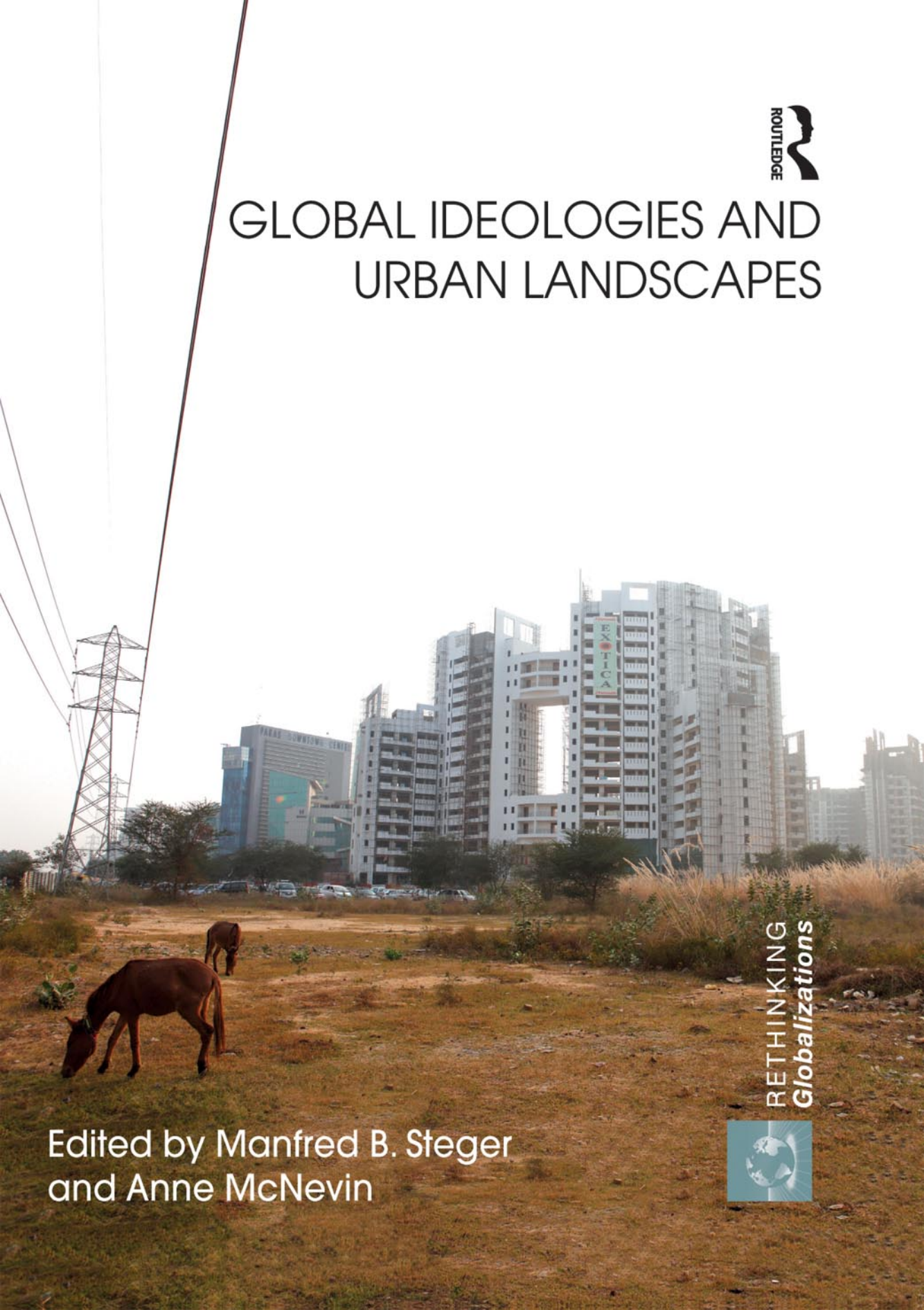
ROUTLEDGE

GLOBAL IDEOLOGIES AND URBAN LANDSCAPES



RETHINKING *Globalizations*

Edited by Manfred B. Steger and Anne McNevin

Global Ideologies and Urban Landscapes

How do political ideologies and urban landscapes intersect in the context of globalization? This book illuminates the production of ideologies as both discursive and spatial phenomena in distinct contributions that ground their analysis in cities of the Global North and South. From Sydney to Singapore, Hong Kong to Hanoi, Las Vegas to Macau, conventional public spaces are in decline as sites of ideological dissent. Instead, we are witnessing the colonisation of urban space by market globalism (today's dominant global ideology) and securitised surveillance regimes. Against this backdrop, how should we interpret the proliferation of metaphors that claim to communicate the essence of global transformation? In what ways do space and language work together to normalise the truth claims of powerful ideological players? What kinds of social forces mobilise to contest the cooptation of language and space and to pose alternative local and global futures?

