



Mapping the Super-Whale: Towards a Mobile Ethnography of Situated Globalities

Anders Blok

To cite this article: Anders Blok (2010) Mapping the Super-Whale: Towards a Mobile Ethnography of Situated Globalities, *Mobilities*, 5:4, 507-528, DOI: [10.1080/17450101.2010.510335](https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2010.510335)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2010.510335>



Published online: 23 Sep 2010.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 860



Citing articles: 13 View citing articles [↗](#)

Mapping the Super-Whale: Towards a Mobile Ethnography of Situated Globalities

ANDERS BLOK

Department of Sociology, Copenhagen University, Copenhagen, Denmark

ABSTRACT *In empirical discussion on global connections, frequent allusions are made to Michael Burawoy's 'global' and George Marcus' 'multi-sited' ethnographies. While both have inspired transnational fieldwork, neither methodological approach has sufficiently analysed the local-global dichotomy embedded at their core. Drawing on actor-network theory (ANT), this article suggests an alternative framework for mobile ethnography, better suited to a social world conceived in network-relational terms. Employing metaphors of mobility, scale-making, and cartography, an empirically driven approach to situated and plural 'globalities' is outlined. These claims are developed drawing on the author's inquiries into Japanese whaling practices, showing how 'ethno-socio-cartography' can contribute to the mapping of global-scale micro-cosmoses.*

KEY WORDS: Mobile methods; global-scale ethnography; actor-network theory (ANT); mapping; Japanese whaling

Ah, if only you were an ethnologist, you could stay in your village and draw nice maps. Whereas we sociologists have to drag ourselves around everywhere. Our terrains aren't territories. They have weird borders. They're networks, rhizomes. (Latour, 1996a, p. 46)

Introduction: What Ethnography for which Globalities?

In recent empirical discussion on world-spanning mobilities, a certain methodological conundrum has come to occupy an important position, arising from a juxtaposition of the local and the global. The underlying concern runs as follows: when researching global-scale social relations, how exactly are we to 'map' such connections empirically, particularly if we aspire to ideals of localized ethnographic fieldwork? Since the late 1990s, a rapidly growing body of work in the borderlands of anthropology and sociology has coalesced around mainly two interrelated strands of methodological suggestions on the issue: Michael Burawoy's 'global' and George Marcus'

Correspondence Address: Anders Blok, Department of Sociology, Copenhagen University, Øster Farimagsgade 5, Box 2099, DK-1014 Copenhagen K, Denmark. Email: abl@soc.ku.dk

1745-0101 Print/1745-011X Online/10/040507-22 © 2010 Taylor & Francis

DOI: 10.1080/17450101.2010.510335

'multi-sited' ethnographies (see Lapegna, 2009). Both frameworks have been widely endorsed and critically interrogated, and both have inspired transnational fieldwork, helping to break long-standing traditions of 'methodological nationalism' in the social sciences (e.g., Beck, 2005; Friedberg, 2001; Gille & Ó Riain, 2002; Gowan & Ó Riain, 2000; Hage, 2005; Hendry, 2003). For all their merits, however, a nagging question remains in both frameworks: what if the socio-spatial sites of local and global were set up in such a way as to *resist* all empirical mediation? What if the stretch is simply too huge and global multi-sited ethnography on a theoretical mission impossible?

Taking these questions as cue, and situating them within current debates on mobile methods in the social sciences (e.g., Sheller & Urry, 2006), this article has a twofold aim: first, to critically interrogate existing work on global-scale ethnography, in terms of how 'the global' is invoked for methodological purposes; and second, to suggest an alternative methodological framework, inspired mainly by Bruno Latour and his actor-network theory (ANT). The overall claim will be that a Latourian approach to global-scale ethnography is better suited, than its more well-known counterparts, to a social world conceived ontologically in relational, processual, and mobile terms. Neither Burawoy's global nor Marcus' multi-sited approach has arguably had much success in conceptually interrogating the otherwise much-criticized dualism of local versus global, ethnos versus cosmos, embedded in the epistemology of their own more-or-less mobile ethnographies (see Burawoy, 2000a; Lapegna, 2009; Marcus, 1995). Originating in ethnographic work on how techno-scientific objects come to circulate worldwide, ANT, by contrast, suggests a promising approach to the mapping of social relations *beyond* the local-global distinction. In this article, an ANT-inspired approach to global-scale ethnography is empirically illustrated using experiences gained by the author in researching, from within Japan, the social relations played out worldwide around controversial practices of Japanese whaling.

The central argument here is that, short of a literal socio-spatial reference, methodological invocations of 'the global' must be scrutinized for their social-relational qualities. An ANT approach starts (and ends) by articulating scepticism towards the entire project of 'mediating' a supposed local-global dichotomy, as seems implied when global multi-sited ethnographers attempt to link up local experiences to global forces (e.g., Burawoy, 2000b) or to the world system (e.g., Marcus, 1995). In such conceptual contrasts, local implies concrete *place*, and hence connote to familiarity, experience and embodiment, compatible with notions of ethnography. Global, by contrast, is often left behind as an abstraction, connoting the ultimate large-scale Euclidean *space*, things at once 'everywhere' and 'nowhere' (see Law & Mol, 2001). There is, in such distinctions, simply no way of experiencing the global, let alone of *mapping* it – except perhaps by putting oneself, literally or figuratively, in the God-eye position of an Earth-spanning satellite (see Ingold, 1993; Massey, 1991). This level of hyper-mobility, however, is hardly available to the 'earthly sciences' of social inquiry (Latour, 2007).

Now, rather than take this to suggest the impossibility of any global-scale ethnography, the purpose of this article is quite the opposite. The aim is to articulate an empirical approach to mapping networked global fields, referred to throughout, following sociologist John Law, as situated globalities (Law, 2004). The plural form here is a major part of the argument. Just as ethnography self-evidently deals with a multiplicity of specific places, the suggestion will be that we should be envisaging, and

ethnographically investigating, a multiplicity of mobile world-spanning processes, without invoking any deep dichotomy between local and global. This ethnographic imagination of situated globalities, I will argue, is exactly what ANT has to offer to the on-going ‘mobility turn’ in the social sciences, including how this turn, like ANT itself, reverberates through discussions in sociology (e.g., Urry, 2000b, 2007), science and technology studies (e.g., Law, 2002; Law & Mol, 1994), anthropology (e.g., Collier & Ong, 2005; Tsing, 2005), and cultural geography (e.g., Collinge, 2006; Davies & Dwyer, 2007). The way ANT is invoked here it embodies an ethnographically attuned sociology of ‘networks, mobility and horizontal fluidities’ (Urry, 2000a, p. 200), complementing other attempts to foster mobile methods for studying key global-scale challenges of our times (e.g., Büscher & Urry, 2009; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

The distinctiveness of ANT as a social ontology in this context stems from the way it deals with issues of socio-geographical scale-making: where exactly, on a ‘vertical’ scale – reaching from the body, home, region, nation, supranational entity, and finally, to the global – are dynamic social relations taking place? (see Collinge, 2006). Further, as ethnographer, how to keep this question of scale empirically open? This is where notions of global ethnography may prematurely settle *the* key empirical question of transnational social inquiry, by implying that the real action takes place *globally*. In what follows, I work my way from ‘global ethnography’ towards a mobile ethnography of situated globalities; and in the process, the term ethnography will change to ‘ethno-socio-cartography’, to signal an ethnographic interest in scale-making processes in their own right. As a mobile method, ethno-socio-cartography may thus be read in response to the question posed by Anna Tsing (2005, p. 3) in her ethnography of global friction: ‘Where would one locate the global in order to study it?’.

For the purposes of this article, the case of Japanese whaling has the virtue of being clearly and incontrovertibly an instance of globality, a global-scale ‘assemblage’ (see Collier & Ong, 2005). At the same time, it would be hard to confuse worldwide whaling controversies with notions of ‘seeing the global whole’: this specific globality is a micro-cosmos of very particular social relations. These seemingly contradictory qualities – of being both global and micro – are exactly what I need to illustrate my methodological claims. The idea is not to delve into any empirically satisfying discussions on Japanese whaling.¹ Rather, I use the ‘formal’ qualities of the case to illustrate instances of scale-making, and their deconstructions, found in my empirical material, and to reflect on how my own ethnographic mobility mirrors, or attempts to catch up with, the multiple scale-shifts of whaling actors. Hopefully, the brief auto-ethnographic intersections – positioned in-between the conceptual argumentation – will add some flavour to what is meant by a mobile ethnography of globalities. Part field notes, part narrative device and part post-hoc reflection on my own employment of ethno-socio-cartography, these intersections aim to gradually build up, in iterative style, a ‘partial mapping’ of the global micro-cosmos of whaling. Later on in the article, these threads come together in a specific instantiation of global flows: the complex movements of the Super-Whale image, weaving together a Japanese narrative of cultural resistance to Western domination. This fluid object is taken to illustrate the need for a mobile approach to mapping situated globalities.

