

# INTRODUCTION

## *Deciphering Shadows*



That spring was long, extended from the roots of its hair. An eery cloud was approaching the highlands of Greek Macedonia. Colourless, odourless, a harrowing ghost grinding its invisible claws along the towering peaks of the Pindos Mountains, sharpening its vaporous talons as it dispersed southward across the Balkans. The young girl's nightmares reached a new crescendo. She screamed out in her dreams: 'What is going to happen to my village, my heaven, the only place I am grounded?' Her nightmares intensified, becoming more vivid, her heartbeat raced, tears welled in her eyes, her quivering breath was snatched again by the tentacles of the haunting creature ... The little village obliterated to the rubble of dusty nothingness. This repetitive dream whose power lingers to this day, left a rancid taste in her mouth and lay heavily on her chest, smothering her. The day that followed was torturous.

How does one know when something is off, a bit odd, not quite 'right'? There is something strange, you are certain of its strangeness, but cannot describe it fully or make sense of it, let alone articulate it in a coherent narrative. How does one see patterns that are not obvious and structuring, as Claude Lévi-Strauss would have them, but nonetheless order the world? Instead, you need to tilt your head a degree or two, just a tiny fraction, put your balance on the other hip, and then the pattern starts making some sense, fitting together, appearing in 3D from its murky surroundings. Like a magic picture, there is an ordering pattern, indeed, but the design is all confusing, some might say dull, even banal. But the pattern is there. It is. There – lurking in the background! Lurking as a shadow, a presence, a ghost, a noise, a deep gut feeling. Hovering as a resonance. An atmosphere. A liberating sensation that assures you that things are, after all, what you always thought they might be.

Lurking describes at once that which is always there and the modality by which it is present. It is characterised by shifting density, intensity, proximity, reverberations (hums, radiance, pulsations), tingling on the tips of your hairs, in the pit of the stomach, when your skin is creeping. Lurking is part of life: we are not always aware of its existence – whatever ‘it’ might be – we know it but cannot always see it, make sense of it, or put it into context. It is a noise that in its familiarity has become imperceptible, indistinguishable from all the background fuss. Noise agitates the confusing pattern that camouflages ‘its’ existence. Lurking is something so familiar that it cannot be heard unless it is announced, although you are in tune with its resonant hum. In the mundane everyday, the lurking presence has become part of life, eroding, seeping into those whom it orbits, phasing in and out of proximity, until exploding – sometimes quite literally – onto the scene (cf. Ahmann 2024).

## MODES OF ANNOUNCEMENT

That which lurks steps out of the shadows in highly unpredictable or very familiar ways. It makes you jump when you dream, it is apparent in sudden events and ruptures, announces itself in flashes of imagination out of nowhere, seemingly without any prior knowledge. It is in the dream that ruins the waking day. It lands on desks as dull bureaucracy, it transgresses borders of nation and *ethnos*, it is at the liquid core of spinning planets of ideology. Lurking resides in boxes of knowledge, dusty and crumbling, piled up in humid and suffocating ministries in proud administrative buildings, uncatalogued boxes that retain what is untouched and unreached. It resides in other more metaphorical boxes too, categories with assumed knowledge that are destined to provide ‘ready-to-consume’ responses, on the tip of the shared tongue, and in major international disputes that make hearts bitter and sullen. We all know what these categories reference, the politics, histories, and feelings that are contained within: think, ‘The Cold War’. That which lurks is also nearby in recognisable atmospheres, tastes, and smells that follow us all since childhood, akin to ghosts accompanying us as we walk the Earth. It might take a lot of self-reflection to acknowledge that which lurks and live with it, to start to understand its sources and consequences, its intentions. Atmospheres lurk, too, on the pages of literature, a feeling of an entire epoch caught up in writing as texts and their characters ooze that ‘something’ that makes the era unique, confined to its own time frame on a page, yes, but also seeping over like a pyroclastic flow to immerse our worlds too (cf. Gumbrecht 2012).

Lurking is a shadow that stalks, always attached and inescapable in the light of day and stillness of night – ‘Like any hunting animal, [lurking]

knowledge has night vision' (Serres 2015: 22). Its shadow projects and surrounds, it never leaves. You cannot run away from it. It draws you in. But, as Carl Jung (1971) would have it, turning toward the shadow, liberates. Even if usually suppressed or unnoticed, the shadow overwhelms, takes control, and overwrites 'culture'. Unlike the Derridean sense of haunting, lurking can be liberating as it opens the window into self-reflection, a state of self-awareness that may be unpleasant, disturbing, but illuminating nonetheless. While Jung theorised collective shadow projection to be the divisive mechanism between peoples on either large (nations, majorities and minorities) or small (family, Self, individual) scales, the self-awareness of what is lurking is a liberating mechanism of sensitivity, getting accustomed to the resonant noise of the lurking presence, tuning in to the wavelength. Sensitivity and tuning to surroundings heighten the intensity and purpose of what is lurking, acknowledging its presence and its impact on life – perhaps by overcoming it, learning to live alongside it, in spite of or in tandem with it, or becoming more complete in personhood due to the constant agony of trying to transcend it. Its presence is a constant reminder to strive for betterment. It is, indeed, liberating to knowingly become better through self-awareness in the shadow of the shadow.

Plato has his trope of shadows the wrong way round, says Michel Serres (2015: 27), with the inside of his infamous cave actually being a model of the exterior world full of truths. That is, the darkness of the cave is a reality in itself, not merely an inaccurate representation of unobservable objects under the sun. As with Jules Verne's cavern of stars, each cave, each individual reality, each personal dance with lurking, shows the reality of the world as a labyrinth of connected messages, mirrors, thoughts and information, cast as patterns against the walls for us to decipher. Some sparkle, shining brightly, others emerge from the perpetual darkness as our eyes adjust to being starved of light. Do the shadows, the patterns of information, also see us?, asks Serres. They are part of our experiential world; for both Jung and Serres, perhaps oxymoronically, shadows are enlightening, emerging from the dusky ethers of elsewhere to sprinkle eery light upon our senses.

Lurking can manifest in dreams, breaking into the realm of daily life. It is apparent in 'borrowed' experience, in shivering, in fantasies and daydreaming, and beyond-reality experiences. It hides itself in natural wonders or man-made materials, and stalks the imagination, as in Serres' cavern of interconnected and never-ending knowledge. It is an agitation, a suffocation, a rash and a hinderance, but not something that can be fully detached – like the pain of losing someone you love dearly. In a search to find the terms to describe it, lurking announces its victory over articulation. The victory, if inarticulation, makes its presence more unbearable. Very often the vocabulary to describe phenomena falls short in the magnitude of human

experience. As you approach it, grapple with it, try to stare into its eyes, tell it what you think of it, lurking recedes again into the background pattern, into a state of latency, of existing but not fully manifested (Gumbrecht 2013, Bandak 2022), lost once more in the flow of time, life, pain and hauntology.

Crucially, lurking ultimately provokes *methexi* (communion), which brings realms together in a pinnacle of understanding, crumbling apart dichotomies of past/present, presence/absence, known/unknown, global/local, imagination/reality. Lurking is the bridge that brings these bifurcations into communion, launching a crescendo of affect and feeling. It thus allows us to break down categories of assumed knowledge that are laden with political rhetoric and historical baggage and forge a path of mutual comprehension around the ‘things’ that teeter on the cusp of articulation.

