

I Introduction

Building Blocks

MARVEL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND ANCIENT HERITAGE

In December 1992, the front page of the *Times of India* diagnosed the Indian republic as irreversibly ‘besmirched’. The sequence of events prompting this prognosis centred on the Babri Masjid: a mosque that was built in the sixteenth century and, according to members of the Hindu-nationalist ‘family’ of groups (the Sangh Parivar), sat atop the birthplace of Lord Ram, a mythical deity from the ancient epic Ramayana. They demanded the ‘liberation’ of Ram’s holy birthplace from its centuries of Muslim suppression. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader L. K. Advani led a public march from Gujarat to Ayodhya to mobilise support for the *Ram Janmabhoomi* [Ram’s birthplace] movement. This erupted in the mob-fuelled demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and catalysed waves of vitriol and inhuman brutality against Muslims across the country. The prime minister at the time, P. V. Narasimha Rao, temporarily banned the RSS,¹ the BJP’s grassroots paramilitary organisation. Yet an interview with a member of the RSS at the time showed them unperturbed. The government might ban the organisation, he said, but it cannot stem the spread of their ideas (Rattananani 2020).

In 2019, almost three decades later, the Supreme Court of India declared that the 1992 demolition may have been illegal, but the disputed land now belonged to Lord Ram. The then Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi, noted, ‘The land rights of the disputed 2.77

¹ The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is a Hindu paramilitary organisation, roughly translating to National Volunteer Organisation.

acre land will be handed over to the deity Ram Lalla, who is one of the three litigants in the case' (Firstpost 2019).

On 5 August 2020, construction of the Ram Mandir over the ruins of the Babri Masjid began ceremoniously. Prime Minister Modi led a *bhoomi puja* (prayer) by laying a fifty-pound silver brick at the construction prayer site (Singh 2020). Despite a surge of coronavirus cases in India, crowds waving saffron flags and chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' [Hail Lord Ram] flanked the area. National newspapers circulated photographs of women in burqas and hijabs performing an *aarti* prayer over pictures of Lord Ram as they celebrated the groundbreaking of the temple. Elsewhere in the country, crowds gathered to watch live public screenings of the event (The Financial Express 2020). In New York's Times Square and Washington, DC's Capitol Hill, organised members of the Indian diaspora gathered to celebrate this momentous occasion. If the symbolism of building a Hindu temple over a destroyed mosque left any room for doubt, the then president, Ram Nath Kovind, tweeted, 'Felicitations to all for the foundation laying of Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Being built in tune with law, it defines India's spirit of social harmony and people's zeal. It will be a testimony to ideals of RamRajya and a symbol of modern India'. Modi compared the moment to India's Independence Day, announcing that the statue of Ram, which has, thus far, been 'staying in a tent', will now have a grand temple as a 'modern symbol of Indian culture' (Firstpost 2020).

India has long been lauded as the largest democracy in the world, prompting international commentators to celebrate its multiple religious communities and describe its elections as feats of far-reaching and inclusive representation. Yet, over the last decade, an increasingly ethno-nationalist leadership has eroded this global image. The BJP's rhetoric following the construction of the Ram Mandir is predictably victorious. However, the mirrored language of the Congress Party (the BJP's main political opposition and the party that amended the Indian Constitution to add the word 'secular' in 1975) demonstrates how Hindu nationalism has become a mediating

discourse across political party elites lines² (Reddy 2011a). The Congress Party's former General Secretary, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, called the event a hopeful 'marker of national unity, brotherhood and cultural harmony in accordance with the message of Lord Ram and with his blessings' (Indian Express 2020).

While the Ram Mandir was one of the BJP's key election promises in 2014 and 2019 and featured heavily in their manifesto, it has become a matter of shared political aspiration, cultural nationhood, and technological modernity. More recently, the Ram Mandir has promised to include high-tech security systems and technological advances showcasing the global reach of the Ramayana, constituting both a 'marvel of modern technology and ancient heritage' (Digital Desk 2021). In 2020, a prominent self-described 'liberal right of centre' news portal 'catering to the new India' published an article accusing establishment intellectuals, historians, and archaeologists of intellectual dishonesty in opposing the Ram Janmabhoomi movement (Mehta 2020). This piece asserted that such left-liberal intellectuals had 'damaged the social fabric of India' by arguing that the Babri Masjid was illegally demolished and that there was no evidence of it being built on top of Hindu ruins. At the discovery of Hindu iconography and religious structures underneath the site, a new set of right-wing experts have reinforced their legitimacy, both cultural and political, to build the Ram Mandir on the ruins of the mosque.

