Abbreviations

ARIB	Azienda Romana Imbottigliamento Bevande
CCE	Coca-Cola Enterprises
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro
CISL	Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori
CNR	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche
DC	Democrazia Cristiana
ECA	Economic Cooperation Administration
ERP	European Recovery Program
FAMIB	Fabbrica Milanese Imbottigliamento Bevande
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano
PCF	Parti Communiste Français
REBOC	Rete Boicottaggio Coca-Cola
SFBN	Société Française des Brevauges Naturels
SIBEG	Società Imbottigliamento Bevande Gassate
SNARR	Syndicat National de l'Alimentation et de la Restauration Rapide
SOCIB	Società Capua group Imbottigliamento Bevande Gassate (previously Società Calabrese Imbottigliamento Bevande Gassate)
SPBG	Société Parisienne de Boissons Gazeuses
SRBG	Société Régionale de Boissons Gazeuses
Socobo	Société Corse de Boissons Gazeuses
TCCEC	The Coca-Cola Export Corporation
UIL	Unione Italiana del Lavoro
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USIS	United States Information Service
VOA	Voice of America
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction: Think Global, Act Local

In a speech made in 1999, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger remarked that globalization was nothing more than "another name for the dominant role of the United States."[1] A few months earlier, in *The New York Times*, Thomas Friedman had similarly proclaimed "Globalization-is-U.S."[2] At the same time, anti-globalization protests were challenging the increasing influence of US multinational corporations around the world, and the charges of imperialism directed against such corporations bore a strong anti-American tone.[3] The recurrent tendency to equate globalization with Americanization is indicative of a post-Cold War era that is persistently and profoundly shaped by the universal presence of a globalized America; the worldwide distribution of brands like McDonald's and Coca-Cola makes them powerful heralds: firstly of Americanization, and thereafter of globalization.

As noted by several scholars, however, though the US is indeed "the country with more assets and fewer liabilities" insofar as concerns globalization, this has not led to the homogenization of the world along American lines, nor to the predominance of the US as the only globally-hegemonic power.[4] On the contrary, the post-Cold War age has been marked by the political and economic rise of non-American competitors that have expanded their influence and made their own inroads toward greater globalization. This trend became particularly evident after the 2008 economic crisis. By unveiling the contradictions of American neoliberal capitalism, the crisis also undermined US global

1 Henry A. Kissinger, "Globalization and World Order," lecture delivered at the Independent Newspapers Annual Lecture at Trinity College, October 12, 1999. Henry A. Kissinger Papers, Part II (MS 1981). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. http://hdl.handle.net/10079/digcoll/558738 (last accessed in October 2022).

2 Thomas L. Friedman, "A Manifesto for the Fast World," *The New York Times,* March 28, 1999. See also: Thomas W. Zeiler and Alfred E. Eckes, *Globalization and the American Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

3 Ezra Suleiman, "Les noveaux habits de l'antiaméricanisme," *Le Monde*, September 29, 1999.

4 Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* (New York: Picardo, 1999), 368. Similarly, Chandler and Mazlish have highlighted how "there is no denying that the United States is the most important player in globalization in terms of its economic muscle – its MNCs –, its political power, its cultural reach, and, especially, its military capacity … But this by itself does not constitute Americanization of the globe." See: Alfred D. Chandler and Bruce Mazlish (eds.), *Leviathans: Multinational Corporations and the New Global History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

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hegemony, challenging the viability of the American neoliberal paradigm of globalization, and leading economists such as Joseph Stiglitz to foresee the imminent "end of neoliberalism."[5] More recently, some scholars have argued that globalization, rather than making macro-regional institutions like the EU more dependent on global markets, has instead made them more resilient and able to maintain an independent global role.[6] It is also argued that globalization has caused a substantial retreat toward more nationalistic economic and political stances, increasing the popularity of right-wing, protectionist political parties throughout Europe.[7] Moreover, the idea that the rise of neoliberal globalism has led to the downsizing of national governments and state institutions has been challenged by the well-documented redeployment of these institutions in support of global capitalism.[8] Increasingly evident political and economic shortcomings continue to undermine the US-led neoliberal international order, such that historians are once again predicting and investigating its forthcoming decline.[9]

Globalization has not only fostered increasing cultural or political homogenization. It has also proceeded hand in hand with a parallel push for greater localization, multi-polarity, international competition, and cultural variety. Globalization also implies the re-launching of local and national cultures, and the global circulation of non-American models and products, from Japanese sushi and Mexican chili to French baguettes and Italian cappuccino. As a result, we now live in a more multicultural world than ever before, and our consumption options have substantially increased.[10] Even American hegemonic

5 Joseph E. Stiglitz, "The End of Neoliberalism?" *Project Syndicate*, July 7, 2008 and "The End of Neoliberalism and the Rebirth of History." *Project Syndicate*, November 4, 2019.

6 Oscar Guinea and Florian Forsthuber. "Globalization Comes to the Rescue: How Dependency Makes Us More Resilient." *European Center for International Political Economy*, no. 6 (2020), 1–18; Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, "From Globalization to Regionalization." *YaleGlobal Online*, October 30, 2018.

7 Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig. "The Surge of Economic Nationalism in Western Europe." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Fall 2019): 128–151. For a similar trend outside the West, see: Şefika Kumral, "Globalization, Crisis and Right-wing Populists in the Global South: The Cases of India and Turkey." *Globalizations* (February 2022).

8 Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists. The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

9 Gary Gerstle, *The Rise and Fall of the Neoliberal Order. America and the World in the Free Market Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022); Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents. Anti-Globalization in the Era of Trump* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018); Peter S. Goodman, "Globalization Is Moving Past the U.S. and Its Vision of World Order," *The New York Times*, June 19, 2019.

10 Hunter and Yates have effectively argued how globalization has carried along the cultural heterogeneity of the Western world, which is now consequently less "monolithic" than it

control over the Internet, one of the most influential agents of globalization, is increasingly challenged. Indeed, despite the dominant role of American corporations like Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple, the US no longer dominates the production and ownership of the Internet's material infrastructure.[11]

There can be no doubt, therefore, that globalization is not merely another name for an ongoing process of Americanization. But while US global influence is not unchallenged, it is, however, still unparalleled. In contrast with the theses predicting the decline of American neoliberalism some scholars have argued that the post-2008 economic crises have actually reinforced the neoliberal political project.[12] Perhaps more importantly, people face American-driven expressions of capitalist globalization every day, all around the world. The international success of cultural products like *La Casa de Papel* or *Squid Game* points to the growing popularity and appeal of non-American cultural items and models. Nonetheless, these products owe their global circulation to American corporations and platforms like Netflix. In 2017, the French historian Regis Debray contended that the Americanization of Western Europe can be considered a *fait accompli*.[13] One year later, the Italian periodical magazine *Limes* addressed the issue of "where [meaning in what fields and over what aspects of the global order] do the Americans rule?"[14] Likewise, David Ellwood and other scholars have analyzed American corporations' persistent ability to exercise their "coercive soft power" and impose American products, logistics, and distribution and production systems globally.[15] In this regard, Paul Freedman has noted how, although the feared McDonaldization of the world "has not quite happened," the United States continues to be the "transmission agent" for "diverse and mixed up dining practices. Sushi is originally Japanese, tacos Mexican, and pizza Italian, but their export and diffusion is via

was during the Cold War. See: James Davison Hunter and Joshua Yates, "In the Vanguard of Globalization. The World of American Globalizers," in *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, edited by Paul L. Berger and Samuel P. Huntington (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 323–358.

