

## 7 For Example: The Web of Meanings ‘New World’ in US President Obama’s Public Papers 2013

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But there are things we can do right now to accelerate the resurgence of American manufacturing. [...] Last year, my administration created our first manufacturing innovation institute. We put it in Youngstown, Ohio, which had been really hard hit when manufacturing started going overseas. And so you had a once-shuttered warehouse, it’s now a state-of-the art lab where new workers are mastering what’s called 3-D printing, which has the potential to revolutionize the way we make everything. That’s the future. [...] And I’m calling on Congress to help us set up 15 institutes: global centers of high-tech jobs and advanced manufacturing around the country.

BARACK OBAMA (2013F)

Over the course of the previous chapters, I conceptualised the omnipresence of the adjective *global* as a discursive re-production of a web of meanings ‘new world’; I framed it as both a political phenomenon and an ‘unconventional’ object of study. In this present chapter, I present an exemplary exploration of this ‘unconventional’ object of study. I explore the web of meanings ‘new world’ as it is re-produced in US President Barack Obama’s Public Papers of 2013.<sup>1</sup> I chose Obama’s public communication because of my

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1 As I explained in Chapter 2, the Public Papers of the US Presidents include all public messages, statements, speeches, and news conference remarks, as well as documents such as proclamations, executive orders, and similar documents that

general interest in US politics and culture and because the President of the USA is a particularly powerful actor in the contest over the meaning of the world, where 'powerful' and 'actor' are to be understood in the 'unconventional' sense that I sketched in Chapter 6.

My choice of selecting a corpus comprising all Public Papers from the year 2013 is not a theory-driven choice but motivated by research practical considerations. I am interested in taking a synchronic, in-depth approach to a distinct case. A corpus of appearances of the word *global* in Obama's public communication over the course of one year is well suited for such an endeavour simply because it is still manageable in the context of an interpretive and detailed exploration.

Inevitably, my exploration of the web of meanings 'new world' in Obama's 2013 Public Papers is a narrow study; as we saw in Chapter 6, 'unconventional' studies are by nature 'narrow'. However, in my concluding outlook, I broaden the perspective. I position my study as the empirical starting point for analyses that could move into three different research directions.

Before embarking on my analysis, it is worth reiterating two interlinked points that I outlined in Chapters 4 and 6.

First, it is important to keep in mind that, in contrast to 'conventional' research endeavours, the study of the omnipresence of *global* understood as a discursive re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world' is not about the critical study of the strategic use of language. Nor is it about the study of what a social actor, in this case US President Obama, thinks, means (by *global*), holds as his worldview, or, as it were, imagines how a scholarly predefined thing 'new world' looks. The study of the omnipresence of *global* is about the exploration of a discursive web of meanings that is brought into play and that is re-produced through the use of the adjective *global*. As I stressed in Chapter 4 with reference to Keller (in Landwehr 2009: 21) and Landwehr (2009: 20), 'discourse', or, for that matter, the web of meanings 'new world', is an analytical concept rather than an ontological object that exists in texts and waits to be unveiled through the right choice of data. It is an analytical concept that presumes the understanding of the relationship between language, meaning and social reality, which I sketched in Chapter 6. For the study of the re-production of the web of meanings 'new world' this means that the compilation of a dataset does not face the 'conventional' concern of being representative of a predefined idea of the web of meanings 'new world'. In other words, my ('random') choice of a 2013-corpus is not problematic.<sup>2</sup>

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are published in the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations, as required by law (see The American Presidency Project URL).

- 2 In contrast, see Gerhards' (2004) approach to 'discourse' in a comparative content analytical study of the debate about abortion in the public discourses in Germany and the US.

The second aspect that is worthy of reiteration is that the study of the omnipresence of *global* as a re-production of a web of meanings called 'new world' is not about the study of causalities – it is not about 'why'-questions. Being an 'unconventional' object of study, the exploration of the omnipresence of *global* constitutes a scholarly exercise, the aim of which is to 'make strange' (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989) the normalised symbolic production of the world. In this sense, it is about 'how'-concerns. It is about the exploration of a discursive web of meanings, which is brought into play and is re-produced through the use of the adjective *global*, and which constitutes a distinct dimension of the contest over the meaning of the world. It is about the exploration of a discursive web of meanings that re-produces "interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others" (Doty 1993: 298); it is this production that is the focus of analysis. As I pointed out in Chapter 6, what is particularly interesting about the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is that the web of meanings, which it brings out, fills the conceptual space 'present' with meaning. Furthermore, as I argued in Chapter 5, it constitutes an actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective'. How precisely this actualisation looks is a/the empirical question.