The evolving discourse on the building of the Ram Mandir is emblematic of how notions of technological modernity and technocratic expertise³ interact with deep-rooted historical disputes and

² In many ways, Hindu nationalism has been a core undercurrent of Indian nationalism for the last eight decades, constituting key slogans and normative ideals of the Independence movement and beyond. See Chapter 2 for more on how, more recently, the BJP has been able to carve out mainstream acceptability for its world view.

³ I understand technocracy as encompassing a discourse of rational governance, set of institutions, bureaucratic practices, pragmatically oriented technical experts, and a culture of corporate professionalism. While I am not conflating technological advances with technocratic expertise, claims to the former are often a close companion of the latter.

identities to create a distinct political assemblage in contemporary India. While discrediting, attacking, and replacing existing policy-makers, experts, and intellectuals they consider to be brainwashed by left-liberal establishment rhetoric, the Indian right wing has been developing its own set of institutional bodies to legitimise their presence in elite political, cultural, and policy conversations.

This book is, at its core, motivated by a desire to map this diverse formation through an examination of (a) institutions that have become a constituent part of democratic governance: think tanks, consulting firms, IT cells, government advisory groups, political parties and (b) the multiple discourses they create, entwining populist mobilisation, technocratic governance, and the haze of anti-establishment sentiment that surrounds them. Through the first in-depth analysis of India's new intellectual elite in the wake of its Hindu supremacist government, I argue that technocratic and populist discourse can work together to produce shared visions of glorified technological and hyper-nationalist futures. Simply put, I ask the question: if right-populists have had enough of establishment experts, how do they replace them, with whom, and to what effect?

While presenting itself as anti-establishment, Modi's particular populist formation engages in strategies to appeal to a wide range of demographics while replacing the old elite with a new set of legitimised experts.

TECHNOCRACY AND POPULISM: CAN THEY WORK TOGETHER?

I start with a fundamental tension within democratic formations: should societies be governed by the people, or by the experts? Political movements that claim to embody the 'people' as the backbone of their visions for social change have historically spanned the left/right ideological spectrum, and often put themselves in opposition to insular and elite experts. This binary is rife throughout hegemonic political movements, ranging from Nazi Germany in the 1930s, McCarthy's 'Red Scare' hunt for US communists in the

1950s, Mao's Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, a Thatcherite dismissal of left-liberal intellectuals in the United Kingdom in the 1980s, to President Trump's call to diminish institutional intellectuals in the United States in 2016.

In the 1960s, for example, Richard Hofstadter recognised a virulent strain of anti-intellectualism in his seminal work, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. He wrote with shock and dismay at the Republican Party's treatment of so-called egghead intellectuals, positing that it was driven wholly by a 'resentment of the life of the mind, and those who are considered to represent it; and a disposition to constantly minimise the value of that life' (Hofstadter 2012). Hofstadter assigned anti-intellectualism to a rise in utilitarianism and 'the cult of the practical or self made man' (Peters 2019, 357), or a 'mystique of practicality' (Masciotra 2014). In India, forms of anti-intellectualism have encompassed religious fervour, anti-elitism, and technocratic instrumentalism, often overlapping and interacting in dissonant ways. Since the 2014 national election, a distaste against intellectuals has served to discredit several of India's public intellectuals, citing insularity due to their upper-middle-class lifestyle, English-medium education and proficiency, lack of business or corporate experience, or their institutional/personal networks (Yadav 2020). Hindu nationalists have mobilised this anti-elite discourse alongside the religious fervour of Hindu-nationalist politics. For example, terms like 'Khan Market gang',⁴ 'sickular' (a play on secular), 'anti-national', and 'Tukde Tukde Gang'⁵ emerged over the last ten years out of instances caricaturing or targeting different combinations of dissenting academics, students, intellectuals, and left-liberals.

⁴ Khan Market is an elite area of South Delhi where liberal intellectuals, expats, and others of the upper-middle-to-upper classes give regular patronage to gourmet restaurants, bookshops, and designer stores (Mehta 2019).