## LURKING COLD WAR

The protagonists of this book experience lurking Cold War in numerous forms. To put these modalities down in words is not easy. While they are adamant about its existence, its precise articulation is difficult to master. By lurking Cold War they refer to the lingering experience of the Cold War in and on their lives in Italy and Greece. This experience may manifest either as a continuum from the actual historical epoch of the Cold War (here defined as the period 1945–89), or a sudden meeting point of imagination, where the Cold War becomes proximate again.

The interlocutors and I have built this understanding by working together for a long time, over the course of seven years, long before the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the public discourse around neo-Cold War relations that has rapidly advanced since 2022. I wish I could accurately capture the somatic ways my interlocutors responded to the first fundamental question, ‘Do you believe that the Cold War is over?’ Their reaction often resembled a confident, almost arrogant, eyes wide open, striking smirk and a loud and confident voice proclaiming: ‘Absolutely not!’, as if they had been waiting for this question to come along, just so they could connect, knowingly, with the person who posed it. The first moment of mutual appreciation was, itself, a point of communion between researcher and interlocutor. From this ultra-confident affirmation we then moved into a prolonged collective effort – and in some instances, struggle – to find ways to put this avowal into ethnographic moments, snippets from their lives where the Cold War still lurks, so that it makes some kind of sense to the reader. We would reach points where we would be driven crazy. How was it possible to be sure of the lingering presence of the Cold War but not be able to purely articulate this belief, this knowledge?

I am fortunate to have formed close and trusting relationships with my interlocutors. Not only because of the ways in which they have devoted time to respond to endless invitations to piece together their stories, but because of their own sensibilities and the faith they have shown in developing a project whose essence is so tricky to pin down. We all want to say something that we hope has value for a reader who is curious about the ways in which historical epochs do not finish when they are ‘supposed to’, or when we turn to the next page of a history textbook. *Lurking Cold War* is a project beyond event-driven history, keying into the resonances of that uncanny ‘something’, as Susan Lepselter (2016) would have it, that makes lifeworlds intelligible. The reader who believes in the value of lived experience will find concrete examples of lurking Cold War and highly individual ways of identifying how lurking is manifested. We can open pathways and suggest possibilities to the reader to reflexively delve into personal historical epochs that have not reached an end, but their lingering presence reveals a sense of experience that is totally individual and makes sense only to them. At the same time, my interlocutors try to commensurate experience by putting it into the paradigm of a digestible narrative.

The aim of this book is to bring value to the ways in which anthropology can critique phenomena that are destined to be analysed by political, bureaucratic, and administrative ‘experts’, looking at big history as a top-down project detached, unaffected and unaffected the lives of everyday people. The project is set in the twenty-first century, its prose destined to capture the ways in which we experience the continuous unfolding of stories of a past supposedly pushed deep into the background, but nevertheless always present, somehow, as something. It poses that history is an emotional *pool* and an emotional *pull* (or, perhaps, even the other way around, where emotion becomes a historical pool/pull) and that people are brought into historical communion by fragments of the past that continue to lurk, in different modalities, moods, and tangibilities.

## CONJURING

The search for ways to express and *feel* lurking has taken me into popular literature, novels, and historical archives. Set during the nineteenth century, *The Yellow Wallpaper* is a classic in feminist literature, addressing the denial of female autonomy and the implications of this repudiation on mental health (Gilman 2015 [1892]). It is centred on a woman who is suffering from postpartum depression. Her husband and brother are both physicians and have taken over her recuperation strategy. Even though her well-being is not

her own project per se, she is reflexive of her situation in terms of treatment plans; ‘Personally, I disagree with their ideas. Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.’ She secretly places her thoughts into a journal, hidden from her husband. He is unaware of the extent of her suffering. ‘He knows there is no *reason* to suffer, and that satisfies him’ (2015 [1892]: 5).

Confined to an empty mansion, she can feel that ‘there is something strange about the house’ (2015 [1892]: 3). Increasingly, she becomes obsessed with the yellow wallpaper that adorns her room with ‘patterns committing every artistic sin’. The wallpaper is ‘dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough to constantly irritate and provoke study’ (2015 [1892]: 4). Its colour is ‘repellent’, with a tenacity to constantly change its hue. The wallpaper starts looking at her ‘as if it *knew* what a vicious influence it had! There is a recurrent spot where the pattern lolls like a broken neck and two bulbous eyes stare at you upside down’ (2015 [1892]: 7). Those eyes cast upon her their everlasting gaze, absurd and unblinking they are everywhere, akin to Serres’ insinuation that the shadows and glimmers of light might be watching the inhabitants of Jules Verne or Plato’s cave. In her loneliness, her attachment to the room gets stronger. She follows the highly unusual and unconventional pattern, yearning for a sort of resolution. She loses herself in her effort to decipher the pattern. Eventually ‘the dim shapes get clearer every day’ until a ‘faint figure behind seemed to shake the pattern, just as if she wanted to get out’ (2015 [1892]: 13–14). It is a female figure that is trapped in the pattern. The woman tries to figure out the logic behind the movement of multiple patterns and sub-patterns and how they have managed to trap the female figure, keeping her still. But the female figure behind the patterns ‘gets out in the daytime!’ (2015 [1892]: 20). In her effort to capture the figure, the woman hides a rope. As the female figure behind the pattern multiplies, the observing woman becomes one of them. *She* is now behind the wallpaper, enmeshed in its pattern. She fancies creeping into the room, making herself comfortable in the wallpaper and trying to find a path in it. From trying to decipher the pattern ever-looming over her, she becomes part of it, entangled within. Now creeping around her husband as part of the pattern, creeping ‘over him every time’ (2015 [1892]: 26), she is both finally free from his domination and out of the clutches of the wallpaper.

The feminist intentions of *The Yellow Wallpaper* have had great influence on the writing of this book. Not only because the protagonist is a woman who is subjugated under dominant, in this case patriarchal, patterns, but because she finds release through another woman, the lurking female figure in the wallpaper. There is reflection here of the ways in which female participants identify the lurking Cold War through dominant patterns, often

imposed top-down but becoming engrained in everyday life and adopted subjectively into individual lives with disparate meanings. The dominant narratives of the Cold War, produced by mainly male figures in ‘the Great Powers’, resonate with macho domestic politics, and reflect family relations in Italy and Greece. This opens up questions of ‘whose knowledge?’ and becomes the reference point for sense-making, and ‘from what perspective’ is history authored, read, and archived? Some of my interlocutors, as will become apparent, reach such conclusions through feminist studies that help them locate Cold War domination first and foremost. The Cold War is often portrayed as a power game of white male politicians with the gift to create history. For my female participants in Italy, the pattern of Cold War domination maps onto similar patterns in the Italian patriarchy. This realisation allows them to make sense of these resemblances together, through feminist literature, and cultural critique. Reflecting on their own experiences as women in Italy, they are able to identify domination and then correlate this with the Cold War on both an intimate and global scale. Across the board, the dominating presence that keeps alternative versions of knowledge suppressed is of primary concern to the women. Reaching understanding through feminist studies is fundamental for many of the people in this book.

