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The Cold War as Comparative Political Thought

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The cold war as comparative political thought

Abstract

The aim of this article is to provide a programmatic statement for a research agenda in the comparative political thought of the Cold War. As an innovative methodology for the study of the political ideas, I contend that comparative political theory connects up very well with the ways in which Cold War historians have come to frame their questions: systematically applying its principles therefore offers an interesting opportunity to take the recent scholarship forward. The first section reviews the treatment of ideas across phases of the Cold War historiography, and proposes that an approach styled on comparative political theory potentially brings out two general qualities of Cold War ideas, which are often missed: what I call their granularity and embeddedness. At the same time some prospects are raised for reconciling the political and cultural histories of the Cold War. The second section focuses on the aspect of comparison, and situates the research programme in the context of the recent trend towards the study of international history. The third section is the most constructive. An indicative series of projects is offered which such a programme might pursue. The concept of the Cold War 'thought-practice' is proposed as the most promising unit of analysis by which the figure of the political theorist might contribute to the interpretation of Cold War history.

Introduction

There is much evidence in the literature to be able to say, quite confidently, that two current priorities in Cold War history are the explanatory value of ideas and reflection at a 'metahistorical' level.[1] In the space of this article, I intend to engage each. Meanwhile, my point of departure in doing so is developments current within the field of political science. I take the view, in a general sense, that some measure of interdisciplinarity may be profitable when studying historical political experience, and I suggest that the case of Cold War study shows this acutely. As such, narrowing down the professional distance that separates the historian from the political theorist may help to produce a creative space, since in the synergy between these two figures we are presented with a very effective vantage point from which to think both about the types of ideas which mattered in the Cold War, and the ways in which they did so. Broadly, I propose that the capacities conventionally associated with the political theorist might provide for the study Cold War ideas 'close-up': in

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[1] See esp. Dan Stone, 'Cold War Ideas', *Contemporary European History*, 22/4 (2013), pp. 675-686; and Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell, 'Introduction', in Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (eds.), *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 4.

particular, analytical rigour and interpretive charity.[2] However, the proposal is targeted in the sense that what is envisaged is the systemic application of a distinctive methodology – one associated with 'comparative' political theory.[3] I take my first cue not from deficiencies in how Cold War historians have handled ideas (though I do have much to say about that), rather from the suggestiveness of comparison for investigating the Cold War as a two-way confrontation. The move I make is simply to reconceive the subject as a two-way confrontation expressed in political thought.

A different way of describing what is envisaged is to re-read the intellectual history of the Cold War by taking comparison as the organising principle of interpretation. No new material will necessarily be offered. Rather, one intention is to show familiar sources in a new light, by aligning representative political thinking side-by-side – 'East' and 'West'.[4] The article's foremost aim is to provide a comprehensive statement in support of such a research programme, which I designate as the comparative political thought of the Cold War. The statement is organised into three sections. The first section addresses the 'Cold War in ideas'. For various schools of Cold War historiography, I ask: How (if at all) have ideas mattered? And what lessons are there for the design of the research programme? Briefly, I characterise the three positions that are usually dubbed 'orthodox', 'revisionist' and 'post-revisionist' as each failing to grasp the *granular* qualities of Cold War ideas. In greater depth, I then proceed to consider the more recent scholarship, especially that associated

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[2] There is no intention in this article to apply to normative aspects of political theory.

[3] See *inter alia* Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Fred Dallmayr, *Dialogue Among Civilizations: Some Exemplary Voices* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Andrew March, 'What is Comparative Political Theory?', *The Review of Politics*, 71/4 (2009), pp. 531-565; Fred Dallmayr (ed.), *Comparative Political Theory: An Introduction* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2010); Farah Godrej, *Cosmopolitan Political Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Michael Freeden and Andrew Vincent (eds.), *Comparative Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 2012).

[4] A cultural studies variant of comparative political theory might caution against taking 'East' and 'West' as reference points. However, I suggest that 'East' and 'West' are not troubling labels when the purpose is to provide original historical interpretation, which logically must entail working with historical self-identifications, rather than (say) challenging the legacies of empire. This is not to discount the utility of seeking to comprehend Cold War East and West from 'post-colonialist' analytical perspective: see esp. William Pietz, 'The "Post-Colonialism" of Cold War Discourse', *Social Text*, 19/20 (1988), pp. 55-75. The political thought, of West and East bloc may have involved, respectively, an 'Orientalist' and 'Occidentalist' conception of the Other. Two useful sources are Martin Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Harvard MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York NY: Penguin, 2004).

with the 'New Cold War history'; where because the study of concepts and culture is instead

paramount, a failure is rather to grasp the *embedded* qualities. I use the term 'embedded' in order

to get at the relationship between Cold War representations and realities.[5] The most appropriate

subject for Cold War intellectual history is not, I argue, a self-enclosed 'cultural Cold War',[6] rather

the types of political thinking that are attached to a far less rarefied realm of Cold War actions. At

this point, meanwhile, the conceptual apparatus that informs the research programme is explained.

In particular, I argue for combining a variant of comparative political theory with (for historians) the

more familiar practice of 'conceptual history'.[7]

The second section continues to discuss the possibilities for the comparative political

thought of the Cold War contained in the recent scholarship. The commitment lately expressed to

interpreting the Cold War in 'multiarchival', 'multipolar', and 'multicultural' dimensions would

appear to suggest rich prospects for comparison.[8] However, just as the research programme should

not drift off *too* far into the direction of 'culture', a check should be put on the potential excesses of

an internationalist perspective. The first stage of any application of comparative political theory is to

specify the exact units of space being operationalised.[9] I propose that comparative political theory

will be most useful for Cold War study when the event is understood in quite conventional terms, as

corresponding to a 'bipolar' world organised into East and West *blocs*. Hence, the type of

exploration envisaged is based around two broad assemblages, political-thought-of-the-East and

political-thought-of-the-West. I draw inspiration from accounts like that of Major and Mitter, who

suggest separating East and West in order to generate source material for the 'comparative socio-

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[5] For discussion of embedded ideas, see Daniel Béland and Robert Henry Cox (eds.), *Ideas and Politics in Social Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[6] A standout study is David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[7] Reinhard Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).
[8] Odd Arne Westad, 'Introduction: Reviewing the Cold War' in Westad (ed.), *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretation, Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 5.
[9] Freeden and Vincent, 'Introduction' in Freeden and Vincent (eds.), *Comparative Political Thought*, pp. 1-23.

cultural history' of the Cold War.[10] Only in place of society and culture, I insert a less equivocal focus on ideas.

Comparing broad assemblages offers a rather blunt tool for comparison. Therefore the article's third and final part proposes a stage of disaggregation before any ideas (to be taken from East and West) are pressed together for inspection, side-by-side, underneath the political theorist's microscopic lens. Equally, this move is intended to do justice to the (my) granular and embedded qualities of Cold War ideas. I explain why there may be a strong case for arranging the detail of the programme around a series of interlinking Cold War 'thought-practices': the thought-practice is designated as the site of purposeful political thinking, and a sequence of comparative exercises is projected around a number of those. The kinds of exercises anticipated are, finally, signposted, by in each case describing: some relevant institutional arenas and contexts; some potential 'texts'; the precise categories of discourse that might guide analysis; and the types of research questions which might be engaged.

1. **The Cold War in Ideas**

In one significant respect the programme stakes out the importance of ideas for Cold War history, and it is for this reason that the political theorist can hope to make a contribution. However, the point of departure is that recognition of this importance has already grown organically out of Cold War studies. In this first section I track the historiographical trends by which the attention given to ideas has fluctuated; not only in degree, but in kind. Roughly (and only roughly), it is possible to discern the presence of a pattern whereby ideas are: initially elevated (but in the wrong sort of way); downplayed; then restored.

Orthodoxy, revisionism, realism

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[10] Patrick Mayor and Rana Mitter, 'East is East and West is West? Towards a Comparative Socio-Cultural History of the Cold War' in Mayor and Mitter (eds.), *Across the Blocs: Cold War Cultural and Social History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), pp. 1-21.

A failure common to an initial three schools of thought is not to have grasped ideas in their

entire granularity. Nevertheless (I propose) there are five distinct lessons to be gleaned. First, an

orthodox school laid the emphasis on 'ideologies' – communism versus capitalism, liberals against

'totalitarians'.[11] Such commentators could differ: some pointed to sincere political belief held to the

point of fanaticism; others saw ideology as malleable in the hands of all-powerful leadership

figures.[12] Positively, however, the orthodox emphasis on ideology gestured toward the interaction

of ideas with *institutions* ('liberal' democracy versus 'collectivist' dictatorship) – a feature which is

timely to take note of now.[13] But against this positive, there are at least three negative lessons –

properties that are *un*likely to convince contemporary political theorists.   (1) *Selective appearance*:

Ideology was defined in quite crude opposition to American-style pluralism (i.e. as denying ideas

healthy competition) and so animated only a single protagonist, the Soviet Union.[14] In this one-

sided focus 'Sovietologists' came to have a prominent voice in international affairs,[15] and although,

as David C. Engerman (now) argues, Sovieteologists may have subscribed to 'no single… party line',

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[11] Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). See *inter alia* Thomas A. Bailey, *America Faces Russia: Russian-American Relations from Early Times to Our Day* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952); William H. McNeill, *America, Britain and Russia: Their Cooperation and Conflict, 1941-1946* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953); Hebert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War they Waged and the Peace they Sought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957); Feis, *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-50* (New York: Norton, 1970); Arthur M Schlesinger Jr., 'Origins of the Cold War', *Foreign Affairs*, 46 (1967), pp. 22-52.