## CORPUS AND RESEARCH STRATEGY

The theory that I developed in this book is that the omnipresence of the adjective *global* is a discursive re-production of the web of meanings 'new world'; whenever the word *global* is used this web of meanings is re-produced. Consequently, the appearance of the adjective *global* in a text signals this re-production; it signals the web of meanings 'new world'. As I suggested in the previous chapter, this makes the compilation of a data corpus relatively straightforward. Capturing the re-production of the web of meanings 'new world' requires capturing and analysing the appearance of the word *global*.

In order to establish the data corpus for my example analysis, I used the database The American Presidency Project (URL) and compiled all of US President Obama's Public Papers from 2013 that contain the adjective *global* at least once. I transformed these documents into simple text files in order to be able to process them with the computer programme *AntConc*. The dataset comprised 158 documents with a total of 333 appearances of *global*.<sup>3</sup> A concordance approach helped me to find out that 37 of these 333 appearanc-

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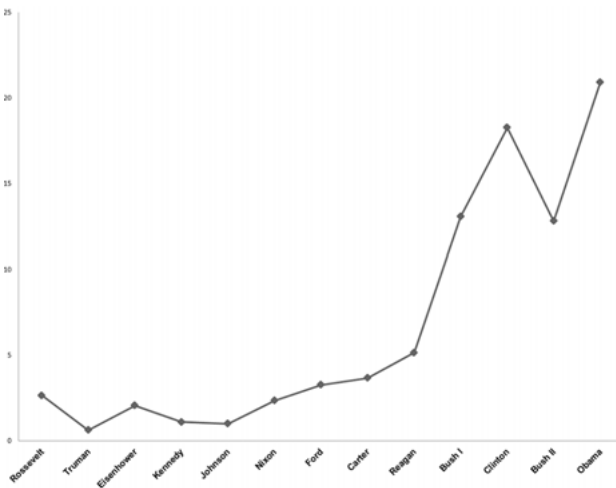
3 I decided to leave the documents "Joint Statement – Group of Eight Leaders Communique" (Obama 2013d), containing 50 appearances of the adjective *global*, and "Joint Statement by Group of Eight Leaders on the Global Economy" (Obama 2013e), containing 2 uses of *global*, out of my dataset as I felt they were insufficiently closely connected to the other texts contained in the dataset.

es were in the context of set names, such as ‘Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria’ (Obama 2013a), ‘U.S. Global Change Research Program’ (Obama 2013b) and ‘President’s Committee on Global Entrepreneurship’ (Obama 2013c). I did not consider these particular uses of the adjective, which left me with a dataset of 296 appearances of *global*.

To get an initial sense of my database, I compiled two additional databases.<sup>4</sup> The first contained all Presidential Public Papers from the first appearance of the word *global* in one of Roosevelt’s Papers until 31 December 2015. The second database comprised all Public Papers of President Obama from 7 January 2009 to 31 December 2015 with the word *global*. This second database consists of around 1,360 documents with around twice as many uses of the word *global*. I set up each of the additional databases to get an initial sense of my 2013-database and the word *global* in it as an indication of the web of meanings ‘new world’.

In the initial stage of my analysis, I gained three general insights. First, through a comparison of the number of documents, which contain *global* over time, I realised that the web of meanings ‘new world’ intervenes more steadily in Obama’s Public Papers than in any other Presidential Papers before (see Figure 3).

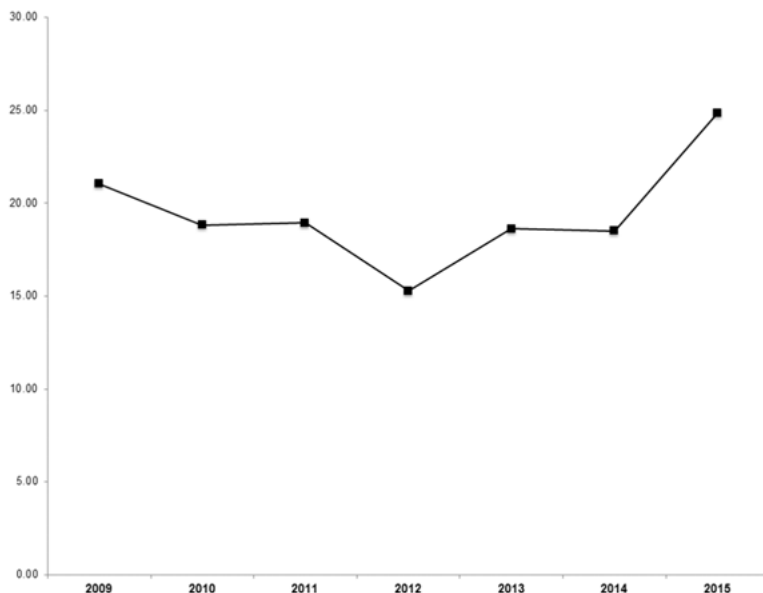
Figure 3: Percentage of Public Papers of US Presidents that contain the adjective *global* at least once (4 March 1933 – 31 December 2015)



