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Glocalization as a Generic Entrepreneurial Strategy¹

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1. Looking behind and beyond Globalization

Nobody would deny that we today live in a globalized world. Our digitalized living daily revises our worldwide mindmaps. Thanks to free trade and travel our material and social worlds have become global as well. This radical sociocultural change has since the last decade been preached all over the world with public institutions and business-interest organizations as megaphones. Since those carrying the globalization message mainly represent nations or super-nations such as the EU, the viewpoints of lower-level actors such as regions, localities, firms and individual citizens have seldom been considered. Paternalistically (super-)national bodies have instructed its subjects, not the least the many small firms that populate the (private) economy, what action to take. The basic message is: submit to the global forces – local is not beautiful any longer.

In a world where corporate forces and their assistant technology-driven regime rule a top-down, hierarchical perspective is only to be expected. Since these originate in metropolitan areas with a cosmopolitan life-style, concern for the cultural embedding of business and everyday life in regional and local contexts are becoming increasingly neglected as globalization proceeds. This does not mean that entrepreneurs and citizens have remained passive. If anything, economic and social experimentation beyond boundaries have increased. When the countries in former Eastern Europe opened their borders many small Swedish firms recognized the emerging business opportunities and established a supportive subcontractor system there. Reflecting upon the experiences gained, many of these pioneering firms have,

¹ In *The Role of SMEs and Entrepreneurship in a Globalised Economy*. Expert report no. 34 to Sweden's Globalisation Council. Stockholm: The Globalisation Council. Pp 41-58.

however, today rather restructured their national support systems and approached even more distant markets such as India and China. Young people got involved in movements such as Attac in order to channel reflection and propose alternative ways to cope with global challenges. The overall lessons seem to be that too general and therefore simplistic national policies easily become dysfunctional when applied by lower echelons in the economy.

There may be many reasons for the uniform response to the globalization process that neglects distinctive local features. The present response to global challenges appears as a reminiscence of the 'holistic' systems approach that occupied national governments, corporations and academics in the 1960s. Then the need for unlimited networking rather than a simplistic hierarchical world order had not yet been revealed. When this thinking appeared unproductive in the 1970s and 1980s firms took their own initiative to internationalize and communities mobilized local forces in order to cope with the increasing marginalization (Stöhr 1990). In the 1990s, as indicated, firms tried to build business bridges to other emerging economies, and some of them even by their very conception established global market connections. These 'born global' firms appeared as pioneers in the making of a new business practice. However, within the context of cosmopolitan values and practices these firms and the leaders behind were perceived only as representatives of the globalizing economy, not as the pathfinders towards a much more intriguing global setting. This emerging world, I propose, is that of a 'glocalized' society and economy alike. This is a society where global challenges call for regional/local tactics as much as national or supranational strategies. Why the latter response is needed for obvious reasons when it comes to global ecological change, the complex global socioeconomic fabric in contrast, where intentional action and coincidences combine, need multiple local responses.

Different agents contribute to the enactment of 'glocal' tactics where a **global** outlook guides **local** measures. 'Local' is then associated with an agent/actor, individual or collective, that takes action and interacts within a social and spatial setting that is possible to comprehend and thus 'control' in the sense that the outcomes of own initiatives can be imagined. Individuals in their own life-setting and firms in their local markets illustrate such situations where 'economies of overview' rule. In the Swedish

setting the financially strong municipalities with their qualified competencies may also benefit from such advantages. Larger administrative units, for example regional counties (in Sweden 'län'), run the risk of being caught in the middle, trying (in vain) to deal with global changes by way of traditional strategic approaches.

The purpose of this text is to elaborate on the generic argument that 'glocalization' and its associated tactics are needed to cope with global challenges. This perspective can be adopted from the point of view of the individual entrepreneur, the individual (small family) business and the locality/community. Thus, as a point of departure there is a need to properly identify the constitution, ambitions and capabilities of individuals, firms and localities (Section 2). In Section 3 the implications of these characteristics for the construction of a generic entrepreneurial strategy composed of glocal tactics are elaborated upon. Section 4 further embeds this discourse on glocal tactics in a framework that may frame (national) public-policy measures as well as initiatives taken by local stakeholders.

