6 The Omnipresence of *Global* as a Political Phenomenon and 'Unconventional' Object of Study

Constructions of reality and codes of intelligibility out of which they are produced provide both conditions of possibility and limits on possibility; that is, they make it possible to act in the world while simultaneously defining the 'horizon of the taken-for-granted' (Hall 1988: 44) that marks the boundaries of common sense and acceptable knowledge.
JUTTA WELDES ET AL (1999: 17)

In this chapter, I return to the adjective *global*. The aim of the chapter is to develop the central argument of this book. I argue that the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is a political phenomenon. It is a re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world'. As such, the omnipresence of the adjective *global* constitutes an object worthy of study by scholars in the political studies and IR discourses – or, as we will see, at least by scholars at the margins of these discourses.

My strategy in developing my argument is twofold. On the one hand, I bring together and re-assemble the insights that I generated in the previous chapters and theoretically synthesise them. The previous four chapters provide the ground that enables me to conceptualise the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a re-production of the web of meanings 'new world'. On the other hand, I broaden my perspective and bring in a distinct theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. This allows me to conceptualise the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon.

The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part is about the synthesis of the previous chapters and my conceptualisation of the omnipresence of *global* as a re-production of a web of meanings 'new world'.

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Two insights, which I developed in the previous chapters, are particularly important in that they provide the ground for this conceptual move.

The first insight is the empirically grounded understanding that the contemporary adjective *global* is closely enmeshed with the talk about 'globalisation.' I developed this understanding in Chapter 3 when I demonstrated that the contemporary *global* has come to be used in the sense of 'outcome of globalisation'. This insight allowed me to conceptualise *global* as a 'new word'; as I argued at the end of Chpater 3, what is 'new' about the contemporary adjective *global* is that it implies 'globalisation'.

The second central insight that provides the ground for my conceptionalisation of the omnipresence of *global* as a re-production of a web of meanings 'new world' is the realisation that all utterances, in which the word *globalisation* is applied, can be seen as constituting a discursive re-production of an object that is best labelled 'new world'; I developed this argument in Chapter 4.

Bringing these two insights together allows me to conclude in the first part of this chapter that the use of the word *global*, like the use of the word *globalisation*, constitutes a re-production of the web of meanings 'new world'. Still synthesising previous insights, I demonstrate that the influential but unnoticed existence of the contemporary adjective *global*, which I worked out in Chapters 2 and 3, and the finding that the proclamation of the 'new world' implies an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of the process of modernisation, which I developed in Chapter 5, mean that the omnipresence of *global,* this discursive re-production of a web of meanings 'new world', is a relevant and interesting phenomenon that is worthy of critical exploration.

In the second main part of this chapter, I go beyond the synthesis of insights that I developed in previous chapters. I take my conceptualisation of the phenomenon of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* a step further and argue that the omnipresence of *global* is not only a *relevant* and *interesting* phenomenon but also a *political* phenomenon; this makes it an – albeit 'unconventional' – object of study for those, who are interested in the political world.

My conceptualisation of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon is a *theoretical* exercise. It is grounded in a distinct theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. I introduce this theory by extending and refining the discussion of the concept 'discourse', which I presented in Chapter 4, as well as, my excursus on language and meaning in Chapter 2. In particular, I reflect on the ideas of 'politics' and 'power', which are implied in this conception of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. It is these distinct ideas of 'politics' and 'power' that make the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* a political phenomenon.

Part of my theoretical elaboration is a juxtaposition of my conception of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality with similar

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but, nonetheless, meaningfully different theories, which are well established in political practice and the political studies and IR scholarship. I do this in order to be able to situate the political phenomenon of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* in the broader scholarly discourse. More precisely, I do this to situate it at the 'unconventional' margins of the political studies and IR scholarship.

Finally, in the third main part of this chapter, I outline what it means to approach empirically the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as an 'unconventional' object of study. I introduce the empirical study of the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* as an 'unconventional', experimental, interpretative and 'provisional' endeavour.

SYNTHESIS: THE OMNIPRESENCE OF THE CONTEMPORARY *GLOBAL* AS A PHENOMENON THAT BRINGS OUT THE 'NEW WORLD'

The adjective *global* has been around for some time. Yet, there is something special about the *contemporary global*. It is not only an ever more popular word, it is also a 'new word'. Today *global* has a "hitherto unnoted" (Hargraves 2004: viii) meaning, which, as I argued in Chapter 3, is sufficiently significant as to acknowledge the contemporary adjective as 'new'.

It is not the first time in its life that *global* has been 'discovered' as a 'new word'. As I observed in Chapter 3, the first time *global* became a 'new word' was in 1954, the second time in 1955, and the third time in 1991. The 'new' meaning, which justifies taking the adjective *global* in 2016 once again as 'new' is 'outcome of globalisation'. This 'new' meaning becomes apparent when we look at the many actual uses of the word today. What many of them share is that the adjective refers to an attribute of something that has this attribute because of something that is called 'globalisation' – this is despite of and in addition to the various other meanings that are attached to *global* in the diverse contexts, in which the adjective is used today. In Chapter 3, I provided a selection of examples from across discourses that illustrate this point, such as Kofi Annan's claim:

> "This system worked, and made it possible for globalization to emerge. As a result we now live in a global world." (Annan 2000)

To propose acknowledging the contemporary *global* as a 'new word' is not to suggest that the 'new' meaning of the word is *the* meaning of it, or, for that matter, that social actors, such as Kofi Annan, apply the word with the intention of meaning 'outcome of globalisation'. As discussed in Chapter 2, words do not carry one clear and fixed meaning. Linguistic signs constantly lose and gain meanings. They are like chameleons which adjust to their environment and take on different meanings. In fact, meanings themselves are

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not static but only ever constitute a shadow that runs through language. Meaning is a "constant flickering of presence and absence together", explains Terry Eagleton (1983: 128). There is never any '*the* meaning' of a word to begin with – this also applies to the adjective *global*. In this sense, highlighting the 'new' meaning of the contemporary *global* – that is apparent, once one looks at contemporary uses of the word, guided by the question what they have in common – is a scholarly move to highlight a particularly *noteworthy* 'new' meaning, and not a claim about *the* meaning of *global*, let alone, about what social actors intent to mean when they use the word *global*.

The 'new' meaning of the contemporary *global* is noteworthy, hence, worth being acknowledged as 'new' and significant, not only because it has been "hitherto unnoted in dictionaries", which, as I suggested in Chapter 2, lexicographer Hargraves (2004: viii) identifies as a criterion that justifies taking a word as 'new', but also because this 'new' meaning points to the distinct enmeshment of the contemporary adjective *global* with the talk about 'globalisation'. Acknowledging the 'new' meaning of the contemporary *global* makes us aware that *global* can hardly be thought of independently from 'globalisation' any longer – at least not when it comes to public, political, and social and political scientific applications of the adjective. It is this distinct relationship between *global* and 'globalisation' that is interesting.

In Chapter 3, I showed that it is not a novel move to acknowledge that there is a link between the adjective *global* and the idea 'globalisation'. The idea that there is a relationship between both is often implied or even made explicit in scholarly approaches to ideas of 'globalisation'. As discussed in detail in Chapter 3, it is not uncommon for 'globalisation'-scholars to develop their conception of 'globalisation' with reference to a supposed link between 'globalisation' and the adjective *global*. In these instances, whatever is associated with the word *global* is taken as *foundational* for whatever is associated with the word *globalisation*. In fact, as seen in Scholte (2005), the meaning of the word *globalisation* is sometimes even explicitly derived from what is understood to be an 'etymological tracing' that goes back to the supposed 'true' meaning of the adjective *global*. However, I mean something different when I point to the link between 'globalisation' and *global* than these scholars do. My empirical exploration of *actual uses* of the contemporary adjective *global* (including by Scholte) brought me into a position to understand that the contemporary *global* gets its meaning *from* 'globalisation'; *global* encapsulates 'globalisation', rather than the other way around.

This insight into the contemporary relationship between the word *global* and the idea/s 'globalisation' is intriguing once we look at the talk about 'globalisation' not through a predetermined idea of what 'globalisation' 'is', hence, through an understanding of it as a distinct *thematic* issue (such as market integration), but acknowledge the polysemy of the word *globalisa-*

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tion and take utterances, which contain this word, as a re-production of a distinct web of meanings, in other words, as a 'discourse' that *produces* the object it speaks of. Starting from such an alternative position, which, as I sketched in Chapter 4, asks what kind of web of meanings is actually re-produced through uses of the word *globalisation*, brings to light the 'new world'.

I discussed in Chapter 4 that what I label the 'globalisation'-discourse was born in the face of the breakdown of the bipolar bloc system at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. I argued that the 'globalisation'-discourse is a manifestation of the fact that there was a widespread conviction that the (perceived) 'new' reality needed new concepts to grasp it.

> "The irruptions in the established order and traditional practices of statecraft have given many of international politics' customary modes of analysis an air of nostalgia",

observed David Campbell (1998[1992]: ix). They were perceived as demanding a breakout from the "conceptual jails in which the study of world politics is deemed to be incarcerated", argued the earlier quoted Rosenau (1990: 22). In one way or other, existing concepts, theories and categories were perceived by many as no longer being fully adequate to capture the 'new' social reality. It was in this context that a concept called 'globalisation' stepped in, being praised and naturalised by some as "an idea whose time has come" (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton 2003: 1).

As I pointed out in Chapter 4, it is undisputable that many of the developments, which have come to be captured with the word *globalisation,* are not 'new' but have existed before the word *globalisation* entered public, political and, importantly, scholarly debates. The earlier quoted Amartya Sen (2001) is one of many scholars, who make us aware of this fact. Yet, it was only at the end of the 1980s and in the course of the 1990s that the neologism *globalisation* came up and that the concept 'globalisation' fully captured discourses.[1] As I suggested in Chapter 4, Michel Foucault provides us with a useful language to grasp this phenomenon; with Foucault we can say that at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s 'globalisation' came to be "in the true" (Foucault 1981: 60), meaning that it became socially acceptable to speak of a thing called 'globalisation', to assume and proclaim that 'globalisation' was a truth.[2] Hence, amending Held et al's quote

1 Refer back to Chapter 4, fn 5.

2 Of course, this does not mean that there was and is an agreement about how this 'truth' 'globalisation' looks. My overview of the life of the 'globalisation'-discourse in Chapter 4 illustrates the many different takes on the 'truth' 'globalisation'.

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from above, it was not that 'globalisation' was an idea whose time had come after the end of the Cold War because of a distinct socio-political reality that *was* 'globalisation', but that the time had come for a *new concept* to grasp the world of the 1990s – and that idea/s of 'globalisation' and the word *globalisation* were apparently perceived as appropriate to serve this purpose.

The difference between the suggestion that the time had come for 'the' concept 'globalisation' because of an external reality and the suggestion that the time had come for a new concept (which happened to be 'globalisation') because of a *perceived* external reality is only slight but significant, in that the second assessment acknowledges that there is nothing inherent in empirical reality that prescribes the use of the word *globalisation* and the application of a particular concept 'globalisation' to grasp this reality. The claim "globalisation is an idea whose time has come" is a *claim* not a commonsensical *observation* of empirical reality. While there might be good reasons to address the contemporary world and its distinct developments with a neologism, such as *globalisation*, the crucial point is that this is not inscribed in social reality as such. There needs to be the space for such a move to be accepted and acceptable. To refer back to Foucault's quote above:

> "It is always possible that one might speak the truth in the space of a wild exteriority, but one is 'in the true' only by obeying the rules of a discursive 'policing' which one has to reactivate in each of one's discourses" (Foucault 1981: 60)

As I discussed in Chapter 4, in the case of the neologism *globalisation* and (the various ideas captured in) conceptions called 'globalisation', the space that allowed them to be 'in the true', i.e. to enter discourses and to become a "talismanic term, a seemingly unavoidable reference point for discussions about our contemporary situation" (Low and Barnett 2000: 54), was the conceptual vacuum that the breakdown of the bipolar bloc system and the end of the Cold War constituted in the eyes of many commentators. It was the perception that there was a 'brave new' (post-Cold War) world that made it possible for a new term, namely *globalisation*, and the various idea/s 'globalisation' to become centre-stage in attempts to make the social world meaningful, i.e. that made it acceptable to claim that 'globalisation' was 'an idea whose time had come'.

Grounded in the above insights, I argued in Chapter 4 that the idea of a 'new world' is at the heart of the talk about 'globalisation'. Turning this insight around, I argued that what all uses of the word *globalisation* share is that they make claims about a (supposedly) 'new world' – whether or not this is explicitly intended by the sign users and whether or not sign users are aware of it. This insight motivated me to suggest in Chapter 4 that the web of meanings that is re-produced through utterances, which contain the word *globalisation*, is best called 'new world'. Putting it differently, I suggested that utterances, which contain the word *globalisation*, form the 'globalisation'-discourse, which is the re-production of a web of meanings, in other

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words, the re-production of an object, which is "systematically form[ed]" (Foucault 1972: 49) in the use of language, that is best labelled 'new world'.

This brings me back to the adjective *global*. The above developed ground allows me now to conceptualise the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a distinct phenomenon. Echoing my take on the 'globalisation'-discourse, I understand utterances, which contain the word *global,* as a 'discourse', i.e. as the re-production of a distinct web of meanings. Given the particular relationship between the contemporary adjective *global* and the 'globalisation'-discourse, which I described above and conceptualised in Chapter 4, this web of meanings can be called 'new world'. In other words, this web is the same object that is re-produced in utterances, which contain the world *globalisation*. In short, synthesising the insights that I generated in the previous chapters, I am now in a position to argue that the omnipresence of the contemporary word *global* constitutes the re-production of the object 'new world', a distinct web of meanings.

