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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Introducing the 'conceptual archive': A genealogy of counterterrorism in 1970s Britain

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Abstract

This article contributes to an 'historical turn' in security scholarship. It addresses imbalance in security studies' attention to historical empirics, and argues against notions of temporal disjunct prevalent within the discipline. I employ a genealogical framework to clarify the interpellation of past and present; and I introduce the 'conceptual archive' as a lens for pursuing that interpellation in research. My thesis on the 'conceptual archive' represents a twofold contribution. Firstly, a conceptual contribution: I advance the 'conceptual archive' as a way of thinking about past-present interpellation (specifically, existing conceptual logics' remodelling in arguments justifying new practice). Secondly, an analytical contribution: I propose the 'conceptual archive' as a tool for *doing* genealogy (a research programme with historicising promise, but one suffering nebulous operationalisation at present). I use the field of terrorism studies as an entry-point to these contributions: adopting a mixed-methods research design to trace British counterterrorism practices' roots within an 'archive' of logics on Northern Ireland. I find 1970s British governments remodelled long-standing 'archival' vocabularies in their arguments for new security provisions: framing exceptional practices according to an accepted fabric of concepts.

Keywords: Counterterrorism; Discourse; Genealogy; History; Temporality

Introduction

Recent scholarship has called for greater historicity in security studies. Critics have noted the 'fraught',[1] 'amnesiac',[2] and even 'intimately adverse'[3] relationship between security research and the historical past: thanks to which a 'broadly non-historical centre of gravity' has 'long prevailed in the field'.[4] Writing in this journal, for instance, Faye Donnelly and Brent Steele found it 'surprising' that 'very few' studies had 'explicitly foregrounded the intricate interrelations that exist between history and security'[5] – an observation affirmed by journal editors in their invitation to

[1]Tobias Lemke et al., 'Forum: Doing historical International Relations', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* (2022), pp. 1–32 (p. 2).

[2]Richard English, 'Change and continuity across the 9/11 fault line', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 12:1 (2019), pp. 78–88 (p. 86).

[3]Steve Hewitt, '"September 12 Thinking"', in Richard English (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Terrorism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 503–23 (p. 503).

[4]Richard English, 'History and the study of terrorism', in English (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Terrorism*, pp. 3–28 (p. 6).

[5]Faye Donnelly and Brent J. Steele, 'Critical security history: (De)securitisation, ontological security, and insecure memories', *European Journal of International Security*, 4:2 (2019), pp. 209–26 (pp. 210–12).

historically informed submissions that 'shake some of the foundations of the field'.[6] This article addresses that invitation. It clarifies problems in security scholarship's treatment of the past; and introduces a framework for resolving them. I call this framework the 'conceptual archive': a tool for historicising security practices, by situating the discourses in their favour in relation to an 'archive' of established logics.

The conceptual archive is a way of thinking about interpellation between past and present, and an analytic for pursuing that interpellation in practice. It manifests a dual premise. Firstly, that discursive exchange proceeds according to stable sense-making structures. Secondly, that discursive interventions acquire meaning and traction by remodelling those structures. I describe these structures as an 'archive': an ensemble of 'rules for the formation of concepts',[7] inherited from the past and reproduced through established logics' consistent recirculation.

The archive is the conceptual ecology in which discursive agents operate. It imposes constraints and engenders opportunities for what agents can sensibly say, with ramifications for the possibilities of practice. Most especially, the possibilities for engaging *new* forms of practice, since these always require some legitimising discourse to enable their introduction. Prospects for such discourse are informed by archival constraints/opportunities. Those seeking to legitimise new forms must speak to the archive's established logics, to assure their arguments' intelligibility, resonance, and rhetorical purchase. This means assimilating archival vocabularies even in discourse advocating change: cutting arguments for new practice from an established conceptual fabric, or 'constituting the new in terms of the old'.[8] The archive operates as a scope condition for evolutions in practice; it sets parameters for what forms can be legitimately introduced, and how. It follows that new departures in security will always carry the footprint of archival logics. Identifying that footprint can put past and present in communication: demonstrating how past conceptual inheritances shape, animate, and sustain present political possibilities.

This article pursues that goal. I begin by reviewing existing literature, clarifying the need for my historicising framework. I consider the 'eternal divide'[9] between security scholarship and the historical past, straddling two equally dissatisfying accounts of past time: temporal myopia (security theories being drawn from a narrow recent past); and temporal sovereignty (artificial 'inscription of "temporal borders"'[10] between times, via notions of contingency). I pose my conceptual archive as a solution to these problems – grounded in genealogical traditions theorising past-present interpellation, which I systematise across two levels of analysis:

1. A search for past logics pertaining to a discursive field (the 'archive'); and
2. An assessment of how arguments for new practice remodel those logics.

I proceed to demonstrate this framework's empirical substance, adopting a mixed corpus linguistic/discourse analytic method to explore a particular evolution in security – 'new' counterterrorism practices in 1970s Britain. I establish the continuity and parameters of an 'archive' of logics in British political discourse (concerning the 'problem' of Northern Ireland, and prevailing since the latter's creation in 1920). I then identify this archive's footprint in 1970s ministerial rhetoric justifying 'unpalatable' departures in domestic security. I end with reflections on these findings' import. I suggest the conceptual archive realises efforts to 'broaden the historical imagination'[11] in security studies: contributing a platform for *thinking* historically, and an analytic for *doing* historical research.

[6]Edward Newman et al., 'Editorial', *European Journal of International Security*, 5:1 (2020), pp. 1–4 (pp. 2–3).

[7]Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2010), p. 63.

[8]Rainer Hülsse and Alexander Spencer, 'The metaphor of terror', *Security Dialogue*, 39:6 (2008), pp. 571–92 (p. 588).

[9]George Lawson, 'The eternal divide? History and International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 18:2 (2010), pp. 203–26.

[10]Tom Lundborg, 'The limits of historical sociology', *European Journal of International Relations*, 22:1 (2015), pp. 99–121 (p. 101).

[11]Lemke et al., 'Forum', pp. 6–7.

Security studies' dual problem with the past

Existing security literatures ('orthodox' and 'critical' alike)[12] suffer a twofold ahistoricism – the first, and most straightforward, feature of which is security studies' temporal myopia. This is a question of temporal mandate: a 'presentism',[13] 'recentism',[14] or 'tempocentrism'[15] in which findings and theory are drawn from narrow (temporal) horizons. That is, a horizon of cases from the recent past, or *courte durée* – relegating the deeper past to a 'peripheral'[16] zone within the discipline.

Past reviews find security scholarship suffers an 'extraordinarily "lopsided" focus'[17] on the recent past: with studies 'frequently [operating] an unhelpfully abbreviated 21st-century lens';[18] or, less generously, exhibiting 'an almost complete lack of historical awareness'.[19] Beyond manifesting a research 'gap', this temporal myopia constrains security studies' conceptual scope. Analytical frameworks drawn from present empirics risk misinterpreting past phenomena: misconstruing contemporary dynamics as 'universal historical occurrence[s]',[20] and projecting these across time without sensitivity to context (paralleling the 'Eurocentrism' whose critique is well established in security studies[21] – though in time, rather than space). More importantly, they may also misread phenomena from the *present* – whenever these phenomena are not captured in narrowly contemporary data. As, for instance, in the phenomenon this article theorises: past conceptual logics' footprint in discourses legitimising new practice. This dynamic, so central to *present* possibility, would be impossible to ascertain from tempocentric empirics alone – since these couldn't tell us which *past* logics a *present* discourse speaks to. To continue the 'Eurocentrism' analogy, this is the equivalent of blindness to 'whiteness' in research analysing European phenomena in isolation from their 'imperial conditions of possibility'[22] – which tells us as little about the European, as the non-European experience.

The second, and more significant, feature of security studies' dual problem with the past emerges from scholars' response to the first. Some scholars rightly reject security studies' temporal myopia: suggesting 'analysis … has been compromised by the failure to adequately historicise and contextualise [concepts]'.[23] Instead of projecting 'current concepts onto historical practices',[24] as in tempocentrism, these scholars emphasise the 'contingency' of different periods: 'the contingent and mutable constitution of social forms',[25] and the 'distinctiveness of social phenomena [across]

[12]Harmonie Toros, '"9/11 is alive and well" or how critical terrorism studies has sustained the 9/11 narrative', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 10:2 (2017), pp. 203–19 (p. 211).

[13]Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John M. Hobson, 'The big bangs of IR', *Millennium*, 39:3 (2011), pp. 735–58 (p. 737).

[14]Roger Mac Ginty, 'Temporality and contextualisation in peace and conflict studies', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 57:2 (2021), pp. 191–209 (p. 195).

[15]Brieg Powel, 'Blinkered learning, blinkered theory', *International Studies Review*, 22:4 (2020), pp. 957–82 (p. 957).

[16]Lorenzo Cello, 'Taking history seriously in IR', *Review of International Studies*, 44:2 (2018), pp. 236–51 (p. 236).

[17]Giovanni Mario Ceci, 'A "historical turn" in terrorism studies?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51:4 (2022), pp. 888–96 (pp. 888–9).

[18]Kathryn Marie Fisher, *Security, Identity and British Counterterrorism Policy* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 182.

[19]Colin Wight, 'Theorising terrorism', *International Relations*, 23:1 (2009), pp. 99–106 (p. 103).

[20]Malte Riemann, 'Mercenaries in/and history', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 33:1–2 (2022), pp. 22–47 (p. 23).

[21]Tarak Barkawi, 'Decolonising war', *European Journal of International Security*, 1:2 (2016), pp. 199–214 (pp. 200–08).

[22]Meera Sabaratnam, 'Is IR theory white? Racialised subject-positioning in three canonical texts', *Millennium*, 49:1 (2020), pp. 3–31.

[23]Riemann, 'Mercenaries in/and history', p. 24.

[24]Verena Erlenbusch-Anderson, 'A History of Terrorism in the Age of Freedom' (Brighton, UK: University of Sussex, 2012), p. 160.

