

Introduction: Political Ideologies and Social Imaginaries

Ideologies may be power structures that manipulate human action, but they are also ideational systems that enable us to choose to become what we want to become.

Michael Freeden (1996)

The social imaginary is that common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy.

Charles Taylor (2007)

Both self-evidently global and denationalizing dynamics destabilize existing meanings and systems.

Saskia Sassen (2006)

I.1. Disparaging Ideology: From Napoleon Bonaparte to George W. Bush

Ideology is a loaded word with a checkered past. Most people today regard it as a form of dogmatic thinking or political manipulation. Virtually no one associates it with analytic clarity or scientific rigor. And yet, this is precisely how *idéologie* was envisioned by an imprisoned French aristocrat awaiting execution at the height of the Reign of Terror. Count Destutt de Tracy coined the term for his rationalist method of breaking complex systems of ideas into their basic components. Consciously directed against established religion and its transcendental claims to absolute Truth, the ultimate purpose of Tracy's new "science of ideas" went far beyond intellectual contemplation. The postulation of ideology's

scientific truths was to guide the practical improvement of the new French Republic that emerged from the convulsions of the Revolution. Branded as the infallible instruction manual for political and social reform, *idéologie* was the rallying cry of Tracy's small circle of Enlightenment thinkers affiliated with the newly founded National Institute of Arts and Sciences in Paris. Young Napoleon Bonaparte, too, embraced ideology on his rise to power, but swiftly discarded its social prescriptions when members of the Institute dared to impede his political ambitions. To add insult to injury, he accused the Institute's absentminded *idéologues* of failing to grasp the imperatives of modern statecraft. The ensuing battle over the "real" meaning of ideology was decisively won by the wily Emperor, for it was his pejorative connotation that stuck in the public mind.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the term acquired additional derogatory punch in radical circles inspired by the revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Their *German Ideology* defined it as a deliberate distortion of material reality that served the ruling classes as a convenient cloak for economic exploitation and political oppression. At the dawn of the twentieth century, ideology continued to be condemned as a tool of mass manipulation employed with equal skill by ruthless captains of industrial capitalism and radical left-wing revolutionaries. The crimes of these ideologues—a term now reserved for modern dictators and their unscrupulous propagandists—reached new heights in their genocidal regimes, ghastly concentration camps and sprawling gulags. As political philosopher Hannah Arendt put it in the early 1950s, "Not before Hitler and Stalin were the great political potentialities of ideologies discovered."¹ Attentive to the public's disaffection with these "ideological" excesses, shrewd postwar politicians quickly fell back on Bonaparte's successful strategy of presenting themselves as levelheaded solvers of concrete problems with nothing but contempt for anything that smacked even remotely of ideological thinking. And yet, their professed pragmatism was belied by an Iron Curtain that split the world along the seams of its two opposing isms.

Academics, too, found themselves deeply entangled in the sticky web of Cold War ideology. Soviet dialecticians invented new categories for the many degradations of "bourgeois ideology," while their Western counterparts contrasted the "highly emotive" content of (communist) ideology with the "value free" character of (liberal) social science. Claiming to analyze politics and society in a strictly objective manner, they disparaged ideology as the pernicious product of tyrannical minds

obsessed with discovering “how populations and nations can be mobilized and manipulated all along the way that leads to political messianism and fanaticism.”² Following Arendt’s influential conflation of ideology with “totalitarianism,” Western academics developed new typologies and classification systems designed to capture the essential features of “pathological” political belief systems. The least derogatory meaning bestowed upon ideology during these polarizing Cold War years was “party affiliation,” used by public opinion researchers as a scientific measure for voters’ electoral preferences. Reduced to this label, ideology managed to eke out a living in a small corner of the political science discipline.³ At the same time, however, media-savvy campaign managers returned to the old stereotype by hurling ideology at their opponents’ cheap political rhetoric, biased views, and self-interested spin.