4 Again, I used The American Presidency Project (URL) for each of these databases.

Second, through a calculation of the annual percentage of Public Papers that contain *global* at least once, relative to the total number of Obama's Public Papers (illustrated in Figure 4), I learned that the spread of the web of meanings 'new world' in the 2013-corpus falls around the annual average of 18%.

Figure 4: Percentage of Obama's Public Papers that contain the adjective *global* at least once (7 January 2009 – 31 December 2015)



Third, through a look at the words, with which the adjective *global* co-occurs, more precisely, which the adjective pre-modifies in all of Obama's Public Papers, I realised that there is a relatively homogenous picture across the years. In each year, *economy* is the word that is most frequently pre-modified with the adjective *global*, with other 'economic' terminology, such as *market/s*, *marketplace* and *financial*, also ranking relatively highly. I learned that there is nothing extraordinary about my 2013-corpus in this respect. These initial insights gave me a general feeling for my chosen corpus.

In the systematic empirical exploration of my 2013-database, I proceeded in the two steps that I sketched out in Chapter 6. The aim of the first step was to capture the phenomenon of the re-production of the 'new world', which unfolds through utterances that contain the adjective *global*. Where can it be found and how does it unfold? This first step focused on the appearance of the word *global* in the corpus as a whole. My unit of analysis was each document as a whole. Through a process of inductive and circular coding, I categorised the documents according to broad themes. My coding

exercise brought out a catalogue of eight categories, which turned out to be related to text genres rather than themes narrowly understood.<sup>5</sup> This catalogue helped me to understand, into which broad thematic discourses and contexts the re-production of the web of meanings called 'new world' intervenes in Obama's 2013 Public Papers.

The aim of the second and main step of my empirical exploration of the 2013-database was to generate insights into the nature of the web of meanings 'new world', more specifically. I sought to determine what the reproduced object 'new world' looks like and, ultimately, what 'interpretive dispositions' it holds, and which possibilities it opens and closes. Rather than each document as a whole, the unit of analysis in this second step was each single utterance, more precisely, each sentence, in which the adjective *global* appeared. In some instances, I extended the unit of analysis to the paragraph, in which the adjective *global* appeared. These were instances, in which the sentences were too short to enable me to detect the meanings of the reproduced web of meanings 'new world', or in which particularly valuable insights could be gained through this strategy.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I established that the web of meanings 'new world' fills the conceptual space 'present' with meaning and constitutes an actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective'. These theoretical assumptions guided my interpretation in the second step of my analysis; in Chapter 6, I translated them into the general questions: 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 much space does the re-produced web of meanings 'new world' open to go beyond modern principles and institutions and to fundamentally reimagine the world?

As per the theoretical premises that I outlined in Chapter 6 and that I partly summarised above in this present chapter, the study of the reproduction of the web of meanings 'new world' in Obama's 2013 Public Papers is a scholarly reconstruction of a particular dimension of the (constructed) world. This is reflected in the language I use for presenting my findings below. I describe (my findings of) the web of meanings 'new world' as a reality and not as something that is 'intuitively' and 'actively' constructed by Obama in the texts; for instance, I write 'the 'new world' *is xyz*' instead of 'the 'new world' is *presented as xyz*'.