Here I am, in my new local supermarket, in the city of Sendai northeast of Tokyo, having just arrived from Europe to study perceptions and practices of whales in Japan, and trying to learn enough Japanese to get by. Hidden on a back-store shelf, a picture grabs my attention: sure enough, this is a can of whale meat, the literal incarnation of the object that brought me here. I slowly read my way through the Japanese characters printed on the can: 'There are 760,000 minke whales alive in the world'. Really? This is not what the European media, let alone Greenpeace International, has told me. How do the producers know? Where does this figure come from? Answering this question will require an imaginative journey through long chains of associations, from the transnational science of cetology, through the politics of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), only to stop briefly at the Japanese Fisheries Agency in Tokyo. Can I, the mobile ethnographer, retrace all these global connections? Well, if I cannot, I will never know how this particular figure ended up on this particular can in this particular supermarket in Japan.

Global Multi-Sited Ethnography: Towards an ANT Critique

As Anna Tsing has recently pointed out in a conversation on 'anthropology after globalization' (Hirsch *et al.* 2007, p. 122), while there has been a rush of programmatic announcements, 'the actual ethnography of the global is still largely lacking'. This statement, surely, is not meant to disregard the masses of creative work attempting to situate 'globalisation' in a dense picture of historical, political, cultural and affective engagements with global imaginaries of diasporas, mass media stories, corporate networks, environmental disruptions, and so on.² Instead, what Tsing points out is that, strictly at the level of methods for studying the global ethnographically, much work still lies ahead. Arguably, so far, Burawoy's global and Marcus' multi-sited ethnographies have emerged as the two most *explicit* answers to this almost oxymoronic challenge. While clearly different in terms of research design and the construction of sites (see Lapegna, 2009), both frameworks, I argue, nevertheless entail a problematic invocation of 'the global', in effect hindering the kind of ethnographies of global connection called for by Tsing and others.³ Adding an ANT sensibility of situated globalities, I suggest, will carry more potential for mobile ethnographers.

Let me start by making a few observations on Michael Burawoy's global ethnography, which only superficially resembles my ANT-inspired concerns with scale-making. As Burawoy makes clear, what brings social researchers together under this heading is the idea of sharing a common context, that of the 'globe'. He goes on to explain that his project started by using 'secondary constructions to create a picture of the "global" economy, polity, and culture as composed of forces constituted beyond our sites' (2000a, p. 29). Notice, however, that both instances of scare quotes stem from Burawoy himself. Globe and global, he seems to be suggesting, are not quite as straightforward as sometimes implied. Indeed, Burawoy self-reflexively questions whether in fact he himself ever transcended national boundaries to become a *global* ethnographer (2000a, p. 24; see also Burawoy, 1998, p. 20). Either way, being hesitant when speaking of the global is consistent with one of his major conclusions, namely that rather than *one* globalisation, we are faced with grounded globalisations in the plural (2000b, p. 341). Grounding – in the sense of looking into lived experiences – is exactly what ethnography is all about, global or otherwise.

Before moving into a closer, and more critical, exploration of Burawoy's so-called extended case method of global ethnography, together with Marcus' associated calls for a multi-sited approach, let me make clear that I very much share the vision of an ethnographic sociology of grounded globalisations. For reasons that will become clear further on, however, I prefer to talk about socio-spatially grounded, or situated, *globalities*, so as to not confuse the methodological task of mapping globe-making projects with the theoretical task of outlining general social changes brought about by globalisation (see Law, 2004). This may seem a minor conceptual issue, but it masks a much wider-reaching divergence, given that both Burawoy and Marcus embed their global ethnographies within quite particular theoretical commitments, both broadly located in traditions of Marxist political economy. My concern here, then, is whether such commitments are helpful in furthering the methodological agenda of empirically mapping mobile, world-spanning connections?

Let me concentrate on one salient conceptual strategy in Burawoy's approach, embodying what I take to be problematic about global ethnography: his distinction between forces, connections, and imaginations, as three different types of global relatedness. Put simply, as Burawoy employs them, these concepts come to conflate a number of different problems: a question of 'degrees' of post-nationalism; a question of structure and agency; a question of power differentials; *and* a question of method. My real contention here is with the notion of global forces. In Burawoy's social ontology, global forces (whatever else they may be) are the *real* actors behind the scene of any local ethnography, as evidenced by statements such as the following:

The global force makes itself felt through mediators that transmit it as their interest or as the subjective internalization of values or beliefs. The locality in turn can fight back, adapt, or simply be destroyed. (2000a, p. 29)

While speaking the language of studying globalisation from below, Burawoy's social ontology seems to achieve the exact opposite, by turning global forces into all-powerful actors threatening localities. Why this double bind? From Marxist political economy, Burawoy seems to already *know* which global forces (i.e., world capitalism) are at work *everywhere*, including their effects on the powerless 'on the ground' (e.g., the laid-off factory workers) (see Burawoy 2000b, p. 344ff). The underlying issue is one of power structures: global forces (structures) oppress local people (actors); global connections and imaginations are what powerful actors do to re-structure the world.

The problem here has less to do with Marxist political economy, and more with the fact that, by deriving powerful global forces from pre-existing theory, Burawoy turns ethnographic interpretation into an almost deductive derivation (Abbott, 2007, p. 88). To counter this tendency, we should invoke what Fujimura (1991, p. 208), in a different context, calls the indeterminacy of perspectives: knowing which type of globality (or globalities) to nest a piece of ethnography into is exactly *the* main question of any global-scale mobile ethnography. Capitalism, we may note, is not necessarily the only relevant type of globality in fields of transnational social relations. Further, the distinction between forces and connections is inherently unstable, as Burawoy himself concedes, stating that 'global forces are constituted by global connections' (2000a, p. 30). Why not, then, do away with the notion of global forces? The answer,

to Burawoy, seems wholly pragmatic: ‘There are simply limits to the temporal and spatial reach of participant observation, beyond which we substitute forces for processes’ (1998, p. 23). A methodological limitation is here turned into a social ontology, with huge explanatory consequences. In essence, Burawoy is suggesting that mobile ethnographers should go on documenting global connections until they run out of energy (or research funding), at which point connections are conceptually turned into ‘global forces’. Perhaps we would be better off, however, admitting our situational limitations?

This is where a connection should be made between the global ethnography of Burawoy and the multi-sited ethnography of George Marcus. Both versions of non-local ethnography share a commitment to macro-theories of the capitalist world system; but they differ crucially when it comes to locating these macro-views in social relations (see Lapegna, 2009). As Marcus puts this point, referring to Wallerstein’s world system theory, ‘this perspective has itself become fragmented, indeed, “local” at its very core’ (Marcus, 1995, p. 98). Generalized to all of theory, this is equivalent to claiming (contra Burawoy) that ethnography has no access to transposable global forces. Indeed, Marcus draws a consistent but very far-reaching consequence, claiming that ‘for ethnography, *there is no global* in the local-global contrast so frequently evoked now’ (Marcus, 1995, p. 99, author emphasis). Instead, what mobile ethnographers should be doing is to literally follow connections and associations linking various places. Doing so, Marcus suggests, the multi-sited ethnographer will map entirely new social territories beyond the local-global contrast. The social, in short, will start to look more like networks and less like ‘world capitalism’ or ‘the nation’ (Marcus, 1995, p. 102).