11 Dwayne Winseck. "The Geopolitical Economy of the Global Internet Infrastructure." *Journal of Information Policy,* Vol. 7, 2017, 228–267.

12 Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval, *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society* (New York: Verso, 2013).

13 Régis Debray, *Civilization. Comment nous sommes devenus américains* (Paris: Gallimard, 2017).

14 "La Rete a Stelle e Strisce," *Limes,* Vol. 10, 2018. The translation from Italian is mine.

15 David W. Ellwood, "Le paure dell'Europa davanti alla sfida Americana." *De Europa*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2020, 73–84; Eliot A. Cohen, *The Big Stick. The Limits of Soft Power and the Necessity of Military Force* (New York: Basic Books, 2016).

American heterogeneity."[16] Accordingly, scholars have called to "(re-)establish Americanization as a viable field of historical research."[17] These considerations suggest that addressing the nature of the relationship between Americanization and globalization is still relevant.

How do we reconcile different perspectives which either associate or separate globalization from enduring American hegemony? To what extent, outside the US, has globalization been perceived as being indicative of American global prominence? And how American is globalization, actually? In order to answer these questions, this book looks at the relationship between Americanization and globalization from within the West, focusing on "intra-core" economic, cultural, and political connections and exchanges. The intent is to investigate the American constituents of globalization, alongside the strategies employed by American multinationals to effectuate a process of "Americanization first, globalization later", and the various reactions to these two processes. I will do so through a comparative case study, examining the history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's—perhaps the most popular conveyors of a global America—in Italy and France.

The decision to look at two American companies and brands is consistent with the idea that Americanization was largely driven by the private sector, as much as, if not more than, the policies of the US government. This was especially true during the first half of the 20th century, when US efforts to spread the American way of life globally were largely delegated to private companies and individuals, in what historians have called America's "private approach to foreign policy."[18] But even during the Cold War and into the post-Cold War era, American firms continued to play a major role in US efforts to win over "hearts and minds." The history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's is part of this privately supported American internationalism.[19] At the same time, both companies have contributed to the development of what Benjamin Barber has called the "McWorld," whereby their presence is, in itself, evidence of increasing

16 Paul Freedman, *Why Food Matters* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2021).

17 Richard F. Kuisel, "The End of Americanization? Or Reinventing a Research Field for Historians of Europe." *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 92, no. 3 (2020).

18 Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion. American Political, Economic and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1911–1933* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream. American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2011); Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2006).

19 The participation of companies, such as Coca Cola and McDonald's, in the process does not mean, of course, the full correspondence of their interests with those of the US nation. As we will see, however, in more than one occasion the two overlapped.

globalization.[20] Coca-Cola and McDonald's are, therefore, global icons and globalizing actors, as well as being symbols of a globalization that, to many people around the world, tastes American.

Overall, the book supports three interconnected arguments. Firstly, that Coca-Cola and McDonald's represent effective case studies to address the question of how globalization reflects and spread American values. An analysis of their expansion unveils how the American character of globalization resides in the global spread of specifically American models of production and consumption, as well as the standardized operating procedures and business practices that are at the core of Coca-Cola's and McDonald's systems: outsourcing, franchising, financialization, and commercialization of knowledge and intellectual property. Secondly, that the Coca-colonization and McDonaldization of the world were, to a large extent, made possible by the inherently multilocal nature of these two companies, which enabled the gradual but increasing "glocalization" of their structures. As a matter of fact, the more the two corporations expanded globally, the more they were compelled to strengthen their glocal approach. In this regard, I contend that growing globalization has led both companies to become more glocal than ever before, and that their glocalization has been the result of both internal and external pressures. Lastly, it is my conviction—as supported by a comparison of the different attempts to resist the "invasion" of Coca-Cola and McDonald's—that the elaboration of any effective alternative to the glocal paradigm of Coca-Cola and McDonald's has itself been glocal. These glocal alternatives were not intended to contrast globalization *per se,* but those McDonaldizing principles that regulate its enactment.

1 How American Is Globalization? Thinking Systematically

The choice of Coca-Cola and McDonald's as case studies to examine Americanization and the American template of globalization is not entirely new. Various scholars have referred to the postwar process of Americanization as "Coca-colonization."[21] Others have spoken of "Coca-Globalization" to address

20 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld. Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy* (New York: The Random House Publishing Group, 1995).

21 The most famous employment of the term is the one realized by Wagnleitner in his study on the postwar Americanization of Austria. Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: the Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria After the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994). On the Coca-colonization/Americanization of Western Europe in the 20th century, see also: Victoria De Grazia,

the implications of Coca-Cola's multilocal strategy through an analysis of the company's transnational impact in non-Western contexts.[22] Humphrey McQueen has employed the history of Coca-Cola as paradigmatic in his analysis of the evolution of global capitalism, while Bartow Elmore's has examined the making and characteristics of what he calls "Coca-Cola's capitalism."[23] Likewise, the concept of "McDonaldization," often used as a byword for globalization, was first introduced in the early 1990s by the American sociologist George Ritzer, who sought a "useful lens through which to examine globalization theory."[24] In their analysis of multinational corporate globalization, Chandler and Mazlish have noted how "McDonald's has come to symbolize an American homogenization of the planet."[25] This set of associations (Americanization/Coca-colonization, globalization/McDonaldization) is, at least in part, connected to the role that American multinational corporations have played, and still play, as agents of Americanization and drivers of globalization.[26]

Irresistible Empire. America's Advance Through Twentieth Century Europe (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2005).

22 As Foster argues, "the Coca Cola story opens a window on world historical processes that are now glossed as globalization." Robert J. Foster, *Coca-Globalization. Following Soft Drinks from New York to New Guinea* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), XXII; Amanda Ciafone, *Counter-Cola. A Multinational History of the Global Corporation* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019); Henry J. Frundt, *Refreshing Pauses: Coca Cola and Human Rights in Guatemala* (Westport: Praeger, 1987).

23 Humphrey Mcqueen, *Essence of Capitalism. The Origins of Our Future* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2003); Bartow J. Elmore, *Citizen Coke: An Environmental and Political History of The Coca Cola Company* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015).

24 The term "McDonaldization" was introduced by George Ritzer to indicate the global spread of the fast food principles. To be fair, Ritzer does not consider McDonaldization as a synonymous of globalization. He nonetheless retains it a form of globalization and "a specific type of grobalization" (that is, the globalization process as driven by multinational corporations in their continuous ambition to grow). See: George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society.* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1993); George Ritzer (eds.), *McDonaldization: The Reader* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2006). The quote comes from: George Ritzer and Elizabeth L. Malone, "Globalization Theory: Lessons from the Exportation of McDonaldization and the New Means of Consumption," *American Studies* 41, no. 2 (July 2000), 101.

25 Alfred D. Chandler and Bruce Mazlish (eds.), *Leviathans*, p. 7.

26 On American corporations as the main drivers of globalization, see: James Davison Hunter and Joshua Yates, "In the Vanguard of Globalization. The World of American Globalizers." Louis Pauly and William Keller have come to the point of arguing that "the global corporation is mainly an American myth." The relation between Americanization, US corporations, and globalization is further confirmed by the incredible amount of studies dedicated to American global businesses and their contribution to the global spread of American models and US global hegemony. To name only a few, see: Emily Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to The World. The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy 1900–1930*

Within this framework, I contend that using the history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's to reveal the American template of globalization does not depend on the American origin of the two companies, nor on the Americanness of the products they distribute. On the contrary, the book will cast light on how even Coca-Cola—the ultimate American drink—was in fact the product of a larger history of North Atlantic crossings and, thus, transnational in nature from its inception. At the same time, the primarily "multilocal" character that has defined Coca-Cola's and McDonald's activities from the outset will be unveiled. Neither corporation is strictly American. They are both franchising companies and consequently operate through a global network of local enterprises and firms. This multilocalism has been key to their economic and cultural penetration abroad. In light of this, I have decided to place the multilocal nature of the two companies at the core of my analysis. I have thus maintained a simultaneous focus on the two firms' international ambitions and on their many local activities, constantly bringing together their global dimensions with their inherently localized structures.