Having established this conception of the omnipresence of *global*, I now go a step further. Still synthesising insights from previous chapters, I suggest that this re-production of the web of meanings called 'new world' is worthy of being acknowledged as a phenomenon that is 'relevant' and 'interesting'. It is relevant and interesting in two different ways. First, it is relevant and interesting by virtue of its wide spread but 'untroubled' existence, which I sketched out in Chapter 2 when I reflected on the popular and 'free' nature of the contemporary adjective *global*. The contemporary *global* has become an important, in the sense of 'normal', aspect of contemporary approaches to the world. My overview in Chapter 2 of the various enthusiastic uses of *global* these days, such as in high profile publications like the *Human Development Report* 2014, where it is applied 513 times across 239 pages, or in the *World Development Report* 2014, in which it appears 278 times across 286 pages, made this apparent. The relevance of *global* is further apparent in the observation that the adjective plays a central role in the conceptualisation of ideas of 'globalisation', which, in turn, are an influential component of the contemporary knowledge production; I elaborated on this point in Chapter 3. Furthermore, if we look back at the conclusion of Chapter 2, which explored the use of the adjective *global* in US President George W. Bush's public post-9/11 communication, we see that political practitioners even seem to use the adjective *global* strategically. As I discussed in Chapter 2, what is remarkable about this wide-spread, enthusiastic and 'normalised' use of *global* is that it happens off the radar of critical engagement and scrutiny. I believe that already this 'influential' but 'unnoticed' existence of the contemporary *global*, captured in Chapters 2 and 3, justifies scholarly attention and a critical take on the phenomenon of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global*.

Second, the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global,* understood as a re-production of an object called 'new world', is worthy of being acknowledged as a relevant and interesting phenomenon because the proc-

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lamation of the 'new world', which is implied in the object that the discourse brings out, can be seen as indicating an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of the process of modernisation. I developed this point in Chapter 5 by distinguishing between the proclamation of a 'new world' *to come* and the proclamation of the 'new world' that *came*. The proclamation of a 'new world' *to come* is grounded in the modern fondness (for the striving) for the 'new' as a central, in fact, foundational aspect of societal progress and development. In Chapter 5, I provided a set of examples to illustrate what I mean by 'new world' *to come*, such as Barack Obama's (2009) promise of a "a new way forward". I then stressed that the idea of the 'new world' that is implied in the use of the words *globalisation* and *global* differs from the (modern) idea of the 'new world' *to come*. As I elaborated in Chapter 5, it is about a 'new world' that *came*. This 'new world' that *came,* in comparison to the 'new world' *to come*, implies a passive speaking position of an observer, who is confronted with a 'new' reality 'out there', a reality that does not match established conceptions and understandings.

As I explained in Chapter 5, the fact that I take the proclamation of the 'new world' that *came* as a manifestation of an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation is grounded in a distinct understanding of the social world. This is an understanding of social reality that is informed by the work of sociologist Ulrich Beck. According to such an understanding, contemporary social reality is shaped by two aspects and their interplay. On the one side, it is the reflexive 'backfiring' of the process of modernisation. On the other side, this is the prevalence of the tradition of what Beck (2006) calls "the national perspective" and "methodological nationalism". The term 'reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation' captures three aspects that together shape contemporary social reality: the 'internal cosmopolitisation' of national societies, the existence of 'global risk' and the 'return of uncertainty'. I explained each of these aspects in detail in Chapter 5. In sum, the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation brings out a social reality, in which not only modern institutions but also modern principles are challenged, outmoded and, in fact, rendered obsolete through the process of modernisation itself. They are radicalised as a side effect of modernisation, its institutions and principles, and the actions shaped by them. Importantly, this side effect is not the dark side of modernisation but the manifestation of the very *success* of modernisation. The second aspect of the 'reflexive modern' world, the tradition of the 'national perspective', is a political perspective and a scholarly take on the world that is grounded in "categories […] that take the nation-state as the norm" (Beck 2006: 73). It obscures the look at (the reality of) the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation, especially the 'internal cosmopolitisation' of national societies, which is, as I stressed in Chapter 5, a social reality.

Grounded in such an understanding of the world, the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global,* understood as a discursive re-production of an object called 'new world', is to be seen as a manifestation of an

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'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation. This is simply because it implies a questioning of the (modern) world (grounded in a traditional actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective') as we know it.

I made clear in Chapter 5 that this conceptual move is, indeed, a *conceptual* move and not an *observation* of how social and political actors actually grasp the perceived 'newness' of the world, in the sense of how they label and conceptualise it. My engagement with the adjective *global* in Chapter 2 brought out that the world is grasped in diverse ways through utterances, which contain the adjective *global* – as we saw, the adjective is used with a myriad of different meanings. Hence, when I use the word 'awareness' I do not mean to suggest that the 'new world' that *came* is consciously and explicitly 'grasped' as being shaped by the 'internal cosmopolitisation' of national societies, 'global risk' and the 'return of uncertainty'. When I take the phenomenon of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* as a manifestation of an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation, I make a conceptual move, which *presupposes* the above mentioned Beck-inspired conception of social reality; as I put it in Chapter 5, it is grounded in a 'pre-theoretical commitment' to a conception of the world as being 'reflexive modern'.

It is in such a 'reflexive modern' world that the omnipresence of the adjective *global* becomes a relevant and interesting phenomenon that is worthy of scholarly attention because, as something that implies an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation, its study is always a study of an actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective', which, as I explained in Chapter 5, constitutes a central aspect of social reality.

THE SYMBOLIC PRODUCTION OF THE WORLD, AND THE 'NEW WORLD' AS A DISTINCT MODE OF THE PRESENT

In the previous section, I conceptualised the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* as a discursive re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world' and presented it as a relevant and interesting phenomenon that is worthy of being acknowledged by scholars. I did this by synthesising various insights that I generated over the course of the previous chapters.

In this second main part of this chapter, I move a step further; I go beyond synthesising previous insights. I argue that, in addition to it being relevant and interesting, the re-production of the web of meanings through utterances, which contain the adjective *global*, is a *political* phenomenon, i.e. it is something the study of which enables insights into the political world. I propose that the omnipresence of *global* can be seen as a political phenomenon because it constitutes a dimension of the symbolic construction of social

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reality, in general, and, in particular, because it makes meaningful an important conceptual space and temporal category, namely the 'present'. In this sense, I argue, the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is a particular and noteworthy part of the perpetual contestation over the meaning of the world, which does not simply mirror a world that exists 'outside' of language but *constitutes*, in the sense of *symbolically produces*, this world. Symbolic productions of the world make some things possible, in the sense of imaginable, and others impossible, i.e. unimaginable – this relates to socially binding decisions, like 'political' decisions in a narrow sense, and beyond.

I substantiate my argument that the omnipresence of *global* is a political phenomenon in two steps. I start by returning to the discussion of the concept 'discourse' that I presented in Chapter 4, as well as to my excursus on language and meaning in Chapter 2. I extend and refine some of the insights from these previous chapters and carve out what I mean when I say that the omnipresence of *global* is a dimension of the symbolic production of social reality. This includes a reflection on the ideas of 'politics' and 'power' that are implied in such a conception of the world. To be clear, substantiating that the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is not just a relevant and interesting but also a *political* phenomenon, because it is a dimension of the contestation over the meaning of the world, is a *theoretical* exercise. Contrary to the above mentioned two aspects that make the omnipresence of *global* a *relevant* and *interesting* phenomenon, it is not grounded in something that is distinct about the word *global* or about the object that is brought out by utterances with the word *global*. Rather, it is grounded in a particular theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. I already touched on this theory in previous chapters because it informs the concept 'discourse' that I introduced in Chapter 4, as well as, the work of the scholars to whom I referred in Chapter 2 in my discussion of poststructuralist understandings of language and meaning.

The aim of this following section is to highlight the hallmarks of this theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. I do this by embedding these hallmarks into the context of other understandings of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality that are in some respect similar to this theory but differ in other respects fundamentally. This is, for instance, the theoretical ground, on which the scholarship builds that looks at how words 'do' things, as well as, the theoretical foundations of the IR social constructivist literature. I provide this excursus on these seemingly similar but meaningfully different approaches to clarify my own ground and its theoretical specificities. It also helps me to situate the understanding of the world, which informs my conception of the omnipresence of *global*, in the broader scholarship. Such a strategy seems to be particularly appropriate as the idea of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality that I follow here is marginalised in the mainstream of the political studies and IR scholarship. Consequently, as I point out, as an

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object of study, the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is a phenomenon of interest to scholars at the margins of academic explorations of the political world; paraphrasing David Campbell (1998[1992]: ix), it is a phenomenon of interest for an "unconventional analysis".

This first step in this second part of this chapter is of general nature. I frame the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a dimension of the contest over the meaning of the world. It is then followed by a more particular second step. Here, I take up insights from my discussion of the proclamation of the 'new world' in Chapter 5 and frame the 'new world', i.e. the object that is re-produced through utterances, which contain the word *global,* as a *special* dimension of the contest over the meaning of the world. I argue that it is special because the 'new world' constitutes a mode of the temporal category 'present'. The aim of the second step in this part of the present chapter is to put forward that historical appearances of the 'new world', i.e. distinct actualisations of the object that is re-produced through utterances, which contain the word *global,* constitute ways, in which the conceptual space 'present' is filled with meaning.

The symbolic production of reality

Social reality does not exist 'as such' and 'out there'. It is produced, in the sense that it is made meaningful. Language is an important dimension of this production of social reality.[3] In Chapter 2, we saw that the practice of making the world meaningful through language is not straightforward because language and meaning are not straightforward. The excursus on Ferdinand de Saussure's philosophy of structural linguists showed that meaning is the product of differences between signs rather than natural references to an external world. This means that it is misguided to consider language as a tool that objectively mirrors a reality external to itself. But this is not all. De Saussure and, ultimately, the various poststructuralist thinkers to whom I referred in Chapter 2, make us aware that it is not only that meanings are not naturally inscribed in the world, they are also not simply inherent in words. Meaning is the product of endless plays of signifiers. As such, language must not be understood

> "as a transparent, reflective form of communication, but as a situated, interpretable phenomenon that serves to construct social reality." (Ainsworth and Hardy 2004: 155)

3 Of course, language is not the only dimension of the construction of social reality. Linguistic interventions play an important role but so do all sorts of practices. It is only my specific interest in the word *global* in this project that makes me stress and focus exclusively on the role of *language* in the social production of the world.

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This brings me back to Foucault (1972: 49) and his explanation that language and texts "systematically form the objects of which they speak." Rather than *mirroring* the world, language and texts *produce* the world. In this sense, as Jutta Weldes et al (1999: 16) put it, language and texts have "concrete and significant, material effects. They allocate social capacities and resources and make practices possible." There is an intimately interwoven relationship between language and politics.

The relationship between language and politics has been subject to diverse debates and theorisations. Aristotle in his *Ars Rhetorica* (1959[350 B.C.E]) famously points to the persuasive nature of language and the significance of rhetoric for the conduct of politics, which has inspired much research on rhetoric, persuasion and propaganda. Jürgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt, each in their own ways, stress that the nature of human existence, politics and language are interlinked in fundamental ways. Habermas' entire social theory, significant parts of which have found their way into the political studies and IR scholarship on (deliberative) democracy, is based on a communication paradigm;[4] and Arendt (1958: 4, 25-6, 175) points out that one of *the* guiding concepts in political theory and philosophy, namely Aristole's *zoon politikon*,

"can [only] be fully understood if one adds his second famous definition of man as a zoon logon ekhon ('a living being capable of speech')."

Accordingly, she concludes,

"wherever the relevance of speech is at stake, matters become political by definition, for speech is what makes man a political being." (ibid. 3)

Arendt's colleague Hans-Georg Gadamer (1976: 59) argues in a similar way when he writes,

"Aristotle established the classical definition of the nature of man, according to which man is the living being who has logos. In the tradition of the West, this definition became canonical in a form which stated that man is the animal rationale, the rational being, distinguished from all other animals by his capacity for thought. Thus it rendered the Greek word logos as reason or thought. In truth, however, the primary meaning of this word is language. [...] To men alone is the logos given [...], so that they can make manifest to each other what is useful and harmful, and therefore also what is right and wrong. [...] Man, as an individual, has logos. He can think and he can speak. He can make what is not present manifest through his speaking, so that another person sees it before him."

4 Refer back to Chapter 4, fn 1.

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Political linguist Heiko Girnth (2002: 1) stresses the role of language as a means of politics, in fact, he stresses that language is not just any kind of means of politics but the very condition of the possibility of politics. This is because unless physical force is used, politics is about symbolic action. Political goals have to be explained and opponents' visions have to be criticised and deconstructed in an attempt to secure public approval (Bergsdorf 1991: 19). This is done through persuasion, argumentation and an appeal to the audience's emotions. It is done through the use of some and the avoidance of other words.

The theory that language 'does' something is well established not only in the scholarship but also in political *practice*. "[W]ords have consequences as much as actions do", acknowledges US President Bill Clinton (quoted in Washington Post 2010). An understanding of the 'doing' of language is also apparent in the following exchange between a journalist and US President George W. Bush's spokesman Scott McClellan at a press conference about the abuses of prisoners in US-led prisons in Iraq and in the Guantanamo Bay detention camp:

> "*Journalist*: You call it a war. They're prisoners of war. Why do you make a distinction, which has led to so many abuses by not abiding by the rule of law?
>
> *Scott McClellan*: Well, I don't know, when you say 'so many', what exactly you're referring to." (Bush 2004f)

The above exchange is not so much about (the fate of) 'prisoners of war' but about language. It is about what something is called or not called; it is about the expression 'so many' and the question of what a sign user, namely the journalist, means when they use it. Linguists such as Joseph Klein (1991) and Martin Wengeler (2005) provide comprehensive accounts of the various forms of this kind of 'self-reflection' on language in daily political practice. With self-reflection they mean the explicit problematisation of language, such as in instances in which the supposed or actual linguistic (in)competency of sign users are questioned,[5] or in instances in which there are explicit disputes about single words and their meanings, such as is seen above in the question "what do you mean by 'so many'?"