2. Featuring Entrepreneurs, Firms and Localities

In research (family business) owner-managers are often portrayed as rational profit-seeking agents. Although this helps advanced modelling as a scientific exercise, it means cutting corners when representing business realities and being adopted as a basis for policy-making and associated practical/normative advice. Not that such advice is declined – often it can be used to rationalize policy practice as an element of its organized hypocrisy (Brunsson 2003). However, providing policies which also make sense to those concerned – business people in the context where they do their living and practise their business – must be given fair attention.

Academics are also known to spare no efforts when it comes to differentiating between 'genuine' entrepreneurs and those running bread-and-butter businesses. The former, sometimes addressed as 'gazelles', are favoured since they are associated with opportunity construction/seeking and continuous firm growth. The latter, the traditional small firms, are presumably only concerned with survival and risk avoidance. Their venturing career is triggered by a need to become independent

or make a living in their domicile, which means that moving does not become a necessity. 'Gazelles' are expected to be profit-oriented and proactive on the market, systematically planning to successfully seduce external financiers. Traditional family businesses are allegedly reactive and consider external financial capital as a threat to their autonomy. The simplistic assumptions producing this dichotomy are, however, misleading. A study of Sweden's fastest-growing firms, the country's gazelles in 2002, most of which are family businesses and located all over the country, communicates quite a different image (Johannisson 2008). This comprehensive inquiry tells us that the weaknesses that conventional wisdom ascribes to (small) family businesses largely reflect the practice of these fast-growing firms and their owner-managers.

As regards the (wo)men behind the growth-oriented firms, less than one out of ten is driven by profit. The others are motivated either by enacting their own idea or crafting their own identity. This suggests that starting and running a business is as much about an existential as about an economic project, as much a way of life as a building block in a professional career. Obviously, irrationalities and emotions and not just deliberate action guide the choices business leaders make while practising their trade. Besides, the boundary between being an owner-manager and a private person with a (mostly) local life dissolves. Businesspersons, and with them businesses, are deeply socially embedded in the community context.

The successful (Swedish) owner-manager differs in several other ways as well from the stereotype produced by economic theory and further normative frameworks. Only a small minority (one out of ten) consider financial resources to be the most important form of capital when it comes to feeding the company. The other respondents, including the far majority, recognize either human or social capital as the most crucial form of capital for the development of the firm. All successful firms spend little time on planning – considering hands-on everyday enactment and also crafting visions much more important. What is more, neither pro-activity nor re-activity characterizes successful firms – inter-activity is the rule.

These features of owner-managed firms and their leaders, constituting the far majority of firms in all (free) economies, also propose strong ties between the

persons and their firms on the one hand, and the place where they reside on the other. For practical reasons most time is spent in their physical proximity, which makes different kinds of exchanges natural. Although not all localities can demonstrate the manifold proximities that an industrial district such as the Gnosjö region offers (Johannisson 2009), the firms and further stakeholders share a responsibility for the development of the community. There is a mutual dependence between the businesses and their leaders on one hand and the local community on the other. This means that involvement in local (business) life means enhancing the development conditions not only for each individual firm and its leader but for the community at large as well.

The distinction between the individual owner-manager, her/his firm and the locality is obviously an unfortunate construction by researchers and policy-makers alike. The creation of this trichotomy thrives on three interrelated myths. The first one concerns the misconception that the rational/cognitive element in human life can and should be separated from the irrational/emotional. Being action-oriented, passionate and social is not a drawback in the business-creation process but a basic condition for its enactment in the first place. The second illusion is that business creation is an economic event that emerges according to an individual's personal capabilities. However, to the extent that the firm crystallizes out of the continuously evolving personal network of the instigator, the entrepreneur and her/his associates, entrepreneurship is genuinely collective. The third misconception is that the dynamics of small rural communities is restricted to the few local, often small, firms. However, in such contexts different proximities – physical, cultural, social and organizational – embed each firm in a dense fabric of relations. Each network, not to speak of their interrelatedness within and beyond individual business-to-business relations, provides a multiplicity that can be used to deal with a global environment, for example for scanning information and enacting opportunities. Multiple networking reveals the real capacity of a local business community. The existence of 30 small firms in a locality is not an impressive number. Considering that these firms may establish 435 reciprocated relations in every network they establish, for example exchange for professional advice and production systems, however, reveals a story about local variety and potential. Cf. Johannisson, Nowicki, Alexandersson and Senneseth 1994 and Johannisson, Ramirez-Pasillas and Karlsson 2002.