⁵ Tukde Tukde Gang literally translates to 'the breaking-up gang', used by people to refer to the students at Jawaharlal Nehru University who protested the government's occupation in Kashmir in 2016 as 'breaking up' the unity of India.

Of course, populist resentment against the Indian and often-times global elite is not without cause. The ability to make decisions and access economic, political, and cultural capital has long been limited to increasingly smaller groups of powerful people. Many articles and books have been published on the global spate of populist movements in the last decade (see Berezin 2009; Bickerton and Accetti 2021; Bušítková 2019; Moffitt 2016; Muller 2021; Wodak 2015). These works do the essential service of analysing how these movements can bolster hyper-nationalist sentiments, neoliberal governance, and/or the rise of authoritarian leaders.

Yet few of these books address whether these movements have accompanied technocratic promises of efficiency, governance, and pragmatic delivery. When they do, scholars have primarily focused on the United States, the United Kingdom, or Europe and identified heightened technocracy as an elite reaction or a rational corrective to populist demands. Recently, Bickerton and Accetti (2021) conceptualised the phenomenon of ‘techno-populism’ as a dominant political logic in contemporary societies that prompts political actors to appeal to ‘the people’ while promising bureaucratic efficiency. Crucially, they argue that the rise of techno-populism in the latter half of the twentieth century has replaced and/or overlain traditional paradigms of substantive group interests and partisan ideological commitments. Through a deep focus on India, I show how populism and technocratic expertise can offer promises not, as Bickerton and Accetti suggest, unmoored from party ideology but instead *grounded* in traditional group interests, partisan politics, and organised ideological frameworks.

As such, the Indian case challenges broader theories of populism: namely, that populist actors do not always emerge from outside political establishments and in opposition to established technocratic institutions. Rather, I demonstrate how populism can effectively dovetail with, rather than against, technocratic promises of

governance through a new breed of elite experts. Beyond India under Modi, there are historical precedents to this claim: Italy under Mussolini and Britain under Thatcher similarly offered a homogenous national identity while promising to deliver goods and services to 'the people' more efficiently, without bureaucratic stagnation. Establishment groups, then, can mobilise and undermine traditional political apparatuses to combine these two strange bedfellows: technocratic expertise and populist anti-elitism.

Indeed, populist and technocratic appeals to legitimacy can be tied to policies from any end of the political spectrum (Centeno 2010). Bickerton and Accetti (2021) identify 'techno-populist' parties in Western Europe to argue that the dominant terms of political competition have shifted away from a model where politics represented existing religious, regional, and economic cleavages. This has been replaced, or overlain, by a model where parties win based on who can more successfully combine 'populist claims to represent the people as a whole with the technocratic competence to design and implement effective policy' (Bickerton and Accetti 2021, 36). All parties represent themselves as 'catch-all' (Bickerton and Accetti 2021, 91) entities, becoming ideologically neutral purveyors of policy for an apparent common good. Yet, unlike the Five Star Movement (M5S) in Italy or Macron's *La République En Marche* (LREM) movement in France, the BJP is, at its core, historically premised on representing a specific social identity. While this becomes either heightened or diluted in its different manifestations, Hindu supremacy remains as central to the BJP's discourse and electoral competition as technocratic competency.

India and Western Europe have significantly different histories of political party formation and pipelines into political and bureaucratic leadership. As such, the paths by which populism and technocracy have become entwined are starkly different. Some have argued that politicians like Macron, who were trained as apolitical technocrats and used technocratic competence to legitimise their

power, have subsequently embraced populist techniques to compete with radical right populists (Perottino and Guasti 2020). Macron's LREM was formed in 2016 after a Great March across France, where a tightly knit group of policy specialists surveyed what the French public wanted most. They found that French citizens were dissatisfied with the political establishment and more interested in 'consensual' policy goals (improving living standards and public order and security) rather than 'ideologically connoted political projects' (Bickerton and Accetti 2021, 44). This appeal to consensual policy goals is premised on a universalised conception of common good, untainted by seemingly partisan, religious, cultural, and social biases. Similarly, the Five Star Movement in Italy relied on the organisational, crowdsourced power of the Internet to pool competence of ordinary citizens: not as bearers of subjective interests but as individual experts and carriers of a specific competence. Both LREM and M5S represented themselves as problem-solvers rather than politicians, eschewing politics in favour of post-ideological expertise to address people's problems.