The theory that language matters and that it 'does' something is apparent in political practice in two respects. First, practitioners are aware that the use of a specific word in a specific situation implies *actual* consequences. This is expressed in the above provided quote by President Clinton. It is most ob-

5 The critique of George W. Bush as being unable to pronounce foreign countries and names, and like the (alleged) lack of English skills of former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, with reference to which his political opponents aimed to discredit his (foreign) policy competency, are also prominent examples of this kind of self-reflection on or problematisation of language in political practice.

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viously manifest in the many instances, in which words that are associated with (international) law are explicitly applied or avoided. For example, in 1956, then British Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden was eager to stress to the House of Commons: "We are not at war with Egypt. We are in an armed conflict" (Eden 1956). In recent public debates in Germany, government representatives avoid using and explicitly reject the term *Kampfeinsatz* (combat mission), as well as, *Krieg* (war), when it comes to the engagement of the German Federal Armed Forces (*Bundeswehr*), for instance recently, in Afghanistan.[6] Similar examples include the application or avoidance of the word *genocide* in various contexts, or, the use or avoidance of the term *prisoners of war* for specific detainees in the debate about the US detention camp in Guantanamo Bay – we saw this in the above quoted exchange between the journalist and President Bush's spokesperson.[7]

Second, the relevance of the theory that language 'does' something in political practice is also apparent in instances, in which the 'right' choice of language seems to be perceived as having a positive impact and even 'producing' the social world by naming it. An obvious example is the practice of code-naming military operations, such as 'Cast Lead', the name of the

6 This debate is deeply embedded in post-1945 German history and culture and relates to debates about the role of the German Federal Armed Forces (*Bundeswehr*). According to the German *Grundgesetz* (Art. 87a) the role of the *Bundeswehr* is a defensive one only. Before 1990 the only active exercise, in which the *Bundeswehr* was allowed to be involved, was related to disaster control operations. With the end of the Cold War and Germany's (re)unification, debates about the role of the *Bundeswehr* came up. In 1994, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that the idea of the *Bundeswehr* as 'defending' German borders needs to be reconsidered and understood more broadly than it used to be; the idea of 'defence' now also includes the reaction to crises and the prevention of conflicts elsewhere in the world in order to preserve Germany's security. This ruling has made the question of what is the task of the *Bundeswehr* a highly politically charged issue.

7 The 2002 'Fact Sheet: Status of Detainees at Guantanamo' (Bush 2002e) explicates the US policy under President Bush: "The United States is treating and will continue to treat all of the individuals detained at Guantanamo humanely and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. The President has determined that the Geneva Convention applies to the Taliban detainees, but not to the al-Qaida detainees. Al-Qaida is not a state party to the Geneva Convention; it is a foreign terrorist group. As such, its members are not entitled to POW status. Although we never recognized the Taliban as the legitimate Afghan government, Afghanistan is a party to the Convention, and the President has determined that the Taliban are covered by the Convention. Under the terms of the Geneva Convention, however, the Taliban detainees do not qualify as POWs. Therefore, neither the Taliban nor al-Qaida detainees are entitled to POW status."

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2008/9 strike of the Israel Defence Forces in the Gaza Strip, which refers to a children's Chanukah song (Ronen 2008). Codenames are usually chosen with a view to boost public relations and support, as it was the case when the 1989 US invasion of Panama was code-named 'Just Cause' and when the 2001 US military build-up to the 'war on terror' ran under the label 'Enduring Freedom', after its initial name, 'Infinite Justice', was reconsidered in order to avoid outrage by Muslims. The name change was officially announced on 24 September 2001 when the US Administration realised that in the Islamic faith 'infinite justice' is only to be provided by God (BBC 2001). The linguistic move by the US military during the 1991 Gulf War to replace the term 'body bags' with the euphemism 'human remains pouches' in order to avoid associations with (the trauma of) the Vietnam War (see Freedberg 2003) is another prominent example that hints to an underlying theory, according to which words 'do' something – even beyond being acts with concrete (legal) implications; so is the case of the labelling of the Berlin Wall, which, in official East German (GDR) political jargon, was not simply called 'wall' but *antifaschistischer Schutzwall* ('antifascist protection rampart'). This encoded the founding narrative and guiding ideology of the GDR as a socialist and explicitly anti-fascist society that, within this narrative, required protection from a fascist capitalist 'outside'.[8] US President Franklin D. Roosevelt's public endeavour in 1942 to find an appropriate name for the 1939–1945 war is another example along these lines:

> "So I am looking for a word – as I said to the newspapermen a little while ago – I want a name for the war. I haven't had any very good suggestions. Most of them are too long. My own thought is that perhaps there is one word that we could use for this war, the word 'survival'. The Survival War." (Roosevelt 1942)[9]

This endeavour, like the previous example, makes apparent that the sign users, such as Roosevelt, seem to hold a theory according to which, as feminist

8 In contrast, in West Germany, the border, which was erected by the GDR, was usually called *innerdeutsche Grenze* (internal German border) in order to indicate that the separation of the Soviet zone from the three zones initially occupied by the Western Allies was not officially acknowledged and that Germany was still one and not two countries. This is also why, by default, it is a political statement if one chooses to speak of the *re*-unification (*Wiedervereinigung*) of Germany or the unification (*Vereinigung*) of Germany in 1990. While the former implies that something came together *again* which was always there but was artificially separated, the latter suggests that there is a new Germany as a result of two Germanys coming together.

9 As we know, the name *Survival War* did not take hold. However, as Reynolds (2003) discusses in detail, even *World War II*, which became the common label in the West, was not used worldwide.

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theorist Dale Spender (quoted in Bhatia 2005: 9) puts it in a different context,

> "[t]hose who name the world have the privilege of highlighting their own experiences – and thereby identify what they consider important."[10]

The notion that choices of the 'right' words make a difference beyond having actual legal implications is further apparent in attempts by political actors to actively 'occupy' and 'capture' linguistic signs with specific meanings and associations. A recent attempt was US President Barack Obama's move to 'capture' the term *change* for the purposes of his 2007-8 Presidential nomination campaign.

As Martin Wengeler (2005) points out, the belief that words could be 'occupied' with specific meanings has its origin in leftist thoughts.[11] It builds on Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony as outlined in his famous *Prison Notebooks* (1991[1929-35], 1996, 2007) but it was also taken up by conservative and right wing groups. Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch explained the success of the Nazis in resurrecting wide parts of former socialist discipleship in Germany in the 1930s with the fact that the Nazis managed to 'occupy' for their purposes critical concepts, such as *Nation* (nation), *Seele* (soul), *Reich*, *Einheit* (unity). For Bloch it was the task of the Left to 're-occupy' these terms in order to be able to reach the "soul of the people" (Wengeler 2005: 181). The German student movement of the 1960s argued in a similar way and built on Herbert Marcuse, who claimed that political linguistics was "one of the most effective 'secret weapons'" of the political establishment (ibid.). And in the 1970s, the belief in the 'power of words' went so far that Germany's conservative party, CDU, after its defeat in the general elections, officially established a so-called *Projektgruppe Semantik* ('project group for semantics'), the task of which was to develop strategies to 'occupy' terms with meanings according to the CDU's party line (Wengeler 2005; also Klein 1991).[12] Given the insights into the complexity of meaning, which I provided in Chapter 2, the idea that words could be easily 'occupied' with specific meanings is, of course, misguided. Mean-

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10 Historian David Reynolds (2003: 29) stresses in a similar vein, "[t]he labels we apply […] are as important as the events themselves. Sometimes these concepts are developed retrospectively; often they are taken from the vocabulary of the time. But the labels are rarely neutral, either in their political bias or their analytical implications." This point is backed up when we consider that in the Soviet Union the Second World War was officially called *The Great Patriotic War*, which gives the historical event a completely different meaning in that it "linked the conflict with the struggle against Napoleon ('The Patriotic War')" (ibid. 14).

11 For the following, including fn 13 in this chapter, see Wengeler (2005: 181).

12 The 'study group' existed from 1973-77.

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ings are inevitably products of social processes and less one-dimensional and functional than the assumption behind the *Projektgruppe Semantik* and similar endeavours seems to suggest. As became clear above, words are not containers that could be readily filled.[13]

Moving now from political *practice* back to the *study* of politics (understood in the broadest sense), the theory that language 'does' something has come to inform a diverse and growing body of works, which build on the philosophy of speech acts, developed by J. L. Austin (1962, 1971, 2013) and John Searle (1969).

As Krallmann and Ziemann (2001: 74) note, J. L. Austin was the first philosopher who argued for a theory of linguistic action. Building on pragmatic language philosophy, or, as it is also called, the 'ordinary language philosophy' of Ludwig Wittgenstein (especially 1953),[14] Austin was the first who explicitly developed the theory that language has a performative potential. Suggesting that "[w]hat we need, perhaps, is a more general theory of speech-acts" (Austin 1971: 20), he set out to develop this theory by distinguishing between constative and performative utterances. The function of constative utterances is to use language in order to *say* something; the function of performative utterances, in comparison, is to use language in order to *do* something:

"if a person makes an utterance of this [performative] sort we should say that he is doing something rather than merely saying something. […] When I say 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' I do not describe the christening ceremony, I actually perform the christening and when I say 'I do' […], I am not reporting on a marriage, I am indulging in it." (Austin 2013: 22)

Building on this, Austin argues that the context, in which the use of language as a performative act is embedded, needs to be acknowledged as critical for its success. Surely, as he makes clear, marrying is not "simply saying a few words", rather, "the words have to be said in the appropriate circumstances" (ibid.). Wrong circumstances, such as a missing convention, make the intended performative act misfire:

"Suppose that, living in a country like our own, we wish to divorce our wife. We may try standing her in front of us squarely in the room and saying, in a voice loud enough for all to hear, 'I divorce you'. Now this procedure is not accepted. We shall not thereby have succeeded in divorcing our wife […]. This is a case where the convention, we should say, does not exist or is not accepted." (ibid. 23)

13 Jürgen Habermas (1979) was among those who made this point clear in the public debate about the usefulness of the CDU's 'project group for semantics' (see Wengeler 2005; Klein 1991).

14 Refer back to Chapter 2, fn 7.

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Austin's emphasis on the pragmatic and performative dimension of (the use of) language turns away from the idea that utterances are only about making statements about 'facts'. In other words, it turns away from perceptions according to which the use of language is only about truthful or untruthful propositions about an independently existing reality. This becomes apparent in his explanation that a performative utterance is an utterance,

"which looks like a statement and grammatically […] would be classed as a statement, which is not non-sensical, and yet it is not true or false. […] They will be perfectly straightforward utterances, with ordinary verbs in the first person singular present indicative active, and yet we shall see at once that they couldn't possibly be true or false." (ibid. 22)

Rather than being either 'true' or 'false', performative utterances may be 'unsatisfactory' and 'unhappy' or, as he calls it, they may be "infelicities" in that they "fail to come off in special ways" due to the fact that "certain rules, transparently simple rules, are broken" (ibid. 23), of which the above noted missing conventional context is one – for instance, when trying to divorce somebody by standing in front of this person and saying 'I divorce you'. In this sense, performative utterances are about the 'right way' of using language; they are either 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' but they are never 'true' or 'false'.[15]

The notion of the performative dimension of language has found its way into social and political scientific discourses, for instance, through Jürgen Habermas' work on 'communicative action' (e.g. Habermas 1981a, 1981b).[16] It was also taken up by Nicholas Onuf (1985, 1998), who intro-

15 In his posthumously published *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), Austin stresses the performative nature of language in that he revises his initial taxonomy of speech acts. In *How to Do Things with Words* Austin moves away from the dual distinction between constative and performative acts because he realises that, in fact, constativa have a performative function too. This conceptual shift is not of relevance for our purposes here, for which we just need to understand the basic premises of speech act theory. However, to give an idea of the direction into which Austin moves: In *How to Do Things with Words* he shifts his attention away from the dual distinction between constative and performative acts to the three dimensions or forms of action, which he recognises as being inherent in every utterance. These are the locutionary act, the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act (Austin 1962: esp. 94-119). He understands the locutionary act as the actual performance of an utterance. The concept of the illocutionary act, "such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking" (ibid. 108), refers to the conventional force of an utterance. The perlocutionary act is about the actual effect of an utterance on those who are addressed.

16 Refer back to fn 1 in Chapter 4.

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duces it into the study of international law. Onuf's aim is to criticise legal positivism. Based on the insight that "saying is doing" (Onuf 1998: 59), he uses speech act theory to establish a "typology of rules" in order to "show that the international order is a legal order", which, as he argues, is a statement that could not be defended if one looks from the perspective of legal positivism (ibid. 386).

Another prominent instance, in which speech act theory has entered the study of politics and the IR scholarship, is the concept 'securitisation', which was developed by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Joop de Wilde (1998). The securitisation scholarship has come to be labelled Copenhagen School. Building on Austin's pragmatic premises, scholars of the Copenhagen School set out to reconceptualise 'security' by moving away from considering it as something objectively measurable and as an issue that is solely linked to the military sector. This is how the issue of security has been commonly treated in the mainstream IR scholarship (see Williams 2008). Instead, the main argument of the Copenhagen School is that "security is a particular type of politics applicable to a wide range of issues" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: vii).[17] Security is not to be understood "just as the use of force" (ibid. 19). Rather, Copenhagen School scholars argue that security is to be understood as a speech act. It is this speech act that they label 'securitisation'. As Ole Wæver (1995: 55) puts it, for securitisation scholars "security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act."

