Teaching National Identity in Post-colonial Contexts:

An Arendtian Reimagination

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Statement of Originality

I, Rowena Anthea Palacios, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis argues for a new approach to conceptualising the teaching of national identity in post-colonial schools, the theoretical underpinnings of which are founded on Hannah Arendt's thought. I problematise the way that national identity is valued as an educational goal in Philippine schools, and propose a different approach that is applicable to post-colonial contexts and beyond.

Using a historical lens, I first trace the current approach of teaching national identity in the Philippines to the American colonial period, and uncover its theoretical and ideological roots. Drawing from postcolonial thought, I argue that, for an education for national identity to be compatible with post-colonial history, it must account for the ambivalence of postcolonial identity and power disparities that have resulted from coloniality. I propose an alternative to the commonplace 'civic/ethnic' dichotomisation of national identity, arguing instead that national identity can be seen as either *fixed* or *malleable*, and that teaching about national identity in a postcolonial setting ought to be based on the idea that national identity is malleable.

Proceeding from this, I draw from Arendt's educational thought as a source of inspiration for reimagining the role that schools play in teaching cultural identity in post-colonial contexts. I perform a genealogy of her conceptualisation of the 'social', demonstrating that she advocated for schools to be liminal spaces that enculturate children into a community while simultaneously encouraging their ability to renew this culture.

I build on Arendt's ideas and the challenges posed by postcolonial thought to develop a concept of teaching national identity as *play*, giving examples of how this can be implemented. Finally, I anticipate a possible objection to my proposed approach, that it may lead to insularity. To prevent this, I suggest that Arendt's notion of *amor mundi* be a guiding principle in the teaching of national identity.

Impact Statement

This thesis offers a new way to conceptualise the development of national identity as an educational aim, and offers a new approach to the teaching of national identity in post-colonial settings. Some of these insights have already contributed to the academic discourse about the teaching of national identity. A paper that was derived from this thesis has been published in the journal *Educational Philosophy and Theory* (Azada-Palacios 2021b; see Appendix). I have also presented work on this topic at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference (2019, Manchester). Finally, although not drawn from this thesis, an article that I co-authored about the related field of citizenship education has been published in *Perspectives in Education* (Mi-Cheong Cheong, Azada-Palacios, Beye, Lang, Bahadur Saud & Tong 2021). These insights are also useful to educational practitioners and policymakers. I was invited to present some of these insights in April 2021 at a seminar series organised by the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) and the Moray House School of Education and Sport at the University of Edinburgh, targeting an audience of teachers.

In its engagement with Hannah Arendt's work, this thesis also offers new readings of her writings on education, thereby advancing Arendt scholarship within philosophy of education. I have presented portions of this work at conferences organised by the following societies: the PESGB (2017 and 2019, Oxford), the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia (2017, New South Wales, Australia; and 2018, Hong Kong), the British Educational Research Association (2018, Newcastle), and the International Network of Philosophers of Education (2019, Haifa, Israel). I have presented portions of this work at the IOE-Leuven Doctoral Colloquium (2017, London), the Kyudai-Ateneo Philosophy and Education Colloquium (2017, Fukuoka, Japan), and the PESGB London Branch seminar series (2019, London). I have also submitted a manuscript based on these parts of this thesis to the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (Azada-Palacios 2021a; see Appendix). Apart from advancing academic scholarship, Arendt's insights about education have a bearing on teacher education and teaching practice, and I have published a chapter that draws from this work in the *Encyclopaedia of Teacher Education* (2020, Springer; see Appendix).

Finally, in challenging older portrayals of nationalism and issuing provocations for new directions on this thinking, this thesis offers insights that may be useful for political thought. I was invited to present a portion of this work as a plenary speaker at a conference organised by the Philosophical Association of the Philippines (2019, Laguna, Philippines). An abstract for a paper drawn from my thesis that focused on this element was also accepted for presentation at the 2020 annual conference of the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic). These insights may also be useful for practitioners in the fields of government, law, and

political organisation (e.g., community organisation), and I have also organised a reading group about these topics for members of the Philippine public, which have included such practitioners.

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Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations

Works by Hannah Arendt

A Reply	'A Reply to Critics'
BF	*Between Friends: The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, 1949–1975*
Contemp. Issues	'Contemporary Issues,' Undergraduate Seminar, 1955. [Unpublished lecture notes]
Corresp.	*Hannah Arendt and Karl Jaspers: Correspondence 1926–1969*
CC	'The Crisis in Culture'
CE	'The Crisis in Education'
Denk. 1	*Denktagebuch Bd. 1: 1950–1973*
EU	*Essays in Understanding 1930–1954: Formation, Exile and Totalitarianism*
FKAA	'Franz Kafka, Appreciated Anew'
HC	*The Human Condition*
I&T	'Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government'
JW	*The Jewish Writings*
LI	*The Last Interview*
LKP	*Lectures on Kant's Philosophy*
LM	*Life of the Mind*
OV	'On Violence'
Refl.	'Reflections on Little Rock'
RLC	*Reflections on Literature and Culture*
RV	*Rahel Varnhagen: Life of a Jewess*
WFW	*Within Four Walls: The Correspondence Between Hannah Arendt and Heinrich Blücher*
WIA	'What is Authority?'

Government Departments, Agencies, and Committees, and Documents Thereof

Annual Report of the Dir. Ed. [Year]	*Annual Report of the Director of Education.* (Published by the United States Insular Government of the Philippines, Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Education.)
Annual Report of the Gov. Moro Province [Year]	*Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province* (Published by the United States of America. Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department.)

Annual Report of the Secr. Publ. Instr. [Year]	*Annual Report of the Secretary of Public Instruction.* (Published by the United States Insular Government of the Philippines, Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Education.)
Annual School Reports	*Annual School Reports, 1901–1905.* (Published by the United States Insular Government of the Philippines, Department of Public Instruction. Reprinted by the Philippine Bureau of Public Schools.)
US Comm. on the Phils. Hearings	Hearings Before the Committee on the Philippines of the United States Senate
US Cong. Rec. [Volume Number]	United States Congressional Record

Chapter 1: Introduction

'The hope of developing any real idea of nationality among the Filipino peoples in the future lies more probably in the spread of a common language than in any other one thing, and English offers the only to be raised in this respect.' - Brigadier General Frank McIntyre, Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs (1912)[1]

'The most stupendous undertaking in the school program was that of driving the mother tongue out of the mouths of millions of people by substituting for it the language of a nation whose habitat lay beyond six thousand miles of ocean.' - W.C. Grimes (1928)

'All of these provincial people belong to one race, and all of them are Christian people practicing the morals and arts of civilization, and speaking dialects which are as similar to each other as are the dialects of the different provinces in England.... [The] difference between the dialects of the seven provincial districts would not be a real difficulty to independent self-government.... [The] alleged antagonisms between the inhabitants of the provincial districts, or between the so-called 'tribes,' have arisen, not in the minds of the Filipinos themselves, but in the minds of those who do not understand our people and who have reached conclusions in no way warranted by the facts.' - From a statement by Filipino diplomat Sixto Lopez, read to the US Senate on 31 January 1901[2]

When the government of the United States of America decided to colonise the Philippines in 1898, the rhetoric that began to emerge among many supporters of the move was that the American annexation of the Philippines was going to be completely unlike the European conquests of large swathes of Asia and Africa. The United States, it was said, was colonising the Philippines in order to prepare it for nationhood. That is, the United States was seeking to create, out of a diverse archipelago composed of several ethnolinguistic groups (the contemporary count is more than 180), a single nation-state, patterned after an idealised vision of herself. In such an atmosphere, the multiplicity of cultures, languages, and 'races' was a problem that had to be overcome, and the forging of a singular national identity around a homogenous culture was the aspiration. The United States granted political independence to the Philippines in 1946, after the Second World War, but post-colonial Philippine literary works are filled with expressions of an

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[1] US Bureau of Insular Affairs, Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs to the Secretary of War (1912).

[2] 'The "Tribes"' (statement by Sixto Lopez), read by the Secretary. (*U.S. Cong. Rec.* 34, 1901, pp. 1716–1717.)

ambivalence towards national identity, the tension between the multiplicity of local identities and the aspiration of a homogenous national identity, and the tension between a nationalistic 'indigenous' identity and an identity shaped by 'foreign' or Western influence.

This is the post-colonial context from which my project emerges. This doctoral thesis, a work that lies in the field of philosophy of education, is my attempt to think through and address some of the dilemmas that have emerged within education from this colonial history. Specifically, I am troubled with the way citizenship education in the Philippines has continued to aspire towards a homogeneity of culture, an aspiration that, I argue, has merely been an unreflective perpetuation of American colonial educational policy that has not been sufficiently criticised.

In contrast to this, I propose a different way of thinking about post-colonial citizenship education for national identity. By the end of this thesis, I hope to have reimagined and reconceptualised the teaching of national identity in post-colonial schools, informed by the distinct case of the Philippines, political theory around post-colonial identities, and Hannah Arendt's educational thought.

The main body of this thesis, comprising Chapters 2 to 8, is divided into three parts. In the next three sections of this introduction, I describe each of these parts in greater detail.

1.1 National Identity: A Postcolonial Analysis

A typical school day for a Filipino child begins with the singing of the national anthem while saluting the national flag – either a large school flag hoisted on a pole outside the classroom, or a smaller one painted on the wall above the blackboard in the classroom. This is followed by the national pledge, not a pledge of allegiance to the flag (unlike in the United States), but rather a pledge to be a 'good' citizen. Whereas pupils at faith-based schools, which are private and make up a small percentage of the country's schools, might follow this up with a communal prayer, most pupils will proceed from here to their first lesson for the day. A few times a week, one of the lessons will be in civics education, which, depending on the child's year level, might focus on lessons about the community, on national history, or on the structure of Philippine government. In two of the child's language and literacy classes, Mother Tongue and Filipino, the child will be introduced to the literature of the country: folk tales, poetry, and eventually, novels. Such mandated lessons continue all the way through to senior high school. At university level, the child continues to learn about the concept of Philippine nationhood through mandated courses on the Philippine Constitution, and on the life and works of the Philippine national hero, José P. Rizal.

This 'catechism' into Philippine national identity is a central part of the Philippine curriculum, and international students studying at Philippine schools are rarely exempt. My interest in this aspect of the Philippine curriculum arises from my own multicultural upbringing. Born in England, I spent the first few years of schooling at local schools in Hong Kong and Singapore, before moving to the Philippines at the age of eight and being enrolled by my parents in a private Catholic school that targeted Chinese-Filipino students.[3] From the perspective of a Filipino undergoing the curriculum for national identity, but having spent much of my childhood abroad, and being surrounded by classmates whose cultural identities were hybrid, the monoculturalism of the curriculum was stark.

To understand why such a monocultural approach is problematic in the Philippines, the diversity of the Philippine population must be emphasised. The Philippines is a Southeast Asian archipelago that currently encompasses more than 7,000 islands, whose inhabitants speak almost 200 languages. Their consolidation as a single state can be said to be a result of three-and-a-half centuries of Western colonisation: around 300 years of Spanish colonisation and expansion from the 16th to the 19th centuries (interrupted by 20 months of British occupation of the capital in the 18th century), followed by American colonial rule in the first half of the twentieth century (interrupted by the three-year long Japanese occupation during the Second World War). Leaders of the Philippine revolution against Spain at the end of the 19th century began to imagine Philippine inhabitants as a single united people, but it was the educational system mandated by the American colonial government in 1910 that first sought to systematically build in Filipinos' minds a concept of the Philippines as a nation-state.

Since then, a Philippine nation-state has been the elusive dream in Philippine educational policy and the Philippine curriculum. Its elusiveness has led to frustration, while its ambition has led to the marginalisation of multiple minority cultures in the Philippines.

The first part of this thesis consists of the second and third chapters, in which I wrestle with questions I have had about the Philippines' education for national identity. In Chapter 2, I explore the ideological roots of this identity-building project, foregrounding the status of the Philippines as a post-colonial state. I do this by first exploring the concept of national identity and related ideas. Then, I explore the roots of this project, first historically (drawing on both primary research as well as secondary literature), then ideologically.

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[3] Most of the major cities in the Philippines have at least one school for Chinese-Filipinos; the capital, Manila, has more than a dozen. These schools serve Chinese-Filipino communities, mostly descendants of Chinese immigrants who moved to the Philippines during the Cultural Revolution. Filipino nationals who self-identify as Chinese are estimated to compose less than 2% of the population (Palanca 2002; see also Gonzales 2021), but are the largest immigrant community in the country.

In the third chapter, I respond to previous literature that has taken up the question of teaching national identity in schools. Most of this literature has been framed around the debate as to whether it is desirable to teach students to be patriotic. I demonstrate how anti-colonial and critical political thought complicates the discourse by challenging its presumptions about identity and nationalism. Firstly, I draw on Homi Bhabha's problematisation and conceptualisation of postcolonial identity to offer a starting point for reimagining how national identity might be taught. Secondly, I introduce an analysis of power to the discussion of national identity, inspired by critical race theory. Finally, in addition to the traditional civic/ethnic dichotomy of national identity, I offer an alternative heuristic for understanding and evaluating the teaching of national identity, a conception of national identity as either fixed or malleable.

Having introduced the problems of Philippine national identity education in the first part, and proposed some conceptual anchors for reimagining national identity from a postcolonial perspective, I turn in the second part of this thesis – Chapters 4, 5, and 6 – to the question of education. For this part, my main interlocutor is Hannah Arendt.

1.2 Why Arendt?

Anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the main themes in Hannah Arendt's work might be surprised by my decision to engage with her as a main interlocutor for the questions that I raise in my thesis – questions about multiculturalism and cultural identity, questions about education, and finally, questions about post-colonial education – none of which figure strongly in her work. Thus, before I introduce my approach to initiating a conversation with Arendt, I must first defend my decision to choose her as a thinking partner. This defence must be prefaced with a brief account of my own personal interest in Arendt's work, which began when I was an undergraduate student of philosophy in the Philippines. For my first master's degree, completed seventeen years ago, I wrote a dissertation about her political thought, arguing that she was a postmodern political thinker. My interest in Arendt's work did not wane even after that, and I continued to read works about her thought. It was after completing my first master's degree that I came across an essay by American Studies scholar Ann Lane (2009), entitled 'Is Hannah Arendt a Multiculturalist?' In the essay, Lane recounts feeling surprised by her undergraduate students' reaction to Arendt's works. Her students, most of whom came from ethnic minority groups, found that many of Arendt's ideas resonated with their own thinking about culture. This led Lane to wonder whether there might be an underlying strand of multiculturalism in Arendt's work that was not immediately obvious to readers.

When I read Lane's work, I was surprised that she was surprised. Like Lane's students, I too had read Arendt from the lens of someone who was very concerned about the cultural identity of marginalised ethnicities. Like Lane's students, I too had found that

Arendt's ideas gave me ways to think through my own questions about the negotiation of cultural identities. Yet I slowly began to learn that many people did **not** see these facets in Arendt's works. This was confirmed most strongly to me a few years ago at a conference when, at one session, a well-known scholar said, 'There is no notion of 'culture' in Arendt.' Part of my thesis, then, grew out of a desire to respond to Lane's question: 'Is Hannah Arendt a Multiculturalist?' Was I merely imagining that Arendt was concerned centrally with the question of cultural identity, or was it actually there in her work? And if it was there, how could I articulate it more clearly?

Another aspect of deciding to engage with Arendt is seeing her as someone who might have something to say about *education*. This aspect of my decision might be becoming less controversial, as evidenced by the publication last year of two new book-length volumes about Arendt and education (Veck & Gunter 2020; Nixon 2020), apart from a number of journal articles. Nonetheless, Arendt is still not yet conventionally thought of as an 'educational thinker'. Apart from a few short opinion columns and political commentaries about educational issues, she wrote just two essays that explicitly explored the nature of education: 'The Crisis in Education' (1958a) and 'Reflections on Little Rock' (1959b), both at a time when she was thinking about freedom and political action. Whereas she did think about education, then, her reflections on the topic were still contextualised within her larger attempt to imagine what political life ought to be. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that prior to the year 2000, even as an interest in Arendt surged among political theories, the interest in Hannah Arendt's thought among educational scholars was considered to be limited and sporadic (Schutz, 2001b). However, things have changed since then. In the past two decades, interest in Arendt's thought in relation to education has grown. Dozens of them have drawn inspiration from her political ideas in their own attempts to work through educational questions; others have used ideas from different parts of her work and applied them to educational issues.

Curiously, though, Arendt's own works about education *per se* are infrequently cited either in the Arendt scholarship or by educational theorists. Only recently has an increased interest specifically in her educational work begun to grow (see, for example, Masschelein & Simons 2013; Conroy 2019; Korsgaard 2019; Nixon 2020; Swillens & Vlieghe 2020; Veck & Gunter 2020). Part of the reason for this lacuna may be that Arendt scholars find her thoughts about schooling difficult to grapple with. She attracts scholars who share her vision of a pluralist, agonistic democracy, where human life finds its flourishing in political discourse and participatory engagement. However, she appears surprisingly conservative when it comes to educational matters: controversially rejecting schools as sites of political engagement, and carrying the banner for the restoration of teachers' authority, an idea that appears at first glance to fly in the face of the radically democratic ideals she is known for.

Education scholars who are generally sympathetic to Arendt's work have approached this tension in different ways. Among those who have used Arendt's thought to explore

the purpose of formal education, some, like Stephanie Mackler (2010) and Morgan White (2017) have managed to elude the contradiction by appropriating her ideas for higher education. In institutions where students are adults rather than children, it might be assumed that Arendt's conservative view of children's education, which is hinged on a certain presumption of children's political status, does not apply. Secondly, there are those scholars (e.g., Schutz 2001a, 2001b; Norris 2006; Biesta 2010; Koyama 2011; Norris 2011) who have written specifically about children's schooling, and have opted for a selective appropriation, citing the parts of Arendt's corpus that further their own arguments, while either rejecting or ignoring those parts that contradict them. Most commonly rejected is Arendt's view that students ought not to participate in the public realm; the typical argument against this is that political participation, which she expects of adults, requires participation, and that this participation best takes place in schools. Finally, there are those (e.g., Gordon 1999; Korsgaard 2015) who have argued that an intertextual reading of Arendt's educational work with her other writings make it possible to reconcile Arendt's radical politics and conservative educational theory. I myself am sympathetic to this third group, as will be evident in the body of this thesis.

Missing in all of these interpretations of Arendt's educational thought is an in-depth exploration of her understanding of the social sphere, despite this being central to her own explicitly educational ideas. It is not entirely surprising that educational philosophy has paid little attention to this idea thus far, though, because the concept of the social is itself one of the more challenging concepts in her work. As I explain in the next section, my engagement with Arendt focuses on this line of thought in her work.

1.3 How Might Cultural Identities Be Taught? Engaging with Arendt's Educational Thought

The typical layperson who is familiar with Arendt's concept of the social sphere most likely came to it by way of her 1958 book *The Human Condition* (Arendt 2018), widely considered to be her most important work of political theory. In these pages we find the most famous elements of Arendtian political thought: the notion of plurality ('Men, not Man, inhabit the world'), her version of the classic distinction between the public and the private, and her trifurcation of human activity into labour, work, and action. We also find in these same pages her commentary on what she called the 'social sphere', a liminal realm that lay in between the public and the private realms, having the form of the public realm in its publicity, but containing concerns proper to the private realm.

The textbook understanding of the concept of the social is as follows. Traditionally, the private realm was the space of the home (*oikos*), where humans were preoccupied with the economic concerns of biological, animal survival. The public realm was where politics took place: individuals appeared to one another as unique citizens, with differing

opinions and perspectives, and exchanged ideas with one another in public debate. In Arendt's account, modernity had created a conflation of the public and the private, allowing the in-between *social realm* to emerge. The social realm had the *form* of the public realm in that it was a space outside the home where people encountered one another. However, the concerns of the social realm – its content – were private rather than public.

When one goes beyond *The Human Condition* to her less famous writings, one discovers, as Pitkin (1998) has recorded, that Arendt had been working on her idea of the social realm throughout her entire career, not only when she was writing *The Human Condition*. One also finds that, for a thinker who relied on neat distinctions, the concept of the social sphere is messy and ambiguous, and Arendt's writings demonstrate her personal ambivalence towards it. She generally spoke disapprovingly of the way the social realm displaced public concerns. However, she also recognised that its ubiquity was irreversible, and she acknowledged that certain human concerns – like culture, the social dimension of religion, and yes, the formal education of children – properly belonged to the social realm.

I found the middle chapters of my thesis on the belief that the issue that led Arendt to the concept of the social realm is one of the most central questions of her entire *opus*. Arendt commentators have tended to view her concept of plurality as an unquestionable, unchallenged axiom. However, I demonstrate in my thesis that a wider reading of Arendt's body of work reveals that she struggled with the tension between plurality and commonality, and that this was a struggle that sprung from her own questions – both personal and theoretical – about Jewish identity, culture and cultural communities, and the political community more broadly. I propose that her conceptualisation of the social realm, especially in relation to education, was one of her attempts to resolve this tension.

To move, then, to the third question I raised above: why would Arendt, who did not write from a postcolonial perspective, have anything to say that would be useful in the post-colonial context? The connection I make between Arendt's work and postcoloniality lies mainly in the so-called 'Jewish Question', that always underlay much of her political thought.

Before the Second World War, Arendt wrestled with the question of whether Zionism was the best response to antisemitism, and she thought deeply about Jewish identity. After the war, the fear that a phenomenon similar to Nazi totalitarianism might re-emerge was at the heart of much of her thinking. Many scholars ignore the fact that before she resumed her intellectual work in the United States, Arendt was an activist for Jewish causes, helping to arrange the safe passage of Jews out of hostile territory, writing for Jewish political publications, and working to salvage Jewish cultural artifacts from war-torn Europe. Alongside this political action, Arendt reflected on the roots and effects of antisemitism (which she viewed as a political movement rather than mere anti-Jewish sentiment) both on a micro-level, examining the miniscule details of the life of Rahel Varnhagen, and on a macro-level, trying to see within the expanse of global history the

trends that led to Nazi totalitarianism. Arendt found in her adopted home, the United States of America, the possibility of a political community that could accommodate diverse peoples because it was founded not on ethnicity or nationality, but on principles. Her political writings from the 1950s onwards post-war reflected on both the promise of the American way, but also its dangers and weaknesses.

Arendt's deep reflections on the Jewish experience make her relevant to postcolonial thought. Foundational postcolonial thinkers like Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon acknowledged the kinship between the Jews and colonised peoples, because of their similar experiences. Recently, scholars have reflected on this connection more theoretically. Santiago Slabodsky (2014), for example, has argued that the European colonial projects and antisemitism both resulted from the same historical thread of Eurocentric supremacy. Arendt (1968b) herself gestured towards a relationship between antisemitism and European colonialism in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, although she did not explicitly attribute them to a common cause; rather, she saw antisemitism and imperialism as two movements and ways of thinking that led to one effect, Nazi totalitarianism. This connection nonetheless demonstrates that Arendt intuited within the tradition of the European Enlightenment a certain totalising tendency that victimised minority peoples.

The minority people that Arendt was most concerned about in the 1930s and 1940s was her own people, the Jews. Decades of cultural assimilation had not worked to end anti-Jewish sentiment in Europe, and Arendt, herself an assimilated Jew, began to realise that (as she said in her interview with Günter Gaus many decades later), if she was attacked as a Jew, she had to defend herself as a Jew (*LI*, p.20). In contrast, then, to the Enlightenment ideal of universal truths, Arendt began to appreciate the value of culture and history to the Jews whose historical particularity was being erased in the global historical narrative written by Enlightenment thinkers. Thus, she vigorously defended, in a 1930s opinion column, the teaching of Jewish history to Jewish students. She carried this belief in the value of protecting one's culture and history throughout her life.

At the same time, Arendt also saw the dangers of an extreme focus on communitarian identities. Such disproportion could render a group politically weak, and Arendt's famous criticism of the social realm articulated this. It could, conversely, become so strong that it could seek to literally eradicate any deviations from this fixed identity. Arendt's antidote to both dangers, which she tried to work out in her later political theory, was the insistence that each individual be seen as a political actor whose value always transcended the value of the group identity.

It is these reflections on Jewish identity that make Arendt's political thoughts relevant for post-colonial political communities such as the Philippines. Arendt's political thinking is relevant for the Philippine context because she imagined the possibility of a political community that is founded not on a fixed national identity but rather on a plural population who, amid their agonistic struggles, have discovered shared principles,

concerted action, and a shared love of the world. At the same time, she was not naïvely cosmopolitan: she took seriously the value of identity and culture to minority communities, and understood the burden that threatened communities bore to ensure the survival of their culture. These insights are what I find valuable in my decision to enter into conversation with her about post-colonial dilemmas.

1.4 Schools as Cultural Playgrounds

The first two parts of this three-part thesis lay the theoretical groundwork for my reconceptualisation of teaching national identity in postcolonial schools, first by offering a postcolonial reimagining of national identity, and then, by offering a Arendtian reimagining of education. In the third part of the thesis, I embark on a reimagination of education for national identity.

Chapter 7 develops a conception of teaching national identity around the metaphor of play. I propose that schools in postcolonial contexts view the teaching of national identity as the playful exploration of cultural and national identity. In other words, I propose that the classroom be seen as a cultural playground. In this chapter, I introduce new interlocutors: French philosopher Barbara Cassin, Filipinist Vincente Rafael, and philosopher, economist, and public intellectual Amartya Sen. I also give a concrete example of what a playful approach to teaching national identity might look like, in the teaching of the *Lola Basyang* children's stories.

In Chapter 8, I address a possible objection and allow this anticipated critique to fine-tune my conception of teaching national identity. One of the most enduring criticisms of politics of identity is that they may undermine political action. Although I do not view the classroom as a space for political action (a point explained in Chapters 4 and 5 of the thesis), I do believe that there might be a parallel version of this criticism when referring to education for cultural (including national) identity. Thus, in this chapter, I take this criticism seriously. I use a reading of the juvenile novel *Patron Saints of Nothing* (Ribay 2020) to illustrate this criticism. Then, exploring Arendt's conception of '*amor mundi*', I reflect on some of the principles that might prevent education for national identity from becoming vulnerable to such criticism.

1.5 Significance of this Work

How might the work in these pages move the thinking on these topics forward? As I discuss further in Chapter 3, much of the debate thus far about national identity in schools has focused on Western or Eurocentric contexts. These discussions have taken for granted Western and Eurocentric presumptions about the nation-state and about

national identity. Although anti-colonial thought (i.e., postcolonial theory, decoloniality, and settler colonial studies) has become more prominent in other areas of education research, the challenges raised by anti-colonial thought to these presumptions have not figured strongly in the discussion about national identity. One of the ways that I hope to nudge the discussion in a new direction is by centring postcolonial ways of thinking about identity, and allowing these insights to lead to new possibilities for the way issues of national identity are explored in schools.

I also hope to contribute to the growing interest in Hannah Arendt in the field of philosophy of education. Over the past decade, various aspects of Arendt's thought have been taken as springboards for reflections on education: her distinction amongst labour, work, and action; her concept of *natality* (an idea I also use extensively in this work); and her thoughts on political speech and action. To this list, I wish to add her reflections on education itself, particularly her controversial claim that education belongs to the social realm.

Finally, I hope that my reflections will be useful to educational practitioners, particularly those working in subjects or topic areas that are related to questions of national identity, such as citizenship education, history education, literature, and language. In imagining education about national identity as *play*, I hope to offer an additional vocabulary with which to discuss some of the more contentious questions surrounding these subjects. Although I direct my reflections most specifically to practitioners in the Philippines, I imagine that some of these reflections may be relevant to the rest of the post-colonial world and beyond.

1.6   Some Words on Terminology

I end this introduction with a few comments on some of the terminology I use that might be confusing or controversial. In this thesis, I refer frequently to the literature on nationalism, especially in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. The word 'nationalism' receives a bad rap in some parts of the world, such as in Germany, where it is associated with the harmful effects of ethnic nationalism such as that which was central to Nazi ideology, and more recently in the United States where a white religious nationalist movement has recently grown in strength. In other parts of the world, such as in countries with post-colonial histories, the word 'nationalism' is seen largely positively and completely compatible with liberal democracy, because it is associated with the right to self-government. In this thesis, unless I specify otherwise, I use the word 'nationalism' in a normatively agnostic way, as it has sometimes been used in the academic literature on modern nationhood. The complexities of the meaning of term will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, but in this introduction, I tentatively describe it as the 'we-feeling' that allowed for the development of political identities associated with the state.

This thesis also deploys a term that is not used frequently by Arendt in her works, the term 'identity'. Brubaker and Cooper (2019) have helpfully parsed the different ways that the term 'identity' is used in social and political theory, and I am mindful of the problematic equivocations of the word that they enumerate. Such equivocations are visible in Arendtian scholarship as well, such as in the divergent ways that the term has been used by Bonnie Honig and Mario Passerin d'Entrèves. Honig (1988) uses the term extensively in her commentaries on Arendt's works, to refer to the notion of 'personal identity', or as Arendt puts in *The Human Condition*, the *who* of a person, in contradistinction to the *what.* On the other hand, d'Entrèves (1994) considers aspects of Arendt's political theory to be illustrative of how collective identities are created.