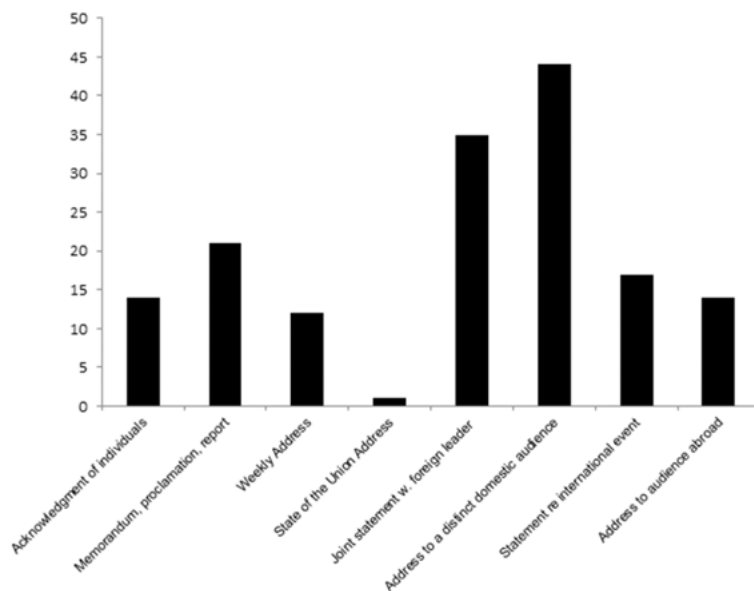
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5 The categories are: 1. Acknowledgment of individuals; 2. Memorandum, proclamation and report; 3. Weekly Address; 4. State of the Union Address; 5. Joint statement with foreign political leader; 6. Address to a distinct domestic audience; 7. Statement addressing international event; 8. Address to audience abroad.

## THE WEB OF MEANINGS 'NEW WORLD' IN OBAMA'S 2013 PUBLIC PAPERS: MODERN AND 'HYPER COSMOPOLITISED'

The web of meanings 'new world' intervenes in contexts as diverse as addresses to a distinct domestic audience, such as at US colleges and US companies, memoranda, joint statements with foreign leaders, State of the Union Addresses and speeches addressed at audiences abroad. In particular, as Figure 5 illustrates, it intervenes in the context of joint statements with foreign leaders, concrete addresses to a distinct domestic audience, as well as the acknowledgement (of achievements) of individual Americans.<sup>6</sup>

*Figure 5: The spread of the web of meanings 'new world' across the corpus of documents*



So, how does the web of meanings 'new world' concretely look? Which possibilities does it open or close? What kind of actualisation of the tradition

6 Examples for the latter category are the “Statement by the President on the Resignation of Steven Chu as Secretary of Energy” (Obama 2013h) and the “Remarks on the Nomination of Ernest J. Moniz To Be Secretary of Energy, Gina McCarthy To Be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Sylvia Mathews Burwell To Be Director of the Office of Management” (Obama 2013m).

of the ‘national perspective’ do we see? Does it open spaces to reimagine the world beyond modern principles and institutions?

In Chapter 6, we saw that exploring the ‘unconventional’ object of study of the omnipresence of the contemporary adjective *global* is inevitably an interpretative exercise that is a “craft skill, more like bike riding [...] than following the recipe for a mild chicken rogan josh” (Potter 1997: 147). Hence, before presenting the digested outcome of my analysis as a whole, I decided to present a sample interpretation of a sample text extract. The aim of presenting my interpretation of a sample extract is simply to make transparent how I went about my interpretation, i.e. to give but a general sense of the nature of and steps in my interpretative, ‘bike riding’ exercise.

### Sample extract and interpretation

“And I’m calling on Congress to help us set up 15 institutes: *global* centers of high-tech jobs and advanced manufacturing around the country.” (Obama 2013f; emphasis added)

Given the developed theoretical premises, the exploration of the web of meanings ‘new world’ focuses on the adjective *global*; the strategy is to explore the context, in which the word appears, in order to grasp the web of meanings ‘new world’ that, according to the theory that I developed in this book, is re-produced through utterances that contain the adjective *global*. As an indication of an ‘awareness’ of the reflexive ‘backfiring’ of modernisation, the appearance of the word *global* constitutes, *in principle*, an opening of conventional (modern) constructions of the world; as such, it holds the possibility of generating insights into actualisations of the tradition of the ‘national perspective’ (ref Chapters 5 and 6). How precisely this opening looks in a distinct case, i.e. what it makes imaginable and desirable and what it favours, or what it rules out as unimaginable and undesirable, as well as, how precisely the actualisation of the tradition of the ‘national perspective’ looks in this ‘new world’, is a/the empirical question to be tackled in the study of the omnipresence of *global*.

Keeping these theoretical points in mind, I turn to the sample extract above. A first close reading of it brings out three observations. First, the challenges that the US is facing are manageable through established traditional state institutions; in fact, there is a concrete and measurable answer to whatever challenges there are: what is needed is the establishment of “15 institutes [...] around the country” by the Obama Administration. Second, “high-tech jobs and advanced manufacturing” are desirable achievements. Third, decisions in the present and for the future are closely interwoven with the past; this is implied in the expression “advanced manufacturing”, where the word *advanced* implies that there is something ‘old’ that is to be advanced, and where the word *manufacturing*, e.g. as opposed to *production*, is a language that refers to the notion of an industrial setting of a distinct time in the past.