> "Security is […] a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat." (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 24)

The central claim of securitisation scholars is that this speech act lifts issues beyond the sphere of 'normal politics' into the sphere of 'security'.

> "Traditionally, by saying 'security', a state representative declares an emergency condition, thus claiming a right to use whatever means are necessary to block a threatening development." (ibid. 21)

Hence, by *saying* something, namely 'security', something is *done*, namely an issue is described as, or one could say, is transformed into something "posing an existential threat" (ibid.). Through this (symbolic) transformation, that is, through this securitisation-speech act, the respective issue

17 In addition to the military, Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde suggest four sectors, in which security is a crucial component: the environmental sector, the economic sector, the societal sector, and the political sector.

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gets pushed to the far end of a spectrum, which, as the Copenhagen School scholars explain, consists of the following three main stages:

> "nonpoliticized (meaning the state does not deal with it and it is not in any way made an issue of public debate and decision)[,] politicized (meaning the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) [and] securitized." (ibid. 24)

Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (ibid. 23) describe this securitisation-move as an "extreme form of politicization" because it enables political actors to break rules of political conduct and procedures. Importantly, it legitimises the use of force or the prohibition of debates about a 'securitised' issue in public or academic discourses.

The securitisation-speech act is conceptualised as consisting of "three components (or steps): existential threats, emergency action, and effects on interunit relations by breaking free of rules" (ibid. 26). Yet, as Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (ibid. 25) stress, just saying 'security' does not yet count as a successful act of securitising an issue.

> "A discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization – this is a securitizing move, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it as such." (ibid.)

This brings in the *context* of the securitising-speech act, which is something also Austin stresses. Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (ibid. 32) explain that to grasp a successful securitisation-speech act does not only require "to gain an increasingly precise understanding of who securitizes, on what issues (threats), for whom (referent objects), why, with what results" but also "not at least, under what conditions (i.e., what explains when securitization is successful)" (ibid.). In this sense, the securitisation-speech act is more than the act of using the word *security* and of calling and presenting an issue as an 'existential threat'; it also requires the *acceptance* of the issue as a 'security' issue by the respective addressees (ibid. 25). In short, as Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (ibid. 32) argue, the success of a securitising-speech act depends on two criteria: a) "internal, linguistic-grammatical" criteria and b) "external, contextual and social" conditions.[18]

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18 In utilising pragmatic language philosophical premises and Austin's concept of speech acts, the notion of 'securitisation' highlights the normative dimension of 'security'-debates. The acknowledgment that empirical reality (in the particular case of 'securitisation' this means 'existential threats') is not objectively 'out there' – in other words, that it is not just innocently perceived and reacted to by political actors – but that political actors are actively involved in creating it through the use of language, i.e. speech acts, highlights "the responsibility of

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'Securitisation' has come to be a popular concept in the political studies and IR scholarship. A growing number of empirical case studies look at the 'securitisation' of a variety of socio-political issues, prominently the environment (e.g. Ney 1999; Litfin 1999) and migration (e.g. Ceyhan and Tsoukala 2002; Huysmans 1995, 2002a), but also HIV/AIDS (e.g. Peterson 2002/3; Elbe 2006), as well as less obvious issues, such as the 'securitisation of Africa' through the UK Blair Government, analysed by Rita Abrahamsen (2005).

In her study, Abrahamsen argues that the British approach to Africa under UK Prime Minister Tony Blair has changed significantly after the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001. She argues, the continent has been subject to securitisation. This process of securitisation has taken place through the UK government's explicit linking of the trope of global interdependency, on the one side, with the "interpretation of poverty and underdevelopment as dangerous" (Abrahamsen 2005: 62), on the other side. Following on from this, Abrahamsen (ibid. 55) argues, the British approach to Africa under Blair has been "part of an ongoing securitization of the continent" after 9/11. This 'ongoing securitisation' is manifest, she argues, in public statements of the British government, such as Blair's cognition that "we are realising how fragile are our frontiers in the face of the world's new challenges" (quoted in ibid. 65), Jack Straw's claim that "we care about Africa because it is no longer possible to neglect the world's problems without running the risk of eventually suffering the consequences" (ibid.), and Chris Mullin's claim that there are "sound practical reasons why we cannot afford to ignore the state of Africa. The most immediate of these is terrorism" (quoted in ibid. 67). Abrahamsen (ibid. 56) argues that although the UK engagement in Africa is "less visibly militarized than U.S. policies", it has come to be shaped by a discourse of "risk/fear/security" rather than "development/humanitarianism". This shift of discourse, she concludes, may lead to a 'demonisation' of the continent, justifying a tightening of immigration and asylum laws in the UK, and, more generally, may result in policies which have "very little to offer in terms of solving Africa's development problems" (ibid. 74). It is this discursive shift that Abrahamsen takes as an indicator for that there is "an ongoing securitization of the continent" (ibid. 55) unfolding.

On close scrutiny, there is something curious about Abrahamsen's study. While she provides a valuable interpretation of the official UK discourse

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talking security, the responsibility of actors as well as of analysts who choose to frame an issue as a security issue. They cannot hide behind the claim that anything in itself constitutes a security issue" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 34). The use of "the security label", as Ole Wæver (1995: 65) puts it, is then a "political choice". As such, it provokes us to question "with some force whether it is a good idea to make [an] issue a security issue – to transfer it to the agenda of panic politics" (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 34).

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towards Africa, she actually does not really study 'securitisation'. This is not least because the dimension of the 'acceptance' of a securitising-speech act is left unexplored in her study. Abrahamsen's study unveils a distinct kind of *naming* and, perhaps, *framing* of 'Africa' and offers insights into how UK representatives, such as the above quoted Blair, Straw and Mullin, symbolically address and grasp 'Africa'. It leaves out, however, the question whether this reference to 'Africa' with security-terminology is actually a successful securitisation-move. Following the theory of 'securitisation', it would be a successful securitisation-speech act if the addressees of the securitisation-move, such as the British public, *accepted* it as a securitising-move. This, however, is not part of Abrahamsen's examination.

I mention Abrahamsen's study not only to indicate that empirical analyses of 'securitisation' are challenging endeavours that have to go beyond the analysis of the linguistic level and have to take into account perceptions and attitudes on the side of those who are addressed. I mention it because it points to another way, in which the relationship between language, meaning and social reality is treated in the study of politics. It seems to me that, rather than following a pragmatic speech act-approach, Abrahamsen's study uncovers the symbolic legitimation of political decisions in a particular case, more generally. With that, it seems to me, she is close(r) to another kind of established literature, which takes seriously that language 'does' something, than to the pragmatic speech act-scholars. This other literature is the scholarship that follows, in the broadest sense, an approach called critical discourse analysis.

There is a comprehensive literature that looks critically at the linguistic legitimation of past and present (future-oriented) political decisions. This is done in various different ways. Particularly popular are approaches that follow, in one way or other, a tradition called critical discourse analysis. Norman Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2015) is one of the scholars who set the foundations for this kind of theory and study of language and politics. In contrast to the concept 'discourse', that I sketched in Chapter 4, the word *discourse* is used by Fairclough to refer to the use of language as a particular aspect of social life that stands in a dialectical relationship with other parts of social life (Fairclough 2015: 7).[19] Language is seen as a social practice that is embedded in a broader social context. The focus of critical discourse analyses is on unveiling in written or spoken texts "contradictions between what [the discourse] is claimed and expected to be and what it actually is" (ibid. 9). The analysis focuses on explaining "how such contradictions are caused by

19 With reference to David Harvey (1996), Fairclough (2015: 7) lists five other elements that form social life: "power; social relations; material practices; institutions (and rituals); beliefs (values and desires)". He (ibid.) explains that these "elements are distinct, but dialectically related – […] for example […] discourse is a form of power, a mode of forming beliefs/values/desires, an institution, a mode of social relating, and a material practice."

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and are a part of […] the wider social reality, which they exist within" (ibid.). The aim is to understand "how language contributes to the domination of some people by others as a step towards social emancipation" (ibid. 46). As the adjective *critical* suggests, critical discourse analysis is a

> "*normative critique* of discourse, leading to *explanatory critique* of relations between discourse and other social elements of the existing social reality, as a basis for *action* to change reality for the better." (ibid. 48; emphasis in the original)

This brings me to the end of my excursus on ways in which language is taken seriously by scholars and political practitioners and in which it is taken as something that *does* something. The purpose of my excursus is to point to the fact that, in general, theories according to which language 'does' something are a well-established 'ingredient' both of political practice and the scholarship. At the same time, it helps me to distinguish from these theories the idea of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality that informs my conception of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon. As sketched above, according to this theory language, meaning and texts "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972: 49) and have "concrete and significant, material effects. They allocate social capacities and resources and make practices possible" (Weldes et. al. 1999: 16). My excursus on the widespread understanding that language, in one way or other, *does* something helps me to point to the specificity of this theory.

The many examples, which I presented above, make apparent that the conception that language and meaning do not simply mirror, or as Stuart Hall (1997: 15) puts it, "reflect" social reality but somehow *construct* this social reality, is well and widely established. Yet, despite this general similarity, the above sketched theories according to which language *does* something differ significantly from the theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality that informs my conception of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon. Importantly, in the above sketched approaches the use of language is seen as doing something "intentionally", to use Hall's (1997: 15) words again. There is an idea implied in the above sketched approaches that clearly confined actors do something to, i.e. construct and shape a world 'outside' (of themselves). It is in this respect that the theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality, which informs my conceptualisation of the omnipresence of the word *global* as a political phenomenon, differs; it is more radical. Rather than just presuming that actors do something through the use of language, my theoretical assumption is that social reality ('unintentionally') *emerges from within* language and meaning. This includes the social actors, who 'construct' the world; they, too, 'emerge' from within language and meaning. This means nothing less but that language and meaning, as manifest in texts, fundamentally open and close pathways as they produce social

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facts and identities.[20] Language and meaning bring out "interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others", explains Roxanne L. Doty (1993: 298). As Weldes et al (1999: 17) put it with reference to Stuart Hall,

> "[c]onstructions of reality and codes of intelligibility out of which they are produced provide both conditions of possibility and limits on possibility; that is, they make it possible to act in the world while simultaneously defining the 'horizon of the taken-for-granted' (Hall 1988: 44) that marks the boundaries of common sense and acceptable knowledge."

This symbolic production of social reality through language and meaning is not only 'not intentional' (in Hall's sense above). It is also highly complex, provisional and historical. Given that, as I pointed out in Chapter 2, language and meaning are a "constant flickering of presence and absence together" (Eagleton 1983: 128) social reality, including (the identities of) social actors, are principally in flux; they are anything but naturally stable. Consequently, any symbolic production of reality must be regarded only ever as a production of a *possibility* of reality rather than of reality per se.

This is where 'politics' comes in. Implied in this theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality is a distinct idea of 'politics' and 'power', where the latter is not held by stable actors but reproduced within the web of meanings that *is* social reality.

I come back to this point and elaborate on it in due course. However, before doing this, I want to conduct a second excursus on a scholarly approach that has similarities with the theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality that informs my conception of the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon but that differs in its foundation. This is the theory of social constructivism. Again, I embark on this excursus in order to clarify the hallmarks of the theoretical premises that inform my own conception. At the same time, it is a way of situating the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon and object of study in the broader political studies and IR scholarship.

The social constructivist approach entered the political studies and especially the IR scholarship in the context of the wider post-positivist turn. This post-positivist turn is grounded in the assumption that "social reality does not fall from heaven but that human agents construct and reproduce it through their daily practices", as IR scholar Thomas Risse (2007a: 128) puts it with reference to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's seminal work *The Social Construction of Reality* (1967). Although the oppositional labels

20 As stressed at the beginning of this section, social facts and identities emerge from within language *and* practices. Yet, in the context of this project, I only stress the issue of language.

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'positivism' (understood as 'pro-science') and 'post-positivism' (understood as 'anti-science') are still used in the debate about the nature of the disciplined knowledge production in political studies and IR, the scholarship has come to be shaped by broader recent developments in the philosophy of social science (Kurki and Wight 2007). This has lead to a basic rejection of the idea of positivism as a valid, let alone as the only account of science. Milja Kurki and Colin Wight (2007: 23-25) point out that the idea of 'positivism' has been largely replaced by what has come to be called 'scientific realism'. Scientific realism, in turn, is based on the premise that

> "what makes a body of knowledge scientific is not its mode of generation, but its content. Contra a positivist account of science, a body of knowledge is not declared scientific because it has followed a particular set of procedures based upon empirical 'facts' but, rather, because it constructs explanations of those facts in terms of entities and processes that are unknown and potentially unobservable." (ibid. 24)

This general turning-away from the idea of 'positivism' and the growing, relative ease with 'post-positivist' accounts is apparent in Thomas Risse's hypothetical question:

> "[i]f 'post-positivism' means, 1) a healthy scepticism toward a 'covering law' approach to social science irrespective of time and space and instead a strive toward middle-range theorizing; 2) an emphasis on interpretive understanding as an intrinsic, albeit not exclusive, part of any causal explanations; and 3) the recognition that social scientists are part of the social world which they try to analyse […] – is anybody still a 'positivist' then […]?" (Risse 2007a: 127)

Today, "it has simply become too difficult not to be a constructivist", argues Niels Akerstrom Andersen (2003: ix).