[25]Andrew Phillips, 'Asian incorporation and the collusive dynamics of Western "expansion" in the early modern world', in Julian Go and George Lawson (eds), *Global Historical Sociology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 199–220 (p. 207).

history'.[26] Such emphasis invites assessing mercenary violence in quattrocento Italy or contemporary Libya, for instance,[27] on their own terms: in 'the specificity of … their temporal and spatial contexts',[28] instead of 'assuming any conceptual continuities over time'.[29] This approach has its strengths. It resolves tempocentric theorisation: refuting past empirics' misinterpretation through presentist frameworks, by 'accept[ing] that many aspects of the past are significantly different from those of our own time'.[30]

But there is also 'a danger of over-correcting'[31] here. Contingent approaches' concern with 'context and indeterminacy'[32] risks throwing the historical baby out with its bathwater: engendering 'a sovereign politics of time' by inscribing 'temporal borders'[33] between periods. In stressing past times' 'radical "otherness"',[34] contingent approaches institute artificial barriers between them. Scholarship operationalising the past in terms of 'discontinuity, contingency, and particularity'[35] ends up 'cutting'[36] history into a series of disconnected chunks: a 'butterfly of contingent hiccoughs',[37] rather than an intricate and interpellated whole. This erection of temporal sovereignties manifests a *reverse* presentism: siloising historical times as fundamentally different to, and lacking connection with, each other. In so doing, it overlooks 'broader processes, sequences and plots',[38] which make the past meaningful – internally, and to the present. Past time is not divisible. On the contrary, it '*flows*, events overlap and break against each other like waves on a shore'.[39] Attempts to 'freeze'[40] history through notions of contingency marginalise temporal intersections – and diminish the past's footprint within the present.

A solution? Genealogy

Such is security studies' dual problem with the past: either an 'obsession'[41] with the present in empirical analysis, constraining the discipline's conceptual scope; or, a 'fetish' for 'the particular and the exceptional'[42] negating past-present interpellation. All is not lost, however. For 'there is another literature' containing 'the potential to push these limits'.[43] This is the literature of security studies' 'genealogical turn':[44] including important works redirecting the scholarly gaze into a deeper past, without invoking temporal disjuncture.

[26]Cello, 'Taking history seriously in IR', p. 238.

[27]Malte Riemann, '"As old as war itself"? Historicising the universal mercenary', *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 6:1 (2021), pp. 1–16.

[28]John M. Hobson and George Lawson, 'What is history in International Relations?', *Millennium*, 37:2 (2008), pp. 415–35 (p. 422).

[29]Stephanie Lawson, *Culture and Context in World Politics* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 39.

[30]Cello, 'Taking history seriously in IR', p. 240.

[31]Christopher McIntosh, 'Theory across time: The privileging of time-less theory in International Relations', *International Theory*, 7:3 (2015), pp. 464–500 (p. 492).

[32]Ibid., p. 469.

[33]Lundborg, 'The limits of historical sociology', p. 101.

[34]Riemann, 'Mercenaries in/and history', p. 27.

[35]Julian Go and George Lawson, 'For a global historical sociology', in Go and Lawson (eds), *Global Historical Sociology*, pp. 1–33 (p. 19).

[36]Tom Lundborg, 'Time', in Aoileann Ní Mhurchú and Reiko Shindo (eds), *Critical Imaginations in International Relations*, pp. 262–76 (p. 267).

[37]George Lawson, 'The eternal divide?', pp. 204–05.

[38]Ibid., p. 205.

[39]Marc Froese, 'Archival research and document analysis', in Laura J. Shepherd (ed.), *Critical Approaches to Security* (London, UK: Routledge, 2013), pp. 118–28 (p. 120).

[40]Helge Jordheim, 'Against periodisation: Koselleck's theory of multiple temporalities', *History and Theory*, 51:2 (2012), pp. 151–71
(p. 170).

[41]Powel, 'Blinkered learning, blinkered theory', p. 962.

[42]George Lawson, 'The eternal divide?', p. 205.

[43]Lundborg, 'Time', pp. 270–1.

[44]Martyn Frampton, 'History and the definition of terrorism', in English (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Terrorism*, pp. 31–57.

Genealogy's relationship with security studies begins with the discipline's 1990s 'linguistic' and 'practice' turns. 'Closely linked'[45] to each other, these turns frame discourse/language as a 'field of social and political practice',[46] which brings objects of security into being, thus shaping political relations. According to linguistic/practice theorists, political phenomena like 'security' are not 'given and self-evident'[47] – 'pre-formed and ontologically separate'[48] from discourses by which they are imagined/evoked/interpreted. On the contrary, they are 'essentially contested'. They contain 'multiple meanings'[49] – which 'no amount of discussion can possibly dispel',[50] and whose salience depends on 'perception'[51] or 'ideological [and] moral element[s]'.[52]

Given security phenomena's essential contestability, linguistic/practice theorists suggest their dynamics have less to do with 'reality'[53] than the 'deliberately and meticulously composed … myths and forms of knowledge'[54] that constitute them. Security is 'literally inconceivable'[55] beyond language. As such, speaking 'security' involves an 'almost magical power'[56] to 'shape the terrain upon which [political] struggles take place'[57] – with security's discursive imagination having material effects for political relations (as in securitisation theory, which proposes the 'practice' of 'saying "security"' moves conflicts 'above politics',[58] as a precursor to their closure). Security, in this sense, is 'as much about ideas as it is about guns'.[59] 'What happens in someone's mind, or in the minds of a series of individuals'[60] is not ornamental to material realities. Instead, concepts 'have teeth'.[61] Discursive practice is 'the political action par excellence',[62] forming 'a necessary part of our study'.[63]

Genealogy's value to that study is straightforward. According to genealogical traditions, the concepts constituting discursive practice do not emerge in isolation from each other. Rather, they exist in a *conceptual ecology*. Per Friedrich Nietzsche,

> concepts are not something arbitrary, something growing up autonomously, but on the contrary grow up connected and related to one another … however suddenly and arbitrarily they

[45]Jérémie Cornut, 'The practice turn in International Relations theory', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (2017), p. 10.

[46]Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice* (London, UK: Routledge, 2006), p. 16.

[47]Keith Krause and Michael Williams, 'Towards critical security studies', in Keith Krause and Michael Williams (eds), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (London, UK: Routledge, 1997), pp. vii–xxi (p. ix).

[48]Stefan Elbe and Gemma Buckland-Merrett, 'Entangled security', *European Journal of International Security*, 4:2 (2019), pp. 123–41 (p. 126).

[49]Simon Dalby, 'Contesting an essential concept', in Krause and Williams (eds), *Critical Security Studies*, pp. 3–31 (p. 6).

[50]Walter Bryce Gallie, 'Essentially contested concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 56 (1956), pp. 167–98 (p. 169).

[51]Daniel Stevens et al., 'Male warriors and worried women? Understanding gender and perceptions of security threats', *European Journal of International Security*, 6:1 (2021), pp. 44–65 (p. 44).

[52]Karin Fierke, *Critical Approaches to International Security* (2nd edn, Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2015), p. 95.

[53]Thierry Balzacq, Sarah Léonard, and Jan Ruzicka, '"Securitization" revisited: Theory and cases', *International Relations*, 30:4 (2015), pp. 494–531 (p. 519).

[54]Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 2.

[55]David Campbell, *Writing Security* (2nd edn, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p. 6.

[56]Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 1992), p. 170.

[57]Mara Loveman, 'The modern state and the primitive accumulation of symbolic power', *American Journal of Sociology*, 110:6 (2005), pp. 1651–83 (p. 1656).

[58]Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), pp. 23–32.

[59]Mlada Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 7.

[60]Michel Foucault, *Essential Works, 1954–1984: Volume Three, Power*, ed. James D. Faubion (London, UK: Penguin Books, 2020), p. 277.

[61]Janice Bially Mattern, *Ordering International Politics* (London, UK: Routledge, 2005), p. 193.

[62]Piki Ish-Shalom, *Beyond the Veil of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2019), p. 23.

[63]Christopher Hobson and Milja Kurki, 'The conceptual politics of democracy promotion', in Christopher Hobson and Milja Kurki (eds), *The Conceptual Politics of Democracy Promotion* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012), pp. 1–15 (p. 3).

> appear to emerge in the history of thought, they nonetheless belong just as much to a system as do the members of the fauna of a continent.[64]

Exploring politics' discursive constitution requires locating concepts within this ecology. Discourses don't emerge overnight. They evolve through 'descent'[65] – acquiring shape and traction from the existing ecosystem. As, for instance, in Nietzsche's thesis on the origins of 'guilt' in the 'material concept of "debt"':[66] the former being a reinvention of the latter. This 'palimpsestuous'[67] take on discourse directs the scholarly gaze into the past: tracing contemporary discourses' descent from prior ecologies in a 'history of systems of thought'.[68]

An emerging ('but still very small')[69] community of security scholars have undertaken this task. These scholars note how contemporary discourses/practices around counterterrorism,[70] confinement,[71] or peacekeeping[72] remodel 'repertoire[s] of cultural idioms, categories, and narratives'[73] from the past. They establish ways 'our current [security] order has been shaped by, or continues to be shaped by'[74] 'historical matrices'[75] of discourse – suggesting past conceptual ecologies remain 'overlaid … readable, or operational'[76] in contemporary practice (including especially ecologies associated with colonialism[77] and gender).[78] Such scholarship affords a path beyond security studies' dual ahistoricism: inviting attention to past empirics, while retaining sensitivity to temporal interpellation (past ecologies' 'deep, sticky'[79] footprint in contemporary practice).

However, there remain problems in pursuing this path. Foremost among these is genealogy's nebulous application. Genealogy is an 'unsystematic'[80] tradition: with advocates having undertaken 'comparatively little systematic work or meta-theoretical reflection on genealogy as a *method* of political theory',[81] and with 'the question of *how* we should go about investigating and interpreting the past [being] rarely asked, let alone answered'.[82] Genealogy's 'really frustrating'[83] lack of methodological systematicity is by design. Genealogists have avoided 'produc[ing] plans for some

[64]Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, ed. Reginald J. Hollingdale (London, UK: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 49–50.

[65]Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, genealogy, history', in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2010), pp. 76–97 (p. 80).

[66]Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Douglas Smith (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 44.

[67]Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, *The Liberal Way of War* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2009), pp. 84–5.

[68]Derek Hook, 'Discourse, knowledge, materiality, history: Foucault and discourse analysis', *Theory & Psychology*, 11:4 (2001), pp. 521–47 (p. 542).

[69]Mikkel Thorup, *An Intellectual History of Terror* (London, UK: Routledge, 2010), p. 3.

[70]Erlenbusch-Anderson, 'A History of Terrorism in the Age of Freedom'; Lisa Stampnitzky, *Disciplining Terror* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Ondřej Ditrych, *Tracing the Discourses of Terrorism: Identity, Genealogy and State* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[71]Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

[72]Christine Andrä, 'Problematising war: Towards a reconstructive critique of war as a problem of deviance', *Review of International Studies*, 48:4 (2022), pp. 705–24.