As a writer, one of the immediate appeals of the novel is the way in which feminist studies offer a clear pathway to understanding global and local politics. The female protagonist of *The Yellow Wallpaper* reaches deep levels of self-reflection and awareness through deciphering the patterns. In a similar way to how Serres believes that deciphering the immediate patterns and messages of one’s own cave can provide information – truths and realities – about the wider world beyond, so finding pathways through the yellow wallpaper links the intimate surrounds of a bedroom to global systems of governance and patriarchal domination. Or one might think back to similarities with Jung’s argument on turning towards shadows, facing them head-on, and finding enlightenment through their darkness and entrapment. The lurking Cold War, I suggest, operates in a similar fashion to the interaction between the woman and the wallpaper, becoming infused in personal worlds, a presence in the form of patterns and atmospheres – that *something* – that traverses scales and scopes of individual, family, communal, and global orders. People become one with the lurking, the pattern takes over, they see the room from the perspective of the wallpaper.

Finally, it is the lurking female figure in the wallpaper who liberates our protagonist. Similarly, women in this book find a clear path to deciphering dominant patterns of the world through feminist readings. They are able to peel off the layers of global political domination that are hidden in patterns and sub-patterns, interlinking pathways and networks, with the help of feminist literature. Indeed, global politics and the male-authored academic



disciplines that provide the popular consumption of Cold War histories are made familiar, or deconstructed, through feminist texts.

The process of pattern deciphering results in a deep level of self-awareness and reflexivity. Eleonora, one of the protagonists in *Lurking*, was deeply engrossed in feminist texts during her university years. She read articles and books that made a strong argument against patriarchy and the subjugation of women. Such readings were critical to deciphering patterns and sub-patterns of domination, from her own friends and family to the Italian state and international governing bodies. She could then successfully transfer this knowledge to examine Cold War discourses as dominant ordering patterns that sustain a narrative that puts the complexity of humans into banal *Us* versus *Them* binaries. For Eleonora, masculinity was carefully crafted into a disciplinary narrative of authoritative voice. The same masculinity that controls the settings between genders serves as the operating principle of the Cold War world. For her, the Cold War economy *is* a reflection of the masculine world. Her intellectual hero, Luce Irigaray, inspires Eleonora not only because of the critique she launched on Sigmund Freud, but also owing to her stance on the human capacity to transcend (a trait Eleonora shares with another of my interlocutors, Akilas). ‘Irigaray writes with a strong irony that the real world with people born in this way is a world full of ghosts, since a “ghost has never been stopped by a wall, or even a door, much less by a curtain or a veil”’ (Irigaray 1985: 282 in Gu 2009: 51). The female figure in the wallpaper is a ghost, or perhaps a figment of Earthly reality, who cannot be stopped. Regardless of scale, like this female figure, the Cold War is lurking in life, its lingering existence manifested in crevasses, in tastes, in stones, from the house to the societal mood or atmosphere – what Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (2012) has famously identified as the *Stimmung* of the time. It is in the surges and lulls of feeling, partially of this world, partially somewhere else, parallel and intertwined, both contemporary and elsewhere. These fluctuations of the everyday are lost in the disciplines of International Relations (IR) and Politics, often even in History. Anthropology captures their oscillations.

## SO, WHAT’S THIS BOOK ALL ABOUT?

*Lurking Cold War* takes in accounts from Italy and Greece and has its root in a Leverhulme Trust project that explored the intergenerational trauma of displaced children after the floods of 1951 and 1953 in Calabria. As a consequence of the natural disaster, children were relocated by the Communist Party and the then governing Christian Democracy party to live with communist families in the north of Italy or to reside in summer camps and Church



institutions respectively. These events are silenced in national or ‘official’ accounts of the past, and often covered up by the people themselves, but are representative of the ideological battle for the future generations of Italy (see Pipyrrou 2020). This Cold War episode continues to lurk – in the background of historical texts (where it does not explicitly make itself known), in the lifestories of my interlocutors who toil with the schism of their childhood years, and as a vaporous atmosphere entangling the 1950s and the present day. Although the accounts of displaced Calabrian children do not appear in this book – they have been written up elsewhere (Pipyrrou 2016b, 2017, 2020) – this particular fieldwork was fundamental for turning my attention to the continued lived dimension of the Cold War.

The research presented here has taken place over the course of seven years, during which time I have consulted approximately 25 interlocutors in Italy and 25 in Greece. For purposes of clarity, the Cold War era is here defined by the period between the end of the Second World War in 1945 and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Italy and Greece provide a comparative framework in terms of Cold War experience. There are strong similarities in the ways in which the Cold War was articulated both bottom-up and top-down from the strong presence of communism, the direct link with the Soviet Communist Party as point of reference, the major anti-communist influence of Catholic and Orthodox Churches and the United States, and the fact that both countries were not part of the Eastern Bloc. In terms of academia, in both locations disciplines such as History and International Relations took over as leading the discussion about the Cold War, but it is remarkable that the first two decades of the period remain largely unexplored in both countries. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia further brought back discourses among people in Italy and Greece that were once thought to be confined to the Cold War era. As my research progressed, these neo-Cold War reference points became more palpable and started to infuse conversations that were initiated long before this recent event.

People in this book hail from different generations, and although they are often divided by nations and book-bound histories they share some common ground as they reflect on everyday lives through a trope of global politics. I always find it reassuring when human beings pull out the same ‘critical events’ from their lives to connect and transcend categories such as the nation, religion, language, gender, and age. They all engage in historical revisionism or post-historical revisionism to conclude that (a) their narratives offer a glimpse of truth from an otherwise silenced voice, (b) they speak up against well-established regimes of truth or categorical knowledge, and (c) they point to a certain ‘authenticity’ of their account which is derivative of the above two conditions. More precisely, it is intriguing to see how an intersectional approach to revising history and the ways in which lurking

Cold War is shaped and manifested sheds light on a generational stance vis-à-vis reconciliation and mediation practices, attribution (or not) of blame, forgetting or ‘moving on in life’, and delayed grief. Further, the interlocutors seem to gravitate towards an understanding of slow politics which indicates a gradual process of awareness. They are witnesses to the incredible suffering of knowing, to haunting memories and the fragmentation of history, and this requires time and distance for them to reflect on the oscillation of proximate lurking pasts.

The Cold War continues to resonate in Italy and Greece in terms of social practice, its influences on bodily reactions, and how it fuels imagination. The concept of ‘lurking’, around which this book revolves, aims to capture the haunting, intangible, and affective legacies of the Cold War at the grassroots level, from silences surrounding forced child displacement and the politics of kin relations, to interactions with the material environment and the continued threat of the nuclear age. With much media interest in neo-Cold War politics on both sides of the Atlantic often linked to the politics of fear and the fake news era, the book interrogates whether an analysis of the Cold War should be confined to a specific historical epoch, or whether it is always linked to surges in global events – points when, Serres poses, time crumples together as waves rise and descend on the high seas of history (Serres 2000: 64). Addressing questions of whether the Cold War ever really ended and what types of future society have risen in southern Europe over the past three decades, *Lurking* examines whether the nightmare of a potentially suicidal end of history was ever lifted. Anthropologically, we know extraordinarily little about the ways in which the Cold War continues to be lived in the twenty-first century outside of popularised and ‘news-worthy’ events. As is demonstrated through a range of ethnographic cases from Italy and Greece, Cold War-shaped experiences, even staunch ideologies, are still very much alive both in the form of detrimental experiences lived first-hand and through intergenerational narratives. The book addresses the pressing need to connect the Cold War with contemporary questions concerning democracy, belonging, and the rise in neo-nationalist movements. *Lurking*, I propose, is a way forward in considering how the pervasive period of radical imagination and silence that defines the Cold War continues to inform contemporary individual and collective experience, thus illuminating understandings of the Cold War not only on the scale of international geopolitics, but in the ongoing intimate personal dramas animated by affective and material legacies. The concept of lurking foregrounds how people experience communion (*methexi*) with the past, where categories of assumed knowledge and supposedly rigid dichotomies are disassembled, bridged, and brought into new orbits.