[12] The orthodox view of the Soviet outlook after 1945 was that it was fundamentally aggressive, even if considerably dampened in revolutionary ardour since 1917. George Kennan's famous despatch from Moscow noted that 'expansionist tendencies' inhered in Stalin's aims despite the fact that they were one part revolutionary logic, one part circumstance, hence a response of 'firm and vigilant containment' was required. See George F. Kennan, 'The Long Telegram', in Thomas H. Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis (eds.), *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 62-63, and also Kennan, 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct', in *ibid.*, pp.84-90. In particular, Kennan emphasised Stalin's continuity with the Tsars.

[13] See Jan-Werner Müller, 'The Triumph of What (If Anything)? Rethinking Political Ideologies and Political Institutions in Twentieth-century Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 14/2 (2009), pp. 211-226

[14] Howard Brick, 'The End of Ideology Thesis' in Michael Freeden, Lyman Tower Sargent and Marc Stears (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 34-56. At policy level, ideas-as-ideology connected a firm stand against communism to the prior mobilisation against fascism. See Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, 'Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930s-1950's', *American Historical Review*, 75/4 (1970), pp. 1046-1064.

[15] E.g. Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953). For a Soviet specialist's more recent (re)statement of the case for the priority of ideology, see esp. Robert Conquest, *The Reflections on a Ravaged Century* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), pp. 34-56.

they did come to make 'Soviet Studies' the 'quintessential Cold War intellectual endeavour'.[16]   (2)

Aggregation: Ideas (as ideology) became self-contained monoliths, ostensibly bearing no dis-

aggregation, into component parts.[17]   (3) *Uniform consumption*:   Contemporary historians, like

Kenneth Osgood, are now abundantly clear both that two sides practiced ideology and that the

propaganda efforts of U.S. officials were highly orchestrated, yet the orthodox school has little to say

about the *heterogeneous* ways in which Cold War ideas could be both transmitted and received, i.e.

interacting variously with different Cold War populations.[18]   On the orthodox treatment, the

consumption of ideas rather resembled the cinema audiences in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-*

Four – amassed together, chanting wildly, denouncing the enemies of 'Ingsoc', indiscriminately

absorbing a message, and with end-effect on behaviour alike.[19] .

Second, and contrastingly, a school known as 'revisionism' did little, on first view, to elevate

ideas to importance at all, in virtue of centring instead the rivalry between 'superpowers'.[20] But this

time an outward diminution marks some positive contributions, albeit quite indirectly. One such is

very incidental indeed: because the key drive of revisionism was to rebalance the censure of Soviet

communism by turning a critical eye to American motives and behaviour, more than a single

protagonist's outlook now (rightly) came to matter. Two features of the revisionist treatment of

Cold War ideas are more explicit, and so (I suggest) should be added to the list of pointers for

grasping them in their granularity.   (4) *Multiple idea-constructs*: The motives that revisionists

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[16] David C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). Sovietology was central to the U.S. intellectual mobilisation against the enemy. However, Sovietologists could both over- and under-estimate Soviet strength; they could assert that the Soviet Union was either stable or else on the brink of collapse (p. 5).

[17] Cf. Douglas MacDonald, 'Formal Ideologies in the Cold War: Toward a Framework for Empirical Analysis', in Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretation, Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 180-204.

[18] Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (University Press of Kansas, 2006).

[19] Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958), p. 14.

[20] Revisionism can be understood as a generational perspective that came of age in the 1960s.   This was the era which ended in American disaster at Vietnam. See *inter alia* Lloyd C. Gardner, *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941-1949* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1970); David Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus: A Critique of American Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1965); Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War: The World and the United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968); Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold* War (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Delta Books, 1962).

inferred resembled Orwell's theory of 'permanent war' (expressed in *Nineteen-Eighty Four* by the renegade figure, Goldstein), by which common possession of the atom bomb prompted a war-without-end, and whereby 'unconquerable' super-states collaborated in the maintenance of the extant political and social structures.[21] To be accurate, this is type of idea-construct perhaps best pictured as the 'political rationale'; and the point is not that it is convincing, rather than it points beyond 'ideology', to other units. In other words, it calls the researcher to be open-minded about categories for Cold War discourse when she sifts through the evidence. (5) *(In)formal political arenas*: Revisionists could be appreciative that Cold War ideas had life outside, as well as inside, political institutions. For instance, their bedfellows were those political scientists working within the 'conflictualist' paradigm of Soviet politics, who emphasised factional struggle and (thus) ideas-out-of-power.[22] Granularity should mean looking beyond formal arenas for the expression of political ideas. Further, on the particular pointer provided by the revisionists in Soviet studies, the programme should factor in that (let alone anti-Soviet) criticism of official positions on the Eastern side was not necessarily anti-Marxist.[23]

'Realism'/ post-revisionism marks a third historiographic phase.[24] Here, the importance of ideas is scaled down more methodically, since an organising concept is the 'balance of power'.[25]

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[21] Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty Four*, p. 160. For Orwell, the theory exposed the (Cold War) deception that 'war is peace': the active maintenance of permanent war sustained – in the domestic sphere – 'the special mental atmosphere that a hierarchical society needs'. For revisionists, this was in part the thesis of the 'military industrial complex'; in part the view that in the United States, election campaigning played to the exaggeration of threat. A more recent statement appears in Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge MA: Belknap, 2005)..

[22] See Neil Robinson, 'Marx and Kremlin: Writing on Soviet politics and Marxism-Leninism after the Fall of Communism', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 5/3 (2000), pp. 377-390.

[23] See esp. Robert Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969); and Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography: 1888-1938* (New York: Knopf, 1974). An additional lesson is that Cold War historiography itself comprises a first-hand source of Cold War ideas, i.e. given the political commitments of many revisionist commentators. The late Tony Judt rightly observed that we need to appreciate far better the ways in which writing the contemporary history of the Cold War was actually intrinsic to what the Cold War *was*. Judt, 'Why the Cold War Worked', *New York Review of Books*, October 9, 1997, p. 42. See esp. Robert Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969); and Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography: 1888-1938* (New York: Knopf, 1974).

[24] John Lewis Gaddis, 'The Emerging Post-Revisionist Synthesis on the Origins of the Cold War', *Diplomatic History*, 7/3 (1983), pp. 171-190.

Hence, there may be nothing new to add to the list of lessons.[26] This is not a case of outright dismissal: in *Strategies of Containment*, for example, John Lewis Gaddis features ideas in the form of the 'geopolitical codes' animating successive U.S. presidential administrations.[27] Nonetheless, it is difficult to separate a current clamour in Cold War studies to bring ideas 'back in' from a perceived discredit of realism:[28] realism appeared far better resourced for accounting for prolonged international stability (in virtue of 'balance') than accounting for the Cold War's sudden ending.[29] So far, from among social scientists, it is mostly to post-realist 'interpretivists' in international relations that historians have looked for enlightenment on ideas. The research programme presently being constructed suggests looking to political theorists as well. [30]

Recent trends

'Granularity' is the term I use to identify the weaknesses in some earlier accounts of Cold War ideas. And to this point I have identified five pointers for the programme to rectify that (to recognise *all* actors will hold ideas; to break them down into parts; to admit variety in their reception; and to be alert both to the various types of idea-construct that may be relevant, and to

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[25] For foundations of realism, see Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1960); and Kenneth Waltz, *A Theory of International Politics* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1979). For realism, balance of power is engendered by mutual pursuit of the strategic arms race. In the least, realism thought ideas could not be given priority because what went on inside the human head was difficult to measure. Douglas J. MacDonald, 'Communist Bloc Expansion in the Early Cold War: Challenging Realism, Refuting Revisionism', *International Security*, 20 (1995/6), pp. 152-88.

[26] Viewed in the terms of Orwell's positions, realism/ post-revisionism amounts not so much to the power of ideas, but to the idea of power; and as such it approximates what the character of O'Brien in notes of the super-state in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: that power serves as an end in itself, independent of ideological goals. (p.274). That, perhaps, calls attention to a different *kind* of idea: certainly, in the form of strategists who advised on policy in Washington, the world view of realists can be said to have entered the substance of Cold War political life, as well as having provided it with external comment. On realism's influence, see Sean Molley, *The Hidden History of Realism: A Genealogy of Power Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[27] Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. ix.

[28] Mark Kramer, 'Ideology and the Cold War', *Review of International Studies*, 25/4 (1999), pp. 539-576. Similarly, some recent accounts of Soviet foreign policy restate the priority of (Marxist-Leninist) ideas, e.g. Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

[29] Charles W. Kegley, Jr. 'The Neoidealist Movement in International Studies? Realist Myths and the New International Realities', *International Studies Quarterly*, 37/2 (1993), pp. 131-146.

[30] Lebow, 'Social Science, History, and the Cold War: Pushing the Conceptual Envelope' in Westad (ed.). *Reviewing the Cold War*, pp. 103-125.

finding ideas in unexpected places). I call the general quality which is lacking in the current discussions, rather, 'embeddedness'. In substance this concerns the relationship between the political and cultural histories of the Cold War, and in timing these discussions can be traced to the 'New Cold War history' which gathered steam with the opening of access to archive material from the old Warsaw pact countries.[31] In the context of this body of writing, I advance three connected arguments: for approaching the Cold War as a social imaginary; for avoiding 'Cold War determinism'; and for practicing a Cold War variant of conceptual history.