[73]Joseph McQuade, *A Genealogy of Terrorism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 4.

[74]Ibid., p. 3.

[75]Joanna Fadyl and David Nicholls, 'Foucault, the subject and the research interview: A critique of methods', *Nursing Inquiry*, 20:1 (2013), pp. 23–9 (p. 25).

[76]Dillon and Reid, *The Liberal Way of War*, pp. 84–5.

[77]Yael Berda, 'Managing "dangerous populations"', *Security Dialogue*, 51:6 (2020), pp. 557–78.

[78]Julia Welland, 'Liberal warriors and the violent colonial logics of "partnering and advising"', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 17:2 (2015), pp. 289–307.

[79]Rabea Khan, 'Race, coloniality and the post 9/11 counter-discourse', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 14:4 (2021), pp. 498–501 (p. 499).

[80]Colin Koopman, 'Ways of doing genealogy: Inquiry after Foucault. A group ionterview with Verena Erlenbusch, Simon Ganahl, Robert W. Gehl, Thomas Nail, and Perry Zurn', *Le Foucauldien*, 1 (2016), pp. 1–10 (p. 6).

[81]Amy Nigh and Verena Erlenbusch-Anderson, 'How method travels: Genealogy in Foucault and Castro-Gómez', *Inquiry* (2020), pp. 1–28 (pp. 1–2).

[82]Cello, 'Taking history seriously in IR', p. 237.

[83]Koopman, 'Ways of doing genealogy', p. 6.

future building',[84] preferring instead 'a playful, improvised and disruptive mode which consciously avoids offering a simple and coherent account'.[85] This flexibility has merit, insofar as it prevents 'warping empirical materials by subjecting them to a framework whose contours were developed elsewhere'.[86]

Nevertheless, the instinct for analytical freedom has a cost. It 'puts [genealogy] at a disadvantage within the research community'[87] by constraining possibilities for its application. Genealogy's opaque/nebulous operationalisation inhibits widespread use; 'with such vague guidelines … it is little wonder that political scientists have, with very few exceptions, not taken up the challenge'.[88] Realising the past-present interpellation genealogy theorises requires some framework clarifying its practice – illuminating 'the dark tunnel of genealogical method' to 'make it "usable"'.[89] This is where my 'conceptual archive' comes in.

The conceptual archive

The conceptual archive is a way of thinking about past-present interpellation, and an analytic for pursuing that interpellation in practice. It channels genealogy's core theoretical premises: locating discursive practices within their conceptual ecology, with present discursive possibilities being shaped, animated, and sustained by past conceptual inheritances. And it systematises that theory of discourse across two levels:

1. A search for 'archival' logics pertaining to a discursive field; and
2. An assessment of how arguments for new practice remodel those logics.

The first part of this framework begins with a simple intuition: that basic sense-making rules are a prerequisite for discursive exchange. As Antje Wiener suggests, 'understanding is never unmediated'.[90] On the contrary, communicative agents' adherence to a common frame of reference is a precondition for 'mutual intelligibility'.[91] Per Michel Foucault, 'if language exists' it is only because 'below the level of identities and differences there is [a] foundation provided by continuities, resemblances, repetitions, and natural criss-crossings'.[92] This foundation makes sensible discursive exchange possible, providing a 'central authority structure' to 'halt the fluidity of terms and make language meaningful'.[93] Without it, discursive exchange would descend into a 'chaos-cosmos'[94] of incoherent/disconnected fragments. Conversely, the necessity for a common frame of reference ensures a degree of continuity in discursive practice. If agents consistently return to collective frames to assure intelligibility, then discursive structures will remain stable over time: setting parameters for what agents can sensibly say, across generations of practice (a system of

[84]Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, p. 206.

[85]Felix Berenskoetter, 'Approaches to concept analysis', *Millennium*, 45:2 (2016), pp. 151–73 (p. 170).

[86]Colin Koopman and Tomas Matza, 'Putting Foucault to work: Analytic and concept in Foucaultian inquiry', *Critical Inquiry*, 39:4 (2013), pp. 817–40 (p. 819).

[87]Jennifer Milliken, 'The study of discourse in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 5:2 (1999), pp. 225–54 (p. 226).

[88]Paul R. Brass, 'Foucault steals political science', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 3:1 (2000), pp. 305–30 (p. 313).

[89]Maria Tamboukou, 'Writing genealogies: An exploration of Foucault's strategies for doing research', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20:2 (1999), pp. 201–17 (p. 202).

[90]Antje Wiener, 'Enacting meaning-in-use: Qualitative research on norms and International Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 35:1 (2009), pp. 175–93 (p. 179).

[91]Ted Hopf, 'The logic of habit in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 16:4 (2010), pp. 539–61
(p. 542).

[92]Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 120.

[93]Jenny Edkins, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 7.

[94]Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, eds Constantin Boundas, Mark Lester, and Charles Stivale (London, UK: Athlone Press, 1990), p. xiii.

rules for the discursive game; or, in Wiener's coinage, an 'invisible constitution [for] politics').[95] Rules for present discursive practice are inherited from the past. Hence, the 'archive': an ensemble of 'historical *a priori*'[96] for discourse, or reservoir of inherited logics – into which agents dip when making interventions, and against which audiences refer to interpret them.

This archive is the equivalent of a familiar tune, engrained knowledge of which 'is exercised in humming or playing it'; 'in recognising and following the tune, when heard'; and 'in noticing errors in its misperformance'.[97] The first step in a 'conceptual archive' analysis is to establish this tune's parameters, looking for familiar logics' consistent recirculation/reappearance (what I refer to as keyword/collocate 'undulation' or 'porpoising' in my empirical analysis). The second step is to identify these parameters' footprint in arguments justifying new practice – establishing 'resonance' between legitimising discourses and the archival 'tune'.

This second stage derives from a further intuition: that all evolutions in practice require some argument by which to legitimise them. Per Wiener, again, unfamiliar forms are 'contested by default'.[98] Those forms that can't be legitimised in the face of such contestation 'cannot be pursued over the long haul'.[99] In short, 'legitimation is … an imperative, not a mere nicety'[100] for new practice. But the acquisition of legitimacy is a *relational* process. Legitimacy is not dictated by the proposer, but negotiated with their audience. It is not the case that 'anything goes'[101] in legitimising practice. Rather, prospective legitimisers must work *with* stakeholder expectations: cutting their arguments for new practice from an established conceptual fabric. Successful legitimising discourses are those 'resonating' with that conceptual fabric. Namely, employing rhetorical 'frames' ('predefined structures [that] already belong … to the receiver's knowledge of the world')[102] conforming to the 'existing range of favourable evaluative-descriptive terms'[103] within a conceptual ecology. *Un*successful discourses are those that depart radically from that ecology: lacking rhetorical purchase,[104] or even being 'beyond comprehension and reason'.[105]

The archive is the conceptual ecology in which discursive agents operate. Agents who successfully assimilate archival logics enhance possibilities for new practice. Equally, agents speaking in abstraction from archival logics will 'meet with a rude reception',[106] and are 'likely to fail to achieve [their] goals'.[107] As Quentin Skinner put it, these constraints oblige 'every revolutionary … to march backward into battle':[108] modelling past logics to guarantee sense and traction, even in communicating evolutions of practice. The archive operates as a scope condition for evolutions in practice. Since 'any course of action is inhibited from occurring if it cannot be legitimated', 'any principle

[95] Antje Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 23.

[96] I. Jansen, 'Discourse analysis and Foucault's "archaeology of knowledge"', *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 1:3 (2008), pp. 107–11 (p. 109).

[97] Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2009), pp. 244–5.

[98] Antje Wiener, 'Contested meanings of norms: A research framework', *Comparative European Politics*, 5:1 (2007), pp. 1–17 (p. 6).

[99] Ronald Krebs, *Narrative and the Making of US National Security* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 2.

[100] Stacie Goddard and Ronald Krebs, 'Rhetoric, legitimation, and grand strategy', *Security Studies*, 24:1 (2015), pp. 5–36 (p. 13).

[101] Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics*, p. 15.

[102] Jenny Pickerill, 'Symbolic production, representation, and contested identities', *Information, Communication & Society*, 12:7 (2009), pp. 969–93 (p. 971).

[103] Quentin Skinner, 'Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action', *Political Theory*, 2:3 (1974), pp. 277–303 (pp. 294–5).

[104] See 'anti-totalitarian' languages of the War on Terror's failure 'to connect with the public imagination' in Richard Shorten, 'The failure of political argument', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 11:3 (2009), pp. 479–503.

[105] Derek Hook, *Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power* (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 101.

[106] Krebs, *Narrative and the Making of US National Security*, p. 33.

[107] Jonathan Charteris-Black, *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 18.

[108] Skinner, 'Some problems in the analysis of political thought and action', p. 295.

which helps to legitimate a course of action must also be amongst the enabling conditions of its occurrence'.[109] Having established the existing archive's logics, then, my framework further suggests identifying their 'footprint' in discourses enabling change – noting *how* agents remodel those logics in legitimising new forms. I describe this footprint in terms of 'resonance': synergies between archival logics, and those of a legitimising discourse.

This approach to discursive practice resembles 'facilitating conditions' in securitisation theory – the 'conditions under which the [securitising] speech act works, in contrast to cases in which the act misfires or is abused'.[110] Where the archive innovates on 'facilitating conditions' is in the specific relationship it establishes between past and present in imagining them. That is, the multigenerational archive of sense-making logics: handed down from the past, and constituting the 'conditions' to which discursive agents must speak. This temporal interpellation unites past and present in an assessment of evolving practice, with archival ecologies being a condition of present political possibility.

This framework also unites change and continuity (resolving discomfort[111] with structuralist models depriving discursive practice of agency). On the one hand, the conceptual archive is concerned with continuities, per its intention to connect past and present. Instead of assuming agents speak freely, in abstraction from their conceptual ecology, the archive looks to 'parameters of sense-making'[112] to which agents conform for intelligibility/purchase. As in practice literatures on 'habit', such conformity 'anchors actors' perceptions, attitudes, and practices toward the status quo'.[113] The archive reproduces itself continuously, as a condition for meaningful discourse. On the other hand, the archive does not eliminate possibilities for change or agency. Rather, it *anticipates* them: recognising individual efforts to introduce new practice, but connecting these to 'vocabular[ies] already normative within [their] society'.[114] The archive does not deny authorship. Instead, it proposes sensitivity to ways authorship takes shape; with agents adding value to their designs by 'appropriating' the archive's 'rich resources',[115] as much as being limited by its constraints.