But if neither the companies nor their products are intrinsically American (i.e. if neither the agents nor the objects of globalization are American), then how, exactly, do Coca-Cola and McDonald's help to explain the relationship between America and globalization? Answering this question requires some clarification on the meaning of globalization and its association with persistent forms of American global hegemony. The popularization of the term "globalization" is generally ascribed to Theodor Levitt and the publication of his famous 1983 article on "The Globalization of the Markets."[27] By the end of the 1980s, globalization, both as a process and as a discourse, had progressively replaced Americanization in the public debate on the socio-economic effects of capitalist modernization, as well as on the homogenizing threat posed to local cultures by global market forces. Variously defined as "the increased

(Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Mira Wilkins, *The Emergence of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad From The Colonial Era to 1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) and *The Maturing of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad From 1914 to 1970* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Robert Gilpin, *US Power and the Multinational Corporation: The Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment* (New York: Basic Books, 1975); Paul N. Doremus, Louis W. Pauly, Simon Reich, and William Keller, *The Myth of the Global Corporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 143.

27 Theodore Levitt, "The Globalization of Markets," *Harvard Business Review*, (May 1983), 92–102. For a thorough and multi-scholar consideration of contemporary globalization, see: Nayan Chanda and Susan Froetschel (eds.), *A World Connected: Globalization in the 21st Century* (New Haven: Yale Center for the Study of the Globalization, 2012).

economic integration and interdependence of nations, driven by liberalized trade and capital flows," as a "process of expansion of commodity relations, integration of domestic markets and emergence of an international division of labor," or as "the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before," globalization, i.e. a trend toward growing global integration, has deep historical roots that precede the late 20th century.[28] However, it was as a result of the transformations of the international economic order that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s that the "lack of a counter-hegemonic alternative allowed the neoconservative interpretation of globalization to become a hegemonic discourse."[29] Thus the idea of globalization became interchangeable with the global spread of American-led free-market capitalism. The full realization of this capitalist globalization would take place in the subsequent post-Cold War decade, when the collapse of the Communist bloc and the consequent establishment of a new geopolitical order transformed globalization into the dominant international system, kept stable by the so-called "Washington Consensus" and founded on free markets and democracy.[30]

As noted by Saskia Sassen, however, this "neoliberal corporate economic globalization is but one form."[31] Sassen is correct in the sense that globalization,

28 Definitions offered, respectively, by: William H. Marling, *How American is Globalization?* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2006), VII; Mustafa Koc, "Globalization as a Discourse," in *From Columbus to Conagra. The Globalization of Agriculture and Food,* edited by Alessandro Bonanno, Lawrence Busch, William Friedland, Lourdes Gouveia (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 265; Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 9. For an overview of the longer history of globalization as a process, see: Antony G. Hopkins (eds.), *Globalization in World History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002).

29 Mustafa Koc, "Globalization as a Discourse," 266.

30 See Friedman's thesis on globalization as the international system defining the post-Cold War age and on the stabilizing role held by the US, which is summarized by his "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention" (i.e. "no two countries that both had McDonald's had fought a war against each other since each got its McDonald's"). For a U.S. diplomatic historians' take that emphasizes financial markets, see: Daniel J. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft From Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

31 Sassen is among those sociologists that have more influentially argued how globalization has entailed the emergence of new global actors, including multinational corporations, which operate on a multiscalar level directly connecting the global and the local. See: Saskia Sassen, "Globalization or Denationalization?" *Review of International Political Economy* 10, no. 1 (February 2003), 1–22.

as a broader process, implies the presence of networks, temporalities and exchanges that are not fully encompassed by the dominant neoliberal paradigm. Other non-Western and alternative forms of globalization were outlined during the Cold War, and still exist.[32] Moreover, I believe that the parallel presence of different and centrifugal globalizing trends within neoliberal globalization highlight the importance of a multilocal approach to the history of globalization. While acknowledging the existence of other paradigms of globalization, I have decided to limit my focus to the capitalist one embodied by Coca-Cola and McDonald's, in the belief that its global influence is still unparalleled, though not unchallenged. This form of globalization pursues the fundamentals of neoliberal ideology: market deregulation, financialization, free market competition, minimal state intervention, commodification of culture and knowledge, and a strong commitment to freedom of trade and capital. The institutional apparatus that sustains this paradigm emerged out of the economic crises of the 1970s. In this respect, I have aligned myself with those historians who envision the 1970s not merely as a decade of transition from the postwar Keynesianism of Western economies to the neoliberal turn of the 1980s, but rather as a critical era that set the foundations for the transformations of the international economic order that occurred in the 1980s. What came next—the post-Cold War—was an era defined by the global leadership of the United States, and by the regulating role of international institutions like the World Bank and the IMF.[33]

Within this neoliberal global context, the distinction between the two terms and processes—Americanization and globalization—is often unclear, not just among the general public but also among scholars. This is, in part, a result of the way that many US-based global corporations tend to leverage their ties to

32 Hassan Siddiq, "Globalization Without Uncle Sam," *YaleGlobal Online*, May 23, 2017; Wang Huiyao, "Globalization Isn't Dead, It's Just Not American Anymore," *The Washington Post*, May 7, 2022; Richard Harris and Melinda Seid (eds.), *Critical Perspectives on Globalization and Neoliberalism in the Developing Countries* (Leiden: Brill, 2001). See also: James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Steffi Marung (eds.), *Alternative Globalizations Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020).

33 Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, Daniel J. Sargent (eds.), *The Shock of the Global. The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How The United States Traded Factories for Finance in the 1970s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930–1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Verso, 2018); Alexander E. Kentikelenis and Sarah Babb, "The Making of Neoliberal Globalization: Norm Substitution and the Politics of Clandestine Institutional Change," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 124, no. 6, May 2019.

popular images of their nation and, thus, to the American way of life, as compared to non-US corporations. According to Barber, this leads to the seemingly dominant American character of global popular culture.[34] But if globalization has a largely "American template," an examination of the history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's in France and Italy unveils how this American template has often been a product of a larger North Atlantic connection, shaped by the unbalanced yet mutual exchanges between the US and Western Europe.[35] In this regard, Barber also acknowledges how the McWorld is "the natural culmination" of a "Westernization" process "that has gone on since the Renaissance."[36] Similarly, Anthony Giddens has defined globalization as a "stretching process" that has resulted in the global spread of Western modernity.[37] With this in mind, it is telling that Robert Foster framed local opposition to Coca-Cola in Papua New Guinea as being triggered by fear of a "Western" rather than "American" monoculture. To contrast the idea of a strict bond between globalization and the US, one might say that, especially in the last three decades, the hegemonic capitalist order should be considered more Western than American.[38] Yet the modern "Western World," at least in the field of popular culture and neoliberal economic forces, is still characterized by an ongoing dialectic between American cultural hegemony on the one hand, and the resistance of European national cultures on the other.