My own decision to use the word stems from a desire to generalise insights from Arendt's problematisation in her early works of the status of Jewish people in Europe. Arendt did not use the word 'identity' in these works, but simply 'Jewishness'. However, in order to make her insights about Jewish identity applicable to other contexts, I use the word 'identity' to refer to one's sense of belonging to a group with which one identifies some sense of sameness. This encompasses both a cultural identity that may spring from a shared heritage (be it ethnic, culturally symbolic, or linguistic) and a political identity that deploys this cultural identity for collective political action.

Another pair of terms that requires clarification is 'post-colonial' and 'postcolonial'. The variance in spelling is not accidental. In this thesis, I use the adjective 'post-colonial' to refer to previous colonies that have undergone the political and legal process of decolonisation. I use the adjective 'postcolonial', without the hyphen, to allude to the body of scholarly and literary writings that have emerged in former colonies and have come to be known as 'postcolonial studies' and 'postcolonial literature'.

Finally, in this thesis, I also refer to two groups of people whose names, originally used disparagingly within imperial racial hierarchies, have come to be used strategically as political identities. First, I refer repeatedly to Arendt's essay 'Reflections on Little Rock' (1959b), which was Arendt's take on school desegregation in the American South. In referring to the African-American community, Arendt used the word 'Negro', following the conventions of her own time. In this thesis, I leave direct quotations from Arendt's work unchanged, but use the word 'Black' in my own voice. I am conscious that 'black' is a racialisation rather than a biological category, and I use the word with a capitalised letter out of respect for the way that members of many communities of African ancestry, including African-American communities, have strategically used this word in a political way. Similarly, when referring to the Muslim communities in southern Philippines, I maintain the terms used when directly quoting from texts from the turn of the 20th century (e.g., 'Mohammedan'), but in my own voice, I occasionally use the term 'Moro' to allude to the strategic political deployment of that identity in these groups' various struggles for autonomy.

Chapter 2: The Ideological Roots of

Philippine Identity-Building in Schools

The connection between schools and the shaping of some form of cultural, civic, or political identity has been made by dozens of scholars, both in an analytical context and as a normative position. Of the various forms of cultural identity a person might possess, national identity has been seen as having a particularly important connection to schools. This has been true in the West especially since the modern period, with the rise of school systems centrally regulated by national governments. Analytically, various studies about the historical emergence of the modern nation-state have viewed the school as having had a vital place in the process; the most famous of these is Eugen Weber's classic 1976 work *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*, which argued that the expansion of the French school system enculturated rural peasants into the Parisian language and culture, which in turn allowed for Parisian culture to become increasingly accepted as 'French culture', thus fostering a sense of national unity.

Normatively, governments have long considered a main aim of schooling to be the inculcation of civic values in service of strengthening the state. The widespread acceptance of this notion in Western education appears to have its seeds in the late 18th and 19th centuries, alongside the shift from European Absolutism to the development of the modern nation-state. In Western Europe, this period of modernisation saw a shift in the moral aim of schools, from religious to civic frameworks. There is no consensus about where exactly these ideas first emerged: James Melton (1988) names Prussia and Austria as their source, whereas Derek Heater (2001) identifies France as the first country in modern times where such ideas became widespread. There does appear to be general agreement, though, that the late 18th century was the period when this change began to occur, and Heater (2001) cites La Chalotais' publication in 1763 of *Essai d'Education Nationale* as an important milestone in this transition. By the latter part of the 1800s, citizenship education had become a normal part of the school curriculum in parts of Europe, as evidenced by the publication of several civics education textbooks in England (Heater 2001) and a law in France making *l'instruction civique* mandatory in 1882 (Heater 2002).

In parts of the world colonised by Western countries, forms of education for citizenship that targeted locals (as opposed to European settlers) often emerged alongside a desire for locals to exercise increased self-governance, sometimes with an eye to granting the colonies eventual independence (for examples, see Chelati Dirar 2007; Whitehead 2007; Sai 2012). In the case of early 20th century Philippines, the official U.S. policy was one of 'benevolent assimilation' almost from the beginning of its occupation. At least on paper, the United States considered one of its central colonial goals to be the

'preparation' of the locals for a type of self-government patterned after American political culture (ignoring the already-mature nationalist movement that Filipinos had launched against Spain decades before). The United States established in the Philippines an expansive state education system that catered primarily to the lowland Christian majority, in which education for citizenship was a central driving force of the curriculum.

Both analytic and normative attempts to link the development of national identity to schooling have had their share of critics. Miguel Cabo and Fernando Molina (2009) have enumerated various critiques of Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen*, some of which have cast doubt on the degree to which the development of French national identity was dependent on state-led factors such as schooling. According to these alternative accounts, local communities were often able to develop national identity references based on local issues, such as community conflicts, border disputes, and economic concerns, notwithstanding the ability of the state to further strengthen this more organic process of national integration.

On the other hand, the normative position that schools ought to play a role in enculturating pupils as future citizens of a state, has had its own long history of debate and resistance. The most radical protests to civics education have been offered by those who object to any type of moral formation in schools, seeing it as an impediment to children's freedom. Judith Suissa (2010) has noted that such ideas have been deployed by figures such as Leo Tolstoy in the late 19th century, by more recent libertarian-minded thinkers such as Stephen Cullen and A.S. Neill, as well as by early social-anarchist educationalists like Barcelona-born Francisco Ferrer (1859–1909) who appealed to the 'universality' of an education driven by rationality in place of the perceived dogmatism of both religious and patriotic education.

Some of the debates have questioned, not the idea of enculturating pupils per se, but rather, a type of enculturation shaped either by the state or in service of the state. Heater (2001) mentions a very early example of such resistance, Joseph Priestley's 1765 *Essay on a Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life.* In that essay, published in England a century before mass civics education was widespread there, Priestley questioned the already commonly-held position that the state ought to determine the content of civics education. Suissa (2010) has enumerated more modern examples. She gives examples of 20th-century educational experiments that sought to replace state-centric civics education with school systems that promote alternative civic or political ideals: the Ferrer School (1911–1953) and the Walden Center (1956–present) in the United States were both originally founded on such principles as anti-authoritarianism, fraternity, and communal living, and rejected a type of civics education that promoted national patriotism. Finally, in the late 20th century, resistance to state-centric civics education has taken an altogether new form. The advocacy of a global rather than a national citizenship education has become widespread in many school systems; this discourse has been shaped either by neo-liberal global mobility (such as in the case of elite international schools that cater to

children of expatriate workers) or by an emphasis on post-World War II liberal internationalist values (such as in the case of the Human Rights Education movement).

Amid these criticisms, however, education for citizenship – and specifically, for national identity – has remained the norm in many post-colonial contexts (Goh and Gopinathan 2005; Halai 2013). On the one hand, this makes these post-colonial countries barely different from many other countries. Whether in the post-colonial or non-post-colonial world, the state remains one of the most significant ways in which populations are organised. Due to the history of the concepts 'state' and 'nation' being conflated, an education that emphasises national identity is still seen as one way to promote the legitimacy of the state. As Siniša Malešević (2015) has argued, nationalism remains one of the dominant operative ideologies of the contemporary world.

On the other hand, discourses in post-colonial countries, especially in the Global South, have underscored the distinct importance of national identity in postcolonial contexts. The rise of nationalism has been central to anti-colonial struggles for independence and self-government. Even after decolonisation, however, a shared national identity has often been seen as a crucial ingredient in the path towards political development, usually involving a vision of 'integrating' groups with diverse cultural or regional identities (see Barrington 2006, p. 19–20). Thus, some educationalists have valourised past expressions of national identity to galvanise support and action for a more progressive national future.

In this chapter, I am interested specifically in how education for national identity has developed in one such post-colonial context, the Philippines. In choosing to focus on one context, I do not assume the Philippines to be representative of other post-colonial countries. There is not one, but many colonialisms, because colonial and post-colonial histories diverge widely from one another. Nonetheless, there are also sufficient similarities across the experiences of various post-colonial countries such that studying the experiences of one context can inform the analyses of others.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the historical and theoretical roots of national-identity-making in Philippine education. I demonstrate that the use of schooling to build a sense of national identity among Filipino pupils has its origins in the colonial educational system established by the U.S. government during the Philippine-American War (1899–1901), and that vestiges of the theories and ideologies that underpinned the colonial educational system persist today. To argue this claim, I first discuss the concepts 'nation', 'state', and 'national identity' in the literature. Secondly, I give a brief historical account of the events that led to the establishment of the American colonial educational system in the Philippines, and, drawing on both primary and secondary sources, I conclude that the American colonial education had three distinct and sometimes contradictory main aims: (a) the pacification of Filipinos, (b) the Philippines' economic self-sufficiency, and (c) Filipinos' self-governance. Thirdly, I examine writings of American military and civil leaders who shaped colonial education to confirm the accounts from

other scholars that certain racial ideologies underpinned these educational policies. Finally, I show how certain aspects of these beliefs persist in contemporary education for national identity in the Philippines, using the changes to language policy as a specific example.

In this chapter I use documentary research to build some of my arguments. Most of the documents I draw from are from the public record: congressional debates in the United States, official reports of the department of education, and so forth. Although such public reports are sometimes devalued in historical research, I use these reports to uncover the presumptions that underlay the establishment of policies during the American colonial period by policymakers and others in power (see McCulloch 2004, p. 80–81).

This chapter also builds on the published and unpublished work of other researchers. Previous Filipinists and historians of the Philippines have uncovered the racial ideologies that animated American colonial rule (Go 2000; Kramer 2006). The recent academic interest in the history of U.S. imperialism has also led to an emerging interest in colonial education in the Philippines, as evidenced by the recent publication of books on the topic by Elisabeth Eittreim (2019) and Sarah Steinbock-Pratt (2019). Among those who have written about the connection between racial ideologies and education, some have painted sweeping characterisations of the American colonial government, attributing to the entire American government, as a group, certain ideological perspectives (Milligan 2005; Francisco 2015). Others have been more careful. Eittreim's (2019) research, which is based on first-person accounts of American teachers in the Philippines, distinguishes between teachers who held steadfast beliefs in racial hierarchies and those who didn't; Steinbock-Pratt's (2019) account of American colonial education depict American-Filipino race relations as complex and nuanced, highlighting the different ways Filipinos resisted American racialisations as well as the ways that Filipinos' hybrid understandings of race complicated the racial understandings of the American occupiers that were typically characterised by strict boundaries. Just as they have done, I too wish to nuance the characterisation of the racial ideologies of the American colonial government by demonstrating that these ideologies were held by individuals whose ideas often differed from one another's.

2.1 Conceptual Considerations: Nation, State, and National Identity

This chapter uses the phrase *national identity*, a phrase that is not without its problems. The first problem lies in the meaning of the word *nation*. In everyday language, *nation* is used alternately to refer to: (a) the citizens of a state, or (b) people who identify with a large group, most of the members of which they do not personally know, on the grounds of either shared ethno-symbolisms, or an imagined shared ancestry (cf. Anderson

1983/2006; Smith 2002). The polysemy of the phrase means that one might use the phrase *national identity* in everyday language to refer to one's self-perception as a citizen of a state, and another might use the phrase to refer to one's self-perception as a member of an ethnocultural group. There continues to be a pervasive belief among many in Western Europe that ethnocultural identity is ideally congruent with formal citizenship, a belief that has resulted from the nation-state ideology that has been dominant in the past century.

Such a belief has several effects. First of all, it creates a hierarchy of national identity. People whose ethnocultural identity (e.g., French) are congruent with their citizenship (e.g., France) are oftentimes seen to be the 'most French'; whereas those whose ethnocultural identity (e.g., Filipino) are not congruent with their citizenship (e.g., France) are seen to be 'less French'. Secondly, it creates the belief that an incongruence between nationality and statehood is inimical to the state. The diversity of ethnocultural identities within a state is seen as either problematic or potentially problematic, whether this diversity has been a historical fact since the foundation of the state, as with many post-colonial countries, or a more recent phenomenon due to immigration, as with many Western countries. In the former case, the 'nation-state' – a state where there is a single dominant national culture – is often seen as an aspiration: '*we hope to become a nation-state someday*'. In the latter, the 'nation-state' is often seen as a feature of a glorious past, a mythical period when '*we all knew one another and shared the same values*'.

Recognising the problems with conflating the notions of *nation* and *state*, some scholars have tried to parse the meanings of the two with greater precision. The *state* has become more clearly distinguished from the *nation*. Nonetheless, exactly what the concept 'nation' ought to refer to remains contentious, and different scholars – ranging from Smith to Gellner, Anderson to Kymlicka – have provided different and sometimes incompatible definitions of the term.

Another level of criticism has to do with the idea that the concept of *nation* or the ideas surrounding the concept have been conceptualised primarily in European and Western contexts. Asian Studies scholars, for example, have challenged the applicability of concepts related to European nationalism, including European accounts of the development of the nation-state, to post-colonial Asia. Asianists studying the nationalisms of the region have reasoned that the differences between European and Asian histories and cultures undermine an uncritical application of any presumptions about the nation-state that draw from European history. Building his theories on case studies from across Southeast Asia, Anthony Reid (2009) has portrayed some parts of the region as historically 'state-averse' and resistant to nationalisms that have emanated from strong centres. Tønnesson and Antlöv (1996), on the other hand, have developed a category they have called 'plural states' to refer to states with multiple ethnies whose sense of 'we-feeling' was found in anti-imperial struggle rather than in a sense of kinship or similarity. Rather than see the plurality of these states as a sign of evolutionary backwardness,

Tønnesson and Antlöv reject the evolutionary account and present the 'we-feeling' in plural states as an alternative form of nationalism.

A more radical criticism of the concept of the nation-state comes from decoloniality theorists. Building on world-systems theory, Ramón Grosfoguel (1996) has argued that the very concept of the nation-state – as a sovereign and free entity in rational control of its own development – was the (mis)application of 18th-century conceptions of the individual subject that led to 'developmentalism' becoming a central feature of global capitalism. Such a criticism, however, is normative in its intention rather than analytic, and the decoloniality movement considers one of its tasks to be the discovery or creation of an alternative world-system with roots in the peripheries that can challenge the dominant Eurocentric frameworks, including its conception of the nation-state. Nandita Sharma (2020), for instance, has recently argued for the dissolution of the concept of nationhood altogether, arguing that it has created the distinction between natives and migrants, and is therefore essentially exclusionary towards people who cannot lay 'native' claim to any territory.

As if the difficulties with the word *nation* were not enough, the meaning of the word *identity* in relation to nations has also been debated. Arthur Aughey (2010) has commented on the way that previous literature has problematically attempted to capture in the phrase *national identity* both political and cultural issues; he has therefore recommended the use of the word *allegiance* to more clearly distinguish the reciprocal sense of confidence between citizen and nation/state on the one hand, and the feeling that one belongs to a nation, on the other. Malešević (2011) has highlighted the problem in a slightly different way, pointing out that group designation (i.e., identifying as 'French', for example) is not the same as having inner feelings of attachment to that group.

Because of these difficulties, some academics have questioned whether the phrase *national identity* ought to be used at all. Malešević (2011) has one of the most comprehensive arguments to this effect, calling *national identity* a 'conceptual chimera' (p. 272). Apart from enumerating the theoretical problems of the phrase, he also argues that there is scant empirical evidence to show that anything that can be univocally labelled as a 'national identity' exists. Malešević proposes, instead, that academics turn their focus to the 'ideological processes' through which people come to believe in the abstract concept that they identify as their 'nation', and the processes by which they become willing to be mobilised as social actors to perpetuate this concept (p. 283).

Despite Malešević's sound criticisms of the term, categories of national identity persist in everyday language, and people continue to identify themselves with at least one nation in ways that are not tied exclusively to their citizenship status (see Skey 2007). Moreover, despite their ambiguity, institutional structures have been built around these concepts, although controversies such as the recent Windrush Scandal in Britain, in which the citizenship status of certain groups was challenged despite the validity of their legal claim

to such, highlight the ambiguity of these structures. In this chapter, therefore, I decide to continue to use the words *nation* and *national identity*, but in ways that are mindful of the critiques raised against the use of the terms. Firstly, by *nation*, I refer to a large group of people that either exercises self-government (such as through statehood or sub-statehood), or aspires towards such self-government, which (and in this I follow Barrington [2006]) most often includes the control of a specific territory. Such groups typically are large enough such that most members of the group do not personally know one another. However, following Will Kymlicka (1996), I do not exclude from my definition smaller groups (such as indigenous people's communities) whose members might personally know one another, especially if they have developed their own internal structures for self-governance.

I understand a *national identity* – such as, for example, the identification of oneself as 'British' or 'Filipino' – as a concept that is propagated by the state and other actors for at least three purposes: firstly, to support social cohesion among the people to whom the idea of national identity is being propagated; secondly, to encourage them to support and lend legitimacy to actors who claim to act in the name of the group; and thirdly, to encourage the people themselves to act in ways that support the authentic or purported interests of the entire group. In this sense, *national identity* is closely related with *nationalism*.

Normatively, people from different contexts judge *nationalism* in very different ways. In post-World War II Western Europe, the term *nationalism* might be seen by advocates of liberal democracy to be an inimical, dangerous idea, and it may conjure up memories of Nazi ideology. However, in post-colonial contexts or contexts of continuing colonialism, the term *nationalism* might have a very positive connotation, and be used by advocates of liberal democracy as a description of the colonised people's desire for self-governance and sovereignty, or it may be used to refer to sense of a civic spirit that is seen in opposition to selfish individualism or tribalism. The distinctions between positive and negative ideas of nationalism have figured in academic debate as well. Canovan (2000) summarises the debate by describing the emergence of a group of scholars who defend a form of group loyalty that remains particularistic in its allegiance to the culture of a group, while also protecting liberalism. Canovan cites Maurizio Viroli as an example, and highlights how Viroli prefers the term *patriotism* to describe such a form of loyalty, in order to maintain the critique against *nationalism* (also see Papastephanou 2013 for a similar distinction). Yet Canovan ultimately demonstrates that the arguments for such a form of patriotism are very similar to the arguments given by political philosophers such as David Miller, who also defend a form of loyalty that is both particularist and liberal at the same time; one of the key differences is that Miller does not hesitate to call this form of loyalty, *nationalism*.

In this chapter and throughout this work, I am mindful of these many debates regarding the terms *nation* and *nationalism* in the terms I choose to use. To respond to

Malešević's critique outlined above, I distinguish between two kinds of nationalism. I use the phrase *analytic nationalism* to refer to the acceptance that the world today *is* organised into nations; this idea usually accompanies the acceptance that these nations most often correspond to the polity which is the state (i.e., the *nation-state*). I use the word *patriotic nationalism* to refer to the idea that it is desirable to foster an allegiance to the nation to which one considers oneself a member. In using the word *patriotic nationalism*, I follow in the tradition of Canovan, Miller, Yael Tamir, Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, and Joseph Raz, who argue, *contra* some universalist and internationalist political thinkers, that although there are forms of patriotic nationalism that are incompatible with liberalism, there are also forms of patriotic nationalism that are compatible with liberalism. Finally, I use the phrase *national identity* to refer to the perception that one belongs to one such group.

Having lain out some clarificatory remarks about the concepts used in this chapter and the thesis as a whole, let us turn our attention now to the specific setting from which this work emerges.

2.2 American Motivations for Colonial Education in the Philippines

In developing his well-known idea of nations as 'imagined communities', Benedict Anderson (1983/2006) uses the Philippines as one of his main case studies. Anderson highlights the 19th century – the decades that have come to be known as the Philippine Enlightenment – as the period when the concept of the Philippines as a nation began to emerge among its people. To substantiate his claim, he contrasts two Filipino literary works of the century, Francisco Balagtas' Tagalog epic *Pinagdaanang Buhay ni Florante at ni Laura sa Caharaiang Albania* [The Story of Florante and Laura in the Kingdom of Albania], estimated to have been written as early as 1838, and polymath José Rizal's novel *Noli Me Tangere*, written in Spanish in 1887. Unlike the earlier work, the latter one is written in a style that 'conjures up the imagined community' in the readers' minds, referring to a specific time and part of Manila that any Filipino who has visited the capital would be familiar with (p. 27). This, Anderson argues, is evidence of the emergence of a sense of a 'we' between the author and the intended audience, one that transcended linguistic, regional, or cultural barriers. It might be said that this was an indicator of the spirit of nationalism that inspired local armed revolts and anti-clerical movements across the country to become united in a full-fledged revolution against the Spanish colonial government.

In this thesis, however, I begin my account of Philippine national identity at a slightly later date than Anderson does. My analysis commences with the events in 1898 that led up to the Philippine-American War. The focus of my attention is not the development of a sense of national identity among the Filipino public, but rather, the use of educational

systems to fashion such an identity. Although there was some attempt during the latter part of Spanish colonial rule to centrally regulate formal schooling in the Philippines based on a vision of an ideal colonial subject (Hardacker 2013; Concepcion 2014), these attempts were a far cry from the American colonial project in the archipelago, to which I now turn.

The story of the US colonisation of the Philippines is convoluted. Towards the end of the 19th century, a Philippine revolutionary army was winning a revolution against Spain, and the Philippines seemed on track to achieving independence and self-governance. By June 1898, Manila was one of the few major areas previously under Spanish governance that had not yet been taken over by revolutionary forces. The Philippine forces declared victory, established a government with a Constitution in Bulacan, a province just north of Manila that came to be known as the 'Malolos Republic' after the city in which it was established.[4] Filipino statesmen began the work to secure international recognition of the Philippines as a sovereign state. These efforts, however, were dashed by the entry of the United States into the drama.

The Spanish-American War had begun in April 1898, with the United States deciding to declare war against Spain, officially to support Cuba's quest for independence. Halfway across the world from Cuba, American forces entered Manila in June 1898 with the knowledge of the Philippine forces. In a letter dated 4th July 1898, Commanding Brigadier-General of the U.S. Volunteers acknowledged military leader General Emilio Aguinaldo as the commander of the Philippine forces, and led the latter to believe that American forces were supportive of their revolutionary struggle against Spain (*US Cong. Rec. 32*, 1899, pp. 2513–2514). Philippine and American forces thus cooperated in the fight against Spain.

Spanish forces, not only in Manila but on other fronts as well, lost heavily to American firepower. In August 1898, peace negotiations began between Spain and the United States. A central topic of the negotiation was the future of four Spanish colonies: Cuba, Guam, Puerto Rico (called Porto Rico in American documents of the time) and the Philippines.

No representative of the Philippines or any of the other colonies was present at the negotiations. US President William McKinley had originally been uninterested in annexing the Philippines, but was convinced to over the months of negotiation, and the result was the Treaty of Paris, signed in December 1898; the treaty declared that Spain was ceding the Philippines to the United States for an amount of US$20 million. In a

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[4] The leaders of the newly declared republic envisioned Philippine territory to encompass much of present-day Philippine territory, and also present-day Palau, which is presently a republic related to the United States in a protectorate-type relationship of 'free association'. They also hoped it would include the Sulu archipelago in southern Philippines; the Sulu archipelago presently is part of official descriptions of Philippine territory, although there has also been a long-standing independence movement in the area. See Suva 2020 for more.

proclamation addressed to the Secretary of War, President McKinley declared that American policy towards the Philippines would be one of 'benevolent assimilation' (*US Comm. on the Phils. Hearings*, p. 777). A vote of at least two-thirds of the US Senate was required to ratify the treaty, and the issue became the topic of heated debate among the legislators as well as the American public. The Congressional Record of the time reveals the two major sides of the debate. Most of those opposed to the annexation – the minority Democratic Party and some Republican dissenters – argued that Philippine sovereignty ought to be recognised, and that the government established by Aguinaldo ought to be acknowledged. Supporters of the annexation, however, painted Aguinaldo as a 'dictator' (*US Cong. Rec. 33*, 1899, p. 1832), his troops as 'barbarians' and 'savages' (p. 1109), and the American annexation of the Philippines as an act that would liberate the Filipino people from a possible dictatorship (p. 1155). The ratification of the treaty in April of that year did not end the debates; over the next twenty years, the US legislature would continue to be divided between those who wished to end the American occupation of the Philippines and those who wished for it to continue.

Back on Philippine soil, after weeks of silent tension between American and Philippine forces, fighting broke out in February 1899, marking the start of the Philippine–American War. The war was brutal, losses on the less-equipped and battle-weary Philippine side were staggering, and instances of brutal treatment of Philippine civilians became another heated topic of congressional debate in the United States. Still a leader of the guerrilla resistance, Aguinaldo was captured by American forces in March 1901 and later pledged allegiance to the American flag. Other pockets of resistance to American rule continued after his surrender, including a second attempt to establish a national Philippine government, but these were easily overpowered, and the United States began to switch its governance of the Philippines from the military to American civilians. This contextual backdrop is crucial for understanding the motivations that underpinned American educational policy in the Philippines.

To be clear, systems of schooling were already in place throughout the Philippines well before the beginning of American rule. By the time the Americans colonised the archipelago, there were at least two systems of education. In the Islamised parts of southern Philippines, which had remained largely politically independent until the end of the Spanish colonial period, small schools, each of which was led by a *pandita* ('learned man' in Sanskrit), taught children literacy and the fundamentals of Islam (Milligan 2005, pp. 32–34). Meanwhile, the parts of the Philippines under Spanish governance had a Western-style system of formal education that included several institutions of higher education (the oldest extant university in the Philippines is older than Harvard, the oldest university in the United States), professional schools, Latin grammar schools, and both parochial and secular primary schools. Spanish colonial law had required at least one pair of single-sex primary schools in each town with at least 5,000 inhabitants. The implementation of Spanish educational law, however, had been uneven, with only half of

the required schools running in the year 1896, and low attendance in many locations. There had also been a great disparity in the quality of and access to education between the more rural, far-flung areas and urban areas. Many of the wealthiest Filipino elite sent their children to Europe for either university or postgraduate studies (Justice 2009). Nonetheless, in the short period of independence before the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, the Malolos Republic demonstrated their optimism about further developing state education in the country, through several decrees mandating educational development and reform. A newly established state university, the *Universidad Literaria de Filipinas*, went as far as to issue its first degrees in 1899 to students who had transferred from Spanish-founded universities in Manila (Mojares 2006a), before the Philippine–American War brought these efforts to an end.

One of the most important differences with regard to educational policy in the two colonial periods (Spanish and American) was how central the educational machinery was to the U.S. colonial government. Education was at the very heart of the American colonisation of the Philippines. The violence that characterised the start of American rule in the Philippines reveals the first of three prime motivators that drove American educational policy in its new colony. That motivator was pacification. Education was a central pacification strategy employed by the United States in the Philippines, and this explains why soldiers were the first American teachers in the Philippines. The army was given instructions to put up a makeshift school in each village or town as it fell to American forces. In reality, as soldiers advanced through the villages, they often found that school buildings were already in existence. Army chaplains and soldiers often served as the superintendents and teachers at these temporary schools, and focused primarily on teaching conversational English in an educational programme that was haphazardly implemented (Justice 2009). The American government moved swiftly to improve the schooling system, however, and with the Philippine-American War still raging, the US Philippine Commission established a formal civilian Bureau of Education by the start of 1901 that began to recruit highly-qualified American teachers to teach in the archipelago (Justice 2009).

The second motivator for American educational policy in the Philippines was economic self-sufficiency. The U.S. Congressional Records of the time reveal that economic and business self-interest that lay behind American governance of the Philippines (see, for example, *US Cong. Rec. 36*, 1903, pp. 2108–2110). A 1905 article from the *Mindanao Herald*, the American newspaper in Zamboanga, Mindanao, explicitly declared the 'millions of acres of virgin land' as 'white man's country' for the taking (Steinbock-Pratt 2019). For the Philippines to become an asset rather than a financial burden to the United States, its population had to be trained. A succession of general superintendents in the earliest years of the American colonial period proposed and experimented with different curricula, but eventually a model of industrial education prevailed (Justice 2009). To be sure, the educational project was also at some points seen

as a hindrance to American economic interests; in his 1907–1908 annual report, Director of Education David Barrows lamented the complaints of 'much of the American community' in the Philippines that 'the public schools interfere with the availability of labor' and 'expend large sums of money which would better be devoted to industrial and commercial development' (*Annual Report of the Dir. Ed. 1907–1908*, p. 12).

The third motivator (and one that was at odds with the first two) was a desire for Filipinos to become self-governing. The public justification for the annexation of the Philippines, rhetoric designed to silence the anti-imperialists among the American public, had been that the United States was going to treat the Philippine dependency as a 'little brown brother', guiding it until it was 'ready' for self-governance. Through the decades, there were debates among American policymakers about the degree to which the Philippines ought to be granted self-governance, as well as debates about when this self-governance was going to be given. (Most Democrats wanted the Philippines to be granted independence immediately, while most Republicans refused to set a deadline for Philippine self-governance.) Nonetheless, the result of these debates was that the educational system was built with a view towards developing a Philippine citizenry. Similarly, while American educational bureaucrats stationed in the Philippines held different opinions about Filipinos and different views about the future of the Philippines, many of them bought into the mission of 'preparing' Filipinos to be citizens.

Apart from these three motivations, an additional factor must also be considered to appreciate the roots of American educational policy in the Philippines. The racial ideologies of the time played a significant role in shaping this policy. These are explored in the next section.