This book poses these questions against the collapse of old geographical scales and cartographic techniques for identifying the contours of civil society. The city acts as an entry point to a new spatial analytics of contemporary ideological forces.
This book was published as a special issue of *Globalizations*.

Manfred B. Steger is Professor of Global Studies and Research Leader of the Globalization and Culture Program of the Global Cities Research Institute at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. He is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Globalization Research Center at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa. He has served as an academic consultant on globalization for the US State Department and as an advisor to the PBS TV series, *Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism*.

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Rethinking Globalizations
Edited by Barry K. Gills, University of Newcastle, UK

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Edited by
Manfred B. Steger and Anne McNevin

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Introduction

MANFRED B. STEGER & ANNE McNEVIN

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ABSTRACT *This article introduces the central problematic behind this special edition: the intersection of language and space as reflected in the interplay of global ideologies and urban landscapes. We aim to illuminate and problematise the production of ideologies as both discursive and spatial phenomena by grounding our analyses in cities of the global North and South. We outline our reasons for this focus in relation to the prominence of space in contemporary social theory and in relation to more everyday local-global conditions. Specifically, we point to the declining availability of conventional 'public spaces' as sites of ideological dissent; the proliferation of ideologically embedded metaphors and neologisms that narrow the diverse potentials of spatial transformation; the constraints that disciplinary boundaries place on socio-spatial inquiry; and the normative drive to build heterogeneous futures other than those set out by elites as universally 'global'. We outline the contributions to this special edition in relation to these key themes.*

Este artículo introduce la problemática que constituye el tema principal de esta edición especial. La interacción de las ideologías de la globalización y el espacio urbano se reflejan en los cruces del lenguaje y el espacio. Con el fin de ilustrar y afianzar esta problemática, se analizara la creación de ideologías en ciudades globalizadas del norte y del sur como un fenómeno espacial y de discurso. A continuación enumeramos las razones de este enfoque con relación a la importancia del espacio en la teoría social contemporánea y su relación cada vez mayor con las condiciones locales-globales del diario vivir. Señalamos específicamente el deterioro de la disponibilidad de 'espacios públicoś como lugares para el disentimiento de ideologías; la proliferación de metáforas y neologismos enquistados que disminuyen el potencial diverso de la transformación de los espacios; las restricciones generadas por límites disciplinarios en la búsqueda socio-espacial; y, la tendencia normativa que busca construir futuros heterogéneos que difieran de los establecidos por las elites como

globalmente 'universales'. Los temas mencionados anteriormente, son claves para esta edición especial.

本文介绍了本特辑背后的中心问题，即语言和空间的交汇，这反映在全球意识形态和城市景观的互动中。我们旨在通过把我们的分析建基于全球北方和南方的城市，来说明既是话语现象又是空间现象的意识形态生产，使之问题化。我们就其与当代社会理论中空间的突显、就其与更为日常的地方—全球条件的关系来勾画我们如此聚焦的理由。尤其是，我们的指向包括作为意识形态异议场所的寻常"公共空间"正变得日益狭小；意识形态上内嵌的隐喻和新语压缩了空间转型的各种潜在可能，这一情形在扩展；各种学科边界在制约社会—空间探索；以及除了那些精英们认为是普遍"全球"的未来之外建设种种异质未来的规范性推动。我们概述了与这些关键主题有关的本特辑中的各篇论文。

The central theme of this special issue is the intersection of discursive formations and social space as reflected in the interplay of political ideologies and urban landscapes. We take as our point of departure the premise that enquiry into the shifting grounds of contemporary ideologies requires close attention to the socio-spatial relations in and through which such ideational constellations assume concrete forms. At the most basic level, this starting point allows us to acknowledge the diversity of ideological production, application, and contestation in specific urban places and across different geographical scales. Such heterogeneity counters reductionist presentations of globalization as a homogenizing process of 'McWorldization' or 'Americanization'. Moreover, it helps us to reconsider how spaces usually cast as 'local' connect in geographically challenging ways with what we imagine to be 'global'.