This philosophical 'open-mindedness' has lead to a growing body of literature in political studies and IR, which runs under the label 'social constructivism'. Alexander Wendt (e.g. 1992, 1994, 1999) is the most prominent representative of this scholarship, famously arguing that

> "people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them. States act differently toward enemies than they do toward friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not." (Wendt 1992: 396-7)

With the acknowledgement of the mutually constructing relationship between actors and structure, social constructivists have moved ideational aspects into the spotlight of their political analyses. Notions such as the 'collective identity' of political actors, e.g. states, have come to be considered as relevant components that guide the action of political agents – especially when it comes to foreign policy (e.g. Hellmann 2006; Risse 2007b; Weller 1999; Wendt 1994, 1999). Closely related to the concept of collective iden-

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tity, and sometimes even used synonymously, are the concept 'political culture' (Duffield 1998, 1999) and the idea of so-called 'role perceptions' of state actors (Kirste and Maull 1996). Together, these three concepts – political culture, role perceptions and collective identity – share reference to the collectively shared ideas and world-views, which are considered to underlie and, to some degree, direct policy making, and especially foreign policy making.

In the study of international politics this conceptual shift constitutes a significant development. The growing number of works, which acknowledge the significance of collective identity, political culture and role perceptions in and for policy / foreign policy, move away from the idea that policy making is guided by national interests, which are objectively predetermined either (from a realist perspective) through the conditions 'dictated' by the international environment or (from a liberal perspective) as the outcome of the demands and processes of the formation of coalitions within the social environment (see in more detail Risse 2007b: 49). Rather than assuming that interests and preferences are objectively and extrinsically predetermined, these interests and preferences themselves are exposed as socially constructed and, as such, are moved onto the radar of critical exploration.[21]

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21 This brings in again the breakdown of the bipolar bloc system at the end of the 1980, which I identified as the discursive 'door opener' for the concept 'globalisation' to come to be 'in the true'. Again, it was this event and especially the question of German foreign policy after the end of the Cold War and after the unification of both Germanys in 1990, which played a distinct role in triggering the above sketched shift away from traditional (especially realist) approaches in policy analysis (see Risse 2007b; Baumann and Hellmann 2001; Duffield 1998, 1999). Based on realist presumptions, German post-Cold War foreign policy was expected to alter significantly in the face of the power political changes, which followed from the breakdown of the bloc system. A new(ly) powerful Germany was expected to adjust its strategic interests and (power political) behaviour accordingly. Yet, post-1990 German foreign policy did not change significantly – at least not as dramatically as realist premises made analysts predict. German foreign political decisions, such as the rejection of the 1994 NATO-request to actively enhance the UN-authorised flight ban over Bosnia, which came only months after the historic decision of the German constitutional court, according to which German armed forces could join collective military actions under UN auspices, left those political analysts puzzled who built on 'traditional' approaches – at least it left them without explanation (see Duffield 1999). It was this obvious inability of traditional (realist) approaches to fully capture, in this case, German foreign policy behaviour, which caused some to turn to ideational aspects, to the concepts of collective identity and political culture, in order to explain and understand policy / foreign policy behaviour and, not least, to detect and predict policy change. In the German case, for instance, a significant body of literature became devoted to considering Germany's collective self-perception as

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This brings me back to the theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality, which informs my conception of the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon. While the social constructivist approach shares with this theory the idea that social reality 'does not fall from heaven' but is constructed, it remains committed to traditional premises regarding the very constitution of social reality. Theorists, such as Emanuel Adler (1997), Maja Zehfuss (2002), Karin Fierke (2007), as well as the already mentioned Kurki and Wight (2007) elaborate on this point. The latter identify social constructivism as a "via media, or middle ground, between rationalism and reflectivism" (Kurki and Wight 2007: 25). It is a 'via media' because ideational factors, like collective identities and political culture, are considered to be independent variables. They are not questioned and de-constructed themselves. In short, social constructivist approaches are committed to and reproduce an essentialist understanding of the world. Despite a belief in a socially constructed nature of socio-political reality and the stress of ideational aspects (such as collective identity and world-views) as crucial components in the analysis of world politics, the presumption that there is an essence of socio-political reality is not questioned as such – or at least it is not explicitly taken into account and built into the scholarly production of knowledge.

This is where the theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality, which informs my conception of the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon, differs from these accounts. And this difference accounts for the fact that it finds itself positioned at the 'unconventional' margins of the political studies and IR scholarship.

While studies, which take the productive nature of language seriously, like the speech act-inspired securitisation scholarship and (parts of) the studies that follow social constructivist premises, are rising in popularity and have settled into the mainstream,[22] "unconventional" studies, as David

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a *Zivilmacht* (civil power) as a crucial variable determining its policy / foreign policy behaviour (see further Kirste and Maull 1996; Maull 1993). For an empirical study see also Hellmann, Weber, Sauer and Schirmbeck (2007), which I mentioned in the Introduction of this book.

22 This 'rise' is to be seen in relative terms. Overall, the focus on language, even in the pragmatic sense, is (still) relatively unpopular in the political studies discourse and IR. For the IR scholarship, Karin Fierke (2002: 351) finds, "[t]he question of language […] has been marginalized, given assumptions that dealing with language is equivalent to being uninterested in research". Joseph Klein (1991) observes that the majority of scholars in political studies and IR either remains assuming that language is a neutral tool, which captures an externally existing empirical reality (in this sense language is not considered to be worthy of investigation in itself), or thinks that one cannot be sure that political actors 'really mean' what they say but that they might use language in order to obscure

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Campbell (1998[1992]: ix) calls them, which fall outside an essentialist outlook on the world, continue to be faced with profound scepticism on the part of the mainstream scholarship. Michael H. Lessnoff's decision to explicitly exclude, among others, Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty and Jacques Derrida, from his introductory book *Political Philosophers of the Twentieth Century* (1999) on the basis that "none of them seems […] to have said anything about politics that is both original and significant – in so far as their writings are comprehensible at all" (Lessnoff quoted in Finlayson and Valentine 2002: 2), might be an extreme form of this 'scepticism', but in its basic sentiment it is symptomatic for the nature of the contemporary mainstream in political studies and IR. As Milja Kurki and Colin Wight (2007: 23) detect,

> "the mainstream has been reluctant to take the knowledge claims of ['unconventional'] scholars seriously, because they challenge the very status of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions upon which the mainstream depends."

Richard J. Bernstein (1983) calls this rejection the "Cartesian Anxiety", which David Campbell (2007: 211) explains as

> "the fear that, given the demise of objectivity, we are unable to make judgements that have been central to the understanding of modern life, namely distinguishing between true and false, good and bad."

To replace the idea of 'objective reality' (essence) with 'textuality' (discourse) and to focus on the symbolic systems through which the distinctions that guide life are made, as it is in one way or other at the heart of 'unconventional' approaches, and, subsequently, to challenge the "cognitive validity, empirical objectivity, and universalist and rationalist claims of idealist, realist, and neorealist schools alike" (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989: ix), is (still) unthinkable and unacceptable for the majority of scholars in the field.

Yet, despite the fact that, as Peeter Selg (2010) observes, "due to current power relations (in terms of institutional resources, careers, funding, prestige, status, discipline's public relevance and 'impact factors')" it seems that 'unconventional' approaches will remain at the margins of the political studies and IR scholarship, these margins have been steadily colonised by more and more scholarly contributions. These contributions bring along nothing less than a distinct idea of 'politics' and 'power'. Implied in the non-essentialist outlook of these approaches is a widening of what is to be grasped as 'politics'. As IR scholar R. B. J. Walker (2000: 23) puts it, "[t]he most challenging political problems of our time […] arise primarily from a need to re-imagine what we mean by politics." But the implied notion of 'politics' is not only broader; it is also different from existing ones that

their 'actual intentions' (consequently, the use of language is not considered as 'hard fact').

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shape the mainstream scholarship in the field. It differs, for instance, even from those understandings of politics, which are already relatively broad, like Adrian Leftwich's idea, according to which:

"[p]olitics consists of all the activities, within and between societies, whereby the human species goes about obtaining, using, producing and distributing resources in the course of the production and reproduction of its social and biological life. These activities are not isolated from other features of social life. […] Politics is therefore a defining characteristic of all human groups, and always has been." (Leftwich 1983: 11)

The notion of politics that is implied in an 'unconventional', non-essentialist theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality, which informs my conception of the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon, goes beyond the one quoted above, in that it implies that "there is nothing given about the elements and forms of the political, the mode in which politics appears" (Finlayson and Valentine 2002: 4). Rather, "[e]veryday life is [seen as] ideological in an ontological sense; that which we know and which seems true depends on our sense of what is real" (Gregory 1988: xxi). Consequently, as David Rochefort and Roger W. Cobbs (1994) make clear, politics is the perpetual struggle over alternative realities, manifested in and through symbolic webs of meanings – such as the one re-produced in utterances, which contain the adjective *global*.

Finally, along with an 'unconventional' idea of politics comes an equally 'unconventional' idea of power. This idea is well captured by Michel Foucault (1984: 92-3) in his *The History of Sexuality*:

"[P]ower must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies. Power's condition of possibility, […] must not be sought in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary and descendent forms would emanate; it is the moving substrate of force relations which, by virtue of their inequality, constantly engender states of power, but the latter are always local and unstable. The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next […]. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere."

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This kind of 'unconventional' idea of power implies that power is not simply in the hand of a particular, 'powerful' person, let alone a state, as it is often presumed in the mainstream of the political studies and IR scholarship. Rather, in 'unconventional' approaches, a powerful person is understood to be a product of discourses, which produce distinct ('powerful') identities / speaking positions.[23] Myriam Dunn and Victor Mauer (2006) illustrate empirically this point in regard to the US President in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City in September 2001.

Taking the above together, politics is the

> "contests over the alternative understandings (often implicit) immanent in the representational practices that implicate the actions and objects one recognizes and the various spaces […] within which persons and things take on their identities." (Shapiro 1989: 12)

This brings me back to the adjective *global*. It is this theoretical ground and its idea of 'politics' and 'power' that make the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* not only a relevant and interesting but also a *political* phenomenon. Utterances, which contain the adjective *global*, constitute a dimension of the symbolic production of social reality, that is, they constitute a dimension of the perpetual contestation over the understanding of the social world, which, following the above sketched theoretical premises, *is* politics.

Preliminary summary

To this point in this chapter, I have substantiated my argument that the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is not just a *relevant* and *interesting* but also a *political* phenomenon. I have stressed in the introduction to this section that this is a *theoretical* argument. Contrary to the two aspects that make the phenomenon relevant and interesting, its *political* nature is not grounded in the word *global* itself or in the object, which uses of the word *global* bring out. Rather, it is grounded in a distinct, 'unconventional' and non-essentialist theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality. I carved out the hallmarks of this theory by referring to rele-

23 This also reveals the distinction between 'unconventional' approaches and the premises that inform classical transcendental takes; in his elaboration on 'discourse theory', Jacob Torfing (2005: 10) explains that in the case of the former, "[f]irst, the conditions of possibility are not invariable and ahistorical as Kant suggests, but subject to political struggles and historical transformation. […] Second, [it] does not see the conditions of possibility as an inherent feature of the human mind, but takes them to be a structural feature of contingently constructed discourses."

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vant theorists, such as Stuart Hall, and through an excursus on popular approaches in the political studies and IR scholarship that follow an apparently similar theory of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality but differ in their essentialist foundation. In juxtaposing these popular approaches with the theory that informs my conception of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon, I was able to position my project in the broader political studies and IR scholarship. I put forward that the political phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* is an 'unconventional' object of study at the margins of the political studies and IR scholarship.

Building on this general conception of the omnipresence of *global* as a political phenomenon, I now move a step further and add a nuance to it. I suggest there is something special about the omnipresence of the adjective *global*, understood as a dimension of the perpetual contestation over the meaning of social reality. What is special about the omnipresence of *global* is that the object 'new world', which it re-produces, is a mode of the temporal category 'present'. This means that historical appearances of the 'new world', i.e. distinct actualisations of the object that is re-produced through uses of the word *global,* constitute ways, in which the conceptual space 'present' is filled with meaning. In what follows, I illustrate the relevance of this point. I do this by highlighting the prominent role that the conceptual spaces 'past', 'present' and 'future' play in the organisation of social and political life.

The 'new world' as a distinct mode of the present

Together with the past and the future, the present constitutes a central category that guides social life. Grounded in a linear idea of time, divided into past (the realm of memory and experience), present and future (the realm of expectation), the present is the realm from within which decisions are made.[24]

24 The familiar threefold distinction between past, present and future is not a universal idea. As Hartmut Rosa (2001, 2001a, 2001b) elaborates, the idea of time is culturally specific and historically contingent. In fact, it is not only the relationship between the categories present, past, and future that is historical but the very categories as well; they are variable (Rosa 2001a: 618). The respective conception of time determines whether there are three main temporal categories to begin with. In a conception of time that distinguishes between 'now' and 'not-now', past and future merge (Rosa 2001b: 677). The same applies to a cyclic idea of time. Here, too, the past (memory) and the future (expectation) are almost congruent. It is only in the context of a linear conception of time, in which time is seen as flowing from the past via the present to the future, that the past (the realm of memory and experience) and the future (the realm of expectation) are separated from each other and from the present. It is only in this context that the three-

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> "Every perception of reality and time takes place in the present. Action, too, is always ever present action, even though it is shaped by the past and directed at the future." (Rosa 2001: 210; my own translation)

As Rosa indicates above, the present is intimately enmeshed with the past and the future. In general,

> "[t]hrough memory and expectation the unity of past, present and future is constituted in every present anew. The existence of past and future presents, futures and pasts remains untouched by this. Certain is that the present present will appear in the future memory as the past." (ibid. 211; my own translation)

In particular, the past, as memory and experience, determines the present and present decisions made for a(n imagined) future; just as the future, namely expectations, determines the present. The constructed (present) 'content' of the remembered past and of the expected future shapes present action. In this sense, the past and future serve as coordinates for the now; they serve as a trigger for a pluralisation of presents (see further Rosa 2001). This is because "[p]ast and future […] are horizons of the present; they appear as past and future of the present" (ibid. 211; my own translation).