Keeping these three initial observations in mind, I extend my analytical gaze beyond the single sentence, in which the adjective *global* is used, and look at the paragraph, in which this sentence and the word *global* are embedded.

### Extended sample extract and interpretation

“But there are things we can do right now to accelerate the resurgence of American manufacturing. [...] Last year, my administration created our first manufacturing innovation institute. We put it in Youngstown, Ohio, which had been really hard hit when manufacturing started going overseas. And so you had a once-shuttered warehouse, it’s now a state-of-the art lab where new workers are mastering what’s called 3-D printing, which has the potential to revolutionize the way we make everything. That’s the future. [...] And I’m calling on Congress to help us set up 15 institutes: *global* centers of high-tech jobs and advanced manufacturing around the country.” (Obama 2013f; emphasis added)

A close reading of this extended text extract around the word *global* brings out additional observations. These additional observations broaden the picture and make it more nuanced. The branching of the web of meanings ‘new world’ starts to become apparent. What comes to the fore is a ‘new world’, in which perceived contemporary challenges are to be managed through the innovation of the past. Challenges are to be managed through the adjustment of what has been proven; they are to be managed by building on past experience. The expression “resurgence of American manufacturing” indicates this; it is also implied in the fact that “new workers” have replaced ‘old workers’ in the “once-shuttered warehouse” of the past, which has now been transformed into a “state-of-the art lab”. A belief in progress is driving decisions in the ‘new world’. This is apparent not only in the fact that the goal of building “high-tech jobs” is desirable but also in the glorification of the technology of

“3-D printing, which has the potential to revolutionize the way we make everything. That’s the future.” (ibid.)

These observations allow me now to take another interpretative step forward. I detect three main points. First, the web of meanings ‘new world’ reproduces a strictly modern understanding of time, in which the decisions in the present are about the innovative adjustment of the past in a linear outlook on a (better) future to come. Second, decisions are strictly national decisions, where the national and its institutions are in full control of the future. It is the national, “all around the country”, that is to be built up, grounded in past, again, distinctly national experiences and through concrete and measurable steps, such as the set up of 15 high tech hubs. At the same time, ‘the national’ is subject to and ‘threatened’ by extra-national, nebulous forces. These come, like a second nature, from outside. They are not driven

by identified and identifiable agents; their impact on the national just happens, as “when manufacturing started going overseas”. This is a ‘new world’, then, in which ‘the national’ is re-produced as something distinctly confined. It becomes what it is via natural (external) forces that threaten (jobs in) the inside. Third, in addition to being a re-production of the modern notion of time, the ‘new world’ is also a reproduction of modern principles, such as progress and innovation. This suggests that ‘global risks’ do not exist in the ‘new world’. A technology like 3-D printing constitutes an innovative transformation of past technologies. While being innovative, new and potentially “revolutionising”, this technology is nevertheless something familiar; it is the innovative transformation of what has been there in the past. The reflexive ‘backfiring’ of modernisation, an ‘awareness’ of which is implied in the use of the adjective *global*, does not play a role in this ‘new world’; potential unintended consequences – such as ‘global risks’ associated with the new technology 3-D printing – do not play a role. They are discursively ‘blocked out’ through a normalised reliance on modern conceptions and principles.

### Findings: The ‘new world’ in Obama’s 2013 papers

My above interpretation of a concrete sample extract gives a general sense of how my interpretative exercise of exploring the web of meanings ‘new world’ unfolded. At the same time, it also already captures important insights into the ‘new world’ that is re-produced in Obama’s 2013 Public Papers. I now move to present a synthesis of my findings of the analysis of all 296 appearances of the adjective *global* in the corpus as a whole. This extends the initial observations above and brings out an intriguing picture.

The ‘new world’ that is re-produced in Obama’s 2013 Public Papers is a complex and fascinating web of meanings. At its heart is an actualisation of the tradition of the ‘national perspective’ that is best labelled, modern and ‘hyper cosmopolitised’. For lack of a better term, the expression ‘modern and ‘hyper cosmopolitised’ is to capture the two central aspects that, in their interplay with each other, shape Obama’s ‘new world’. This is a ‘new world’ that essentially relies on and re-produces modern (market) principles and institutions, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, constitutes a distinct national reality that fuels its own ‘internal (hyper) cosmopolitisation’. What is intriguing is that one leads to the other and vice versa.