In India, however, the BJP's primary appeal is that of a mass popular party simultaneously proffering both deeply ideological and seemingly neutral, post-ideological solutions. Trade unions, religious organisations, civic associations (and more recently, social media) remain the means through which political parties, both regional and national, sustain and build support (Chhibber and Verma 2018). While economic policy frameworks across major political parties in India have remained fairly consistent since economic liberalisation in 1991 (indeed, neoliberal policies have been so written into the lexicon of 'good' public policy that they no longer appear to be ideologically tinged), there is a clear social, identitarian element to the interests of the BJP-RSS. Here, populism and technocratic claims to expertise⁶

⁶ Indeed, I examine how technocracy does not necessarily depoliticise democratic institutions, but *politicises expertise* through electoral claims to competence.

make appeals situated within party ideology, group interests, partisan politics, and organised ideological frameworks. Yes, the 'political logic' (Bickerton and Accetti 2021, 2) of competition has changed, as, since the 1980s, the BJP has actively developed coalitions, expanded its intra-party demographics and political base beyond upper-caste Hindus, and strategically moderated some of its policy promises. But rather than shifting away from organised interests, the overall terms of electoral competition have become more majoritarian, combining Hindutva with promises of technocratic competency.

MODI'S TECHNO-POPULIST FORMATIONS

How does the BJP intelligentsia successfully hold together different, sometimes contradictory, promises and paradigms of governance? While a Hindu majoritarian nation and/or state may appear contradictory to technocracy and/or an ideal of Indic civilisational harmony, they converge across varying framings of social life. Prime Minister Modi's government offers to deliver goods and services to the people by sidestepping bureaucratic inefficiency, while simultaneously rallying the public to combine aspirations for development with desires for a unifying Hindu supremacy. As such, this book explains how the BJP and its related political and cultural associations work through a diverse set of mechanics and techniques that focus on targeting constituents with different messages.

While discrediting, attacking, and replacing left-liberal intellectuals, alternative 'right wing' intellectuals build a mimetic cultural infrastructure to legitimate their own Hindutva⁷ ideology. At the

⁷ While many assume the word Hindutva to refer to Hinduism as a 'way of life' or as Hindu-ness, Hindutva was coined by an RSS ideologue, V. D. Savarkar, in 1923 as a political ideology seeking to make Indian national identity synonymous with Hindu identity. In Savarkar's words, the term 'articulates criteria for Indian identity based on citizenship, common ancestry, common culture and regard for India as fatherland (pitrbhu) and sacred land (punyabhu)'. See Chapter 2 for more discussion on the ideological basis for contemporary Hindutva.

same time, glorified technical experts associated with the government and its politics project the image of apolitical objectivity, moderation, and economic pragmatism. They speak to different constituencies: explicit Hindutva supporters and/or the middle classes and professionals who may nurture a Hindu normativity but are primarily motivated by bourgeois concerns. Based on in-depth interviews and ethnographic research with national and international policymakers, politicians, bureaucrats, consultants, and journalists, this book analyses how political leaders in India strategically use modes of populist spectacle and established technocratic institutions to appeal to multiple demographics with diverse moral-political schemas.

A variety of discourses work to legitimise different kinds of institutionalised actions. At times, the BJP benefits from working within procedural systems of government, whereas at other times it operates outside legality through its networks with the RSS. While one tactic of persuasion might involve personalising Modi as a leader through targeted technological tools, another, such as in their think tanks, relies on depersonalising the BJP's knowledge claims to make it seem objectively authoritative. On the campaign trail, Modi used hologram projectors on visits to urban constituencies, and vans outfitted with LCD screens to visit villages (Jaffrelot 2015). Policy rhetoric may emphasise statist paternalism to appease protectionist RSS supporters and rural constituencies demanding agricultural support, electricity, and water, while weakening labour laws, and easing land acquisition laws to please big business communities. In 2020, the Modi government introduced a series of new Farm Bills to remove the allocation of a government-subsidised Minimum Support Price for several essential grains, while still announcing unequivocal support for the farmer.