At the same time, the relationship between past, present and future, as well as, the way in which the past and the future are made meaningful, is grounded in the present. For instance, the technology of 'risk', which I discussed in Chapter 5, is a strategy to fill with meaning an 'open' future from within the present. Through 'risk', the future is 'colonised' (from with)in the present, grounded in the (present) memory of past experiences. The past, too, is the product of the present in that it is constructed from within the present. This is because, in a linear notion of time, the past and the future cannot be directly accessed. There is no direct access to the future because it is the realm of the potential. There is also no direct access to the past because what has passed inevitably needs to be remembered and 'communicated'; the past does not exist in a repository, where it could be accessed from a

fold distinction between past, present and future fully appears (ibid.). But even in the linear conception of time, there are different understandings of these temporal categories and of what is the relationship between them. For instance, the future is either imagined as something that is 'closed', the form of which is derived from religious or philosophical assumptions, or as something that is 'open', i.e. uncertain and the product of human action (see ibid.; for the above see also in general Rosa 2001, 2001a). The latter is the kind of modern idea of time and future that I mentioned in the context of my excursus on 'risk' in Chapter 5. There, I quoted Anthony Giddens (1994: 7) explaining that modernity is about the active "colonization of the future", and that 'risk' is "the mobilising dynamic of a society bent on change, that wants to determine its own future rather than leaving it to religion, tradition, or the vagaries of nature" (Giddens 2002: 24).

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present position, by going 'back in time' (see Rosa 2001, 2001a, 2001b).[25] As Christian Lotz (2001: 660) points out with reference to Edmund Husserl, the notion that one could go 'back in time' is misleading. One can only ever *understand* something as having passed; in practice, time is always only experienced *in* memory and in the present. What has passed needs to be remembered, and remembering is a distinct way of *constructing* the past from within the present. In this respect, both, the past and the future are conceptual spaces, which are 'filled' from within the present. It is 'memory' that constructs the past from within the present, and 'expectations' that construct the future – also from within the present (see Rosa 2001b: 677).[26] At the same time, however, the past (memory and experiences) and the future (expectations) shape the present. In short, past and future are only ever present pasts and present futures. They are the products of the present. First, the present shapes how the *temporal categories* 'past' and 'future' are imagined in relation to the present. Second, the present shapes how the *conceptual spaces* 'past' and 'future' are 'filled' with meaning. At the same time, both of these aspects play back into the present.

There is a comprehensive scholarship, which deals with the (present) 'filling' of the conceptual spaces past and future, and their interplay with the present. In particular, the 'filling' of the (present) past, more precisely, the *collective* 'filling' of the present past, has attracted significant scholarly attention. It runs under the labels 'memory studies', "politics of memory" (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003), and "politics of the past" (e.g. Munasinghe 2005).[27] Grounded in an understanding that there is a social dimension of memory, i.e. that there is a 'collective memory',[28] scholars analyse

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25 Again, this is not natural and universal, refer back to fn 24 in this present chapter.

26 As Rosa (2001: 211; my own translation) adds, in addition to being the position, from which the conceptual spaces past and future are filled with meaning, the present impacts on the future in that the "present action and experience […] determines […] the possible content of future memory – then, as a memory of a past present."

27 Astrid Erll (2003: 156-6) provides a catalogue of aspects, which explain the striking rise of the interest in (collective) constructions of the past at the end of the 1980s. One of them are the profound changes regarding the media of memory and the possibility of the generation of large sets of data. Another aspect is the gradual diminishing of witnesses of the 'big catastrophes' of the 20th century, prominently, the Second World War and the Holocaust. It has brought up questions about what it means to rely solely on modi of memory other than the accounts of historical witnesses. Furthermore, Erll points to a general tendency at the end of the 20th century to 'look back'.

28 The concept 'collective memory' goes back to Maurice Halbwachs (1925, 1950), who stresses the social dimension of memory. Halbwachs argues that memory is not solely an individual, cognitive phenomenon, but that it is social and collective in that individuals are part of groups and these groups' collective memory.

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"[c]ontests over the meaning of the past [as] contests over the meaning of the present and over ways of taking the past forward" (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003: 1). Of interest are the "strategic, political, and ethical consequences" (ibid.) of the collectively memorised past.

For instance, Ruth Wittlinger and Steffi Boothroyd (2010) discuss Germany's "'usable' past" in its post-unification present. They unveil a change in German collective memory of the past of the *Third Reich* from being

> "polarized before the fall of the Wall […] to a past that is much more accommodating and allows an easier identification with the German nation. A more institutionalized and internationalized approach to the Nazi past, which incorporates the memory of German suffering, is increasingly complemented by a focus on positive aspects of German history, like the successes of the Bonn Republic, the peaceful East German revolution of 1989, and unification in 1990." (ibid. 489)

In a related study, Wittlinger and Larose (2007) show how the distinct present past of the Nazi era at the beginning of the millennium impacted on various (foreign) policy moves under the Schröder Administration. In a different context, Dario R. Paez and James Hou-Fu Liu (2009) unveil how collective memory of past conflicts affects present conflicts through "aggressive forms of in-group favoritism, a duty of retaliation, [and] generalized hatred", which makes "the current situation appear as a repetition of previous violent conflicts" (ibid. 105). Richard S. Esbenshade (1995) provides an ac-

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Halbwachs' notion of 'collective memory' was prominently refined and extended by Aleida Assmann (1999) and Jan Assmann (1992, 1995). They develop a theory, which distinguishes between "communicative memory" and "cultural memory". Assmann's and Assmann's concept 'communicative memory' refers to the kind of collective memory that "includes those varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications" (Assmann 1995: 126). The concept 'cultural memory', in contrast, refers to a kind of collective memory that is grounded in highly symbolic and fixed points in the past. As Jan Assmann (ibid. 128-9) explains, "[j]ust as the communicative memory is characterized by its proximity to the everyday, cultural memory is characterized by its distance from the everyday. Distance from the everyday (transcendence) marks its temporal horizon. Cultural memory has its fixed point; its horizon does not change with the passing of time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past, whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance)". While everybody is involved in 'communicative memory', which is shaped by "a high degree of non-specialization, reciprocity of roles, thematic instability, and disorganization" (ibid. 126), 'cultural memory', as suggested above, is grounded in 'fixed points' and, as such, depends on and 'demands' expert interpretation. With this distinction, Assmann and Assmann enable a nuanced approach to the issue of collective and political identity (see further Erll 2003: 173).

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count of the contest over and impact of memory in national narratives constructed in Central Eastern Europe after the end of the Communist era; and Jelena Subotić (2013: 306) illustrates "the way in which hegemonic state narratives of the past influence contemporary human rights policies in the western Balkans."[29]

Another example of the enmeshment of the (present) past with the present (as the basis for imagining and approaching the future) is the everyday linguistic feature of analogies. In analogies something complex and (potentially) 'unfamiliar' is explained through a comparison with something from the past. Using Daase and Kessler's words, analogies "represent codes for secured knowledge" (Daase and Kessler 2007: 420); they provide "certainty where uncertainty reigns" (Fry 1991: 13) by grasping the world through reference to something familiar, namely something 'from the past'. Yet, analogies are, of course, not universal and ahistorical. Which analogy is considered useful in which context is a product of the present.[30] The inauguration

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29 Referring back to Chapter 5, the case of Christopher Columbus' 'discovery' of the 'New World' and the way this narrative is inscribed in US culture is, of course, another prime example of the impact of a distinctly memorised (present) past on the present and the future. In this context, Thomas J. Schlereth (1992) not only shows the influence of the memory of Columbus on US collective identity in various historical presents, he also demonstrates that there are various historical present 'fillings' of the past of Christopher Columbus' 'discovery' of the 'New World'. Each of them serves a distinct purpose in establishing the respective present from within which they are imagined. Columbus "has been interpreted and reinterpreted as we have constructed and reconstructed our own national character", finds Schlereth (ibid. 937). In fact, as I mentioned in Chapter 5, Columbus has actually not even always been a part of the American past, of American collective memory to begin with. He only entered it in 1792. As Schlereth (ibid.; emphasis in the original) explains: "[Columbus] was ignored in the colonial era. […] Americans first discovered the discoverer during their quest for independence and nationhood; successive generations molded Columbus into a multipurpose American hero, a national symbol to be used variously in the quest for a collective identity. This process in the public (rather than the professional) American history of Columbus can be traced over three chronological periods: first, Columbus as a feminine, classical deity, Columbia, an allegorical figure symbolizing liberty and progress; second, the masculine, fifteenth-century European, Columbus, who sanctioned nineteenth-century American Manifest Destiny and western expansionism; and third, Columbus as the major symbol of Columbianism, a late nineteenth century form of patriotic Americanism that involved cultural and political hegemony and various ethnic and religious identities."

30 With reference to Yuen Foong Khong (1992: 10), Milo Jones (2004) highlights the relevance of analogies in politics. He explains that "analogies assist policy-makers by performing three diagnostic tasks: they 1) help define the nature of the situation confronting the policy-maker; 2) help assess the stakes; and 3) pro-

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of US President Barack Obama in 2009 was a concert of analogies in that it provided historical references from Lincoln to the invocation of the spirit of Martin Luther King. Amnesty International's Irene Khan's (2005) comparison of the US detention camp in Guantanamo Bay with the gulags of the Stalinist era is another prime example of an analogy,[31] and so is the link between the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 and the 1941 Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor. This analogy was institutionalised through the Executive Summary of *The 9/11 Commission Report* (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States 2004), which starts with the following paragraph:

"More than 2,600 people died at the World Trade Centre; 125 died at the Pentagon; 256 died on the four planes. The death toll surpassed that at Pearl Harbor in December 1941."

Following David Hoogland Noon (2004: 339), we realise that the 'war on terror' discourse or, as he aptly calls it, 'Operation Enduring Analogy' in essential ways "capitalizes on post-Cold War historical memory" in that

"the 'liberation' of Kabul or Baghdad has been likened (albeit awkwardly) to the liberation of Paris or the capture of Berlin; the accumulating disarray in Iraq and Afghanistan is optimistically compared with the slow postwar reconstruction of Germany and Japan; the unusual bond between Bush and Tony Blair is regularly measured against that gold standard of Anglo-American relations, the Roosevelt-Churchill alliance; and during the buildup to the war in Iraq, critics of the impending war were chastened by forceful warnings about 'appeasement', Neville Chamberlain, and the ineffectual League of Nations."

Above and beyond this, the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 itself, or better the abbreviation of it, '9/11', is widely used as an analogy, seen for instance in the context of the November 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai, when Indian film-maker Kunal Kohli stressed that one of the targets, the Taj Mahal hotel,

"is not just a hotel, it is a symbol of Mumbai and for that to be attacked is no less than the World Trade Centre being attacked in New York. It is truly our 9/11." (BBC 2008)

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vide prescriptions. In addition, they help policy-makers evaluate alternative options by: 1) predicting their chances of success; 2) evaluating their moral rightness; and 3) warning about the dangers associated with the options" (Jones 2004: 40).

31 The fierce and immediate reaction to Khan's analogy by US President George W. Bush (2005e), who called it "absurd", illustrates that such linguistic moves are powerful and clearly taken seriously by political actors.

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We can get a sense of the cultural specificity and complexity of analogies when we consider that any kind of analogy using the *Third Reich* in general and the Holocaust in particular is tabooed in Germany to a degree that the disregard of this norm by public figures immediately and inevitably leads to public condemnation and calls for their resignation. This also shows that analogies are ultimately a product of the historical present.[32]

In contrast to the scholarship on the constructed present pasts and their influence on the present, the study of the 'politics of the future', or 'politics of expectation' is less institutionalised.[33] This is despite the fact that in a

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32 Another tool through which the (present) memorised past is brought into and shapes the present are 'frames'. In the social sciences, the concept 'frame' is associated with Erving Goffman's (1975) work on "the organization of experience", as well as with the literature on social movements and collective action, where it goes back to sociologists such as Maurice Halbwachs (1925, 1950) and his above mentioned work on collective memory. Outside the social sciences, 'frame' is a concept used in the study of semantics (e.g. Fillmore 2006), as well as in the cognitive sciences, especially in research on artificial intelligence. Marvin Minsky (1997[1974]) is one of the prominent developers of the concept in this latter field, where it is linked to several related concepts, such as 'scripts', 'schemes' and 'scenarios' (see further Donati 2001; Ziem 2005); these latter concepts have been taken up by scholars in other fields such as corpus linguistics (e.g. Fraas 2000, 2003). In the context of the cognitive sciences, the concept 'frame' was developed in an attempt to understand the process of cognition. As Minsky (1997[1974]: 109) explains, "the essence of the theory [is]: when one encounters a new situation […], one selects from memory a structure called a frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary." Erving Goffman (1975: 10) defines 'frames' as follows: "I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization, which govern events […] and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements, as I am able to identify." In this sense, the concept 'frame' refers to quasi-memorised structures that are applied to make sense of the world. At the same time, they restrict what is visible and determine how something is visible. Like analogies, 'frames' are not simply individual cognitive phenomena; they are social and cultural products. Following this theory, cognition is always already socio-culturally shaped in that it is embedded in and the outcome of collectively ratified knowledge. Hence, when it comes to colletive memory, in one way or other, only those things can be 'remembered' in those particular ways, for which there is a collective frame, i.e. what is already socially ratified as acceptable to remember.