2.3   The Racial Ideologies That Underpinned Colonial Citizenship Education

During the Spanish–American War and its immediate aftermath, Filipino leaders of the newly declared Philippine Republic were in disagreement about what kind of relations to establish with the United States. As negotiations between Spain and the United States continued, a few of them were resigned to the eventuality of American colonial rule, and began to draft plans to secure autonomous status under American protection, believing that the United States would be a more benevolent and more liberal coloniser (Mojares 2006a, pp. 139–149). Officially, though, the republic retained hope that it could secure recognition of its independence, sending representatives to the United States to lobby before politicians and the public for this cause (Kramer 2006). One of the sources of mistrust in American claims of benevolence was precisely the history of slavery in the US and its reputation for racism towards people of African descent.

The Filipinos' worries that they would be targets of American racism were not unfounded. Publications from the period give a glimpse as to how the race thinking that

was prevalent in the United States (and elsewhere in the West) at the time was applied to Filipinos as well. As American colonial interest in the Philippines grew in the year 1898, applications of 'race science' to the Philippines began to be published (Brinton 1898; Worcester 1898). To take one example, in a pair of 1898 articles published in *The Scientific American* (Steere 1898a, 1898b), University of Michigan professor Joseph Beal Steere categorised the Philippine population into four groups: 'the civilized Indians, the Mohammedans, the wild Indians and the Negritos or Attas', a list ordered according to what Steere perceived to be each group's degree of 'civilization' (Steere 1898a, p. 407). The phrase 'civilized Indians' was a reference to the majority Hispanised population – that is, the segment of the population whose culture had been most influenced by Spanish colonisation. They had adopted Christianity, and they lived in towns or villages that had been established by the Spanish colonial government. It was this segment of the population that Steere considered to be the 'real citizens and inhabitants of the Philippines'. Steere's descriptions of the 'civilized Indians', however, were notably racialised, and he considered their 'origin and relationship to the Malay race ... a part of the great race problem of the Pacific' (Steere 1898b, p. 184). Echoing the census taxonomies of the Spanish colonial government, Steere distinguished them from the 'mestizos – people of mixed blood' and began his description of the 'Philippine Indians' with physical descriptions: 'brown in color, with coarse, straight, black hair, and little or no beard...' (p. 184). He repeated the hypothesis of 'Spanish authorities' that they were 'mixed races of Malay and Negrito stock, with perhaps some infusion of Chinese and Japanese blood' (p. 184). At the same time, he also considered them to be a separate group from the 'savage tribes' of the islands, though the former's physical appearance and language showed their 'close relationship' to the latter.

A version of Steere's categorisation of the Philippine population soon began to be reflected in American government documents and policy. US Commissioner of Education William T. Harris included in his 1899–1900 annual report a lengthy essay entitled, 'Intellectual Attainments and Education of the Filipinos', not attributed in the original version of the report, but attributed elsewhere to R. L. Packard (1901). The essay was a synthesis of supposedly 'impartial' European and Filipino scholarship about the 'natives' of the Philippines. and began by offering a 'practical' division of the Philippine population into three categories:

> the Christianized or civilized peoples, called 'Indios' by the Spaniards, who alone are now designated by the term 'Filipinos,' and who form the great majority of the population; the wild mountain tribes called 'Infieles' (infidels or heathen) by the Spaniards; and the Mohammedans [Muslims] of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, to whom the Spaniards gave the name of 'Moros' in memory of their ancient enemies, the Moors of Spain. (p. 1596)

As with Steere's, Packard's categories were racialised. Among the 'wild tribes', he considered the 'Negritos', whom he racialised as 'black', to be the original inhabitants of

the islands. He described the 'civilised' Filipinos as a 'mixed race', descended from a first migration of members of the 'Malay' race but also from other races, on account of settlements by traders from China and Japan even prior to the 'discovery' by the Spaniards, as well as by Mexican and Peruvians who had served in the army in the Philippines. Apart from the 'Negritos', the rest of the 'wild tribes' were also described as also being of Malay origin, except for some of the wild tribes of Mindanao whom he said had been identified by a previous atlas as belonging to the Indonesian race. Finally, the 'Mohammedans' were also identified as Malay, but descendants of a separate invasion. In the racial hierarchy presented by Packard, those Filipinos whom he considered to of 'mixed race', he also considered to be the most civilised, 'capable of culture', 'the best of whom are … on a par with the corresponding classes elsewhere in the world', an achievement attributed partly to 'enlightenment brought by their conquerors' (Packard 1901, pp. 1596–1597).

Such depictions of the Philippine population were resisted by Filipino scholars and authors. The Filipino pro-independence diplomat Sixto Lopez, for example, wrote a statement protesting such portrayals that was read in the US Senate (*U.S. Cong. Rec. 34*, 1901, pp. 1716–1717). However, despite their objections, as well as those of anti-imperialist Americans, such depictions of the Philippine population persisted in the US. The tripartite classification of the Philippine population described above remained throughout American rule, and eventually led to a difference in the way that these groups were administered. In 1903, the American government created a separate 'Moro Province' in the Philippines, encompassing the areas with large Muslim populations that had, for the most part, successfully resisted Spanish colonisation until the end of the 19th century (*Annual School Reports*, pp. 652–653). By 1904, General Superintendent David Barrows had included a separate section in his report on 'schools for pagan tribes' and 'schools for the Moro province'.

Differences in governance also translated into differences in proposed educational approaches. For Christian students, Barrows recommended a curriculum similar to the curriculum given to American students, with a few adaptations. The curriculum he proposed for the so-called 'pagan tribes', many of which he considered to be in a 'state of barbarism' (*Annual School Reports*, p. 653), however, was very different, focusing only on elementary English, arithmetic, and 'some study of the plant and animal life of his own wild mountain region', and focusing on industrial work and agriculture (*Annual School Reports*, p. 653–654). In the Moro Province, the school curriculum by 1910 had broad similarities with the curriculum for Christian students, but with more emphasis on vocational and industrial training (Milligan 2005, p. 61).

Personal letters and diaries make it clear that American teachers stationed in the Philippines largely internalised white supremacist ideas in general, and racialised ideas about Filipinos more specifically (Steinbock-Pratt 2019; Eittreim 2019). But this is not to say that Americans' racial depictions of Filipinos were uniform. Julian Go (2004) has

categorised American racial depictions of Filipinos of the time into two types. On the one hand, some accounts considered Filipino 'savagery' to be an inherent biological trait that rendered them incapable of self-government. On the other hand, other accounts attributed Filipinos' supposed incapacity for self-government to their history, culture and environment, with their race a 'correlate' of this inferiority rather than a cause.

The first type of rendition was found in soldiers' and military officials' accounts of the Philippine–American war, statements from imperial-minded elected officials, and also among statements from a few white supremacist members of the Anti-Imperialist League who feared miscegenation between Filipinos and Americans (Go 2004, pp. 38–40 and 49; Kramer 2006, pp. 182–184). This type of thinking, that, as a 'race', Hispanised Filipinos could not aspire to self-governance, may have also been a factor in the earliest American colonial educational policies in the Philippines. The first civilian governor-general of the Philippines was William Howard Taft (who would later become the president of the United States). He appointed the first civilian in charge of Philippine public education in the person of a 35-year-old Massachusetts school principal named Fred W. Atkinson in 1900. Before Atkinson left for the Philippines, Taft instructed him to visit the Hampton Institute in Virginia and Tuskegee Institute in Alabama that catered to African-American students, as well as the Carlisle Industrial School for Native Americans (Tarr 2006), which had been established with the aim to '[k]ill the Indian … and save the man' (Pratt 1892, cited in Hsu 2013). He also instructed Atkinson to read Charles Trevelyan's book *On the Education of the People in India* (Tarr 2006, p. 157). Taft's recommendations to Atkinson hint at the extent to which he viewed the educational project in the Philippines through a racial lens, and they appear to be founded on a presumption that the education of Filipinos ought to be patterned after the education of America's minority races rather than Anglo-Saxon education. Atkinson's own racial presumptions can be gleaned from a passage from his letters quoted by Glenn May (1980), in which Atkinson seemed to equate Hispanised Filipinos with African-American minorities at home, and warned of the consequences of 'overdoing' higher education (p. 93). Ultimately, Atkinson attempted to establish industrial education in the Philippines patterned after the Tuskegee school, but made little headway, partly due to poor implementation, and partly due to a lack of interest from Filipino students (May 1980), though, as alluded to above, the third director of education, Frank White, would later reinstate a focus on industrial education when he was appointed in 1910.

The second type of racial depiction of Filipinos – that which considered 'savagery' to be a product of culture rather than inherent nature – was applied not just to Filipinos but to other racialisations of the time, and was developed theoretically in the American academic and intellectual writing of the period. These theorisations were influenced by social evolutionary theory, a linear theory of political development that posited that societies developed from tribal fragmentation towards national unity, as well as the

evolutionary theories of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, which posited that characteristics acquired during one's lifetime could be passed onto offspring (Go 2000; Kramer 2006).

Elizabeth A. Gagen (2007) has convincingly connected American policy in the Philippines to one such Lamarckian theory, the theory of recapitulation developed by Clark University psychologist G. Stanley Hall. Hall's theory was a convergence of psychology, eugenics, and genetics. Gagen describes his theory as one in which the normal development of a child could be mapped onto human evolutionary history, through the principles of genetics. Thus, the young child was controlled by the genetic memory of primitive mammals; the child from the ages of eight to twelve was enacting the behaviours of humans in their savage stage; and the adolescent and young adult were finally mirroring the most recent stage of human development. Adolescence was the stage at which development was no longer merely recapitulatory: an adolescent could acquire new learnings rather than merely rehearsing genetic memory. This was the stage, therefore, that had led to divergences among races. According to the theory, because previous generations of Anglo-Saxons had been raised in better environments during their adolescent years, Anglo-Saxons as a race had advanced further and become more civilised, and this superiority had been passed onto later generations. In contrast, Hall believed that individuals belonging to 'savage' races had inherited more primitive characteristics from ancestors whose advancement had terminated in adolescence. Unlike conventional white supremacism, though, Hall was optimistic that more inferior races could, through schooling, be uplifted as well, and that advancements made by the current generation of a particular race could then be passed on to future generations. Schooling, then, was crucial for adolescents, not just for their benefit as individuals, but as a means to shape, through genetics, the future of the race to which the adolescent belonged.

Evidence for Hall's influence on American imperial policy can be seen in the pages of the *Journal of Race Development.* Hall co-founded this journal in 1910, together with his Clark University colleague, historian George Blakeslee (Blatt 2004). The second issue of the journal published some of the proceedings of a conference hosted by Hall and Blakeslee, at which two Philippine-based civil servants, including director of education David Barrows himself, delivered papers that were published in the journal (Barrows 1910; Beardsley 1910). The connection between Hall's journal and the Philippines continued long after the conference. In its first nine years of existence, before its name was changed to *The Journal of International Relations*, one of its contributing editors was James Alexander Robertson, librarian at the National Library of the Philippines.[5] Likely through that connection, the journal was able through the years to publish a number of contributions from other Philippine-based civil servants as well: Victor G. Heiser (1912), Director of Health for the Philippine Islands; Major John P. Finley (1913), governor of the Philippine district of Zamboanga; and the Filipino resident commissioner and future

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[5] See https://www.jstor.org/stable/29737841 to see Robertson listed as one of the editors on the first page of the journal's first issue.

Philippine president Manuel L. Quezon (1915). The journal also published reviews of books about the Philippines as well as commentaries by US-based academics and civil servants that addressed issues in the Philippines.

Go (2000) argues that a Lamarckian racial ideology about Filipinos became the dominant rendition among colonial civilian officials and the lens through which they undertook state-building in the Philippines. The prominence of civilian officials in the pages of a journal published by a leading Lamarckian appears to confirm this. Educational policy specifically about Hispanised Filipinos, however, appears to have swung back and forth between these two types of racial depictions: the dismissal of Filipinos as incapable of self-governance, and the Lamarckian view that they (especially Hispanised Filipinos) could be educated for self-governance. After Atkinson's protracted focus on industrial education, Barrows took over as the second director of education, a post he held for six years (from 1903 to 1909). May (1980) has characterised Barrows' approach to Philippine education as 'Jeffersonian' in its commitment to social egalitarianism and democracy (p. 99). He wanted to prepare Filipinos for citizenship and wrote about the government policy as one that sought to weld Filipinos into 'one nation with a common language, a common appreciation of rights and duties, and a common patriotism for their land as a whole' (*Annual Report of the Secr. Publ. Instr.*, 1903, p. 13; quoted by Francisco, 2015, p. 13.)

Such racial ideologies shaped educational policy concerning the Moro Province as well. Jeffrey Ayala Milligan (2005) describes such racial discourse as the background against which Moros (Milligan uses the term 'Muslim Filipinos') were cast as the 'exotic and threatening Other' (p. 51). Incidents of anti-colonial armed resistance were used to strengthen the image of them as 'violent savages', and sociocultural differences with Christians – from their colourful clothing and polygamous practices to their practice of slavery – were highlighted to portray them as uncivilised and morally degenerate. According to Milligan, these beliefs underpinned the American educational aim of 'deculturalising' Muslim Filipinos (Moros) and preparing them to be subordinated to Hispanised Filipinos (p. 63).

The oxymoronic nature of the phrase 'benevolent assimilation' (oxymoronic *and* unfactual, as the assimilation was oftentimes brutal), and the conflicting interests and ideologies that motivated American bureaucrats in the Philippines led to a central paradox in the American state-building and nation-building 'mission' in the Philippines. Motivated both by 'civilising' as well as imperial aspirations, the American educational project eventually settled into an uneasy equilibrium: it became a project that encouraged self-governance but not self-determination. Filipinos were trained to provide the manpower and resources for the large civil service machinery that was required to administer the territory's affairs. They were taught skills that would allow them to harness the rich natural resources of the land they lived on and participate in capitalistic

endeavours. However, the decisions regarding the direction of the Philippines, including its cultural, social, economic, and political development, were in many ways ultimately controlled by the American colonial government. Financially, it was arguably American businessmen who were the main beneficiaries of the economic transformation of the country (Justice 2009). Filipinos were as early as 1907 represented in the legislature by elected Filipinos, but their decisions were subjected, first to the approval of the Philippine Commission, composed of American bureaucrats appointed by the American president, and then later, in the 1930s, to the Philippine governor-general who retained veto power over the decisions made by the Filipino government.

The United States finally granted the Philippines independence shortly after the Second World War, on the 4th of July, 1946. However, as I show in the next section, many of the ideas that shaped American colonial educational policy persisted. In particular, Filipino policymakers continued to see the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Philippines as a hindrance to state-building, and believed that the state educational system should retain a central role in 'unifying' the country by instilling a common national identity. This has been particularly evident in the debates about educational language policy, to which I now turn.

2.4 Education for National Identity in the Philippines and the Case of Language Policy

Linguistic diversity has long been seen to be problematic for state interests. It is often assumed that linguistic diversity is a hindrance to economic development, despite the inconsistency of the empirical evidence for this claim (Pool 1972; Ginsburgh & Weber 2011; Bacsi 2018). Beyond the economic question, linguistic diversity also contradicts the Western 'ideal of nationalism' that emerged during the modern period, a 'congruence between territory and people' (Wright 2004, p. 19). Western imperialism brought this idealisation of the nation-state to the colonies. In the Philippines, the American colonial government systematically educated the colonial citizenry in the notion that the monocultural nation-state was the most important and ideal system of political organisation. Monolingualism, or at the very least, the presence of only *one* official language, was considered one of the strongest indicators of monocultural nationhood. This was one of the reasons why monolingualism was promoted by the American colonial government, and the ideal of a unifying language persisted beyond the end of colonial rule. In this section, I trace this story as one example of how the ideology of the nation-state began during the colonial period and persisted beyond it.

The American colonial government managed and regulated the state school system in the Philippines from 1902 to 1935; throughout this period, the official policy was that all classes ought to be taught in English and *only* English. Although some American

bureaucrats criticised this policy (see Bernardo 2004 for a brief discussion), other officials believed that Philippine languages had little value and were not worth conserving; in his 1903–1904 annual report, for example, Moro Province governor General Leonard Wood reported that his office was not attempting

> to preserve the native dialects, as they are crude, devoid of literature, and limited in range…. The language … is not believed to present any features of value or interest other than as a type of savage tongue. It will probably be necessary in some instances to give a certain amount of instruction in Moro for a time …. The teaching of English, however, should be pushed forward as rapidly as possible. We can not expect to continue many different dialects of the island, and any attempt to do so would be unwise, but we can hope with a reasonable degree of assurance to make English the main language … in the comparatively near future. (*Annual Report of the Gov. Moro Province*, 1904, p. 13; see also Hsu 2013 for similar opinions expressed by other American officials)

Indeed, the government's annual education reports of the time, not just in the Moro Province, but across the archipelago, demonstrate that American bureaucrats considered the adoption of English to be one of the most important success indicators of the educational project. These claims to success, however, conceal the range of attitudes that Philippine colonial subjects themselves had towards the learning of the new language. In her unpublished doctoral dissertation, Adrianne Marie Francisco (2015) notes that while Filipinos were largely enthusiastic about English instruction, in practice their adoption of English did not replace the vernacular tongues. Instead, Filipinos, who were already multilingual, simply added another language to their repertoire, with varying degrees of fluency. Moreover, despite the official policy of English only, the degree to which Filipino teachers actually adhered to this rule is unclear. Beyond the classroom, Spanish was also still widely spoken among the Filipino elite. Among the Moro communities, resistance to American education was even stronger than it was in Hispanised towns and cities, encompassing not just the attempts to change children's spoken language, but the establishment of the American schools themselves. Moro families saw American schools as incursions on their religious identity, and as late as 1926, residents burned to the ground more than 20 American-built schools near Lake Lanao; throughout the American colonial period, many Moro families continued to send their children to *pandita* schools instead (Milligan 2005, pp. 69–71).

The reasons underlying American language policy are connected to the motivations and theoretical roots of colonial education discussed in the previous sections. The initial reason for the decision to replace vernacular languages with English had to do with pacification. Teachers were instructed to teach children English and to discourage the use of local languages, partly to prevent insurrectionary meetings which the Americans could not understand. As late as 1903, James F. Smith, then Secretary of Public Instruction, considered a common tongue to be useful in the American administration and

governance of the islands, citing the lack of a common language to be 'one of the fruitful sources of trouble for Spain' as well as one of the main causes for the Philippine insurrection against the United States (*Annual School Reports*, p. 233). At the same time, the focus on education was also seen as a pacification strategy in a softer sense; it was hoped that American soldiers' presentation of themselves as educators to the local communities would convince Filipinos of the 'benevolence' of American intentions (Hsu 2013).

In time, most of the remaining pockets of armed resistance to American rule were quashed, and the threat of insurrection receded. The educational system was handed over from the American military to the new civil government that was established in 1902, and the decision to maintain English as the medium of instruction became an economic one. Although there were a few bureaucrats, like the first director of the educational bureau Fred Atkinson, who held the personal view that children should be taught in their vernacular, the dominant opinion was that it would be much easier and more efficient for Filipinos to learn the Americans' language rather than to have American teachers and superintendents learn the local languages.

Eventually, bureaucrats with politically liberal views towards the Philippines took over. These American advocates of Philippine self-governance saw the teaching of English as a 'civilising' mechanism for the Philippines, with English depicted as a more 'advanced' language. Underlying these motivations were the racial ideologies described above in Section 2.3, which assumed Anglo-Saxon culture to be superior to Philippine culture, alongside a social evolutionary theory that saw the multiplicity of languages in the Philippines to be a hindrance to political development. In his 1907–1908 report, for example, Barrows expressed the view, which he said was 'generally recognized', that the number of 'native dialects' in the Philippines was a 'cause of division' and their continuance 'an obstacle to the attainment of nationality' (*Annual Report of the Dir. Ed.*, 1907–1908, p. 31).

Much of the internal policymaking of the Philippines switched to Filipino hands in 1935, with the establishment of a transitional protectorate government known as the 'Commonwealth government', of which Filipino statesman Manuel Quezon was installed as the first president. In a show of resistance to American educational policies, Quezon pushed for the elevation of one of the indigenous languages to the status of national language. This eventually resulted in Tagalog, one of the major regional languages of trade of the archipelago, becoming such. Despite his disagreement with American language policy, however, Quezon echoed the American government's presumption that a single language was required to weld the country together. Amid the debates as to which of the two main lingua francas – Cebuano or Tagalog (the eventual victor) – ought to become the national language, the idea of having two (or more) indigenous official languages never arose.

In the classroom, English remained the main medium of instruction, but beginning in 1939, Tagalog was allowed as an alternative medium of instruction in the classroom, to be used when teachers deemed it necessary, making it a *de facto* second language of instruction. By this time, some 45 percent of school-age children in the Philippines were enrolled in a public school (Mojares 2006b), and were thus exposed to the promotion of English as the official language of education, and Tagalog as a national language. This policy was briefly interrupted when Japan occupied the Philippines during World War 2; Japanese administrators encouraged the expunging of English from schools (Llamzon 1976).

The Philippines became a sovereign country in 1946, soon after the war ended. The pre-war language approach in schools resumed, with English as the main medium of instruction, and Tagalog as a supplement. The idealisation of a single national language strengthened, as evident in the decision in 1959 to change the name of Tagalog to *Pilipino*, to reflect its status as a language that no longer belonged to the Tagalog minority, but to the entire nation. In the 1970s, after much debate, the Department of Education officially adopted a bilingual (English and Pilipino) policy of education, elevating the status of Pilipino further, and encouraging the development of Pilipino academic vocabularies in various subjects, although English remained by far the dominant language in the sciences and social sciences.

The 1973 Constitution also provided for the construction of 'Filipino', envisioned as a synthetic language drawing on all Philippine languages, but which in reality was simply the new name for the Tagalog dialect spoken in major urban areas, especially Metropolitan Manila. After a decade of flip-flopping between a bilingual policy and an English medium-of-instruction policy (with Filipino as a second language), the 2000s ushered in the next major change: the Philippines adopted mother tongue instruction up to Grade 3 (approximately the age of 9), and bilingual instruction (English/Filipino) in the higher grades, a move that remains contentious to this day.

The disagreements about language policy in Philippine education have been shaped by a variety of concerns. Some of these have been economic: despite not being a national language, English has been retained as an official language that all pupils must learn, and the defence of this position often centres around a belief that learning English is economically advantageous to the country. Other concerns have been pedagogic: even during the American colonial period, many educationalists – both Filipino and American – argued that pupils ought to be learning in their mother tongue to facilitate their grasp of the subject matter. However, amidst these different concerns has also been a persistent belief that a single national language is necessary for the Philippines to become a truer 'nation-state'. As mentioned above, there has been no attempt to adopt more than one national language, nor any attempt to add other Philippine languages to the list of official languages.

I have used language policy as one specific example to illustrate how the idea has persisted in schools, long after the end of the American colonial period, that the nation-state is the ideal and most important political organising principle. However, there are many other indicators of this. Throughout the country, pupils' and teachers' school lives are arranged around what Michael Billig (1995) calls 'banal nationalism', or what has come to be known as 'everyday nationalism'. The school calendar is adjusted according to holidays marking dates considered to be important to the state. From Grade 4 (ages 9–10) onwards, the languages of instruction are Filipino, designated by law as the national language, and English. Each school that follows the national curriculum (all state schools, in which around eight out of ten school-age children are enrolled, and most private schools) is typically adorned with the Philippine flag: either an actual flag on a pole in the school quadrangle or an image of one painted above the blackboard in the classroom.

Apart from this, Philippine schools take a more purposeful approach to instilling nationalism among pupils, both analytic nationalism, as well as patriotic nationalism (i.e., an allegiance to the Philippines). For the past two decades, 'love of country' has come to be identified as one of the core values of the state education system, after Philippine Republic Act 8491 adopted '*maka-Diyos, maka-tao, makakalikasan at makabansa* [roughly, 'for God, for people, for nature, and for country']' as its motto in 1998. In 2002, the basic education curriculum created a discrete learning area called *Makabayan* (literally, 'nationalistic' or 'patriotic'), incorporating several subjects from the old curriculum: Social Studies, Home Economics/Technology and Livelihood Education, Music and Arts, and Values Education. Philippine schools also adopt certain patriotic rituals: at least once a week, pupils recite a patriotic pledge and salute the flag while singing the national anthem.

Both analytic and patriotic nationalism are propagated through a curriculum that reinforces various ethnosymbols and narratives of the group. Analytic nationalism is transmitted, for example, through the teaching of a national language even in places where that language is not the lingua franca. Portions of the civics education curriculum are organised around the notion of the state as a central form of organisation: topics in Philippine history are arranged as a national history rather than local histories, with anachronistic mentions of 'the early Filipinos' pre-dating the naming of the Philippine archipelago as such and the colonial-era administrative organisation of the islands into a single unit.

These transmissions of nationalism in the curriculum support both the acceptance of a nation-state ideology as well as the construction of a national identity that accords with this ideology.

2.5 Conclusion

I have shown in this chapter that pacification goals, economic interests, colonial paternalism, and racial and political ideologies all fed into the development of the state school system under American colonial rule in the Philippines. I have further shown that from this web of interests, motivations, and beliefs, theoretical presumptions regarding the development of the modern nation-state persisted beyond the colonial period. As I have demonstrated through the example of language policy debates, the ideology of the nation-state has remained strong even in the decades since the Philippines gained its independence, and it continues to underpin the thick identity-building in Philippine schools. I consider the uncovering of the historical contingency of these ideas about the nation-state to be a first step towards imagining alternatives to the status quo.

Despite the persistence of these ideas in the Philippines, however, the teaching of national identity in schools has long been challenged elsewhere. In Western Europe, for example, nationalism came to be regarded with suspicion after the Second World War, and for a time in the 1990s and early 2000s, it was thought by some to be an ideology in rapid decline. Among educational theorists and philosophers, the teaching of national identity in schools became the topic of heated discussion. In the next chapter, I consider some of these debates before proposing a different way of framing the issue.

Chapter 3: Postcolonial Foundations

for an Education for National Identity

Should schools promote patriotic/nationalistic attachments? This is the debate that, since the 1990s, has framed much of the philosophy of education discourse on the relationship between nationalism and education. This fact demonstrates that much of this literature has understood nationalism in its patriotic (rather than analytic) sense. The debate mirrors and draws heavily from disputes within broader political philosophy on whether patriotic nationalism itself is desirable, especially within societies committed to democratic ideals.[6] The overarching argument within educational theory goes roughly like this. If the political philosophers who defend patriotic nationalism are correct in that patriotic nationalism is both desirable and compatible with democracy (many arguments specify *liberal* democracy), then patriotic nationalism should become an educational aim of schools.[7]

Critics of patriotic education attack different parts of the proposition. Some question whether patriotic nationalism is desirable (Hand 2011b). Some argue that patriotism is not compatible with democratic ideals, including the principle of global democracy (Miller 2016). Others argue that whether or not patriotic nationalism is desirable outside of school, it is either unfeasible or undesirable to teach it in schools (Archard 1999; Brighouse 2006; Haynes 2013; Merry 2013; see also Kodelja 2011). Finally, there are those who opt to go between the two horns and favour an analytic and evaluative approach to teaching patriotic nationalism, giving pupils the tools to decide for themselves whether patriotic nationalism ought to be cultivated (Hand 2011b; McDonough & Cormier 2013; see also Costa 2009).

The context of most of these discussions in the past has been changes in educational policy in the countries in which these debates have been most vibrant, such as the United Kingdom and the United States. Likely because of the geographic location of most of the scholars involved in these debates, much of the discussion has taken for granted Western and Eurocentric conceptions of nations and states, and has rarely questioned these constructions in the way that critical traditions of thought – such as postcolonial and decolonial thought, settler colonial studies, and critical race theory – have done. To be sure, the voices from these latter traditions – the voices, in other words, that attempt to speak for those who have been marginalised from the dominant narrative of world history – have entered the wider spaces of political and educational philosophy in the past decade. However, with only a few exceptions (e.g., Cross & Leroke 1995; Zembylas 2014;

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[6] See the work of Will Kymlicka, Yael Tamir, David Miller, Alasdair MacIntyre, Margaret Canovan, Charles Taylor, and Joseph Raz (Keller 2007).

[7] See, for example, Galson 1991; Callan 1997; Gutmann 2002; White 2006; Ben-Porath 2007; Tamir 2013; Zembylas 2014; Schumann 2016.

see also Papastephanou 2012 for some consideration of critical viewpoints on the issue), their perspectives have not yet figured strongly in the mainstream discussions about nationalism and education, despite the fact that most countries in the world were colonised by European powers.

One of the common themes in the different strands of anti-colonial thought (e.g., postcolonial theory, the decoloniality movement, settler colonial studies, and anti-colonial indigenous studies) is the challenge to the very conception of 'nationhood' as deployed in modernist accounts of the nation-state. A simple example of how colonial history complicates presumptions that underlie discussions about nationalism is seen in the way that territorial borders were often drawn by imperial governments with little regard for the culture of colonised inhabitants; thus, groups of people that might be called 'nations' were scattered across different states, or borders drawn around several groups that might be called such. This historical legacy is just one of the reasons why the present-day theoretical discourses about nationalism and patriotism do not neatly fit the post-colonial or settler colonial condition.