The archive embeds this duality in its twofold analytical framework. First, exploring conditions for discursive exchange by establishing archival parameters. Second, clarifying agents' operations within those parameters (remodelling archival logics in legitimising new practice). In Pierre Bourdieu's words, this is a question of 'invention within limits'.[116] The conceptual archive assumes agents communicate their own ideas, just not in a conceptual fabric of their own invention – per the classic Marxist bridge 'man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth, he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of conditions found, given, and transmitted from the past'.[117]

Britain's 1970s counterterrorism moment

This article *introduces* the conceptual archive as a way of thinking about past-present interpellation, and a tool for pursuing that interpellation in research. It does so by considering a particular case of security practices' evolution: 'new' counterterrorism's emergence in 1970s Britain. I chose to consider counterterrorism because, of all security literatures, terrorism studies suffers the greatest

[109]Ibid., pp. 299–300.

[110]Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, pp. 32–3.

[111]Michelle Bentley, 'Enough is enough: The UK Prevent Strategy and normative invalidation', *European Journal of International Security*, 3:3 (2018), pp. 326–43 (p. 327).

[112]Hook, *Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power*, p. 108.

[113]Hopf, 'The logic of habit in International Relations', p. 545.

[114]Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume One: The Renaissance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. xii.

[115]Shorten, 'The failure of political argument', p. 481.

[116]Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, ed. Richard Nice (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 96.

[117]Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (London, UK: Origami Books, 2018), p. 3.

ahistoricism.[118] And I chose the British case as an entry-point to my contribution. Not only, because the UK was the first state to transition to an explicit 'counterterrorism' paradigm[119] (in whose practice it subsequently 'stands apart',[120] or claims 'profound expertise').[121] But, also, because of heightened pressures to justify evolving security provisions in Britain's common law tradition – throwing conceptual archive dynamics into sharp relief.

Counterterrorism 'began'[122] for Britain in the 1970s, with the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1973 and Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1974. The Emergency Provisions Act (EPA) introduced Northern Ireland-specific measures, including: non-jury courts for scheduled offences; non-attendance for witnesses/defendants at trial; detention without charge; proscription of political parties; reductions in the onus of proof for prosecution; stop-and-search; bail restrictions; and other security provisions. The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) transferred detention and proscription powers from Northern Ireland to the wider UK, supplementing these with additional powers of exclusion for terrorist suspects (an executive prerogative of the Home Secretary, requiring no evidential basis).[123] PTA also extended maximum detention periods from 48 hours to seven days. Although individual EPA/PTA powers were not unprecedented in British history,[124] their assembly in the specific name of 'terrorism' was. Before 29 November 1974, the UK Parliament had never passed a law featuring 'terrorism' in its title. Since then, it has passed 260 – one piece of terrorism legislation every two months.[125]

Such was the novelty of mid-1970s British security. But how might Britain's 1970s counterterrorism moment illuminate my thesis on the conceptual archive? The British case's particular value lies in its common law traditions, and their associated rhetorical pressures. Others have explored counterterrorism's proliferation in Roman law polities, through activation of constitutional 'state of exception' clauses – an administrative process involving less a 'politics of security' than its 'lasting eclipse'.[126] The UK, however, does not have a constitution. When the desire arose for disciplinary powers in the 1970s, therefore, British governments had to *create new laws*: and present these to critical stakeholders. Most obviously, critical stakeholders in Parliament – a necessary 'site'[127] for discursive practice in a common law context, whose support for new measures governments must win through carefully curated argument.

These rhetorical pressures were particularly sharp in 1970s Britain. Government ministers recognised the significant shift in security norms EPA/PTA provisions manifested. Ted Heath described EPA, for example, as a 'marked change in our practice'[128] – one Home Secretary Robert Carr thought would be 'highly controversial [and] extremely unpalatable',[129] and which Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Willie Whitelaw acknowledged as 'unpalatable to a democratic society'.[130] In particular, Cabinet reflected '*parliamentary* handling of the legislation would need

[118]Michael Livesey, 'Historicising "terrorism": How, and why?', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 14:4 (2021), pp. 474–8.

[119]Joe Sim and Philip A. Thomas, 'The prevention of Terrorism Act', *Journal of Law and Society*, 10:1 (1983), pp. 71–84 (p. 72).

[120]Lee Jarvis and Tim Legrand, 'The proscription or listing of terrorist organisations', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 30:2 (2018), pp. 199–215 (p. 201).

[121]Clive Walker, '"They haven't gone away you know": The persistence of proscription and the problems of deproscription', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 30:2 (2018), pp. 236–58 (p. 236).

[122]Fisher, *Security, Identity and British Counterterrorism Policy*, p. 52.

[123]TNA CJ 4/1037, 'Gardiner Committee: Preparations for Publication', 1975.

[124]Laura K. Donohue, *Counter-Terrorist Law and Emergency Powers in the United* Kingdom, *1922–2000* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2001), p. xxiii.

[125]Correct on 20 January 2023.

[126]Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 86–7.

[127]Lee Jarvis and Tim Legrand, *Banning Them, Securing Us? Terrorism, Parliament and the Ritual of Proscription* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2020), p. 10.

[128]TNA CAB 130/676, 'Cabinet Meetings: Terrorism in Great Britain', 1973.

[129]TNA PREM 15/1711, 'Proposal for Introducing Legislation to Restrict Movement between Ireland and UK', 1973.

[130]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill', 855.275–392 (1973), col. 290.

careful thought';[131] since EPA/PTA powers were likely to experience 'a stormy passage through Parliament',[132] or 'lead to extreme difficulties in Parliament'.[133] Hence, Government developed a deliberate rhetorical programme by which to 'stage manage'[134] Parliament's initiation to counter-terrorism. Central to this programme was a repurposing of conceptual logics already familiar to parliamentarians. Namely, logics pertaining to parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland: my 'conceptual archive'.

1970s Britain represents a useful case to tease out the past-present interpellation my conceptual archive theorises. 1970s British officials faced pressures to justify new powers in Parliament – pressures throwing archival dynamics into illuminating relief. This 'spatial' case selection is simultaneously a 'temporal' one, however. Given my arguments against temporal myopia, why begin this study in 1920 (a longer timeline than most research, but not yet the *longue durée*)? In refuting common security chronologies, Harmonie Toros calls for empirically grounded research design, suggesting scholars use whichever timeline is 'most relevant to the subject at hand'.[135] In my case, 1920 is a relevant place to begin this article, as a reasonable origin for the specific 'conceptual archive' my study investigates; namely, the archive of British political discourse on Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is 'only a recent invention',[136] in both administrative and conceptual terms. The spatio-political entity 'Northern Ireland' did not exist until the Government of Ireland Act 1920. More significantly, the discursive *concept* 'Northern Ireland' only entered British discourse after 1920 – featuring merely three times in pre-1920 parliamentary debate (once each in 1861, 1904, and 1919), but 179 times in 1920.[137] The years between Northern Ireland's creation and British counterterrorism's emergence remain an appropriate horizon within which to generate insights on 'old' and 'new' discourses' intersection, therefore. In my case, the intersection between archival logics on Northern Ireland, and arguments justifying 1970s security.

Methodology

Before I elaborate these insights, a note on my mixed methodology. My analysis is based on a twofold assessment of data. Firstly, quantitative corpus linguistic assessment of material from the Hansard record of parliamentary debates. Secondly, qualitative discourse analytic assessment of UK Government documents from the National Archives. My 'corpus-assisted discourse analysis' builds on a growing trend towards 'methodological synergy'[138] in discourse studies: combining breadth of computational analysis[139] with depth of close reading.[140] This is not the only way to operationalise the conceptual archive; but it does demonstrate insights afforded by its two analytical levels.

I begin with corpus linguistic assessment of a new dataset of language on Northern Ireland from the period 1920–84 (from Northern Ireland's creation to the end of Britain's counterterrorism 'moment'). The 'Northern Ireland in Parliamentary Discourse' dataset (NIPD) is a 12,751,975-word corpus capturing all UK Parliament debates on Northern Ireland in the 65 years following its creation. I divide these 2,449 debates into 13 five-year blocks[141] (emulating similar historical discourse

[131]TNA CAB 128/55, 'Cabinet Meetings: July-December', 1974.

[132]Whitelaw on EPA, TNA CJ 3/111, 'Emergency Planning', 1972.

[133]Minister for Home Affairs Lord Harris on PTA, TNA HO 342/266, 'Human Rights Legislation', 1975.

[134]TNA CJ 4/879, 'Gardiner Committee: Arrangements by Officials', 1975.

[135]Toros, '"9/11 is alive and well"', p. 215.

[136]Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xxiii.

[137]Fraser Dallachy et al., 'Hansard Corpus (British Parliament)', English-Corpora.Org (2016), available at: {https://www.english-corpora.org/hansard/} accessed 19 July 2021.

[138]Paul Baker et al., 'A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press', *Discourse & Society*, 19:3 (2008), pp. 273–306.

[139]Nelya Koteyko, 'Corpus linguistics and the study of meaning in discourse', *Linguistics Journal*, 1:2 (2006), pp. 131–55 (p. 23).

[140]Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (3rd edn, Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2015), p. 21.

[141](1920–4/1925–9/1930–4/1935–9/1940–4/1945–9/1950–4/1955–9/1960–4/1965–9/1970–4/1975–9/1980–4).

studies of prostitution[142] and race):[143] with a mean word count of 980,921, and with each block corresponding to a different 'chapter' in Northern Ireland's first decades (Northern Ireland's creation (1920–4); the Second World War (1940–4); the civil rights movement (1965–9); the Heath administration and Direct Rule (1970–4); etc.). This article advances a series of findings about language use over 65 years of parliamentary discourse; it does so by tracking change/continuity of specific measures between these blocks. The measures I use are Simple Maths Parameter (SMP) to calculate word keyness, and Mutual Information 2 (MI2) to calculate collocation.

'Keyness' is a tool for evaluating a corpus' 'aboutness'. That is, specific keywords' relative prevalence, as a proxy for corpus topicality.[144] SMP is one means of ascertaining keyness. It operates by comparing relative frequencies of all words in a 'focus' corpus, to relative frequencies of all words in a 'reference' corpus.[145] The formula's beauty is the ease of interpreting its findings. SMP quantifies keyness in 'simple' terms: if a word returns an SMP of 2.00, we can interpret it as being *twice* as prevalent in the focus corpus *vis-à-vis* the reference corpus. My keyness analysis in this article proceeds through two phases. First, I acquire a list of words that are *externally* key in NIPD: words that are substantially more prevalent in my 13 corpus blocks than in *contemporaneous* reference corpora of generic policy language.[146] I calculate external keyness for all words in NIPD: removing words with an SMP below 2.00, along with stopwords, to generate a shortlist of 324 external keywords. These 324 are words that were *at least twice* as prevalent in parliamentary language on Northern Ireland as in contemporary policy discourse (SMP>2.00). Capturing terms like 'problem', 'anomaly', and 'situation', these keywords conceive Northern Ireland in a particular way. Namely, as an 'exceptional' and 'troublesome' space in the British political imaginary – an 'urgent' 'question' in need of 'solving'.