In the first place, picturing the Cold War as a distinct form of 'social imaginary' may be advantageous for the purpose of negotiating a stand-off between 'idealist' and 'materialist' positions in intellectual history, and as that pertains to Cold War study in particular.[32] The key issue is reality versus its representations: where researchers are otherwise forced to choose between a) the intellectual (cultural) history of the Cold War, and b) its social and political history, the advantage of the social imaginary is to make it possible to *mediate* between these two realms (indeed, insofar as it may be plausible to separate them even in abstraction). At stake in this move is to avoid synergising Cold War history-writing with political theory only to draw upon a rather safe and unimaginative (if not dated) conception of the latter. Rather, something like Pierre Rosanvallon's championing of a 'philosophical history of the political' offers, I suggest, a good template. By this, Rosanvallon means that there is an obligation on researchers to try harder to integrate 'social representations' (i.e. intellectual categories) into the broader terms of (their) historical understanding.[33] To borrow from Rosanvallon, therefore, the historical field that *this* programme

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[31] Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 281-295. In broad terms, the New Cold War history spotlights a) culture and b) internationalism. For an effort to systematise this agenda, see Westad (ed.), *Reviewing the Cold War*.

[32] The concept of the social imaginary originates from two fields: first, from continental post-Marxism, where it is used to describe the relative autotomy of thought from material life; second, from Anglo-American philosophy, where it is used to attenuate any aspiration that intellectuals might have to found the social order with the more modest position that they may structure its concepts. See Samuel Moyn, 'Imaginary Intellectual History' in Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn (eds.), *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 116-118, 120.

[33] Pierre Rosanvallon, 'Towards a philosophical history of the political' in Dario Castiglione and Iain Hampsher-Monk (eds.), *The History of Political Thought in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

would embrace – i.e. a philosophical history of Cold War politics – is a sum total of articulations in political thought, whereby rather than free-floating, political thought is one dimension of *all* experience by which the Cold War was expressed.   To put matters grandly, what this entails is suspending any conventional distinction between political history and political theory, so that – *contra* Clausewitz – political theory, not politics, is the Cold War 'by other means'. The practicalities of this move may not be obvious, so consider what it may mean by way of contrast with two recent accounts. First, Jan-Werner Müller has attempted in a related vein to inscribe Cold War politics into the general narrative of late twentieth-century intellectual history,[34] but this is very distinct from the comparative political thought of the Cold War, since the subject matter of the programme ought to be very far from the ambit of the 'great text'.[35]   Second (and again relatedly), David Milne has written an admirable intellectual history of American foreign policy – showing the value of a complex narrative that transcends realism and idealism – [36] but in Rosanvallon's terms what that fails to do, equally, is to connect intellectual history with 'what is […] *most intimate* and *most decisive* about the social experience'.[37]

The problem of 'Cold War determinism' is a special subject of debate in the recent literature.[38]   Determinism also links to the problem of mediating between two realms of Cold War history, by pushing us to consider more directly the connection between discursive and non-

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[34] Jan-Werner Müller 'The Cold War and the intellectual history of the late twentieth century' in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. III, *Endings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 1-22.

[35] Rosanvallon, 'Towards a philosophical history of the political', pp. 192, 200; italics added.

[36] David Milne, *Worldmaking: The Art and Science of American Diplomacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015), esp. pp. 3-20.

[37] Rosanvallon, 'Towards a Philosophical History of the Political', p. 200. This is the relevant passage:

> [I]t is precisely the essence of the political to consider that social representations cannot simply be assimilated to the [Marxist] order of ideology; nor can they be reduced to categories of prejudices reflecting a given state of relationships. The philosophical history of the political maintains that beyond ideologies and prejudices there are positive representations organising the intellectual field within which lie a certain range of possibilities in a given historical moment. These representations need to be taken seriously: they constitute real and powerful infrastructures in the life of societies. In contrast to an idealist vision, which disregards the economic and social determinants structuring the field of human action, this approach sets out to enrich and render more complex the notion of determination. Alongside passive representations, it is consequently necessary to take into account all those active representations by reference to what is thinkable, and determine the questions of the moment.

[38] Engerman, *Know Your Enemy*, p. 5.

discursive elements. At what points, exactly, does a prospectively vast field for study obtain outer

limits that are manageable?   Here I argue for confining attention – discursive/ non-discursive

distinction aside – to that which is 'politically significant'.[39]   The grounds for doing so can be

expressed with reference to a recent exchange between two prominent Cold War specialists, Odd

Arne Westad and Anders Stephenson.[40] Determinism means the scholarly tendency to attribute all

features of a Cold War 'period', from high to low, to the conflict; and is welcome for opening up

areas beyond the diplomatic, but troublesome for diverting from what Rosanvallon would call the

'most decisive' kinds of human activity.[41] One answer to this diversion is Stephanson's: to

considerably circumscribe 'period'. In opposition to the spirit of Westad's 'global' Cold War, my

sympathies are likewise with reining subject matter in, but with two addendums to Stephanson's

argumentative strategy.[42] To explain, Stephanson's 'short' Cold War is enclosed by the years from

1947 to 1962 and the bounds of political-ideological struggle; he argues that the Cuban Missile Crisis

is an ending since nuclear weapons prove 'very effective ideology killers'.[43]   But his are problematic

grounds for gauging significance, i.e. for putting a check on diversions. First, he seeks to resolve one

thorny conceptual issue in isolation of two others, with which it is very awkwardly entangled. One

may say he tries to 'periodize first', when perhaps periodisation is no trickier than a) cultural bounds

and b) geography. Even if still imperfect, the prudent strategy for gauging significance may be to

hold these three issues in equilibrium (as I attempt myself shortly). Second, and though it is more

implicit, what informs Stephenson's strategy is an 'actors category' argument. In other words, what

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[39] On political significance as a criterion, see Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011).

[40] See, respectively, Anders Stephenson, 'Cold War Degree Zero' and Odd Arne Westad, 'Exploring the Histories of the Cold War: A Pluralist Approach', in Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (eds.), *Uncertain Empire*, pp. 19-50, 51-60.

[41] Nils Gilman calls this the 'adjectivalization of the Cold War', whereby the conflict becomes the adjective that explains any sort of extra-geopolitical activity, from 'Cold War tourism' to 'Cold War science' ('The Cold War as Intellectual Force Field', *Modern Intellectual History* 13/2 [2016], p. 507). I argue that a comparative project will make its optimal contribution when the *entire* Cold War is treated as cultural history (on this, see Stone, 'Cold War Ideas'), but the kiss of death of the more conventional cultural approaches is to portray the Cold War as 'the smoking gun' behind all cultural activity in the epoch (David Caute, 'Foreword', in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe*, *1945 to 1960* (eds.), Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendom [London: Frank Cass, 2003]).

[42] Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[43] Stephanson, 'Cold War Degree Zero', p. 35.

the Cold War was is a matter of what the original Cold War actors *thought* it was; with Stephenson's gloss being that the meanings – the idioms – of U.S. policymakers are primary.[44] In contrast to some recent 'metahistorical' commentators, I take the view that difficult questions about what is and is not significant to the Cold War can only be ducked when scholars defer to the discursive use of Cold War idiom, in place of making their own evaluative judgments.[45]

Practicing a Cold War version of 'conceptual history' might be a final pathway, I argue, to providing Cold War ideas with 'embedded' character. Given the methodological approach priorities of conceptual history this is one more way of determining subject matter according to significance.[46] Beyond that, conceptual history might offer up an established toolkit for the comparative part of the programme to draw on. The interest of conceptual historians (following Koselleck) is in the 'basic concepts' of a given historical period – deemed as 'non-interchangeable', inasmuch as their presence is the precondition for even *recognising* a social and political reality.[47] Accordingly, a set of 'basic' Cold War concepts might prove an auspicious basis on which to rest comparison. Were there multiple meanings of Cold War concepts at synchronous points, and by which East and West were either similar or different? This entails manipulating conceptual history to suit the present purposes,

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[44] Stephenson, 'Cold War Degree Zero', p.35. This is unpersuasive at one level because it ignores the original meanings for non-U.S. actors. For instance, it may appear salient that political actors in Moscow and Washington pursued foreign policies constructed around 'peace' and around 'security' respectively. See Ole Waever, 'Securitization and Desecuritization' in Ronnie Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 60-61.

[45] Prominently, Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell argue that in order to foreground ideas, a premium should be placed on accessing what 'the Cold War' meant to the original historical actors themselves (Isaac and Bell, 'Introduction', in Isaac and Bell [eds.], *Uncertain Empire*, p. 6). Insofar as the very concept of the Cold War has a 'metaphorical foundation', the suggestion seems appropriate, but I think the experience of Enlightenment history may offer a cautionary tale. Over recent decades historians of the Enlightenment have followed the same kind of cultural turn, taking them to what 'the Enlightenment' meant – when used in written word or speech – in different time and place; and the consequence is 'multiple' Enlightenments. But this is rather to obscure the issue of significance: What is influential and not? What counts as innovative and not? So, with too *much* eye to detail, there is perhaps a danger of a similar fate befalling Cold War history. See the excellent discussion in Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), esp. Ch. 1.

[46] Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History*. Conceptual history casts ideas as 'embedded' with nuance: concepts are neither elevated to autonomy from material life (i.e. do not *create* the 'decisive' aspects of experience that Rosanvallon centres), nor reduced to the status of the merely epiphenomenal (i.e. do not simply *register* experience).

[47] Jan-Werner Müller, 'On Conceptual History' in Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn (eds.), *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 83-44

and certainly no equivalence between the two methodologies is being projected: conceptual history is concerned with diachrony (the steady emergence of meaning over long periods of time), comparative political theory is interested in synchrony (multiple meanings, at any single point in time). What follow are three methodological precepts, each taken from conceptual history, but adapted so that they might assist comparative inquiry into Cold War political thought:[48] (1) *Context*: Can we pinpoint ideas/ concepts that reflect the context of the Cold War as opposed to other contemporaneous circumstances? In comparative political theory terms, this is really the condition of possibility for constructing 'intercivilizational dialogue' between Cold War East and West.[49] (2) *Conflict*: What are the concepts that provide the Cold War (to quote Holgar Nehring) with its 'war-like character'? [50] And à *la* conceptual history, in which precise ways was Cold War conflict a struggle to impose meanings on concepts? (3) *Vernacular*: How ought the pinpointing of concepts to reflect conflict *infra* elites? What will comprise suitable 'documentation' for analysis? We can surmise documentation will need to go well beyond just books and/ or the records of legislative speech; but what novel material will it encompass, exactly? Prospectively perhaps the records of the strategy room, the espionage agency, and the street protest.