To be more specific, I take as an example M. Victoria Costa's (2018) recent summary of the debates about patriotic education in the *International Handbook of Philosophy of Education*. Costa's article makes a series of distinctions that are helpful for understanding some differences among countries, but which do not lend sufficient clarity to the cases of post-colonial countries. She begins by making a distinction between the possible objects of attachment of patriotism/nationalism. She distinguishes between attachments to an institutionalised polity, which she calls 'patriotism', and feelings of attachment towards a group of people who share a common identity, which she calls 'nationalism'. Such a distinction may be helpful to citizens of countries in conventional nation-states, but may be less helpful to those in the midst of political struggles where the forms of political institutions themselves are the object of contention, as is often the case in struggles perceived to be anti-colonial in nature. In such cases, the feelings of attachment are to a polity that has not yet been institutionalised, a polity that is yet to be imagined. Costa's definition of 'patriotism' is insufficient because of the condition that the object of attachment be an institution akin to a nation-state. Her definition of 'nationalism', however, is also insufficient because in such a case the object of attachment is directed not merely to the group of people to which one belongs but also outward towards a political vision.

A second example of how Costa's account does not sufficiently take into account the post-colonial context is in her distinction between multinational countries with a history of peaceful coexistence among nations, and societies divided among national lines. Although her distinction is useful for many cases, she makes no mention of the colonial history which led to the discordance between national and state boundaries in many parts of the world.

Finally, Costa helpfully highlights the common assumption shared by advocates of patriotic education that 'having a sense of belonging together contributes to the well-functioning of social institutions and the well-being of individual citizens' and that having a sense of belonging, in turn, depends on 'experiencing specifically patriotic feelings of attachment and identification' (p. 1395). However, she makes no mention of the complexities of identity faced by people in post-colonial contexts, where the target of patriotic feelings is not so simple. Does 'patriotism' in post-colonial contexts here only refer to patriotic feelings towards the state as defined after political decolonisation? What place is there for patriotism or nationalism towards the group of people considered to be one's nation prior to colonisation? And how does this relate with patriotism or nationalism towards the group of people constructed as the nation in the period after decolonisation? In the debates summarised by Costa, both those in favour of promoting patriotism as well as those critical of promoting patriotism appear to have taken the concept of the nation itself – the love of which patriotism seeks to promote – as an unproblematic given.

The relative absence of a postcolonial account within educational debates about patriotic nationalism is a gap I hope to partly fill. In this chapter, I aim to demonstrate how different strands of postcolonial thought complicate existing debates about the teaching of patriotism or national identity in schools. I build my argument in the following way. In the first section of the thesis, I summarise the arguments in favour of patriotic education, and highlight two gaps. In the second section, I address the first of these gaps, the sparse engagement with the question of power imbalances of national identities. I demonstrate how an analysis of power borrowed from the decoloniality movement can complicate these discussions. After this, I address a second gap, the simple portrayal of identity in many of the accounts. I show how postcolonial ideas about identity can help articulate the ambivalence surrounding experiences of national identity, and, drawing from Homi Bhabha's concept of *hybridity*, I propose a heuristic for analysing portrayals of national identity that can serve as an alternative to the traditional civic/ethnic dichotomy.

3.1 Previous Defences of Patriotic Nationalism in Education and Their Gaps

As indicated above, much of the debate about patriotic education can be summarised as a spectrum of responses to the question, 'Should citizenship education promote partiality towards the national political community of which the student is a member?' I sketch a brief summary here of the defences of patriotic education. It must be clarified at the outset that all of those involved in the debate criticise extremist forms of patriotic nationalism. Where they differ is in their positions regarding moderate patriotic nationalism.

The argument of those who defend patriotic education rests on the premise that patriotic nationalism is both desirable and compatible with democratic principles. The arguments regarding the desirability of patriotic nationalism are of two types: arguments that appeal to claims about the value of patriotism for the political community (what Costa [2009]) has described as an 'instrumental value' and which I call a 'political value'), and those that appeal to claims about the value of patriotism for the persons themselves (what I call a 'personal value'). Arguments that appeal to the political value of patriotic nationalism rest on claims that feelings of identification with the political community and its citizens contribute positively to the larger community as a whole. Such feelings, the argument goes, make members more willing to make sacrifices for the common good, to cooperate in common projects, to support redistributive policies, or to participate in democratic deliberation (Miller 1997; Callan 2002).

On the other hand, arguments that defend patriotic education based on its personal rather than political value rely on various claims about the benefit of patriotic dispositions to the person who holds them. David Miller (1997), for example, has argued that it is typical for individuals to have strong feelings of identification with their communities, and that, as a result, they perceive their personal well-being to be tied to the well-being of these communities. Alasdair MacIntyre's (1984, pp. 10–11) stronger version of this argument is that individuals' relationship to their political community is the foundation for developing morality, and should this relationship be severed, their ability to make moral and political judgements is hampered.

Many of the most influential arguments for the *compatibility* of patriotic nationalism with democratic principles is in the literature of what has come to be known as 'liberal nationalism' (see Miller 2020 for a brief history). Defenders of liberal nationalism recognise that nationalism can become chauvinistic or violent, and argue for a specific type of nationalism to be cultivated over other types, as well as for certain procedures to safeguard against the devolution of nationalism into its extremist form. With regard to the type of nationalism advocated, defenders of patriotic nationalism typically argue for the cultivation of civic values and principles rather than to inherited attributes such as ethnicity, a nod to the classic distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism. As for the procedural recommendation within the argument, defenders of liberal nationalism typically emphasise that rational and democratic political discussion is important in ensuring the legitimacy of obligations that may seem to stem from these patriotic attachments.

Viewing this debate from a postcolonial lens uncovers two gaps. The first gap is that most of the interlocutors in the current debates tend not to account for imbalances in the power afforded by different identities, and the use of specifically national identities to addresses such disparities. In colonial contexts, nationalisms have been developed and used strategically to forge political solidarity across sometimes very diverse groups of people, in the interest of self-determination in the wake of imperial invasion or unjust

occupation. When self-determination has been advocated through diplomatic means, such nationalisms have been key ingredients in demonstrating to imperial powers the strength of desire for self-determination. When self-determination has been fought for through armed resistance, such nationalisms have been central to recruiting and organising the numbers of troops required to fight imperial forces that are typically more resourced and more armed than they. The current discourse on patriotic education is largely silent on the strategic value that nationalisms have played in possibly legitimate struggles against unjust forms of national domination and the way parallel strategies continue to be used in post-colonial settings.

The second gap has to do with the portrayal of national identity: within these arguments defending patriotic education, it is typical for *national identity* to be portrayed in a simple, uncomplicated way. There are two senses in which the conventional understanding of national identity is simple. Firstly, feelings of identification with one's national or political community and its members are immediately assumed to translate into positive feelings for the nation and even partiality towards one's nation over others. National identity, in other words, tends to be conflated with *patriotic nationalism.* In contrast, post-colonial literature is replete with accounts of much more ambivalent experiences of national identity and political identity. Secondly, national identity itself is portrayed to be easily identifiable. Even when national identity consists of two levels of nationhood, such as Scottish and British, these are portrayed as identities that the person can easily name. The question, 'What is your national identity?' is not depicted as one that might be difficult to answer. In contrast, post-colonial literature often depicts the question to be a complicated one that sometimes cannot easily be answered.

In the next two sections of this chapter, I elaborate on these two points in greater detail, before proposing some theoretical adjustments to the conception of nationalism that may allow us to reimagine these issues differently.

3.2 Power

Within the existing debates, there has been a sparse consideration of current and historical power imbalances or domination between national groups, especially between people who identify as being from Global North countries and those from Global South countries.

One of the few authors who does consider a power element but in the allied domain of citizenship education[8] is Sarah DesRoches (2015); building on Sigal Ben-Porath's

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[8] Although some of the teaching of national identity takes place within citizenship education, it does not exclusively happen within that domain. National identity is taught more implicitly, for example, through the selection of texts for literature classes, in the teaching of history, and, as implied in the previous chapter, in the selection of the medium of instruction for all subjects.

earlier work, she draws from a Foucauldian analysis of power to suggest that leading students into an analysis of their social positionings within a larger web of relations can help them to better understand their political identities. Meanwhile, without referring explicitly to power, Richard W. Miller (2016) uses a similar lens to the one I wish to apply here, but taking the perspective of the (neo-)coloniser: he argues that American teachers must help students 'unlearn American patriotism' and instead commit to 'hemming in American empire'. In this section, I take on DesRoches' suggestion by looking at how an analysis of power inspired by the work of the so-called modernity/coloniality collective might further complicate the debate around the teaching of national identity.

National Identities and the Global Matrix of Power

The modernity/coloniality movement arose in Latin America at the turn of the 21st century, pushing postcolonial thought in a new direction.[9] Galvanised by the work of Anibal Quijano, the collective used a world-systems approach that conceptualised colonisation and modernisation to be the same historical movement: European modernisation was understood to have both driven and been dependent on waves of European colonisation of other parts of the world beginning in the 16th century. Quijano (2007) coined the term 'coloniality' to refer to the continuing legacy of colonialism (and modernity) in the aftermath of the political decolonisation in the middle of the 20th century; by this, he meant that Eurocentric institutions and ways of thinking continued to dominate globally in a 'colonial matrix of power' (a phrase coined later by Walter Mignolo [2011]), even after the former colonies became sovereign states. The collective thus described the task ahead as one of 'decoloniality', that is, seeking to change the hegemonic relationship between Europe and the rest of the world both politically and epistemically. Politically, this work included 'de-linking' social, economic and political systems from global systems that were Eurocentric. Epistemically, the work involved included the 'de-centring' of European epistemic frameworks by drawing more from non-European epistemic sources.

The decoloniality framework can help us think about present-day imbalances of power between the national identities of the Global North and those of the Global South. These power imbalances have both a cultural and legal dimension. Or, to put it differently, inasmuch as the concept of nationality had its origins in the ideology of the nation-state, there are imbalances both within the 'nation' dimension and the 'state' dimension of one's nationality (see Section 2.2 above). These power imbalances are more visible on the legal and bureaucratic level, that is, the policies and structures that define the relationship between a citizen and a state and that the state uses to regulate the actions of its own and

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[9] After initially publishing their work in journals of postcolonial thought, decolonial theorists went through a period in the early 2000s of seeking to distinguish themselves from postcolonial thinkers. However, in this chapter, I describe the decolonial movement as one thread within the larger tradition of postcolonial thought, a connection that current decolonial thinkers no longer object to as strongly.

other citizens. Legally, persons who are citizens of less powerful states (usually, post-colonial states) have less power globally. One example of this is the level of mobility that a person's passport affords, which is itself entwined with colonial history (see, for example, Bhambra 2017a). Citizens of Global North countries can assume a high level of freedom of global movement: their passport allows them visa-free access to half or more of the countries of the world. In contrast, a passport holder of a Global South country must often assume that they will not be allowed entry into another country, unless they are able to fulfil a long list of bureaucratic requirements and undergo several financial checks. The origin of one's passport is the defining factor for mobility above all other factors including, for example, wealth. The wealthiest person who holds a Global South passport typically has more legal restrictions to their freedom of international movement than does the poorest person who holds a Global North passport.

However, as Pierre Bourdieu (2002) and others have pointed out, power disparities exist on the cultural and social level as well. To take one example, different languages have different levels of power, and even different forms of the same language are unequally powerful (see Tupas 2019). The language a person speaks, including the accent and dialect used, positions them either closer to the centre or closer to the periphery of power. Of course, in different settings, different languages might be powerful, and a language that is powerful in one context may be almost powerless in another. However, the decolonial analysis helps us to see that these smaller maps of power are connected to one another to form a global matrix of linguistic power within which certain languages, such as English or Spanish, are globally more powerful than others, such as Tagalog or Hokkien. What is true of language is true of other aspects of culture as well, such as the way one dresses, the social cues one is accustomed to performing, the cultural references one mentions in conversation, and so forth.

For analytical purposes, I have taken these legal and cultural dimensions of power separately, but in practice they both shape people's national identity and often influence each other. In Chapter 2, I clarified that I use the term 'national identity' to refer to the perception that one belongs to a 'nation'. The objective realities that support such perceptions can be either cultural or, in the context of the aspirational 'nation-state', legal. Being able to speak Philippine languages, eating food that is typically identified as unique to Philippine cuisine, engaging in social practices that are associated with 'Philippine culture': all these may contribute to my feeling of belonging to the Philippine nation, i.e., to my Filipino national identity. On the other hand, having a British passport, being able to vote in UK elections, having to pay taxes in the UK, and being subjected to UK laws: all these may contribute to my identification as British.

In the same way that both cultural and legal realities contribute to my identification with a nation, my experience of the power imbalances and marginalisation associated with either my cultural practices or my legal status can shape my affective experience of national identity as well. Mockeries of the food that I eat, insults about the clothes I wear,

or dismissals of the languages I speak may engender feelings of shame or anger in me, but so can being interrogated harshly at border controls because of the passport I hold, being barred from requesting for public aid in the middle of a pandemic because of my visa status, or being threatened with deportation because of gaps in the documentation that I keep.

Echoing DesRoches' insight, and taking Richard Miller's argument above as one example, the above reflections indicate the potential usefulness of examining the relative power of one's national identity. In post-colonial settings, two dimensions affect the relative power of one's identity. On the one hand, it was often the case during the processes of colonisation and political decolonisation that geographic borders were artificially drawn around a multiplicity of cultures. Post-colonial states, then, have often been characterised by struggles of power within each state. Thus, the congruence between a student's local identity and the national identity portrayed in schools is a factor in the relative social positioning of that student's identity. On the other hand, within the global matrix of power, with just a few exceptions, the national identity of someone from a post-colony is typically weak.

Other than understanding the current relative positioning of one's national identity, another useful insight – one that further complicates discussions about the teaching of national identity – is an understanding of the different approaches that have been suggested to mitigate the relative weakness of post-colonial national identities. I turn to this now.

Mitigating the Power Imbalances Between National Identities

Although an analysis of power has not been very central to debates about nationality and education among educational theorists, such an analysis has become common among political philosophers, social theorists, and political actors who have some affinity with anti-colonial traditions of thought. In different ways, these thinkers have challenged the nation-state ideology as a means to address injustices experienced by those whose national identities have been peripheral in the global power matrix. Considering them in relation to the questions I have posed in this thesis, I categorise these approaches into four.

The first two types of approaches advocate for the *weakening* of national identity as a way of mitigating the condition of power imbalance in the world. The first of these two focuses on the cultural dimension of national identity, whereas the second focuses on the legal and bureaucratic structures shaped by nationalism. The first includes the type of argument made by Martha Nussbaum (1996) in her essay, 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism', which focuses on how national allegiances can blind people in places of greater advantage (e.g., the United States) to the problems they cause in other parts of the world (pp. 12–13). The need to address such global imbalances of power is then used as one of the many arguments for deemphasising the cultural dimension of national identity in favour of a stronger global cosmopolitan culture.

A second approach is more agnostic to the cultural dimension of national identity, and more concerned instead with its legal dimension. This approach includes calls to strengthen other non-state identities relative to traditional nation-state identities (i.e., citizenship) in order to weaken the exclusionary or dominating features of state identities. One example of this is the clamour for governments to legally recognise the Indigenous identity as a political identity that justifies the ascription of a different set of rights and privileges compared to other citizens of a state. Another example can be found in the recent work of Gurminder Bhambra (2017b), which seems to indicate the recognition and strengthening of some form of post-colonial identity, that is, an identity of citizens of former colonies, or possibly descendants of former colonial subjects. For Bhambra, rather than limiting certain privileges or performing obligations only to their own state citizens, governments of former empires should extend some of these to bearers of these post-colonial identities, as a form of reparation for historical injustices (Bhambra 2020).[10]

The next two groups are approaches that advocate for the *strengthening* of either the cultural or legal dimensions of national identity among those whose identity puts them at a disadvantage within the global power matrix; the third of these four sets of approaches focus on the cultural dimension, whereas the fourth focuses on the legal dimension. Approaches that fall under the third category are underpinned by a belief that strengthening rather than weakening the cultural dimension of national identities can lead to greater justice. This group has overlaps with the previous one. Some Indigenous studies activist-scholars in settler colonial states, for example, in advocating for alternative forms of sovereignty, simultaneously advocate for the weakening of state identity (i.e., one's citizenship in the state and what that entails) while also seeking for the recognition of their own local identity as a form of national identity (a 'First Nations' identity) that is not congruent with the state.

Finally, there are those who see state identities as potential avenues towards achieving justice. These are those who accept the modern institutional constructions of the globe – its division into states, and the creation of transnational (or more accurately, trans-state) institutions overlaid on the system of states – but work to transform these institutions 'from the inside' as it were, to make them more just. The example I have in mind is the formation of the Alliance of Small Island States, composed mostly of representatives from tiny island states. This alliance have been able to play a leadership role in international climate change negotiations, leveraging the vulnerable status of the states they represent

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[10] To demonstrate how different this is from previous accounts, note that David Miller (1997), for example, does not even consider reparations for historical injustices to be a possible reason for obligating one country to provide aid to another. In his discussion of famine, for example, he is silent about famous historical cases in which imperialism aggravated famine, such as during the Bengali famine of the 1940s. At most, he considers the 'quite rare' general obligation of some countries to provide for the basic needs of those in other countries simply because the former are 'in a position to provide aid'; nonetheless, he insists that it is probably 'much more often' the case that nations' failure to support their members are because of their own mistakes, such as 'misguided economic decisions' (pp. 76–77).

to push for more ambitious global climate action for the benefit of their residents (Ourbak & Magnan 2018) .

I have enumerated different theories and strategies that have been proposed or enacted by thinkers and political actors for addressing the power imbalances among national identities. I have categorised them to highlight the differences in their approaches, and by doing so, I have necessarily performed some simplifications. A notable example is the more recent work on cosmopolitanism, which argues that cosmopolitanism may be compatible with partiality and therefore does not necessarily require that national identities be weakened (Appiah 2006, Papastephanou 2012). Papastephanou has a particular strong version of this argument, not merely presenting cosmopolitanism as an attitude that can be tolerant of patriotism, but rather, reimagining cosmopolitanism and patriotism as justice-oriented stances that mutually regulate each other.

The admitted simplifications of these approaches aside, my aim in giving this overview was to consider how a glance at this wide range of approaches might help us think more deeply about the teaching of national identities in schools. I contend that including an analysis of power in the debate complicates presumptions regarding the benefits and disadvantages of national identity. For example, in the previous literature, patriotic national identity has sometimes been presumed, on the balance of it, to tend towards acts of injustice towards other groups because of its propensity for exclusion. Although this is possible, it may also be the case that a strong sense of national identity can lead to situations of greater justice rather than injustice, when such an identity is deployed by holders of less powerful identities to challenge the power imbalances that push them into the periphery. National identity can then be a means to fight for greater *inclusion* within state and global power matrices, as demonstrated by those who have worked for the rights and recognition of Indigenous peoples in settler colonies. Moreover, such struggles may *include* other disadvantaged national identities as well, as has been demonstrated by the solidarities and alliances formed by representatives of small states in international climate change negotiations. By suggesting that national identity can also be a wellspring for greater justice and not only injustice, this insight thus challenges criticisms of the teaching of national identity that have proceeded from concerns about justice.

In this section, I have considered how a decolonial analysis of power challenges some of the presumptions that underlie the existing philosophical literature on the teaching of national identity. In the next section, I turn to another gap in the educational literature, which has to do with the portrayal of national identity itself.

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3.3 National Identity from a Postcolonial Perspective

Following the reflections of the previous sections, if David Miller (1997) is correct in claiming that national identity is an important component of personal identity, then it is likely that many children come to school with some degree of a sense of belonging to one's nation (see also Archard [1999]). In a post-colonial context, the nation that most children are likely to have a sense of belonging to is one that has a undergone a history of being colonised and is likely still shackled by structures of coloniality. What effect might the history of colonisation and the continued reality of coloniality have on the sense of identity experienced by children?

In this section, I seek to infuse the discussion of the teaching of national identity with a postcolonial account of identity, drawing mainly from Homi Bhabha's thought. I first examine how Bhabha's description of postcolonial identity compels us to distinguish between feelings of belonging to a nation and feelings of allegiance to a nation. By making this move, I hope to disentangle the discussion of teaching national identity from the question of whether patriotism is a desirable goal in schools. Secondly, building on Bhabha's concept of *hybridity*, I propose a new heuristic for evaluating depictions of national identity.

The Complexities of Post-Colonial Identity

Developing a stance towards education for national identity in the post-colonial classroom, requires understanding how national identity is experienced from a post-colonial perspective. One source from which we can draw for this exercise is the more classic strand of postcolonial theory as it emerged and developed in literature departments in the late 20th century. Homi Bhabha (1994) has a rich account of this experience that highlights two characteristics of the complicated post-colonial identity: liminality and 'splitting'. Examining literary works from across the colonised world, Bhabha extracts accounts of the experience of liminality and in-betweenness in colonial subjects' and post-colonial writers' attempts to articulate their identity. Bhabha describes how the coloniser's treatment of the colonial subject created a desire within the subject to be other than they are, or to phrase it differently, a dissatisfaction with the identity they have. For Bhabha, enflaming this desire creates a 'tension', a 'splitting' (p. 44). Analysing the work of Frantz Fanon, for example, Bhabha explains that:

> 'Black skin, white masks' is not a neat division; it is a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once that makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable évolué ... to accept the colonizer's invitation to identity: 'You're a doctor, a writer, a student, you're different, you're one of us.' It is precisely in that ambivalent use of 'different' – to be different from those that

are different makes you the same – that the Unconscious speaks of the form of otherness, the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement. (p. 64)

Apart from the negative feelings that the post-colonial subject often has towards their identity, Bhabha also focuses on the instability of this identity and how this 'splitting' carries on beyond the moment of political decolonisation, becoming part of the post-colonial experience. He argues that this is what makes the post-colonial experience of identity different from the images of identity in Western traditions (p. 45–48). To cite an example, he analyses the words of the Bombay migrant poet Adil Jussawalla, focusing on Jussawalla's notion of the 'missing person':

> What these repeated negations of identity dramatize, in their elision of the seeing eye that must contemplate what is missing or invisible, is the impossiblity of claiming an origin for the Self (or Other) within a tradition of representation that conceives of identity as the satisfaction of a totalizing, plenitudinous object of vision. By disrupting the stability of the ego, expressed in the equivalence between image and identity, the secret art of invisibleness of which the migrant poet speaks changes the very terms of our recognition of the person. (pp. 46–47)

These negative feelings identified by Bhabha, and the ambivalence towards one's identity (particularly one's political or national identity) are a recurring theme in the literature of peoples who have been oppressed or marginalised.

When these accounts are read against the existing literature on patriotic education, it becomes apparent that the latter often tends to conflate national identity – that is, one's identification with a nationality – with partiality towards that nation. A person who identifies strongly with a nation, it is often assumed, is someone who sees that nation positively, and typically more positively than they see other nations. This does not account, however, for the ambivalence or even outright shame that one might feel in relation to one's national identity, or the possible co-existence of pride and estrangement in one's feelings towards one's country. In the case of some post-colonial contexts, identifying as a member of a nation – that is, accepting the designation that accompanies national identity – cannot be naïvely equated to having positive feelings towards that identity, and vice versa.

One way to prevent such oversimplifications is by conceptually distinguishing, as political scientists Leonie Huddy and Alessandro Del Ponte (2020) have done, between national identity, national pride, and national chauvinism. In their framework that is built on social identity theory, national identity is understood as a sense of belonging to a nation that has been internalised both cognitively and emotionally (assessed as an affective bond to the nation). National pride is a positive evaluation of national institutions and symbols. National chauvinism is a sense of superiority and dominance of one's nation over others, characterised by animosity towards outsiders or other nations. Although all three are characterised by national attachment, the conceptual separation of

the three emphasises that national identity does not necessarily lead to national pride nor national chauvinism.

To return, then, to Miller's assumption that national identity is often an important part of personal identity: in the case of the post-colonial classroom, it is likely that children come with feelings of ambivalence towards their nation. It makes sense, then, to address the issue of national identity in schools not primarily out of a desire to inspire patriotic nationalism, but as a way of addressing an issue that is pertinent to children within a post-colonial setting.

'Good' vs. 'Bad' National Identity: Moving Beyond the Civic/Ethnic Typology to a Malleable/Fixed Distinction

Another feature of existing mainstream discussions about the teaching of national identity is the frequent referral to the civic/ethnic typology for nationalism. Despite the increasing consensus among theoreticians of nationalism that discussions should move beyond this dichotomy, its continued usefulness is evident in the way that it is still deployed even in very recent educational research about national identity and nationalism in schools (e.g., Hung 2014; Ozga 2017; Siebers 2019).

Within the narrower field of philosophy of education, this dichotomy has also occasionally been deployed within debates about nationalism, specifically as a way to address the criticism that teaching national identity can be exclusivist, and therefore unjust. It has, for example, been used in the defence of patriotic education developed by Terence H. McLaughlin and Palmira Juceviciene (1997). McLaughlin and Juceviciene advocate specifically for the cultivation of national identity (and not just patriotism more broadly) in education. Their argument follows Miller's account of national identity as an element which is often significant in the formation of personal identity. Their argument becomes problematic when they attempt to address the anticipated objection that the communitarian support for personal identity is at odds with democratic principles and values. To defend their position, they appeal to the traditional distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism, arguing for a specifically civic notion of national identity that would not, in their view, contradict democratic principles; interpreting Miller, they assert that Miller's vision of nationalism is one that is civic (rather than ethnic) as well.

Recent empirical findings, however, lend further weight to calls to go beyond the civic/ethnic dichotomy, by demonstrating that this theoretical distinction does not correspond to actual experiences of nationalism. Social psychologist Samuel Pehrson (2020) argues, for example, that popular conceptions of nationhood are messier than the theory imagines. Analysing data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) modules on 'National Identity' conducted in 1995, 2003, and 2013, Pehrson found that a person may endorse both an 'ascribed' set of criteria (e.g., ancestry, birth, religion) for national identity as well as an 'acquired' one (e.g., respecting institutions, speaking the language); the two, in fact, were positively correlated in that people who supported one

tended to also support the other. Analysing the differences in responses within countries, Pehrson proposes that, rather than defining their national identities based on abstract 'types' of nationhood, respondents position themselves within prevailing public debates. Similarly, Pehrson also points out that, on the national level, 'civic' and 'ethnic' are not types of country. Contrary to the popular theoretical practice of describing nationalism in countries as either 'civic' or 'ethnic', populations in most countries endorse a mixture of the two dimensions.

To be sure, previous scholars, especially those writing about non-European contexts, have challenged the civic/ethnic divide. However, these attempts have resulted merely in slightly altered versions of the existing dichotomy and the addition of new categories. Both Anthony Smith and Benedict Anderson, for example, developed tripartite taxonomies of nationalism. Smith (2002) found it difficult to neatly apply the civic/ethnic distinction outside of Europe, and in his analysis of the United States, he called American nationalism a third type of nationalism, which he called *plural* nationalism. Moving outside the Western world altogether, Benedict Anderson's (1983/2006) now-classic formulation of the nation as an 'imagined community' was based on analyses of both European and non-European histories (including Philippine history and histories of other Southeast Asian contexts). Anderson minimised the idea of nationalisms developed from shared 'blood'. Instead, he distinguished between *linguistic* nationalism and *official* nationalism, and also added the third category which he called *creole* nationalism. Despite Anderson's deviation from Smith's categories, there were nonetheless broad parallels between the two typologies in the insistence on classifying countries based on these typologies: Germany's path to nationhood could be understood as both 'ethnic' and 'linguistic'; France's, both 'civic' and 'official'; and America's, both 'plural' and 'creole'.

While building on earlier work, Asianists criticised their forerunners for largely taking the European models as the norm and merely applying these to non-Western contexts. Reid, Tønnesson, and Antlöv attempted to build new typologies from the ground up as it were, looking at the diverse histories of Asian nations. Nonetheless, these attempts resulted in typologies of their own that still relied on the same types of distinctions made by Smith and Anderson. Anthony Reid's (2009) four-fold typology consisted of: (a) *ethnie nationalism* (similar to Smith's ethnic nationalism and Anderson's linguistic nationalism), (b) *state nationalism* (similar to 'civic' and 'official' nationalism), (c) *anti-imperial nationalism* (similar to 'plural' and 'creole'); and (d) '*outrage at state humiliation*'. Tønnesson and Antlöv's (1996) typology again had the first three: (a) *ethnic* (b) *official or civic*, and (c) *plural*, and a fourth, not discussed elsewhere in the literature, which they call (d) *class*.

All of these previous attempts to improve on the civic/ethnic divide, however, do not address the fundamental problem highlighted by empirical findings such as Pehrson's: the fact that people do not in fact experience nationalism as only one type, and the fact that the data does not justify the categorisation of populations within one nation as

having just one 'type' of nationalism. Notwithstanding the heuristic usefulness of the dichotomy, an alternative way of taxonomising national identities might be more fruitful.

In the post-colonial context, one possible way forward is opened up by the ethical-political project that Bhabha begins when he moves from his reflections on liminality to his introduction of the concept of 'hybridity'. Unlike previous attempts from the perspective of post-colonial contexts to challenge the ethnic/civic distinction, Bhabha's insights, by radically disrupting the idea of 'identity' altogether, allow us to forge a different path.