The legacy of the Cold War in Italy and Greece engages radical questions of historical revisionism and whether ideological polarisations that cost families their lives are really worth fighting for. What does the family offer a father-stranger who were kept away from each other for so many years? Deeper questions touch upon the existential torture of a collective grand master narrative that does not allow the accommodation of individual pain and drama. Did personal experience really take place, really mean anything, if there is nothing to show for it, no affective or material manifestations? The lurking Cold War is tangible and intangible, a tantalising something that teases and provokes the people of this monograph. Lurking exists in the presence or absence of lived experience, exhibited in half-burned pictures found in dilapidated walls, in dreary abandoned homes, and in the fear or anticipation of conflict. Lurking creeps forward in the patterns of fear and the aesthetics of anticipation, coming together like a magic eye collage to present patterns of meaning, and of being-in-the-world.

The first fundamental question that drives my enquiry is the ways in which historical phenomena prowl, manifest, and impact the everyday lives of people often perceived to be on the periphery of the main historical event. Is memory enough of a modality to capture these aspects of experience or do we need to turn our attention to the holistic interlinked framework of human comprehension? This is not an insignificant challenge, since as anthropologists we need to find ways to move beyond categories that reproduce the same story again and again, instead interrogating the gaps, intersections, and the ooze that seeps between the porous membranes of life (Bandak and Knight 2024). For all the identity politics and arbitrary labeling of belonging, people do not live in stagnant or stationary categories of ethnicity, politics, economics, nationalism, history, and so forth – these are what Nigel Rapport calls the ‘epiphenomena’ of the human condition (Rapport 2014: 111). Serres goes one step further to proclaim that ‘every evil in the world’ comes ‘from belongingness’, since it incites ‘comparisons and rivalries’ between rigid categories that impede attempts to comprehend alternative truths between and across human beings (2018: 75–76). My interlocutors are not contained by the boxes of history and global politics, and to reproduce these categories on the page is both dangerous and misleading (see Pipyrrou 2024). How do we come to know what we know, to inhabit the crossovers between bodies of knowledge and categories of identifying our being? What about our methods and perhaps our willingness to learn new things and make novel connections that do not ‘fit’ predetermined identity markers?

The accounts in this monograph address how the Cold War comes into being at unexpected or seemingly irrelevant times. For some, it jumps in

front of them, suddenly revealing its pattern in a painful manner; for others it lurks in their imagination, tantalizing them, making them wary of how the ‘world works’. For others still, it is always clearly there as a suffocating atmosphere of torturing emic/etic sets of parameters that they see as stable; they may rearrange the pattern of the global conversation but it still exists, smothering and strangling with a stubborn tenacity.

The second fundamental question of the book relates to how one makes sense of the pattern of lurking Cold War and all the nodes that connect disparate points of experience with current life. Here it is important to turn attention to the value of lived experience which, when captured through qualitative methods, can enhance commensurability across phenomena. Abandoning orthodoxies and reductions, anthropology can seriously adapt its toolkit for such commensuration between scales of human experience that uncovers subjugated knowledge.

Many years ago, when I first submitted the proposal for a module ‘The Anthropology of the Cold War’ to be taught at my home institution, the University of St Andrews in Scotland, there was, perhaps understandably, a discussion in the School as to whether the Cold War was a suitable topic to be taught in a social anthropology department. The subject, it was argued by some, suited the discipline of International Relations or, perhaps, Politics, or History, but was not within the scope of Social Anthropology. Yet, anthropologists have made a magnificent effort to show the relevance of the discipline in navigating the individual or fine-grained detail of experience within global idioms and overarching patterns of international politics. I am extremely grateful to my colleagues for their listening ears at these formative stages, some of whom have significantly influenced my thoughts and shaped my understanding of the ways in which the Cold War lurks in lives and what anthropology might bring to the conversation.

When disciplines such as History, IR, and Politics speak of global provocateurs during the Cold War, Anthropology brings attention to the everyday actors, individuals, and communities whose lives were drastically affected and altered, thus bringing the two scales of experience into the same analytical sphere. Students who have subsequently attended my module in its different iterations have been inspirational with their own stories and reflections, and continue to strengthen my conviction that younger generations can tap into novel realms of knowledge that have not yet been fully shaped or categorised. Indeed, my students brought knowledge of the Cold War through familiarity with (for me an astonishing amount of) video games, science fiction literature, visual materials, visits to tourist and heritage sites such as bunkers and other Cold War structures, and even abandoned train stations and nuclear sites. They also brought imaginaries through family stories, senses of present/absent history, or, for some, a ‘feeling that (I) need

to know more' about how the Cold War lives today. Oh, they know a lot! And the Cold War, it seems, is present in their lives too, in a multiplicity of registers.

## CALABRIA, AGAIN AND AGAIN

As mentioned, I first came to the idea of lurking Cold War through a project on displaced children in 1950s Reggio Calabria, people who are now in the latter years of life. This research was fundamental in helping me make the connections through different scales of Cold War experience: the United States, Russia, Christian-Democrats, Communists, civic groups affiliated with political parties, family ideologies, and finally the experience of the displaced children themselves, some 70 years on from the original, generally silenced, event. As an anthropologist, I started from the individual's experience of displacement, but the bigger picture revealed itself very early in the project. It is here where I started seeing a pattern of lurking Cold War in the lives of the displaced children as local and global, family and party, tangible and atmospheric, as presence and absence, all mingling in the lifeworlds of my participants.

But why Italy and Greece? Italy and Greece are not exceptional in the ways in which the Cold War lurks in people's lives, but, as two locations peripheral to global narratives yet with complex internal sociopolitical histories, they do offer a profitable opportunity for conversation. Let us take, for instance, the question of how 'national memory' of the Second World War was shaped in southern European countries. A painstaking historical revisionism that coincided with national and international political agendas and new academic research, challenged a monolithic narrative of the 'patriotic war' by focusing on the memories of people who lived through the events but who were not directly involved with the resistance (van Boeschoten 2006: 3; Cappelletto 2003). In both Italy and Greece, this development came about on a national level in the 1980s, as processes of nation-building entered a new 'European' era that looked to revisit war-time experiences from the security of political union and extended peacetime, without the need to whitewash the details of the original event in favour of post-war national unity (cf. Price 2016: 6–7). New political alliances were being formed and there was enough social and political distance from 'The War' for people to delve deeper into the complexities of 'being' in conflict, many of which had not yet been publicly or privately resolved. Such a development is critical if we are to capture a picture that moves away from focusing on political motives as organising principles for action across dichotomic categories to rather focus on what influenced

people to act in the everyday, often guided by what they considered in the best interests of looking after their families.