There are several implications of a view that recognizes the social embedding of local small business activity and the mutual dependence between local business and social life. One is that the distinction between opportunistic and necessity entrepreneurship dissolves. First, opportunities emerge out of coincidences which are enacted in complex social processes, whether guided by effectuation (Sarasvathy 2001) or vision (Johannisson 2008). Necessity may be existential, that is associated with what makes life worth living, and not 'just' associated with the pressure to satisfy immediate material needs, as is often the case in developing economies. Also, the decision to start a business in the home district can for good reasons be regarded as an existential and moral necessity. In the Swedish welfare economy as well as in further European settings, people are more tied to place than in, for example, the mobile U.S. culture where footloose profit-seeking presumably directs entrepreneurial careers. In Europe in general and in Scandinavia in particular it is in the owner-managers' own interest to contribute to the development of the place where they live and run a business. Positive agglomeration economies, as originally pointed out by Marshall (1920), are obviously more frequent in local settings where (small) family businesses in few industries dominate than in local constellations where the permanent population is heterogeneous with respect to industry, size and ownership.

Recognizing the social dimension of entrepreneurship means identifying it as a genuinely collective phenomenon. This feature is already reflected in the (primary and extended) family's involvement in almost all new venturing and is explicit in team entrepreneurship. Generally, the enactment of the venture calls for the commitment of different stakeholders, notably resource providers and customers (Gartner, Bird and Starr 1992, Sarasvathy 2001). The collective character of entrepreneurship becomes even more obvious in localized clusters of small family businesses as we meet it in the Gnosjö region. The culture dominating in such settings, including the positive implications of the special Scandinavian version of social control, the 'Jante law', holds back entrepreneurship in individual firms. The collaborative features of such networked small-business communities, in the literature addressed as industrial districts (Becattini 1990), however, render them entrepreneurial capabilities as a collective. Gnosjö is Sweden's only one fully-fledged industrial district (Johannisson 2009). The dynamics of its business community has bestowed an outstanding

economic success on the region at large – in the 1990s it even outperformed Metropolitan Stockholm. Excluding advanced technology and further unique formal competences only leaves social explanations of the region's progress.

The attachment to place for historical-cultural reasons is strong in Sweden as a European setting and remains so in a globalizing world. In spite of the power of digital information technology, the need for the casual, face-to-face meetings that only physical proximity offers apparently does not seem to decrease. Ongoing qualitative research at Växjö University shows that even individuals giving birth to international firms ('born globals') in their venturing career are triggered by concern for the family or the locality and have kept their growing business in the place where they have their roots (Ghannad 2008). Research also suggests the superiority of personal networking and the social proximity it offers to other ways of organizing for entrepreneurship in general (Johannisson 2000) and knowledge diffusion in particular (Hägerstrand 1967, Singh 2005). Digital conversations only seem to trigger more intimate encounters between business partners at, for instance, international trade fairs (Ramirez – Pasillas 2007).

Obviously, there is no need to refer to the ongoing debate concerning sustainable (business) development and social entrepreneurship in order to (also) recognize entrepreneurship as social projecting. Nevertheless its vital importance to business creation and subsistence is seldom put on the agenda. However, researchers as well as practitioners who promote localized business alliances, whether we have innovation systems, clusters or more complex structures for business development such as Triple-Helix constellations in mind, pay little attention to the social dimension of (collective) economic activity. Formal agreements and codified knowledge, not relations based on trust and the insights that come out of experiential learning, are worshipped as the engines of growth. Paradoxically, in Sweden there is more concern for technological issues than for carrying out the entrepreneurial function, that of bringing products out on the market. Although Sweden holds a leading position in technological output, it is far below average with regard to entrepreneurial activity as reflected in new firm formation.