Closely related in Bhabha's work to the notion of liminality, the word 'hybridity' recalls, for some commentators (see Mizutani 2013) the politics of anti-miscegenation in various post-colonial contexts in history, where the 'mixing of blood' among colonisers and locals created colonial categories and hierarchies of race and ethnicity. Bhabha himself, though, does not use the term to refer to the politics of racialisation. Rather, he uses it in reference to post-colonial culture and identity. The concept is both an analytical tool, useful for understanding the effects of colonial practices, as well as a politically useful concept that can be deployed to subvert colonial presumptions. In Bhabha's account, it is insufficient to analyse power in the cultural sphere of the colonial milieu, merely as the exercise of command over a silenced or repressed population. For him, each attempt to exert colonial authority did not silence the native populations, but rather *produced* something new in culture: a 'hybridity' that developed when aspects of the culture of the colonisers were appropriated and then transformed by the colonised population. (Bhabha uses the example of the appropriation and enculturation of Christianity by a group of people near Delhi.) Although the idea of culture as produced and lived (rather than 'inherited') is not unique to Bhabha (see Hollinshead 2017), he distinctively infuses these ideas with a Foucauldian analysis of power to speak specifically of the colonial condition. Through its productivity and creativity, hybridity was also a subversion of and resistance to colonial power. The colonial authority may have sought to assert its power through the technics of knowledge: categorising the colonised population, cataloguing its traditions, and turning itself into the 'authoritative reference' (p. 114) of the colonised culture. The production of hybridity, however, challenged the colonial authority and contradicted its catalogues by creating new cultural artifacts and practices that no longer fit the colonisers' records of 'pure' native culture.

More than just an analysis of the historical colonial encounter, Bhabha imagines hybridity to be an ongoing post-colonial project. He calls this political space of hybridity the 'Third Space': in the field of global cultures where such cultures are oftentimes imagined as clearly distinct from one another, the spaces inhabited by formerly colonised populations are spaces of cultural agonism, negotiation, deconstruction, and creativity that resist essentialist notions of culture (such as those found in both imperialist and nationalist discourse), always exposing the ambivalence and instability of cultural representation. Against notions (which he attributes to colonisers) that 'pure' and

'uncorrupted' cultures are superior to 'mixed' ones (as evidenced, for example, by the derision with which white English subjects would view Eurasians who performed English culture), Bhabha advances hybridity as the post-colonial world's positive contribution to culture, because of the fecundity and creativity of the Third Space.

Bhabha's analysis focuses on cultural texts, artifacts, and practices. However, the concept of hybridity can be applied to cultural identities as well. His description, in fact, lends itself to such an application, because his account of the exercise of colonial power includes, among its examples, the categorisation of colonised populations according to different cultural identities. It can be argued, then, that among the objects of negotiation and deconstruction within the Third Space of hybridity can be cultural identities themselves, including national identities.

In what specific ways, then, do Bhabha's ideas complicate the civic/ethnic taxonomy of national identity? Firstly, hybridity challenges the temporal presumptions that underlie the traditional dichotomy. In their acceptance of the civic/ethnic taxonomy, many theorists see ethnic national identity, which is based on shared culture, shared history, and myths of shared ancestry, as a national identity that looks to the past (in contrast with the civic national identity that looks to the future in its quest for aspirational goals). Bhabha's notion of the postcolonial identity, however, is cultural, and yet is not tied to the past and in fact rejects essentialist understandings of culture. Following Bhabha, we see how it is possible to conceive of a cultural identity that is constantly being remade. Thus, Bhabha's ideas also challenge the notion that only a civic identity can be future-oriented.

Closely related to such temporal presumptions are the presumptions related to the idea of inclusivity and exclusivity. A civic national identity is conventionally seen to be more inclusive than ethnic national identity, because the markers of commonality are seen to be more accessible to all than the markers of an ethnic national identity: it is more difficult for an immigrant to lay claim to shared ancestry than it is to pledge allegiance to political principles, the latter of which can be a product of a rational decision. However, Bhabha's ideas complicate this supposedly neat bifurcation. The biological roots of the term 'hybridity' immediately challenge the idea that 'ancestry' must be equated with some form of 'purity'. Ancestry, rather, is and always has been the product of encounter and 'mixture'.

Building, then, on Bhabha's ideas, I propose, in addition to the ethnic/civic distinction, a different dichotomy that can be used as a heuristic in understanding national identities. I propose that the *representation* of national identities be understood either as *malleable* or *fixed*.

At first glance, there may seem to be a parallel between the two taxonomies, in that an 'ethnic' national identity appears to be a fixed national identity, and a 'civic' national identity is malleable. However, this is not necessarily the case. First of all, unlike a civic identity, a malleable identity does not preclude any reference to ethnicity. 'Ethnicity' is

conceptually vague. In some contexts, such as in the United Kingdom or the United States of America, the word 'ethnicity' is used as a code for 'race' and is used to refer primarily to skin colour and physical features. In other contexts, however, such as in the Philippines, it is used to refer to shared languages, as with the distinctions drawn among ethnolinguistic groups. In still other contexts, it is used to refer to belief systems, such as the ethnic distinctions among religious groups. What all of these have in common is that they refer to characteristics that are already given – something that is in a person's history, rather than in someone's future. These include physical features one is born with, one's mother tongue, the religion that one has been raised in, the place from which one's ancestors hail. A malleable identity, then, does not preclude the fact that such features of one's past play into one's national identity; however, it recognises that the weight and importance given to one of these features over another changes, often as a result of negotiations about these features in political discourse. Moreover, certain civic virtues may also be part of the negotiation.

The concept of a malleable identity then also foregrounds the fact that the shared identity of a community – such as a national identity – can change. In the United States, for example, 'Anglo-Saxon' was, at the end of the 19th century, central to the American (i.e., US) identity (see Bell 2020). However, this identity was negotiated, in public discourse and in Congressional debates, and the idea of what it meant to be American changed with each generation. The inclusion of the Indian State into Ohio and the annexation of Hawai'i and Puerto Rico altered American identity, began to decouple, legally at least, race from US national identity, a process that was completed with the repealing of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the granting of civil rights to African-Americans. Beyond these legal strides, today, American identity continues today to be negotiated, sometimes heatedly, alongside questions of immigration, questions about undocumented immigrants and the DACA program, and so forth.

In contrast, the concept of a 'fixed identity' refers to an identity which one presumes to be finished and unchanging. The question might be raised, however: are there any identities that are, in actuality, fixed? Is it not the case that all identities are malleable? I do believe this is, in fact, the case. However, the distinction between malleable and fixed identities is useful as an analytical tool to evaluate representations of identities constructed and perpetuated within societies.

Taxonomies of nationalism in the previous literature remain relevant in this way of understanding national identity, but no longer as a way to categorise forms of national identity. Rather, these can be understood as the dimensions of identity that are negotiated.

3.4 Conclusion

My aim in this chapter has been to demonstrate how postcolonial and decolonial analyses complicate the discourse about teaching national identity in schools. I have introduced an analysis of power disparities drawn from decolonial thought. I have shown how the approaches that have been proposed to address these imbalances challenge the presumption that the teaching of national identity is likely to lead to potential injustices. Apart from this, I have also shown how the postcolonial literature on national identity destabilises presumptions about the way patriotism and national identity are connected, and I have proposed a heuristic typology that distinguishes between fixed and malleable representations of national identity.

Later in this thesis, I draw from these ideas when I sketch out my proposals for the teaching of national identity in schools (see Chapter 7 below). For now, having altered the shape of the questions surrounding the teaching of national identity, I head down a different path, by initiating a conversation with the educational thought of Hannah Arendt.

Chapter 4: Cultural Belonging in Arendt's Thought:

Her Concept of 'The Social'

In my attempt to reimagine education for national identity, I have taken Hannah Arendt as my main interlocutor, and in this chapter, I explore her thoughts about cultural belonging. For the benefit of those unfamiliar with her work, I begin this chapter with a brief orientation to Arendt's *oeuvre*. Following Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's (2004) example, I find it useful to mark the main philosophical questions of Arendt's career by some of her major works.

Arendt only rose to prominence as a political thinker and public intellectual after she moved to the United States as a refugee of the Second World War. However, she began working on some of the key questions of her work much earlier than that, when she was still in Europe. After completing her studies in Germany (under Martin Heidegger then Karl Jaspers), she began working in the late 1920s on the biography of Rahel Varnhagen, an 18th century Jewish salon hostess. (It would eventually be published in 1958, as *Rahel Varnhagen: Life of a Jewess*.) In this work, we see Arendt grappling with questions of identity and assimilation, as well as the seeds of her reflections on 'world-alienation', that is, the experience of not being able to share the world with people whose opinions differ from one's self. *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (published in 1951, but written between 1941 and 1949 [Young-Bruehl 2004]) was a result of Arendt's attempt to make sense of the war she had survived, and the political movements that had allowed it to happen. *The Human Condition* (1958) was a natural progression from her study of totalitarianism, wherein, as Young-Bruehl puts it, Arendt turned to 'the positive side of the question: What elements can preserve freedom or help people achieve freedom?' *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (Arendt 1965; first published in 1963 based on her reports serialised in *The New Yorker*) and the first part of the *Life of the Mind* (published posthumously in 1978) marked her attempt to understand how a lack of thinking might lead to the occurrence of evil on a grand scale. Finally, her unfinished project, portions of which are available to us in *The Life of the Mind* and *Lectures on Kant's Philosophy* (published posthumously in 1978) were to be the result of her diagnosis that the greatest contemporary threat to politics is a lack of judgement.

I contend that the seeds of Hannah Arendt's political thought lay in her reflections on the Jewish experience and her identity as a Jew. This is not immediately apparent to those who initially come to know her work, as many do, via *The Human Condition* (1958/2018), in which she barely discusses Jewish themes. However, from the late 1920s, the time she was working on the biography of Rahel Varnhagen (née Levin), all the way until the publication of *Origins of Totalitarianism*, a period of more than twenty years, she wrote primarily about Jewish issues, published mainly in Jewish journals and magazines, and

worked professionally for Jewish organisations. Although her major works of the 1950s were concerned with American politics, she returned to her reflections on the Jewish experience when she covered the Eichmann trial in 1961, spending an additional three years expanding on some of the themes she had been thinking about more than three decades prior.

Arendt's Jewishness is central to her political thought. That it took a while for this fact to come to light is no surprise. Book publishers tend to publish for as wide as possible an audience, and so, the political ideas which she originally became known most for – political action, republicanism, evil, and even totalitarianism – were themes that did not require prior knowledge nor interest in the particularities of Jewish history. It was only seven years after *Origins of Totalitarianism* had spurred her to fame that the Rahel Varnhagen biography saw print, and even then, only by a small London publisher that specialised in Jewish publications. (The American edition, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, would be published 16 years later, after Arendt's death.)

Arendt's intellectual interest in questions about Jewish identity and Jewish politics began to develop in the mid- to late-1920s, spurred in large part by her friendship with Kurt Blumenfeld (Young-Bruehl 2004). There is little evidence in her work to show that Arendt held a particular interest in Jewish Studies earlier than that, or that she struggled with her own Jewish identity. When it came time to prepare her *Habilitationschrift*, she originally planned to write on German Romanticism, but then came across the diaries and correspondence of a particular figure of that movement: the writer Rahel Varnhagen (1771–1833), who had hosted many salon sessions of the Romanticists in Berlin. By 1930 she had decided to focus her *Habilitationschrift* on Varnhagen.

Varnhagen lived in the period that has come to be known as the Jewish Enlightenment in European Jewish history. However, unlike figures from the period who advocated the development of Jewish thought through an openness to European Enlightenment culture and ideas, Varnhagen, like many Jews in Berlin of the time, converted to Christianity. She was one among approximately twenty Jewish women in Berlin who, in the words of Shmuel Feiner (2011), 'climbed the social ladder via the glittering salons and Jewish-German society' (p. 311).

Arendt discovered a spiritual kinship with Varnhagen, something that may have arisen from Varnhagen's position as a Jewish woman among the male-dominated German intellectual elite, a position Arendt found herself in a century later. Current events also fuelled Arendt's interest in the so-called 'Jewish question' (see *LI*, pp. 8–10): Arendt saw, earlier than her mentor Karl Jaspers did, the danger to Jews of the growing German patriotism of the time, and by the early 1930s she was attending Zionist meetings regularly.

What was Arendt's specific 'Jewish question'? From the issues she wrote about in her essays as well as the aspects of Varnhagen's life that struck her the most, we can reconstruct that question. Arendt's primary concern was: **Was it possible for Jewish**

identity to have a place in the world? 'World' at this point meant the German world, the only world that Arendt had known, though later on in life this 'world' would come to mean the world more broadly.

This chapter of the thesis explores the concept of the 'social' in Arendt's work, grounding it specifically in Arendt's reflections on Jewishness. To do this, I build on others' interpretations of her work and also add to those my own reading of both her public and private writings, including some of her unpublished notes. I briefly outline how Arendt's idea of the social developed from the 1930s to the 1950s, with a view to highlighting one manifestation of the social that the current literature has not paid much attention to: its manifestation in communities who share a common cultural identity. I pay particularly attention to her conceptualisation of the social around the time she wrote her first major essay about education, 'Reflections on Little Rock' (written in late 1957 but published in 1959), and comment on the allegations of cultural elitism in her work. Finally, I demonstrate how around the same time, her thoughts begin to gesture towards the notion of a shared cultural world as the grounds for imagining political communities.

4.1   Four Manifestations of the Social

The 'social' is one of the most slippery concepts in Arendt's work, and in this and the next section I attempt to put some order into what at first glance may be a string of equivocations across her work. Arendt developed the concept in order to distinguish public activities that are political in nature from those that are apolitical. Unlike the concept of the social, Arendt's idea of 'the political' was clearer and remained largely unchanged through her career. Elaborated on most extensively in *The Human Condition*, Arendt used the word, 'political', not to describe the power dynamic between state authority and the citizenry, but rather, to characterise the dynamic among citizens of a political community who have agreed to view one another as equals in the public realm. Arendt famously constructed a metaphor to portray the political realm: that of people sitting around a table and conversing about an object on the table. The different positions from which people viewed the object portrayed, for Arendt, the plurality of the political sphere; that is, the fact that each person in the political sphere began from a different vantage-point and thus had a unique perspective about the world. The object on the table about which everyone spoke was a metaphor for the common world about which controversial issues arose. 'Political action' for Arendt referred to the occasional coming together of a plurality of people to act in concert about an issue. Political action did not require that the members acting in concert had to share exactly the same opinion about the issue, only that they should agree to act in cooperation with one another.

The conventional understanding of the social likewise relies primarily on *The Human Condition*, where she theorised about it most clearly. There, she portrayed the social realm

as a sphere that lay between the private realm (the proper place for domestic and economic matters) and the political realm. The social realm was a specifically modern phenomenon, arising because changes in economic systems had created an in-between space where private matters had become public. In *The Human Condition*, however, the social was portrayed primarily in a negative light because of its tendency to supplant political action in the public realm.

Because of the focus on the conception of the social in *The Human Condition*, many commentators have focused on the *economic* character of the social realm, and this is the dominant reading in educational literature. Trevor Norris (2011), for example, highlights Arendt's description in *The Human Condition* of anti-political consumer society. However, scholars who have engaged deeply with the rest of Arendt's *oeuvre* have demonstrated that 'the social' is a much more robust concept. Both Hana Pitkin (1998) and Richard King (2015) summarise this by describing the concept of the social as a 'placeholder', a catch-all idea for anti-political tendencies of society: not just an overemphasis on economic concerns, but also phenomena such as unthinking behaviour and the experience of succumbing to the pressures of social norms. Some scholars, including Pitkin, Seyla Benhabib (2000) and Richard Bernstein (1996), appear dissatisfied with the inability to neatly capture the idea of the 'social' in a single definition or a clear concept, and imply a discontinuity between the way she used the word across her works. In the following paragraphs, I draw both from Arendt's published and unpublished writings to show how the concept of the social developed from its origins in *Rahel Varnhagen* up to the writing of *The Human Condition*. By tracing the development of Arendt's thought on this topic, as Richard King (2015) has also partially done, it becomes clear that her use of the term was not as disjointed or self-contradictory as it appears to some.

Arendt first brought up the concept of the social in her biography of Rahel Varnhagen, written from the late 1920s to the early 1930s. Arendt's interpretation of Varnhagen's struggles with her Jewish identity were coloured by the threats experienced by the Jewish community in Germany at the time she was writing it. During this period, Arendt was frustrated with German intellectuals – both Jewish and non-Jewish – who downplayed the threat of institutionalised German race-thinking. It was in this context that she began to be sensitive to the types of responses that fell short of the political response that she thought was necessary if there was to be any hope of stemming the tide. She wrote some of those contemporary observations into her biography of Varnhagen as well, criticising two of Varnhagen's behaviours that she thought had prevented the 18th-century writer from engaging with her own Jewish identity in a political way. The first was Varnhagen's introspection or 'self-thinking', and the second was Varnhagen's involvement in 'society'; that is, the 'good society' of 19th-century Berlin Romanticism with the regular salon-gatherings of intellectuals and artists.

This was the background against which Arendt came to see the idea of 'society' or 'the social' in opposition to political action. In Varnhagen's case, her (Varnhagen's) lack of

distinction between political emancipation and social assimilation had led her to believe that social assimilation was a sufficiently satisfactory response to the marginalisation of her Jewish identity. Arendt likely saw a parallel between that part of Varnhagen's life and her observations about the responses to the 1930s growth of the political movement of antisemitism, among the intellectuals who sought to over-intellectualise rising German antisemitism, and the Jewish community leaders who encouraged the Jewish faithful to turn inwards in spirituality and prayer. In contrast to these responses, what Arendt thought was urgent (and what she found in the Zionist movement) was a *political* response to antisemitism. Outside of the movement, most of what she observed, she considered to merely be 'social' responses: public but abstract, and focused on internal group identities (whether the identity of salon 'membership' in the 1800s or the identity of Jewish communities) rather than a rallying of energies towards concrete actions that might have an impact on the Jewish community as a whole.

The criticism of a social response focused on group identities ought not to be interpreted to mean that Arendt advocated a kind of liberal universalism. Liska's (2014) analysis of the different ways that Rahel Varnhagen's life has been interpreted by different scholars situates Arendt's position in the debate about Varnhagen's choices. Liska notes how scholars such as Käte Hamburger and Heidi Thomann Tewarson see Varnhagen as an exemplar for progressive universalism, and express approval for Varnhagen's willingness to embrace modernity. Yet these choices were precisely the ones that Arendt criticised. Both in her analysis of Varnhagen as well as in her Jewish writings of the 1930s, Arendt was not merely advocating for a political response, but a *Jewish* political response. The seeds of Arendt's famous formulation in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 'the right to have rights', had thus been planted: an individual's human rights could not exist in the abstract and could only be guaranteed when one belonged to a political community. In Arendt's 1930s writings, then, the concept of the social straddled two meanings: 'good society' and cultural identity.

The second appearance of the concept was more than a decade later, in *Origins of Totalitarianism*. Arendt was living in the United States by this time, and her conception of the social was informed by the theory of mass society, the popular mid-century idea that contemporary society had transformed into 'masses' of people who felt increasingly isolated from one another, an isolation which made them more susceptible to totalitarian ways of thinking. Arendt was familiar with these ideas from her reading of David Bell, and developed her thinking on these themes further through her correspondence with lawyer-turned-sociologist Daniel Riesman (King 2015). Arendt's earlier writings had analysed 19th and 20th European affairs from the perspective of the Jewish community. In *Origins*, she repeated some of these insights, but in addition, she also turned her political imagination[11] to the way German citizens had acted prior to World War II. She sought to

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[11] Arendt used this term in her undergraduate classes. See Contemp. Issues, images 2 and 3.

understand what it was that had led them to accept totalitarianism. Her theory (criticised recently by Peter Baehr [2016] for its lack of evidence) was that, following the First World War, huge numbers of Europeans were atomised and lonely, unable to organise around any common political goals, a situation that was fertile ground for the rise of totalitarianism. This, then, was a more insidious manifestation of the anti-political aspect of 'the social' than she had written about previously. While Arendt used the word 'mass society' to refer to this phenomenon, it is important to note, though, that she also thought that one of the contributing factors to its emergence was the lack of *healthy* social relationships and *healthy* class membership. This point will be important to bear in mind later in this chapter when we examine how the social might be seen positively as a precondition for the political.

After the publication of *Origins*, Arendt continued to refer to mass society theory, no longer to analyse European history but this time to analyse American current affairs. Her syllabus and lecture notes for the 'Contemporary Issues' undergraduate seminar she taught at University of California Berkeley, confirm that she was taking the idea of 'mass society' to analyse present-day American society: she used Riesman's 1950 book *The Lonely Crowd* (Riesman, Glazer, & Denney 1950), an analysis of contemporary American society, as the text to introduce her students to mass society theory (Contemp. Issues, image 1). King (2015) describes Arendt's analysis of the American manifestation of the social as a 'soft' version of her mass society analysis of Europe. Although the United States had not manifested the extreme symptoms of mass society as had been present in Europe, there were still elements of loneliness and social conformism in American society that hindered political action, and Arendt explicitly described McCarthyism as a phenomenon that had 'totalitarian elements springing from the womb of society, of mass society itself, without any "movement" or clear ideology' in a 1954 letter to Jaspers (*Corresp.*, pp. 248–249).

Arendt's lecture notes from the undergraduate seminar reveal more about her thinking regarding the concepts of 'masses' and 'mass society' at this time, and augur the directions of her thought in *The Human Condition*. One element that becomes clearer in her lecture notes is the distinction among the public, social, and private realms. A common and not entirely unfounded criticism of Arendt's distinctions is that they are too strict. In her lecture notes, Arendt anticipated this criticism, acknowledging that there may be overlaps among the realms, and there may, too, be situations where a private concern becomes common to all and therefore a public experience (she cites the example of loneliness) or where a public concern is felt primarily as a private experience (she uses the example of the Black Death). Nonetheless, she said, distinctions among them could still be clearly made. Her lecture notes reveal that she invited her students to think through the differences between a family meeting, a townhall meeting, and 'the masses'. She herself described the 'masses' with these words:

No purpose. No distinction: My peers means everybody supposed to be like everybody else.... / Loss of Self. / Feeling of being threatened by everybody else: Majority-Minority of One. /What is the common denominator: Life and making a living.... / We can focus on life, or on the world: The world is outside ourselves, we have it in common. Life we dont [sic] have in common, though each one of us is alive. / Loss of World. (Contemp. Issues, image 6)

These lecture notes bolster Piktin's interpretation wherein she posits that Arendt understood the 'space' of the political and the 'space' of the social to be, in fact, the same space: any public space where humans interacted with one another (Pitkin 1998). The distinction between the public and the social was the type of activity that went on in that space. Pitkin explains that when people behaved unthinkingly as a 'mass', whether because they were preoccupied with economic concerns or because they felt constrained by social norms, then that space was a social space. When people acted as individual agents, then that space functioned as a political space. Pitkin's interpretation can be nuanced further, though, in that 'the mass' was just one manifestation of the social among others.

The Berkeley lecture notes also reveal how Arendt's understanding of the social had developed from the time she was writing about Varnhagen's life. A number of elements were still present: the idea that the social was public, but that it was not directed towards a common purpose beyond the group. Additional elements had become more explicit. Arendt had described Varnhagen's loneliness in her biography, but in her description of mass society, she saw loneliness as a central feature. She did not refer to the idea of group identities in relation to the idea of mass society, though there is of course a parallel between the absence of individual distinction among the masses, and the similitude of a group that has gathered because of a common identity.

The next major transition in Arendt's concept of the social emerged after 1955. King (2015) observes that after this year, Arendt gradually began to drop the phrase 'mass society' from her work, replacing it with the term 'the social', the form in which the concept appears in *The Human Condition*. He points out that much of her criticism about mass society reappeared in *The Human Condition* as a criticism of 'the social'. At about the same time *The Human Condition* was being prepared for publication, however, Arendt wrote another work where the concept of the 'social' featured prominently, and this work became the controversial essay 'Reflections on Little Rock'. In 'Reflections', Arendt resurrected the cultural element of the social that had been a strong feature of her original reflections on the concept in the 1930s. I explore Arendt's use of the word 'social' in 'Reflections' in the next section of this chapter.

Before turning to 'Reflections', though, it is worth pointing out that Pitkin's and King's description of the 'social' as a 'placeholder' concept ought to be modified. The word 'placeholder' implies that the concept was empty of substance. However, my account above demonstrates that the 'social' (in its different forms: 'society', 'mass society', 'the masses', and 'the social') was a heuristic rather than a placeholder, an idea

that Arendt did not attempt to define neatly and with finality, but rather one that helped her to think through various failures of people through modern history to act politically. Arendt's declaration in 'The Crisis in Culture: Its Social and Its Political Significance', that '[good] society' is chronologically and conceptually the precursor of 'mass society' demonstrate the conceptual continuity in Arendt's work (CC, p. 199)

4.2 Cultural Belonging and Identity: The Social as a Positive Precondition for the Political

Arendt has been criticised for not paying sufficient attention to the positive experiences of the social that contribute to the political. King (2015), for example, suggests: 'Perhaps Europeans such as Arendt were particularly prone to forget that race, ethnicity, and religion had historically been among the main social sources of meaning, companionship, rejuvenation, cultural stimulation, even protection to individuals and groups in America (and elsewhere)' (p. 123). The criticism is warranted to some degree, because her portrayal of the social as a negative, anti-political realm is a key theme of four of her major book-length works: the biography of *Rahel Varnhagen*, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, *The Human Condition*, and *On Revolution*.

However, this does not mean that Arendt saw the social realm absolutely in negative terms (a fact that King himself admits in a much later chapter where he points out that Arendt framed the 'social' positively in 'Reflections'). In the following paragraphs I draw on Arendt's writings from the 1930s to the 1950s to show that Arendt also cast the social realm – specifically, cultural belonging and identity – positively, particularly when she was writing about education. Theoretically, King (2015) further laments the 'adversarial' relationship that Arendt had set up between the social and the public spheres, in contrast to what he considers to be a complementary relationship between the social and the public that has been so evident in American political life. By turning our attention to Arendt's writings about education, though, it becomes clear that the adversarial relationship that Arendt paints in some of her writings is also not absolute, as she identifies formal schooling, an institution belonging to the social realm, as a preparation for the political realm.

One aspect of King's criticism of Arendt's 'forgetfulness' of cultural identity as a source of meaning is biographical rather than theoretical. He casts Arendt in two lights: a pre-American – we might say, 'early' – Arendt, who worked hard to preserve and advance Jewish culture through her work with the Schocken Press and the Jewish Cultural Restoration Commission, and a post-naturalisation 'late Arendt' whose lack of identification with the American Jewish community was evidence for a lack of 'loyalty to Judaism or Jewishness' (King 2015). Arendt's alleged lack of attachment to the American Jewish community, however, is insufficient basis for the charge. Arendt never stopped

identifying as a Jew (*LI*, pp. 127–128), and she remained attuned to Jewish concerns even after she had become an American, as evidenced by her continued engagement with Jewish issues (she frequently mentioned and opined about Jewish current affairs in her personal correspondence), her continued involvement with Jewish organisations (she sat on the board of the Leo Baeck Institute [*Corresp.*, p. 295]), and, most clearly, her decision to go to Jerusalem to cover Adolf Eichmann's trial.

Did a continued belief in the importance of cultural identity also manifest in her public writings? Arendt's work in the 1930s clearly demonstrate her belief that, for the Jewish community to act politically, it was imperative that they be *educated* about their own history. Two essays from this period contain this theme. The first is the essay '*Gegen Privatzirkel* [Against Private Circles]' (Arendt 2007a), originally published in 1932, in which Arendt was responding to a very specific issue at the time: the narrow population served by Jewish schools, in light of the rising antisemitism in Germany. The essay was a call to Jewish schools to be open to the broader population of half- or quarter-Jews. But what is of interest to us for our purposes is the role that she believed Jewish schools were to play for the Jewish community. In the essay, she stressed the importance of making sure that Jewish children learned, not just the history of Judaism up until assimilation, but also the history of Jewish assimilation as well as antisemitism. 'Only in this way can they be provided with a basis from which to judge their environment and themselves in a genuinely reasonable way ....' (*JW*, p. 19).

The view she expressed in this specific opinion piece is further supported by a more theoretical essay that was published in the same year, '*Aufklärung und Judenfrage* [translated as "The Enlightenment and the Jewish Question"]' (Arendt 2007d). In that essay, Arendt objected to the Enlightenment idea, expressed by Lessing, that history is only educative insofar as it allows us to arrive at universal reason. Arendt accepted Herder's objection to Lessing, that reason itself is historicised and subject to history. She paid specific attention to Herder's recuperation of the idea of *Bildung*. She echoed Herder's criticism that the Enlightenment had reduced *Bildung* to the act of thinking for one's self, and that such a conception lacked 'any sense of reality' (*JW*, p. 13). The importance of Herder to the Jewish community, according to Arendt, was that, *contra* the Enlightenment claim that history was subordinate to reason, he restored the importance for Jews of studying their own history. Arendt argued, though, that history ought not to be studied in a way that bound one completely to the past. Rather, Arendt said that the *Bildung* provided by studying history contains within it two moments. The first was

> a summoning of reality – to accept [history] as it really was... – and the second, a distancing from the past – never to confuse the past and oneself, to take seriously and include in one's understanding the time that lies between

the past and include in one's understanding the time that lies between the past and one's attempt to understand. (*JW*, p. 14)

Thus, one could understand history as 'unique and transient', could learn it without being bound to it (*JW*, p. 14).

Twenty years later, having moved to America and gained an audience beyond the Jewish community, Arendt began to return to her earlier ideas on the importance of cultural identity, in her controversial appraisal of the Little Rock crisis and two related pieces, 'The Crisis in Education', and 'A Reply to Critics'. Although Arendt's ideas on cultural identity were not fully-formed nor clearly articulated in these three pieces, they contain much evidence that in the span of time that she wrote these pieces, she was once again beginning to think about these positive aspects of the social realm.