I repeat this keyness procedure for my 13 blocks: comparing my 324 keywords' relative frequencies in each block to their relative frequencies in the whole corpus, to generate data on *internal* keyness. That is, how much more prevalent a keyword is *in one period of NIPD*, *vis-à-vis* NIPD generally. I use these calculations to create a diachronic keyness matrix: detailing change/continuity in my 324 keywords across 65 years of discourse on Northern Ireland. I employ this matrix as the basis for contentions on the conceptual archive (using standard deviation, an 'attractive technique'[147] for diachronic corpus linguistics, to measure keyness variation). If keywords exhibit significant stability across NIPD (SMPs 'undulating' around 1.00/low standard deviations) this would suggest the existence of a stable conceptual archive: a set of logics for thinking about Northern Ireland, consistent in parliamentary discourse across historical 'chapters'.

[142]Tony McEnery and Helen Baker, *Corpus Linguistics and 17th-Century Prostitution* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

[143]Helen Baker, Tony McEnery, and Andrew Hardie, 'A corpus-based investigation into English representations of Turks and Ottomans in the early modern period', in Michael Pace-Sigge and Katie Patterson (eds), *Lexical Priming* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2017), pp. 42–66.

[144]Paul Rayson, 'Computational tools and methods for corpus compilation and analysis', in Douglas Biber and Randi Reppen (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of English Corpus Linguistics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 32–49 (p. 41).

[145]Adam Kilgarriff, 'Simple maths for keywords', in *Proceedings of Corpus Linguistics Conference CL2009* (Liverpool, UK: University of Liverpool, 2009), pp. 1–6. I use a constant of 50 in this calculation.

[146]I use the Brown family of historical corpora as reference corpora: sub-setting the 'H' genre of policy texts, and matching each corpus block with its closest chronological pair. See Geoffrey Leech and Nicholas Smith, 'Extending the possibilities of corpus-based research on English in the twentieth century: A prequel to LOB and FLOB', *ICAME Journal*, 29 (2005), pp. 83–98; Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, and Helen Goodluck, *Manual of Information to Accompany the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English* (Oslo, 1978); Marianne Hundt, Andrea Sand, and Rainer Siemund, *Manual of Information to Accompany the Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English* (Freiburg, 1999).

[147]Paul Baker, 'Times may change, but we will always have money', *Journal of English Linguistics*, 39:1 (2011), pp. 65–88 (p. 72).

'Collocation' is a tool for ascertaining the 'meaning' of words in a corpus. Collocation metrics quantify meaning by calculating how often keywords appear alongside other words within the corpus – based on the Firthian principle that 'you shall know a word by the company it keeps'.[148] Collocation assumes word meanings emerge from contexts of their use. Frequent collocation of 'time' with words denoting value, for example, implies a semantic relationship 'time is money'.[149] Having ascertained change/continuity in my 324 keywords' prevalence across NIPD, I thus also advance an assessment of change/continuity in their *meanings*. I subsample relevant keywords from this group of 324 and track variation in their collocates over time. I use MI2 for this purpose. MI2 is a measure of *exclusivity* of collocation: comparing observed frequencies of words' co-occurrence with *chance* co-occurrence, if the corpus was reorganised randomly. A high MI2 implies a 'tight'[150] semantic relationship – one signifying the uniqueness of words' co-configuration. For reference, when applied to the BE06 corpus of modern British English,[151] the search parameters employed below returned MI2s of 9.18 for 'royal'-'family' and 9.26 for 'university'-'student'.[152] These are very strong collocations in British English. Scores above 9.00 can therefore be taken as evidence of very strong semantic relations in NIPD. I use collocation analysis to supplement findings on internal keyness. Whereas stable keyness scores suggest *quantitative* continuity in parliamentary language (keywords are used equally frequently over time), stable collocation scores imply *qualitative* continuity (they are used with the same meanings). Such qualitative continuity would support my claims about the existence of a conceptual archive in British political discourse.

Finally, I bring depth to corpus linguistic returns via qualitative reading of non-digitised UK Government documents from the National Archives. I explore how Government mobilised discursive logics from the conceptual archive in language justifying 'unpalatable' counterterrorism. In particular, I employ metaphor analysis to explore Government's reliance on an accepted vocabulary (the 'conceptual archive') in framing these provisions. Metaphors work by 'smuggling'[153] shared values into an argument: tying common vocabularies (the metaphor) into an argument's logic, and leaving uncomfortable details unelaborated. Metaphors enable a mechanical style of discourse, concealing contestable propositions within a mutually accepted conceptual fabric. I find Government's argument on counterterrorism employed multiple metaphors from the conceptual archive – portmanteau connectors between rhetorical propositions, which worked precisely by channelling a reservoir of logics for thinking about Northern Ireland.

Across both quantitative and qualitative analyses, I look for synergies between long-standing logics of parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland (my conceptual archive) and Government discourse on counterterrorism (my evolution in security). The latter's constitution according to the former would substantiate my claims on the conceptual archive. Namely, that the conceptual archive operates as a scope condition for justifying new practice.

Genealogising 1970s counterterrorism

I begin by tracking keyness returns for NIPD's 324 external keywords (words that were at least twice as prevalent in discourse on Northern Ireland as in generic policy discourse, 1920–84) across my 13 corpus blocks. If my hypothesis on the conceptual archive's stability holds, we should see limited variation in keyness returns over time (SMPs hovering around 1.00/low standard deviations) – indicating these keywords are *not* especially prevalent in any single period of NIPD. But, rather, that

[148]John Rupert Firth, *Papers in Linguistics, 1934–1951* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 179.

[149]Vaclav Brezina, Tony McEnery, and Stephen Wattam, 'Collocations in context: A new perspective on collocation networks', *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 20:2 (2015), pp. 139–73 (p. 152).

[150]Dana Gablasova, Vaclav Brezina, and Tony McEnery, 'Collocations in corpus-based language learning research', *Language Learning*, 67:S1 (2017), pp. 155–79 (pp. 163–4).

[151]Paul Baker, 'The BE06 corpus of British English and recent language change', *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 14:3 (2009), pp. 312–37.

[152]Returning collocates within a 10<>10 span, with a threshold frequency of 3.

[153]Charteris-Black, *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis*, p. 90.

	Internal keyness scores (SMP, 2 decimal places)													
Keyword	**1920**	**1925**	**1930**	**1935**	**1940**	**1945**	**1950**	**1955**	**1960**	**1965**	**1970**	**1975**	**1980**	**Standard deviation (σ)**
Anomaly	0.90	0.79	1.13	0.79	0.98	1.07	2.46	1.23	1.01	1.05	0.87	1.02	1.08	0.41
Anxiety	0.82	0.77	1.46	1.13	0.78	0.72	0.73	0.83	1.40	1.29	0.96	0.91	1.12	0.25
Circumstances	1.04	0.98	1.23	1.84	1.09	0.89	1.28	1.15	0.55	1.10	1.10	0.91	0.96	0.28
Divided	1.26	1.40	1.87	0.98	0.57	0.70	0.89	0.84	0.91	0.82	1.06	0.76	1.17	0.33
Emergency	0.30	0.65	0.31	2.67	0.88	0.60	0.34	0.33	0.30	0.77	1.01	1.41	1.10	0.63
History	1.57	0.68	0.84	0.96	0.58	0.74	0.76	0.89	0.65	1.44	1.41	0.72	0.76	0.32
Moment	1.97	0.91	1.26	0.62	1.26	0.90	1.00	0.89	1.03	1.10	1.11	0.87	0.72	0.32
Partition	2.65	0.86	0.59	1.48	2.01	1.33	1.26	1.75	0.71	1.25	1.11	0.55	0.77	0.59
Peculiar	0.93	1.19	1.33	1.51	0.88	1.99	2.34	1.00	1.16	1.09	0.98	0.96	0.93	0.43
Problem	0.29	0.73	0.39	1.59	0.27	0.49	0.96	1.16	2.25	0.89	1.04	1.17	1.01	0.53
Quarrel	1.22	0.85	1.22	2.13	1.05	0.85	1.33	0.96	0.96	1.02	1.05	0.91	0.94	0.33
Question	1.81	1.52	1.93	1.41	2.01	1.34	1.71	1.20	0.98	0.96	0.99	0.95	0.70	0.41
Security	0.17	0.09	0.31	0.16	0.96	0.16	0.09	0.17	0.11	0.39	1.09	1.66	1.11	0.50
Serious	0.71	0.60	0.40	1.34	1.28	0.97	1.15	0.96	0.84	1.08	0.90	1.13	1.09	0.26
Solving	0.96	0.79	0.79	1.39	0.98	0.79	1.10	1.02	1.95	1.06	0.98	0.97	0.95	0.30
Terrible	1.06	0.80	0.79	1.85	1.12	1.10	0.42	0.65	0.68	0.65	1.17	0.98	0.97	0.34
Threat	0.51	0.46	0.37	1.22	0.37	0.71	0.37	0.48	0.63	1.34	0.95	1.09	1.23	0.35
Tragedy	0.78	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.83	0.53	0.90	0.83	1.44	0.95	0.90	0.26
Urgency	0.65	0.70	0.57	1.00	1.93	0.57	0.78	0.88	1.29	0.98	1.47	0.92	0.80	0.38
Worried	0.60	0.71	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.82	1.02	1.12	0.93	1.01	1.28	0.24

Figure 1. Internal keyness scores for twenty indicative keywords

they are generic to parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland: representing a stable ensemble of logics for thinking about its politics.