From what I have said so far, it should come as no surprise that Marcus’ multi-sited imagination fits an ANT-inspired mobile agenda much better than does Burawoy’s global ethnography. Indeed, the work of Latour is one of Marcus’ sources of inspiration. One crucial meeting point, here, is a common interest in processes of mapping, including what might be called ‘ethno-cartography’. As Marcus puts this:

Sorting out the relationships of the local to the global is itself a salient and pervasive form of local knowledge that remains to be recognized and discovered in the embedded idioms and discourses of any contemporary site which can be defined by its relationship to the world system. (1995, p. 112)

As will be shown, an ANT approach similarly entails the language of cartography, explaining why I find it helpful to talk of ethno-socio-cartography rather than ethnography. For now, coming from an ANT perspective, only two short caveats against Marcus’ conception must be noted: first, relations between local and global are not simply semiotic (‘idioms and discourses’) but also material; second, sites are not necessarily related to a somewhat unspecified world system, but rather to one or more specifiable global-scale ‘oligoptica’ (as defined in the next section).

By way of summing up, both of these caveats then serve to move us into a more positive exploration of ANT-style ethnographies of globalities, having attempted to sort out what is valuable from what is expendable in Burawoy’s global and Marcus’ multi-sited ethnographies. Fundamentally, I argue, we should retain Burawoy’s methodological ambition of paying close ethnographic attention to *grounded*, or

situated, globalities. However, this necessitates a greater respect for the indeterminacies of social theory and global forces, notions that should be handled with precaution in the ethnographic process. This standpoint is much closer to Marcus' approach, which is valuable for emphasizing the mapping of connections between far-away localities without invoking global determinations. However, as previously quoted, Marcus still retains an ambiguous commitment to notions of *the* world system, compromising *globalities* in the plural. This leaves us with a clear notion of what an ANT-inspired mobile ethno-socio-cartography should ideally deliver: first, a coupling of the semiotic and the material; and second, a multiplication of globalities, which nevertheless retains the power-inflections and specific histories of scale-making projects, from local to global.

On the plane to Tokyo, I read a giant book called 'The History of Modern Whaling', written by Norwegian scholars. Ever since the early 19th century, I learn, whaling has been embroiled in histories of interstate competition and global capitalist expansion. Surely then, to understand current-day Japanese whaling, I simply need to understand its economic logic of accumulation? Changing my reading to a 2005 consultancy report found on the Internet, written for an Icelandic whaling company, I'm in for a small surprise: the current-day Japanese whaling 'industry' consists of just one company, employing a mere 500 workers, and entirely dependant on state subsidies. Further, the Icelandic authors believe that the Japanese market for whale-meat is too small for commercial exports. This is global connections, or perhaps global disconnections, dynamically reshaped in historical conjunctions. What used to be a 'world market' for whale meat has become a national 'Japanese' market, which, when seen from the inside, is really a small trans-local network of retailers. From global to national to trans-local: the geographical scales of social life seldom remain fixed for long.

ANT Network Ontology: Situated Globalities

What would it entail to move *beyond* the local-global dichotomy, without retaining Marcus' ambivalence – that is, without, on the one hand, abandoning the notion of the global altogether, and yet, on the other, still talk of a world system? In a nutshell, the route taken by Bruno Latour and other actor-network theorists – the route I will be joining now – is to adopt a thoroughly topological thinking. The epitome of this is the concept of the network itself. Contrary to notions of regions or fields, networks simply do not lend themselves easily to any scaling between the local, the national and the global. In other words, the network metaphor builds on entirely different topological presuppositions from socio-geographical regions (Law & Mol, 1994, p. 650). Generally speaking, ANT is the social theory that attempts to draw as many conclusions as possible from this small observation: it 'does not wish to add social networks to social theory but to rebuild social theory out of networks' (Latour, 1996b, p. 369). As will be shown, this has far-reaching consequences for attempts at global-scale mobile ethnography, for, as Latour notes (1993, p. 122), networks 'are by nature neither local nor global'.

To return to the contrast between local places and global space, networks thus entail a quite different scenography, comparable to a figure/ground reversal (see Strathern, 2002). Rather than seeing 'local' places as what is always-already nested

inside ‘global’ spaces, ANT starts methodologically from unconnected places, investigating all the different procedures allowing for commensurable connections, or spaces, to historically emerge at all (Latour, 1996b). Networks are about nodes with multiple connections. More often than not, the connections investigated by ANT analysts involve some form of techno-science – the reason being that sciences and technologies are uniquely powerful in forging durable, long-lasting connections among localities (Law & Mol, 2001). To ‘globalise’ something in a network world means to displace an entity – say, a scientific fact – to many hitherto unconnected places spread out more-or-less planet-wide. This is what Latour calls ‘immutable mobiles’: entities (like technologies, graphs, statistics) capable of travelling without (major) deformations. To adopt one of his common-sense examples of such virtual mobility: you can be one metre away from someone in the next telephone booth, and nevertheless be more closely connected to your mother 6,000 miles away.

Notably, sorting out what is local from what is global in a world-spanning telephone (or, any other technological) network would be rather difficult. This is a crucial point for the notion of global-scale ethnography:

Instead of having to choose between the local and the global view, the notion of network allows us to think of a global entity – a highly connected one – which remains nevertheless continuously local. (Latour, 1996b, p. 372)

To expand on the telephone example, social and geographical distance thus seems to disentangle: indeed, this is why you are *closer* to your otherwise distant mother. We could talk of ‘time-space compression’ here (e.g., Harvey, 1989), but this would obscure the practical work of technologies of attraction – such as telephone cables, voice amplifiers, and so on – all situated somewhere and co-acting in your conversation. To put this point differently, the social ontology of ANT refuses to privilege either the local or the global; instead, it privileges *displacements* themselves, the travelling of (im)-mutable mobiles, and the forging of new connections between sites. Circulation is primary, while stabilizations, local *and* global, are temporary and contested. In many ways, ANT is ‘mobile theory’ par excellence: an ontological attack, as it were, on any type of categorical immobility (see Law & Mol, 2001).

In today’s world, localities are linked up, materially and discursively, with numerous other localities, often – although by no means always – making for more-or-less global-scale connections. Rather than taking local or global, micro or macro, as departure points, however, mobile ethnography should take these opposing sites as only provisional end-points. The real task of mobile ethnographic inquiry, on this view, is to understand the very production of ‘local’ and ‘global’, of localities and globalities. This is where ANT differs most starkly from Burawoy’s global ethnography, and also where it adds to existing mobile methods in the social sciences, since it is the very work of scale-making, of assuming global importance, which should be empirically analysed. Alongside ethno-socio-cartography, we may thus think of this as ‘ethnographies of scale-making’, in that we cannot take the global as an already-existing context. The global is what actors may, or may not, be projecting, building or otherwise achieving, and thus represents one amongst other situated standpoints (Law, 2004; Tsing, 2005). To put this programmatically, Latour maintains that scale is ‘what actors achieve by *scaling*, *spacing*, and *contextualizing* each other’

(2005, p. 184f, original emphasis). Hence, it is *not* the job of the mobile ethnographer to decide in advance at what scale – from the local to the global – any set of social relations unfold.

Importantly, however, this approach to social inquiry in no way entails a disregard of emerging scale and power differences; indeed, ANT is unique in linking the micro-macro distinction directly to the unfolding of power relations (see Callon & Latour, 1981). Hence, contrary to the ‘scale-effacing’ suggestions of Marcus – i.e., that the global is simply ‘local knowledge’ – ANT favours the symmetrical view that local and global are equally unlikely end-points of situated social processes. Social life, quite straightforwardly, takes place in-between these extremes. There is hence no problem in speaking of *relative* scale- and power-differences – more micro or more macro – but we should avoid the idea of one single, overarching totality in social life. As Callon and Latour puts this (1981, p. 294), by reference to Hobbes: ‘there is not just *one* Leviathan but many’.⁴ This is why the notion of global is potentially misleading:

What would be the use of having left the shadow of totalitarianism, to fall into the ‘globalonneys’ of globalization, ‘total’ and ‘global’ being two words for the common world obtained without due process? (Latour, 2000b, p.120)

Due process, amongst other things, is a question of method: of tracing and mapping, as detailed as possible, the network, assemblage or territory under study.