Riki van Boeschoten, two decades ago, brought into the same analytic framework north Italy and Greece to argue against exceptionalism regarding phenomena of divided memory of the traumatic past. Indeed, divided memory ‘occurred widely either as a dominant feature or as a single strand of communal memory’ (van Boeschoten 2006: 4). Here, I push the argument further towards an anthropological approach that centres the ways in which historical phenomena lurk in life and how this lurking is articulated beyond an analytical memory or purely narrative framework.

For this project I have consulted literature, archives, and cultural paraphernalia produced in and about the Cold War not only in Italy and Greece but also in the United Kingdom, where I have lived since 2003 – from journalistic reportage and literary protest lyrics to fictions of apocalypse, espionage, and paranoia. I looked into work in the context of a wide variety of official and unofficial media forms, including government propaganda films, civil defence leaflets, poetry and songs, visual art, and film. Connections between these seemingly unconnected temporal and spatial domains beyond the fieldsites in Italy and Greece will become apparent in the navigation of this book.

And connection forms a theoretical, as well as methodological, backbone of my argument too, with the proposal that people are brought into communion with history in a way that breaks down borders of objective/subjective, form/interpretation and known/unknown. The concept of *methexi*, partially drawn from the work of Plato, is a pivot in how my interlocutors relate to and participate in history.

## METHEXI

Throughout this book, and particularly in the epilogue, I build a theory of *methexi*. *Methexi* can be translated as participation or communion. It has connotations with Victor Turner’s (1969) *communitas*, since it is about bringing people, things, and feelings together in a domain of communal experience through a rite of passage of sorts, namely the Cold War. There is a sharing of common experience in an unstructured state, by crossing a blurred threshold, but there is something more inherent or intuitive about *methexi*. For example, my friend and interlocutor Apollonios brought up the term to describe his experience of dancing with his wife. He did not even have to anticipate her moves, since he was one with her. There is no need to ‘read’ the situation, he insisted, or learn a movement because the connection was already there. Its form pre-existed and he would tap into it when

the situation arose. It all comes together at the right time, intuitively, as the latent properties of knowing rise to the fore. There is no need for people to tell you what to do, what to search for, or what to learn, Apollonios insisted, because you are in *methexi* with people and place.

*Methexi* is, I would argue, more complex and wider reaching than potential kin-terms like embodiment or connectivity. Or even intuition or participation in their English language usage. Plato explained *methexi* as the way the particular and the form are related, an experience that brings together the performer and the audience in a method of group sharing. For Plato, *methexi* links personal or subjective opinion with reality and objective forms – the experiential and the foundational intermingle and inform each other, rather than being separate domains. Influencing Plato was ancient Greek theatre, where audiences would often join in, ad-libbing along with the actors, in a form of *methexi* that allowed for hybridity and symbiosis between script and interpretation.

For our case of the lurking Cold War, Platonic empirical and foundational forms are analogous with individual experiences of Cold War history. The Cold War is the underlying form with which people relate through communion. People do not need to read the situations being presented, and they do not need to be told if things have finished or not in the way that global politics and international relations might preach. They are one with the historical details that inherently and intuitively live with them. They are in communion with history. As Apollonios, states, when the time and place is right, they know what to do, they feel other people (dead and alive), and participate in the dance of the lurking Cold War.

In his reading of Plato, Leo Sweeney (1983: 2) comments on *methexi*,

The Greek verb *metechein* (and its derivatives) does not have ... misleading connotation[s], since *meta* with the genitive means: in the midst of, among, in common with, along with. The verb *metechein* would, then, mean: to have along with, to have in common with (by inference) to be dependent on, to be in relationship with. Thus, the noun *methexis* indicates a state of having in common with, of dependence upon, of being related to. (The verb *metalambanein* is sometimes used as a synonym for *metechein* and differs mainly by suggesting an ongoing process: to come to have along with.)

Plato proposes that individuals are caused to be what they are by the presence in them of forms. The forms provoke the individuals to be partially defined by them, in multiple ways. There might be one singular form or structuring format – for us, the Cold War – but this is related to, brought into communion, in multifarious ways, by individuals. Platonic *methexi* brings together objective and subjective, form and interpretation, and examples and imitations. It is a communion of difference and diversity in representations of



form imbedded in subjects. *Methexi*, then, straddles the blurred boundaries of History and historicities, known and unknown, real and imaginary where difference breeds mutual understanding.

This blurring of form and interpretation, or the subjective interpretation of historiographical script, could facilitate a critique of Turner's structure and anti-structure, or Lévi-Straussian patterns and binaries. I prefer to take categorical blurring down a route identified in existing work on the Cold War, in particular ideas about arrested history, suspension, and imaginaries.

## MEET THE MUSES, PART I: BLURRED AND ARRESTED STATES

For one of my interlocutors in Italy, Eleonora, an inspirational figure for thinking about time and history is the physicist Carlo Rovelli, who makes a compelling argument that 'our vision of the world is blurred because the physical interactions between the parts of the world to which we belong and the rest are blind to many variables' (2019: 126).<sup>1</sup> This blurring depends on what 'I *do not* register' and is intrinsically linked to entropy: 'The entropy of the world does not depend only on the configurations of the world; it also depends on the way in which we are blurring the world, and this depends on what the variables of the world are that we interact with. That is to say, on the variables with which our part of the world interacts' (2019: 127).

Abstract though this might at first seem, Rovelli is basically making an argument for comprehension through blurring, living on the rugged edges of knowledge rather than in clarity. There is a blindness to the variables that makes reality whole, and the parts of the world we choose to interact with shape our experience of objects and atmospheres, and physically produce existential orders (on entropy and the revelation of hidden knowledge, see Knight 2025). The notion of 'particularity' is born only at the moment we begin to see the universe in a blurred and approximate way, not as complete or precisely sorted (Rovelli 2019: 30). My interlocutor, Eleonora, enjoys thinking with this concept of blurring as a way to better understand her place in history. Blurring is a human organisational principle to make sense of experience and ensure that humans have the agential capacity to blur the world. For the imperfect human, clarity and order are only possible with blurred vision, if they squint their eyes and invite blindness to creep in to their peripheral vision. Some people are aware of the blind spots, others choose to ignore them, while for others still, the blurred sidelines go unnoticed.

Interacting with the past, or with experience registered as transpired in the past, people look for traces, which Rovelli argues are everywhere. For

something to leave a trace it has to ‘become *arrested*, to stop moving’ and this can happen only in an ‘irreversible process’ (2019: 145, my emphasis). In a sense, the trace is a standard unit of history, an entity or event with its own coordinates of belonging, and a category with a spatiotemporal location. The trace references a bundle of relations that are packaged together and only partially accessible due to undeniably residing ‘in the past’. These assemblages of arrested relationships are what we would commonly consider to be the events that form the building blocks of book-bound history. These, Rovelli would have it in a somewhat positivistic tone, represent the irreversible and indisputable moments that leave a trace.