With the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites precisely two centuries after the French Revolution, communism was pronounced dead and the Anglo-American variant of liberal democracy was elevated to the “final form of human government.”⁴ Triumphalist voices in the West celebrated the “end of ideology” as though competing political ideas had overnight turned into curious relics of the past. China’s gradual shift to a party-directed capitalism and the rapid decline of Third-World Marxism only seemed to confirm the “passing of an illusion,” as a nonchalant French commentator referred to the demise of communism.⁵ It took the al-Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001, to expose the naïveté of such premature hopes for a de-ideologized world. The familiar Cold War equation of ideology with the totalitarian schemes of depraved minds received a new lease on life in George W. Bush’s characterization of jihadist terrorists as the “heirs of all murderous ideologies of the twentieth century.”⁶ Although the President’s administration has come under severe criticism for its policies in Iraq, many people today support Bush’s assertion that the Global War on Terror amounts to an “ideological war that is going to last for a while.”⁷

1.2. Two Conceptions of Ideology

Moving beyond the invective, this book considers ideology as evolving and malleable political belief systems that emerged during the American and French Revolutions and competed with religious doctrines over

what ideas and values should guide human communities. Although ideology offers a “secular” response to these fundamental questions, it also resembles religion in its attempts to link the various ethical, cultural, and political dimensions of society into a fairly comprehensive belief system. Imitating its rival’s penchant for trading in truth and certainty, ideology also relies on narratives, metaphor, and myths that persuade, praise, condemn, cajole, convince, and separate the “good” from the “bad.” Like religion, it thrives on human emotions, generating rage, fear, enthusiasm, love, sacrifice, altruism, mass murder, torture, and rape much in the same way as religious doctrines have run through the gamut of human virtues and vices.⁸ Hence, it would be unfair to confine ideology to its harmful manifestations. What, for example, about its moral influence on human conduct or its crucial role of generating bonds of solidarity that result in enduring human communities? Its pejorative connotations notwithstanding, ideology deserves a more balanced hearing—one that acknowledges its integrative role of providing social stability as much as its propensity to contribute to fragmentation and alienation; its ability to supply standards of normative evaluation as much as its tendency to oversimplify social complexity; its role as guide and compass for political action as much as its potential to legitimize tyranny and terror in the name of noble ideals.

In this spirit, sociologist John Thompson usefully distinguishes between scholars employing critical or neutral conceptions of ideology.⁹ The former approach ideology as systems of ideas that are necessarily misleading, illusory, or one-sided, whereas the latter refuse to do so. This book subscribes to a neutral conception, for it takes seriously the indispensable functions of political belief systems irrespective of their particular contents or political orientations. As Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser suggested some time ago, “Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life.”¹⁰ Still, to opt for “neutrality” does not necessarily imply withholding value judgments from what the analyst might consider harmful or beneficial commitments of various political ideologies. Under the guise of value-neutrality, declarations of “fact” can obscure or ignore normative aspects crucial for gaining an understanding of the phenomenon in question. A neutral approach to German Nazism, for example, might begin with an acknowledgment that this ideology operates on the same functional levels as, say, German liberalism, but it does not foreclose sustained ethical criticism of Hitler’s genocidal vision. The same critical approach might be applied to classical British liberalism’s tendency to neglect social welfare

in the name of individual liberty. The same goes for French conservatism's defense of patriarchal hierarchies. Advancing such a neutral conception of ideology allows the student of ideology to use "the investigation of ideology as a critical tool for interpreting institutions, practices, and social thought-patterns all at once."¹¹

Drawing on this critical spirit of conceptual neutrality, let us define ideology as comprehensive belief systems composed of patterned ideas and claims to truth. Codified by social elites, these beliefs are embraced by significant groups in society.¹² All political belief systems are historically contingent and, therefore, must be analyzed with reference to a particular context that connects their origins and developments to specific times and spaces. Linking belief and practice, ideologies encourage people to act while simultaneously constraining their actions. To this end, ideological codifiers construct claims that seek to "lock in" the meaning of their core concepts. Michael Freeden refers to this crucial process as "decontestation." Although successfully decontested ideas always require more explanation and justification, they are held as truth with such confidence that they no longer appear to be assumptions at all. Ultimately, major ideational claims give each ideology its unique fingerprint:

This configuration teases out specific conceptions of each of the concepts involved. Its precision of meaning, while never conclusive, is gained by the specific and constricted interaction among the concepts it employs. An ideology attempts to end the inevitable contention over concepts by *decontesting* them, by removing their meanings from contest. "This is what justice means," announces one ideology, and "that is what democracy entails." By trying to convince us that they are right and that they speak the truth, ideologies become devices for coping with the indeterminacy of meaning. . . . That is their semantic role. [But] [i]deologies also need to decontest the concepts they use because they are instruments for fashioning collective decisions. That is their political role.¹³

Ideological "morphologies" can thus be pictured as decontested truth-claims that facilitate collective decision-making. Their interlinked semantic and political roles suggest that control over language translates directly into power, including the decision of "who gets what, when, and how."¹⁴ As we shall see in the ensuing chapters, ideologies are not merely justifications of economic class interests, but fairly comprehensive programs designed to shape and direct human communities in specific ways.¹⁵

I.3. Ideology and the Social Imaginary

Chapter 1 opens with Destutt de Tracy's attempt to establish *idéologie* as the foundational discipline of all sciences. It traces the early career of the concept in postrevolutionary France and the unexpected reversal of its fortunes at the hands of Napoleon and Marx. Chapters 2 and 3 analyze the central truth-claims made by some prominent codifiers of the five grand ideologies—liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, and fascism/Nazism—by taking into consideration the crucial national context in which they grew to maturity.¹⁶ Most importantly, this study links political ideologies to their overarching “social imaginary.” Constituting the macromappings of social and political space through which we perceive, judge, and act in the world, this deep-seated mode of understanding provides the most general parameters within which people imagine their communal existence. Drawing on Benedict Anderson's account of the imagined community of the nation, Charles Taylor argues that the social imaginary is neither a theory nor an ideology, but an implicit “background” that makes possible communal practices and a widely shared sense of their legitimacy. It offers explanations of how “we”—the members of the community—fit together, how things go on between us, the expectations we have of each other, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie those expectations. These background understandings are both normative and factual in the sense of providing us both with the standards of how things usually go on and how they ought to go on.¹⁷ Much in the same vein, Pierre Bourdieu notes that the social imaginary sets the prereflexive framework for our daily routines and our commonsense social repertoires.¹⁸

Consider, for example, how the social imaginary provides the deep matrix for our meaningful participation in a public celebration of a national holiday. Here we find a smiling young woman waving a flag as the marching band passes by playing patriotic songs. There sits an old man on the side of the street, mouthing with gusto the words that go along with the tune. Around the corner we can observe throngs of patriotically dressed school children purchasing candy and soft drinks from a street vendor. Behind the long row of excited onlookers, we can make out two young men in uniform pointing proudly to the military planes roaring overhead. In the blink of an eye, language, symbols, space, and action flow into each other in ways that make immediate sense to all participants. The crowd does not seem to expend any conscious effort in navigating this familiar ocean of circulating symbols and their

corresponding spatial orders as the social imaginary endows people's holiday celebrations with a background aura of normality.

Despite such apparent intangibility, however, social imaginaries are quite “real” in the sense of enabling common practices and deep-seated communal attachments. Though capable of facilitating collective fantasies and speculative reflections, they should not be dismissed as phantasms or mental fabrications.¹⁹ Social imaginaries acquire additional solidity through the (re)construction of social space and the repetitive performance of certain communal qualities and characteristics. And yet, they are temporary constellations subject to change. At certain tipping points in history, such change can occur with lightning speed and tremendous ferocity.²⁰ This happened at the end of the eighteenth century when in intellectual circles, there arose in modernizing states on both sides of the Atlantic the conceptual template of the “nation.” Its political message was as clear as it was audacious: henceforth, it would be “the people”—not kings, aristocrats, or clerical elites—that exercised legitimate authority in political affairs. Over time, the will of the people would replace monarchical forms of communal authority based on transcendental powers emanating from a divine realm beyond the nation. Thus, modern nationhood found its expression in the transformation of subjects into citizens who laid claim to equal membership in the nation and institutionalized their sovereignty in the modern nation-state. But who really counted as part of the people and what constituted the essence of the nation became the subject of fierce intellectual debates and political struggles. Seeking to remake the world according to the rising national imaginary, citizens exhibited a restlessness that became the hallmark of modernity. As William Connolly observes, “Modern agencies form and reform, produce and reproduce, incorporate and reincorporate, industrialize and reindustrialize. In modernity, modernization is always under way.”²¹