The conceptual archive: Keyness analysis

This stability is indeed what my keyness analysis suggests. NIPD's 324 external keywords disclose the profile of a continuous keyness plateau across its 13 blocks (see Figure 1 for an illustrative selection of keyness scores). The significant keywords 'peculiar', 'problem', 'question', and 'solving', for example (as in 'the peculiar Northern Ireland problem/question' requiring 'solving'),[154] return unremarkable mean SMPs of 1.25, 0.94, 1.35, and 1.06, respectively – with low standard deviations (σ) of 0.43, 0.53, 0.41, and 0.30 across corpus blocks. So do 'tragedy' (mean keyness 0.76/σ 0.26), 'terrible' (0.94/0.34), 'serious' (0.97/0.26), and 'anxiety' (1.00/0.25). When parliamentarians spoke of the 'Troubles' as a 'time of very great anxiety',[155] as Lord Belstead (Conservative) did in April 1974, they were merely recycling a convention of angst about Northern Ireland, therefore. Per, for instance, Austen Chamberlain (Conservative, Birmingham West) who felt 'not a little anxiety'[156] about Northern Ireland's constitution in November 1931. Or, Frederick Lee (Labour, Newton), who emphasised the 'widespread dismay and anxiety … expressed by practically every honourable member'[157] in November 1962.

Across 324 keywords, mean internal keyness stands at 1.00 with a σ of 0.58. 55 per cent of keywords have a σ below 0.50, and only 5 per cent one above 1.50. Such minimal variation suggests the proliferation of a *style* for discussing Northern Ireland across its first seven decades … A notable feature of which was its peculiar reliance on temporally situated keywords (peculiar because these keywords must have been at least twice as prevalent in NIPD as in generic policy discourse to merit inclusion) – keywords such as 'history' (mean keyness 0.92/σ 0.32), 'moment' (1.05/0.32), 'emergency' (0.82/0.63), or 'circumstances' (1.09/0.28). These temporal keywords conform to a genre of debate about Northern Ireland. A genre, which, firstly, obsesses over the 'long history' of trouble in Ulster. Thus, William Adamson's (Labour, West Fife) November 1920 formula on 'the long history of … murders and reprisals'[158] in Northern Ireland; recycled by Clive Soley (Labour, Hammersmith North) in May 1982: 'the long history of the struggle between the

[154]Marysia Zalewski, 'Intervening in Northern Ireland: Critically re-thinking representations of the conflict', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 9:4 (2006), pp. 479–97.

[155]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland: Terrorism and Security', 350.1133–1144 (1974), col. 1140.

[156]Hansard, 'New Clause (Saving With Respect To Irish Free State And Northern Ireland)', 260.303–355 (1931), col. 313.

[157]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland', 667.1457–1546 (1962), col. 1458.

[158]Hansard, 'Government of Ireland Bill', 134.1413–1465 (1920), col. 1416.

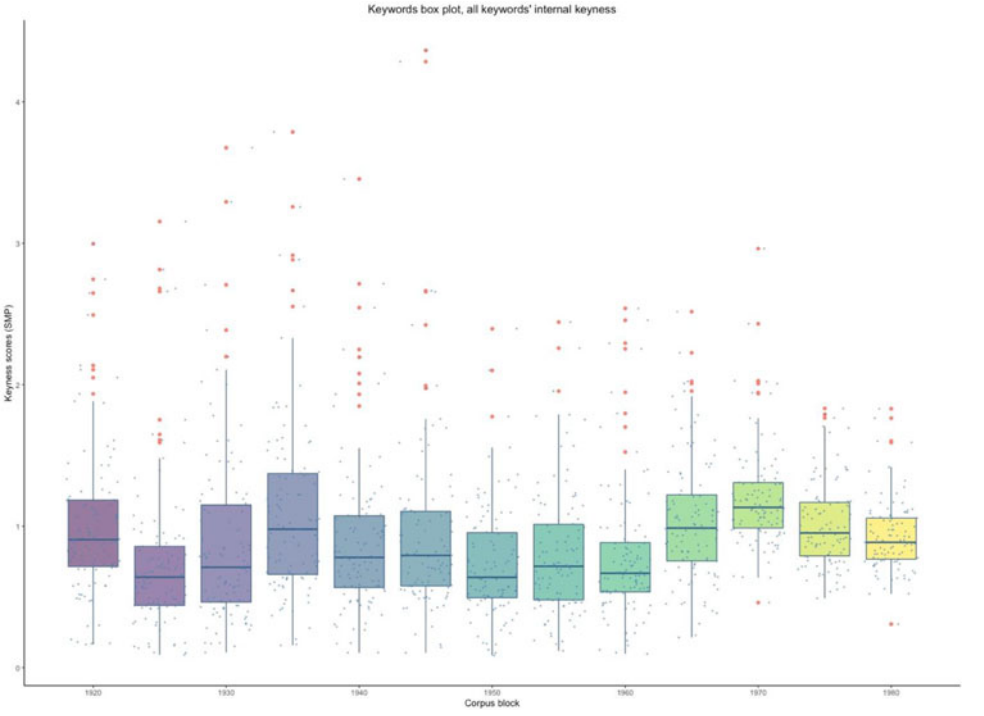

Figure 2. Keywords box plot, all keywords' internal keyness.

two halves of Ireland'.[159] Alternatively, a genre centring on the existence of a permanent Northern Irish 'emergency'. Per Walter Guinness' (Conservative, Bury) October 1920 thoughts on 'the present emergency'[160] – revisited by Osbert Peake (Conservative, Leeds North) in September 1939 ('when the emergency is over')[161] or Martin Flannery (Labour, Sheffield Hillsborough) in October 1976 ('since the present emergency began').[162]

Stable SMPs across corpus blocks (minimal variation in keyword prevalence/low standard deviations) are indicative of a 'conceptual archive' in British political discourse on Northern Ireland. Parliamentarians became habituated to a programme for speaking about Northern Ireland, over decades of debating its politics – conceiving these as 'problematic' and 'exceptional'. The boxplot in Figure 2, visualising SMPs for all 324 keywords across 13 corpus blocks, exemplifies this trend. Median SMPs (the central bar in each box) hover around 1.00 – with no significant upward/downward pressure in keyword prevalence between blocks. This is what I would expect the conceptual archive to look like: a steady recirculation of concepts in discourse, albeit with gentle keyness undulations over time.

There is something noteworthy about the moments when these undulations take place, however. As the boxplot shows, there are some limited keyness 'peaks' across NIPD. These include the early 1920s, late 1930s, and 1970s. The keyword 'problem', for example, enjoys soft keyness peaks in 1935–9 (SMP 1.59), 1960–4 (2.25), and 1975–9 (1.17). Likewise, 'threat': which is most prevalent in 1935–9 (1.22), 1965–9 (1.34), and 1980–4 (1.23). In fact, across my corpus there are four blocks where mean keyness surfaces above 1.00: 1920–4 (1.01), 1935–9 (1.11), 1965–9 (1.04), and 1970–4 (1.20). These moments of *keyword porpoising* correspond to periods of insecurity in

[159]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland Bill', 23.469–549 (1982), col. 544.
[160]Hansard, 'Government of Ireland Money (No 2)', 133.1229–1292 (1920), col. 1250.
[161]Hansard, 'Administration of Justice (Northern Ireland) Bill', 351.741–742 (1939), col. 741.
[162]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland', 918.676–694 (1976), col. 693.

respect of Northern Ireland: including the Irish Civil War, the onset of the Second World War, and the Troubles.

Alongside its generic currency in parliamentary discourse, it appears the conceptual archive attains additional purchase at moments of heightened insecurity. Parliamentarians are particularly likely to invoke archival logics when facing challenging questions. Its familiar languages serve as a conceptual *comfort blanket*: furnishing preformed conceptual schemes by which to rationalise these questions (a 'repertoire or "tool kit" of habits, skills, and styles from which [to] construct "strategies of action"').[163] Already, we see mutuality between conceptual archive and 'security' (parliamentarians employ familiar languages to make sense of insecurity, but it is precisely their sense of insecurity that directs them to those familiar languages).[164] I explore this mutuality in greater detail later. For now, let me return to corpus linguistic analysis.

The conceptual archive: Collocation analysis

Keywords may well crop up continuously across NIPD. But any conclusions about the conceptual archive's stability would be moot if they did so with different meanings in each usage. To ascertain whether keywords are *qualitatively* stable across different periods, I now subsample two keywords of particular interest ('emergency' and 'circumstances'): deploying MI2 to explore consistency in their collocations across NIPD's four keyness peaks. As with the Firthian 'company-keeping' principle, I suggest stability of collocations over time would confirm stability in these words' *meanings* within the conceptual archive. And, thus, qualitative continuity in parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland. My analysis does indeed find such stability. It also advances the archive's temporalised parameters (to which I return in assessing 1970s counterterrorism discourse). Remember, in what follows, MI2 scores above 9.00 evidence very strong semantic relations – as with 'royal'-'family'/'university'-'student' in BE06 (9.18/9.26).

I begin my assessment of word meaning at a very basic (but significant) level … That of the definite article: 'the'. 'Emergency' collocates with 'the' with high MI2s across keyness peaks: 9.85 (1920–4), 10.13 (1935–9), 10.77 (1965–9), and 14.59 (1970–4). Such scores identify '*the* emergency' as a powerful configuration in parliamentary language – one more exclusive than '*the* Commonwealth' (9.73 in 1920–4), '*the* Army' (9.81 in 1935–9), '*the* Pope' (8.87 in 1965–9), and even '*the* Queen' (12.96 in 1970–4)! The configuration appears in comments such as Maurice Dockrell's (Irish Unionist, Rathmines) in February 1920 ('the special emergency'),[165] Thomas Inskip's (Conservative, Fareham) in September 1939 ('the present emergency'),[166] or Lord Hunt's (Crossbench) in March 1973 ('the future beyond the present prolonged emergency').[167] Emergency's repeated collocation with 'the' constitutes 'the Emergency' as a proper noun in parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland: *ontologically stable*, a thing unto itself. This is by contrast to 'solution' – which does not collocate with '*the*' in NIPD. But, rather, with the *indefinite* article: '*a*'. The *ontologically indefinite* configuration '*a* solution' crops up with high MI2s in each keyness peak (12.36 in 1920–4, 7.00 in 1935–9, 11.35 in 1965–9, and 15.85 in 1970–4): placing parliamentarians' conviction of 'the Emergency' in direct opposition to their doubts regarding 'a solution'. Hence, Lord Beswick's (Labour) December 1972 juxtaposition: violence 'does not help towards *a solution*. In my first speech on *the present emergency* …'[168]

'The Emergency' is a stable concept in parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland: conceiving the latter in a state of perpetual turmoil. Such 'permanent emergency' represents a contradiction in terms, however, given emergency's *transient* temporal character. Logically, 'emergency' cannot be

[163] Ann Swidler, 'Culture in action: Symbols and strategies', *American Sociological Review*, 51:2 (1986), pp. 273–86 (p. 273).