I believe that the trace speaks to the ethnographic project at hand if we consider how, in its arrested state, the borders of the seemingly neat packaging or categories of historical events become blurred, are ill-defined, and incorporate a porous membrane through which information about the past, present, and future, can pass. My interlocutors reside on the blurred borders of categorical history, linking into the arrested relationships that not only leave a trace but continue to directly affect people’s lives. I prefer to consider the trace as a moment of the past that has been caught in suspended animation, like a cartoon character who has overshot the rocky ledge and realises they are about to plummet to the ground – the character pauses, suspended in mid-air, to slowly consider their fate. The trace is not isolated in its connectedness to other points on the timeline, but rather enhanced, brought into sharp focus, recognisable, relatable, and possibly retractable. The relations, affects, and pedagogy of the trace hold contemporary relevance, even if it cannot be fully accessed or identified. As Rovelli’s timeline moves on from event to event, the cracks and passages in between the neatly categorised knowledge are home to atmospheres, affects, relations, and people – all the dark matter which cannot fully escape the arrested animation of the past-made-present.

Unlike physicist Rovelli, anthropologists have generally looked at time as more socially constructed, whether within the Heideggerian tradition of ‘being in time’ (Bryant and Knight 2019), a Gellian cultural construction (Gell 1992), or in terms of ‘historicity’ where the past becomes proximate to present experience by way of its social, political, and ethical use-value (Hirsch and Stewart 2005). Italian social theorist, Ernesto de Martino (2012 [1956]) has further argued that people may be torn from timelines to reside in cultural and historical limbo in a ‘crisis of presence’. Triggered by traumatic experience or ritual passage, a crisis of presence has utopian qualities as the person is freed from cultural etiquette while looking down upon history from a perspective not pre-conditioned by society (on living in spaces of liminality, see Thomassen 2014). For the purposes of the current book, I find the work of Carole McGranahan particularly inspiring.

McGranahan (2010) discusses the notion of arrested histories, enquiring into the ways in which ‘histories are made and lived, rather than asking only which ones are and why’ (2010: 3). Arrested, for McGranahan, can refer to various possibilities that can or cannot materialise from an era or event. Histories are not suppressed indefinitely, but are instead ‘arrested or delayed until a time in the future when it will be deemed appropriate to tell them’. They remain relevant, stay on the blurry sidelines (by way of lurking, one might contend), waiting to encroach on people’s lives when the time is right (or, perhaps, wrong) (2010: 5). The notion of arrested here points to ‘unfinished business’, something that will potentially come up with renewed fervour and force to declare its truth or gain a new force during the time of being in arrest. Arrested does not mean static, or in stasis, or even complete, but a blurred interaction with the variables of the world that humans utilise to make sense of their particularity in their ‘delayed form of historical time’ (2010: 6). During this period of delay, arrested histories can gain potency, take on renewed or skewed relevance, or be revised and rewritten. This delayed form of historical time is particularly interesting when we look at the ways in which history *matters* for different generations. As Benedetto Croce argued, history matters because I see something that makes sense for me, where I am now, and therefore a connection, say with the Ancient Greeks, is possible in a form of ‘dialectical thinking’ (Benjamin 1968a in Walton 2019, see Croce 1960; Pipyrrou 2016a). This, of course, is not to suggest a primordial connection but more a dynamic way that history makes sense for different generations who are capable of linking to moments of the past, transforming them for contemporary purposes, and making history their own. The understanding and pertinence of arrested pasts is novel on each occasion, as individuals reach *methexi*, or communion with the traces of history that help them comprehend their circumstances. At the point of *methexi* the blurred images are sharpened, come into focus, and take on more intense meaning somewhere between the pinnacle of euphoria and the angst of dystopia.

For example, the generation who succeeded those who lived through the Second World War may feel less inclined to critically engage with the political events that defined the lives of their parents. They may not be silent as such, but they can look at the politics from a non-attributive perspective. Their children, however, may take a different stance that explores how to reach new truths, or more complete truths, about their generational history. They search for comprehension in arrested histories in a way their parents may not. In so doing, they adopt a more global, yet totally personal stance on politics, collapsing spatial and temporal coordinates to make the traces their own, to reach a point of communion with historical events that offers a fuller understanding or alternative truths. Their endeavour often starts from

something that speaks to them personally, emanating from an intense proximity, for instance cultivated through their familiarity with social media.

To live with forgetting and the torture of belonging as a paradigm of truth does not only refer to people wrestling ‘individually and collectively with the pains of belonging’ (belonging is Serres’ great ‘evil’, lest we forget) (McGranahan 2010: 6). For where do truths belong if not in paradigms defined by disciplinary knowledge and power? We certainly need to insert the variable of pain and contradiction into these paradigms of truth to blur the boundaries of established knowledge because histories are lived in pain, in the contradictions in one’s everyday life as a ‘site of lived impermanence’ (McGranahan 2010: 5). On the blurry edges of categorical knowledge and established truths contradiction resides, a space of both epistemic murk and clarity in which the world and one’s place in it are constantly being reconfigured in a simultaneous space of ‘fixidity and mobility’ (McGranahan 2010: 5). My interlocutors express a clarity of living with imperfect blurred vision, knowing and not knowing the lurking presence of *something* that propels their world, that has almost eternal relevance, and that encroaches upon their assumptions through literature, bureaucracy, material objects, or intangible and almost unexplainable atmospheres. Rovelli ultimately acknowledges the contradictions inherent in the state of arrest, ‘The intrinsic quantum indeterminacy of things produces a blurring, like Boltzmann’s blurring, which ensures – contrary to what classic physics seemed to indicate – that the unpredictability of the world is maintained even if it were possible to measure everything that is measurable’ (2019: 86).

## MEET THE MUSES, PART II: FORGETTING AND DREAMING OTHERWISE

Perhaps we need to look at the power of what is left out of the paradigms of truth that shape visions and versions of the contemporary world. Or more precisely, to look at the effect of leaving out bits and pieces of truth paradigms and what these omissions achieve. People may choose to forget (see Winichakul 2002). They see forgetting, permanent or delayed, as the only viable option of moving on in life (Portelli 2014). That does not mean that histories and events are forgotten. They may be arrested, purposely forgotten, or deferred. Again, this is closely related to the ways in which people engage with history. As Jeremy Walton argues with reference to past empires, some histories ‘refuse to be forgotten’ and instead are ‘retrofitted and deployed to new ends’ (2019: 354). Oscillating between amnesia and post-imperial *hyperthymesia*, Walton acknowledges the limits ‘of memory as a rubric and concept for comprehending multi-scalar processes of social, cultural and

political duration, transformation, diminishment and disappearance over time' (2019: 354). Hyperthymesia is also interesting in the same way as forgetting, omitting, or arresting. Hyperthymesia, the 'exhaustive memory of specific events that strangles narration with an excess of detail', may be the result of deliberately approximating experience in the hope of overcoming crises and thus being able to 'see' the self in the future.<sup>2</sup> As Daniel M. Knight (2015) argues, the reason why certain historical epochs mattered for Greeks during the financial crisis was precisely because the past can provide a powerful anchor of hope that current affairs can be overcome. As well as being a temporal reference 'back' to the past, Knight argues, proximity to bygone times is also a futural orientation that draws people out of the crisis present to look beyond the current horizon of destitution to project toward divergent, more positive, future possibilities. In short, if people have overcome worse or comparable crises in the past, there will be a post-crisis future for us, too, and communion with the has-been provides pathways to alternative versions of the yet-to-come.