2. The Cold War in Comparison

To this point we have demanded that the research programme feature two general qualities of Cold War ideas: granularity and embeddedness. Now is the time to reflect on what comparison yields. Comparative inquiry has a general axiom to make use of: namely, that knowledge and understanding

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[48] Roughly, there are three approaches to comparative political theory: from ethics, cultural studies, and political science. Ethical approaches generally seek to ensure that the visions political philosophers construct are not unduly 'Eurocentric' (e.g. March, 'What is Comparative Political Theory?'). Approaches from cultural studies typically contest 'colonial' legacies (e.g. Godrej, *Cosmopolitan Political Thought*). The version of comparative political theory I seek to engage is the one aligned to political science (e.g. Freeden and Vincent [eds.], *Comparative Political Thought*). This takes its cue from the comparative study of political institutions and extends the same rationale, rather belatedly, to the study of ideas.

[49] Cf. Dallmayr, *Dialogue Among Civilizations*. This is not easy because conceptual history rejects that the investigator should fixate on the presence of particular words (i.e. to indicate particular concepts): even within a single language, a concept may be designated by more than a single word. This is one further reason why the actors' category argument is problematic. Melvin Richter, *The History of Social and Political Concepts: A Critical Introduction* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 9.

[50] Holger Nehring, 'What Was the Cold War?', *English Historical Review*, 127/ 527 (2012), p. 923.

of any object will be necessarily incomplete and unbalanced until considered in the context of objects to which it is similar. Presently, those 'objects' comprise sides in the Cold War, and the political-theoretical range of comparison means, further, that 'consideration' will involves holding up two assemblages of *ideas* against one other. Naturally, the programme centres comparative inquiry only on condition that there are significant pay-offs in prospect (most of which concern the extant research questions, as I indicate in the third section). The task at the current stage, however, is to formalise some *units of space*. This can be understood to be the procedural requirement of any exercise in comparative political thought, in order to maintain consistency and rigour in analysis.[51] Yet it raises some further tricky questions.

Specifying spatial units is an opportunity to continue locating the research programme *vis-à-vis* the recent scholarship, especially as expressed in the Westad/ Stephanson exchange. From the off this poses a complication, in that (to recall) 'space' – or geographical bounds – is intimately bound up with the issues of both scope and temporal duration. In *The Global Cold War,* and in place of the short Cold War of 'the long Fifties', Westad points to the 1970s as an important moment of evolution.[52] The 1970s are neither just an aftermath (*à la* Stephenson). Nor are they an interregnum of *détente*, prior to a 'second Cold War', in the Reagan era of the 1980s.[53] Rather, the 1970s is the moment at which the Cold War – hitherto contested between East and West – moves from North to South. The 'Third World', argues Westad, thus becomes the site of several *new* Cold War realities (i.e. modifying its scope), including proxy wars and competing development projects.

It is vital to give importance to Westad's point about mutation over time. The full thrust of his argument, though, is perhaps not so persuasive, and it is useful to consider this *en route* to fixing the (our) units of space. In general, Westad's perspective is a token of how the comparative political thought of the Cold War may legitimately scale back the recent methodological commitment to

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[51] See Freeden and Vincent', 'Introduction' in Freeden and Vincent (eds.), *Comparative Political Thought*.
[52] Westad, *The Global Cold War*.
[53] E.g. Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War* (London: Verso, 1983).

internationalism, but without compromising comparison's purposes.[54]   Although the programme

shares in an aim to overcome the one-sidedness of neo-orthodox accounts, like that of Gaddis in

The Cold War: A New History – which really narrates the conflict from only a single perceptive, that

of a United States emerging triumphant – [55] this is quite possible, I propose, within the remit of just

two-way comparison.   Westad is a token because in his account, the actors are only superficially

distinct from those customarily identified: he locates importance in competition for the allegiance of

populations in the global South, but it is revealing that this competition is driven by two actors who

are long the most familiar – the Americans and the Soviets – who each attempt to export a particular

model of modernity (free-market liberal democracy or Leninist socialism).[56]   On the identity of

actors, it strikes me that Stephenson presents the stronger case, which contains a nod to realism, as

well as revisionism:[57] Stephenson foregrounds the binary division of the Cold War world, whereby

Soviet and American positions echoed one another.   Because this case also reprises an earlier

argument of his about the semantics of 'polarity', there are some additional, rich implications for

framing comparison.   Polarity (Stephenson argues) implies *duality*, and from this there are several

facets to factor into the programme's design:[58] a) the systematic opposition of parties; b) symmetry

– or the 'mirroring mechanisms' whereby parties either emulated or alternated courses of action

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[54] Westad, 'The new international history of the Cold War: three (possible) paradigms', *Diplomatic History*, 24 (2000), pp. 23-54.

[55] Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin, 2005). For the criticism, see Tony Judt, 'A Story Still to be Told', *New York Review of Books*, March 23, 2006.

[56] Westad, *The Global Cold War*, pp. 8-38, 39-72. In other words, Westad's thesis may be a better pointer to granular ideas than to spatial units: what would be worthwhile is to unpack these two visions of modernisation vying for Third World 'hegemony'.

[57] Stephanson, 'Cold War Degree Zero'.

[58] Anders Stephanson, 'Fourteen Notes on the Very Concept of the Cold War', in Simon Dalby and Gearòid Ò. Tuatail (eds.) *Rethinking Geopolitics* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 62-85. The most salient consequence is that it becomes implausible to picture a multipolar Cold War (more than two 'poles' can show systematic opposition, but neither symmetry nor continuous action). China especially is an important omission in my conceptualisation: it is difficult to assimilate China into a (single) Communist bloc, since logically the record of Sino-Soviet rivalry will have prevented China and the Soviet sphere from having spoken in a single voice. On China's place here in general, see esp. Mark Philip Bradley, 'Decolonisation, the global South, and the Cold War', in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, *Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 474.

(and consciously so);[59] and c) continuous interaction. Each facet supplies a rather intuitive sense of the event's 'war-like' character.

The detail of the spatial units I propose is as follows: The aim should be to systematically compare the political thought arising out of two Cold War 'blocs' (East and West). Their geographic ranges should be taken to be 'transatlantic' and 'Eurasian' respectively. And because the notion of the Cold War regional bloc implies a boundary at those peripheries, but also possession of a 'centre', employing the notion is very different to reducing Cold War conflict to a struggle between superpowers (as represented by 'Moscow' and 'Washington').[60] But lastly, one should ask: What is the relative significance of Cold War activity as the researcher moves outwards away from the centre?

Heuristically, the centre-periphery relation gives rise to perhaps three considerations. (1) *Power politics*: The extent to which the United States should be de-centred in relation to Europe is perhaps limited (because as Craig and Logevall argue, that assigns implausible historical agency to non-U.S. actors),[61] but quite possibly the reverse is true in the case of the Eastern bloc. Occurrences across East and Central Europe and the Baltic states may call for extended attention, for the reason that Soviet authority was very concretely installed in its satellites (i.e. domestic experience in Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, etc. is highly indicative of East's political culture).[62] (2) *Cultural scope*: Perhaps the corollary of fixing the Cold War's scope beyond geopolitics and diplomacy alone must be to give the peripheries greater coverage than would otherwise be the case (the example is complex, but 'dissidents' plausibly denote one form of Cold War activity *in and of* the Eastern bloc, despite one dissident tactic being to wilfully identify with alternative categories such as 'Central

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[59] Major and Mitter refer to two 'mirroring mechanisms': 'mirror imaging' versus adopting the 'mirror opposite' ('East is East and West is West?', p. 7).

[60] The narrow conception of the Cold War as superpower rivalry is often still expressed. E.g. see Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007).

[61] Craig and Logevall, *America's Cold War*, pp. 5-6, 10.

[62] Experience in East and Central Europe was very different from Western Europe's 'empire by invitation', cf. Geir Lundestad, 'Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952', *Journal of Peace Research*, 23/3 (1986), pp. 263-77.

Europe').[63] (3) *Country-case comparison*: A size-issue crops up in applying comparative political theory: political-thought-of-the-East and political-thought-of-the-West present units too big to squeeze together under a single microscope in order for comparison to proceed, at least without sacrificing the virtue of precision notionally on offer. This is just a fraction of the problem facing the 'international history' of the Cold War *per se*:[64] that the synthesis of all possible source material would be a 'truly Herculean undertaking'.[65] Proceeding instead by country-focused comparison is a rationale I borrow from Major and Mitter's proposal for a 'socio-cultural' comparative Cold War history. I combine that with their further recommendation that such study should break down the Cold War into wieldy parts. They write: such research will operate best 'by placing Eastern and Western experiences side-by-side in […] a cross-bloc framework'.[66] Into that framework I insert the focus on texts. And I propose that particular texts for comparison ought to be selected with due consideration that different Cold war aspects would have been on show to *varying* extents in different places. The practical consequence, in short, is that different locations – from centre to periphery – may represent East and West in respect of discrete aspects of Cold War activity. To optimise the political-theoretical contribution to the programme, the final section of the article reformulates these aspects as 'thought-practices', which is also a refocusing of the earlier presentation of basic concepts.