[164] See similarly Daphna Canetti et al., 'Exposure to political violence and political extremism', *European Psychologist*, 18:4 (2013), pp. 263–72 (p. 269), regarding the link between psychological distress and hardening of existing perceptions.

[165] Hansard, 'Coal Shortage (Ireland)', 125.1273 (1920).

[166] Hansard, 'Administration of Justice (Northern Ireland) Bill', 114.1099 (1939).

[167] Hansard, 'Northern Ireland Constitutional Proposals', 340.1078–1181 (1973), col. 1134.

[168] Hansard, 'Future of Northern Ireland', 337.146–239 (1972), col. 230.

continuous (as it is in NIPD). If it were, it would cease to be 'emergency' – becoming, instead, a temporal norm. This contradiction points to an important feature of my conceptual archive. Namely, parliamentarians' operationalisation of *time*, according to a kind of lapse: whereby extraordinary ('emergent'/'circumstantial') temporal states become the discursive norm (even if, by definition, they communicate anomaly).

Thus, another important collocation in my corpus: that of 'present circumstances'. 'Circumstances' collocates with 'present' in NIPD with very high MI2s across keyness peaks (10.32 in 1920–4, 10.38 in 1935–9, 8.52 in 1965–9, and 13.80 in 1970–4). This configuration emerges in contributions such Hamar Greenwood's (Liberal, Sunderland) in May 1922 ('the abnormal expense of Northern Ireland arising out of the present exceptional circumstances'),[169] Donald Somervell's (Conservative, Crewe) in July 1939 ('a conspiracy of violence [in] the present circumstances'),[170] or Andrew Faulds' (Labour, Smethwick) in an otherwise innocuous July 1970 debate on museums ('the present distressing circumstances in Northern Ireland').[171] Temporal *transience* inheres to both 'present' and 'circumstances': terms conveying a temporary temporal locus – especially, when overlayed with other terms signifying anomaly (like 'exceptional'[172] and 'special').[173] Their combination in parliamentary discourse, however, communicates complete temporal *stasis*. 'Present circumstances' appear with relentless regularity across NIPD, with the effect of situating Northern Ireland in a *liminal* temporal space: one that is both 'circumstantial' (a deviation from the norm) and 'continuous' (a fundamental quality).

Time exists in a state of *permanent exception* in NIPD: trapped between concepts of continuous 'emergency' and perpetual 'present circumstance'. These are logically untenable propositions. But they prevailed over seven decades of parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland. They are stable logics comprising a 'conceptual archive' of British parliamentary discourse – one remodelled in 1970s governments' argument for 'unpalatable' counterterrorism.

1970s counterterrorism: Temporary time

I've flagged ministers' awareness of counterterrorism's 'unpalatability' in Parliament – a necessary stakeholder for new security legislation under Britain's common law tradition. 1970s counterterrorism was unpalatable to parliamentarians because of its contradiction of liberal norms: a cherished feature of Britain's political mythology, and a bar against which to assess praxis (per Jack Stallard's (Labour, St Pancras) condescension on EPA: 'if these powers were being exercised in some faraway place like Mozambique, South Africa, or Rhodesia … there would be a hullabaloo and outcry from every liberal-minded person throughout the UK – and quite rightly, too').[174]

Given their sensitivity to 'unpalatable' contradictions between liberal myth and illiberal proposals, Government ministers devoted significant effort to a rhetorical package by which to lubricate EPA/PTA's passage. Central to this package was its recourse to familiar logics from the archive – clothing exceptional practices in a conceptual fabric already accepted among MPs. Government's argument for counterterrorism spoke to the archive's parameters, including its temporal parameters: with both Heath and Wilson administrations mobilising archival temporalities to justify EPA/PTA. In this article, I highlight two of these: *temporary* time, and *euphemistic* time.

Temporary time's core premise was that measures under EPA/PTA represented a time-limited derogation from liberal norms – invalidating these for a defined period, to meet the needs of a passing emergency. Hence, these acts' titles ('Northern Ireland (*Emergency Provisions*)' and 'Prevention of Terrorism (*Temporary Provisions*)'). Hence, also, their 'sunset clauses': requiring provisions' renewal after twelve/six months. These sunset clauses provided a timetable for powers to lapse – as

[169]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland Grant-in-Aid', 154.455–466 (1922), col. 455.
[170]Hansard, 'Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Bill', 350.1047–1127 (1939), col. 1115.
[171]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland (Museums)', 850.369–394 (1973), col. 386.
[172]Collocates with 'circumstances' with MI2s of 13.85 (1920-24), 13.05 (1965–9), and 14.45 (1970–4).
[173]Collocates with 'circumstances' with MI2s of 9.56 (1920-24), 10.02 (1965–9), and 11.37 (1970–4).
[174]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland (Detention of Terrorists)', 848.45–103 (1972), col. 84.

promoted by Lord Chancellor Hailsham on EPA ('although these measures appeared draconian, there was a safeguard in that they … would remain in force for only 12 months');[175] and Home Secretaries Roy Jenkins/Merlyn Rees on PTA ('I do not see the act as anything other than a temporary measure'[176]/'powers contained in this act are exceptional … a temporary infringement of civil liberties.')[177]

Temporary time resolved EPA/PTA's 'unpalatability', by framing them as a temporary anomaly. Underlying liberal norms are unaffected by practices taking shape under an anomaly: the anomaly is provisional, but the underlying norms are transcendent. This logic appeared in briefing materials ('the bill makes no attempt to deal with the rules for *normal times*'),[178] speeches ('no-one will welcome provisions which are recognised to be unacceptable *in normal times*'),[179] and published reports ('recommendations to take effect only so long as the emergency … continues').[180]

Such temporary time arguments relied on a binary between 'exceptional' and 'normal' times – a binary in which the conceptual archive played a definitive role. In private correspondence, officials emphasised 'for [EPA] to command general support, we think it should be made clear that its provisions are intended for use *only in an emergency situation*'[181] (a comment Northern Ireland Secretary Willie Whitelaw annotated with 'agreed, Very important'). The familiar archival logic 'the Emergency' thus became a central part of Government's argument on counterterrorism: as the conceptual identifier distinguishing 'exceptional' from 'normal' times. For instance, in a speech by Whitelaw on EPA ('a temporary measure to meet an emergency situation'),[182] or Rees on PTA ('the act makes emergency provisions and is by its nature temporary, to cover the period of an emergency').[183] This identifier attained rhetorical purchase thanks to its familiarity in parliamentary discourse. As noted earlier, 'the Emergency' was an established part of the conceptual archive – 'becoming the norm'[184] in the ensemble of logics for thinking about Northern Ireland. When ministers invoked 'emergency' to substantiate their argument on 'temporary time', therefore, they were invoking a concept with existing purchase in the parliamentary imagination – one from whom they expected limited demurral ('I think it unlikely any honourable member … would dispute the contention of the Government that an emergency exists in Northern Ireland at the present time').[185]

Temporary time was essential to 1970s' governments' argument for 'unpalatable' counterterrorism. It resolved contradictions of illiberal security practices in a polity priding itself on its liberal traditions, posing these practices as 'out of the norm with conventional legal provisions'.[186] This is the equivalent of Michelle Bentley's thesis on 'normative invalidation' – proposing discursive 'invalidation' as one means by which agents resolve 'normative dilemmas' associated with securitisation.[187] Temporary time represents a *temporalised* instance of normative invalidation: involving efforts to *temporarily* 'neutralise the relevance and/or meaning'[188] of Britain's liberal mythology, in the face of 'emergency' circumstances. And it worked precisely through resonance with the archive

[175]TNA LCO 58/5, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill 1973', 1973.
[176]TNA CJ 4/961, 'Prevention of Terrorism Act: Action Arising', 1975.
[177]Hansard, 'Prevention of Terrorism (Shackleton Report)', 964.1505–1624 (1979), col. 1517.
[178]TNA CJ 4/2551, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1973', 1975.
[179]TNA CJ 4/359, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill: Report Stage', 1973.
[180]TNA CJ 4/125, 'Report of the Commission to Consider Legal Procedures to Deal with Terrorist Activities', 1972.
[181]TNA CJ 4/364, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill 1973: Papers and Correspondence of Secretary of State (William Whitelaw)', 1973.
[182]TNA CJ 4/363, 'Criminal Law in the Light of Diplock', 1973.
[183]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions)', 876.1273–1317 (1974), col. 1273.
[184]TNA CJ 4/1032, 'Gardiner Committee: Transcripts of Oral Evidence', 1974.
[185]Hansard, 'Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions)', col. 1273.
[186]Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister, *Anti-Terrorism, Citizenship and Security* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2015), p. 24.
[187]Bentley, 'Enough is enough'.
[188]Ibid., p. 327.

of discourse on Northern Ireland: acquiring rhetorical purchase by remodelling established logics concerning the latter's temporally liminal 'permanent emergency'.

1970s counterterrorism: Euphemistic time

Euphemistic time derived its rhetorical purchase, similarly, by recycling logics from the conceptual archive. In its argument on 1970s counterterrorism, Government was at pains not to spell out challenging or contestable details. Ministers avoided specificity on the exact conditions provoking practices at odds with Britain's liberal myth (like detention without charge or non-jury trials): justifying these practices, instead, by recourse to the familiar euphemism 'present circumstances'.

The notion that violence in Northern Ireland/Britain had risen to a point requiring exceptional derogations was contestable. Indeed, some (including the military hierarchy)[189] argued it was factually incorrect. Northern Irish fatalities, for example, had fallen by 90 per cent between Direct Rule in 1972 and PTA's introduction in 1974.[190] Arguments supporting specific provisions were equally contestable (with evidence suggesting detention without charge, for instance, was a boon for paramilitary recruitment rather than law enforcement).[191] To sustain claims about counterterrorism's necessity, ministers had to bypass such contentious details – potential banana skins in their argument on EPA/PTA – connecting that argument, instead, through uncontested logics.

'Present circumstances' was one such uncontested logic. Ministers presented security evolutions as 'consequential upon *the circumstances now prevailing* in Northern Ireland';[192] asserting 'drastic powers, despite their worrying implications for civil liberties, were justified by *the special circumstances of the time*'.[193] On EPA, Merlyn Rees defended adjustments to justice norms, claiming 'unfortunately *in present circumstances*, intimidation is such that many witnesses will not come forward with evidence'.[194] And, on PTA, Roy Jenkins dismissed concerns about exclusion powers, suggesting 'it is inevitable that wholly innocent people will occasionally be subjected to a certain amount of inconvenience. I believe that people will be prepared to accept that *in present circumstances*'.[195] 'Present circumstances' operated as a scope condition justifying EPA and PTA: a mediator between counterterrorism powers and conventional rights/liberties. But ministers advanced no detail on what those circumstances were; and, therefore, what kind of balance they implied. Only those habituated to the language of 'present circumstances' might make sense of the balance they sustained – importing assumptions about Northern Ireland's 'circumstantial' politics into their assessment of Britain's new security paradigm.