Countless meanings and definitions of modernity have been put forward in the past two centuries. They extend far beyond familiar designations, referring to a historical era in the West characterized by its radical rupture with the past and its ensuing temporal reorientation toward notions of infinite progress, economic growth, and enduring material prosperity. As philosopher Jürgen Habermas reminds us, modernity is inextricably intertwined with an expanding “public sphere”—the incubator of modernity's tendency to “create its own normativity out of itself.”²² Various thinkers have elaborated on the main dynamics of modernity: the separation of state and civil society; conceptions of linear time; progressive secularization; individualism; intensifying geopolitical

rivalries that facilitated the formation and multiplication of nation-states; new orders of rationality and their corresponding domains of knowledge; the uneven expansion of industrial capitalism; the rapid diffusion of discursive literacy; the slow trend toward democratization; and so on. The detailed genealogy of these features need not concern us here, although its involvement with the story of ideology will become apparent in later chapters. What we ought to consider straightaway, however, is the centrality of the national in the modern social imaginary.

1.4. Ideology and the National Imaginary

New treatments of nationality and nationalism appearing on the academic scene since the early 1980s have advanced convincing arguments in favor of a tight connection between the forces of modernity, the spread of industrial capitalism, and the elite-engineered construction of the “national community” as a cultural artifact. As Eric Hobsbawm notes, “The basic characteristic of the modern nation and everything associated with it is its modernity.”²³ Even scholars like Anthony Smith, who reject the modernist view that nations were simply “invented” without the significant incorporation of premodern ethnic ties and histories, concede that nationalism represents “a modern movement and ideology, which emerged in the latter half of the eighteenth century in Western Europe and America. . . .”²⁴ Smith’s definition of nationalism as an “ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of a nation” usefully highlights the idiosyncratic ways of processing and disseminating secular ideas that emerged in the nineteenth century as a distinctive feature of modernity. As Tom Nairn explains, “An ism ceased to denote just a system of general ideas (like Platonism or Thomism) and evolved into a proclaimed cause or movement—no longer a mere school but a party or societal trend.”²⁵ In other words, ideas acquired alluring banner headlines and truth-claims that resonated with people’s interests and aspirations and thus bound them to a specific political program. Having to choose sides in these proliferating battles of political ideas, like-minded individuals organized themselves into clubs, associations, movements, and political parties with the primary objective of enlisting more people to their preferred normative vision of the national.

There is, however, a serious downside to Smith’s definition: it turns nationalism into an ideology of the same ilk as liberalism or conservatism. This begs the question of how nationalism can be both a distinct political

ideology and a common source of inspiration for a variety of political belief systems. Sensing the overarching stature of the national, Benedict Anderson and other social thinkers with an anthropological bent have resisted the idea that nationalism should be seen as a distinct ideology. Instead, they refer to it as a “cultural artifact of a particular kind,” that is, a relatively broad cultural system more closely related to “kinship” and “religion” than to “liberalism” or “conservatism.”²⁶ For this reason, the national has often been described as an overarching *esprit general* capable of integrating different layers of the social into a cultural unity. Reaffirmed in a “daily plebiscite,” it is said to underpin modern collective identities forged by common memories and common acts of forgetting.²⁷ In the same vein, sociologist Liah Greenfeld has likened the national to a powerful cultural system that produced the major structures of modernity, including the modern nation-state.²⁸ In spite of some remaining differences, most of these perspectives share the conviction that the national decisively colors the modern social imaginary.

