently, only those phenomena can be fully globalized, which are substrates neutral, so, those that can be expanded regardless of space and time. On this basis, the picture seems clear: globalization favors the substrate-neutral patterns. This is how we come to the idea of global world culture, according to which local cultures are created and replaced by a culture that has no localizable points. The substrate, which is the bearer of this culture, is the general human, we must also make this criterion because we do not know any other form of existence capable of installing and running complex cultural patterns.

The presented argument can be shaded successfully if we call these cultural patterns to memes following Richard Dawkins (1989). Memes are replicators similar to genes, but are not genotypes but phenotypes, whose replication direction is not vertical but horizontal. The memes, in theory, are substrate-neutral (Dawkins 1989; Dennett 1996; Blackmore 1999), each meme can be “installed” on each human brain, but in practice, some of the memes are highly environmentally dependent, i.e. they are able to reproduce in a specific socio-cultural environment, so, in a specific space and time relation. In light of the foregoing, it also follows that globalization allows the reproduction of memes that are not inherent in explicit space and time. World culture, therefore, refers to a set of memes whose only carrier is not a class, nation or group, but a general human being. The roots of this idea can be found in the philosophy of Hegel (1975) and Marx (1974) who describe the dialectical development of history as a process where the unique becomes universal.

There is no consensus in the social sciences about what social-cultural phenomena would indeed be essentially substrate neutral, but we can give a few approximate examples: such as math, in principle, democracy and universal values such as love or friendship. It can be argued – perhaps only with the exception of mathematics – that such memes, for example, democracy, are connected to specific space and time. In response to this, it can be argued that democracy is an objective observation similar to the Pythagoras theorem whose discovery can also be related to space and time, but the square of the hypotenuse even at the Mars gives the sum of the squares of the other two sides.

World culture should, therefore, be interpreted as a system of objective (factual) truths. But there is a fundamental problem with this concept of world culture, since so far no single product of cultural value could ever be proved objectively. Thus, there is no evidence that some artworks would be

valuable regardless of space and time. The Pythagoras theorem also applies to the Vogons, but they are probably less valued by Shakespeare's 18th sonnet, just as we humans are the vagon poetry¹. The question that arises is whether the processes of globalization must indeed be treated as a utopia or as a dystopia of positivism.

It seems more appropriate to me to set up an alternative model, to which I think the meme theory² provide an ideal framework. The closest organic neighbor of the memes is the virus. The virus, in theory, is also substrate neutral, as it does not deal with the nationality, religion, love life and favorite football team of the infected organism. The virus is perfectly democratic. The virus, however, does not infect "without regard". Certain viruses infect only birds, others only reptiles and others humans and can only replicate in those hosts. But viruses are able to "copy" themselves by a mutation from one host to another host.

What can we learn from viruses? According to the meme-theory, the spread of certain memes takes place in the same way as the spread of viruses, a particular (cultural) meme can replicate only in its own socio-cultural environment, but after certain mutations may become capable of infecting other hosts. The mutant meme can even move away from its original environment to such an extent that it can no longer replicate itself. Of course, this is not a necessary process, it is conceivable that the mutant meme will remain virulent in either culture, or another mutation may also be necessary for it to be re-virulent in its initial environment. What follows from this? It is possible to locate something in a space-time that transposes itself into another space-time. In principle, any cultural phenomenon can be extended, in other words re-localized, whether it is inherently substrate neutral: if the sacred space cannot be moved the verb can be spread.

In the following, we need to consider what the memes replication ability depends on. The replication ability of memes is determined by their carrier and host.³ We do not know exactly where the memes came from and when they were born, however, but we know a lot about hosts and carriers. The framework of this paper does not allow me to discuss this topic in as much detail as it needed, but it is necessary to provide a brief overview.