In George Orwell's words, political arguments are always contestable. But agents can avoid contestable premises' discernability through resort to 'euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness': allowing meaningless metaphors to 'fall upon the facts like soft snow, blurring the outlines and covering up all the details'.[196] Such euphemism only works, however, if the metaphors in question already enjoy discursive purchase. Government's framing of 1970s security relied, here, on 'gap-filling': whereby audiences supply '"missing links" between explicit propositions',[197] through a *mechanical* process of inference. In Government discourse on counterterrorism, missing links were

[189]TNA PREM 16/153, 'PM Wilson Gardiner Briefing', 1974.

[190]TNA CJ 4/876, 'Gardiner Committee: Evidence of Lt Gen Sir Frank King, General Officer Commanding, Northern Ireland', 1974.

[191]TNA CJ 4/1315, 'Gardiner Committee on Terrorism and Subversion', 1974; Eleanor Leah Williams, 'Counterterrorism and just intelligence, an oxymoron? The ethical analysis of internment without trial in Northern Ireland', *Critical Studies on Terrorism* (2022), pp. 1–20 (p. 7).

[192]TNA HO 325/76, 'Northern Ireland: Legislation', 1972.

[193]CAB 128/55.

[194]TNA CJ 4/873, 'Gardiner Committee: Papers on Detention and Other Matters', 1974.

[195]Hansard, 'Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Bill', 882.634–752 (1974), col. 642.

[196]George Orwell, *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume IV: In Front of Your Nose, 1945–1950*, eds Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (London, UK: Secker and Warburg, 1968), pp. 136–7.

[197]Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (1st edn, Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2001), p. 104.

connected through recourse to 'present circumstances': a temporally situated euphemism, deriving its meaning and purchase from the archive. Ministers would not have been able to employ 'present circumstances' as a connector in their argument on counterterrorism, if these weren't a pre-established feature of parliamentary discourse – a portmanteau of assumptions about Northern Ireland's 'problematic' politics that could be stated as established fact: 'it is … *a sad fact* that normal legal processes are no longer adequate in *the circumstances of Northern Ireland*';[198] 'it is *an unfortunate fact* that … *under these circumstances* the normal agencies of law enforcement have been unable to cope'.[199]

As with temporary time, Government's argument on EPA/PTA worked because it resonated with conceptual archive logics. In this case, remodelling euphemistic 'present circumstances' to bypass challenging detail.

Conclusion

This article introduced the conceptual archive as a way of thinking about past-present interpellation, and a framework for pursuing that interpellation in practice. My argument on the conceptual archive highlights discourses' fundamental stickiness over time: with consistent conceptual logics being a prerequisite for sensible exchange, and with arguments for new forms acquiring purchase by remodelling those logics. The 'archive' is the conceptual ecology in which discursive agents operate. Innovating agents, who 'understand the benefits' accruing to 'those who can rework … underlying narratives',[200] must speak to that ecology, even in advocating change – cutting arguments for new practice from a familiar conceptual fabric. This means evolutions of security will always carry the footprint of archival logics. Identifying that footprint can put past and present in communication: revealing how past conceptual inheritances shape, animate, and sustain present political possibilities.

Applying this framework to British counterterrorism's 1970s emergence, I found arguments for the new security paradigm worked by remodelling logics from an 'archive' of discourse on Northern Ireland. Parliamentary discourse on Northern Ireland between the latter's creation and Britain's 1970s counterterrorism moment centred on an ensemble of logics relating to the 'problem' of Northern Ireland: a 'habit of mind'[201] or 'frozen regime of thought'[202] structuring debates on Northern Irish politics across their first decades. This ensemble also enjoyed centrality in rhetoric justifying 'new' counterterrorism. 1970s ministers recycled 'frozen' archival logics when legitimising 'unpalatable' security provisions. Specifically, ministers recycled logics concerning Northern Ireland's temporal liminality: justifying exceptional derogations from liberal norms, by connecting these to Northern Ireland's permanent 'emergency' and peculiar 'circumstance'. Such findings substantiate recent insights on the 'will to *time*'[203] in political relations: 'recognis[ing] time as fundamental'[204] to new practices' evolution. Moreover, they illuminate my 'conceptual archive' framework's empirical scope: demonstrating intersections between a tradition of logics structuring political discourse, and arguments advanced by innovating agents to justify new departures.

[198]CJ 3/111.

[199]CJ 4/873.

[200]Ronald Krebs and Jennifer Lobasz, 'Fixing the meaning of 9/11', *Security Studies*, 16:3 (2007), pp. 409–51 (p. 449).

[201]Margaret O'Callaghan, 'Genealogies of partition; History, history-writing and "the Troubles" in Ireland', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 9:4 (2006), pp. 619–34 (p. 621).

[202]Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'Towards a problematisation of the problematisations that reduce Northern Ireland to a "problem"', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 9:4 (2006), pp. 513–26 (p. 521).

[203]Andrew Hom, *International Relations and the Problem of Time* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 52.

[204]Ryerson Christie and Gilberto Algar-Faria, 'Timely interventions: Temporality and peacebuilding', *European Journal of International Security*, 5:2 (2020), pp. 155–78 (p. 156).

This article's conceptual and empirical arguments matter for security scholarship. They contribute a 'theoretically vibrant and [methodologically] rigorous'[205] platform for overcoming security studies' dual problem with history: clarifying the essential relationship between past and present, and outlining a framework for its analysis. They also contain implications for practice turn literatures. 'Regularity and repetition' are a cornerstone of practice theory; since 'practice cannot be an isolated event or a unique performance',[206] but must be situated within 'patterns of action'.[207] The conceptual archive represents one such pattern of action. It manifests a *discursive* '*habitus*': an ensemble of 'durable, transposable dispositions … predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of [discursive] practices'.[208] The archive acquires this generative function thanks to the ready rationalities it furnishes in the face of political challenges. Archival logics afford 'ready-made responses to the world that we execute without thinking'.[209] I've described this affordance as a 'conceptual comfort blanket' – to which parliamentarians returned continuously over seven decades of discourse (measured as stability in longitudinal keyness/collocation). We can explain this generic continuity by reference to discursive conditions in which parliamentarians operate: where 'occasions for reflection are few' (thanks to temporal/party-political constraints, and limited subject specialism), 'and where competing discourses and voices from the margins … are most likely absent'.[210]

However, I also found the archival comfort blanket obtained heightened relevance at times of insecurity (keyness/collocation porpoising during the Second World War, the Troubles, etc.). This additional finding proposes *insecurity* as a condition for the archive-as-habitus' reproduction. Parliamentarians returned to archival logics precisely when they felt most in need of easy rationalities. Namely, when faced by challenge and uncertainty. This finding is the inverse of Ann Swidler's thesis on 'culture'. Whereas Swidler located cultural transformation in moments of 'unsettled times',[211] I find it is exactly at these times that discursive agents returned to the archival comfort blanket. I'll end with a converse hypothesis, then … If discursive agents reproduce the archive in times of insecurity, the precondition for conceptual transformation would be a sense of *settled* certainty: with agents simply *forgetting* archival logics, as the pressure for ready rationalities dissipates.

As a provocation to further discussion, that hypothesis exemplifies this article's purpose: *introducing* the archive as a *new research agenda* – a 'start of ongoing … conversations' on past-present interpellation, 'rather than a definitive end'.[212] There are various possibilities for developing this agenda elsewhere. One such would be to elaborate the conceptual archive's scope in other cases (including non-common law contexts, featuring different pressures for legitimising practice; or, in discourse relating to other 'colonial' contexts – to see if my findings on Northern Ireland connect to a wider 'archive of colonialism'). I've intentionally titled this article '*a* "genealogy" … rather than "*the* genealogy"'[213] of counterterrorism. Much could be done to expand the story told here: making distinctions/connections between discursive fields.

Likewise, there are interesting possibilities for elaborating the conceptual archive's *non-linguistic* parameters. This article has addressed discourse as constituted in language. But recent innovations in discourse studies have repositioned 'discourse' as 'not a particularly linguistic phenomenon'.[214] Proponents of 'multimodalilty' argue '"language" isn't a big enough receptacle for all the semiotic

[205]Hansen, *Security as Practice*, p. 1.

[206]Cornut, 'The practice turn in International Relations theory', p. 5.

[207]Iver Neumann, 'Returning practice to the linguistic turn: The case of diplomacy', *Millennium*, 31:3 (2002), pp. 627–51 (p. 629).

[208]Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 72.

[209]Hopf, 'The logic of habit in International Relations', p. 541.

[210]Ibid.

[211]Swidler, 'Culture in action'.

[212]Donnelly and Steele, 'Critical security history', p. 211.

[213]McQuade, *A Genealogy of Terrorism*, pp. 244–5.

[214]Gavin Kendall and Gary Wickham, *Using Foucault's Methods* (London, UK: SAGE, 1999), p. 39.

stuff we felt sure we could pour into it',[215] and advocate analyses combining textual with non-textual data. Establishing whether the conceptual archive operates multimodally could expand its scope. For example, exploring security's spatial manifestations, and how these also channel archival logics.

Finally, analysis in this article rests on material from 'elite'[216] sources: the UK Parliament/Government. This was a methodological choice, based on data availability. But it also holds implications for the article's attention to discourses' relational character – and oppositional agency's role in shaping conceptual archive logics. Per Foucault, there is 'no free, neutral, independent statement … a statement always belongs to a series or a whole … it is always part of a network of statements'.[217] Future research could expand my treatment of the 'conceptual archive', by considering its wider 'network'. Research into non-elite discourses could build understanding of the archive's *relational* evolution.

These are paths for developing contributions made here: clarifying the conceptual archive's analytical scope, and expanding its parameters. In introducing the 'conceptual archive', this article has illuminated possibilities for maturing security studies' sensitivity to past-present interpellation. I look forward to reading research realising these possibilities in future.

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[215] Gunther Kress, *Multimodality* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010), p. 15.
[216] Laura McAtackney, *An Archaeology of the Troubles* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 46.
[217] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, p. 99.

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