3. The Cold War in Thought-Practices

It is not actually that novel to assert that the Cold War should be studied by disaggregating the conflict into some constitutive elements. Cold War historians rather converge on the need to pick

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[63] Timothy Garton Ash, 'Does Central Europe Exist?' in *History of the Present* (London: Penguin, 1999). See also Catherine Lee and Robert Bideleux, 'East, West, and the Return of "Central" Europe: Borders Drawn and Redrawn' in Stone (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 85; and György Peteri (ed.), *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010).

[64] Cf. Westad, 'The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century' in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I, *Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[65] Craig and Logevall, *America's Cold War*, pp. 5-6.

[66] Major and Mitter, East is East and West is West?', pp. 6-7.

out 'important aspects', 'certain characteristics', or crucial 'moments'.[67] Nor is it even entirely original to disaggregate the Cold War with reference to discursive elements: Nils Gilman characterises the Cold War as an 'intellectual force field' in which a 'radiating effect' organises the relevant intellectual phenomena in degrees of proximity to a 'politically radioactive center', denoting stronger and weaker degrees of determination.[68] The novelty in what *is* being proposed is to situate discursive elements in relation to Cold War actions: this is consistent with the integration of a toolkit borrowed from conceptual history and generally it is to draw inspiration from contextualist approaches to the study of political thought, which link historical political ideas to historical political actions.[69] My particular organising idea is the 'thought-practice'. Freeden and Vincent's methodological statement for comparative political theory proposes to compare the political thinking expressed in distinct spatial contexts according to a set of thought-practices together making up the master-practice, 'politics'.[70] The central object here of course is not politics, and so instead the remit is the *aggregation of thought-practices that constitute the Cold War*. There are two levels to the relationship between ideas and actions which the notion of the Cold War thought-practice makes it possible to explore, and each can be explained with reference to 'performativity'.[71] Hence the suggestion is double-edged: Cold War actors thought while they acted and also acted in virtue of thinking in the first place.

At the macro-level, there is the dramatological sense of performance. Overall, it is productive to picture the Cold War in theatrical terms; because in order to take on significance, all the constitutive elements had to be 'acted out'.[72] Note, in a moment, that the practices specified

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[67] Westad *The Global Cold War*; Westad, 'Exploring the Histories of the Cold War: A Pluralist Approach', in Isaac and Bell (eds.), *Uncertain Empire*, p. 51; Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*, p. 7.

[68] Gilman, 'The Cold War as Intellectual Force Field', p. 8

[69] Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, Vol. 1, *Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[70] Freeden and Vincent present this as the 'foundational ontology of political thinking' ('Introduction', p. 7). See also Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking: The Anatomy of a Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), esp. pp. 314-16.

[71] For a good discussion of the 'performative turn' in historical studies, see Peter Burke, 'Performing History: The Importance of Occasions', *Rethinking History*, 9/1 (2005), pp. 35-52.

[72] See esp. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1956).

are all expressed in verb-form. To draw on Judith Butler's use of the idea of performativity, the Cold War – like gender – is something one does, as opposed to something which simply is.[73] This is to take a far clearer stand (now) on the definitional question: rather than inert background circumstance, the Cold War ought to be conceived as the contingent performance of phenomena, open to variation over time.[74] Hopefully, the merit is to do justice all at once to scope, periodisation and geography. Treating the Cold War as the performance of a broad range of activities is to allow for change-within-continuity. It is to reject the 'Long Fifties' account, and equally to reject of the account whereby *détente*, 'thaw', and the Soviet-Afghan war appear to separate a 'First' and 'Second' Cold War (which is very much a chronology of high politics). Ebbing and flowing is rather to be expected.

At the micro-level, to conceptualise the Cold War according to performance corresponds not to drama, but to language. The elements of the Cold War were performed linguistically as well as physically – hence why political thought may have a general purchase upon historical interpretation. But there is a particular purchase as well. The general and particular relate to different connotations of the word 'thought' when it is attached to 'practice'. In turn, thought-practice may, first, connote habitual behaviour. On this connation, practices *per se* are sufficiently sustained over time and space to count as 'habitual', and patterns in the expression of *thinking* accompany the physical deeds. Did East and West think about the deeds similarly or differently, in either quality or degree? A second connotation of thought-practice is 'action'. This corresponds to the account of linguistic performance offered by J.L. Austin. Here, to think – more strictly, to speak/write – is to do. Accordingly, what is brought into focus is not exactly how words may accompany Cold War deeds, rather how words may effect them. Thus, the research programme proposes to scrutinise Cold War ideas as if they were examples of the performative 'speech act'. Austin's example: the statement 'I

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[73] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40/4 (1988).

[74] This is to reject the alternative definition often implied by realists: simply, that the Cold War corresponds to competition maintained all the way through a discrete historical period. From another angle, this is a further rejoinder to the temptation to take 'culture' too far: the Cold War was performed in culture, but not in all culture, and certainly not all the while.

marry you' does more than simply report something.[75] As we see towards a conclusion, Cold War political thought includes *inter alia* the following linguistic performances: the systematic construction of opposition; the placing of categories of person outside the political community; the expression of loyalty to a political principle; and the expression of (dis)belief in a philosophy of history.

In what remains I sketch seven Cold War thought-practices and meanwhile indicate what projects for their respective, comparative analysis might look like. They are: (i) dividing, (ii) crusading, (iii) purging, (iv) spying, (v) arms-racing, (vi) dissenting and (vii) rebelling. There is a loose linearity implied in the timing of the significance of these practices.[76] In other words what the 'Cold War' *was* is whichever practices East and West were acting out, to developed event, at any given juncture. The practices form an interlinked configuration: Dissenters were spied upon, fluctuations in the arms race had one origin in dissent; the arms race was informed by assessments of spies, and spying was also the basis for purge; crusading in the East had one aim in rousing dissent in the West, and purging in the West (i.e. McCarthyism) was denounced as fascism in the East; fascism itself was put to service in dividing (the case of 'anti-fascism'); dividing was crusading's flipside (looking to frighten, not inspire); and rebelling may have started where merely dissenting ended (repudiating the present, rather than arguing for its correction).

I gesture at all this very tentatively – the linkages demands greater demonstration in institutional terms. Rather, the immediate concerns are: What patterns does the series exhibit in political thought? And how may the activity of comparison help give those patterns clearer focus? Nevertheless, it is being pictured that certain institutional contexts have special relevance – they are one aspect of what is signposted. I also signpost how each comparative project might proceed via a selection combination of texts; via analysis at a particular level of discourse; and with reference to

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[75] J.L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 5
[76] Roughly, on this account, the Cold War begins in 'dividing' and 'crusading'; purging, spying, and arms-racing are to the fore in the middle era; dissenting and rebelling are foremost when the Cold War starts to unravel. Though this ordering really is only intended to be loose (for instance, dissent was present at the start; dividing was still manifest at the end).

specific, extant research questions. The last of these constitutes the programme's prospective 'value-added'.

The exclusions from this configuration (i) – (vii) derive from a small number of practical principles (certainly, there will be alternative ways of giving content to the Cold War's practices).[77] In the first place, straightforwardly, a practice must have a good claim to be 'archetypical' Second, a practice must extend to both sides – slightly more complex, because some prospective practices appear as archetypical, though are really just the property of one side alone. Think of 'stagnating': stagnating economies are a tokenistic image of the Cold War, yet precisely insofar as they are remembered to have been a feature of the Eastern bloc – in contrast with the West. Third, it makes sense to isolate practices which not only emerge in the Cold War's own era, but also possess the quality of being contained therein. Here, perhaps think of 'pacifying' (along with other euphemisms for practising the violent repression of whole populations): pacifying itself may have emerged in superpower interventions in Latin America, but the practice may outlast the era.[78]

(i)   Dividing

In its earliest conception it may even be speculated that the Cold War began in dividing. As with all practices, dividing is suggested by an intuitive comparison, in the sense that a comparison can be readily drawn out of institutional aspects of political life. Further, dividing has representative expression in particular geographical locations within the East and West blocs. That points, especially, to the sorts of texts that may be taken as ripe for the comparison of political ideas. Dividing has a proximate idea in 'legitimating': dividing was how East and West each *justified* their

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[77] It is important to stress that nothing is excluded on the principle that a practice is not well-enough expressed 'in ideas'. Rather, the task is to pinpoint where and how a practice receives that expression.

[78] Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004). Also, some practices can be subsumed within alternatives . 'Thawing' has a claim for inclusion, but is covered in the Cold War practice of dissenting. So too does 'brinkmanship' – or escalating conflict to a dangerous point – but that might be that is brought under arms-racing.

pursuit of the Cold War. But 'dividing the world' comes prior, I suggest, because in its absence there were no pursuits to which legitimacy could be given.[79]

The performance of dividing was implied in assigning opponents into (armed) camps. One's own camp was always, really, the camp of 'peace'; the other, the camp of 'war'. This is not a simple issue of the physical separation of East and West: the political imagination can complicate map-drawing. The 'workers' of the West were not the East's opponents, and for the West, it was highly important that the East housed its own victims, who were not at all the antagonist. Nevertheless, for all that maps are complicated, physical divisions – 'the Iron Curtain', 'the Berlin Wall' – still make two-way comparison intuitively appealing.[80] The intuitive comparison in ideas arises out of a corresponding juxtaposition of 'anti-fascism' and 'anti-communism'.[81] In political thought, these oppositional political languages were the means, respectively, for East and West to enact division.[82] The notion of a political language points our attention to a very particular category of discourse for analysis: political language is a subset of 'ideology' (itself a category distinct from the more refined realm of 'philosophy'),[83] and its identity is to be both 'thinner' and more fluid than a full-blown ideology, with a less sharply-defined arrangement of core concepts and propositions.[84] The notion of an oppositional (or 'anti-') political language – separating friend and foe – is more distinct still.[85] Generally speaking, the relevance of the articulation of a practice at an identifiable level of discourse will be to guide the choice of suitable tools to render the political theorist's input profitable. With

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[79] 'Dividing the World' is title of the opening chapter in Gaddis' Cold War account, *We Now Know*.