To begin with, in the ‘new world’ that is re-produced in Obama’s 2013 Public Papers ‘the national’ as a unique and distinctly value-loaded unit is dissolved. Places, which are commonly taken as distinct, like “Calcutta or Cleveland” (Obama 2013g), are the same in the ‘new world’. ‘The national’ loses its uniqueness and its distinct value. With this dissolution, a central traditional aspect of ‘the national’, which accounts for its exclusive nature, disappears. The idea of ‘the national’, as it is at the heart of traditional actualisations of the ‘national perspective’, is demystified in the ‘new world’. This demystification and dissolution of ‘the national’ as a unique unit is due

to a distinct 'internal cosmopolitisation' that is triggered by the market. In the 'new world', which is re-produced in Obama's 2013 Papers, the market constitutes a second nature that intervenes from the outside and dissolves 'the national' as a distinct value-loaded unit. It is the market that makes places like 'Calcutta and Cleveland' the same. It accounts for an 'internal cosmopolitisation' of the US national; more generally, it accounts for a homogenisation of 'the nationals'.

The kind of dissolution and demystification of 'the national' through the distinct 'internal cosmopolitisation' that comes along with the market is remarkable and intriguing in itself. What makes it even more remarkable and intriguing, however, is that the demystification of 'the national' does not mean that 'the national' disappears altogether in the 'new world'. National units, such as the US, neither disappear nor do they actually lose their exclusiveness as such. The contrary is the case. The 'new world' in Obama's 2013 Papers is a world that is constituted by strictly confined and exclusive national units. It is a highly compartmentalised 'new world' that is re-produced in the 2013 Papers. In other words, on the one hand, 'the national' loses its uniqueness and distinct national value; on the other hand, however, the 'new world' is constituted of exclusive national units.

So how do these demystified national units then look that make up the 'new world'? To begin with, they are, what one could call, '*pragmatic*' units. The national units in the 'new world' are the product of the potentially threatening market environment that surrounds and brings out these units. They are the product of this nebulous second nature 'out there' that might intervene into the national, triggering "manufacturing [...] going overseas" (Obama 2013f). It is a 'pragmatic' national and a 'pragmatic' market-driven exclusiveness that informs the national units in the 'new world', in fact, that brings them out to begin with. This means that although places lose their (national) distinctiveness in the 'new world' they do not dissolve into one homogenous whole. The 'new world' consists of a set of, in principle, homogenous but strictly autonomous units. The 'pragmatic' national units of the 'new world' are autonomous units in that they each struggle for survival in the face of the second nature of the market. They gain their shape and existence as units in an individual struggle for survival in the market. In the 'new world' the national units form players in a competitive game, in which it is, for instance, a goal to "put our country on a path to win the global race for clean energy jobs" (Obama 2013h), to succeed and, in fact, survive in "the global race for jobs and industries" (Obama 2013i), and to generally "keep our edge and stay ahead in the global race" by figuring out "how to fix our broken immigration system, to welcome that infusion of newness while still maintaining the enduring strength of our laws" (Obama 2013j). In this sense, the 'new world' is shaped by an intriguing fueling of national exclusiveness and compartmentalisation, in which 'the national' loses its national uniqueness, while, simultaneously, turning into a 'pragmatic' exclusive unit. This makes the 'new world' a strictly international system. Yet, it

is an international system with homogenous units, which come into being not because of an 'inherent' national uniqueness or in the face of an existential threat posed by other national units, but in the course of the struggle with each for survival in the second nature that is the market.

Applying the language and concepts from Chapter 5, the above findings motivate me to conceptualise the 'new world' that is re-produced in Obama's 2013 Public Papers as a 'hyper cosmopolitised' reality. In Chapter 5, I established that national societies are always inevitably subject to an 'internal cosmopolitisation', which brings out distinct national realities with distinct actualisations of the tradition of the 'national perspective'. In the case of Obama's 'new world' this distinct national reality is 'hyper cosmopolitised'. For lack of a better term, I use the expression 'hyper cosmopolitised' to highlight that this reality is not only a *product* of the process of the reality of its 'internal cosmopolitisation', which the market brings along, but that it also fuels its own 'internal cosmopolitisation' in a distinct and 'essential' way. National societies, these 'pragmatic' national units in the 'new world' fuel their own 'internal cosmopolitisation' because, as seen in the quote above, as 'pragmatic' exclusive national units in the market they need 'immigration' in order to "stay ahead in the global race" (Obama 2013j). In other words, the exclusive 'pragmatic' national units in the 'new world' depend for their very survival on their opening towards 'others'. In fact, it is this opening that brings out their distinct exclusive national existence to begin with. What we then see is a distinct actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective': it is a 'hyper cosmopolitised' one.