The disregard of non-rational factors (also) in the Swedish setting is all the more surprising, considering the long-term concern for industrial and business development as a collective and experiential process. More than half a century ago the Swedish economist Erik Dahmén (1988), forestalling much of the present research and political interest in systemic approaches to economic development, coined the notion of the 'development (competence) block'. Also inspired by Schumpeter's work on creative destruction, Gunnar Eliasson has brought this model for systemic industrial development further into a 'competence bloc', to which he ascribes six features: "1. Competent and active *customers*; 2. *Innovators* who integrate technologies in new ways; 3. *Entrepreneurs* who identify profitable innovations; 4. *Competent venture capitalists* who recognize and finance the entrepreneurs; 5. *Exit markets* that facilitate ownership change; 6. *Industrialists* who take successful innovations to industrial scale production." (emphasis in original) (Eliasson & Eliasson 2006:397; see also Johansson 2001).

However, neither Dahmén nor Eliasson are explicitly concerned with the regional dimension. Linking the competence-bloc framework to an image of the economy as experientially organized, Eliasson offers a bridge between entrepreneurially instigated high-tech agglomerations and low-tech industrial districts as emerging out of special production and living conditions. The boundaries between the functions that Eliasson's six key actors carry out are possibly more blurred in industrial districts due to their cultural and social embedding, a contextualization that is basically disregarded in the competence-bloc framework with its national focus.

To conclude, in parallel with amplifying globalizing forces, the understanding of the locality, the region or the community as a generator of entrepreneurial energy has deepened. This is reflected on both national and supranational (EU) political agendas by way of increased decentralization and dependence on local initiatives and in research into entrepreneurship and regional development, where the portion of published papers including a regional dimension has increased considerably over the last few years (Sternberg 2008). The question is, to what extent has that power been recognized beyond political rhetoric and academic discourse?

3. Glocalization: Origin, Process and Outcome

Scandinavian researchers contributed at an early stage to research on 'born globals', firms that at their very inception are oriented towards international markets (and therefore also addressed as international new ventures). See for example Madsen and Servais 1997, Moen and Servais 2002, Andersson and Victor 2003. An obvious challenge is to link this firm strategy to collective business activity, as outlined above. The industrial district and its member firms apparently epitomize the 'glocal' strategy meaning that: global competitiveness is gained through local collaboration. Here again Scandinavian researchers have made significant contributions, cf. e.g. Maskell, Eskelinen, Hannibalsson, Malmberg and Vatne 1998, Andersen, Böllingtoft and Christensen 2006. Onsager, Isaksen, Fraas and Johnstad (2007) demonstrate that glocalization as a generic collaborative and competitive approach is amplified when different kinds of proximity are taken into account.

The notions of 'glocal' and 'glocalization' no longer belong to some extraordinary academic jargon. Google (July 2008) offers more than 400,000 hits to the 'glocal' entry and a tenth of that number to 'glocalization'. Wikipedia's understanding of this concept is:

Glocalisation (or **glocalization**) is a **portmanteau** of **globalization** and **localization**. By definition, the term "glocal" refers to the individual, group, division, unit, organisation, and community which is willing and is able to "**think globally and act locally**." The term has been used to show the human capacity to bridge scales (from local to global) and to help overcome **meso-scale**, bounded, "**little-box**" thinking. The term '**glocals**' is often used to describe a new social class: expat managers who travel often and switch homes often, and are therefore both global and local. (Wikipedia 080715)

It goes without saying that this definition must be modified to cover our concern for entrepreneurship and business development. This is hardly an altogether new idea - Google offers (in July 2008) well over 1,500 hits where glocalization appears in the context of entrepreneurship. However, since the aim here is to elaborate upon glocalization as a generic entrepreneurial strategy, there is a need for a more detailed account of its origins, its process characteristics and its effects

on the conditions for business development and on economic as well as social change.