[80] See for instance Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper* (London: Penguin, 2005).

[81] For a stimulating and recent account of the politics of anti-fascism, see Dan Stone, *Goodbye to All That? The Story of Europe since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[82] Cf. Willibald Steinmetz, (ed.) *Political Languages in the Age of Extremes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). See in particular Steinmatz's assertion that in the literature, there is a discrepancy between the abundance of comparative studies on the ideologies of dictatorial regimes and the dearth of those between regimes that are, in turn, dictatorial and democratic (Steinmatz, 'New Perspectives on the Study of Language' in *ibid.*, p. 7).

[83] Cf. Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

[84] Freeden, 'Is Nationalism a Distinct Ideology?' in *Liberal Languages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 204-224.

[85] For 'oppositional' political languages, see Richard Shorten, 'The Failure of Political Argument: The Languages of Anti-Fascism and Anti-Totalitarianism in Post-September 11th Discourse', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 11/3 (2009), pp. 479-503.

any abstract cateogory of discourse, there will be familiar conventions of expression and criteria for evaluation.[86]

The 'German question' – regarded as crucial to Cold War history –[87] offers very clear evidence of the reciprocity of oppositional political language. For very particular reasons, 'anti-fascism' was inscribed deeply into the culture of the GDR – the Berlin Wall itself was an 'anti-fascist protection rampart'.[88] In the FRG, anti-communism was integral to political discourse across a significant period of time.[89] Geographically then, representative texts from across GDR and FRG might be especially ripe for substantive comparison. However, this is an appropriate point to reflect on a further consideration that ought to attach to the selection of source material. There will be scholarly conventions also about those questions that are important for historical interpretation: the comparativist will be sensible to build these into the research design.[90] There may be a good deal of sense in rooting comparison is in the earliest stage of Cold War chronology – to provide potential insight into the achievement of division, as opposed to its maintenance over time. In respect of periodisation, some conventionally important questions[91] concern the Cold War's origins: When did the Cold War start? Who was responsible? Was it inevitable?[92] A familiar 'revisionist' answers says

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[86] Separations of levels of intellectual articulation appear, for instance, in Steve Buckler, 'Theory, Ideology, Rhetoric: Ideas in Politics and the Case of "Community"', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9/1 (2007), pp. 36-54, and Iain Hampsher-Monk, 'Politics, political theory, and its history' in Jonathan Floyd and Marc Stears (eds.), *Political Philosophy versus History? Contextualism and Real Politics in Contemporary Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 105-127.

[87] Nicolas Lewkowicz, *The German Question and the International Order, 1943-48* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

[88] Cf. Maxim Leo, *Red Love: The Story of an East German Family*, trans. by Shaun Whiteside (London: Pushkin Press, 2013).

[89] See for instance Thomas Mergel, 'The Unknown and the Familiar Enemy: The Semantics of Anti-Communism in the USA and Germany, 1945-1975', in Wilibald Steinmetz (ed.), *Political Languages in the Age of Extremes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 245-274.

[90] The *received* questions should sometimes be taken with a pinch of salt: the historiography of the Cold War contains numerous examples of the questions of the day deriving from very particular agendas and assumptions. Characteristically, a) the first post-war generation debated 'guilt' (Soviet or otherwise); b) the generation of the seventies and eighties debated 'the long peace', such that the absence of war became the anomaly to be explained; and c) for the most recent generation, in the wake of the Soviet demise, the debate really became about whether the West's early stand is (now) vindicated. Lebow, 'Social Science, History, and the Cold War: Pushing the Conceptual Envelope', pp. 105-8.

[91] David C. Engerman, 'Ideology and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1962' in Leffler and Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 1, pp. 20-43.

[92] See recently, for instance, Gellately, *Stalin's Curse: Battling for Communism in War and Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

1917, when the great powers embarked on anti-communism. But rather less is known about its comparator language, anti-fascism, though that too surely affects how we should appraise origins, and hence the implications of analysis are potentially far reaching. This being the case, we should want to select texts which are contemporaneous with one another in and around the late 1940s. The following sources, therefore, might be worth examining for the articulation of anti-communism: George Kennan's 'Long Telegram', Winston Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech, and the text of the 'Truman Doctrine'.[93] Contemporaneous, systematic articulations of anti-fascism are Stalin's pamphlet 'Economic Problems of the USSR' and Andrei Zhdanov's speech to the Cominform, 'The Two-Camp Policy' – each of which is a (re)statement of Soviet philosophy for the post-war world.[94]

(ii) Crusading

A second Cold War practice was flipside to dividing. While dividing tapped into negative emotions like fear, 'crusading' did not quite tap into hope, but did mobilise energies in pursuit of a cause. There was a cause in each case, so that together, again, a comparison may be arranged in diametric opposition: 'building socialism' versus 'defending freedom'.[95]

In the first place it is relevant to comment on the place of emotions in analysis. The source material for a comparative political thought of the Cold War is, as we have seen, potentially broad, but a criterion for inclusion is the presence of something recognisable as 'reasoning'. In the absence of a 'text' in this sense there is little to be gainsaid by the political theorist's contribution. However, this is not to say that material should not be evaluated in a non-reasoning aspect – emotion being

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[93] See Gaddis (ed.), *Containment*.

[94] Stalin, 'Economic Problems of the USSR', in Bruce Franklin (ed.), *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings, 1905-1962* (New York: Doubleday, 1972); Andrei Zhdanov, 'The Two-Camp Policy' in Gale Stokes (ed.) *From Stalinism to Pluralism: A Documentary History of the Eastern Europe since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 38-43.

[95] Cf. Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945-1956* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

the apt example.[96]   The broadest interest is in 'normativity' in Cold War East and West:[97] emotions comprise one aspect of how each would have articulated what was (un)desirable and (in)valid. Contemporary historians like Martin Leffler have strongly implied that an overall account of the Cold War needs to incorporate actors' 'hopes' and 'fears', 'aspirations' and 'disillusionment'.[98]

'Building socialism' and 'defending freedom' are two representative slogans for crusading that drew on, and targeted, wellsprings of emotion.   The discourses that surround the contemporaneous Cold War events like the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Blockage heavily suggest so.[99] There are some fairly evident institutional contexts for comparison as well.[100] One important institutional arena where ideas like political freedom and democracy – as well as free enterprise – were promoted was the Congress of Cultural Freedom.[101] In intellectual life, the CCF is the arena which across the Western bloc brought together Cold War liberals (who often made a show of distinguishing themselves from Cold War conservatives). Against the CCF, there are a number of Soviet 'front' organisations which held similar function.[102] One simple exercise in comparison might revolve around the typical rhetorical packages by which cultural diplomacy was practiced. A slightly more complex exercise might focus on the phenomenon of intellectual 'fellow-travelling'. This might centre upon the stances assumed by two intellectual figures: the Cold War liberal and the Soviet 'fellow-traveller'.[103] Borders are untidy once more. Certainly, residents of the West could make good crusaders for the East. But in fact, obvious 'pairings' for comparison leap out precisely from

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[96] Simon Clarke, Paul Hogget and Simon Thompson (eds.), *Emotions, Politics and Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[97] For an account of normativity in this sociological (rather than philosophical) sense, see Charles Tilly, *Why?: What Happens When People Give Reasons… and Why?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[98] Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*, p. 9.

[99] CNN *Cold War*, Episode 3, 'Marshall Plan, 1947-52'; Episode 4, 'Berlin, 1948-49'.

[100] A brief but effective overview of relevant cultural institutions appears in Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, 'Culture and the Cold War in Europe', in Leffler and Westad (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 1, pp. 398-419.

[101] See esp. Frances Stoner Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta, 2000).

[102] See, for instance, Fredrick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960). See also Stephen Koch, *Stalin, Willi Münzenberg and the Seduction of the Intellectuals* (London: HarperCollins, 1995).

[103] Jan-Werner Müller, 'Fear and Freedom: On "Cold War Liberalism"', *European Journal of Political Theory* 7/1 (2008), pp. 45-64; David Caute, *The Fellow Travellers: Intellectual Friends of Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988).

within individual Western bloc nations. For example, in Britain, Isaiah Berlin versus the Marxist commentator, Isaac Deutscher (as David Caute has recently written about);[104] in France, the contributor to *Le Figaro*, Raymond Aron, versus his long-term sparring partner in public polemics, Jean-Paul Sartre.[105] Beyond the pairings, discussion of Cold War intellectuals regarding their stances towards crusading may prove opportunity to consider some texts that may be deemed 'classics', not only of the Cold War, but of modern political theory itself. Hence, the analysis of the political thinking of the public intellectual, in place of any other type of political actor, transports us to a quite rarefied level of discursive articulation, for this is a figure suspended some between the arenas of the academy and of action. Some corresponding conventions and criteria will therefore be implied, as well as representative dilemmas.[106]   Prospective texts include Aron's own *Opium of the Intellectuals* (1955), as well as perhaps the famous edited volume featuring Arthur Koestler, *The God that Failed* (1949), and Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s *The Vital Center* (1949).[107] On the opposite side, comparison could look at well-known arguments for 'commitment' such as that those expressed in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Humanism and Terror.*[108]

(iii)   Purging

'Purging', like dividing and crusading, was expressed to its most developed extent in the earlier decades of the Cold War, in the late forties and the 1950s. This is when purging was at an apogee in

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[104] David Caute, *Isaac and Isaiah: The Covert Punishment of a Cold War Heretic* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

[105] Tony Judt, *The Burden of Responsibility: Blum, Camus, Aron, and the French Twentieth Century* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[106] Alan Montefiore and Peter Winch (eds.), *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Jeremy Jennings and Anthony Kemp-Welch (eds.), *Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salmon Rushdie*.