Hence, we ought to treat the national not as a separate ideology but as the background to our communal existence that emerged in the Northern Hemisphere with the American and French Revolutions. Indeed, it gave the modern social imaginary its distinct flavor in the form of various factual and normative assumptions that political communities, in order to count as “legitimate,” had to be nation-states.²⁹ Benedict Anderson, for example, speaks of “modern imaginings of the nation” as a limited and sovereign community of fundamentally equal members whose knowledge of each other is, in most cases, not direct, but mediated in linear time through the diffusion of discursive literacy and other factors.³⁰ The national imaginary, then, refers to the taken-for-granted understanding in which the nation—plus its affiliated or to-be-affiliated state—serves as the communal frame of the political.³¹

What, then, is the precise relationship between the national and ideology? Or, to reverse the question, what is the connection between political belief systems and the national imaginary? As I will seek to demonstrate in the first part of this book, the explicit grand ideologies gave political expression to the implicit national imaginary. To be sure, each ideology deployed and assembled its core concepts—liberty, progress, race, class, rationality, tradition, community, welfare, security, and so on—in specific and unique ways. But the elite codifiers of these ideational systems pursued their specific political goals under the background umbrella of the national imaginary. Liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, and Nazism/fascism were all “nationalist” in the sense of performing the

same fundamental process of translating the overarching national imaginary into concrete political doctrines, agendas, and spatial arrangements. In so doing, ideologies normalized national territories; spoke in recognized national languages; appealed to national histories; told national legends and myths; or glorified a national “race.” They articulated the national imaginary according to a great variety of criteria that were said to constitute the defining essence of the community.³²

As we shall see shortly, the essentialism of race gained tremendous traction in the second half of the nineteenth century. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai even goes so far as to argue that, “No modern nation, however benign its political system and however eloquent its public voices may be about the virtues of tolerance, multiculturalism, and inclusion, is free of the idea that its national sovereignty is built on some sort of ethnic genius.”³³ But whatever ideologies purported the essence of the nation to be, they always developed their truth-claims by decontesting their core concepts within the national imaginary. Liberals, for example, spoke of “freedom” as applying to autonomous individuals belonging to the same national community, that is, the liberties of *French*, *Colombian*, or *Australian* citizens. The conservative fondness for “law and order” received its highest expression in the notion of *national* security. Tellingly, even the ostensibly internationalist creed of socialists and communists achieved its concrete political formulation only as *German* social democracy or Soviet *Russia’s* “socialism in one country.” For two centuries, the partisans of political ideologies clashed with each other over such important issues as participation, the extent of civil rights, the purposes and forms of government, the role of the state, the significance of race and ethnicity, and the scope of political obligations. Clinging to their different political visions, they hardly noticed their common embeddedness in the national imaginary.³⁴

I.5. Ideology and the Global Imaginary

In the aftermath of World War II, new ideas, theories, and practices produced in the public consciousness a similar sense of rupture with the past that had occurred at the time of the French Revolution. Novel technologies facilitated the speed and intensity with which these ideas and practices infiltrated the national imaginary. Images, people, and materials circulated more freely across national boundaries. This new sense of “the global” that erupted within and onto the national began to undermine

the normality and self-contained coziness of the modern nation-state—especially deeply engrained notions of community tied to a sovereign and clearly demarcated territory containing relatively homogenous populations.³⁵ Identities based on national membership became destabilized. During the early decades of the Cold War, the changing social imaginary led prominent thinkers in the First World to proclaim the “end of ideology.” As evidence for their assertion, they pointed to the political–cultural consensus underpinning a common Western “community of values” and the socioeconomic welfare state compromise struck between liberalism and democratic socialism. Conversely, detractors of the end-of-ideology thesis seized upon the decolonization dynamics in the Third World as well as the rise of the countercultural “new social movements” in the 1960s and 1970s as evidence for their view that the familiar political belief systems were being complemented by “new ideologies” such as feminism, environmentalism, and postcolonialism.