The 'Little Rock crisis' refers to the events that took place in 1957 in the city of Little Rock, Arkansas. The Supreme Court had ruled in 1954 that all state laws allowing the racial segregation of schools were unconstitutional. Affected states – all in the south of the United States – began to desegregate their schools, at different speeds. One school in Little Rock, Central High School, became the site of events which came to portray for the world the challenges that accompanied school desegregation. The Arkansas governor and several Arkansas citizens initially refused to comply with the Supreme Court decision. In response, President Eisenhower sent the National Guard in to prevent riots from occurring while nine teenagers began to attend Central High School as its first Black students. The incidents attracted international press coverage, and Arendt was commissioned by the Jewish Magazine *Commentary* to write an opinion piece on it. Her engagement with the crisis resulted in the essay 'Reflections on Little Rock' (written in 1957 but published in 1959), in which she controversially objected to what she saw as the forced desegregation of Central High.

I return to the controversies surrounding 'Reflections' in the next chapter, but in this section, I focus on the way that the essay marked a shift in Arendt's thinking about the 'social'. Prior to 'Reflections', Arendt's earlier accounts of the social in her public writings had been deficit accounts. By this, I mean that she had used the idea of the social in a critical fashion: to demonstrate why it lacked the qualities of properly political activities, as in her criticism of the Jewish community leaders of the 1930s whose response to antisemitism fell short of a proper political response. In contrast, 'Reflections' demonstrates how Arendt's appreciation of the importance of cultural identity – already evident even in her previous work – was beginning to fuse with her conceptualisation of the social, an idea that took further shape in 'The Crisis in Education', originally delivered as a lecture just a few months after she had written 'Reflections', and 'A Reply to Critics' (1959), her brief response to David Spitz and Melvin Tumin's criticisms of 'Reflections'.

In 'Crisis in Education', Arendt envisioned a school where all adults in a political community were on the same side in their caretaker role of children. Whereas children

had traditionally been educated primarily at home, modernity had ushered in the age of compulsory education. After spending the initial years of their lives being educated at home by their parents, children moved on to schools, their first experience of the public-social world, where teachers now stood as the representatives of all adults of the political community. In this role, teachers prepared children for their eventual entry into public-political world; they did this by introducing them to the 'traditions' of the political community; that is, those cultural markers that would give children a sense of a world that they shared in common with the other citizens with whom they would be living together in the public-political space.

Whereas 'Crisis in Education' presented this idyllic vision of adults standing together in their shared responsibility for children's upbringing, 'Reflections' laid bare the real-life conflicts and contradictions that inevitably came with implementing this vision. Most notably, 'Reflections' highlighted the conflict between the government and parents, whose ideas of how children ought to be brought up might differ. Arendt attempted to mediate between the two parties in 'Reflections' and 'A Reply to Critics'. On the one hand, she acknowledged how the content of education was shaped by the states' right to prescribe minimum requirements for future citizenship (thus, we can gather, leading to lessons on literacy, numeracy, and basic knowledge about how a state functions). She further acknowledged the state's right to support subjects and professions desirable for the nation's welfare (and thus, its right to fund the study, for example, of vocational subjects that would lead to a citizenry able to support the industries on which the state's economy depends). At the same time, it was also clear to her that compulsory education itself and the determination of school content were government intrusions upon the freedoms of families and children. In light of this, she leaned towards minimising any further government intrusion, and preferred that parents ought to retain the ultimate right to teach their children as they saw fit.

'Reflections', however, was not only an essay about government intrusions into parents' private domain; it was also an essay about the conflicts between communities of citizens: in this particular case, the white community and the Black community of Little Rock. Intriguingly, as objectionable as the racism of the white community was to Arendt, she nonetheless still defended those parents' rights to raise their children with such racist attitudes. Her apprehension about government overreach was stronger than her desire to see such racist attitudes in children immediately changed.

What accounts for this position? There are two ways that we can charitably make sense of Arendt's stance. Firstly, Arendt's position likely stemmed from her belief in an almost-absolute freedom of association, which she inherited from Tocqueville. The influence of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1945a, 1945b) on Arendt's thought is well-known, especially his praise for America's spirit of association. Tocqueville argued that only if freedom of association was absolute – encompassing all types of association, whether political or civil – could public association become universal and a spirit of association

develop. Notably, in the copy of *Democracy in America* she kept in her library, Arendt underlined parts of Tocqueville's footnote that warned of the possible dangers should the executive government have the power to allow or prohibit political associations.[12] Compelling citizens to second-guess their own desire to form associations, Tocqueville argued, would paralyse the spirit of association, leading to a country where not just political associations but also civil associations would barely thrive. Better far, Tocqueville concluded, that all associations be allowed, just as in America (by which he meant, the United States), where the feared dangers of allowing political associations are neutralised by Americans' own skill at participating in associations, developed because the freedom of association was not fettered (or at least, when Tocqueville was writing, not for white male Americans). Thus, although Arendt saw a distinction between two kinds of activities in the public sphere – social activities and political activities – she believed that the public sphere *in general* ought to be protected from government intrusion of any kind. Arendt's position in 'Reflections' demonstrates that this held true for her even when the grounds for association (or dissociation) were reprehensible.

The second way we can understand Arendt's stance is to read it in light of her defence of the right to discriminate in the social realm. Arendt in 'Reflections' described the social realm as a realm where 'like attracts like' and where associations of various different types form, and Arendt enumerated both European lines of 'class origin, education, or manners' and the American lines of 'profession, income, and ethnic origin' along which such associations formed ('Reflections', p. 51). Of these six types of association, the last was evidently top of Arendt's mind as she was writing the essay. She began the essay by reflecting on the heterogeneity of America as a result of immigration, and its difference, in that sense, from the European countries that imagined themselves as nation-states. In an anachronistic line about vacation resorts, she defended the right of people to choose to associate primarily with others who shared the same ethnic origin.

Arendt did not take these ideas very far, and later became critical of identity politics. Nonetheless, it is evident that at the time she wrote these essays, she was beginning to think about the positive experiences of cultural belonging and identity that one might find in the social sphere. It is also evident that she was thinking about this sense of belonging on two levels. In 'Crisis in Education', Arendt underscored how pupils might develop a sense of belonging to a larger political community (such as a nation) by being introduced to the common cultural markers shared historically by the community. 'Reflections on Little Rock', on the other hand, looked at the smaller associations to which people belong, including and especially those formed along ethnocultural lines.

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[12] Arendt's marginalia are in a digital archive based at Bard College. See https://www.bard.edu/library/arendt/pdfs/Tocqueville-Democracy2.pdf page 117 for this specific page.

4.3 The Problem of Cultural Hierarchy in Arendt's Work

My argument that Arendt acknowledged the importance of cultural identity in education cannot ignore the damning paragraphs in Arendt's much later work, *On Violence*, which she began working on in the late 1960s. In a polemic against the use of violence within the student movements of the time, Arendt described as 'silly and outrageous' Black students' demands for courses that explored their African identity at the expense, she claimed, of educational standards (OV, pp. 121, 191–192).

Richard King (2015) offers a charitable reading of these passages by contextualising her remarks. In general, King reminds us, Arendt was impressed with the student movement, which she saw as an exemplar of political action. However, she deplored the eruption of violence in some student protests, and she attributed the introduction of violence on American campuses to the involvement of the Black Power movement. She considered to be unreasonable a number of demands that the movement were advocating on campuses, such as proportionate admission (what we call 'affirmative action' today) (*BF*, p. 229). Thus, she saw the students' clamour for a more inclusive curriculum in that light. Arendt was careful to point out that it was not just she who felt that way, and in the appendix, she chose a quote from a Black civil rights leader, Bayard Rustin, to make her point (OV, p. 191).

King (2015) compares Arendt's remarks regarding American racial issues to other intellectuals of the time and insists that Arendt was more progressive than most, citing her articulations against race-thinking as early as *Origins*. He attributes her comments about the student movement not to racism but rather to ignorance and a failure to understand the situation from the perspective of Black students. At most, he laments Arendt's 'failure to find the correct register' when talking about race in America.

Less forgiving readings of Arendt's approach to race in America come from Kathryn T. Gines (2014) (now known as Kathryn Sophia Belle) and Fred Moten (2018). Both of them conclude that there was an element of racist thinking throughout Arendt's career, specifically regarding Blacks and African heritage, notwithstanding her progressive analyses of race-thinking in her account of global history. Gines and Moten have not been the only ones to cite, for example, her comments on Africa in *Origins*. There are private statements, as well, which do not paint Arendt in a good light: in a complaint to Mary McCarthy about the Black Power movement, she laments that the curriculum being requested by Black students do not have the 'exacting standards of white society' (*BF*, p. 230).

The counter-argument might be made that Arendt was, in many ways, a modernist (as Seyla Benhabib [2000] has argued), and that, like many of her time, she accepted the theories regarding the development of civilisations, seeing the technologies of Western civilisation as evidence that they were more advanced, and the relative lack of such technological advancement as evidence that African civilisations were less so. Certainly,

she had demonstrated a belief in historical progress throughout her historical work, from *Origins* to 'A Crisis in Culture'. This does not, of itself, of course, mean that the charges of racism against Arendt are unwarranted. At the very least, Arendt can be justifiably accused of a certain cultural elitism in her thinking about global cultures. Taking her work as a whole, it is evident that she considered some cultures to be deeper, more advanced traditions – the German tradition, the American political tradition, and Jewish history – and others to have less to offer. In the appendix of *On Violence*, she dismissed Black students' demands to learn Swahili, citing the Encyclopaedia Britannica's description of Swahili as, in her words, 'a nineteenth-century kind of no-language spoken by the Arab ivory and slave caravans' (OV, p. 192). Ironically, she herself, as a young adult, had lamented her own lack of instruction in another minority language, Hebrew, and had taken pains to learn it with a tutor in order to connect herself more strongly to her own cultural heritage. It is awkward that she did not recognise the same desire to be connected to one's heritage and one's history among the Black students she was criticising.

I offer an additional biographical note as a manifestation of this elitism. In 1952, Arendt's husband, Heinrich Blücher, was contracted by the small liberal arts college in New York State, Bard College, to develop a Common Course for their freshman class (Young-Bruehl 2004). Blücher developed (and later taught) a philosophy course which explored ancient 'great thinkers' of human history, including Abraham, Jesus, Zarathrustra, Buddha, Lao-Tse, Homer, Heraclitus, and Socrates. Arendt herself went through the course at home, and biographer Young-Bruehl observes that many of Arendt's later writings refer to thinkers that Blücher included in his syllabus. However, a survey of Arendt's work demonstrates that she only cited from Judeo-Christian, Ancient Greek, and European thinkers, ignoring Buddha and Lao-Tse. (It may be particularly ironic that Heidegger wrote extensively about Eastern thought.)

Finally, it may also be the case that Arendt's position regarding cultural identity changed from the 1950s to the 1970s. Beginning with *The Human Condition*, Arendt's polemic against what we might today call 'identity politics' grew stronger. Arendt possibly began to see more and more of the essentialist approaches to culture in identity politics movements, that she had criticised even during her engagement with Zionism.

Having examined her thoughts on local identities and minority identities, I look in the next section at her writings where she talks about larger-scale national identities.

4.4 National Traditions: The Shared World of the Political Community

Between the time Arendt wrote 'Reflections' and its publication, Arendt wrote another essay about education, 'The Crisis in Education'. (When 'Reflections' was published, she included a note referring to 'The Crisis in Education' as a work that elaborated further

on her position.) The point of departure of 'The Crisis in Education' was a criticism of progressive education, but the substance of the essay was an expansion of the ideas she had previously discussed in 'The Crisis in Authority'. In the essay, Arendt lamented the loss of a sense of tradition among young people, and advocated an educational system wherein teachers, and adults in general, reaffirmed the responsibility to introduce children to the 'world' and to ignite in children a love for that world.

At first glance, Arendt's essay merely repeated conservative ideas about education that had appeared elsewhere and have appeared elsewhere since. However, as Mordechai Gordon (1999) has argued, there was a key difference between Arendt's conservatism and conventional educational conservatism. This was her emphasis on children's natality. Arendt justified her conservatism by describing each new generation of children as a threat to the survival of the political community in that their natality, the human capacity to initiate new ventures, is exceptionally strong, and the 'onslaught of the new' brought about by each new generation threatens to 'overrun and destroy' the world (*HC*, p. 186).

This image is a curious one. How can a generation of children, who Arendt herself admitted were still in a process of becoming, be such a threat to the world that they might 'destroy' it? This statement appears less strange if we relate to another phenomenon that, at first glance, may appear trivial, but which Arendt thought to be one of the greatest threats to humanity, the phenomenon of *worldlessness*, which I summarise here for the benefit of those unfamiliar with this aspect of her thinking. Arendt's concept of 'world' was an adaptation of Heidegger's. Heidegger used the notion of world to specify humans' *meaningful interpretation* of the purely physical environment. An animal interacts with the environment; however, only a human, with his reason and hermeneutic understanding, lives in a *world*. Heidegger's image of the world, though, was one where each humans encounters the world as an *individual* perceiving and responding to objects. His criticism of the 'they' similarly portrayed an individual responding to the 'they' that was mass society. Heidegger did not have an image of the world being discussed by a *plurality* of people. In contrast, this was one of the most central images in *The Human Condition*. Arendt depicted the political realm as a group of people – each with a unique opinion – sitting around a table and having a conversation about whatever was on the table. The table and its contents represented the world, and each participant viewed them from a unique perspective.

Arendt's critique of Heidegger's existential philosophy had to do with this absence of any conception of a *shared* world. As alluded to above, this insight had been present in Arendt's work as early as the 1930s, during which it formed part of her criticism of the elite Jewish societies of Europe, which came together to talk *to* each other, but not necessarily *about* the threats they collectively faced, nor to plan any concrete steps to address the rising and increasingly institutionalised and state-sponsored antisemitism. Her criticism of this attitude of 'worldlessness' (she also used the phrases 'world estrangement' and 'world alienation'), which was present in *Rahel Varnhagen*, reappeared

in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*: there, she identified worldlessness as one of the phenomena of the 19th century that had allowed totalitarian forms of government to develop with only moderate resistance from citizenries. By the time she wrote *The Human Condition*, this concept had matured into a theory of the social realm.

What does this have to do with children and natality? By the 1950s, Arendt believed that the task of political communities in the Western world after the Second World War was to strengthen this sense of a shared world. Modernity, however, had ushered in an era when that sense of a shared world was diminishing. In previous eras, a shared religion, a shared culture, and a respect for common authority had provided a sense of a shared world. Each of these, however, was no longer a reliable source of a sense of commonality. Secularism diminished the hold that religion had on communities. Migration created a greater plurality of cultures. The increased value being given to equality created a scepticism of authority (see WIA).

This loss of authority was especially concerning to Arendt, and she developed her thinking on this in two papers written in 1955 and 1956: 'Authority in the Twentieth Century' (a contribution to a conference in Milan in 1955, published in *Review of Politics in* 1956, and republished in *Thinking Without a Bannister* in 2018) and 'What Was Authority?' (a conference paper delivered in 1956 and published in 1958). Amid the waning years of McCarthyism, and responding to the rise of neo-conservatism and the liberal dismissal of neo-conservative concerns, Arendt sought in these essays to recuperate an understanding of authentic political authority. Arendt herself was no neo-conservative, but in these essays, she performed her habit of political imagination and 'visiting', seeking to understand opposing sides of an issue. Arendt understood the rise of neo-conservatism as a cultural reaction to the denigration of authentic authority by liberals. Arendt believed that this denigration, in turn, resulted from the conceptual conflation of 'authority', 'tyranny', and 'totalitarianism', such that any appeal for the restoration of authority was seen as equivalent to a support for tyranny or totalitarianism. In contrast to this, a healthy understanding of authority, harking back to the ancient Roman conception of authority, had a number of defining features. Firstly, the authority of the leader was voluntarily accepted by the people. Secondly, the leader's moral power was legitimated or justified by something beyond the leader or party: in the past, a leader might appeal to nature, divine right, or a historical moment. Arendt used the example of the Roman Republic, wherein the Caesar's authority was justified by the founding moment of the republic. Finally, the leader's authority was diffused through the bureaucratic structure to the leaders' subordinates.

It was in thinking about the loss of authority that Arendt began to see the possibilities that school might have in recuperating a sense of the world. She arrived at this insight first by noting that the loss of authority had a particularly damaging effect on the place of children in a community. Even in previous eras, the continuation of a shared world had always been threatened by the entry of a new generation. Literature has, for centuries and

across cultures, played the recurring motif of the tension between the older generation who wishes to preserve the old ways of doing things, and the younger generation who wishes to embark on a novel path. The natural drive towards novelty of the younger generation, however, had previously been tempered and balanced by the existence of authority, the willing and voluntary obedience to someone other than one's self: one's parents, one's teacher, or one's religious or political leader. The scepticism of authority brought about by the modern age, however, meant that it was now more difficult to balance the natural drive of the younger generation towards novelty. Unrestrained, this drive could worsen the sense of worldlessness. The loss of authority for Arendt meant that each new generation posed a threat to the shared world to a degree that had been not true of previous eras. Only in the modern age was it true that the younger generation's natural drive towards novelty suddenly threatened the sense of a shared world, and thus, the continuation of the political community.

Thus Arendt began to think of how authority and tradition might be legitimately preserved in the modern age. Arendt believed that schools played a particularly central role in the preservation of authority and tradition. For Arendt, authority and tradition were, in fact, built into the very nature of the school, and this was the idea to which Arendt turned in 'Reflections' and 'The Crisis in Education'. I examine these ideas in the next chapter of this thesis.

4.5 Conclusion

This exegetical chapter has traced the development of Arendt's concept of the 'social' from the 1930s to the 1950s (the decade in which she wrote her two important essays on education, 'Reflections on Little Rock' and 'The Crisis in Education'). By grounding the development of the concept in her questions regarding Jewish identity in the 1930s, I have shown that cultural identity was always, for Arendt, one manifestation of the social. I have further shown that although Arendt criticised the social realm for being anti-political, her negative portrayal of the social was not absolute. Particularly in her discussion of education, Arendt demonstrated the positive aspects of cultural identity and the ways in which an education in cultural identity can be a pre-political preparation for one's eventual entry into the political realm.

Tracing the development of Arendt's thought in this way has also uncovered a tension in Arendt's work pertaining to the boundaries of the social and political communities. Much of Arendt's earlier work reflected on how the social community of an ethnocultural minority might act politically in the context of the larger political institutions of the state. By the late 1950s though, Arendt's thinking about cultural identity was focused more on building a broader shared sense of identity that could be shared by all.

Having explored Arendt's concept of 'the social' and drawn out the specifically cultural dimension of the idea, I discuss, in the next chapter, the implications of Arendt's categorisation of schools as institutions that belong to the social realm.

Chapter 5: Educational Tensions and the Liminality of the School

When scholars explore the distinctions between the private, social and public-political realms in Arendt's work, *The Human Condition* is most commonly cited, as it is in this book where the lines demarcating the three realms are most distinct. Arendt had the adult human in mind when she wrote *The Human Condition*. However, Arendt's distinctions between the three realms presumed a community composed of adults, and it was the adult human that Arendt had in mind when she wrote *The Human Condition*. Arendt did not find it too problematic to imagine a human adult life where the conceptions of the private, social and public-political realms could be demarcated fairly easily. Although critics would later question these demarcations, Arendt herself appeared to assume that the conceptual differences among the three were relatively easy to discern (see Contemp. Issues, image 3). The Little Rock crisis, however, forced Arendt to think about childhood. Arendt had to reckon with members of the community who were, in her own words, still 'becoming human'.

The previous chapter traced Arendt's conceptualisation of the 'social' in Arendt's work, from the beginning of her writing career up to the late 1950s, when she began to characterise schools as social spaces. Building on this, this current chapter explores more deeply Arendt's thinking behind her characterisation of schools as social spaces. It argues that Arendt's classification of the school as such was an attempt to address the tensions that Arendt had come across in her attempt to understand childhood.

Arendt did not write extensively about childhood other than in her two educational essays of the 1950s, 'Reflections on Little Rock' and 'The Crisis in Education'. Her 1964 interview with Günter Gaus demonstrates some naïveté about childhood. A precocious child, Arendt had read Kant and translated Greek texts as a teenager; she confessed to Gaus her assumption that all children had a childhood like hers, and how she only belatedly realised that her childhood was extraordinary (*LI*, pp. 14–16). Arendt raised no children of her own, but she did work with children for a brief period in her life, through her work as secretary-general of the Paris office of Youth Aaliyah, a Zionist organisation that aimed to help prepare young Jews from around Europe for eventual emigration to Palestine. In 1935, she was tasked with accompanying a group of Jewish youths on their journey from France to work in villages and kibbutzim in Palestine (Young-Bruehl 2004). After the war and her eventual migration to the United States, though, while Arendt taught extensively, her teaching experience was limited to classes with young adults at universities.

Nonetheless, the events at Little Rock were the impetus for Arendt to think through her opinions about childhood and the education of children. A decade after the

publication of 'Reflections', Arendt admitted she had made a mistake. In a private letter to Ralph Ellison, she said that she had not fully understood the situation of Black Americans and the thinking of Black parents when she had written the essay; she implied that a better understanding might have led her thinking in a different direction (Young-Bruehl 2004, pp. 316–317). However, her lack of clarity about the issue of race does not diminish her insights in the essay about childhood, and these insights are the focus of this chapter. Arendt recognised that her previous political thinking had focused on the world of adults, and in 'Reflections on Little Rock', she demonstrated her position that children ought to be thought of differently from adults. In this chapter I argue that the difference that Arendt intuited ultimately lay in tensions involving children's vulnerability and natality. An awareness of these tensions led Arendt to conclude that the proper place to navigate it was the liminal space of the social realm, to which the school ought to belong.

5.1 The Vulnerable Child

The events at Little Rock compelled Arendt to articulate her twin presumptions about children and her understanding of their place within a political community. On the one hand, she considered them to be vulnerable. On the other, she also saw them as the epitome of natality. This and the next section discuss these two aspects of childhood in Arendt's thought.

Arendt did not develop the theoretical notion of vulnerability in her work. Nonetheless, it was central to the position she took on the Little Rock crisis. In this section I highlight how central this idea was to her work and evaluate the criticisms levelled against it.

I begin by revisiting the context of the essay. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Arendt's position regarding Little Rock was controversial from the very beginning. Although the editors of Jewish magazine *Commentary* had commissioned Arendt to write the article, upon receiving the piece, they decided to ask Sidney Hook, a philosopher at Columbia University and a famously polemical public intellectual, to write a response. They stated that they were going to publish Hook's response alongside Arendt's piece. However, their waffling regarding the publication of the pieces eventually angered Arendt, and she withdrew the essay about three months after she had originally submitted it (Young-Bruehl 2004, pp. 313–314). (Hook later edited the essay he had already written and submitted it instead as a stand-alone piece to *The New Leader*, which published it as a pamphlet in 1958.) Three months after withdrawing 'Reflections', Arendt delivered the lecture '*Die Krise in der Erziehung* [The Crisis in Education]' in Bremen (May 1958), a critique of the progressive education movement (*WFW*, p. 440; Young-Bruehl 2004, pp. 313–314). The English translation (by Denver Lindley) of this

essay appeared in print in the Fall issue of the *Partisan Review* that year (Arendt 1958a). When 'Reflections' was finally published in *Dissent* in 1959, two additions were appended to the original version. Firstly, Arendt added a preface that referred to 'The Crisis in Education' in relation to the role that education played in American politics. Secondly, the magazine also included two essays criticising 'Reflections', from Daniel Spitz and Melvin Tumin respectively. 'Reflections' is remarkable, then, in that even before the public had read the first word of Arendt's piece, three separate critiques of the essay had already been printed, one of which was published even before Arendt's piece was. In the succeeding issue of *Dissent*, Arendt briefly responded to Spitz and Tumin's critiques in 'A Reply to Critics'.

Although 'Reflections' was a multifaceted analysis of the events at Little Rock, Arendt clarified in her reply to two of her critics, her primary motivation for taking her position. Arendt's analysis of the crisis was founded on a strong belief that children, as vulnerable members of the political community, ought to be protected from the chaos of adults' political world. Arendt judged the Little Rock crisis to be one in which the nine teenagers had been used by the NAACP to further their political agenda, and she diametrically opposed this. Her three interlocutors – Spitz, Tumin, and Hook – did not refute her on this point, and Spitz actually agreed with Arendt on this specific point despite disagreeing with her overall position.

Later commentators, however, have downplayed the importance of this argument. Ellison convinced Arendt that Black children were taught from a young age about the importance of sacrifice, and that asking them to manage their fear and anger while squarely facing the terror of inescapable racial prejudice was a necessary rite of initiation and training required of all Black children at the time (Warren 2014). More recently, Kathryn Gines (2014) has built on Ellison's argument. In her book-length critique of Arendt's assessment of race issues in America, Gines suggests that Arendt mistook a photo that she saw in the newspaper of Dorothy Counts, a Black teenager who was integrating in Harding High School in North Carolina, for a photo of one of the Little Rock Nine. Gines then examines Dorothy Counts' experience, as recounted in a much later interview and in a biography of her, to highlight Counts' courage, fearlessness, and dignity as she walked to Harding High. Unlike the Little Rock Nine, Counts' parents pulled her out of the school a few days later; nonetheless, Gines uses Counts' experience as a counter-argument against Arendt, implying that what Counts felt was representative of the Black children integrating at Little Rock Central High. While not explicitly criticising Arendt's position, Liliane Weissberg (2012) likewise appears to take issue with Arendt's characterisation of the Little Rock Nine as 'children', pointing out that Arendt did not recognise Elizabeth Eckford 'as a young woman or a high school girl' (p. 92).

Does the benefit of hindsight confirm that it was correct to downplay Arendt's concern about the vulnerability of the nine? Taking a historical perspective, it seems that Arendt's critics, after all, were wrong on this point. Of the nine, three of the students –

Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls LaNier, and Melba Pattillo Beals – wrote memoirs of the events. The tone of the three books are different from one another. Roberts' is triumphant and emphasises his own agency: much of the book traces his years growing up in Little Rock, and he weaves a narrative of how he came to decide to join the Little Rock Nine. Looking at his memoir alone lends some support to Gines' implications about the youngsters' agency and their sufficient resilience to face the situation at Little Rock. The two other memoirs, however, cast some doubt as to whether this can be generalised for all of the teenagers. LaNier was 14 years old at the time of entry, and the youngest of the nine; her autobiography includes the chronicle of her life before and after the Little Rock Crisis, and ends on a hopeful and grateful note. In her recollection of the crisis, she emphasises that the decision to attend Central High was her own choice. However, LaNier also admits her youthful naïveté when she made that decision. She writes: 'The rational part of me understood the huge significance of that. But at times, the other part – the fourteen-year-old girl ... – felt used' (LaNier & Page 2009, p. 109). While her memoir is generally sympathetic to Daisy Bates, the president of the Arkansas State Conference of NAACP branches, she also records her ambivalence towards Bates's reminders regarding the historical import of their actions. Finally, Beals' account, reconstructed partly from her high school diary, more strongly describes the despair and suffering that the nine went through. In Beals' own words:

> As I watch videotapes now and think back to that first day at Central High on September 4, 1957, I wonder what possessed my parents and the adults of the NAACP to allow us to go to that school in the face of such violence. (p. 308)

Both LaNier's feeling of having been used by the adults, and Beals' doubt about the adults' wisdom in allowing the nine to go to Central High, strengthen Arendt's position.

More damning to the attempt to downplay the children's vulnerability are the actual experiences undergone by the nine students, as recounted by the three. The nine were verbally bullied, physically attacked, and psychologically taunted by their schoolmates on a regular basis during their stay there (Beals 1994; LaNier & Page 2009; Jacoway 2007). Bruises and abrasions were commonplace, and the three accounts include memories of other kinds of physical assault as well. Roberts (2009) recalls having to avoid scalding water thrown at him in the locker room, as well as an incident where he was hit so hard by a combination lock thrown at his head, that he had to drop to one knee and steady himself against a locker to prevent himself from completely falling down. (He later went to the school clinic to receive treatment for the cut on his head.) Beals (1994) recalls being pushed down the stairs during a fire drill, and, on another occasion, being hit on the back by a tennis racquet so hard that she coughed up blood in the bathroom. The teenagers were frequently tripped, spat at, kicked, and inked. Both Beals and LaNier report having regular tormentors: Beals' were two boys who 'had begun a full-time mission of making my days miserable' by trailing her to each class, harrassing her

throughout (Beals 1994). LaNier's was a girl who once trailed her closely through school, stepping on her heels as they walked, until LaNier's heels bled (LaNier & Page 2009). Beals received a death threat from one of her schoolmates. In her senior year, LaNier's home was bombed in an incident for which a black family friend was charged and found guilty, but for which LaNier believes segregationists were responsible (LaNier & Page 2009).