As regards the triggers of glocalization, a lot has been said above about the need for (local) cooperation in order to cope with increased global competition and the potentials offered by CIT (communication and information technology) to practise such a strategy. As pointed out by Hernes (2003), organized activity is three-dimensional, appearing in physical, mental and social space. What triggers the globalization process in an entrepreneurial setting is the pressure for a double identity, including being both a 'true' local in physical space and a 'genuine' nomad in mental space. Contrasting Florida's (2002) message the far majority of entrepreneurs are neither members of a creative class nor nomads. Mobility in mental space, acknowledging different value systems and cognitive maps, is however important also to entrepreneurs in order to catch up with ever-emerging global change. Interactions in social space, providing a fabric of both local and global personal networks, make the situated focus in physical space and the evasiveness in mental space coexist as a duality. Misguided rationalism make corporations as well as some members of the research community disregard these dynamics, cf. Shaver and Flyer 2000.

As regards its process characteristics glocalization may be both continuous and coincidental (Fletcher 2004). Some international business relations, an outcome of accidental meetings, mature over time and end up as strong ties to distant markets. Once such dyadic relations are established, the trust by which they create and are created is used to mutually introduce the business partner into the local context. This suggests that glocalization processes easily amplify and may well compensate for a marginal location in the home country. A rural business in Sweden doing business with a firm in China may in this way become linked to an urban setting with a population that exceeds that of Sweden. The outcomes of the glocalization process thus is an enforced regional identity and with that an increased awareness of the unique (collective) assets of a locality, cf. Maskell et

al. 1998. The local awareness and self-confidence that glocalization as a world view and practice generates offers a much needed setting for reconciling business venturing as an economic as well as an existential project.

4. Crafting Glocal Strategies on the Local, Regional and National Levels

Introducing the emergence metaphor into the strategy-making process in a business-firm context Henry Mintzberg intuitively provided a perspective that finally seems to have outmaneuvered simplistic normative models in the field (Mintzberg and Waters 1982). Today 'strategizing' as an emergent practice seems to be well established in the strategy research community (cf. e.g. Johnson, Langley, Melin and Wittington 2007). Elsewhere we also recognize its emergence as a generic feature of all entrepreneurial phenomena, which makes a multitude of 'tactics' replace omnipotent individual strategies as a basis for a dialogue with the contexts wherein (business) organizations operate (Hjorth, Johannisson and Steyaert 2003). To the local community may certainly be ascribed organizational features and it ideally provides a very complex organizing context with 'loosely coupled' (Weick 1976) agents, including both autonomous and interdependent business firms embedded in an all-encompassing social fabric. Supporting such spontaneous organizing and the collaborative efforts it generates on its own terms means tapping organically produced entrepreneurial energy, cf. Johannisson 1993. Inversely, if external forces put pressure upon such a local setting, the (business) community will presumably protest. As much as small-business leaders reject expert advice that does not reinforce their self-identity (Johansson 1999), self-organized localized business communities decline alien interventions (Johannisson 2000).

The economically and socially vital local community is where glocalization as a generic entrepreneurial strategy can emerge and be maintained. Such strategies appear as bundles of tactics reflecting local practices. 'Practices' then, according to Schatzki (2001:2), are "...embodied arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding." Rather than being reflected in a particular vocabulary, local practices appear as inimitable (inter)action patterns. Localized knowledge as a unique asset can only be used and enforced by those already involved, not by professionals equipped with academic knowledge and legitimizing