Clearly, we now find ourselves in need of new metaphors to talk about the relatively large-scale but-not-quite ‘global’; and ANT indeed offers such concepts. Let me stick to two – the ‘oligopticon’ and the ‘panorama’ – which represents the closest we get to Latour’s articulation of situated globalities (2005, p. 181ff). Needless to say, the oligopticon is modelled on the panopticon, but contrary to the latter, oligoptica never surveys a totality, always providing only narrow viewpoints on some connected micro-cosmos. Oligoptica are nodes in networks, or centres of calculation,⁵ commanding power to influence or dominate other localities, however far-removed in socio-geographical terms. Examples of oligoptica are legion: scientific laboratories, army headquarters, corporation boardrooms, Hollywood, the World Bank, CNN editorial offices, and, of course, nation-state bureaucracies. These sites all work at macro-structuring parts of reality, but they only achieve such power-effects as long as they uphold semiotic, material and embodied connections with multiple localities. Further, and this is the key methodological point, these connections are all amenable to being ethnographically documented. Doing so, the notion of ethnography may have to expand, in order to encompass infrastructures (Star, 1999), bureaucratic documents (Harper, 1998; Riles, 1998), expert cultures (Knorr Cetina, 2007), and remotely-sensed bodies (McCormack, 2008). But there is no need to turn the macro-structuring work of oligoptica into abstract ‘global forces’. On the contrary, mapping the circulation of images, objects, information and affects within such infrastructures is an important task of mobile methods in general, and ethno-socio-cartography in particular.

Whereas oligoptica thus thrive on being sturdily connected, panoramas work in the opposite direction, producing pictures of ‘global wholes’ whose connections to out-there realities remain uncertain. A panorama, as any cineaste will know, is a

procedure for total visualization, fully encircling the spectator, and hence creating the sense of all-encompassing overview. Every time a newspaper columnist sums up ‘the state of globalisation’ or an environmentalist refers to ‘our threatened planet’, we are in the realm of panoramas. This wording entails no criticism: while one should never confuse the map (panorama) with the territory (network), good panoramas are invaluable for their affective, inter-personal, social scientific and politically creative effects, much like global imaginations in Burawoy’s framework. The advantage of the notion of panorama is, first, to stress that global images are always produced and circulated within specific social territories. Second, all panoramas are socially performative, which means that, by contrast to Burawoy (2000a), social scientific theories no longer enjoy any a-priori advantages over the ethno-theories of other actors, when it comes to projecting global social realities (see Law & Urry, 2004).

By way of summing up, oligoptica and panoramas are constitutive parts of a new social topology, both substituting for the notion of the global. The implications for global ethnography should be evident: rather than nesting local experiences within global forces, mobile ethnographers need to document the displacements of people, images, affects, texts, money, and technologies, paying close attention to oligoptic network nodes and panoramic imaginations. Hence, rather than assuming that the global is always-already there, particular attention should be paid to ‘scale-making projects’ (Tsing, 2005): the very work of forging globalities-in-the-making. Ethnography, in this rendering, blends into the increasingly important cartographic task of tracing and mapping global-scale networks, flows, and assemblages:

Like those satellite imaging systems that enable navigators to keep track of their relative positions at all times, [ANT] can provide the actors with cartographical outline of overflows in progress, thereby paving the way for preliminary negotiations. (Callon, 1998, p. 263)

This type of ANT-inspired cartography is no longer about ‘deep immersion’ in a local life-world. Indeed, constitutive parts of contemporary local realities are themselves trans-locally distributed and mobile, as symbolized by the ‘760,000 minke whales’ figure printed on the can of whale meat in my new Japanese life-world.

To avoid confusing different knowledge-making practices, and to acknowledge concerns about the ‘thinning out’ of multi-sited ethnographies (e.g., Friedberg, 2001), I suggest talking here of ethno-socio-cartography.⁶ Ethno-socio-cartography is about mapping trans-local connections through mobile ethnography. Needless to say, we will need all tools of the trade, from fieldwork to interviews, text analysis, visual sampling, historical archives – and some newer ones, like Web-based hyperlink tracing (Rogers & Marres, 2000) and time-space diaries (Büscher & Urry, 2009) – to fulfil this promise. The scope of the job ahead, however, is no excuse for evading the task. Clearly, as compared to the ‘thick’ understandings obtainable from single-site ethnography, ethno-socio-cartography will sometimes have to settle for ‘flatter’ images, in order to obtain a wider extension of associations. To some extent, this is a necessary effect of switching to a network topology; as such, it only really constitutes a problem when evaluated by the norms of the ethnographic tradition. Ethno-socio-cartographic methods are simply meant to support a rather different research agenda. In order to differentiate this approach to global-scale inquiry from globalisation

studies per se, it will prove helpful to align it with an emerging micro-sociology of globalities, now under way in science and technology studies (e.g., Knorr Cetina, 2007; Law, 2002). Towards such ends, ethno-socio-cartography, I contend, will present new and promising rules of mobile methods for the social sciences.

Contemporary Euro-Americans all know that whales are endangered animals; but how is this knowledge possible? Consider the techno-scientific practices of genetic monitoring, as played out in the story of 'whale #26', published in the January 1999 edition of Nature (Cipriano & Palumbi, 1999). Born in the North Atlantic near Iceland in 1965, to a blue whale mother and a fin whale father, this 21.5 metre giant was formally 'protected' by the 1986 IWC moratorium on commercial whaling, but nevertheless harpooned for 'research' by Icelandic whalers in 1989. Shipped to Japan around 1990, a small part of 'whale #26' then reappeared as a box of whale meat in an Osaka department store in 1993, only to be sampled and scandalized by environmental-minded US researchers. In this story, whales, genetic researchers, natural science texts, and bureaucratic regulations all travel in interweaving networks. Organisations such as IWC serve as an oligopticon, tying together practices of whale classification, counting, and regulation in a transnational assemblage of scientific-political surveillance. Protecting endangered whales is a scale-making project of globe-wide proportions; understanding why whaling continues in Japan requires close attention to the details of such transnational practices and how they come to be mediated in, and opposed by, the panoramas of Japanese scientists, politicians and activists.

Ethno-Socio-Cartography: Mapping Whale Assemblages

The sharp contrast between Burawoy's global ethnography and ANT-inspired ethno-socio-cartographies should now be fairly obvious. To reiterate the difference, whereas Burawoy privileges global forces constructed from theoretical resources, the ANT mobile methodology turns globality into a key ethnographic topic of inquiry in its own right. Globality, in the ANT sense, is what actors may, or may not, be actively achieving through practices of forging global connections – oligoptica and panoramas – through technical infrastructures of immutable mobiles, displacements of administrative regulations, the circulation of images, people and affects, or the spread of standardised value regimes (see Collier & Ong, 2005, p. 11ff). Globalities, in other words, are all about the mobile circulation of different socio-material entities, all amenable to being empirically traced in their specificity within situated assemblages. In this section, the whaling assemblage will serve as illustration of such situated globality, in order to explore one version of how ethno-socio-cartography is practiced, using a combination of ethnographic observation, Internet research, and critical text analysis.

Speaking of globalities, or of the global in the space of assemblages, is meant to convey an interest in situating global connections within what Pálsson and Rabinow term the 'specific historical, political, and economic *conjuncture* in which an issue becomes a problem' (2005, p. 94, author emphasis). It is in the conjunctures, or frictions (Tsing, 2005), between different network trajectories – including the circulation of powerful abstractions like money, law and science – that specific 'mobile issues' emerge for empirical inquiry. Studying the specificities of whaling controversy, in and around Japan, is exactly to study such a situated and 'minor' history, which

nevertheless speaks to the core of contemporary ethical and political concern with global environmental protection. Japanese whaling is embroiled in a global-scale, yet very specific, assemblage of relations, forming a micro-cosmos of conflicting interests, identities and affects around anti- and pro-whaling positions (see Blok, 2008). The mobile methodology advocated here is meant to facilitate the careful mapping of the contours of these micro-cosmoses, as the ‘actually existing globalities’ so often made invisible in the theoretical over-abstractions of ‘globalisation’.

In this conceptual and practical process, ‘the global’ undergoes a double multiplication. First, by situating the global within a space of assemblages, as fields of relations organised around specific issues, we need to envisage a plurality of partly overlapping, partly disconnected assemblages, all dynamically evolving over time (see Marres, 2007). Whaling provides a good illustration: protecting endangered whales is an issue for specific political, scientific, and advocacy organisations, involving specialised forms of expertise, public arenas of negotiation, dynamics of conflict, and acts of staging non-human charisma (see Lorimer, 2007). Simply assuming, prior to ethnographic study, that whaling controversies should ‘mirror’ broader dynamics of global biodiversity and environmental protection, for instance, would be to obscure much of the historical and cultural specificity of this assemblage. In short, partial connections, or disconnections, between plural global-scale assemblages are themselves part of the empirical field of inquiry. This attention to situated practices, even as these extend globally, justifies talking about a *micro*-sociology of globalities.