[107] Richard Crossman (ed.), *The God that Failed* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (London: Transaction, 2014); Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (London: Transaction, 2001).

[108] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror: An Essay on the Communist Problem* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

the West, when it was embodied in 'McCarthyism'.[109] On the Soviet side, the purge was an institutional feature of political life both before and after the early Cold War period: purges followed, notably, in the period of 'normalisation' that denoted repression after 1968, and more to the point they had their prototype in the pre-war era, in the Moscow trials which set the mould in 1937.[110] Ebbs and flows aside, however, in East and West alike purging can be pictured as being crucial to the ways in which the Cold War was practised domestically. This is because purging served to regulate membership of the political community. Purging can be understood as having given very clear notice to precisely what type of person belonged inside, and outside, the political community. Its effect was not merely to remove individuals from the public realm – by disqualification from office, incarceration, or execution – but also to very publicly communicate the criteria of subversion (a stark example, therefore, of the Cold War political idea as the performative speech act). Purging can thus be described as an umbrella activity that subsumes others, such as denunciation.[111]

In the West's case, the 'McCarthyism' episode continues to receive great attention in (American) Cold War cultural representation, in novels like Philip Roth's *I Married a Communist* (1998) and in films like *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005).[112] Indeed, in lots of ways it was peculiar to Cold War America.[113] Other Western bloc countries like Britain, France and Italy simply lacked any replica within their domestic experience,[114] and this gives a good indication of the country-case comparison that should be specified in this instance: as Freeden and Vincent note, 'abnormality' as regards the topics under investigation is an important disqualifier of prospective source material for

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[109] For assessment from contrasting angles, see Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anti-communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998) and Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998).

[110] Karl Schlögel, *Moscow, 1937* (New York: Polity, 2014).

[111] Robert Gellately, 'Denunciation as a Subject of Historical Research', *Historical Social Research*, 26/2 (2001), pp. 16-29. See also Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately (eds.) *Accusatory Practices: Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789-1989* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[112] The classic treatment is Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Vintage, 2008).

[113] See Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd edn (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1996)

[114] Judt, 'A Story Still to be Told', p. 13.

comparative political thought.[115] In the East, the series of late Stalinist show trials that took place

between 1948 and 1954 are what is most suitable for developing comparison around, especially in

respect of Hungary and Czechoslovakia (the Rajk trial, the Slánsky trial).[116]   The Czech case is

particularly prominent in the literature of Eastern bloc repression.[117]

A final aspect which is interesting about the prospective analysis of purging is the level of

articulation. Here, we are pointed to the less conventional genre of 'text' through which to explore

political thought – trial reports and reports on congressional hearings.[118] The interest of the analyst

need not fall upon the particular cases heard and expressed in law; rather upon the rhetorical

features which are in display. Viewed according to a hierarchical arrangement of orders of

discourse, rhetoric occupies a lower place than either ideology or the argumentation of public

intellectuals; it is very obviously intermeshed with real-world politics and can be understood as

political argument as it appears 'in the wild'.[119] This is not in the least meant disparagingly. Rhetoric

per se points to recognise analytical considerations like *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*.[120] And because the

courtroom is a typical setting, more particular techniques for the analysis of 'forensic' (judicial)

rhetoric are readily called upon.[121]

(iv)   Spying

With 'spying' there arises a natural complement to purging. This is much as dividing and crusading

appear to reinforce one another. Purging, in the cases in law, could often be framed on the charge

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[115] Freeden and Vincent, 'Introduction', p. 17.

[116] See George H. Hodos, *Show Trials: Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe, 1948-1954* (New York: Praeger, 1987).
Likewise, the trials in East and Central Europe are often focus of the period's cultural representation, e.g. Milan
Kundera, *The Joke* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992).

[117] E.g. Heda Margolius Kovàly, *Under a Cruel Star, 1941-1968* (London: Granta, 2002).

[118] Cf. 'The Trial of Laszlo Rajk' and 'The Slánsky Trial', in Stokes (ed.), *From Stalinism to Pluralism*, pp. 67-70,
71-77; *Major Speeches and Debates of Senator Joe McCarthy: Delivered in the United States Senate, 1950-1091*
(New York: Gordon Press, 1975).

[119] Alan Finlayson, 'Rhetoric and the Theory of Ideologies', *Political Studies*, 60/4 (2012).

[120] Robert Cockcroft and Susan Cockcroft, *Persuading People: An Introduction to Rhetoric* (Basingstoke:
Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[121] Sam Leith, *You Talkin' to Me? Rhetoric from Aristotle to Obama* (London: Profile, 2011), pp. 208-234. The
classic account is Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. H.C. Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin, 2004).

of having conducted espionage for the Cold War enemy; spying (like purging) was also bound up in policing the terms of political community. Along with 'covert' action of all kinds, espionage – quite aside from mattering to the effective setting of policy[122] – is prominent in the popular conception of the Cold War: the mystique of defectors, double-agents, and out-of-the-ordinary technological conceits.[123] Spying might be taken as especially characteristic of the Cold War in its middle era, the sixties, since in the West this was when the cult of the 'spy novel' came into its own: Graham Greene, John Le Carré, Ian Fleming.[124] With spying, comparison once again has fairly self-explanatory reference points that are institutional: namely, the specific agencies of intelligence collection that were located in Cold War East and West. For the purposes of analysis, these are agencies which will perhaps be best compared in their political thought aspects if they are separated into bodies that are responsible, respectively, for internal or external surveillance. Thus two 'external' agencies to juxtapose are the KGB and the FBI; two 'internal' agencies might be the FBI and (from the GDR) the 'Stasi', acronym for the Ministry for State Security.

Potentially, where to *find* the political thought aspects is the more challenging task. The most auspicious genre is perhaps the 'spy memoir'. Consider, for example, the memoir of Markus Wolf, head of East Germany's secret service (*The Man Without a Face*) or the memoirs of some of the 'Cambridge spies' (such as Kim Philby's *My Silent War*).[125] The genre of memoir merits comment. Ordinarily, we might expect representative texts to be close to events as they take place (consistent with the micro and macro dimensions of 'performance' discussed earlier). Memoir literature is retrospective, yet offers a very interesting record of the ethical discourses of spying. Are there any patterns which are notable in the justifications offered by spies for the East and West respectively? The recurrent justifications cum motivations are often indicated in the acronym MICE: money,

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[122] Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

[123] E.g. Ben MacIntrye, *A Spy Among Friends: Kim Philby and the Great Betrayal* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

[124] Nicholas J. Cull, 'Reading, viewing, and tuning in to the Cold War', in Leffler and Westad (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 2, p. 448.

[125] Markus Wolf, *The Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster* (New York: Public Affairs, 1997); Kim Philby, *My Silent War: The Autobiography of a Spy* (London: Panther, 1969).

ideology, coercion, ego.[126] This perhaps offers a starting point for inquiry. Arguably, this also

provide a good example of how the research agenda might engage some political questions in the

present, as well as the research questions staple to Cold War historians. The comparison of ethical

discourses of spying in the Cold War might be rich resource for thinking about the ethics of

'surveillance', which is a relatively undeveloped field.[127]

(v)   Arms-racing

A fifth Cold War practice also belongs especially to the epoch of the sixties: 'arms-racing'. On first

view, arms-racing will not appear promising for examination as political theory. However, thought

about creatively, it becomes so. Quite apart from that, for any account wishing to do justice to the

nature of Cold War experience, at least token coverage of arms-racing is mandatory. The

competition for ever more refined weapons was a central dynamic. Arms-racing is also the emblem

of the distinctive pattern of *escalation* which the Cold War is popularly associated, usefully pictured

on the example of the stockpiling of weaponry threatening to spiral out of the control.

From the start, arms-racing was integral to the East/West confrontation: after Hiroshima

and Nagasaki, the Soviets sought parity with the United States first in possession of the A-bomb, and

later in possession of the H-bomb, the thermonuclear successor.[128] But regards the 'timing' for an

appropriate comparison, then in 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis provides arms-racing with its

symbolic event – the fallout in the West involved public focus on 'missile-gaps' and 'bomber-gaps'

(as Stanley Kubrick satirised in *Dr Strangelove*, released two year later). Here where are the

potentially significant articulations in political thought? Attempts at *regulating* the arms race would

seem to point in the right direction. On both sides, the scenario which policymakers faced was

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[126] CNN *Cold War*, Episode 21, 'Spies 1945-89'.

[127] A recent philosophical account is Anita L. Allen, 'The Virtuous Spy: Privacy as an Ethical Limit', *The Monist*, 91/3 (2008), pp. 3-22.

[128] David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996).

Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD): how to maintain a capacity sufficient to destroy the opponent, but without pushing the opponent to the first move? It is the thinking ('strategy') in response which suggests the suitable comparative focus – doctrines including those named 'massive retaliation' and 'peaceful coexistence'.[129] In fact, understood thus, the analysis implied may not be so unorthodox at all.   In the West, certainly, prominent nuclear strategists authored the fairly standard type of text, therefore amenable to the conventional types of (textual) interpretation.   Consider, for example, Herman Kahn's *On Thermonuclear War* and *Thinking about the Unthinkable*, or Thomas C. Schelling's *The Strategy of Conflict* and *Arms and Influence*.   The professional-academic theorists of 'strategic studies' provided arms-racing with a policy rationale.[130]

(vi)   Dissenting

What might be identified as a final two practices signal towards the Cold War endgame. Taken together, they also call for careful separation.   'Dissenting' and 'rebelling' could well be placed together under a single remit.   However, the claim here is that some differentiation will be required to serve the most fruitful understanding of Cold War political cultures.   In common, dissenting and rebelling were ways of actively *challenging* the Cold War order.[131]   One implication is that what may have a claim to represent the political thinking of Cold War East and West are the discourses not just of proponents but of opponents as well.[132] Conceived carefully, however, dissenting and rebelling mark challenges to the Cold War order which were significantly different in kind. Note that this

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[129] Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 145-177

[130] E.g. Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961) and *Thinking about the Unthinkable* (New York: Horizon Press, 1962); Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963) and Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).   For the Soviet side, see John A. Battilega, Soviet Views of Nuclear Warfare: The Post-Cold War Interviews' in Henry D. Sokolski (ed.), *Getting MAD: Nuclear Mutual Assured Destruction, Its Origin and Practice* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2004), pp. 151-174.