The first well-localizable hosts (and carriers) of the memes were the primitive communities. The reproduction of memes was provided by non-linguistically articulated rituals (Gabriel 1979). The next big step can be

- 1 The Vogons are fictive characters of the novel *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.
- 2 Meme theory has already received more criticism. Most of the concerns are related to the ontological status of the memes (Sperber 1996 and 2006; Nanay 2014). According to supporters of meme theory, the memes are information just like genes, so there is no reason to doubt their existence (Dennett 2006, 80–81; Distin 2005).
- 3 The host is the special carrier on which the particular meme can "install and run" itself.

captured in the birth of languages (cf.: Donald 1991). Language enabled the memes to reproduce themselves in a linguistic community using communicative acts. The greatest advantage of verbal rituals is that the memes “became take away”. The Copernican turn was the invention of writing because the hibernated memes in the written text as a carrier were conceivable in any part of the world (cf.: Donald 1991). On the other hand, perhaps more importantly, writing is the first medium in which the memes are in a hibernation state, so they are separated from their main hosts. This has been deepened by the discovery of book printing, telecommunication tools, invention of the phone and the radio. In parallel to this, increasingly complex forms of transportation came into being, which could spread more and more of the carriers of memes in more and more ways. The next Copernican turn is the internet. On the world wide web, the memes can be found everywhere and nowhere, there are no localizable points, the diversity of “without-man-cultures” will flow without end on the data-ocean.

This is how we reach the alternative hypothesis of cultural globalization. Against the idea of a homogeneous world culture, the space of flows is the reality of the unlocalizable differences, from which, in principle, can be predicted everything but in fact nothing. The infinite flow of interpretations and perspectives cannot be completely rendered to be meaningful by any entity. The hero of the Big-Data Culture is the data miner who creates meaningful aggregates and microcosms from the infinite meaningless diversity.

In the social world, the role of the data miner is fulfilled by the local cultures that function as a protective net against unmanageable diversity, while “they are aware that their emotions and thoughts are not theirs” (Kollár and Kollár 2017, 43). This is paradigmatically modeled by Luhmann’s system theory (Luhmann 2012), according to which the functional differentiation of systems is to reduce complexity. Accordingly, each of the operatively closed systems can only function effectively if they exclude everything else in their operations. However, excluded operations are structurally linked to the functionally closed system, maintaining the possibility of involving excluded operating modes. According to my argument, the idea of world culture replacing local cultures has a greater explanatory power when the patterns of globalization are interpreted as functionally enclosed structurally linked locality system, whose prevailing environment is represented by the global flow of symbols.

Dialectics of Authenticity and Algorithmization

In the previous sections I argued that the reproductive ability of a given cultural phenomenon does not depend on whether the given phenomenon is authentic or algorithmic, but on the extent to which it is standardized. In line with this, I interpreted the patterns of globalization as the flow of cultural patterns separated from their original carrier.

In the following sections I argue that the reproducibility of a given locality depends on the successful combination of their algorithmic and authentication strategies.

The relationship between authenticity and algorithmization can be metaphorically represented as the complementary relation of the “solidified time islands” in the “space of flows” (Kollár and Kollár 2019, 21). The algorithmic system is responsible for maintaining the stability of the reduced world, while the authentic autonomic patterns of agents enable the domestication of phenomena that cannot be treated by existing functions.

One of the possible adaptation mechanisms is to build algorithms because the unmanageable diversity favors social mechanisms whose mode of operation can easily be predicted. Let's look at a simple example: we go to a strange city where we have never been to, we want to go to lunch on Friday noon and we want to spend about 20 €. We look around the internet what kind of restaurants offer lunch for 20 €, the site recommends 30 restaurants with 3 as the average rating. We see the reviews are spread between 4 and 1, one writes how good the food was and how nice the waiter was at Wednesday noon, the other writes how bad the food was and how rude the waiter was at Thursday noon.

What can we conclude from this? We do not know what to expect at the local canteen on Friday at noon, we will eat either good or bad food. After going through this procedure, we will notice that there is a McDonald's in the city, where we can buy a BigMac menu for 10 €. With the BigMac menu, we don't take any risks, because it will be the same as the ones at Wednesday, Thursday and Friday noons. I won't finish the story, but practice shows that the majority chooses McDonald's after that. Why? Because you do not have to read all the ratings, you do not have to consider what sort of waiter and cook will work that day. The stability of McDonald's as a locality was given by the fact that we know what we get for 20 €.