Other scholars have denied the equation *Americanization = globalization*, reminding us that the United States, like all other nations, has felt the pressures of globalization, and suffered from increasing global competition and the rise of non-American multinational firms.[39] Even the strongest supporters of the

34 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld,* 17, 61, 78, 83–84.

35 Scholars such as Rob Kroes and Reinhold Wagnleitner have highlighted the European origins of many components of the "American Dream." Wagnleinter rejects the term "Americanization," believing that it conceals the fact that behind Americanization lies the Europeanization of the world. See: Rob Kroes, *If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall. Europeans and American Mass Culture* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French: the Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1993); J. D., "Pourquoi aimer l'Amérique?," *Le Monde*, November 10, 1984.

36 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, 158.

37 Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 63.

38 In this regard, David Ellwood argues how, with the end of the Cold War, the postwar transatlantic interdependence remained in place, "while being recast as globalization, now led not by Washington anymore, but by the markets." David W. Ellwood, *The Shock of America. Europe and the Challenge of the Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 448.

39 According to Frank Ninkovich, America's rise to world power represented the US way to keep pace with the globalizing world. See: Frank Ninkovich, *The Global Republic. America's Inadvertent Rise to World Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

equation acknowledge that globalization entails the global circulation of all national and local cultures, so that, for example, French fashion or Italian style have spread worldwide.[40] Despite the American origin of many globalizers, firms like McDonald's and Coca-Cola have consistently denied that they are Americanizing the world. Indeed, they have claimed to be responding to universal needs that transcend national borders and local cultures.[41]

But even if we consider the increasingly multicultural exchanges promoted by globalization, it is undeniable that no other national culture has become so spatially unbound and globally popular as the culture of the US. Equally undeniable is the persistent anti-American tone of most anti-global protests and movements, wherein resistance to American culture is a recurrent subtext to resistance to a variety of global cultural icons. This reality determines the lingua franca of business and, indeed, academia: Not only is American popular culture ubiquitous in the globalized world, but even the debate over whether globalization means Americanization is globally conducted in (American) English.[42]

Globalization is thus somehow American, but how exactly does American culture globalize? The modus operandi of American multinational corporations like Coca-Cola and McDonald's provides useful insight. The key to understanding how and why Coca-Cola and McDonald's represent—I argue—key vehicles of American-led globalization consists in how they have spread a set of American values and logistics through which globalization operates. This point of view is partly inspired by William Marling's insight that "the real American face of globalization consists of methods and logistics."[43] Marling has claimed that the American character of globalization rests not on the global spread of McDonald's, but on the worldwide diffusion of the franchising practices which Coca-Cola and McDonald's have founded their success upon. My analysis takes this argument a step forward, contending that the American essence of Coca-Cola and McDonald's does not stop at their franchising structure.[44] I believe that we can learn a lot by moving beyond logistics

40 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld,* 84–85. On globalization's trend toward both cultural homogenization and cultural heterogeneity, see also: Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

41 James Davison Hunter and Joshua Yates, "In the Vanguard of Globalization. The World of American Globalizers," 350–353.

42 Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, 84.

43 See: William H. Marling, *How American is Globalization?,* 190.

44 On how franchising is a typically and originally American form of business organization, see: Thomas S. Dicke, *Franchising in America: The Development of a Business Method, 1840–1980* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Peter M. Birkeland,

to a thorough analysis of the "Coca-Cola System" and the "McDonald's System" that they have exported. These systems are more than just a set of business strategies, methods of production, or commercial guidelines: They represent "normative systems" directing the behavior and social relations of people and enterprises through a specific set of values, practices, and discourses.[45] They thus imply and prescribe a new mode of acting in accordance with, in this case, American and capitalist principles.

By associating themselves with the core concepts that define the American way of life, namely American notions of democracy and productivity, Coca-Cola and McDonald's have become instrumental to the spread of inherently American value systems, American paradigms of production and consumption, and American forms of business organization. On the one hand, Coca-Cola operates not simply as a local producer, but also as a consumer of local resources. And, in both France and Italy, it has imposed its own standards of production, processing, and labor organization.[46] On the other hand, by offering a democratic product (i.e. "the drink of the people" that crosses all cultural, class, gender and social barriers) and by increasing worker productivity, Coca-Cola has contributed to the spread of the Fordist paradigm of mass production for mass consumption, thereby also participating in the postwar and Cold War-related American effort to promote the "politics of productivity."[47]

This connection with Fordism and with American ideas of democracy and productivity is even more radical and evident in the case of McDonald's and in the "McDonaldization" of the world. Ritzer has stated that "Fordism in the modern world is alive, although it has been transformed to a large extent into McDonaldism."[48] In this respect, I intend to argue how the McDonald's fast food system, founded on the full application of the principles of productivity

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Franchising Dreams: The Lure of Entrepreneurship in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

45 This interpretation is consistent with the idea that neoliberalism is not simply an economic policy, but more broadly a "global rationality," and thus a normative system directing the way in which people, governments and companies relate to themselves and others. See: Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval, *The New Way of the World.*

46 On how Coca-Cola, as a consumer, affects the economies, territories and communities in which it operates, see: Bartow J. Elmore, *Citizen Coke*. The idea that Coca-Cola's American business practices were more impactful than the spread of soda drinks was highlighted also by one of Coca-Cola's former Italian bottlers, Maurizio Traglio, in an interview I conducted with him in October 2019.

47 Charles S. Maier, *In Search of Stability. Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Ch. 3.

48 George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society,* 47.

and efficiency, as well as on forms of standardized mass consumption, represents the fundamental American constituent of this multilocal corporation.[49] Moreover, to the extent that McDonaldization involves broader and deeper transformations—compared to the diffusion of the "Coca-Cola System"—in people's daily habits and the ways that commodities are produced, distributed and consumed, I believe that McDonald's, even more so than Coca-Cola, reveals the American essence of globalization. This is made evident—I contend—by McDonald's universal application of the core principles of American capitalism in their McDonaldized version.

2 Multilocal Realities and Franchised Globalization

In looking at the strategies employed by the two companies to penetrate Italian and French societies, this book highlights how Coca-Cola and McDonald's succeded thanks to their inherently multilocal nature. Their multilocalism made them effective vehicles of Americanization during the years of the Cold War, and even more effective agents of globalization after the end of the bipolar conflict, when an overflowing globalizing trend produced a greater need for local adaption. This ability to adapt stems from their character as franchises. Broadly speaking, the concept of multilocalism refers to corporations that, through franchising, operate not as "one business with a thousand branches, but as a thousand businesses with one product," as Coca-Cola man Don Wharton described it.[50] In other words, despite selling the same products everywhere, both Coca-Cola and McDonald's conduct their businesses and are able to represent themselves not as top-down multinational corporations, but as a wide network of local and independent bottlers and retailers. This emphasis on their domestic character has been obsessively reiterated throughout their history, and is considered, within the companies, as the best way to entrench and safeguard their global presence.

During the postwar decades, the multilocal approach of the two companies remained limited to partial forms of adaptation. In this context, Coca-Cola

49 This point of view is in line with Eric Schlosser's idea that fast food represents an inherently American view of life and way of doing things. See: Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation. The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001).

50 The quote comes from: Emory University – Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, MSS 10, Robert Winship Woodruff Papers, Box 340: Don Wharton, "Coca Cola: America's Champagne," approximately 1940s.

was recurrently perceived and depicted as a tool of US economic imperialism, one that symbolized the threat that American popular culture posed to French and Italian identity. Its expansion consequently triggered a wide range of reactions, including forms of resistance. In order to tackle this resistance Coca-Cola started to more actively Italianize and Frenchize its structures, gradually integrating itself into Italian and French societies through the 1940s and 1950s.