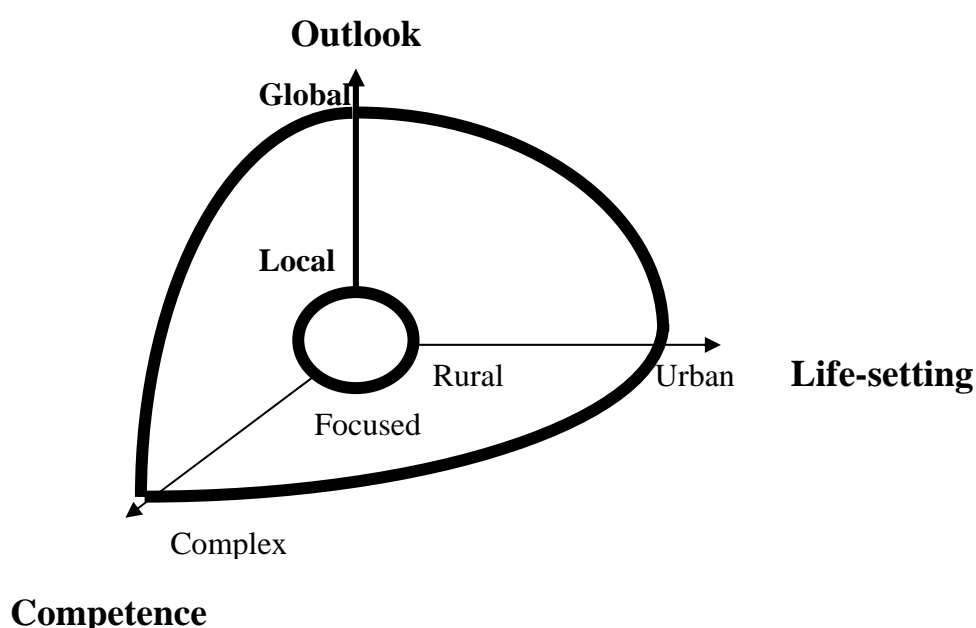
catchwords such as 'benchmarking'. This notion is based on the assumptions that there is one best way in which every locality is unique as is its road to success. Professional management tries to replace commitment to the firm and to the place as well as tacit knowing with knowledge that is general and thus erases whatever uniqueness there is, compare Maskell et al. 1998, Johannisson 2000.

Contrasting the quite extensive literature on 'born globals', see Ghannad (2008) for an overview, little research has so far been done on 'born glocals'. I see at least three reasons for this. First, research on entrepreneurship and small business focuses on the growing and internationalizing firm that breaks out of the local setting, perceived as a sociocultural iron cage. Second, many researchers as well as practitioners seem to want to keep the image of qualified localized low-tech rural clusters apart from the innovation systems and high-tech clusters that have been at the top of the agenda over the last decade. Third, considering simultaneously both the individual firm's and a (local) firm collective's economic as well as social aspects on business activity is presumably simply too much for policymakers and for the policy-implementation structure and its tail of consultants.

However, as argued in section 2 above, it is time to acknowledge not only the complexities but also the dynamics of local places as literally meaning-filling and entrepreneurs as not only profit-creating machines but also as human beings, intimately depending on a personal cognitive-emotive setting. Recent experiences, still to be systematically substantiated by research, suggest that the more globalized the economy becomes the more important the local anchoring turns out to be. The more advanced the digital information and communication technology grows to be the more important personal networking becomes. And the more efficiently the globalized economy can meet material needs, the higher the interest in genuine encounters between entrepreneurs/producers and customers/co-producers are in an emerging experience economy. Recognizing these developments and also overcoming the ideologically and cognitively constructed contradictions between explicit high-tech and tacit low-tech knowledge/technology, on the one hand, and the urban and rural way of life, on the other, suggests a dual world that requires 'glocal' approaches.

At present a discursive battle is going on between the adherents of two contrasting rationalities, one rational and under-socialized view - the 'functional rationale' - and one 'territorial rationale', which acknowledges irrationalities such as spontaneous (inter-)action in creative organizing and the need for improvisation in everyday business-making (Johannisson and Lindholm Dahlstrand 2008). In Figure 1 these two rationales are presented as an outer and inner graph qualified by three pairs of contrasting/supplementing concepts. Besides the global/local dichotomy as extremes on an *outlook* dimension, the exhibit presents the dominant *life-setting* in the territory (place) and the critical *competence* needed to materialize emerging ideas as basic elements of the model.

Figure 1 Globalization Encompassing Dual Rationales



Note: The outer, wider graph represents the functional rationale, the inner graph the territorial rationale.