However, the starting point for this issue also foregrounds the more fundamental relation between language and space that has inspired social theory's 'spatial turn' in the 1980s and 1990s (Soja, 1989; Tonkiss, 2005). In other words, we wish to emphasize the co-implication of political ideologies and the *constitution* of space. Space, in short, is not a neutral background upon which or against which various ideological contests play themselves out. Political in itself, space contains our shared interpretation of places shaped through historically contingent social relations. This is not to suggest that particular places (regions, territories, cities, worksites, homes, meeting halls, and so on) are somehow unreal or less than concrete. It is rather to argue that the names we give to those places, the boundaries we allocate around them, and the role they play in shaping our sense of self are socially determined processes and therefore open to political contestation. When, for example, one particular way of framing space becomes naturalized, some political projects are enabled while others are constrained or even cast in such terms as 'unworkable' or 'unthinkable'. Thus the constitution of space plays into the legitimacy of discursive formations and political ideologies thus shape (and, in turn, are shaped by) the various 'scapes' through which we come to know our social environments.

But why make this relation between language and space the focus of attention now? We do so for four fundamental reasons. The first is political and relates to our recognition of the importance of public space as a necessary condition for ideological diversity. Public or 'civic' spaces—places of inclusion open to a great variety of people and behaviours—are the arenas in which the terms of debates related to the social good are initiated and contested. As Rosalyn Deutsche (1996, p. 273) puts it, 'What is recognized in public space is the legitimacy of debate about what is legitimate and what is illegitimate'. Yet, these civic spaces framing our

'lifeworlds' are always threatened by colonization from the state and private forces (Douglass, 2002). This ongoing struggle to maintain civic spaces is apparent not only in city squares where electronic advertising billboards crowd out community announcements and exclusive consumer establishments limit access to those citizens who can afford their goods and services. Moreover, the welcome rise of so-called 'global commons' and open-access domains of cyberspace has gone hand in hand with new digital technologies of surveillance and the rapid commodification of emerging civic spheres. Seeking to counteract these ominous transformations, vital democratic dynamics historically linked to thriving public spaces are rapidly running out of steam. Hence, the need to analyse critically how new and old spaces usually coded as 'public' or 'civic' become ideologically decontested and serve to normalize the truth claims of transnational power elites (Freeden, 1996; Steger, 2008).

The second reason for situating 'the spatial turn' at the forefront of contemporary discursive enquiry has to do with the ideological predispositions of the myriad of spatial narratives and metaphors that currently circulate in relation to globalization. Though the meanings and impacts of globalization remain broadly contested, recent literature on the subject suggests a growing consensus that our familiar time-space constellations have undergone significant change with serious implications for our modes of law and governance and our very human consciousness. At the dawn of a global age, these crucial changes owe much to the interplay of new socio-spatial relations and new ideological currents. Although space has always been political, the contemporary moment has ushered in spatial transformation in strikingly overt ways. We are daily confronted with new terminology that attempts to capture these new temporal-spatial dynamics and fashion them into regimes of knowledge about the way the world now 'works'. Ceaseless flows of commodities, ideas, and people have launched us into what the hegemonic discourse likes to present as 'inevitable' and 'irreversible' forms of 'global interdependence'. Other metaphors include 'networks', 'nodes', and 'cells' that are said to structure high finance and global terrorist activity. Cyberspace communities offer at once the promise of democratic invigoration and the threat of disembodied 'second life' fantasies. 'Citizenship' proliferates into transnational, post-national and cosmopolitan forms while at the same time jumping scale from local to global in the pursuit of consumerist dreams. Migrants shape their destinies through place-to-place connections that are more evocative of wormholes than of border-crossings and territorial expanse (Sheppard, 2002). As neologisms proliferate and old metaphors are reworked in the service of the new, the spaces of globalization emerge as new 'common-sense' arrangements embedded in political claims. In this crucial point of transition away from a weakening national consciousness toward local–global imaginaries, the contributors to this volume attempt to critically engage the central dimensions of globalization by drawing attention to the politics of space.