The space of forgetting swallows up contradictions and shelters deferrals (McGranahan 2010: 19). What is the productivity, if any, in a perpetual deferring, other than replacing the truth with a futural potential that constantly fades? Generations shed accountability by deferring to the next, asking them to own the responsibility to deal with the past (Croce 1960; Pipyrrou 2016a). This book registers some of these configurations that are themselves arrested and left out of the paradigms of truth that speak about the Cold War and any other unfinished historical business, for that matter. What does it matter to talk about that which lurks, which is left out of the grand narratives of History and Politics? What are the effects of 'speaking half-truths' (Petryna 2013: 69)?

Adriana Petryna, in the context of the Cold War disaster that is the Chernobyl meltdown, argues that our partial interaction with the world rests upon believing: 'Believing implies a pact' where 'experiences of history are recontextualized to address the present' (2013: 59, 68). Petryna makes a compelling argument regarding the disturbing absence of long-term studies that address the question of surviving post-Chernobyl. How is it possible that science does not look into the long-term human and social effects of such a crisis? When the event is 'over', the book closes on this human episode of history. This is a disciplinary problem with hardcore science being short-sighted and not looking into the longitude of human experience. How is it possible to not centre people when looking at the remarkable fact of human survival? Stones, much like fossils and teeth, are durable building blocks of human/non-human interactions, that 'resist the pressure of disappearance'. Arrested stones with biochemical traces point 'to assemblages of life and matter and larger living environments that no longer exist; they

dog the certainties of knowledge systems and the authority we attribute to them' (Petryna 2013: xiv).

So, knowledge of the human exists in more-than-human environments that often step into scientific enquiry in place of the human subjects themselves. For objects, perhaps, are not so elusive or drowned in the affects and emotions of critical events. In the context of the current book, we might ask, 'what is the serendipitous knowledge that a stone-built house or a deep basement revealed to Elpida and Stefano, if not the potential for newer and more complete truths?' Dreaming, imagining, and atmospheres are a few of the modalities of human interaction with place and space that creates and recreates history. As Charles Stewart (2012) and Nadia Seremetakis (1991) argued quite some time ago, the imaginary of dreaming is the beginning of something yet to come. In Seremetakis' case, death starts far earlier than the actual time of biological death. This tells us a lot about the potential of understanding experience as not bound by casual temporal markings – death therefore as a historical experience is not bound to biology (an event that ends biology), or the linear progression of time. Rather, death occurs first in the space of dreaming, in the imaginary, at a temporal scale which is more reflexive and thus manifested in new forms and shapes of the human insertion in history. In Stewart's work, dreaming both overwrites established accounts of history – even those officially endorsed by the state and the Church – while projecting imagined futures which will become realised presents.

My point here is that the Cold War is not tied only to big-scale events and grand narratives, or even the spoken word of my interlocutors. It is something domesticated through the human capacity to imagine, project, forget, and perceive it through aesthetics that define human experience. Like my dream in the opening vignette of this book that resonated with the reportage of the Chernobyl disaster, lurking Cold War infiltrates all capacities and senses. My interlocutors dream, touch, feel shudders to the core, and are blindsided by the Cold War, which has, and still can, become part of life yet-to-come.

Joe Masco takes up the gauntlet of exploring how pathways to alternate and multiple truths heavily rely on sensory experience. He argues that underground testing in Los Alamos during the first decades after the Second World War 'fundamentally changed the technoaesthetic experience of conducting weapons science' (2006: 71). Underground testing replaced a full sensory experience of the exploding bomb (producing fear and awe in the mode of the dynamic sublime) with a more limited form closer to what Immanuel Kant called the 'mathematical sublime' (Wang 2020). Rather than solely physical fear, for Kant, the mathematical sublime was an inundating of the senses with complex, overwhelming data, similar to the vivid over-detail

of hyperthymesia, I might suggest. The underground testing deprived the senses of ‘reality’ in, one might say, blurring the boundaries of observable history in the making. The discrepancy between the sights and sounds of nuclear testing and the repercussions of the experimentations – quite in opposition to the sensory experience of Chernobyl, one might expect – brings another level to the concept of interior states of processing Cold War experience: here the interior was quite literally inside the Earth, rather than human imagination or dreaming.

Petryna and Masco converge in foregrounding the contrasts in the public repression of interior states and how individuals internally draw together knowledge of historical accountability and truth (Petryna 2013: 69). One of the drastic effects of endless, successive nuclear bomb simulations was that the scientists were fully immersed in them, losing sight after a point that ‘they were computational and not reality’; the reality had been internally transformed to sci-fi (Masco 2006: 91). This imaginary, as Cornelius Castoriadis argued, is tied to the ways in which humans deal with the world and their being in the world in imaginative and creative fashions. Imagination makes things possible and plausible as the ‘The imaginary ... is the subject’s whole creation of a world for itself’ (1984: 5). Thus, ‘dreams, desire, wish, pleasure, fantasy’ are constitutive as well as the connecting link of micro and macro political scaling (Elliott 2002: 143) that renders history intelligible, relatable, domesticated, and lurking with the potential to ‘surge forth’ (Castoriadis 1995: 182 in Elliott 2002). Here, we might note that Castoriadis mirrors the terms employed by Serres in describing how history (or imaginaries) tends to rise and fall in eventedness, with surges and troughs. Going a step further, however, Castoriadis puts the surges of history in rhythmical terms, akin to how Gumbrecht describes how atmospheres of epochs hum with orchestral resonances. The imaginary, Castoriadis suggests, has ‘the capacity to posit that which is not, to see in something that which is not there’. Against reductive visual accounts of the imaginary, Castoriadis defines the radical imaginary not as the creation of images in the mind or in society, but rather in terms of the signifiable. As he remarks, ‘one of the gross inadequacies of Lacan’s conception of the imagination is his fixation on the scopic. For me, if one is speaking of stages that are worked out, the imagination par excellence is the imagination of the musical composer ... Suddenly, figures surge forth that are not in the least visual. They are essentially auditory and kinetic – for there is also rhythm’ (1995: 182).

In Los Alamos, Masco (2006: 126) notes how two potent imaginaries have emerged in the post-Cold War era concerning the politics of archival knowledge and secrecy: nuclear weapons science and Pueblo religion. Both perspectives rely on secrecy, a compartmentalisation of knowledge, and the social hierarchy of who knows what and why to control access to social and



material power. Similarly, both systems of knowledge make claims on controlling the essential powers of the unseen universe, for scientists in the form of the atom, for Pueblo religious leaders via intimate understanding of the reciprocal local bonds structuring nature. The imaginaries tap into cultural traditions, read history from inside/outside the blurry margins, and operate with their own rhythms and tempos. I would propose that there is a wider argument here about knowledge production and knowledge control especially with regard to historical phenomena and their lurking. If we take the Pueblo people and the scientists in Los Alamos as two parts of the same story, then we can start understanding how radically different paradigms of truth can be shaped via politics and disciplinary expertise even though they reside in close proximity. Masco talks about ‘mirror imaging’ and David Price (2016), in his groundbreaking work on the anthropology of the Cold War, discusses disciplinary ‘dual use’. Price considers how political forces shaped disciplinary knowledge and how these past events connect to the present in a multiplicity of ways. In the case of imaginaries of Los Alamos, dual use refers to the ‘symbiotic relationship between the “pure” and “applied” sciences’ (Price 2016: xiv). Both concepts point to a proximate truth production with far-reaching ramifications for the people involved, unavoidably leading to scientific as well as general public dual use narratives about truth. The scientists of Los Alamos are themselves living archives of the Cold War whose knowledge has been bequeathed to the next generation of scientists who took over the scientific production at the end of the Cold War. Lurking science, then, is what characterises the imaginaries of both the Pueblo and the nuclear engineers. This science is not necessarily ghosting, but its lurking points to the potential of developing new models of truth, perhaps, as Petryna says, more complete.