Now let us look at the other possible adaptation mechanism for authenticity building, as we argue that diversity also favors social mechanisms whose mode of operation is not determined, as these can be reached with new values and emotions. Let's look at this as a simple example, keeping in mind the following: after we had eaten three times in McDonald's we would like to

go to a good restaurant on Saturday night to celebrate our spouse's birthday and spend about 100 euros. We look around the internet what restaurants offer a 100 € dinner, the page offers us 3 five star rated restaurants. We see among the ratings there are some who praise one chef's meals and there are some who praise the other's. The reviews show us that the two cooks make some dishes in an essentially different way, but both are excellent in their craft. What can we conclude from this? Although we do not know exactly what to expect on a Saturday night in the gourmet restaurant, but we do know that our meal will be tasty. The stability of the gourmet restaurant as a locality was given by the fact that, although its mode of operation is not determined, we know that during our visit we can get quality values and emotions.

We know from the past that primarily not only the degree of algorithmization and authenticity determines the stability of these localities, but also the degree of standardization, i.e. the extent to which localities are adapted to qualitative and quantitative criteria. The examples presented to demonstrate that locals can efficiently reproduce themselves, both those that are standardized and authentic, and those that are standardized and algorithmized. The former is typically more profitable, but its cost ratio is significantly higher. The latter, on the other hand, makes a small profit but has a smaller cost ratio as well.

The question is what is happening in this example with the unstandardized-algorithmic and the unstandardized-authentic localities? More specifically, how can they compete with standardized-algorithmic and standardized-authentic localities? I think the answer is very simple, the only option for unstandardized local canteens is to try to work with much cheaper prices than standardized algorithmic McDonald's. This goes for unstandardized algorithmic localities as well. You will only buy Mike shoes if you get it much cheaper than Nike. Negative price competition may allow the reproduction of a given locality in the short term, but cannot be sustained in the long term, because the minimizing the benefit leads to regression of resources, after which the locality is no longer able to reproduce itself.

Let us now examine the relationship between standardized-algorithmic and standardized-authentic socio-cultural phenomena. At first sight, we can easily fall into the trap of thinking that the two categories are given and considered solid. The reality is that the transition between the two categories is very common. Authentic things can become algorithms and algorithms can sublimate into authenticity. The seeds of this idea can already be found in the conceptual system of Christianity, but as its purest and most common form, in Hegel's "law of the heart" (Hegel 1807, 244–251) and Weber's concept of charisma (Weber 1946) and bureaucracy (Eisenstadt 1968,

9–56; Hidas 2018, 183–207; Kollár 2019). “The main feature of charisma is the not everyday ability of a person to break up the order and to start a radically new one” (Hidas 2016, 8). “The book is written, but I say to you” using this New Testament phrase in a sloganized fashion captures the concept of charisma and charismatic person (Miskolczi and Kollár 2018, 2).

The charisma becomes bureaucratic, and the new order begins after the death of the prophet. Of course, to strengthen and replicate the order there is a need for new charismatic acts (miracles) and charismatic persons (saints). An illustrative example of this is the institutionalization of Christianity which only began after the death of Jesus. A more explicit example is the workflow that takes shape in the context of knowledge-producing corporations. The transformation of innovation into organizational knowledge is the process in which the authentic knowledge becomes algorithmic. Innovation is always bounded to a person, and the new uses are essentially expressions of the internal complexity of an autonomous agent.

The processes of algorithmization are those that separate this from the individual and reduce that to substrate-neutral operation. The movements of algorithmization essentially translate the unpredictable freedom of dynamic time into the order of static time on a narrow reductive path which opens up space for new innovations (Kollár and Kollár 2019, 20). The authentic innovation, the exploitation of creative capacities, cannot exist without reduction, and the waves of the complexity of the world can only be tamed from solid points. The success of the expression of authenticity is essentially a correlation of the reduction of the environment. In other words, the autopoietic systems separated from the autonomous agent, those that allow agents to experience the specific transcendence of their complexity, their authentic actions, which can make them the creator of the world.

According to my argument, those societies are able to respond effectively to the challenges of the globalization that use this insight as a structuring principle in organizing themselves. Effective societies are based on the specific synthesis of standardized order (algorithm) and standardized freedom (authenticity). Consistently operating algorithmic systems make it possible to reduce the complexity of the world, and thus to exploit the autonomous capacity of the individuals. The paradigmatic information society strives to create standardized diversity, thus enabling agents to become self-reliant to become sources of social innovation. In a globalized world, the resilience of emergent systems (localities) can be derived from the integration of the individual's authentic actions.