McDonald's penetration into the French and the Italian markets was initially more difficult. This was in part due to the timing of its arrival, which came during the progressive shift from Americanization to globalization that made the need for local adaptations even greater. As a consequence, McDonald's expansion in France and Italy took place only in the 1990s and required a more radically multilocal approach. In the ever more globalized context of the post-Cold War era, the success of American multinational firms increasingly depended on their ability to effectively address local backlashes and adapt to varying local contexts. As a result, Coca-Cola, and even more so McDonald's, were compelled to further localize their outlook and structure, becoming what may be considered ideal paradigms of "glocalization."[51]

The term "glocalization" is a hybrid word combining "globalization" and "localization." It was first introduced in the 1980s in the *Harvard Business Review* by Japanese economists, and later popularized by the sociologist Roland Robertson.[52] The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines it as "the simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in contemporary social, political, and economic systems."[53] In several works on

51 See: Alice Crawford, Sarah A. Humphries, Margaret M. Geddy, "McDonald's: A Case Study in Glocalization," *The Journal of Global Business Issues* 9, no. 1, 11–18; Claudio Vignali, "McDonald's: 'Think Global, Act Local' – The Marketing Mix," *British Food Journal* 103, no. 2 (March 2001), 97–111.

52 The origin of the term seems to lie in the Japanese notion of *dochakuka*, which refers to the agricultural principle of adapting farming techniques to local conditions. See: Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: SAGE Publishing, 1992), 173; Victor Roudometof, *Glocalization: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2; Barry Wellman and Keith Hampton, "Living Networked On and Off Line," *Contemporary Sociology*, no. 6 (November 1999), 648–654; Koji Kobayashi, "Taking Japan Seriously Again: The Cultural Economy of Glocalization and Self-Orientalization," in Roland Robertson, Didem Buhari-Gulmez (eds.), *Global Culture: Consciousness and Connectivity* (London: Routledge, 2016).

53 According to the Oxford Dictionary, glocalization refers, more specifically, to "the practice of conducting business according to both local and global considerations," while the Cambridge dictionary defines it as "the idea that in globalization local conditions must be considered." For other definitions, see: Victor Roudometof, *Glocalization,* 4. See

the topic, Robertson has used the term as a substitute of "globalization" to overcome what he considers "the misleading 'mythology about globalization,' which sees this concept as referring to developments that involve the triumph of culturally homogenizing forces over all others."[54] In contrast, Robertson has posed the global and the local as mutually inclusive, further arguing how, in adapting to local conditions, globalizing forces do not simply respond to pre-existing cultural landscapes, but also contribute to their formation.[55]

Some studies on the commercial penetration of McDonald's outside the US have embraced Robertson's vision, thus challenging Ritzer's idea that the global spread of McDonald's fast food principles represents a form of cultural imperialism. In particular, in his examination of McDonald's expansion in East Asia, James Watson has argued how local consumers "have transformed their neighborhood McDonald's into local institutions," pushing the corporation to adapt its offering and allow slower and hybrid forms of food consumption.[56] My study focuses on Western Europe, but similarly looks at "economically resilient and technologically advanced societies noted for their haute cuisine." In doing so, it draws similar conclusions to those reached by *Golden Arches East*. The conquest of French and Italian stomachs undoubtedly required a

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also: Encyclopedia Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/topic/glocalization (Last Accessed: July 2022).

54 In speaking of the existing "mythology about globalization," Robertson refers to the seven myths around globalization outlined by Marjorie Ferguson. Robertson opposes Ritzer's and Tomlinson's arguments on globalization as cultural homogenization, as well as ideas on institutional isomorphism and world culture elaborated by the so-called "Stanford School." See: Roland Robertson, "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity," in *Global Modernities*, edited by Mike Featherston, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson (London: SAGE, 1995), 25; Marjorie Ferguson, "The Mythology About Globalization," *European Journal of Communication* 7, no. 1 (1992), 69–93. See also: Roland Robertson and Kathleen E. White, "What Is Globalization?" in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization* edited by George Ritzer, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2007); John W. Meyer, John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, "World Society and the Nation-State," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1, 144–181; John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991).

55 Khondker has similarly commented how "glocalization removes the fear that globalization resembles a tidal wave erasing all differences." Habibul Haque Khondker, "Globalization to Glocalization: A Conceptual Exploration," *Intellectual Discourse* 13, no. 2, 187. On glocalization and globalization as promoting cultural heterogeneity, see also: Jan N. Pieterse, "Globalization as Hybridization," in *Global Modernities*, 45–68; Ulrike Schuerkens (eds.), *Global Forces and Local Life-Worlds* (London: SAGE Publishing, 2004).

56 James L. Watson (eds.), *Golden Arches East. McDonald's in East Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

substantial adjustment of McDonald's offering and the implementation of a multilocal strategy. Nonetheless, a singular focus on the company's adaptations to local tastes and habits in its offering—whether enacted by McDonald's or imposed upon the company by local consumers—might lead us to overlook the imposition of McDonald's unchanging operating principles. What I have therefore attempted to do is to look at McDonald's localizing dynamics, while also highlighting the spread of McDonald's unaltered fast food system. Within this framework, my consideration of Italian and French fast food chains as evidence of McDonaldization invites us to consider not simply the extent to which McDonald's has localized, but also how local/national fast food chains have McDonaldized.

My work borrows from and moves between perspectives. An analysis of the Coca-Cola and McDonald's experiences underscores how the McWorld is received differently from place to place, and how it is defined by a mix of homogenization, cultural fusion and resistance. At the same time, an examination of the ways in which Coca-Cola and McDonald's have adapted their food offerings and business structures to French and Italian contexts will unveil how their glocalization has not altered their core modus operandi, i.e. their underlying systems of production and consumption, as well as their operational business practices.[57] Nonetheless, I do not believe that the global and the local spheres are mutually exclusive, or that McDonaldization inevitably means the disappearance of the local.[58] On the contrary, in looking at the social and political movements that have opposed McDonald's expansion in Italy and France, my research examines the ways in which the local has survived, and the strategies employed to preserve and re-launch it.

3 Alternative Glocalizations

The post-Cold War transition from Americanization to globalization signaled McDonald's and Coca-Cola's further embracement of the slogan "think global, act local." In this new political context, the forms of national resistance which had risen up to face Americanization were less effective in proposing

57 This interpretation is in line with Ritzer's idea that McDonald's adaptation to local environments does not involve the chain's fundamental operating principles, which have remained essentially the same everywhere.

58 On Ritzer's idea that, once touched by the global, the local becomes glocal and thus disappear, see: George Ritzer and Zach Ritzer, "Still Enamored of the Glocal: A Comment on 'From Local to Grobal, and Back," *Business History* 54, no. 5 (2012), 798–804.

alternatives to a new wave of neoliberal globalization, albeit embodied by American multinational corporations. The last part of the book will highlight the tropes of the anti-globalization discourse of the 1990s, alongside different glocal responses to the McWorld. In particular, I will compare the two largest French and Italian movements born in reaction to McDonaldization: José Bové's anti-globalization movement and Carlo Petrini's Slow Food movement.