Techno-managerialism and economic centrism⁸ can and have been argued to be ideologically incoherent with Hindutva politics, or a

⁸ Chhibber and Verma (2018) argue that the conventional European left-right paradigm of politics (free-market liberalism on the right and state intervention on the left) often falls short of describing post-Independence Indian politics. In India, they note that both Congress Party and BJP voters hold traditionally right-wing economic

moderating force to 'balance' extreme majoritarianism (Varshney 2014). For example, Modi's initial campaign appeal to development and economic growth in 2014 led many to erase his history of participation in genocide, believing that the moderating effect of his economic policies would render the latter irrelevant. In 2015, public intellectual and historian Ramachandra Guha wrote a piece entitled 'Where are all the right-wing intellectuals?' (Guha 2015), charting a post-Independence history of left-liberal thought in Indian universities. Guha argued that the Indian right wing has tended to produce more ideologues (active in television, newspapers, and social media) than credible intellectuals. Guha quotes Ashok Desai, a former economic advisor to the government, as saying, 'No respectable economist has Hindu nationalist inclinations: the ideology is mistaken according to economics' (Guha 2015).

This assumed disjunction between economic respectability and right-wing nationalism is deeply contestable and, indeed, provenly false. The Indian 'right wing' is not a homogenous or monolithic group. Primarily because the BJP has never laid claim to a distinct political or economic ideology, the demographics of groups who support Modi and the BJP range from socially liberal to socially conservative, free-market liberal to proponents of state interventionism, protectionists to globalists, and Hindu nationalists to 'apolitical' supporters of good governance and technocratic managerialism.

Within its manifestations, discourses of Hindu nationalism present themselves through a nebulous, diffuse form that can be called on by national, local, and regional actors, sceptics, supporters, and affiliates without being necessarily connected to Hindutva's

values and that the two issues that separate people are: the politics of statism – that is, the extent to which the state intervenes and regulates social norms (marriage, tradition, etc.) and economic interactions (the redistribution of private property) and the politics of recognition – that is, if and how the government should address and make allowances to protect minorities (Verma 2019).

ideological core (Reddy 2011b). As such, it is able to penetrate existing idioms and vocabularies to build a generalisable nationalist ethos. While several of the BJP's statements and paradigms do contradict one another, they are able to strategically soothe these contradictions by producing shifting 'others' (economic elites/Muslims) as figures of opposition, and constructing some kind of shared commonality by positioning very different groups as 'cultural subalterns' (Gudavarthy 2018). Attitudes that privilege either technocracy or ethno-nationalist populism do not only coexist due to their shared oppositions; rather, they can symbiotically develop shared 'positive' visions of glorious technological futures, cultural harmony, and civilisational exceptionalism.

Data Sources

This book not only identifies consumers of knowledge as subjects of ambivalent ideological discourses, but also recognises that producers are subject to, and project, varied and oftentimes contradictory discourses themselves. It theorises a typology of motivations amongst prominent experts and intellectuals and examines this through several sources of rich and triangulated data. Due to the elite centralisation of political and policymaking culture in New Delhi, and the relatively recent mushrooming of think tanks (private, non-profit research organisations), their internal mechanisms have thus far been difficult to access. As such, these significant organisations of knowledge production and dissemination have escaped scholarly analysis.

Through pre-existing relationships with policy networks and elite research institutions, I draw on media sources, years of ethnographic data from working at three prominent think tanks at the heart of New Delhi, and interviews with key decision-making individuals, including members of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), the former General Secretary of the BJP, the former National Security Advisor and Indian Foreign Secretary, the former Head of Data Analytics, Indian National Congress Party, former Research Director of the BJP, former Director General of the

World Trade Organization, the director of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and Senior Partner of Government and Public Policy, Ernst & Young, amongst others.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

While grounded in India's empirical moment, this book addresses several urgent yet enduring questions on strategies of the right wing in altering how knowledge and expertise are produced and disseminated: how do understandings of 'expertise' and the 'people' change during moments of ideological and political transformation? How does this shape conversations surrounding what problems (and solutions) gain prominence in politics and policy discourse?

In Chapter 2, I chronologically follow the interaction between Hindutva and discourses of economic development in post-Independence political regimes. I explore how the BJP has gained legitimacy by creating multiple narratives through both technocratic organisations and populist mobilisation. Drawing on a rich literature on Hindutva's ideological basis and its interaction with economic development, this chapter introduces how the BJP adopts two distinct forms of persuasion in the pursuit of national glory: making claims about returning to an ancient cultural unity, while fixing long-persisting economic and moral decadence.