*Lurking Cold War* brings together a plethora of imaginaries of the Cold War as they continue to live with interlocutors in Italy and Greece. To paraphrase Petryna (2013: xix), it is part of a concerted attempt to link together individuals’ reconstructed, reimagined, and re-embodied histories in order to craft an internationally recognised body of information about an event that has legacies reaching far beyond its assumed spatiotemporal borders, and outstripping its usual disciplinary home in Politics and International Relations.

## CHAPTER NAVIGATION

The chapters of this book pivot around key interlocutors who have their own relationships with the lurking Cold War. The chapters are highly ethnographic, laced with theories and ideas that help the lurking Cold War crawl

out from the woodwork, navigate through the patterns of the mesmerizing wallpaper, and reach a point of historical *methexi*. Based around individual characters, each chapter has its own feeling or atmosphere of existential teetering on the edge (Stefano), a structured bureaucratic paradox (Elpida), a fascinating tale of a life straddling borders and categories that tells its own story (Akilas), a feminist critique of domination (Eleonora and Giorgia), and something of a tip-toeing across the psychological bridge between generational knowledge, trying to infiltrate, unnoticed (Phoebe).

In Chapter One we meet Stefano, who has created his own Cold War-style bunker at his home in north Italy. Stefano has attempted to domesticate the Cold War to sooth his hyperconsciousness. He says that those who believe the Cold War to be over are deluded and he would rather try to embrace or tame it at home than live it outright in the public sphere. The Cold War is in the shadows of journalism and Italian government policy: we only see the ghosts of the Cold War emerge at high peaks or surges, such as the war in Ukraine, but the ghosts are constantly there watching, he emphatically claims. Stefano feels like he is teetering on the edge of time, waiting for the next surge to sweep him away. The government's selective forgetting and sleight-of-hand politics is only a ruse of the puppeteers. His bunker is both a reminder of the Cold War kept close to home and a potential practical asset for the next surge of history yet-to-come.

Chapter Two moves us to Greece as Elpida battles to save her mountain home from repossession by the Greek government. Displacement of communist sympathisers in the early Cold War years of the 1940s meant that part of her family fled the country to return 30 years later. Despite government guarantees on ownership and moral forgiveness, in the 2020s she faces the loss of a home she has inhabited for most of her life. The lurking Elpida experiences can best be captured as 'agitation', a constant itching, a prickling sensation, enough to rouse her heckles and her blood pressure. For Elpida, the Cold War is engrained in relationships with people she meets in government offices, with the buildings she is determined to prove she owns, and with the bureaucratic paperwork that contradicts public knowledge. She describes feeling psyche and physical displacement all over again, in a repeating vicious circle of blame, shame, and retribution. Tellingly, Elpida argues that there is no 'post-' in 'post-Cold War'.

We remain in Greece in Chapter Three for the story of Akilas, who crossed the Iron Curtain as a young child. His father rose up the ranks of the Greek Communist Party in Bulgaria, while Akilas gained a top-notch education. Although his Cold War experiences will always inform his life, Akilas talks about prioritising humanistic qualities over categories of left/right, communism/capitalism. Cultural and political classifications, he believes, do not allow people to forget and forgive the past. Although Akilas advocates

authoring futures anew and free from the burden of history, he cannot escape his inner torments – he had a life in communist Bulgaria and nationalist Greece, and he tries daily to overcome this internal schism. Akilas describes the lurking Cold War in terms of atmospheres – the Cold War atmosphere will remain the primary orienting framework for sociopolitical action for as long as there is no public forgetting and no refocusing on humanistic needs, he proclaims. Forgetting does not mean erasing personal and collective experience, however, but transcending it, going beyond personal and collective pain, rising above the ideological boundaries of categories. His aim is for a change in epochal atmosphere.

Crossing the Adriatic Sea back to north Italy we encounter Giorgia and Eleonora who, despite fiercely feminist leftist tendencies, are now resigned to a life in a nation-state engulfed in right-wing nationalism. With the 2022 election of Giorgia Meloni, the Cold War has taken its latest not-so-unexpected turn. The intensity of the Cold War era was fleeting for Eleonora, yet it burns a slow but constant flame inside her and she searches to reactivate it among public circles, calling for solidarity. The lurking Cold War lives on in the literature she shares with her friends, and the education she chooses to pursue. She assembles a team of contemporaries from philosophical and fiction literature since care for the socialist Self is of utmost import in these dark days of nationalism. For Giorgia, the modern nation-state is the ultimate categorical definition of a rightist Cold War agenda. She sees obvious similarities between the propaganda around the Ukraine war and the Italian election campaign, where arguments are made on the premise of standing up for and dying for the country. She compares how she hides the truth of her communist support on potential travel documents and in some public domains, and scales this to how the nation-state, until the election of Meloni, tries to hide its rightist dominance. This is the time to double-down on personal beliefs and freedoms, in expectation of the next episode of Cold War history.

We end the ethnographic expedition in Chapter Five with the insights of a young Greek interlocutor, Phoebe, who did not live the Cold War period first hand. She relates to the legacies of the Cold War through radical imagination, projecting that it is only logical that the affects of the era have left irreversible psychological marks on the people who experienced it. Alongside a collection of ‘whys’, she proposes a theory of ‘psychic time’ where the Cold War theatre was a battle for temporal structure, from the tempos of economic activity to the anticipation of conflict. Time was up for grabs and the psychological affects of temporal wars are today normalised. She also asks what the point of history is if not to provide lessons as bundles of affects and atmospheres. History as taught in school textbooks is hollow and emotionless and, further, does not properly inform governmental policy.

Phoebe argues for history as *methexi*, the connection between known and unknown, real and imaginary, tangible materiality and abstract atmospheres and feelings.

I invite the reader to take in this ghost-train of the almost certainly undead. Perhaps you can spot the patterns – some of which might even be hidden to me, but clear to you – as you navigate the pages of this book within the blurry lines of your own life journey. Joining the dots, goggling at the magic picture, breathing in the thick and cloying atmosphere, feeling the itch on your skin, and the energy surges on your fingertips. The Cold War has its eyes on you, too.

## NOTES

1. Scholars such as Jacques Derrida on hauntology, Heonik Kwon on ghosts and memorialisation, and Michel-Rolph Trouillot on historical silence will make dedicated appearances throughout the book. Here I choose to focus on those authors who have an immediate relation to the overall analytical framing of this project.
2. In a way, Walton's hyperthymesia offers a direct contrast to Michael Herzfeld's (2002) crypto-colonialism, in that, for Herzfeld, histories of empire and tutelage are ever-present but not readily acknowledged or even recognised due to 'successful' nationalist programmes promoting independence. There is not a forgetting due to abundant detail, but rather a lack of memory-work and excessive indifference.