Arendt had warned against the psychological pain inflicted on a child when that child was placed in a social group where they were not wanted (A Reply, p. 179). Sadly, the three accounts from the Little Rock students do record the emotional torture of their stay at Central High. All three accounts record the crippling fear that they felt while at school. Roberts describes the fear he felt as 'much greater than I could have ever imagined ... the kind of gut-wrenching fear that comes with a sense of powerlessness' (p. 117), a 'terror we felt in our bones' (p. 118). Beals recounts the death wishes that occasionally filled her diaries: 'I wish I were dead'; 'God, please let me be dead until the end of the year.' (p. 236). But the memoirs also describe the sense of isolation they felt. Beals describes her loneliness arising from the inability to participate in activities at her new school, especially in contrast with her old school where she had been very active in after-school activities. Roberts acknowledges the helpfulness of being allowed to participate in activities at the neighbouring school for Black children, Horace Mann, though even these experiences were marred by expressions of resentment from Horace Mann students who judged the nine to be 'know-it-alls' now that they were mingling with white students. As the youngest of the original nine, LaNier stayed at Central High the longest, and in her recollection of being the lone Black student in all her senior year classes, she says that she 'missed feeling like a real part of my school' (p. 165).

Arendt felt that the Little Rock crisis was a case of unfairly '[shifting] the burden of responsibility from the shoulders of adults to those of children' (A Reply, pp. 179–180), and she accused the NAACP of shirking their responsibility of guiding the children (Refl., p. 50). A particularly disturbing theme in the memoirs is that the students did in fact feel, in various degrees, abandoned by many of the adults around them. Although all three accounts mention specific adult family members whose unwavering support helped them through the torturous ordeal, the memoirs also paint a picture of the students largely being left to their own devices while inside the school. The NAACP did meet with the nine. LaNier describes regular debriefings at Daisy Bates' home (LaNier & Page 2009), whereas Beals' recollections focus on the instructions they were given on how to behave: 'Don't give anyone the slightest opportunity to accuse you of being out of line. Don't be late, don't talk back, watch your decorum, watch your grades. Complain only when something is injurious to your health, or life-threatening' (Beals 1994, p. 208). Roberts also recounts that Martin Luther King, Jr., James Lawson, and Glenn Smiley, spoke to them about principles of nonviolence. Despite these meetings, however, the three memoirs reveal a sense that the adults had not sufficiently prepared them for their

ordeal. Roberts describes the training they received as 'rudimentary'. Writing his memoirs as an adult psychologist, he muses that it would have been helpful had they received psychological counselling during the time, but as it was, there was not even an opportunity for them to sit and talk about their 'strong feelings and resentments' (p. 127). Though there were casual debriefing sessions at the Bates' home, LaNier describes these sessions as 'wasted breath, wasted energy, having to go through the trauma all over again' (p. 106). Beals quotes one of her diary entries where she writes, of the Central High staff: 'It feels so scary because the adults here don't know what to do. I believe the rational ones who would keep the violence in check are being controlled by those who want us out at any cost. Therefore, nobody is steering the ship – nobody's in charge – not really. I can see that it's possible we could have a riot within this school' (p. 265). Beals' feeling of abandonment extended to the wider public as well. In reaction to an Arkansas Gazette headline that describes the students' twelfth week at CHS as having 'no incidents', Beals recalls: '[The Gazette editors] were like so many of the adults around us, content to pretend for the moment that all was well as we began classes at Central High on December 2. But we knew better. Our day-to-day experience showed us that the situation was worsening.' Later, the Arkansas Gazette and its editor won Pulitzer prizes for their coverage of the crisis. According to Beals' recollection: 'As I read this article, I wondered when we would get big prizes for what we were doing. After all, this guy was just observing our troubles from afar and writing about them. Not once did I see him spend a day in hell with us.' (p. 292). Roberts, on the other hand, describes the year as one where he had to protect his own mother from knowing about what he was going through to prevent her from becoming too alarmed.

The effects of such an ordeal on the Nine can be guessed from the facts of its aftermath. One of the students, Minnijean Brown, was expelled after defending herself against tormenters; her family moved to New York and she completed her studies there. As the crisis worsened, all of the high schools in Little Rock were closed for one academic year; two of the original Nine chose not to return when schools reopened and completed their high school requirements through correspondence courses instead. In her memoirs, Beals considers it significant that of the nine, only one (Elizabeth Eckford) remained in Little Rock as an adult.

Although the Little Rock Nine have been celebrated for their courage in the face of their ordeal, the question arises as to whether these teenagers ought to have been made to undergo the ordeal in the first place. History tips the balance in Arendt's favour, on this count. These past decades, 'Reflections' has stood out for many commentators as an essay which puts Arendt on the wrong side of history. However, our universal acceptance now for the importance of safeguarding children, and keeping out of harm's way people below the age of 18 appear to demonstrate that the harsh judgment of Arendt's essay might change just yet. As Beals wrote searingly in her diary: 'The National Veterans Organization has awarded us the Americanism Award. They think we are heroines and

heroes. Why are we only Niggers to beat up on to the students at Central High? I don't know if I can make it now. It's really really hard. Why should life be so hard, when will it ever be fun to live again?' (p. 235).

Reading Arendt's critique alongside the accounts of the students reveals how startlingly astute Arendt was in her appreciation of the students' perspective. 'The girl, obviously, was asked to be a hero – that is, something that neither her absent father nor the equally absent representatives of the NAACP felt called upon to be,' Arendt wrote (Refl., p. 236). At around the same time, 16-year-old Beals penned lines in her diary that affirm Arendt's assessment of the situation. Beals wrote: 'Please, God, let me learn how to stop being a warrior. Sometimes I just need to be a girl' (Beals, p. 217). Referring to a newspaper photograph of one of the teenagers walking to school amid a jeering crowd, Arendt went on to describe it as 'a fantastic caricature of progressive education which, by abolishing the authority of adults, implicitly denies their responsibility for the world into which they have borne their children and refuses the duty of guiding them into it'. Arendt likely did not know the extent to which the Little Rock Nine had been prepared and briefed by the NAACP, yet had she known, it likely would not have changed her opinion that these children were, in fact 'being asked to change or improve the world' on behalf of adults. Historically, this argument alone ought to have been sufficient to take a conscientious position against the forced integration of Little Rock Central High.

The theoretical significance of the Little Rock crisis is that it stands out as a cautionary tale against assuming that children have the sufficient agency and capacities to navigate politically charged situations. Other aspects of Arendt's analysis of race in the United States are problematic, and she admitted as much to Ellison some years later. Nonetheless, in recognising the dangers of exposing children to the situation they found themselves in, it turns out that Arendt's originally judgement had in fact been sound.

5.2   Children as the Epitome of Natality

Apart from their vulnerability, Arendt also saw children as the epitome of natality. Unlike vulnerability, a concept which Arendt did not explore in-depth in her educational writings, natality and birth were concepts that ran through her opus. As with other key concepts in her work (and as we saw with the word 'social' in the previous chapter), Arendt did not attempt to pin down the meaning of natality at any point in her career, leading many scholars to try to develop a more cohesive account of the idea. In this section, I evaluate some of these interpretations before presenting my own understanding of the term, motivated specifically by a desire to understand what Arendt meant by the word when she used it to refer to education, especially at the time she wrote 'Reflections on Little Rock' and 'The Crisis in Education' in the late 1950s.

The conventional understanding of 'natality' in Arendt's work takes her use of the term in *The Human Condition* as the starting point for interpreting the idea. Whereas all commentators of her work agree that there were multiple meanings and dimensions of natality in her work, most tend to foreground the political sense of natality (Bowen-Moore 1989; d'Entrèves 1994; Birmingham 2006; Diprose & Ziarek 2017). These commentators latch onto the syllogistic connection that Arendt made between natality and politics *The Human Condition*. On the one hand, among labour, work, and action, Arendt considered natality to be connected most closely to action, because 'the new beginning inherent in birth ... [could make] itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting'. On the other hand, Arendt considered action the 'political activity par excellence'. Thus, natality was the 'central category of political ... thought' (*HC*, p. 9). It is, then, this political sense of natality that many educational scholars have in mind when they deploy the term to analyse various issues (Gunter 2014) . The dominance of the political reading of the Arendtian concept is unsurprising, given that *The Human Condition* was mainly a political work, and Arendt is seen primarily as a political thinker.

However, Arendt also conceived of natality in a pre-political sense. Of this sense of the word, there are two dimensions. The most fundamental dimension of natality is the ontological sense of natality, which Arendt considered to be the grounds of all human activity. In the introduction to *The Human Condition*, Arendt described birth, almost fleetingly, as one of the two fundamental conditions (the other being mortality) in which labour, work, and action were rooted, before emphasising that it was in action where birth is most fully actualised. She described, further along in the text, the fact of natality as the 'miracle ... in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted' (*HC*, p. 247). This ontological sense of natality recalled Arendt's much earlier work on St Augustine where she wrote about the principle of beginnings. In *The Human Condition*, though, Arendt conceived of the principle of beginnings lying within the person rather than outside humanity in God or Creation. Surprisingly, even some book-length treatments of the subject shy away from a discussion of this sense of natality (Bowen-Moore 1989). O'Byrne (2010) alludes to a hesitation among political philosophers to interpret Arendt as a thinker with a thick ontology, preferring to characterise her primarily as a phenomenologist, and this could account for the limited discussions of natality in an ontological sense.

The second dimension of pre-political natality is more phenomenological, and refers to the moment when a person is born. The importance of literal birth has been a point of contention among her commentators. On the one hand, feminist philosopher Adriana Cavarero has concluded that Arendt meant to refer to literal birth only in an abstract way, as an analogy for political birth, as evidenced by Arendt's failure to discuss either the physicality of childbirth or the maternal relationship with the newborn (Cavarero, Gusland, and Bruhns 2014). Such a reading, however, ignores Arendt's thinking about

childhood in her educational essays, particularly in 'The Crisis in Education', which Cavarero dismisses as a 'minor essay' (CE, 19). While 'The Crisis in Education' admittedly does not discuss childbirth in the way that Cavarero is concerned with, it does talk about natality as the very essence of education, linking natality to childhood in a very explicit way.

At the other end of the spectrum, some readings have foregrounded the biological and physical aspect of the literal moment of birth. These readings build on Arendt's distinction between the animal and political self in *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* Miguel Vatter's (2006) is one of the readings that have gone the farthest in this direction, suggesting that Arendt anticipated Foucauldian biopolitics.

Readings that emphasise a biological understanding of the 'first birth' have created a conundrum in the literature because of the gap between the moment of literal birth and the political sense of natality. The conundrum can be expressed as the question: what, drawing from Arendt's work, is the process by which a baby develops into a human capable of being an initiator of new beginnings? Two answers have been offered. On the one hand, some Arendt interpreters identify the capacity to initiate new beginnings with autonomy, agency, and free will. Jacobson (2012), for example, refers to a period of enculturation, after which autonomy becomes complete and a 'second birth' (cf. *HC*, pp. 176–177). From this perspective, the moment of completed autonomy also marks the person's entry into the political realm, prior to which, the child is more of a 'biological' rather than a 'political' being. This reading is problematic, however, in light of Arendt's use of the term in 'Reflections' and 'The Crisis in Education'. It does not account for Arendt's view expressed in her educational texts that children are the epitome of natality and that their newness threatens to overwhelm the existing political community. Arendt saw the natality of the younger generation as something dangerous, a threat to the political community, and therefore something that ought to be reined in. If it were the case that a person's capability to initiate new beginnings only began when their autonomy and free will was complete, then Arendt would not have seen children as the threat that she saw them. A second response to the conundrum identifies the capacity to initiate new beginnings with the ability to form relationships. Benhabib (2000), for example, sees the second birth as starting when a child develops the ability to speak. The political status of the child, therefore, begins when the child acquires the ability to speak, thus accounting better for Arendt's educational thinking.

Is it possible, however, that even Benhabib's reading creates a problem where there needn't be one? Between the biologicist reading of Arendt's 'first birth' and Cavarero's reading that minimises the literal moment of birth, a third interpretation questions the sharp distinction between biological birth and the 'second birth' altogether, by emphasising the inseparability of natality and plurality. This is the reading offered by Danielle Celermajer (2011). Focusing on the Hebraic dimensions of Arendt's thought, Celermajer characterises biological birth not only as a physical phenomenon, but as a

birthing into a pre-existing web of relationships. Such a reading is supported by the Scripture verse that Arendt quotes in *The Human Condition*: 'For unto *us* a child is born' (emphasis mine). Cavarero has taken Arendt to task for mis-identifying the quotation as coming from the Gospels rather than from the Book of Isaiah (specifically, Isaiah 9:6 *KJV*), where it is actually found (Cavarero, Gusland, & Bruhns 2014). By relying only on her memory for her quotation, Cavarero points out, Arendt appeared to miss the physicality of the Christian understanding of Jesus' birth, pictured most starkly in the images of the Madonna and Child usually identified with the Nativity. I argue, however, that it is Cavarero who is mischaracterising the specific Nativity scene that Arendt had in mind. While Cavarero is correct that the phrase 'For unto us a child is born' does not appear in the Gospels, a very close equivalent appears in the Gospel of Luke, in which an angel announces to the shepherds, 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day ... a Saviour...' (Luke 2:10–11 *KJV*). Arendt's description of the Gospel announcement in *The Human Condition* as 'good tidings' confirms that this was the moment in the Nativity story that Arendt had in mind, and she may, in fact, have purposely chosen Isaiah's formulation of the line rather than St Luke's, out of a desire to emphasise the birth of a human child, rather than a mystical Messiah. By focusing on the angel's birth announcement to the shepherds rather than Mary's care for the Child Jesus, Arendt did indeed prevent an understanding of the 'first birth' that was purely biological. However, such a decision did not mean that she meant for the 'first birth' to only be taken as an analogy for political birth. I contend, rather, that she was interested in what the literal fact of a new generation being born meant to the older generation of adults.

By emphasising the literal moment of birth as an event that involves and affects a plurality of people, Celermajer (2011) avoids a biologistic slide in her understanding of 'natality'. This has the advantage of avoiding a strictly developmental understanding of autonomy, such as is characteristic of the other accounts. Celermajer's interpretation does not assume that autonomy grows at an unchanging rate through childhood and then is somehow 'completed' at some point in adulthood; rather, it recognises that the degree to which a person might act autonomously vacillates throughout one's life and that even among 'fully-developed' adults, the capacity to act autonomously may differ.

Building on Celermajer's reading, I propose that, apart from the physical and biological dimension of birth, Arendt's understanding of natality was much broader than free will or agency. Rather, Arendt conceived of natality primarily as **the human capacity to act in a way that interrupts the natural and automatic course of events**, including but not limited to forms of 'renewal' that have a large impact on many people (Levinson 2001, p. 13). Autonomy and agency, then, emphasised in commentaries that focus on Arendt's political use of the term, are only one manifestation of this capacity. My reading erases the problem of reconciling the first and second births. First of all, it becomes clear why natality can be applicable to babies who have not even developed their capacity for

speech. Unlike inanimate objects, babies do act (to the frustration of new parents) in ways that are a 'particular deviation from … natural … cyclical movement[s]' and 'automatic processes', despite their limited agency (*HC*, p. 246). It also becomes clear why the concept can be applied to children, who have not yet developed their autonomy. Children act in ways that deviate from expected 'behaviours' (a term Arendt used to describe acts that had been 'conditioned' by society [see *HC*, p. 45]), precisely because they have not yet been enculturated; thus, they act in ways that do not yet conform to society's norms. Yet at the same time, this interpretation does not discount the ways in which natality is threatened by various phenomena in the public and political spaces of adults. In mass consumer society (the topic of a significant part of *The Human Condition*), the capacity to act with natality is threatened by the pressure of conformity, and in such a context, it is crucial to develop agency and autonomy. Under conditions of totalitarianism, on the other hand, this capacity is threatened by government mechanisms that seek to completely control human behaviour.

Thus far, the above interpretations of 'natality' have drawn largely from *The Human Condition*. As our goal is to better understand how Arendt used the concept in relation to education, another text by Arendt can help. When Arendt was writing the biography of Rahel Varnhagen (mostly around two decades before 'Little Rock' and 'Crisis in Education'), she did not yet use the word 'natality', but she made a connection between the principle of beginning that featured so prominently in her recently-completed doctoral thesis on St. Augustine, and education. Two characteristics that Arendt ascribed to Rahel Varnhagen prefigure her later ideas on natality and education. In Arendt's initial descriptions of Varnhagen, she described her as both 'vague' and 'original'. These two characteristics were two sides of the same coin. They both resulted from Varnhagen's lack of a deep entanglement with history and tradition. Varnhagen was ignorant both of Jewish history – that is, the history of her people – as well as of German tradition, due to her lack of a formal education. Varnhagen's ignorance was further magnified by her own attempts to escape her Jewishness which, Arendt says, was the fact of her birth. Arendt connected this lack of rootedness to an identity to what she described as a 'vagueness' in Varnhagen's personality (p. 92–94). Yet Arendt also described this lack of rootedness as the very reason for her 'original' personality (pp. 108–109).

Arendt's reason for singling out these characteristics of originality and vagueness in her biography of Varnhagen had to do with the overarching commentary she was constructing about Varnhagen's life. Arendt interpreted Varnhagen's life as one in which her central struggle was her own Jewish identity, an identity which, in 19th century Berlin, was increasingly becoming a hindrance to social acceptability. Arendt interpreted each romantic entanglement that Varnhagen had, as well as many of the friendships that she nurtured, as responses to her struggle with her identity: an identity which at first she sought to escape through either marriage or cultural assimilation, and which she finally accepted toward the end of her life.

Clear parallels can be seen in this 1930s work and in Arendt's portrayal of education in her the late 1950s. Arendt saw a lack of education – and specifically, an education in culture and history – as vital in developing a sense of cultural belonging and identity. Failing to be rooted in an identity had both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, such rootlessness allowed for spontaneity that was not hindered by 'clichés' (a formulation that recurred in Arendt's much later work on Eichmann [Arendt 1965]); on the other hand, such rootlessness prevented a sense of personality from emerging.

This tension between history and natality is central, then, to a more robust understanding of natality, especially as she deployed the concept in relation to education. Arendt sought to find a balance between an education that provided rootedness but which also did not impede the spontaneity of people. For Arendt, this tension was at the heart of schooling, to which we turn in the next section.

5.3 The School as a Social Space

From Arendt's view that childhood was characterised by vulnerability and natality sprung two tensions that motivated Arendt's thinking about schooling. Firstly, how could adults protect the vulnerability of a child while simultaneously initiating the child into the adult world? Secondly, how could a school help a child develop a rooted sense of identity without hindering the child's spontaneity? The position I argue in this section is that Arendt deployed the category of 'the social' to articulate what she thought the nature and function of schools ought to be, in relation to these two tensions.

To begin with, were schools necessary at all? Arendt recognised that the ubiquity of schooling across Westernised societies was merely a historical accident. However, she also recognised that in culturally-diverse societies such as the United States, schools played a greater political role, as a mechanism of cohesion for the political community. First of all, schools allowed for the propagation of a common language that allowed members of the political community to speak with one another. This was especially important for newcomers to the community. Secondly, the school also allowed for the propagation of certain cultural symbols that likewise encouraged cultural cohesion. With the rise in global immigration across the globe, Arendt's description of the US in the 1950s is applicable to many countries today. It is reasonable, then, to think that Arendt would have also considered schools in many countries today to play similar functions.

Whether or not schools were necessary in a specific political community, Arendt recognised that the rise of mandatory mass education had made it such that the school had become the most common experience of transition from childhood to public adult life in the West. Whereas in previous generations, parents had played the primary role of preparing children for public, adult life, the norm in modern times was for teachers and other adults who figured in the working of the school to now take on that role. These

adults thus were representatives of the parents as well as the adult generation as a whole in helping the children transition to public, adult life.

Vulnerability

At the same time, given children's vulnerability, Arendt considered it vital that adults perform this role of helping children transition to public, adult life, in a way that protected children. Fanny Söderbäck has portrayed Arendt's thought as maintaining a strict separation between the private realm where literal birth took place and the public realm of political action, allowing then for no concept of 'gestation' in relation to the 'second birth' of political action (Söderbäck 2018, p. 277). I argue, however, that Arendt's ultimate decision to use the word 'social' rather than merely 'private' in relation to children's schooling demonstrates that Arendt did in fact want to bridge the private and the public spheres. In seeking to find a word to describe this process of gestation, she evidently found it useful to deploy the category of 'the social' in a new way. While she had previously used the word 'social' to refer to the social activities of 'good society' or the manifestations of unthinking conformity in mass society, Arendt saw that the liminality expressed by the word made it a useful concept for thinking about schools, spaces that, like the salons during Rahel Varnhagen's time, had an element of publicity without being political. In contrast to the 18th century Berlin salons, though, Arendt viewed the sociality of schools as a positive attribute. They allowed children to take baby steps into the world without fully exposing them to the harshness of the political space.

Arendt's disapproval of the NAACP in relation to the Little Rock crisis, then, was a disapproval that ironically had the opposite tenor of her disapproval towards the insular Jewish communities she had criticised in the 1930s. She had previously criticised the sociality of the Jewish communities for preventing them from crossing the line into true political action. This time, she criticised the NAACP for violating the sociality of schools by purposely exposing children to the chaos of political action. With the Little Rock crisis, she saw the sociality of schools as playing a positive role in allowing for a space that was public while at the same time minimising harm. Thus arose Arendt's famous (and controversial) formulation that schools ought to be social rather than political.

An easy objection to level against Arendt's formulation is that her distinction is impossible because of the intrinsic political character of schools. As institutions that are constructed within a political community (and especially as institutions that are regulated if not entirely run by the state apparatus), every component of the school – the content it teaches, the status of teachers, the pedagogical methods, the selection of students, et cetera – is a product of politics. Such an objection, however, misunderstands the distinction that Arendt was seeking to make. Arendt's categorisation of schools as social rather than political spaces was not a denial that schools were subjected to politics. We can imagine she was fully aware that her own action of writing a commentary about schools was a political one, and the fact that she presented an alternative path towards

the goal of school desegregation confirms this. Rather, Arendt was insisting that the space within the school – that is, the space where teachers and children interacted with each other – be distinguished from the political space outside the school where adults fought political battles about education. The alternative path she proposed in 'A Reply to Critics' – the setting up of pilot integrated schools among teachers, parents, and pupils who desired school integration – demonstrates her position that the inevitable political action required to push for positive changes in schools could be and should be enacted in a way that minimised the potential harm to pupils (A Reply, pp. 180–181). The photographic images of one of the Little Rock Nine being verbally attacked by what appeared to be her schoolmates led Arendt to conclude that in the Little Rock case, the agonistic struggle of politics had entered the boundaries of the school itself.

A more valid criticism of Arendt's insistence that schools be characterised as social rather the political, however, questions the degree to which the distinction is helpful. On the one hand, it can be admitted that the distinction is a useful reminder that a primary responsibility of schools is the protection of children, and that insofar as it is possible, this ought not to be violated by the political struggles surrounding children's education. However, the question can be raised as to whether the characterisation of schools as social rather than political might also minimise the importance of the political struggle surrounding education or even used as an excuse to perpetuate injustices within the education system. Despite the validity of this argument, I intend to show in the next chapter that the distinction can be fruitful when applied to educational issues related to the questions that motivate this thesis.

Identity and Spontaneity

The second tension which was at the centre of Arendt's thinking about schools was the tension between the need to help children develop a rooted sense of identity, without hindering their spontaneity. Arendt considered natality to be 'the essence of education'. This phrase can be understood in two ways, the distinction between which is more a matter of emphasis rather than a fundamental difference. On the one hand, it can be argued that for Arendt, education was the response required to address the threat created by natality. A more radical interpretation is to see education as the very foundation which makes natality possible.

Mordechai Gordon's (1999) approach has been to take the more radical interpretation. Following on from the interpretations of Arendt's political thought *The Human Condition*, Gordon focuses on the positive depiction of natality, and depicts Arendt's educational conservatism through this lens. For Gordon, Arendt is fundamentally different from other educational conservatives – it might even be said that Gordon does not depict Arendt as a conservative as all – because her advocacy for teaching the past has nothing to do with the conservation or preservation of the past as

past. Rather, in Gordon's depiction, Arendt argues that knowledge of the past is 'essential to help children realize their possibility of creating something new' (Gordon 1999, p.172). Gordon's interpretation, however, does not lend sufficient weight to the real crisis that Arendt saw with advent of modernity; it does not, for example, sufficiently account for the almost apocalyptic way that she depicted the changes in culture that she was witnessing, which she wrote about in 'The Crisis in Modernity', nor does it lend sufficient weight to Arendt's later emphasis, post-*Human Condition*, on the need for political communities to ground themselves in a common source of principles, such as a Constitution.

My own position is that Arendt did take the threat of the new very seriously, and this aligns with Benhabib's (2000) characterisation of Arendt as a 'reluctant modernist'. It was, after all, the promise of the new that had swept totalitarian governments into popular power. 'The new' for Arendt was a double-edged sword. While it held the promise of renewal in the ruins of tragedies of history, it also held the promise of destruction as it threatened to destroy the stability of history. (Arendt would, in fact, continue reflecting on this burden of natality into the latter part of her career. In her posthumously-published book, *Life of the Mind*, Arendt, who championed thinking, also noted that thinking itself is 'dangerous' and 'destructive' [*LM*, p. 176, 192].) As Levinson (2010) has articulated, 'The Crisis in Education' was Arendt's criticism of the way that American infatuation with the new had led to a kind of progressive education that no longer fostered in students a 'love of the world', an attentiveness to what was taking place in the public world and a historical consciousness of those events that would prepare children for their eventual participation in the public world.

Arendt found it helpful, then, to deploy the word 'social' in relation to the unique role that she thought schools ought to play. By using the word 'social' to describe schools, Arendt was able to characterise schools as legitimate places of assimilation rather than distinction, and in this way, Arendt was challenging the progressive view that schools only be places that encouraged natality without simultaneously orienting schools to the old.

More than most, however, Arendt was mindful of the dangers of a kind of education that could become totalitarian. Just a few years before writing 'Reflections', she had written the essay 'Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government' (later incorporated into *The Origins of Totalitarianism*), which contained a line that has been often quoted since: 'The aim of totalitarian education has never been to instil convictions but to destroy the capacity to form any' (I&T, p. 314). In what concrete ways, then, might schooling be 'assimilative' in terms of enculturating children but also protective of children's natality? Arendt had, in fact, addressed precisely this question in 'The Enlightenment and the Jewish Question' (1932). In that essay she problematised the Enlightenment approach to teaching history that treated accounts of history as absolute. Referring specifically to the teaching of Jewish history in Jewish schools, she argued for a historicisation of history itself, a recognition of history as 'unique and transient' (p. 14),

not just in historiography, but even in school history. This might be operationalised as a way of teaching history in a way that recognises the historical contingency of the very historical narratives which are told. Notably, a turn of that phrase in that essay anticipates some of the educational thinking she developed later on. Arendt said that teaching history in this way required an attitude whereby one performs a 'summoning of reality – to accept it as it really was'. As early as the 1930s, Arendt was already thinking about a way of helping children understand their cultural background with descriptive rather than prescriptive aims, that is, in a way that did not have politics as its primary goal.

To summarise, the liminality expressed by the category 'social' allowed Arendt to conceptualise schools as having two features that she thought were important. First, it allowed her to address her concern about children's vulnerability by introducing a space that was public but also protective. Secondly, it allowed her to emphasise the process of enculturation within schools that she thought was crucial in helping the next generation develop a 'love for the world'. Clearly, though, Arendt was using the word 'social' in her educational essays differently from the way she had used the term in the past.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have posed two problems, which Arendt sought to address by conceiving of schools as liminal social spaces. The first problem was how to imagine school as a space that could prepare children for the political world while simultaneously protecting them from the psychological and emotional difficulties that come with political struggle. The second problem was how to imagine school as a space in which teachers could introduce children to the world without putting a damper on their natality. Arendt conceived of these problems within her private-public framework, and understood these problems to have originated from the failure to distinguish clearly between the private and public-political realms. The solution that she arrived at for both problems was to categorise schools as liminal spaces between the private and public-political realms. For this purpose, she took the concept of the 'social', which she had written about it in her earlier work, and applied it to the school.

In the next chapter I draw together the insights from Chapters 4 and 5 to summarise Arendt's understanding of school as a social space. I then address some of the limitations of her arguments that identify schools as a social space.

Chapter 6: Arendt's Educational Thought:

Limitations and Applications

In this chapter I acknowledge some of the weaknesses in Arendt's concept that the school belongs to the social space, and also argue that it is nonetheless a fruitful heuristic for exploring the role of the school in postcolonial contexts.

I first summarise the insights that I have drawn out in the past two chapters and illustrate their relevance for thinking about education. Then I consider some of the criticisms of Arendt's position, focusing specifically on one aspect of her argument, the misconstrual of which highlights an important tension in education. Third, I demonstrate the continued usefulness of Arendt's insights by juxtaposing her argument against present-day debates about the common school. Finally, I show how Arendt's ideas can be helpful in thinking about the questions about the teaching of national identity that motivate this thesis.

6.1   Schools as Social Spaces: A Summary of Arendt's Insights

The previous two chapters show how Arendt used the term 'social' as a heuristic across her career, and specifically in her educational thought. Across her career, the concept helped her to think about the various ways that people in the modern world had failed to act politically, and she used the term as a foil for the kinds of human acts and behaviours that she considered to be anti-political. However, in her educational thought, she used the term 'social' differently, to characterise the ways that school prepared students from the political realm.