The examination of Slow Food's and Bové's experiences as both global and glocal is consistent with Saskia Sassen's invitation to consider localized processes that "do not scale at the global level" as being part of globalization insofar as they "involve transboundary networks and formations connecting multiple local or 'national' processes and actors."[59] I share the conviction that globalization has created spaces and opportunities for the development of localized struggles that, through the creation of "multiscalar" cross-border networks, pursue a global agenda and/or a form of global politics based on connections among actors in disparate localities.[60] These "counter-global networks" have been central to the development of alternative, more plural, bottom-up paradigms of globalization.[61]

In light of these considerations, I have examined Bové and Slow Food as representatives of political movements that, in their localized struggles against McDonaldization, have been able to combine the global and the local. This is by virtue of their attempts to operate on a global level while prioritizing and connecting community-level activity in local realities rather than national scales of action. Both movements have pursued what we might call a "translocal" and glocal agenda, rather than a transnational one: translocal because they are focused on the linking of locales, and glocal because the development of these connections is intended to have a global impact. Their success in doing so has varied, and Slow Food has, I believe, proven more able to bring together various local communities on a global scale, while avoiding a reliance on national frameworks of action. The reasons for this must be examined in the light of the different historical relations between the local and the national in Italian and French political and cultural experiences. An analysis of Bové

59 Sassen uses the term "multiscalar" to indicate how such processes and actors destabilized former hierarchies of scale centered on the national dimension by operating across scales, rather than scaling upward. Saskia Sassen, "Globalization or Denationalization?," 1–2.

60 On how globalization has enabled the emergence of new global actors, see also: Geoffrey Pleyers, *Alter-Globalization: Becoming Actors in a Global Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).

61 David Featherstone, *Resistance, Space and Political Identity: the Making of Counter-Global Networks* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2008).

and Slow Food will also highlight how, while earlier opposition to Coca-Cola and McDonald's was largely defined by different national contexts, the transition from Americanization to globalization in the post-Cold War period led to an evolution in the resistance to Coca-colonization and McDonaldization as it became—inevitably—glocal.

In the new globalized context, there has been much opposition to Coca-Cola and McDonald's from the French and the Italian governments, as well as from French and Italian food industries competing with American corporations in the same global market. This opposition to the expansion of American corporations is often framed as being in defense of national sovereignty and cultural identity. Moreover, many French and Italian business groups have often exploited the same kind of rhetoric in defense of local and national traditions as have been used by anti-globalization movements. At the same time, these French and Italian businesses have also glocalized their structures in order to be more competitive on the global market. In doing so, however, these companies have often reproduced the same glocal-capitalist paradigm embodied by Coca-Cola and McDonald's. As such, they do not seem to represent an alternative to McDonaldization. On the contrary, anti-globalization actors like Slow Food and Bové have attempted to elaborate a paradigm that is not merely glocal, but which represents an alternative to McDonalidzation. Their models of glocalization contest the very business practices and operating procedures which make McDonald's and Coca-Cola American vessels of a neoliberal globalization.

4 A Multilocal Perspective, A Transatlantic Focus

In studying the history of private corporations, the historian's first job becomes finding their archives, which are often inaccessible or even inexistent. The business history of Coca-Cola in the US, Italy and France is largely based on the documentation available at Emory University (Atlanta, GA). This is combined with the reports and official publications issued over time by the Italian and French branches of the company, and with the consultation of the company's official magazine, *Coca-Cola Overseas*, to which I was granted access.[62] At the same time, my account of Coca-Cola's activities in Italy and France has relied on a mix of sources collected in the Chambers of Commerce in Rome and Milan, the archive of the Greffe du Paris, the Archive de Paris, and the

62 In many instances archival documents and other sources were in French or Italian. Unless otherwise specified, the English translation is always mine.

National Archives in College Park, Maryland. All interwar documents on the activity of Coca-Cola in Genoa are held by the Genoese Chamber of Commerce and were made available through the Archivio Centrale dello Stato, which also holds the Italian register of trademarks. Part of the reconstruction of Coca-Cola's more recent Italian activities was made possible thanks to Maurizio Traglio, former Coca-Cola bottler, who I interviewed in October 2019.

As for McDonald's, the company does not have a publicly-accessible archive. The majority of the information comes from official reports produced by the company, from a few internal magazines published in Italy and France and, most of all, from the documentation available in the Milan Chamber of Commerce and at the archive of the Greffe du Versailles. I was also able to rely on the official account provided by Mario Resca, former CEO of McDonald's Italia and architect of the company's Italianization in the 1990s. The analysis of the anti-McDonald's campaigns launched by José Bové and by Carlo Petrini's Slow Food movement relies on accounts published by Bové and Petrini themselves, combined with the information available on the websites of Slow Food and of "McDonald's Spotlight," a transnational online network created by anti-globalization activists in the late 1990s.[63]

My evaluation of the impact and the public debate generated first by the arrival of Coca-Cola, and later McDonald's, is based on extended research of the main French and Italian newspapers, first and foremost *Le Monde*, *L'Humanité, Libération, La Repubblica, Il Corriere della Sera,* and *L'Unità*, as well as a series of specialized cultural and economic magazines, such as *Vie Nuove, Il Coltivatore, Néo Restauration*, *Information Syndicale* and *Il Gambero Rosso.* The possibility to rely so extensively on these journalistic sources, especially in the last chapter, is evidence of how much attention major newspapers have paid to Coca-Cola and McDonald's. I have also made use of several British and American newspapers, primarily *The New York Times, Time Magazine, The Guardian,* and *The Atlanta Constitution.* Other useful sources include transcriptions of the postwar Italian parliamentary debates, Coca-Cola's French publications such as *Coca-Cola La Vague de Grigny*, and documentation collected by the Fondazione Turati on the protests in the early 1970s by Coca-Cola workers in Rome. I have also employed audiovisual resources, including the short films distributed by the United States Information Services (USIS) in Italy after the war, the TV commercials of the Italian *Carosello*, and a series of video clips on Coca-Cola in Italy and France collected by the Archivio dell'Istituto Luce and the Ciné-Archives du PCF respectively.

63 "McDonald's Spotlight" was intended to collect all information on McDonald's abusive activities and on the various anti-McDonald's campaigns realized across the world.

The scattered and multifold nature—and locations—of this wide array of primary sources is tied to the multilocal nature of my analysis, which aims to combine elements of business and cultural history. In doing so, my ambition is to enrich the existing literature on Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Americanization and globalization, by offering a "think global, act local" rather than merely transnational approach to the history of these two multinational companies and the broader processes that they were and are a part of. The history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's has intermingled with the local histories of the territories and communities they have operated in. It follows that the best way to explain the differences and similarities in their impact, and resistance to them, is to adopt a multilocal approach, looking at Italy and France's distinctive local contexts.

This comparative perspective has allowed me to account for the reasons why certain strategies prevailed in one country and not the other. In Italy, for example, there was never anything comparable to the violent attacks organized against McDonald's by French anti-globalization activists, nor any actual attempt to stop the arrival of Coca-Cola, as happened during the French "Coca-Cola affairs" of the late 1940s. Similarly, the opposition to McDonald's in France did not lead to the emergence of a transnational movement in defense of conviviality, biodiversity and healthy local foods, as is the case with the Italian Slow Food movement. And yet, the anti-global dimension and the emphasis on nutritional and health issues were common to the strategies employed to challenge the growth of Coca-Cola and McDonald's in both countries.