I argue in Chapter 4 that the most fundamental novelty of these “new ideologies” lay in their sensitivity toward the rising global imaginary, regardless of whether they were formulated by the forces of the New Left or the cohorts of the New Right. Starting in the late 1970s, and especially after the 1991 disintegration of the Soviet Union, the ideas of the New Right gained the upper hand across the globe. By the mid-1990s, a growing chorus of global social elites was fastening onto the new buzzword “globalization” as the central metaphor for their political agenda—the creation of a single global free market and the spread of consumerist values around the world. Most importantly, they translated the rising social imaginary into largely economic claims laced with references to the global: “global” trade and financial markets, “worldwide” flows of goods, services, and labor, “transnational” corporations, “offshore” financial centers, and so on.

But globalization was never merely a matter of increasing flows of capital and goods across national borders. Rather, it constitutes a multidimensional set of processes in which images, sound bites, metaphors, myths, symbols, and spatial arrangements of globality were just as important as economic and technological dynamics. The “objective” acceleration and multiplication of global material networks occurs hand in hand with the intensifying “subjective” recognition of a shrinking world. Such heightened awareness of the compression of time and space influences the direction and material instantiations of global flows. As sociologist Roland Robertson points out, the compression of the world into a single

place increasingly makes the global the frame of reference for human thought and action.³⁶ Globalization involves both the macrostructures of community and the microstructures of personhood. It extends deep into the core of the self and its dispositions, facilitating the creation of new identities nurtured by the intensifying relations between the individual and the globe.³⁷

Like the conceptual earthquake that shook Europe and the Americas more than 200 years ago, today's destabilization of the national affects the entire planet. The ideologies dominating the world today are no longer exclusively articulations of the national imaginary but reconfigured ideational systems that constitute potent translations of the dawning global imaginary. Although my account of this transformation emphasizes rupture, it would be foolish to deny obvious continuities. As Saskia Sassen notes, "the incipient process of denationalization and the ascendance of novel social formations depend in good part on capabilities shaped and developed in the national age."³⁸ Today's discursive preeminence of the "market," for example, harkens back to the heyday of liberalism in mid-Victorian England. And yet, this concept is no longer exclusively tied to the old paradigm of self-contained national economies but also refers to a model of global exchanges among national actors, subnational agencies, supranational bodies, networks of nongovernmental organizations, and transnational corporations. Our New World Order contains a multiplicity of orders networked together on multiple levels. Disaggregating nation-states struggle to come to grips with relational concepts of sovereignty while facing unprecedented challenges to their authority from both subnational and supranational collectivities.³⁹

In Chapter 5, I contend that "market globalism" emerged in the 1990s as a comprehensive ideology extolling, among other things, the virtues of globally integrating markets. It discarded, absorbed, and rearranged large chunks of the grand ideologies while at the same time generating genuinely new ideas. The outcome was a hybridized political belief system capable of articulating the global imaginary in concrete political programs and agendas. But no single ideational system ever enjoys absolute dominance. Battered by persistent gales of political dissent, the small fissures and ever-present inconsistencies in political ideologies threaten to turn into major cracks and serious contradictions. As the Roaring Nineties drew to a close, market globalism found itself challenged on the political left by "justice globalism," an alternative translation of the rising global imaginary.

Although some political commentators have suggested that virulent forms of national populism embodied by the likes of Jean-Marie Le Pen and Jörg Haider constitute the most powerful right-wing challenge to market globalism, I argue in Chapter 6 that this designation belongs to “jihadist globalism.” Far from being a regionally contained “last gasp” of a backward-looking, militant offshoot of political Islam, jihadism of the al-Qaeda variety represents a potent globalism of worldwide appeal. In response to the ascent of jihadist globalism epitomized by the terrorist attacks of 9/11, market globalism morphed into imperial globalism. This “hard-powering” of market globalism has been widely read as clear evidence for the staying power of the national, most clearly reflected in American Empire and its unilateral desire to remake the world in its own image. Analyzing a number of key texts produced by imperial globalists, I will attempt to show that American Empire is not at all incompatible with the rising global imaginary.