The second sense in which the global is multiplied will become apparent by exploring further the different topographies of global-scale actor-networks. As already noted, the network metaphor relies on entirely different topological presuppositions from standard social scientific notions of socio-geographical spaces conceived as regions, nations or cultures. This simple observation has far-reaching consequences, because it implies that, even within a particular global micro-cosmos, *different* spatial principles of connectedness may well be at work. This was impossible to conceive of as long as ‘global’ simply denoted one all-encompassing space; once rid of this unimaginative notion, however, social inquiry is free to deal with a plurality of spatial forms, all implying some form of circulation, mobility and fluidity. Indeed, work in this direction is well underway within discussions on so-called ‘post-ANT’ (see Gad & Jensen, 2010; Law & Mol, 1994, 2001) – and here I simply want to illustrate a few of the implications for ethno-socio-cartography. I do so by highlighting a very particular empirical instance of global connection: the complex movements of the Super-Whale phantom, as it weaves together a Japanese defence of whaling. The point of this story is to illustrate the *internal* spatial multiplicity of globalities: as region, network, fluid and fire. The story, however, requires a bit of ethnographic context.

On a sunny September Sunday in 2006, I participated as observer in a public symposium on whales as food culture, or *geishokubunka*, in the Northern Honshu fishing town of Ishinomaki, traditionally an important port for Japanese whaling activities. As part of the symposium, Mr. Morishita Joji,⁷ head of the by-far most powerful organization in Japanese whaling politics, the Fisheries Agency, gave a 15-minute presentation on the history of global whaling politics, as seen from his screen in Tokyo. In what amounted to an emotionally charged panorama of Japanese pro-whaling policies, he talked about the injustices of the culturally insensitive Western anti-whalers. He talked about the scientifically proven abundance of minke whales in

the Antarctic ocean, invoking the same iconic figure of ‘760,000’ that I had previously encountered in my Sendai supermarket. Most importantly in this context, Mr. Morishita also talked about the Super-Whale: this, he explained, pointing to a cartoon image of a whale dressed in bow tie and holding a microphone, is how anti-whaling Westerners think about whales. They imagine the whale as a highly intelligent, socially complex, caring and singing friend of humanity. Of course, Mr. Morishita continued – showing a scale weighing the giant whale equally against a small cartoon fish – whales are in fact no more intelligent than dogs or goldfish. This comment won rounds of laughter from the audience of roughly 450 mostly middle-aged Japanese citizens.

Much could be said about global whaling controversies from this brief ethnographic snippet, touching on issues of how scientific numbers, cultural-nationalist sentiments, and the cultural relativity of animal charisma all become embroiled in a particular, ideologically charged narrative of unequal global relations. This is not really my intention here. Instead, I want to focus on a particular set of questions: how did the Super-Whale end up in this narrative; and what is the relation between the Super-Whale image and the 760,000 minke whales also evoked in Morishita’s panorama? The reason for focusing on these interrelated questions is that they lend themselves to an important methodological point: rather than reflect some ‘indigenous’ cultural beliefs, Morishita’s narrative takes us into a world of routine global reflexivity (see Riles, 2008). The figurative and numerical resources assembled by this Fisheries Agency spokesperson in front of his local Ishinomaki audience relies for their rhetorical efficiency and affective credibility on a variety of complex networks, mobilities and fluidities. My job as an ethno-socio-cartographer, simply, is to map these assemblages.

Starting with the 760,000 minke whales, what is emerging from my observations so far, we might say, is a landscape of scientific knowledge-making, or more precisely, a topography of a *partially existing* scientific fact (see Latour, 2000a). Discerning the genealogy of this partially existing fact requires a bit of archival work into the science-politics of what is known internationally as ‘Japanese research whaling’, the legal-bureaucratic designation for Japanese practices of hunting, killing, observing, measuring, numerically translating and subsequently eating – usually in specialized whale meat restaurants – approximately 900 Antarctic minke whales annually.⁸ These practices were established by political elites in the late 1980s, and they continue to this date, embroiled in international protest. The 760,000 population count for Antarctic minke whales emerged from international efforts, heavily coordinated by Japanese scientists, in the early 1990s, and has since served as scientific justification of future ‘sustainable whaling’ amongst Japanese pro-whaling elites. From my interviews with government-sponsored scientists and pro-whaling advocates in Japan, the impression is that this figure is mostly taken for granted.

So far, the information just provided amounts to little more than localized ethnography, together with readings of widely available textual sources. Ethno-socio-cartography becomes crucial, however, when we start noting the socio-spatial territories drawn up by the 760,000 minke whale figure. As already suggested, this figure routinely pops up in characteristic places within Japan: it appears in governmental research reports, newspaper articles, museum exhibitions on whaling histories, and, as noted, on cans of whale meat. In short, this numerical device enjoys widespread

visibility in Japanese public spaces, with discernable effects on Japanese public opinion on whaling (see Bowett & Hay, 2009). Internationally, however, the figure hardly behaves like a Latourian immutable mobile; in fact, it behaves rather like the ‘mutable (im)-mobiles’ identified by post-ANT (Law & Mol, 2001). The figure, first of all, is under review in the legal-scientific bureaucracy of the IWC, in what appears a never-ending process of ‘mistrust in numbers’. Just as importantly, it hardly ever appears in Euro-American media reports or NGO discourses, which rely overwhelmingly on the language of animal welfare and charisma (see Murata, 2007). Partially existing scientific facts, in short, do not flow globally without effort and support.

The Super-Whale: Topologies of Embodied Globality

Let me turn now to the Super-Whale figure, and make a related, but slightly different, ethno-socio-cartographic point. Listening to Morishita’s narrative in Ishinomaki, I was immediately able to trace the Super-Whale connection: it stems from the work of Norwegian social anthropologist Arne Kalland, a long-time critic of Anglo-Saxon anti-whaling social movements. Of course, most people in the audience would conceivably have no inkling of this connection, relating to the Super-Whale in a more embodied fashion. However, having previously read most of Kalland’s work, and knowing about his affiliations with the Japanese whaling establishment, it was immediately clear to me where Morishita had gained his inspiration. The Super-Whale, in fact, is a textual construct coined by Kalland in the early 1990s, as part of his explicit denunciation of then-emerging anti-whaling discourses (e.g., Kalland, 1994). As ethno-socio-cartographer, I was becoming enough of an insider to the global micro-cosmos of whaling assemblages to start tracing in more detail the circulation of this curious object, an ideologically charged image of a singing whale.

Exactly how are we to interpret this connection between Kalland and Morishita, however, mediated through the circulating image of the Super-Whale? This is where notions of region, network, fluid and fire will prove useful. To begin with, we may imagine the usual geo-political map of the world, roughly separating nations according to anti- and pro-whaling inclinations. This is a *regional* map of the world, and it will show a crucial similarity between Norway and Japan: in both countries, political elites struggle to maintain the right to commercial whaling, against fierce ‘global’ criticism (see Blok, 2008). This, however, tells us little about the specific connection manifested through the Super-Whale. To pursue this further, we need some biographical research into the work of Arne Kalland. Searching the Internet for publications, one discovers an unusual academic-political mobility: between 1986 and 1994, Kalland formed part of a group of 23 foreign anthropologists invited to Japan by the Japanese government in order to document – scientifically and politically – the cultural aspects of its coastal minke whaling operations (Kalland, 1998, p. 20). Throughout this work, Kalland has sustained a vocal criticism of anti-whaling groups for failing to take account of cultural diversity, and for ignoring the hardships suffered by marginal hunting communities, in Japan and elsewhere, from the international ban on whaling (Kalland & Sejersen, 2005). Kalland’s work, one discovers, is widely cited.