Source: Johannisson and Lindholm Dahlstrand 2008

The life-setting dimension juxtaposes the *rural* and *urban* ways of life. Usually, we associate the rural way of life with peripheral locations involving strong, reciprocal bonds that sediment into informal institutions. In the urban life-setting ties are instead

weak and asymmetric, and formal arrangements dominate the institutional setting. The theoretical foundation of these two contrasting social orientations appear in the notions of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* put forward by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (1965). Where *Gemeinschaft* rules social interactions is an end in itself while they in the *Gesellschaft* setting are means for other ends such as wealth or influence. The third dimension, that of '*competence*', ranges from focused to complex. Focused competence here means approaching challenges with capabilities that the experience carried by the individual as a member of a community of practice has so far generated. 'Focused' thus does not (have to) mean trivial and standardized behaviour but rather refers to insights carried by a reflective practitioner. When a focused competence is at its best it emerges into qualified craftsmanship that over time becomes embodied and intuitive, superior to formal knowing and analytical reasoning. Complex competence emerges out of the ability to combine insights from the frontiers of different knowledge fields, constantly reconsidering the knowledge base that is in use. Such complex competence is usually associated with advanced science-based findings but may as well be found in art and in the humanities in general. Design is a field where aesthetics and science may combine into a unique competence.

The outer circular profile as reflecting a functional rationale is at present the dominant recipe for growth and economic development in contemporary society. It is carefully nurtured by a majority of policy-makers as well as by researchers studying spatial development. This rationale is associated with the global outlook of corporations, institutions and politicians that promote complex innovation systems within a world-wide frame of reference, systems which obviously only metropolitan areas can accommodate. The contrasting image, the inner profile reflecting a territorial rationale, according to a more unobtrusive public discourse, produces a rural community with an outlook that is limited by local norms and networks and whose competences are tied to traditions that concentrate a hands-on knowledge base to a few areas.

It is important to point out that the outer and inner profiles according to Figure 1 are proposed as contrasting ideal images, feasible for the sake of analyzing subsequent empirical findings. The circles also express prejudice and wishful thinking originating

in contrasting ideologies. The outer circle represents centrifugal forces which deny any confinement to a specific place. The inner profile, in contrast, originates in ideas put forward in this paper, arguing that any sustainable initiative has to be taken from inside local encounters in order to create uniqueness and viability. However, keeping the two rationales apart appears awkward considering their parallel discursive and empirical manifestations. With the vocabulary proposed by the French philosopher Deleuze it is more productive to see each pair of dual concepts as a 'contrariety', i.e. signifying two images that are different yet similar. The vitality of a region is thus constructed out of the awareness of keeping both (extreme) images alive in ongoing discursive and embodied practices. Talking about 'rural', 'local' and 'focused' without (also) having the contraries 'urban', 'global' and 'complex' in mind does not make much sense. We thus propose a *dual* rationale for a mindset and related (inter-)action repertoire that produces entrepreneurial energy out of the very tensions between the 'functional' and 'territorial' rationales and the associated centrifugal and centripetal forces. Recognizing such a duality suggests that local collaborative practices constructively use the tensions between rural/urban, local/global and complex/focused competence to instigate and maintain change. This means constructively bridging between location externalities associated with industry homogeneity and urbanization externalities originating in size and heterogeneity. Cf. Döring & Schnellenbach 2006.

There is reason to believe that the emergent experience economy will encourage the further practising of glocal tactics building a generic entrepreneurial strategy, whether as original collective venturing or as an outcome of refurbished industrial districts originating in the manufacturing-industry era. Further pressures towards glocal tactics may be generated on the individual level when entrepreneurs take on glocal identities. This will happen even if personal motives become increasingly influenced by universal values, while everyday (inter)activities will keep even entrepreneurs in place. Supporters of the traditional public-policy focus on (regional) innovation systems as well as on clusters will thus also benefit from a dual or glocal outlook. All the more since there is an increasing awareness of the need for and the feasibility of also considering the extremes of life-styles and competences in parallel, again very much thanks to the freedom offered in a digitalized world. How that freedom is used is up to individuals as entrepreneurs or citizens in their local context to decide.

One question remains: What are the roles of policy-makers on the national level in a world dominated by agents who practice glocal strategies? Acknowledging a federative organizing principle national policies and measures should focus on supporting and thus amplifying local and regional initiatives. National bodies may also provide arenas for exchange, as much on the national as on the international level. Public business support targeting individual firms should consider the interest and ability of firm's willingness and ability get involved in the local business community. An additional role of the national political system is to create an absorptive capacity among public agents, such as the universities, to provide regions, municipalities and further localities with tailor-made knowledge.

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