Conclusion

In my argument, I sought to answer two main research questions:

1. What are the cultural patterns that can be successfully globalized?
2. How are localities able to respond to the challenges of globalization?

In relation to the first question, it can be said that in social science thinking, the belief is that globalization (and modernity in general) favors patterns that a.) Can be predicted fully b.) Are impersonal, so they are not bounded to an explicit substrate. However, according to my results neither condition (a) nor condition (b) is necessary for the globalization of a cultural phenomenon.

On the one hand, based on weberian roots I have shown that the reproductive ability of a given cultural phenomenon does not depend on whether the given phenomenon is authentic or algorithmic (i.e. the relationship between input and output is determined), but on the extent of standardization. In other words, the success of reproducing cultural patterns depends on the consistency of the given structure. Thus, the results suggest that selective procedures of modernization and globalization do not favor patterns that are clearly predictable but that are standardized.

On the other hand, using meme theory, I have shown that any substrate-dependent cultural pattern may be able to reproduce in another cultural context. According to the meme-theory, certain memes spread the same way that viruses do, a particular meme can replicate only in its own socio-cultural environment, but after certain mutations may become capable of infecting other hosts. During the historical changes in the relationship between memes and the host, memes became separated from their original carrier and now they are floating free in the space of flows. In line with this, I argued that it has a greater explanatory power over the idea of world culture replacing local cultures when the patterns of globalization are interpreted as a functionally enclosed structurally linked locality system whose prevailing environment is represented by the global flow of symbols.

In line with all of this, my results suggest that authenticity and algorithmization are not rival concepts of cultural reproduction. On the contrary according to my argument, those localities are able to ride the waves of globalization that are able to combine complementary strategies of algorithmization and authenticity in a standardized form. So those localities are able to respond effectively to the challenges of the globalization that use this insight as a structuring principle in organizing themselves. Effective societies are based on the specific synthesis of standardized order (algorithm) and standardized freedom (authenticity). Consistently operating algorithmic systems make it possible to reduce the complexity of the world, and thus to

exploit the autonomous capacity of the individuals. The paradigmatic globalized society strive to create standardized diversity, thus enabling agents to become sources of the social innovation.

Of course, in order to achieve this successfully, it is essential to exploit the potential for standardization of certain phenomena. This is embedded in a broader context of resources and competencies and in a more normative field in which we consider global players to be agents with causal force. In this framework, we can interpret the conscious act of standardization as non-electoral participation⁴ and conceptualize the issue of resources and competencies as non-electoral capacity of a particular agent or community. However, the discovery of these patterns requires further theoretical and empirical research.

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4 We can conceptualize political participation as "all voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of political system (Kaase and Marsh 1979, 42). In accordance with this, non-electoral participation describes an action that has a manifest or latent effect on the acts and actors of the local or global political sphere. So, in a broader sense, any action in which agents influence the political field can be considered as non-electoral participation. The most common types include the signature of a petition, the demonstration or the boycott (Dalton 2011) but the conscious purchase of local products (Steinbrecher 2007), or even the standardization of local canteens can be considered as a non-electoral action.

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Besivaržantys standartizacijos bruožai: autentiškumas ir algoritmizavimas globalizmo amžiuje

Santrauka

Straipsnyje teigiama, kad globalizacijos bruožus įmanoma interpretuoti kaip funkciškai uždaras ir struktūriškai susijusias lokalumo sistemas, kurių aplinkoje pastebimi globalūs simbolių srautai. Atlikto tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad šiose sistemose autentiškumas ir algoritmizavimas nėra vienas su kitu besivaržančios kultūrinės reprodukcijos sąvokos. Priešingai, skirtingos vietovės atsispindi globalizacijos bangos, kurios susieja autentiškumą ir algoritmizavimą į vieną standartizuotą formą. Dėl to šios vietovės prisitaiko prie globalizacijos, kuri gamina ir susieja standartizuotus algoritmizavimo ir autentiškumo bruožus, iššūkių.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: globalizacija, autentiškumas, algoritmizavimas, standartizacija.