And there is more to the 'new world' in Obama's Papers. While being shaped by a 'hyper cosmopolitised' actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective', the 'new world' is simultaneously shaped by a reliance on and re-production of modern institutions and principles. More precisely, it is shaped by the reliance on and reproduction of particular modern institutions and principles, namely market institutions and principles. As we saw above, important modern *political* principles, such as the idea of 'the national' as it is at the heart of 'traditional' actualisations of the tradition of the 'national perspective', are questioned and partly disappear in the 'new world', yet, modern *market* institutions and principles are unquestioned. They *essentially* shape the 'hyper cosmopolitised' reality. In fact, it is exactly these particular modern market institutions and principles that produce the 'hyper cosmopolitised' 'pragmatic' national units to begin with. In this respect, the modern market principles are nothing less of fundamentally inscribed in the 'hyper cosmopolitised' national. In short, a 'new world' is re-produced in Obama's 2013 Public Papers, in which modern political principles associated with a 'traditional' actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective' do not play a guiding role (anymore) in producing 'the national' but are replaced by another set of, again, modern institutions and principles, namely the institutions and principles of the market.

This distinct actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective' favours and brings out two kinds of political actors. On the one side, the re-produced 'new world' favours non-governmental and private political actors. In fact, these actors take a more favorable position in the 'new world' than state actors. While state actors are good for "diplomatic initiatives", "international and nongovernmental organizations and the private sector" are there to strive for "partnerships and enhanced coordination" (Obama 2013l). On the other side, it is responsible individuals, who are desirable and favoured in the 'new world'. They are favoured because it is individual actors and their personal talent that attract 'market attention' and, with that, essentially contribute to the survival of the 'pragmatic' national unit in the 'new world'.

"You know, in a global economy where the best jobs follow talent [...] we need to do everything we can to encourage that same kind of passion, make it easier for more young people to blaze a new trail." (Obama 2013g)

Taken together, the above presented insights into the 'new world' that is re-produced in Obama's 2013 Public Papers bring out a complex and intriguing web of meanings, which holds a mix of openings and closings of possibilities.

To begin with, we see a radical move away from central modern political principles associated with 'the national', as it is at the heart of 'traditional' actualisations of the tradition of the 'national perspective'. This holds the possibility of an opening to a radical reimagination of the international world. Yet, simultaneously, this radical opening is discursively 'tamed' through the emergence of exclusive 'pragmatic' national units that compete with each other and struggle for survival in the context of a market that surrounds it like a second nature. For manifestations of the reflexive 'backfiring' of modernisation, such as climate change, this means that they cannot be seen as anything but ordinary problems that are to be solved by potent national agents, grounded in the same practices and principles that brought out these manifestations of the 'backfiring' of modernisation in the first place. They are to be solved as part of a race among 'pragmatic' national units that is there to be won. Furthermore, the 'new world' is a world that essentially builds on modern institutions and principles, namely market institutions and principles. These are inscribed in and are re-produced through the 'pragmatic' national units that it brings out, as well as in the political subjects that this 'new world' holds as desirable. The re-produced 'new world' is shaped by a modern linear notion of time, in which the present is intimately enmeshed with the past and looks optimistically at a 'shapable' future. This means that the desirable attributes that political actors need to hold are not different *in kind* from the past. This is because the market, this second nature out there, is not different in kind; it is different *in degree*. Consequently, the 'new world' requires and favours adjustment of the old,

as well as innovation and an advancement from the past. Radically different steps or attributes of actors are not required and desirable. Attributes, which used to be valued in the past, such as “talent and hard work” (Obama 2013k), are also valued and desirable in the ‘new world’.

In this sense, the ‘new world’ in Obama’s 2013 Papers leaves little room for radical moves and fundamental re-imaginings of the world and the international system beyond the premises of modernity. In one way, modern national (“zombie” [Beck in Grefe 2000]) institutions and principles are normalised and re-produced. They are accredited with agency and are ‘in full control’ in an extra-national environment of the market that, as a second nature, intervenes from the outside. With that, behaviours and institutions that fuel the reflexive ‘backfiring’ of modernisation are normalised and symbolically favoured. In such a re-produced ‘new world’ ‘global risks’ do not exist. In fact, in a world with ‘pragmatic’ national units, which are grounded in modern market institutions and principles, ‘global risks’ *cannot* exist and *cannot* inform present decisions as this would threaten nothing less but the very existence of these units. The kind of hyper ‘internal cosmopolitisation’ that shapes the ‘new world’ and brings out a ‘hyper cosmopolitised’ national reality essentially opens up the ‘pragmatic’ national units towards ‘others’, however, without opening room for going beyond a national exclusiveness. In the case of the ‘new world’ in Obama’s 2013 Papers, the ‘internal cosmopolitisation’ fuels the exclusiveness of the national units.