In addition, in looking at Americanization, globalization, and the challenges to American global businesses in two Western European countries, I have adopted a transatlantic focus. This point of view is in line with my interpretation of the history of American global hegemony as a history of circulation and exchange, shaped by the ongoing interaction of American models, products and services within different cultural and national contexts. My transatlantic perspective is also a result of my decision to examine the relationship between America and globalization within Western Europe. On the one hand, this transatlantic framework is intended to transcend national narratives and place different national experiences in a comparative cross-cultural context. On the other hand, adopting an intra-West point of view facilitates the detection of distinctively American (and not generally Western) aspects of globalization.[64] My focus on the circulatory nature of the North Atlantic world, and

64 Several scholars have pointed out the blurred borderline between transatlantic history and global history during the late modern era, arguing how any Atlantic perspective fixes its gaze too firmly on the West. My ambition, however, is precisely this: to fix my gaze on

my interpretation of Coca-Cola and McDonald's as transatlantic products also responds to the call, made by some historians, to re-conceptualize the relationship between Europe and America in the 20th century.[65]

My study therefore moves beyond the existing historiographical debate on Americanization-Coca-colonization, globalization-McDonaldization, and modern Euro-American relations to promote a new multilocal interpretative analysis of these processes. In doing so, I am indebted to Mary Nolan's idea that, at least until World War II, the North Atlantic circulation of people, ideas, goods and practices was not yet defined by any preordained American hegemony, but rather characterized by a multiplicity of mutual influences.[66] I am also indebted to Rob Kroes' thesis on Europeans' "selective appropriation" of American models, and to Volker Berghahn's suggestion that the US conducted two cultural Cold Wars in Western Europe: one against communism, and the other against negative perceptions of American society among Europeans.[67] My understanding of Europeans' multifold reactions *vis à vis* Americanization has also been fundamentally shaped by Victoria De Grazia's and David Ellwood's studies. I have also borrowed from them the interpretation of the differences between José Bové and Slow Food in terms of antagonism/alternatives.

The existing historiography has recurrently used the "Americanization" label to examine the long—and at times framed as "irresistible"—process of consumption-expansion which occurred under American aegis during the 20th century. In doing so, a whole generation of scholars has effectively emphasized local and national resistance to these developments, while also

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the West in order to discern the North Atlantic origin of globalization's American template. This does not mean, of course, that this American template was exclusively Western-made, let alone North Atlantic-made. On the contrary, it was shaped by its interaction with several cultural "Others" all across the world. See: Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Erik R. Seeman and Thomas Bender (eds.), *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500–2000* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Peter A. Coclanis, "Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (October 2006), 725–742.

65 The underlying idea is that the outcomes of modern Euro-American interactions should be considered part of larger transatlantic networks, rather than be ascribed to either America/Americanization or Europe/Europeanization. See: Maurizio Vaudagna, (eds.), *Modern European-American Relations in the Transatlantic Space. Recent Trends in History Writing* (Torino: OTTO Editore, 2015); Marco Mariano (eds.), *Defining the Atlantic Community: Culture, Intellectuals and Policies in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

66 Mary Nolan, *The Transatlantic Century. Europe and America, 1890–2010* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2012).

67 Rob Kroes, *If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall*; Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

coming to terms with the success of this expansion process, especially following US victory in the Cold War.[68] While building on this literature, my work aims to highlight the development of alternatives to the American-led path toward greater consumption, as well as to look at Americanization through a wider lens than that of consumption alone. In my analysis of the responses to McDonald's and Coca Cola in Italy and France, I have thus considered the political and production-related aspects of their expansion, just as much as their influence on consumption patterns.[69]

To be clear, the study of the two companies' impact on Italian and French societies is not entirely new. Emanuela Scarpellini briefly mentions how Coca-Cola attempted to present and advertise itself in Italy after World War II, and the beverage makes occasional appearances in the discourse on Italy's postwar relation with American products and consumer culture. Even more information can be found on Coca-Cola in France. Though studies on this topic are not abundant, Richard Kuisel has examined the so-called "Coca-Cola affairs" of the late 1940s in depth.[70] Moreover, a few references to France can be found in the various books dedicated to the history of Coca-Cola, such as those by Mark Pendergrast and Constance Hays.[71] There is, however, no monographic study entirely dedicated to Coca-Cola in either France or Italy. Likewise, besides the section on McDonald's in Rick Fantasia's book on fast food culture in France, there has been no comprehensive historical analysis of McDonald's history in France since its arrival in the country. As for Italy, the only existing account is the one provided by Mario Resca, former president and CEO of McDonald's Italia.[72] The present work, then, intends to partially fill this vacuum, insofar as

68 For an interesting take on the triumph of consumerism in the US and of American consumerism overall, see: Gary S. Cross, *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

69 Among the scholars who have interpreted Americanization as primarily the exportation of American Fordist systems of production and ideas, we can include: Mary Nolan, *Visions of Modernity*: *American Business and the Modernization of Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Bruno Settis, *Fordismi. Storia politica della produzione di massa* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2016).

70 Richard F. Kuisel, "Coca Cola and the Cold War: the French Face Americanization, 1948–1953," *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1991), 96–116; Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French*.

71 Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country & Coca Cola. The Definitive History of the Great American Soft Drink and the Company That Makes It* (New York: Basic Books, 2013); Bartow J. Elmore, *Citizen Coke.*

72 Rick Fantasia, "Fast Food in France," *Theory and Society* 24, no. 2 (April 1995), 201–243; Rick Fantasia, *French Gastronomy and the Magic of Americanism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2018); Mario Resca and Rinaldo Gianola, *McDonald's: Una storia italiana* (Milano: Baldini Castoldi Dilai Editore, 1998).

it represents a first attempt at a complete and comparative history of these two companies in two Western European countries, and in connection with the wider debate on Americanization and globalization.

To do so, I have combined multiple approaches, blending elements of business history with elements of social and cultural history. The underlying assumption is that every history that takes popular culture, consumption and commodities into consideration is necessarily a transnational history and a business history. For this reason, the economic performance of the companies and the business strategies they adopted are as important as their cultural impact and the political debates they triggered. At the same time, I have used the examination of how American and globalized ways have been differently projected and received over time as an opportunity to reflect on national, political, cultural and local identities. A central aspect of my work consists of an investigation into how the debate on the Americanizing and globalizing effects of Coca-Cola and McDonald's became, in both Italy and France, a debate on the ways in which Italians and French people defined their cultural identities.

My interest in the elaboration of discourses on identity is also at the root of my decision to focus on food commodities. In fact, I have chosen to use Coca-Cola and McDonald's as case studies not only for their international role as heralds of a global America, but also because they have affected systems of food production and food consumption, alongside patterns of land use. The so-called "gastro-globalization" of the world has been one of the most visible and resented manifestations of globalization's homogenizing effects. On the one hand, food products are extremely mobile. On the other, food is inherently local and has consequently represented one of the main fault lines of both Americanization and globalization.[73] As foodways are deeply embedded in broader economic and social infrastructures, practices of food consumption and their related systems of production involve large economic interests at the local and national level, the defense of which has played a crucial role in the broader movement of resistance to globalization. While food globalization has increased the availability of a greater variety of food choices, it has also led to the homogenization of foodways, leading people to cling to their traditional foods as a way of maintaining connections with their local culture and territory.[74] Moreover, the way food is produced and consumed, and the cultural

73 On food as one of the fault lines of globalization, see: William H. Marling, *How American is Globalization?*; David W. Ellwood, *The Shock of America*.