33 There is something like 'future studies' in the academy (see Dunmire 2011: 31). Yet, in contrast to 'memory studies', the label 'future studies' does not cover works that critically engage with the present construction of the future. Rather, the literature in 'future studies' sets out to predict (possible) future developments.

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modern linear conception of time, it is the (open) future that serves as the dominant horizon of the present (see Rosa 2001: 678).[34]

The significance of the future in modern life and for the present is manifest in what I discussed in Chapter 5, namely the fondness for the striving for the 'new', in which the entrepreneur and the one, who makes everything 'new', are attributed with intrinsic positive value.[35] This fondness for the 'new' *to come* shapes the present and policies in the present profoundly. In this sense, one could say that, in one way, all policy analysis is (implicitly) an analysis of the 'filling' of the future because modern politics is essentially future-oriented. Yet, only a portion of analyses explicitly start on the premise that

> "[a]s the site of the possible and potential, the future represents a contested rhetorical domain through which partisans attempt to wield ideological and political power" (Dunmire 2011: 1),

and explicitly investigate the distinct political practice of the 'filling' of the conceptual space future. Patricia L. Dunmire's (2011) study of the "projection of the future" under the post-9/11 Bush Administration is one of a few of such analyses. It unveils the "politics, rhetoric, and ideology of projecting the future" (ibid. 27) in the case of the Bush Administration's post-9/11 national security discourse and discusses its impact on present policy decisions. The kinds of studies that deal with perceptions of uncertainty, such as Wynne and Dressler (2001) to which I referred in Chapter 5, also fall into this category. In a way that is similar to Wynne and Dressler's study, Stefan Böschen, Karen Kastenhofer, Luitgard Marschall, Ina Rust, Jens Soentgen and Peter Wehling (2006: 296) explore the controversy over genetically modified organisms and find,

> "while a more empiricist-oriented British (Anglo-Saxon) institutional culture only accepts robust evidence (e.g. specific causal models) as justifying environmental protection, the general public in continental European countries (particularly Germany)

In this respect, the contributions to 'future studies' are exercises *in* the construction of the present future themselves, rather than studies *of* it.

34 With reference to Fraser (1975: 303), Patricia L. Dunmire (2011: 7) stresses the relevance of the future by pointing out that "children […] express expectations for the future and make references to the future earlier in their development than they recount memories of the past." Quoting Masini (1999: 36), Dunmire (2011: 8) argues, "people become human the minute they begin to think about the future, the moment they try to plan for the future."

35 It is probably precisely this intrinsic positive value that means that there are more studies about the imagination of the (present) past than the critical study of the 'politics of expectation'.

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is more willing to act on the grounds of uncertainty or even 'merely' presumed non-knowledge in a precautionary approach."

The authors demonstrate how the present future is collectively filled with meaning and how this plays back into present decisions. Furthermore, they unveil the present re-production of distinct understandings of the relationship between the temporal categories present and future, namely one in which the future is (imagined) as more or less 'determinable' and predictable from within the present. Again, this is interesting because it is not natural. As discussed in Chapter 5, the comparison between the UK and Germany demonstrates the cultural nature of this 'filling' and its profound implications for present decisions.

Taking all of the above together, we see the relevance of the temporal category and conceptual space 'present' and the enmeshment of the past, present and future, where the present is the realm from within which the past and future are made meaningful; they are made meaningful in that they are 'filled' with sense and in that their relationship with the present is imagined.

It is this relevance of the present that makes the object 'new world', which is re-produced in uses of the adjective *global,* special. The 'new world' constitutes a distinct filling of the present; it is the present, the 'now' that is rendered 'new' and suddenly confronts social actors. As I already inidcated in Chapter 5, such an idea of a 'new world' that *came* implies a distinct imagination of the role of the (temporal categories) past and future. In principle, it establishes a break with the past in that it quarantines experiences as something that no longer 'naturally' holds as the basis for present decisions. Simultaneously, it brings into question the nature of the future as a readily determinable horizon of expectation that provides guidance for present actions. I developed this point in Chapter 5, in which I conceptualised the notion of the 'new world' that *came* as an indication of an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation, including the 'return of uncertainty'. This implies an idea of the future as 'open' but not necessarily easily 'predictable', at least not predictable in a 'traditional' modern way.

It is in this sense that the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* not only constitutes a political phenomenon because it is a part of the contest over the meaning of the world but because it takes a special position in this contest. It takes a special position because its object, the 'new world', fills nothing less but the 'present' with meaning.

APPROACHING THE OMNIPRESENCE OF *GLOBAL* AS AN 'UNCONVENTIONAL' OBJECT OF STUDY

In the previous second main part of this chapter, I conceptualised the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* as a political phenomenon. This conceptualisation is grounded in an 'unconventional' theory of the rela-

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tionship between language, meaning and social reality. According to this theory, the omnipresence of *global* constitutes a dimension of the perpetual contest over the meaning of the world; it brings out the world. Furthermore, I argued that it is not just any dimension of the contest over the world; the omnipresence of *global* 'fills' nothing less with meaning than the present. Consequently, the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is of interest not necessarily to linguists but to scholars, who have an interest in the political world. Inevitably, though, it constitutes an 'unconventional' object of study.

In this third and final main part of this chapter, I reflect on this latter point. I reflect on how to approach the omnipresence of *global* as an 'unconventional' object of study. The aim is not to provide a methodological blueprint for its empirical exploration. As a matter of fact, the provision of such a blueprint would be contradictory to the 'unconventional' theoretical premises that I outlined above. Rather, I sketch the general nature of the approach to the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global*, provide basic guiding questions for such a research endeavour and introduce two techniques, namely concordances and collocations, or co-occurrences, which are fruitful tools for the way into the field.

At the outset, it is worth reinterating that the study of the omnipresence of *global* is a study of the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* in and of itself and not of something 'behind' it. The study of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is not a way of gaining better insight into an already established object of study in political studies and IR, such as foreign policy behaviour, the design of security policies or one of the above mentioned ideational factors that have come to play a role in the study of (international) politics these days, such as role perceptions. This is not to say that, in one way or other, the empirical exploration of the omnipresence of *global* might not generate insights into established objects of study and contribute to the literature on established disciplinary research questions. However, from the outset, it can only be understood and designed as an exploration of an obviously widespread contemporary dimension of the contested symbolic production of social reality. Due to the lack of an already established and delineated framework and a well-trodden ground to walk on, this means that the study of the omnipresence of *global* demads some creativity and, referring back to my elaboration on Ulrich Beck in Chapter 5, a willingness to endure a degree of 'provisionality'.

I proceed in three steps in this chapter and move from the general to the particular. First, I point out the basics that inform the empirical approach to an 'unconventional' object of study, such as the omnipresence of *global*. Second, I suggest that there is something distinct about the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as an 'unconventional' object of study; I suggest it is 'unconventional' and experimental in two ways. Finally, I introduce two tools that are helpful in generating initial insights into the exploration of the

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omnipresence of *global*; these are concordances and collocations, or co-occurrences.

In general: 'Like bike riding'

The theoretical premises that I elaborated in the previous part of this chapter and that make the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* a political phenomenon and an 'unconventional' object of study, demand a distinct approach to its empirical exploration. Using Campbell's (2007: 206) words, it demands an approach that puts "the issues of interpretation and representation, power and knowledge […] at the forefront of concerns", that acknowledges that

> "[r]ather than conceiving of a world of discrete variables with discrete effects, […] there are constructions and versions that may be adopted, responded to or undermined." (Potter 1997: 147-8)

As Matthias Jung (1994) elaborates, it demands an approach that is informed by the conviction that there is something "suspect", or, using Torfing's (2005: 27) words, "absurd" about the 'conventional' ideal of a deductive approach, which starts strictly on the basis of a theory that is transformed into a consistent and decontextualised method, and is eventually verified based on empirical findings. Instead of verifying a pre-set hypothesis, studying an 'unconventional' object of study, like the omnipresence of *global*, is about the evaluation and carving out of the specificity of what is typical about the respective socio-political phenomenon (Wagner 2005: 68). This means that the study of the omnipresence of *global* is an "intervention[…] in conventional understandings or established practices" (Campbell 2007: 219), and not an endeavour that sets out to detect causal explanations and 'real causes', as it is, in one way or another, at the heart of the mainstream scholarship in political studies and IR.

In addition, I suggest, the study of an 'unconventional' object of study, such as the omnipresence of the adjective *global*, is shaped by three of the criteria that Ulrich Franke and Ulrich Roos (2013) identify for their 'social scientific reconstruction'-approach. These are the recognition of the principle of fallibility (ibid. 23), a principle openness for a pluralism of methods (ibid. 22) and a "willingness on the side of the researchers to lay open the rules that guide their professional action" (ibid. 23; my own translation). To explore the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is to 'de-naturalise' alleged natural orders and perceptions; it is to 'make them strange' (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989). Using Jonathan Potter's (1997: 147) words, it is an approach that resembles a "craft skill, more like bike riding […] than following the recipe for a mild chicken rogan josh." Inevitably, this makes it an experimental endeavour that requires a degree of creativity and openness.

To sum up, in general, the exploration of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as an 'unconventional' object of study involves the study of the

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contest over the meaning of social reality. It is about exploring the possibilities that are opened and closed in the re-production of the web of meanings that comes out of the utterances that contain the adjective *global* – where, as implied in the ethos of the above theoretical premises, 'possibilities' are not so much about concrete policies but about broader issues, such as identities, speaking positions, as well as about what is normal and common sensical to begin with. In principle, studying the omnipresence of *global* is about the exploration of 'interpretative dispositions', to pick up Doty's words from above.

In particular: 'Unconventional' and experimental in two ways

The above section provided a general sense of how an approach to the omnipresence of *global* as an 'unconventional' object of study looks and what such a study is generally about. I now move from the general to what I identify as particular about the study of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global*, i.e. the discursive re-production of the web of meanings 'new world'.

As stressed above, the study of the omnipresence of *global* is a study of the omnipresence of the word *global* as a distinct phenomenon. It is not about studying the use of the adjective *global* to gain a better understanding of something 'behind it', i.e. it is not a strategic way to gain insight into another, already established object of interest in political studies and IR. But what is it then about? What is one to look at and what is one to look for if one explores the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global*? As discussed in the Introduction of this book, no matter how inductive and interpretative an approach aspires to be, "[t]here is always something 'before the beginning'" (Pope 2005: xv). So, what is it in the case of the omnipresence of *global*?

There are two aspects to the study of the omnipresence of the word *global*, understood as a political phenomenon. First, to study the omnipresence of *global* is to study the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* in and of itself. Second, to study the omnipresence of *global* is to study the object 'new world' that it re-produces. The concrete and individual design of such a two-fold study is open to scholarly imagination and interest. This is the case not least because the exploration of the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* is as yet an untrodden path; any capturing of the occurrence of the phenomenon, as well as, any study of the object it re-produces adds to our understanding of this object of study. The study of the omnipresence of *global* could be designed with a diachronic or synchronic outlook, the corpus that it builds on could be thematically assembled, or arranged in terms of a particular historical or political or cultural or institutional context and setting, such as the UN discourse or the Public Papers of the US Presidents, which I select for my own empirical exploration in Chapter 7. However, independent of the research design, the generation of the corpus is straightforward. The phenomenon of the omnipresence of the word

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global is manifest in the occurrences of the word *global*, i.e. wherever the adjective *global* is, is the object of study.

The first aspect of the study of the omnipresence of *global* identified above involves capturing the political phenomenon itself. This means it is about mapping where the phenomenon can be found and how it unfolds. In concrete terms, it is a study of where the adjective *global* appears. There are three basic questions that guide entry into the field: Where does the phenomenon appear? Where does it not appear? With which thematic discourses is it enmeshed? Again, depending on scholarly creativity and interest, the phenomenon could be traced and captured comparatively, in a diachronic or synchronic way, and in a distinct institutional, cultural, political or historical context. Once in the field, subsequent questions emerge inductively.

The second aspect of the study of the omnipresence of *global* involves the analysis of the object 'new world' that this phenomenon re-produces. In general, it is a study of how this object looks. In particular, and following the theoretical elaborations in the previous section, it is a study of the 'interpretive dispositions' that this object 'new world' implies, and the possibilities that these dispositions open and close. In contrast to the first aspect, this second aspect is about meanings; it is about more than 'just' the appearance of the adjective *global*. In the previous part of this chapter, I explained that what is special about the object 'new world' is that it fills the conceptual space 'present' with meaning and that it constitutes an actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective'. This insight brings along a set of general questions that guide entry into the field of the exploration of the object 'new world': How is the temporal category 'past' constructed? How is the temporal category 'future' constructed? What kind of an idea of 'uncertainty' is constructed? What is the relationship between past, present and future? How are consequences of actions and decisions constructed? What kind of an idea of agency is constructed? How 'modern' or 'beyond modern' is the 'new world'? How much space does it open to go beyond modern principles and institutions, and to fundamentally reimagine the world?

Again, given the theoretical premises sketched above that inform the approach to an 'unconventional' object of study, such as the omnipresence of *global*, all these questions are guiding questions and not 'traditional' research. The aim is not to answer these questions but to be guided by them into the field. They are stepping stones in the endeavour to capture the political phenomenon of the omnipresence of the adjective *global*. They provide an initial orientation in the field and facilitate initial steps that generate further, corpus-driven questions from within the analytical process.