Once again, none of these observations require much ethnographic work, beyond the usual reading of secondary sources for research contextualization. The important

ethno-socio-cartographic insight, however, emerges at the conjunction of this textual universe of academic anthropology, on the one hand, and the embodied realities of enthusiasm for whale meat manifested at the Ishinomaki meeting, on the other. Encountering a Super-Whale in Morishita's Ishinomaki panorama provides important clues as to how this figure moves in-between anthropology and Japanese politics. In other words, a knowledge-political *network* is starting to take shape, interweaving foreign anthropologists, Japanese fisheries bureaucrats, whale-meat restaurants, local whaling communities and widespread Japanese public sentiments. The Super-Whale emerges as an important figurative part of this knowledge-political network, extending deep into the halls of power in Japanese politics. To Fisheries Agency bureaucrats in Tokyo, the Super-Whale no doubt symbolized much of what is wrong with the current state of global whale affairs, including an embodied sense of humiliation at the hands of irrational American anti-whalers (see Miyaoka, 2004).

Networks, as noted, imply movement without too much deformation: entities keep their shape as they move into new territories. Arguably, in some respects, the Super-Whale behaves like such an immutable mobile: both Kalland and Morishita employ it as part of a criticism of the cultural insensitivity and emotional biases of Anglo-Saxon anti-whaling advocates. Nevertheless, this analysis also misses an important aspect of how the Super-Whale travels, gradually changing its contours while adapting to new concerns and contexts. The Super-Whale, like the figure of 760,000, is also partly a mutable mobile, moving in a *fluid* space of gradual transformations (see Law & Mol, 1994). Notably, whereas Kalland's Super-Whale was a purely textual construct meant for an academic audience, Morishita's Super-Whale has acquired a visual shape, making it more suitable for public Japanese testimony and making it stand in for a broader panorama of irrational 'Western' mentality. When hundreds of Japanese middle-aged citizens in Ishinomaki laughed at the silly figure of a bow tie-wearing Super-Whale, they were laughing at Westerners as imagined Others.

What this means, in short, is that the three spatial versions of global connections mapped so far – of regions, networks and fluids – help co-constitute each other. In the Super-Whale case, regional power politics, knowledge-political networks and fluid numerical and figurative devices co-constitute a Japanese-global imaginary of 'Japan-the-whaling-culture' facing an insensitive and irrational 'anti-whaling-West'. In various guises, judging from research and experience, this imaginary enjoys great strength amongst Japanese pro-whaling elites, in good deal accounting for the continued vitality of global whaling controversies (see Blok, 2008; Miyaoka, 2004). When visualized in public panoramas such as in Ishinomaki, a sense of this disjunctive and potentially disruptive otherness is made manifestly present: with pictures from the 1970s showing anti-whaling activists burning a Japanese flag, Morishita carefully orchestrated collective affects of humiliation, cultural nationalism and controlled anxiety towards this Western whale adversary. What the Super-Whale allowed, in this context, was a channelling of emotional energies towards an absent presence, an invisible enemy, staging an embodied sense of deep global divisions. The Super-Whale, in brief, also behaves as what Law and Singleton (2005) call a 'fire object': an unbounded, affective, and potentially disruptive object constituted in a global space of absences, discontinuities, and otherness.

To sum up, what this illustration is meant to convey is that seemingly unimportant 'details' – such as encountering a Super-Whale in Ishinomaki – can take us into the

core of world-wide micro-cosmoses, provided we employ mobile ethno-socio-cartography to trace various regional, network, fluid and fire connections. It thus aims to show why moving beyond the local-global dichotomy releases new potential for the ethnographic imagination. Importantly, this move allows for the multiplication of the global into a plurality of globalities; and, further, it points to the *internal* multiplication of globalities into a plurality of spatial patterns of global connectedness. Analysing the first sense of multiplicity requires close attention to the specificities of global-scale assemblages, beyond the generalities often encountered in theories of globalisation. Hence the term *micro-sociology of globalities*, aligned with the notion of ethno-socio-cartography, signalling this close attention to situated processes of global scale-making. Analysing the second sense of multiplicity requires a rethinking of the topological presuppositions of social inquiry, a rethinking allowed by following ANT and post-ANT social ontology. In the illustration provided, regional, network, fluid and fire connections embedded in the Super-Whale account for important particularities in how the micro-cosmos of global whaling controversies unfold. Adding these two senses of the multiplicity of globalities together, we come a long way in harvesting the fruits of ethno-socio-cartography, putting it to work for empirically sensitive, micro-grounded, and mobile analytical purposes of mapping situated globalities.

In the Euro-American world, Japanese hunting and eating of whales is nowadays considered a serious political problem, a violation of international law and morality, even sometimes as an ethically indefensible transgression akin to cannibalism. As any visit to whale-related discussion forums on the Internet will show, strongly inflammatory, and occasionally racially prejudiced, anti-Japanese anti-whaling rhetoric abounds. Simultaneously, it is hard to remain ethically unimpressed by media images of harpooned whales in death throes, the water surrounding it turning red from the blood. Amongst international negotiators and activists, dialogue on whales has all but vanished, replaced by verbal and physical confrontations, notably on the high seas. Can mobile ethnography contribute anything to mediating, perhaps even resolving, real-world and controversial 'global' issues like this, situated at the core of contemporary political and ethical concerns? Beyond disinterested research, what is the point of doing ethno-socio-cartography; and, how might collective figures of activism, cartography, and diplomacy help us reflect on these issues?

Conclusions: What Publics for Ethno-Socio-Cartography?

In a world in which social relations are increasingly overflowing the container of nation-states, social scientists are forced to rethink ingrained habits of thought, not least pertaining to deep-seated dichotomies of micro-versus-macro, local-versus-global. The argument of this article can be summarised within the contours of this conundrum. To put it pointedly, my overall methodological claim is that, in inquiring into transnational social connections, we should *stop* evoking the local-global contrast altogether, and start by-passing it via a set of new metaphors of networks, mobility, scale-making, oligoptica, panoramas and cartography. This argument is shaped in critical dialogue with Michael Burawoy's global and George Marcus' multi-sited ethnographies, two of the most promising calls around for an ethnographic imagination adequate to a globalising world. While my proposed ethno-socio-cartography

differs from Burawoy's on most substantial issues, it shares his vision of grounding globalities in everyday social life. Indeed, my main contention with global and multi-sited ethnography lies at the level of its practice: in my interpretation, both Burawoy's theoretical reconstruction of global forces and Marcus' commitment to the world system unduly short-circuits the attempt to ethnographically map emerging global connections. Hence, to reiterate the main ambition of this article, I have attempted to sketch a methodological alternative, in the shape of an empirically driven micro-ethnography of situated, mobile, and networked globalities in the plural.

Partly, no doubt, these methodological issues interweave with substantial differences pertaining to the empirical worlds selected for in-depth ethnographic study. Indeed, the tradition of science and technology studies, from which my theoretical vocabulary of ANT emerges, is distinct (if by no means unique) in the social sciences, for insisting on studying the relatively powerful 'elites' – scientists, bureaucrats, capitalists – with the same ethnographic tools normally applied to 'lay' communities (see Latour, 2000). In many ways, this is what enables the ANT analyst to situate global mobilities within specific assemblages, paying close attention to emerging power- and scale-differentials institutionalised in oligoptic centres. Importantly, contra Burawoy, ANT social ontology hence refuses to postulate any deep, a priori rifts between 'fragile localities' and 'powerful global forces'. Instead, it insists on following the intermediate displacements, paying attention to the negotiability even of universalistic forms – such as money and scientific knowledge – as they travel into new contexts. This is what the Super-Whale illustrates: what need to be ethnographically emphasised is the *conjunctures* of trans-local mobilities, with 'local' and 'global' attaining the fractal character of situated co-presence (see Jensen, 2007).

There are several methodological elements going into the constitution of ethno-socio-cartography, envisaged here as a specific version of a more general call for new 'mobile' methods. First, the ANT social ontology of network displacements offer new and general conceptual tools for bypassing the problematic notion of the global, leading into more empirically sensitive notions of the multiplicity of globalities. Second, a micro-sociological approach to these globalities entails an insistence on mapping situated practices, however far extended in socio-geographical space. Third, and closely related, this insistence on practices lead to the adoption of a distinct approach to social inquiry, one prioritising insights into the specific trajectories along which global-scale sociality is articulated, as against the over-abstractions of much social theory of globalisation. Fourth, this implies a further re-evaluation of the theory-ethnography relationship: rather than a theoretical construction, globalities-in-the-making needs to be acknowledged as highly important empirical objects of inquiry. In particular, the very process of scale-making – of forging 'the global' as a site of situated social practice – thus emerges as itself in need of ethnographic exploration. This, I contend, is the only way to make ethnography, or ethno-socio-cartography, truly important to our understanding of global-scale networks and mobilities. In short, this type of micro-sociology of globalities is meant to achieve what global ethnography prematurely short-circuits: a more empirically sensitive and intellectually 'mobile' inquiry into global-scale social life (see Tsing, 2005; Urry 2007).