And yet, the ‘new world’ also holds the possibility of openings. The political subject that is desirable and favoured in the ‘new world’ does not only bring along ‘old’ attitudes but, as we saw above, also needs to be ‘passionate’ about its role in the market. It is expected “to blaze a new trail” (Obama 2013g). It is this individual ‘passion’ that secures the national unit’s place in the market and, with that, ensures its survival. This means, in turn, that while the ‘new world’ is intimately inscribed and locked in a trajectory from the past to the future, which re-produces experiences and favors tested (modern) behaviour and attributes, the idea that ‘passion’ plays a notable role for the survival of the ‘pragmatic’ national units in the market holds the seed of radical openings – in short, openings in the ‘new world’ lie in the distinct subject that is the product of the modern ‘hyper cosmopolitised’ ‘new world’.

## CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

In this chapter, I presented the findings of an exemplary exploration of the re-production of the web of meanings ‘new world’ in Obama’s public communication in 2013. The analysis brings out a complex picture of a ‘modern ‘hyper cosmopolitised’ ‘new world’. Particularly interesting in the ‘new world’ is the dissolution of ‘the national’ as a unique entity and the emer-

gence of 'pragmatic', homogenous national units, which are the product of an environment shaped by a market that constitutes a second nature. Furthermore, we saw that the re-produced 'new world' relies on and re-produces modern (market) institutions and principles, while simultaneously constituting a distinct national reality that fuels its own 'internal (hyper) cosmopolitisation'. Intriguingly, each of these aspects fuels the other.

Within the confines of this book, my study of the re-production of the web of meanings 'new world' through the use of the adjective *global* in President Obama's 2013 communication is intended to serve an exemplary purpose only. It is only intended to provide an initial empirical ground for future research, which may proceed in one of three kinds of directions.

First, my study can serve as the ground for those kinds of studies which, in a way that is similar to my endeavour above, focus on a particular corpus of texts and, with that, broaden our understanding of the omnipresence of the adjective *global* by adding concrete insights into its empirical existence across political, cultural and institutional fields. As suggested in Chapter 6, additional synchronic but also diachronic studies are imaginable, and comparative studies as well as single cases could be included in this branch of future research.

Second, my findings could serve as the empirical ground for studies that focus explicitly on the discursive re-production of the world and investigate the interplay of the 'new world' with other webs of meanings. My, albeit, general grasp of the thematic contexts, in which the re-production of the web of meanings 'new world' intervenes in Obama's Papers, that I presented at the beginning of my analysis, could serve as a basis for such an endeavour. Here, the task would be to connect the 'new world' with the other webs of meanings, with which it correlates in a particular text corpus.

The third research direction, in which my study may lead, proceeds deeper into the nature of the empirical exploration of the omnipresence of *global* as a re-production of the web of meanings 'new world'. My study can serve as the foundation for future scholarly radicalisations of my own findings. As suggested in Chapter 6, the empirical study of the phenomenon of the omnipresence of *global* is not only an 'unconventional', experimental, and interpretative endeavour but also a 'provisional' exercise. It is 'provisional' because of the nature of the object 'new world', which the adjective *global* brings out. Referring back to Chapter 5, as an actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective', there is no established language, as yet, to readily grasp the web of meanings 'new world'. I highlighted this point in general in Chapter 5 when I discussed the 'provisional' nature of Ulrich Beck's project of rethinking how we think about social reality. Given that the reflexive modern world is a both/and-world (as opposed to an either/or-world), the challenge is to grasp linguistically phenomena, such as the re-production of the web of meanings 'new world' and the distinct actualisation of the tradition of the 'national perspective' that it brings out, without 'taming' insights through conventional language. While the lack of an ade-

quate, 'ratified' 'reflexive modern' language, which does not reproduce the notions of linearity and 'either/or', is not *theoretically* problematic, it does tame the potential of *empirical* insights and inevitably makes them 'provisional'. We see this in my empirical endeavour above, which does not radically go beyond our existing vocabulary. Yet, as argued in Chapter 5 (see also Selchow 2016a), this is not a shortcoming but an inevitable aspect of such research, which demands a constant rewriting and (linguistic) 'radicalisation', with the aim of eventually establishing a 'reflexive modern' language, i.e. a language that, paraphrasing the earlier quoted Bronner (1995: 68), is able to capture the world, in which we live, rather than re-producing "the ['national'] one in which we think."