The above means that the empirical study of the omnipresence of the adjective *global*, i.e. the re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world' through utterances, which contain the adjective *global*, is 'unconventional' and experimental in a twofold sense.

First, it is 'unconventional' and experimental in a way that all analyses of the symbolic re-production of social reality – by nature of the theoretical

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premises that inform them – are. As I elaborated above, these studies are neither about following a pre-set recipe nor about the application of a decontextualised method. Given that they do not set out to test a pre-set hypothesis, which is grounded in an established theory, but aim to make things ‘strange’ and intervene into conventional knowledge (production), they are inevitably less clearly anchored in an existing scholarly environment than ‘conventional’ studies. In my reflection on the nature of the research project that brought out this book, which I outlined in the Introduction, I reflected on challenges of such an ‘unanchored’ approach.

Second, the empirical study of the omnipresence of *global* is also ‘unconventional’ and experimental, in fact, has to be somewhat ‘provisional’ because of the nature of the object that the uses of the adjective *global* bring out, namely the ‘new world’. As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, the omnipresence of *global* indicates an ‘awareness’ of the reflexive ‘backfiring’ of modernisation. More specifically, the object ‘new world’ that utterances with *global* bring out is an actualisation of the tradition of the ‘national perspective’. This makes the study of the omnipresence of *global* fundamentally experimental and provisional simply because there is no established language yet for grasping the generated insights. I made this point clear when I discussed the nature of Ulrich Beck’s ‘provisional’ project of rethinking how we think about social reality. I stressed the inherent ambivalence of his project, which is the result of the ambivalent character of the ‘reflexive modern’ world that Beck set out to grasp (see also Bronner 1995: 67). This world is a both/and-world, as opposed to an either/or-world. While this insight is theoretically manageable, it poses challenges when it comes to empirical explorations because of a lack of ‘ratified’ language to grasp it; for instance, a language that reproduces the idea of linearity and ‘either/or’ is not adequate (any longer) (see Selchow 2016a). For sure, it requires a degree of experimentalism and provisionality. As Beck (2013) puts it, “[i]n the state of total change we try to think this change. This is difficult. Hence, we cannot appear with full confidence.”

This brings me to the final step in this last main part of this chapter: I introduce two analytical tools that are fruitful in taking initial steps into the empirical field of the exploration of the omnipresence of *global*.

Concordances and collocations, or co-occurrences

To study the omnipresence of *global* is to focus on the word *global* without conducting a linguistic analysis. The study of the omnipresence of *global* is a study of the symbolic production of the world. As I suggested above, it is an unconventional, experimental and provisional study that demands a degree of creativity. It is an interpretative and inductive endeavour. Yet, there are two techniques in linguistics, more precisely in corpus linguistics, that form helpful tools for the first steps into the field: concordances and collocations, or co-occurrences. These techniques are helpful because they allow the generation of initial insights into the meanings that are associated with

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the adjective *global* in a corpus. With that they help generating initial insights into the object 'new world', which is re-produced in uses of the word *global*. In concluding this subsection, I elaborate on this point and introduce these techniques, while stressing that they can only provide initial triggers and initial insights. In contrast to 'conventional' studies of the use of language in politics and, for that matter, in contrast to my brief analysis of President George W. Bush's use of *global*, which I presented in Chapter 2, the study of the omnipresence of the word *global* is a study of the re-production of a distinct object 'new world'. Its goal is not to detect strategic uses of the word or to find out what a supposedly extra-discursive social actor means when they use the adjective *global*. It is about the web of meanings 'new world' that the adjective brings along wherever it is applied.

In Chapter 2, I showed that meanings are not attached to a linguistic sign. Meanings are arbitrary and a constant flickering of presence and absence together. Yet, despite this essential flexibility, meanings are actually relatively stable. As we saw in Chapter 2, only in theory can Humpty Dumpty use the word *glorious* to mean 'a nice knock-down argument'. In practice, Alice does not understand him if he does. While meanings are essentially arbitrary, they are also social and conventional; they are 'made possible' and 'tamed' by what I referred to with the word *discourse* in Chapter 4; not everything is sayable. As Claudia Fraas (1996, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2003) suggests, this means that because words and their encoded web of meanings are only used and only 'survive' (over time) if they relate and are adaptable to socially accepted meanings, it is possible to 'sift out' collectively shared meanings through an analysis of how words are used in texts. Putting it differently, linguistic signs, such as *global*, can be approached as 'focal points', in which collective meanings crystallise. In order to empirically 'sift out' these collectively shared meanings one needs to look at a word, such as the adjective *global*, within a large number of texts. Such a systematic analysis enables scholars to detect socially ratified meanings instead of only those meanings which are held by individual sign users and text producers (Fraas 2001). It is the examination of the broader intertextual context that enables the discovery of the wider collective meanings that are encoded in a particular word. In other words, it is this intertextual context, in which the web of references is manifest that enables the detection of and 'sifting out' of socially ratified meanings.[36]

This kind of approach to language is at home in corpus linguistics, which is a way of studying language that does not look "at what is theoretically possible in a language, [but at] the actual language used in naturally occurring texts" (Biber, Conrad and Reppe 1998: 1). The basic idea is to look at a corpus of texts in order to see "how words form meaningful units. By exploring corpora we begin to see how meaning is created in language,"

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36 This is what I did to understand that the contemporary *global* encapsulates 'globalisation'.

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explains Pernilla Danielsson of the Centre for Corpus Research at the University of Birmingham (URL).[37]

Fraas' study of the German word *Wald* (forest) is a concrete example of such an analysis and gives also an idea of the methodological techniques that are helpful in such an endeavour, namely concordances, or 'key word in context' (KWIC), and collocations, or co-occurrences. Looking for collocates, or co-occurrences, is a way of determining, which words appear particularly frequently in a defined distance to a word of interest, such as *global*. As Michael Stubbs (1996: 172; emphasis in the original) puts it,

> "[t]he main concept is that words occur in characteristic *collocations*, which show the associations and connotations they have, and therefore the assumptions which they embody."

Collocations stand for sequences of words, which appear together more frequently than statistical possibility suggests, such as 'good morning' or 'climate change' or 'global warming'. Stubbs' definition is: "'collocation' is frequent co-occurrence" (Stubbs 2002: 29). Based on the assumption that there is an equal probability that each word in a language co-occurs with any other word within this language, it can be determined to what extent individual word combinations occur more frequently than chance suggests. This computation then shows not only how words are used in specific texts and by individual sign users, but, as long as the analysis uses a corpus of a large number of texts, it also enables scholars to reveal patterns in the collective, socially ratified uses of words.[38] In Chapter 2, I referred to a co-

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37 This above sketched capturing of socially ratified meanings distinguishes corpus linguistic approaches from the ones that are inspired by the methodological genre of *Begriffsgeschichte* (conceptual history) – developed by German historian Reinhart Koselleck (1972, 1982, 1985) and taken up by the earlier referenced Bach (2013) in his analysis of the concept 'globalisation' – and related methodological strategies and research programmes, such as the so-called 'Cambridge School' (around Quentin Skinner [e.g. 1989] and the work of James Farr [e.g. 1989] and Terence Ball [e.g. 1988]). Notably, corpus linguistic approaches are also distinct in that they do not focus on elite texts.

38 For Fraas (1998), this strategy is particularly fruitful for detecting the meanings that are encoded in 'abstract terms'. The concept 'abstract terms' refers to those linguistic features, which, as the name suggests, refer to abstract, ideal conceptions about the world as such, about life and about social processes; 'freedom', 'justice', 'equality', 'identity' but also terms such as 'love' and 'family' fall into this category. Fraas (ibid. 256-7) highlights five characteristics of 'abstract terms': First, they are disputable regarding what it is to which they precisely refer. In different situations, 'abstract terms' can refer to very different phenomena. Second, they are disputable regarding their intention. This means that it is not clear which characteristics the object of reference needs to hold in order to be re-

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occurrence analysis of the adjective *global*; in their study of a corpus of American English, Davies and Gardner (2010: 74) find that the adjective *global* particularly frequently co-occurs with *warming, economy, change, system, market, climate, issue, network, trade, community, positioning, environment*, and with the words *economic*, *environmental, local, regional, international, financial, increasingly, truly*.

To calculate collocations, or co-occurrences, the assistance of a computer programme is needed. One of these programmes is the freeware *AntConc*, which I used for my analysis of the use of the word *global* in President George W. Bush's Public Papers at the end of Chapter 2.

In addition to providing collocations, or co-occurrences, *AntConc* also provides the second technique that is helpful in approaching the omnipresence of *global*, namely, concordances. Concordances are lists that present a distinct word in the context, in which it appears, as a "first stage in an analysis" (Stubbs 2002: 62). As Stubbs (1996: xviii) finds,

> "[t]his provides a convenient layout for studying how a speaker or writer uses certain words and phrases, and whether there are particular patterns in his or her use of language."

To reiterate a point from above, the study of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is not a linguistic endeavour, or a corpus linguistic analysis. The goal is not to gain statistical insights into the use of the word *global* as part of an endeavour to learn something about the English language. The research interest is in the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a political phenomenon, i.e. as something that re-produces an object 'new world', which is part of the contest over the meaning of the world. This means that the above introduced techniques can only be a first step into the field. As we saw in Chapter 2 in the context of the analysis of Bush's use of the adjective *global* in the GWOT-discourse, they can help to make patterns visible, which would not be visible without computation – especially if the text corpus is large. As Stubbs (2002: 62) finds, "computer assistance is necessary to allow the human linguist [or, for that matter, the analyst of the omnipresence of *global*] to see the wood for the trees". The realisation that there was a shift in the use of the adjective *global* in the corpus of Bush's Public Papers from 'global terror' to 'global war', and that this shift

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ferred to with the respective abstract term. Third, 'abstract terms' often encode values. The fourth characteristic that Fraas points out is that 'abstract terms' are particularly often part of expert languages. Although terms such as 'family', 'justice', and 'identity' are commonly applied in everyday language, in collective interpretations they also refer to expert discourses, such as sociology, law and psychology. Finally, 'abstract terms' can build up prestige. The application of an 'abstract term' often indicates a particular degree of education, class or it simply encodes a sense of the *zeitgeist*.

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took place on 30 September 2004 as a consequence of the debate with John F. Kerry (see Figure 2), would not have been visible without the help of concordances and the analysis of co-occurrences. Yet, adopting Fairclough’s assessment of the usefulness of corpus linguistics for critical discourse analysis, these techniques are only “best regarded as part of the preparation from which the real work of analysis and critique can begin” (Fairclough 2015: 21). They help to deal with the corpus, bring to the fore patterns, which would otherwise be invisible and can trigger ideas for the interpretation and assessment. However, they do not constitute findings as such. Regardless of whether quantitative techniques are used, the study of the omnipresence of the adjective *global*, understood as a political phenomenon in the symbolic contest over the meaning of the world, is an interpretative endeavour that is ‘unconventional’, ‘experimental’ and ‘provisional’; as a matter of fact, given its theoretical ground, it is somewhat ‘uncomfortable’, relative to established ‘conventional’ studies in political studies and IR.

CONCLUSION

It is hard to imagine public, political, and social and political scientific discourses today without the adjective *global.* The word is (quasi) omnipresent. But it is not only that *global* is more popular than ever today (up to the point where a politician uses it 47 times in a single public address [Brown 2008a]), the spectrum of its meanings has also expanded remarkably (up to the point where a journalist in an established newspaper describes a restaurant menu as “post-global” [Sifton 2004]). The contemporary *global* is highly polysemic and used with a remarkable variety of meanings, ranging from ‘not national’ and ‘not just Northern’, to ‘exclusively Northern’, ‘worldwide’, ‘ethnically-inspired’ and ‘contemporary’. *Global* has turned into a key linguistic tool, with the help of which social actors grasp the contemporary world.

Yet, while being used enthusiastically, the word *global* and its omnipresence have not triggered a heightened sense of interest, let alone, suspicion among social and political actors and scholars. *Global* is rarely perceived as a “difficult” word, to paraphrase Raymond Williams (1976). As discussed in Chapter 2, occasionally *global* is criticised or dismissed as a fad or labelled as a crucial and problematic ingredient in hegemonic (Northern) discourses; yet, comprehensive engagements with the adjective, which are grounded in systematic critical scrutiny are hard to find.

My project arose at the intersection of the observation that the adjective *global* has come to be omnipresent in public, political and scholarly discourses and the astonishment about the fact that this linguistic development has so far attracted only little attention. I was keen to explore whether there was anything of interest in the omnipresence of the contemporary *global* for scholars beyond the disciplinary realm of linguistics. Is the omnipresence of

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global more than a linguistic curiosity? Does it matter? What do actors do when they use the adjective *global*?

Synthesising the insights that I generated over the course of the previous chapters, in this chapter I provided the answer to these questions. I argued that the omnipresence of the contemporary 'new word' *global* constitutes a discursive re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world'. With that, the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is more than a linguistic curiosity; it is a political phenomenon and an 'unconventional' object of study. The omnipresence of the adjective *global* can be seen and studied as an established, in the sense of 'normal' and widespread, dimension of the negotiation, the perpetual contest over the meaning of the world. As such, it can be seen as a common dimension of the symbolic production of the world. It is to be acknowledged as 'political' because the discursively re-produced 'new world' opens and closes possibilities; it brings out subjects and makes some things imaginable and other unimaginable. Particularly intriguing is that it 'fills' the influential conceptual space 'present' with meaning and implies an 'awareness' of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation. As such, the study of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is always also a study of the actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective', a central aspect of contemporary 'reflexive modern' social reality.

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