As emphasised throughout, these methodological prescriptions of ethno-socio-cartography are by no means set forth in intellectual vacuum, nor do they claim radical novelty for themselves. Rather, in more modest fashion, they emerge from a

close and methodologically attuned juxtaposition of ANT, with its particular sensibility towards variable scales and topographies, and the ‘mobilities turn’ of Urry (2000a, 2000b, 2007) and others. What emerges arguably moves beyond current discussions on mobile methods (e.g., Büscher & Urry, 2009; Davies & Dwyer, 2007; Sheller & Urry, 2006), in turning issues of scale-making and plural globalities into important topics of mobilities research, and in articulating a ‘cartographic’ interest in the complex and specific intersections of regional, network, fluid and fire spaces of circulation. Instead of taking ‘globalisation’ to entail particular forms of connectivity (complex systems, global networks) and particular forms of issues (terrorism, climate change), ethno-socio-cartography is meant to open up new avenues for the mobile ethnographic imagination in moving beyond the local-global dichotomy. In this sense, it resonates with the approach to global assemblages suggested by Collier and Ong (2005), sharing its commitment to studying how ‘the actual global’ gets articulated in specific situations and sets of socio-material relations. Contrary to the notion of ‘global forms’ employed by Collier and Ong, however, ethno-socio-cartography makes no a priori assumptions about the relative cultural ‘abstractability’ of objects, images, knowledges and affects circulating within global-scale networks. As the Super-Whale example illustrates, culturally loaded images has the capacity to travel, even as they remain situated at all points and even as they transform by moving between contexts.

Before rounding up, it is fitting to acknowledge one potential shortcoming of my proposed ethno-socio-cartographic methodology, as compared to the global multi-sited ethnography approaches: it does not tie neatly into any easily identifiable public-political project of general, knowledge-political validity. Such issues of ‘engagement’ are indeed essential, if we are to position the ‘mobilities turn’ within broader debates on the future directions of the social sciences (see Büscher & Urry, 2009). If there is one thing commendable about Burawoy’s global ethnography, in particular, it is his commitment to the language of globalisation ‘from below’, simultaneously a scientific and an ethical-political position, implying concern with global inequalities of power and resources. As he self-reflexively concedes, his is inevitably a research-activist persona – involving a level of normative commitment somewhat missing from my discussions of ethno-socio-cartography so far. Another way of putting this is to acknowledge that, as part of my attempted unravelling of the local-global contrast, questions of power, domination and social science critique will have also mutated into as-yet unrecognizable shapes. In order to further justify the call for more mobile ethnographies of micro-globalities, there is no avoiding the hard question: to which collective project is this methodology committed? (see Burawoy, 2005).

The best way to briefly suggest an answer, albeit a sketchy one, is to revisit the quote from Callon (1998), outlining the potentials embedded in talking about ethno-socio-cartographies. Following Callon, this ANT-inspired methodology may be thought of as providing tools for cognitive mapping, and hence, for helping actors navigate their own bearings within complex, global-scale assemblages. Certainly, compared to the critical researcher-activist, this may seem a minimal contribution; however, if we admit that actors constantly reshape the social world through mobile practices, the need for cognitive, political and practical tools of navigation should be evident enough. Further, as Callon goes on to emphasize, ethno-socio-cartographic tools should be oriented towards public ‘overflows’, that is, towards the margins of

powerful economic, political, legal, and techno-scientific institutions. Through their global scale-making projects, these institutions provoke a range of concerned groups into being, from community protests to transnational social movements, engaged in contesting and forging alternative globalities (see Latour, 2007; Marres, 2007; Urry, 2000a). Ethno-socio-cartographic tools may serve here to open new sites of contestation and negotiation, bringing together heterogeneous actors around a shared concern with specific global-scale trajectories. In this sense, beyond advocacy, ethno-socio-cartography takes on diplomatic tasks as it moves in collective spaces of on-going conflicts: diplomats, as Latour (2004) points out, are at once engaged and detached, always staying sensitive to differences in cultural context. Like diplomats, ethno-socio-cartographers work in the 'in-between' spaces of trans-local mobilities.⁹

To end on this note, we can now frame the contrast between Burawoy-style global ethnography and the mobile ethnographies of situated globalities proposed here in explicitly knowledge-political terms. Simply put, whereas Burawoy is committed to an activist-like diagnosis of a 'fragmented' globalisation-from-below, the perspective pursued here is simply one of fragmented globalities – what is at stake, deep down, is the very constitution of our common globe, our common cosmos. Conflicts over whales may seem a 'minor history', but the list of fragmented globalities open for mobile ethnographic inquiry could easily be expanded, from the techno-scientific conflicts over GMOs, climate change, and nuclear power, to ever-present religious-political iconoclasm and violent confrontations. Beyond cosmopolitanism, everywhere we are engaged in cosmopolitics: the politics of forging a common globality (see Latour, 2004). Ethno-socio-cartography, and the mobile micro-sociology of globalities it serves, is committed to this collective project of searching for common spaces of public contestation and dialogue. It is simultaneously activist, diplomatic and cartographic. In the end, contrary to an attitude of theoretical self-confidence, ethno-socio-cartographers must behave as modest witnesses: insisting that, no matter how overwhelming the force, globality is our never-ending common project.

Notes

1. Specifically interested readers are referred to Kalland (1998) and Blok (2008).
2. The potentially relevant references for this statement would be too numerous to list here, reflecting the explosion of 'globalisation' studies and narratives across different social science disciplines. Rather than creating what would anyway be a highly selective list, the reader may consider my overall list of references indicative of the particular trajectory taken for the sake of this article's methodological argument.
3. In setting up Burawoy and Marcus as theoretical proponents of global and multi-sited ethnography, I acknowledge the danger (rightly pointed out by an anonymous reviewer) of eliding important nuances manifested in the growing corpuses of work inspired by these frameworks. However, for the purposes of this article, my sole concern is with methodological invocations of the global, which justifies, I believe, a focus on programmatic statements. Lapegna (2009) provides a valuable recent overview of work inspired by global and multi-sited ethnography, respectively.
4. Implicit in this statement is a reference to the fact that, contrary to the 17th century of Hobbes', nation-states are no longer the sole 'Leviathans' in social life. I will not delve further into this far-reaching point, however.
5. 'Centre of calculation' is the term Latour has been using most of his career to talk about nodes in scientific networks. With the gradual expansion of ANT into new social domains, manifested in his book *Reassembling the Social* from 2005, Latour now uses the term *oligoptica* as the broader

term, reserving the term centre of calculation to talk of network nodes literally performing acts of quantification.

6. Hendry (2003) discusses the relative merits of alternative terms like globography, globology, and ecumenography. With my interest in scale-making, however, I find these terms too 'globo-centric'.
7. I give the name in accordance with Japanese convention, with family name first.
8. This figure has been increasing over the years: in the early 1990s, it was stabilized at 400 minke whales per year, but since 2005, the figure has been closer to 900.
9. Indeed, my own inquiries into Japanese whaling practices have gained public resonance in my European home country, as manifested through 'diplomatic' interactions with environmental NGOs, government officials, and journalists.