74 Ronda L. Brulotte and Michael A. Di Giovine (eds.), *Edible Identities: Food as Cultural Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Lucy M. Long (eds.), *Ethnic American Cooking: Recipes for Living in a New World* (New York: Rowmand & Littlefield, 2016).

meaning attributed to the social act of eating, make a significant contribution to the shaping of ethnic, cultural and religious identities, transforming food practices into sites of political and cultural confrontation.[75] Looking at food thus allows us to consider instances of cultural hybridization, as well as the homogenizing impact of American global corporations.[76]

In adopting a North Atlantic and Western point of view, I could have compared any other Western European countries, but I have decided to focus my attention on France and Italy because of the interesting commonalities they share, as well as their compelling differences. First of all, both France and Italy have been, and in many ways still are, influenced by a strong communist subculture, one which has shaped their contribution to the wider Anti-American and anti-global discourses.[77] Secondly, resistance to Coca-Cola and fast food has proven particularly strong in both countries, precisely by virtue of the centrality that food, wine, and culinary traditions have to French and Italian cultural identities. Both France and Italy have transformed their foods into powerful cultural and economic trademarks, instruments to enlarge their influence and economic presence globally. At the same time, the significant differences between Italy and France have affected their responses first to Americanization and later to globalization. France, unlike Italy, has long been considered a world capital of modernity, and is considered the European birthplace of liberal democracy.[78] As a result, the debate over Americanization in France has always revolved around the presumption that the nation did not need the Americans in order to modernize, but could rather offer its own modern and

75 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London: Harvard University Press, 1984); Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food. Eating and Taste in England and France From the Middle Ages to the Present* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1995); Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat. Ethnic Food and the Making of the Americans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

76 James L. Watson and Melissa L. Caldwell (eds.), *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating: A Reader* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 2.

77 See: Alessandro Brogi, *Confronting America: The Cold War Between the United States and the Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2011); Stephen Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943–1991* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Pier Paolo D'Attorre (eds.), *Nemici per la pelle. Sogno americano e mito sovietico nell'Italia contemporanea* (Milano: Franco Angeli Editore, 1991); Jean-Francois Revel, *Anti-Americanism* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003); Andrea Guiso, "La guerra fredda culturale" and Bruno Settis, "Il prezzo del miracolo. Ricostruzione, sviluppo, lotte sociali," in *Il comunismo italiano nella storia del Novecento*, edited by Silvio Pons (Roma: Viella, 2021).

78 Tyler Stovall, *Transnational France. The Modern History of a Universal Nation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2015). Timothy Baycroft, *France. Inventing the Nation* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008).

universally-applicable cultural and economic models. In addition, France and Italy have markedly different historical backgrounds with regard to the relationship between the local and the national spheres, an element, which—I will argue—played a crucial role in determining the different paths that Bové and Slow Food took.

To the extent in which I have set my examination in a transatlantic context, I have also considered the ongoing historiographical debate on Atlantic history: the Cold War origin of the field, its overlap with global history, and the development of early modern networks of Atlantic and global circulation.[79] Last but not least, I have repeatedly referred to the existing literature on the cultural dimension of the Cold War, and the role played by US soft power and cultural consumption in the effort to conquer European hearts and minds. Particularly important, in this regard, are the studies realized by Federico Romero on the Cold War, by Joseph Nye on soft power, and by Walter Hixson and Laura Belmonte on American cultural diplomacy and propaganda during the bipolar conflict.[80]

5 Chronology and Structure

The chronological framework of my analysis is quite extended. It goes from the invention of Coca-Cola, in 1886, to the sponsorship of the Milan Expo by Coca-Cola and McDonald's in 2015. The decision to cover such a large timescale originates in my belief that, in order to understand Coca-Cola's successful overseas expansion and its transformation into a global herald of American popular culture, we must go back to the transnational origins of the drink and, indeed, the company. The late 19th century also marked the beginning of the

79 Some of the most important studies include: Bernard Bailyn, *The Atlantic History. Concept and Contours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Alison Games and Adam Rothman, *Major Problems in Atlantic History: Documents and Essays* (Boston: Wadsworth Publishing, 2008); Karen O. Kupperman, *The Atlantic in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Donna R. Gabaccia, "A long Atlantic in a wider world". *Atlantic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2004), 1–27; Steven Topik, Zephyr Frank, and Carlos Marichal, (eds.), *From Silver to Cocaine: Latin America Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500–2000* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

80 Federico Romero, *Storia della Guerra Fredda. L'ultimo conflitto per l'Europa* (Torino: Einaudi, 2009); Joseph Nye, *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain. Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way. US Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

US efforts to expand its foreign influence, and thus the history of American cultural exports and exchanges, which played a significant role in the development of broader networks of global circulation. My examination of the history of Coca-Cola and McDonald's in Italy and France has focused on what are generally considered the main stages in the Americanization of European societies, and on the period in which concerns over Americanization triggered large public and historiographical debates. Though I have traced the history of the two companies since their arrival in Europe (after World War I for Coca-Cola, and in the 1970s for McDonald's) and across subsequent decades, I have given particular attention to the 1920s, the early years of the Cold War, and the 1980s. This latter decade was when fast food was popularized in Italy and France, and when the theoretical paradigm of globalization began to supplant that of Americanization. Part 4 of the book deals mostly with the late 1990s and early 2000s; this was when the post-Cold War globalization process reached its peak, and also when McDonald's and Coca-Cola became primary targets of the growing anti-globalization movement.

I have thus connected, within a single narrative, the post-Cold War process of globalization to the broader and centuries-long history of transatlantic exchanges between Europe and America, and to the postwar process of Americanization. To this end, Part 1 frames Coca-Cola as a transatlantic product, while Part 2 is entirely dedicated to Coca-Cola's conquest of the French and Italian markets after World War II and, thus, to a discussion of the Americanization of Western Europe. The reactions to the postwar Coca-colonization of France and Italy anticipated many of the reactions and challenges subsequently raised by detractors of globalization. They also anticipated the multilocal strategies later employed by American corporations to face these challenges by exporting not just American products, but, more influentially, American systems of production, consumption, and business organization.

Part 3 further examines the relationship between Americanization and globalization by bringing also McDonald's into the picture. The golden arches landed in France in 1972, but it was only in the 1980s that the fast food formula became popular both in Italy and France, joining Coca-Cola as one of the most powerful symbols of an increasingly global America. In this context, further analysis of Coca-Cola's history goes hand in hand with that of McDonald's, its fast food system, and the first expressions of what Ritzer would later call "McDonaldization." Lastly, Part 4 deals with the post-Cold War era, looking at Coca-Cola's checkered experience in Italy and France, and at McDonald's even more troubled yet ultimately successful expansion. During the 1990s the challenges that globalization posed not only to its opponents, but also to its agents, compelled both firms to become definitively glocal. Within this context, the

only movements that were able to ideologically challenge the increasing hegemony of American global businesses were those that proved capable of becoming glocal themselves. The comparison between the French movement led by José Bové and the Italian Slow Food movement serves to illustrate their similar yet different roads to glocalization, and thus to explain the varying effectiveness of their strategies. My concluding argument is that the best way to oppose the neoliberal glocalization embodied by Coca-Cola and McDonald's is not to change the global battlefield in which they operate, nor the global weapons they provide to their opponents, but rather to imagine new, alternatively glocal rules and modus operandi to act upon and transform the globalized world they have built.

Overall, my intention is to tell a story, or, perhaps, many intertwined stories. The story of two American multinational companies which have come to embody a whole vision of the world. The story of how two European countries have reacted to the American-tasting modernization process. The story of how these two processes—Americanization and globalization—more than any others have contributed to making our world "smaller." And finally, the story of a transnational network of people that has attempted to imagine a different, fairer, world. These stories are all unfinished, and rooted in a longer history of mutual transatlantic exchanges and interactions. It is precisely as a result of this plentiful mix of cultural encounters that, in telling the first of these stories—on how Coca-Cola became the "soft drink-flag" of the US—I have set its beginning not in America, but in Europe.