The book ends with a brief consideration of the current convergence of religion and ideology. Are we witnessing a reversal of the powerful secularization dynamic that served two centuries ago as the midwife of ideology? Is the rising global imaginary more hospitable to religious articulations than its predecessor? If so, then perhaps today’s destabilization of the national also implies the unsettling of the ideological.

Attentive readers will notice that I refer to all three ideological translators of the global imaginary as “globalisms”—even though I previously argued against considering “nationalism” as a distinct ideology. Since the global possesses the same overarching stature as the national why should it be reduced to its concrete ideological articulations? The reason I use “globalism” on the level of ideology has to do with the difficulty of expressing the articulations of the global imaginary in familiar terms. For example, it was not until the 1820s that “liberal” was first used by aristocratic European elites as referring to the “ideology” adopted by Spanish *liberales* who opposed the restoration of autocratic monarchy under Ferdinand VII. Still, throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the conventional meaning of “liberal” as a derivative of “liberality” (a synonym for the aristocratic virtues of generosity and open-mindedness) continued to circulate in the public discourse side by side with its new meaning.⁴⁰ Similarly, the old British party labels “Whigs” and “Tories” did not give way to their modern ideological significations of “Liberals” and “Conservatives” until the 1830s. In fact, “Tory” is still in use today. It is, therefore, my hope that “globalism,” too, will eventually be known by different terms referring to the various ideological articulations

of the global imaginary. In the meantime, however, I continue to rely on “market globalism,” “justice globalism,” and “jihadist globalism” much in the same way as one could refer to the grand ideologies as liberal nationalism, conservative nationalism, socialist nationalism, and so on.

Finally, before turning to the opening chapter, let me anticipate two objections raised at almost every public presentation of this book’s main thesis. The first alleges that my narrative (re)produces modernist categories unsuitable for capturing the ideational dynamics of a globalizing world. Obviously, there is some truth to the charge that my efforts to analyze and describe the ideologies of the rising global imaginary rely on an established conceptual toolbox. To some degree, the modernist urge to force complex social phenomena into tight classification schemes and precise typologies dovetails with the nationalist impulse to draw rigid boundaries around collective identities and territories. But observers of transitional times necessarily retain a foothold in the old while struggling to find a toehold in the new. To that extent, then, my reliance on an established toolbox appears to be unavoidable. Nevertheless, I have made a conscious attempt to couch my understanding of the global in fluid metaphors of interdependence rather than fixed “zombie categories.”⁴¹

The second objection involves a reading of my thesis as yet another variation on the familiar theme of the death of the nation-state.⁴² That is not at all what I am arguing. In fact, to pronounce the national dead would be both inaccurate and premature, just as it would be myopic to deny the eruption of the global on all geographical scales. The best way of characterizing what I have in mind is to speak of a destabilization of the national that goes hand in hand with the spotty and uneven superimposition of the global. Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort put it well in their discerning exploration of transnational identity:

“Globality”—for want of a better term—spells significant changes in the cultural landscapes of belonging, not because it supplants the nation-state . . . but because it changes the contexts (politically, culturally, and geographically) for them, situates national identity and belonging differently, and superimposes itself on “nationality” as a novel frame of reference, values, and consciousness, primarily for the globalized elites, but increasingly for “ordinary citizens” as well.⁴³

Potent as they are, the dynamics of denationalization at the heart of globalization neither propel the world to an inevitable endpoint nor have these forces dispensed entirely with the vast ideational and material

arsenals of the nation-state. Today, the national and the global rub up against each other in myriad settings and on multiple levels. Putting the analytic spotlight on the changing ideological landscape not only yields a better understanding of the dominant political belief systems of our time but also helps us make sense of the profound and multidimensional dynamics that go by the name of globalization.