Following this foundation, Chapter 3 uses ethnographic and interview data to show how Prime Minister Modi's government oscillates between populist anti-elitism and forms of technocratic expertise to produce a distinct form of nationalism that is both seemingly pragmatic yet ethnocentric. In opposition to scholarship that sees technocracy and populism as contradictory forces, this chapter argues that they have emerged as two complementary arms of governance in contemporary India: (1) populist politics, which appeals to the masses/majority by defining nationalism through rigid boundaries of caste, class, and religion; and (2) technocratic policy, which produces a consensus of pragmatism and neutralises charges of hyper-nationalism. I emphasise the relational dynamic between the two:

they function through different, often contradictory, logics and content, yet are able to work towards the same goals in key moments of mutual reinforcement.

Chapter 4 expands Chapter 3's emphasis on techno-rationalist policymaking and populist mobilisation by tracing a rising market of professional consultants and think tanks in policymaking and political activity. Upper-caste and elite-educated men have long filled positions of power, including parliamentary seats, administrative services, business groups, advisory boards, and chambers of commerce. Despite some shifts towards caste-based affirmative action since the 1980s, the political classes remain predominantly elite (Verniers and Jaffrelot 2020). In 2014, anti-incumbent sentiment led to widespread distrust in existing experts, such that elite intellectuals and Western-educated economists holding political and policymaking positions were replaced by technical professionals: engineers, business managers, and consultants. As an alternative to intellectual and insular elites, this group of professionals projects itself as politically agnostic, rational, and a practical source of business-minded knowledge. This group, however, is no less insular or exclusionary: one set of intellectual experts has merely been replaced by a more elite, deracinated group of professional consultants situated in global management consulting firms.

Moving from technical professionals to anointed intellectuals, Chapter 5 examines the BJP's attempt to build centres of traditional intellectuals to legitimise its identity politics. While dismantling advisory committees, quashing dissent, and attacking universities and established research institutions, the BJP has built think tanks to give its political ideology a footprint in already established policy networks. Some such organisations avoid explicit association with the BJP and Hindu-nationalist groups but pursue a Hindutva agenda nevertheless. Through an ethnographic study of the BJP's two most prominent think tanks, this chapter examines how these organisations build venues for intellectual legitimacy and consolidate Hindutva networks across political, administrative, and military fields with broad implications for Indian society. Here,

I demonstrate how manifestations of Hindutva can be both explicitly political and anti-political at the same time: advocating for political interventionism while eschewing politics and forging an apolitical route towards cultural transformation.

Right-populism often sells itself on criticising established elites. But when it takes power, it ends up simply reconstructing its own versions of them. As such, this book concludes that while hyper-nationalist populist politics may appear contradictory to technocratic paradigms of governance and/or an ideal of a diffuse 'common good', a convoluted combination of these visions has become fundamental to how people make sense of their political, social, and cultural futures. Across the chapters, I show how the BJP has pursued and benefited from its ideologically ambivalent, yet persistent, project. It has been able to stitch together varying political and apolitical subjectivities through a range of persuasive strategies. In identifying the distinctive double-sidedness of Hindutva, I illuminate the knowledge-producing processes through which it has become a nebulous, diffuse logic of social life.

IN CLOSING

This book, then, traces how knowledge travels between different domains, how it gains value in public intervention and political discourse, and, finally, how certain expertise and appointed 'experts' build legitimacy for these ideas, navigating the contradictions between policy (as a technocratic exercise) and politics (as a matter of democratic legitimacy). This approach straddles political science, policy studies, and cultural studies, showing how policy organisations can build and consolidate elite networks, yet also influence cultural notions of knowledge and valued expertise. As populist movements have swept the globe, mass anti-elitism and religious anti-rationalism have often fuelled resentment of socially anointed intellectuals. Yet anger against intellectuals also stems from wanting to replace the disconnected 'eggheads' with the pragmatic businessperson and rational technocrat. In this context, cultural commentators have made

pronouncements of 'the end of politics' as the result of capitalist instrumentality and economic rationalism in a range of political contexts (Dillow 2007; Mouffe 2005; Schedler 2016). Significantly, however, I urge readers not to diagnose a depoliticisation, or 'disappearance' of politics in everyday life. Rather, I determine that it is incumbent upon social scientists to pay attention to what Havelka (2016) calls *herrschaft*: ideas about how political life is organised, and how possibilities of social, cultural, and political futures are reframed.