References

- Abbott, A. (2007) Against narrative: A preface to lyrical sociology, *Sociological Theory*, 25(1), pp. 67–99.
- Beck, U. (2005) How not to become a museum piece, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 56(3), pp. 335–343.
- Blok, A. (2008) Contesting global norms: Politics of identity in Japanese pro-whaling countermobilisation, *Global Environmental Politics*, 8(2), pp. 39–66.
- Bowett, J. & Hay, P. (2009) Whaling and its controversies: Examining the attitudes of Japan's youth, *Marine Policy*, 33(5), pp. 775–783.
- Burawoy, M. (1998) The extended case method, *Sociological Theory*, 16(1), pp. 4–33.
- Burawoy, M. (2000a) Introduction: Reaching for the global, in: M. Burawoy (Ed.) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, pp. 1–40 (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Burawoy, M. (2000b) Grounding globalization, in: M. Burawoy (Ed.) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, pp. 337–350 (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Burawoy, M. (2005) 2004 American Sociological Association presidential address: For public sociology, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 56(2), pp. 259–294.
- Büscher, M. & Urry, J. (2009) Mobile methods and the empirical, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12(1), pp. 99–116.
- Callon, M. (1998) An essay on framing and overflowing: Economic externalities revisited by sociology, in: M. Callon (Ed.) *The Laws of the Markets*, pp. 244–269 (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Callon, M. & Latour, B. (1981) Unscrewing the big leviathan: How actors macro-structure reality and how sociologists help them to do so, in: K. Knorr Cetina (Ed.) *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology: Towards and Integration of Micro- and Macro-Sociologies*, pp. 277–303 (London: Routledge).
- Cipriano, F. & Palumbi, S. R. (1999) Genetic tracking of a protected whale, *Nature*, 397(6717), pp. 307–308.
- Collier, S. J. & Ong, A. (2005) Global assemblages, anthropological problems, in: A. Ong & S. J. Collier (Eds) *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, pp. 3–21 (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing).
- Collinge, C. (2006) Flat ontology and the deconstruction of scale: A response to Marston, Jones and Woodward, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31, pp. 244–251.
- Davies, G. & Dwyer, C. (2007) Qualitative methods: Are you enchanted or are you alienated?, *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(2), pp. 257–266.
- Friedberg, S. (2001) On the trail of the global green bean: Methodological considerations in multi-site ethnography, *Global Networks*, 1(4), pp. 353–368.
- Fujimura, J. H. (1991) On methods, ontologies, and representation in the sociology of science: Where do we stand?, in: D. Maines (Ed.) *Social Organization and Social Processes: Essays in Honor of Anselm L. Strauss*, pp. 207–248 (New York: Aldine Gruyter).
- Gad, C. & Jensen, C. B. (2010) On the consequences of post-ANT, *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 35(1), pp. 55–80.
- Gille, Z. & Ó Riain, S. (2002) Global ethnography, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28, pp. 271–295.
- Gowan, T. & Ó Riain, S. (2000) Preface, in: M. Burawoy (Ed.) *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, pp. ix–xv (Berkeley: University of California Press).

- Hage, G. (2005) A not so multi-sited ethnography of a not so imagined community, *Anthropological Theory*, 5(4), pp. 463–475.
- Harper, R. H. R. (1998) *Inside the IMF: An Ethnography of Documents, Technology, and Organisational Action* (Orlando, FL: Academic Press).
- Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell).
- Hendry, J. (2003) An ethnographer in the global arena: Globography perhaps?, *Global Networks*, 3(4), pp. 497–512.
- Hirsch, E., Kapferer, B., Martin, E. & Tsing, A. (2007) Anthropology after globalization, *Ethnos*, 72(1), pp. 102–126.
- Ingold, T. (1993) Globes and spheres: The topology of environmentalism, in: K. Milton (Ed.) *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology*, pp. 31–42 (London: Routledge).
- Jensen, C. B. (2007) Infrastructural fractals: Revisiting the micro-macro distinction in social theory, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25(5), pp. 832–850.
- Kalland, A. (1994) Super whale: The use of myths and symbols in environmentalism, in: G. Blichfeldt (Ed.) *11 Essays on Whales and Man* (Reine: High North Alliance) Available at <http://www.high-north.no/library/myths/su-wh-th.htm> (accessed 03 April 2009).
- Kalland, A. (1998) The anti-whaling campaigns and Japanese responses, in: Institute of Cetacean Research (Ed.) *Japanese Position on Whaling and the Anti-whaling Campaign*, pp. 11–26 (Tokyo: ICR).
- Kalland, A. & Sejersen, F. (2005) *Marine Mammals and Northern Cultures* (Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press).
- Knorr Cetina, K. (2007) Microglobalization, in: I. Rossi (Ed.) *Frontiers of Globalization Research: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches*, pp. 65–92 (New York: Springer).
- Lapegna, P. (2009) Ethnographers of the world... united? Current debates on the ethnographic study of “globalization”, *Journal of World-systems Research*, XV(1), pp. 3–24.
- Latour, B. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- Latour, B. (1996a) *Aramis, or the Love of Technology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- Latour, B. (1996b) On actor-network theory: A few clarifications, *Soziale Welt*, 47(4), pp. 369–381.
- Latour, B. (2000a) On the partial existence of existing and nonexisting objects, in: L. Daston (Ed.) *Biographies of Scientific Objects*, pp. 247–269 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
- Latour, B. (2000b) When things strike back: A possible contribution of “science studies” to the social sciences, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), pp. 107–123.
- Latour, B. (2004) Whose Cosmos, which cosmopolitics? Comments on the peace terms of Ulrich Beck, *Common Knowledge*, 10(3), pp. 450–462.
- Latour, B. (2005) *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Latour, B. (2007) A Plea for Earthly Sciences. Paper presented at the British Sociological Association, London, April. Available at <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/articles/article/102-BSA-GB.pdf> (accessed 03 April 2009).
- Law, J. (2002) On hidden heterogeneities: Complexity, formalism, and aircraft design, in: J. Law & A. Mol (Eds) *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices*, pp. 116–141 (Durham & London: Duke University Press).
- Law, J. (2004) And if the global were small and noncoherent? Method, complexity, and the baroque, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 22(1), pp. 13–26.
- Law, J. & Mol, A. (1994) Regions, network and fluids: Anaemia and social topology, *Social Studies of Science*, 24(4), pp. 641–671.
- Law, J. & Mol, A. (2001) Situating technoscience: An inquiry into spatialities, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 19(5), pp. 609–621.
- Law, J. & Singleton, V. (2005) Object lessons, *Organization*, 12(3), pp. 331–355.
- Law, J. & Urry, J. (2004) Enacting the social, *Economy and Society*, 33(3), pp. 390–410.
- Lorimer, J. (2007) Nonhuman charisma, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25(5), pp. 911–932.
- Marcus, G. E. (1995) Ethnography in/of the world system: The emergence of multi-sited ethnography, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24(1), pp. 95–117.
- Marres, N. (2007) The issues deserve more credit: Pragmatist contributions to the study of public involvement in controversy, *Social Studies of Science*, 37(5), pp. 759–780.

- Massey, D. (1991) A global sense of place, *Marxism Today*, 38, pp. 24–29.
- McCormack, D. P. (2008) Engineering affective atmospheres on the moving geographies of the 1897 Andrée expedition, *Cultural Geographies*, 15(4), pp. 413–430.
- Miyaoka, I. (2004) *Legitimacy in International Society: Japan's Reaction to Global Wildlife Protection* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).
- Murata, K. (2007) Pro- and anti-whaling discourses in British and Japanese newspaper reports in comparison: A cross-cultural perspective, *Discourse & Society*, 18(6), pp. 741–764.
- Pálsson, G. & Rabinow, P. (2005) The Iceland controversy: Reflections on the transnational market of civic virtue, in: A. Ong & S. J. Collier (Eds) *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, pp. 91–103 (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing).
- Riles, A. (1998) Infinity within the brackets, *American Ethnologist*, 25(3), pp. 378–398.
- Riles, A. (2008) The anti-network: private global governance, legal knowledge, and the legitimacy of the state, *American Journal of Comparative Law*, 56(3), pp. 631–638.
- Rogers, R. & Marres, N. (2000) Landscaping climate change: A mapping technique for understanding science and technology debates on the World Wide Web, *Public Understanding of Science*, 9(2), pp. 141–163.
- Sheller, M. & Urry, J. (2006) The new mobilities paradigm, *Environment and Planning A*, 38(2), pp. 207–226.
- Star, S. L. (1999) The ethnography of infrastructure, *American Behavioural Scientist*, 43(3), pp. 377–391.
- Strathern, M. (2002) On space and depth, in: J. Law & A. Mol (Eds) *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices*, pp. 88–115 (Durham & London: Duke University Press).
- Tsing, A. L. (2005) *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).
- Urry, J. (2000a) Mobile sociology, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), pp. 185–203.
- Urry, J. (2000b) *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-first Century* (London: Routledge).
- Urry, J. (2007) *Mobilities* (Oxford: Polity).