[131] In general see Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[132] Cf. Ference Feher and Agnes Heller, *Eastern Left, Western Left: Totalitarianism, Freedom and Democracy* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1987).

separation does not follow from having performed a physical challenge to power, whether by street protest, sit-ins, or storming formal institutions. This is relevant because for the East, there is an alternative story that *could* be narrated, whereby the physical confrontation with power appears in peaks and troughs – the troughs perhaps falling between peaks in 1953, 1956, 1968, 1981, and 1989.[133] But the physical deeds, I think, should not distract the attention. In part, this is simply to repeat that when something is taken as a thought-practice, an accompaniment in written word or recorded speech is always that which merits scrutiny. But more so, the peaks of confrontation should not distract because instead breaking up the period into *two* phases of challenge serves interpretation far better, by allowing for appreciation of qualitative difference. A first era is the one up to 1968 ('dissenting'); a second era thereafter runs down to 1989 ('rebelling'). The break captures experience in the East more visibly, but also gives meaningful shape to Western experience.

'Dissenting' (like crusading in fact) has a meaning borrowed from the history of religion. In this case too the religious meaning is a helpful tool to understanding. In religion, expressing dissent implies distance from the established church.[134] Likewise, in both Cold War East and West, dissenting meant challenge from *within*: either existing doctrine was challenged on the basis of other understandings of doctrine, or existing doctrine was the standard for challenging existing practice. The distinction is pertinent because these two options indicate the range of the activity contained even within Cold War dissenting (quite aside from the separation from rebelling). In the analytical sense, they might be used to help structure comparison, to ensure that so far as possible, like is being compared with like. The most appropriate institutional contexts for comparison are perhaps two sources of activism: on the one hand, the East and Central European opposition movements; on

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[133] Respectively, these dates mark revolt in East Berlin, the Hungarian Uprising in Budapest, the Prague Spring, the imposition of martial law in Poland, and the various incidences in 1989.

[134] F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 490. The concept of 'dissent' is still quite neglected by contemporary political theorists. A good historical study which throws up the right sort of questions is Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, The Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

the other, the American 'New Left'. Both movements can be seen as having performed each type of dissent.

In the East and Central European opposition, the first option was 'revisionist' Marxism and the second was human rights discourse. The first is self-evident enough. Marxian possibilities alternative to actually existing socialism were played out, for example, in the so-called 'Budapest school' of Marxism, but by this token even a text like Khrushchev's 'The Secret Speech' counts as dissent.[135] Human rights discourse gained specific traction after the Helsinki Accords in 1975: that entailed a public commitment by the Soviet Union to respect 'rights', which therefore opened up the space for dissent not by rival doctrine, but by the 'political' tactic of embarrassing power, by highlighting contradictory practice.[136] In this context one can situate texts like Adam Michnik's 'The New Evolutionism'.[137]

In the case of the New Left activism, the first option was expressed in the anti-Vietnam war and civil rights movements. In the attempt to reform the Cold War order, these movements often imagined alternative political possibilities to those prevailing out of 'American' beliefs in liberty and equality.[138] The second option was perhaps best expressed in the Cold War historiographic revisionism discussed earlier. The historical writings of the revisionists (who often had New Left affiliations) may be themselves suitable for analysis, since a common tack was to portray Western actions as hoist by their own petard, in virtue of the high ideals they were judged as bound by.[139]

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[135] On the Budapest school see, for example, Simon Tormey and Jules Townshend (eds.) *Key Thinkers from Critical Theory to Post-Marxism* (London: Sage, 2006), pp. 141-164; Khrushchev, 'The Secret Speech', in *Khrushchev Remembers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977)¸ Vol. 1, pp. 580-643

[136] Anthony Kemp-Welch, 'Eastern Europe: Stalinism to solidarity', in Leffler and Westad (ed.), *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 2, p. 232. For an original perspective, see Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Harvard, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

[137] Adam Michnik, 'The New Evolutionism' in *Letters from Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[138] Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[139] Robert James Maddox, *The New Left and the Origins of Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 7.

The best analytical unit of analysis for dissent is perhaps the distinctive idea of 'situated critique'.[140] Even then, one could still pinpoint sources quite broadly. For instance, 'cultures of humour' in the Eastern bloc were one medium for expressing opposition, and one very typical formula for joke-telling was to apply (i.e. mock) official state doctrines by making them explain inappropriate problems.[141]

(vii)   Rebelling

Rebelling can be pictured as a final Cold War practice because (on the understanding being offered here) it is concerned with the superseding of an order, not just its change. Granted that definition, the implications for Cold War interpretation are potentially arresting. The 'rebels' in the Cold War West come not at all from the New Left, rather they comprise figures on the Right – who railed especially against permanence of an order which arrangements like *détente* implied. In the East, the rebels – although *they* are usually known as the 'dissidents' – should perhaps come to be defined, more sharply than they are to date, as those who have the distinction of entirely looking *beyond* any variant of reform socialism. Vaclav Havel, for example, was never a Marxist; a text like 'The Power of the Powerless' appeals to 'truth', not social justice.[142] One alternative characterisation of this phase of challenge in the East is the 'retreat to ethics',[143] but the prospective virtue of the analysis proposed is not to presuppose the presence of a prior intellectual framework, which any conception of 'retreat' has to imply.

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[140] For an account of rhetoric connected to the idea of 'situated judgment', see Bryan Garsten, *Saving Persuasion: A Defence of Rhetoric and Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[141] Ben Lewis, *Hammer and Tickle: A History of Communism Told Through Communist Jokes* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2008), p. 145. Lewis gives the following example: 'Why is it not possible to control the birth rate in Soviet bloc countries? Because the means of production remain in private hands'.

[142] Vaclav Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless' in *Open Letters: Selected Prose, 1965-1990*, (ed.) Paul Wilson (London: Faber and Faber, 1991).

[143] The 'retreat to ethics' is the interpretive frame imposed in Stokes (ed.), *From Stalinism to Pluralism*. See esp. Tony Judt, 'The Dilemmas of Dissidence: The Politics of Opposition in East-Central Europe, *East European Politics and Societies*, 2/2 (1988), pp. 185-240.

At one level it is critiques of totalitarianism which can be considered to be the genre of text relevant to the performance of rebelling. In the East, the work of 'dissidents' is one context which explains a revival in the concept of 'totalitarianism' in the 1970s.[144] For example, consider again Havel's essay, or Leszek Kolakowski's piece 'Totalitarianism and the Virtue of the Lie'.[145] It would be worthwhile to compare the features of these (East) critiques with the 'neoconservative' version expressed in *Dictatorships and Double Standards*, a text authored by Ronald Reagan's ambassador to the UN, Jeane Kirkpatrick, which condemns communist totalitarians only to vindicate 'authoritarian' regimes.[146] It is a mark of the late Cold War era arguments that East and West rebels appealed to 'totalitarianism' alike, and as usual the value of the comparison in prospect rests in the detail. Philosophies of history comprise a second genre here which may prove stimulating. Given their structure, one may expect some clues to emerge regarding one question Cold War historians typically ask: why did the Cold War end?. Of course, all sorts of factors – many at considerable remove from ideas – are likely to be in play; including material contexts (such as economic stagnation and technological change), institutional contexts, and also the role of personalities.[147] Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that more is known about the loss of a Marxist-Leninist philosophy of history in the East than about the discovery of a 'liberal triumphalist' historical philosophy in the West – as regularly as the latter has been discussed.[148] Prospectively, therefore, in this last suggested project, Mikhail Gorbachev's text *Perestroika* might be suitably compared with Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*.[149]

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[144] Daniela Baratieri, Mark Edele, and Guiseppe Finaldi, 'Beyond the Delusion: New Histories of Totalitarianism' in Daniela Baratieri, Mark Edele, and Guiseppe Finaldi (eds.), *Totalitarian Dictatorships: New Histories* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 2.

[145] Leszek Kolakowski, 'Totalitarianism and the Virtue of the Lie' in Irving Howe (ed.), *1984 Revisited: Totalitarianism in our Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), pp. 122-135.

[146] Jeane Kirkpatrick, *Dictatorships and Double Standards* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

[147] Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, 'Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 7/2 (2005), pp. 3-12.

[148] Ellen Schrecker (ed.) *Cold War Triumphalism: The Misuse of History after the Fall of Communism* (New York: The New Press, 2006).

[149] Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (London: HarperCollins 1987); Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992).

Conclusion

In this article I have tried to outline a new research programme by which contemporary political theorists might speak to the concerns of an audience of Cold War historians. The ambition may seem bold, but I hope to have provided reasons for why the study of the 'comparative' political thought of the Cold War might prove fruitful. The article's first section argued that Cold War historians should be interested in political ideas in respect of two generic qualities – granularity and embeddedness – and went on to suggest some 'pointers' for doing so. The article's second section argued that the event of the Cold War very aptly lends itself to comparative inquiry. The final part has sought to construct an actual framework by which the programme intended might be carried forward. The key suggestion is that the comparative study of seven Cold War 'thought-practices' may, in equal measure, prove justified, feasible and useful.