Thirdly, our attempt to link ideological narratives and urban space dovetails with our long-standing efforts to connect more closely language-based with space-based literatures in the critical social sciences. In a globalizing world where conventional European disciplinary frameworks are rapidly losing their rationale, it has become imperative to go beyond simply paying lip service to the new requirements of inter- and transdisciplinarity. This special issue represents one such initiative to unsettle established disciplinary territories. It has been specifically designed to bring together political geographers, sociologists, political and cultural theorists, and urban studies experts in a fruitful exchange of ideas. We allow for the cross-fertilization of literatures that, for far too long, have reproduced themselves in relative isolation. In this sense, then, this collection of essays seeks to contribute to the fledgling field of global studies, in which concrete research questions related to globalization take precedence over circumscribed concerns with disciplinary markers and traditions.

Finally, the spirit of this issue works against attempts to colonize the meaning of globality as a singular relation to space and the direction of globalization as a predetermined trajectory. We refer to discursive projects of this kind, in general, as global*ism*. But globalism comes in various forms. The market variety heralds a 'liberated' realm of global trade and consumer desires, while the religious-jihadist version seeks to subordinate world-space and world-time to 'god-given' forms of authority, unalterably etched in Holy Scripture (Steger, 2008). But we can also detect a 'justice globalism' of the transnational Left, although the various claims to 'another world' or 'alter-globalization' still await a more coherent ideological translation into a concrete political agenda. However sympathetic we may be to alternative readings of globalization that start from a global social justice framework, we must be on the guard against the drive to 'get there' via universalizing claims. Constituting indispensable mental maps that help us navigate our complex political universe, ideologies are not always 'bad'—they also offer positive pathways to solidaristic bonds and collective moral decisions. Yet, it behoves us to maintain a critical gaze toward the ways in which ideological truth-claims may close down avenues of interpretation and narrow our engagement with the human diversity of being in space and time. As Doreen Massey notes, 'Conceptualising space as open, multiple and relational, unfinished and always becoming, is a prerequisite for history to be open, and thus a prerequisite, too, for the possibility of politics.' (Massey, 2005, p. 59)

The contributors to this issue aim to illuminate and problematize the production of ideologies as both discursive and spatial phenomena. They do so by grounding their analysis in situated urban landscapes—in cities of the global North and South. While much of the literature on globalization has focused, often uncritically, on a nebulous realm of 'the global', studies based in urban experience have insisted on the place-specificities of 'global' transformations. The 'global' always manifests as the 'local'. Most prominently, the best literature on global cities has shown how global capital relies on concrete local infrastructure in order to coordinate its vast transnational networks and that this place-boundedness has important implications for the spaces that shape our social, political, and economic relations (Brenner & Keil, 2006). Other scholars have looked to 'ordinary' and 'postcolonial' cities to show the many layers of globalization in realms beyond the economic that challenge prevailing assumptions about the necessary course of global urban development (Butcher & Velayutham, 2009; Robinson, 2006). In this issue, we look to the urban for the local production of globalization(s), in both material and symbolic forms. We also focus on urban acts of contestation. In recent years, diverse groups ranging from undocumented migrants and the marginalized urban poor to alter-globalization coalitions have mobilized to reclaim their rights to the city and to challenge the pathways to prosperity championed by proponents of market globalism—whether in relation to national labour markets, local urban planning, or techniques of global governance. Both ideological production and contestation in and through urban spaces offer insight into contending visions of the meaning of globalization assembled by the political forces of the Left and the Right in both the North and South.

The central theme (language and space) and the normative spirit of the project (to resist ideological convergence) required from the editors a willingness to direct the contributions towards key themes and questions while leaving the field open to diverse methodologies and sites of investigation. The approach to space that we advocate here—dynamic and heterogeneous—cannot be advanced if narrow restrictions are applied to the modes of enquiry of the subject-matter in question. We have tried to achieve a balance between openness and coherence by focusing on *urban* space, in all its rich diversity and endless permutations. This is not to say that non-urban spaces are any less transformed by processes of globalization or any less subject to ideological pressures.