The genealogy that we performed of the term 'social' in Arendt's thought allows us to recognise that she was alluding to two characteristics of schools when she described them as 'social'. Firstly, the word 'social' alluded to the role of enculturation that Arendt believed schools had come to play in society: the way, in other words, that schools socialise children into the wider culture of a community. Secondly, when Arendt used the term 'social' to refer to schools, she was also alluding to the tensions that came with the role of enculturation that schools played in children's lives. These tensions arose because of the way the private and public spheres pulled children towards opposite directions. The private sphere was a space that (ideally) prioritised the child's safety and security, and that looked backwards into the child's inherited history, rooting the child to the past. The public sphere was where political action would take place (action that was often enacted as struggle), and where each member had the ability to act in ways that were novel, the effects of which would ripple out to the whole community. I contend that Arendt categorised the school as belonging to the 'social sphere' to highlight the balancing act

required in schools, as places that both prepared children for the public sphere but also bore the responsibility of protecting them and rooting them in ways analogous to the role of the home. Thus, the word 'social' in Arendt's educational thought referred also to their liminality: the fact that they lay in between the private and the public spheres, and thereby embodied the tensions that came with the transitional nature of schooling. Acknowledging this, Arendt believed that schools ought to hold these elements in balance, neither allowing the school to become too much like the public nor too much like the private sphere.

When Arendt used these ideas to think through concrete educational issues, however, additional complications became apparent, related to the possible disjointedness between the different cultures a child might be inducted into. The congruence or incongruence between the culture of the child's family, the school, and the wider political community spelled differences in the significance of such enculturation for the child.

Taking Germany of the early 1930s as a first example, the context in which Arendt wrote 'The Enlightenment and the Jewish Question', for some children, the school merely extended the enculturation that had already begun at home. A child born to a Christian German family, for example, would already have been inducted into a Christian German culture at home, and this induction would simply be further supported at a Christian German school. However, for other children, the experience of schooling-as-enculturation could be more discontinuous. For example, for a family living in Christian Germany who were not Christian-Germans, depending on the family's degree of assimilation to Christian-German culture and which school the child attended, the school could be the site of the child's first immersion into the Christian-German culture that was dominant in the wider community. Alternately, the school could be the child's last immersion into their family's heritage culture before fully entering, as an adult, the dominant culture of the political community.

In the 1950s, Arendt's observations about the role of schools in the United States demonstrated her awareness that in certain contexts, the disruptiveness of schooling might be a more common experience among children than in others. In 'The Crisis in Education', she made an observation similar to something her contemporary John Dewey wrote about, noting that the socialisation role was particularly important in inducting children into a shared culture because the United States was a 'land of immigrants' (CE, p. 494). Arendt was relatively silent about the potential injustices or complexities brought about the inequality of power of different cultural groups, but she was at least aware of the distinctiveness of the United States at the time.

In the rest of this chapter I consider some of the weaknesses and strengths of Arendt's insights. I begin in the next section by assessing Arendt's own application of these ideas to the specific contexts to which she was responding in the late 1950s, when she wrote 'Reflections on Little Rock'. These same considerations put Arendt on the unpopular side of a heated issue in the United States and drew a slew of criticisms. I examine one

thread of these criticisms, which further illuminates the tensions mentioned above, and underscores the fact that Arendt did not merely see schools as private spaces, as some have characterised her thought, but also as transitional spaces towards the public sphere .

6.2 Tensions Between the State and the Public Sphere

'Reflections' contained a number of flaws in reasoning and inconsistencies in the positions that she defended. There was an inconsistency, for example, in Arendt's denunciation of government intrusion. She disapproved of the federal government's supposed intrusion into internal state matters as well as into the social life of the white parents and their children (Refl., pp. 240–241), but she did not criticise Governor Faubus who could also be seen as having intruded into the social lives of the Black children with his original decision to prevent the nine students from entering the school. Furthermore, Arendt committed a false analogy when she likened the heavy-handed implementation of integration to 'forcing mixed marriages' (Refl., p. 50). The presence of the military outside the school was not to force the students to mingle socially with one another (which they barely did inside the school, except when white students were harassing the Black students), but rather to prevent violent incidents from erupting outside the school, thereby allowing the Little Rock Nine safe passage into the school building.

In this section, I shall not rehearse all the criticisms that have emerged in reaction to these inconsistencies. Rather, I focus on a specific line from Arendt's essay that highlights parts of her argument that are particularly vulnerable to criticism. Analysing this line helps us to see a particularly important distinction that Arendt herself did not articulate clearly, but which I believe is an important one.

One of the most striking lines in Arendt's essay was when she argued,

> To force parents to send their children to an integrated school against their
> will means to deprive them of rights which clearly belong to them in all free
> societies – the private right over their children and the social right to free
> association. (Refl., p. 55)

In the paragraphs that follow, I focus on two aspects of this sentence. Firstly, I briefly mention what I consider to be a significant flaw in this statement, her characterisation of mandatory desegregation as one that impeded on the rights of white parents. Secondly, I examine the criticisms levelled against this piece by Arendt's contemporaries in relation to the two rights she identified in this sentence, the right to privacy and the right to association.

The first flaw in the sentence quoted above is her characterisation of mandatory segregation as one in which white parents were being 'forced' to send their children to an integrated school. It presupposed, first of all, that all of the white parents rejected the

integration of Central High. More importantly, it placed the burden of resolving the social tensions on the Black parents rather than the white parents: if there were white parents who were no longer happy with Central High because it had now been declared an integrated school, why should *they* not pull their children out of Central High and send them elsewhere, rather than imply that the Black parents ought to pull their children out?

Beyond this problem, specific to the Little Rock case, the arguments Arendt alluded to in this sentence were also a target of more philosophical criticisms by her contemporaries. In their criticisms of the essay, Arendt's three interlocutors at the time – Hook, Spitz, or Tumin – focused primarily on her apparent protection of white parents' right to association, or more accurately, their right to have their children *dissociate* from Black children. (I will not enter into the even more complex debate about the presumption that Arendt was working on, as to whether parents have the primary right to make decisions about their children's social lives.) Tumin focused on specific sentences in Arendt's work that he (rightly) found offensive. Hook and Spitz, however, found fault with Arendt's broader argument and deduced a connection between her broader argument and her defence of white parents' stance. Specifically, Hook and Spitz argued that Arendt's defence of white parents' stance was a result of her insistence on keeping the political and social realms separate.

There are, however, flaws in Hook's and Spitz's criticisms. First of all, both stemmed from a lack of understanding of how Arendt was using the term 'political', owing to Arendt's own lack of discussion about her terminology in the essay, thus leading them to conflate three separate arguments that she had made, two of which are referred to in the line quoted above. For ease of understanding, I call these the 'discrimination argument', the 'privacy argument' and the 'right of association argument'. In Arendt's discrimination argument, she defended the position that discrimination ought to be confined to the social sphere rather than the political sphere. In her 'privacy argument', she argued against the legitimacy of the government's intrusion into citizens' private decisions. And finally, in the 'right of association argument', she argued against the legitimacy of the government's policing of citizens' right of association.

The first conflation occurred when Hook and Spitz equated 'the government' with 'the political', leading them to think of these three arguments as one and the same. The second conflation occurred when Hook and Spitz equated the private sphere with the social sphere, thus leading them to think of the privacy argument and the right of association argument as one and the same. The mistake is understandable because although Arendt herself made these theoretical distinctions in the essay, she spoke of the right to privacy and the right of association in the same breath in the sentence above, and it is possible that she herself had not clearly thought through the implications of taking these two rights together.

However, if we see Arendt's privacy argument as distinct from the right of association argument, we begin to see that Arendt made a very important point that both Hook and Spitz failed to acknowledge. Spitz attributed Arendt's distinction between the public and private spheres to Mill's influence, but, as already alluded to in Chapter 4, it is more likely that Arendt had Tocqueville in mind when she was writing about freedom of association. (Ironically, Spitz himself appeals to Tocqueville in the final sentences of his essay.) Like Tocqueville, Arendt firmly believed that one of the strongest features of America's democracy was its spirit of association, which she wrote hopefully about in *The Human Condition* and *On Revolution*. Looking at the marginalia in the copy of *Democracy in America* found in Arendt's library suggests that Arendt might have even seen a much more intimate connection between the spirit of association and education. In that copy of the book, someone (presumably Arendt) had highlighted Tocqueville's metaphor of political associations as 'large free schools, where all the members of the community go to learn the general theory of association.'[13] Bearing in mind Tocqueville's influence on Arendt's work, and contrary to both Hook's and Spitz's rejoinders, Arendt's defence of the social sphere from government interference did not stem primarily from a desire to safeguard individual rights. Rather, it stemmed from a desire to safeguard the American spirit of association. Thus, it can be argued that Arendt's belief that the government ought not to intrude into the social sphere stemmed, ultimately, not from a desire to protect the *private sphere* from the government, but precisely to protect, indirectly, the *public sphere* from the government.

Arendt's attraction to the idea of associations was fleshed out in her advocacy for council democracy, scattered across her work. Based on Heinrich Blucher's experiences with workers' and soldiers' councils in Germany and her observations in the United States (Lederman 2018), Arendt saw community councils as potentially (but not necessarily) political, vehicles through which ordinary citizens could act collectively in possibly revolutionary ways.

Of course, as we have already established, Arendt did not think that schools should be political: the school was a form of association that she thought should remain social rather than political. Nonetheless, it appears that Arendt was generally suspicious of any state attempt to hinder the spirit of free association, which included the association that formed within schools. It may have been the case that just as Tocqueville had seen political associations as schools for adult citizens, Arendt saw schools as training grounds for children, to prepare them potentially to eventually participate in political associations in the public sphere.

Arendt's right to association argument reemphasises the importance of distinguishing the public sphere from the government. Within democratic polities, it is easy to assume

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[13] As mentioned in Chapter 4, Arendt's marginalia are in a digital archive based at Bard College. See https://www.bard.edu/library/arendt/pdfs/Tocqueville-Democracy2.pdf page 116 for this specific page.

that state actions (such as, for example, government intrusions on educational practices) are legitimate because the government itself has been legitimated by its democratic election. However, whereas elections only occur every few years, individual actions taken by the government continue to be swayed and influenced by public discourse, and Arendt herself believed in the republican idea of civic participation, whereby citizens' political participation ought not to be limited to the ballot box, but in vibrant engagement in public debate.

This in turn has implications for situations in which there might be disjunctions between a family's, a school's, and the state's understanding of the type of culture that children ought to be inducted into. I examine this in the next section.

6.3   The Liberal State as Culture: Arendt's Insights and Debates about the Common School

When juxtaposed against present-day debates about the common school, Arendt's arguments about privacy and association continue to be relevant. I contend in this section, however, that her argument for protecting the public sphere from government does not go far enough. To make my case, I first present a brief synopsis of the debates surrounding the idea of a common school. In places where it has appeared, the advocacy for universal, tax-funded schooling has often been justified both by the improved access to formal education it would give across socio-economic classes, as well as the anticipated social cohesion that might be afforded by a common curriculum. In Massachusetts, for example, where the phrase the 'common school' originated in the 19th century, early proponent Horace Mann believed that replacing church-based education with a non-sectarian curriculum focused on common public ideals would lessen the political divisiveness he observed (Peterson 2010). Notably, Mann was not concerned about race, and schools in Massachusetts remained segregated until the middle of the 19th century.

This has created a tension between those who wish to expand the reach of the common school further (such as, for example, advocates for the abolition of religious and private schools), and those who, for various reasons, disagree that the state should have a monopoly over children's formal schooling. The latter group is diverse: it includes those who ideologically object to a strong state, advocates of parents' rights, proponents of religious education, and proponents of culturally-sensitive and Indigenous education. For this last subgroup, the debate over state-controlled curricula is enflamed further by not-too-distant memories of state-led attempts at cultural annihilation through formal education, such as through policies mandating compulsory residential schooling for Indigenous children in Australia and North America.

One of the most recent versions of this debate has taken place in the context of philosophical discussions about liberalism in the latter half of the 20th century. As summarised by Walter Feinberg and Kevin McDonough (2003), contemporary liberalism

provided philosophical arguments for a liberal state to play a stronger role in promoting liberalism, a role that was seen by its proponents as emancipatory. Promoting liberalism in schools was seen as a way to enhance children's autonomy and therefore possibly help them liberate themselves from the possible oppressiveness of the cultures to which they belonged.

We can see, however, that defending such a position about schools relied on certain contestable underlying presumptions. Firstly, it wrongly presumed that liberalism itself was uncontested within the state and its machinery, and among all members of government. Secondly, it presumed a separation of the moral universe at school and the moral universe of one's community; the school, in other words, was portrayed as a space of neutrality in which children could develop the autonomy to make decisions about or against their community, rather than a space that was not neutral. Related to this, it rehearsed a Lockean presumption that certain beliefs must be pushed to the private realm and 'left at home', thus imagining the public self to be an unaffiliated self, a position that has long since been challenged. Finally, this position was also contingent on having already accepted justifications for strong government interventions in the educational sphere.

The communitarian critique against liberalism in the 1990s paved the way for the emergence of a group of thinkers whom Feinberg and McDonough call 'affiliate liberals'. Some of these philosophers sought to advance the debate by imagining political arrangements that abide with liberal principles of individual autonomy and freedom, but also took seriously the communitarian argument for valuing community affiliation. Writing from a Canadian context, Will Kymlicka's attempt at a resolution distinguished between two kinds of minorities: immigrants who voluntarily choose to reside in a country and those who belong to the first nations of a settler state, that is, a state's Indigenous Peoples (Kymlicka 1996). In general, he considered it permissible to expect voluntary immigrants to assimilate to some degree into the dominant culture of the host country, even as they also ought to be allowed access to their original culture. However, Kymlicka was opposed to state attempts to assimilate members of First Nations, given their valid historical claims to their territory. With regard to First Nations, his arguments limited state intervention only to situations in which an individual's rights were threatened, or when the community imposed 'internal restrictions' on its members. Beyond this, he supported 'group-differentiated rights', by which he meant the right of individual members of Indigenous communities to access special rights such as territorial rights or rights of self-government. When applied to ongoing debates about common schools, Kymlicka's arguments can be used to justify the rights of members of Indigenous communities to collectively determine the curricula of the schools within those communities as long as those schools do not violate children's rights in the liberal sense. At the same time they consider legitimate the state's promotion of liberalism beyond these communities whose members have been afforded those special rights.

Kymlicka's foregrounding of the historical origins of different types of minority communities is important beyond the Canadian context, because it underscores the fact that the history of these communities is relevant when reflecting on present-day questions of state intervention. It destroys the myth that all citizens of a state (and their ancestors) have acquiesced to the social contract, a myth that is a precondition for justifying strong educational interventions by the state, such as that proposed by contemporary liberalism. Even as they ultimately are supportive of the liberal vision, Kymlicka's arguments highlight the unavoidable fact that many modern states are, in fact, products of violent colonisation and conquest rather than peaceful negotiations.

'Reflections on Little Rock' demonstrates that Arendt, too, recognised how such tensions lay at the heart of compulsory education. She explicitly noted that the introduction of compulsory education had created a situation where, notwithstanding the 'undeniable' right of the government to prepare children for future citizenship, the 'right of parents to bring up their children as they see fit' was now 'challenged and restricted, but not abolished' (p. 55). She argued then that, given that compulsory education was an explicit intrusion on the right of association, the government ought to limit this intrusion as much as possible.

The solution that Arendt advocated was to draw the line at the right to association but to allow the state to determine curricular content. During her time, however, such a solution would have been vulnerable to being used by racist groups – that is, dominant groups that used the category of race as a means of oppression – to insist on 'white only' schools. The above argument I outlined based on Kymlicka's position is more nuanced, granting *only to historically-oppressed communities* (and more specific to Kymlicka's view, only to those that could be considered 'nations') special rights of self-governance, thus allowing these communities to determine even their own school curricula, as has been actualised in Indigenous schools, for example.

However, Arendt's own criticisms about the Little Rock crisis provide even more material for envisioning ways to navigate this tension, that Arendt herself did not fully articulate, and that is the feature of vulnerability.[14] Arendt's entire argument developed out of a concern for children's welfare. The vulnerability that a child might face can potentially be explored as an alternative standard by which to both justify and limit state interventions in education. This standard has parallels with Kymlicka's position that internal restrictions ought not to be protected as 'group rights'. Like Arendt, Kymlicka also sought primarily to minimise harm to the individual. The difference, however, was that Kymlicka focused on the harm that the community itself might wreak on the individual. Like his contemporary liberal counterparts, Kymlicka's argument was primarily concerned with the illiberalism wrought by minority communities on their members, and he in fact prefaced his arguments with the postulate that the conditions he

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[14] For a recent reflection on vulnerability that also draws from Arendt's work, see Ferrarese 2016.

was describing were those within liberal states. Arendt's argument, in contrast, also acknowledged the harm to children that might come from state interventions themselves, even when those interventions are done in the name of liberalism. There was a stronger explicit recognition in Arendt's work that states that were conventionally thought of as 'liberal' were also capable of harmful acts towards its citizens.

Despite her disagreement with Arendt on the notion that schools should not be spaces for political indoctrination, an anecdote from bell hooks gives additional weight to the idea that children in certain communities, particularly historically marginalised or historically marginalised ones, might benefit from something akin to a 'right to self-determination' in the realm of education. In *Teaching to Transgress* (1994) she recalls the 'sheer joy' of being at an all-Black school where learning with her Black teachers was a 'revolution' (p. 2), and she contrasts this with the atmosphere of the racially integrated school she later attended where knowledge had 'no relation to how one lived' and where Black students were 'always seen as interlopers, as not really belonging', the racism of the world outside school often reinforced by white teachers within the school (pp. 3–4).

Bearing this in mind, in the next section, I explore the relevance of Arendt's insights on schools in post-colonial settings.

6.4 Competing Cultures in the Postcolonial Context

Schools in post-colonial contexts are spaces of competing cultures. Let us take the Philippines and its public educational system as an example. This school system is underpinned by epistemic presumptions through which are woven the globally dominant Western culture and more specifically the colonial culture of the United States. This is partly because of the historical roots of the educational system, partly driven by an economic desire for Filipino graduates to 'compete globally', and partly because of pressures imposed by global organisations that define educational success based on parameters developed in the West. These have implications on curricula, on which school subjects are considered to be 'core', on the medium of instruction at schools, and on pedagogical choices and forms of assessment prioritised in the classroom.

This globally dominant culture meets resistance, however, from a nationalist culture and nation-building approach that emanates from the country's capital. This is a culture that traces its historical roots to an anti-colonial national narrative centred in the northern parts of the country, the story of the 19ᵗʰ century Philippine Enlightenment, in which an elite class took Western concepts of autonomy, liberty, and nationhood and used these to construct an argument for Philippine sovereignty. This cultural tradition has implications, too, for curriculum and teaching, such as the choice of Tagalog as the national language (and the second most important language to learn, apart from English),

and for the way that citizenship is portrayed, as described in the second chapter of this thesis.

Both this nationalist culture and the global culture meet resistance from local cultures, the diversity of which is indicated by the fact that 182 different languages are spoken in the Philippines, most of which are indigenous to the archipelago, and by continuing struggles for different levels of sovereignty in the part of the Philippines called Muslim Mindanao. These resistances are captured in historical events and movements. As mentioned in Chapter 2, as late as the 1920s, public schools built by the American colonial government in the southern island of Lanao were being burned down by local residents (Milligan 2005). Also, even though the American colonial government mandated that the medium of instruction would *not* be children's mother tongue, many teachers resisted that mandate in the classroom, teaching subjects in children's mother tongues or in regional languages in defiance of state regulation, until this practice was finally recognised as an officially accepted and endorsed practice in 2012 (see for example Shuster 1910). Finally, since the 1980s, non-governmental organisations have set up indigenous centres of learning for Indigenous Peoples who have chosen not to attend the state schools for various reasons. A government process was created to formally recognise these schools in 2004 (Azada-Palacios & Mariano 2012).

Arendt's categorisation of schools as social highlights their liminality, the fact that they are always in tension, fully belonging neither to the private realm, nor the public realm, nor the state. If schools are, as she says, places for pupils' enculturation, into which culture or cultures ought children be enculturated? Foregrounding the liminality of schools helps us to see that there are no easy answers to this question. From an Arendtian perspective, the school ought not to belong fully to local communities, nor fully to the wider political community such as the nation, nor fully to the state. Or perhaps we might say that the school belongs to all of them *and* none of them.

Arendt's educational concept of the social, however, also provides a way to think fruitfully about this dilemma, and this is in her focus on the pupil. Whatever form enculturation takes, it is only one side of the story. Arendt's position, that the enculturation of children must be done in a way that still protects their natality, serves not only as a regulatory principle for the educational task of schools, but also gestures to a way out of the dilemma that we have described above. This will be the topic of exploration in the next chapter of this thesis.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to link the exegetical analysis of Arendt's educational thought with the problematic of this thesis: the teaching of national identity in post-colonial settings. I have sought in this chapter to summarise the insights in Arendt's educational

thought in a way that foregrounds the aspects that can most fruitfully help answer my research question. In so doing, I emphasised the way that Arendt's conception of schools as social highlights the liminality of schools. Arendt did not mean for this to be a purely abstract, conceptual distinction. Her attempts to use this heuristic to think through concrete educational issues in the 1930s and 1950s demonstrate how this conception highlights the difficult task that schools face in seeking to balance the concerns of the private sphere, the needs of the public sphere, and the demands of the state.

Before we turn, however, to the next chapter, I wish to end by taking a step back from the detailed exegesis we have just concluded to reorient ourselves to the larger map of this thesis.

In Chapters 2 and 3, I problematised the teaching of national identity in postcolonial schools. In Chapter 2, I took the teaching of national identity in the Philippines as a particular case and traced its ideological roots to demonstrate that, despite political decolonisation, national identity is still taught in school in ways that replicate many assumptions about nationhood and identity introduced during the colonial era. I argued that current frameworks for teaching national identity do not sufficiently address the postcolonial ambivalences pertaining to nationhood and identity such as those expressed in postcolonial thought. I proposed to respond to this by taking the approach of thinking about, not just how citizenship education is taught in discrete classes, but more holistically, the role that schools ought to play in introducing students to the identity of the communities (including the national community) to which they belong.

For this purpose, I took an unlikely philosopher as an interlocutor, Hannah Arendt. Arendt is not typically seen as a philosopher of identity, and she in fact eschewed what has come to be known as 'identity politics'. In light of this perception of Arendt, I demonstrated in Chapter 4, through a genealogy of the Arendtian concept 'the social', that questions of identity were central to her work. Establishing this allowed me, in Chapter 5, to revisit her two controversial essays about schools, and understand them through the lens of the question of identity. I demonstrated that her thinking was animated by two central tensions, one of which bears on the question of identity. The first of these was the tension between the responsibility of the school to protect children on account of their vulnerability and its responsibility to introduce children to the public sphere. The second of these two tensions, the one which directly implicates the question of identity, was the tension between the responsibility of the school to introduce children to the culture of the community to which they belong, and the responsibility of the school to respect the child's natality and spontaneity. Arendt attempted to address these two tensions by arguing that the school ought to be positioned in the social rather than the public realm, the implications of which I drew out further in this chapter.

Arendt's idiosyncratic vocabulary, specifically her distinct ways of using the words 'social' and 'political', is one of the reasons why her thinking on this topic has made her vulnerable to criticism. Nonetheless, her way out of these dilemmas, her recommendation

that school be seen as an in-between space (i.e., 'social'), is a promising one. In imagining the school as neither private nor political, Arendt acknowledged the permanent tensions that underlie the role of the school within a political community. In the next chapters I show that Arendt's thought, particularly her focus on children's natality, also provide a way to fruitfully think beyond these dilemmas.

Chapter 7: Classrooms as Cultural Playgrounds

In 2020, amidst the global Covid-19 pandemic, the government of England decided to partly resume face-to-face schooling for the summer term. This was a controversial decision. In the press, one of the ways that the issue was framed was as a debate between the responsibility of schools to educate children in preparation for adulthood, and the responsibility of schools to protect children from the virus. We might describe this debate as one concrete way in which the tensions described by Hannah Arendt in her educational thought (and which I outlined in the previous chapter) continue to play out in the present day. The debate over the reopening of schools might be framed as a tug-of-war between two roles of the school: providing protection to children, and preparing them for publicity. In this example, exiting the confines of the home and entering the quasi-public space of the school was seen as a literal threat to children's safety.

In arguing that schools be thought of as social spaces, Arendt rejected attempts to resolve these tensions by situating them solely in one pole of either dichotomy. In the case of the tension between enculturation and natality, which is of greater relevance to this thesis, the challenge that Arendt's resolution poses to schools is how to maintain that careful balance between the culture of the past and the transformation of the future.

When applied more specifically to the question of national identity, it becomes apparent how Arendt's insights map onto the problematic we have outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. The postcolonial ambivalences surrounding national identity require an approach that can be sensitive to these ambivalences. An approach similar to Arendt's, an imagination of schools as fulcrums in the see-saw of historical identity and future possibility, is precisely such an approach. This is the topic of this chapter.

In seeking to liberate myself from the difficulties of Arendt's use of the word 'social', I attempt in this chapter to use a different heuristic, the image of 'play'. I propose that when it comes to questions of national identity, schools in post-colonial contexts ought to be seen as 'cultural playgrounds' for children, that is, spaces where children are encouraged to 'playfully' explore their cultural and national identities. I shall demonstrate in this chapter that the concept of 'play' provides us with an alternative approach to teaching national identity in schools.

I begin this chapter with some initial reflections about the word play, born from an attempt to bring into conversation with one another two scholars who have recently reflected about language and the concept of 'mother tongues': French philosopher Barbara Cassin and Filipinist Vicente Rafael. To further clarify what it might mean to approach the question of national identities from the lens of play, I discuss Amartya Sen's approach to cultural identities as an example of an approach that is *not* playful. Thirdly, I envision a playful approach to the discussion of national identities in a classroom,

proposing some examples, and showing how these foreground two elements of play, creativity and levity.

7.1 Mother Tongues and Motherless Tongues: Initial Reflections on 'Play'

In her recently translated book, *Nostalgia: When Are We Ever at Home?*, Barbara Cassin (2016) reflects on the meaning of 'home' and 'homeland' from the perspective of language rather than geographical space. In the final chapter of the book, she examines Arendt's experiences and thoughts on the topic. Arendt was born and raised in Germany, and German was her mother tongue. After a brief arrest by the Gestapo in 1933, she fled to France and then eight years later, during the War, to the United States. She remained a stateless refugee in the US until she was naturalised as an American in 1950. From the 1950s, she continued to make frequent trips to Europe and in 1964, she was interviewed by Günter Gaus on German television about, among other things, her thoughts on being German.

Interpreting Arendt's interview with Gaus, Cassin highlights how Arendt, in her remarks to Gaus, decoupled language from any ethnic group. Following the horror of the Shoah, Arendt no longer considered the German territory to be her homeland, nor the German nation to be her people. Rather, for her, 'What remains? The language remains' (*LI*, p. 21). The German 'homeland' that she identified with was not German land, but the German language, which she continued to consider her mother tongue, despite her fluency in French and the fact that, by that time, she wrote primarily in English.

What makes a language a 'mother tongue'?, Cassin asks. She suggests that Arendt's answer to the question rested on the distinction between language as '*ergon*' and language as '*energeia*' (a distinction earlier made by Wilhelm von Humboldt). Cassin does not explain her appropriation of this distinction in great detail, but language as *ergon*, she seems to imply, is language seen as an externally-imposed static totality, something that one must learn in order to use. From the word *ergon*, it is evident that this emphasises an instrumental view of language. In contrast, Cassin attributes to Arendt a belief that a mother tongue is a language that we have such mastery with, that we are capable of 'putting [it] into work, into act and evolution' (p. 46). Here, language becomes *energeia*, language *at* work, inventive and active.

Cassin herself challenges this idea later on in her book, arguing that we are quite capable of inventing in so-called 'foreign' languages as well; she concludes that the lynchpin of a mother tongue is not invention, but nostalgia: the mother tongue is the language for which we are nostalgic. However, the distinction between language as *ergon* and language as *energeia* as introduced by Cassin is nonetheless a very helpful one, and has parallels with Filipinist Vicente Rafael's account of how Filipinos learned American English during the American colonial period (1901–1946) and the years that followed.

Whereas Cassin seeks to understand the meaning of the phrase 'mother tongue', Rafael (2016) captures the postcolonial ambivalence about language in the ironic title of one his books, *Motherless Tongues.* The difference is stark: Cassin appears to associate language with belonging, whereas Rafael associates language with estrangement. In one of the essays of that book, entitled 'Wars of Translation: American English Colonial Schooling, and Tagalog Slang', Rafael imagines how pupils experienced language instruction under the tutelage of American teachers, in schools where they were banned from speaking in the vernacular. His account portrays the language as *ergon*:

> Coming to school meant leaving the home, stepping into a foreign space dominated by the other's speech. One left one's mother and mother tongue to stand before a foreign language.[15] One was exposed to the specific, exacting demands of the foreign for several hours a day, forced to conform one's body and voice to its commands and expectations. Submission to the rigors of English, however, was deemed a way of eventually mastering it. Confronting the other's speech, one was trained to conquer it, to possess it and make it an integral part of oneself. (p. 52)

This may have been the goal, according to Rafael, but this was not the effect. Rafael cites the complaints of an American schoolteacher that even after two decades of colonial education, Filipino pupils were not speaking American English, but what teachers saw as a mangled, perverted form of English.

Rafael, however, presents a counter-narrative that challenges the American schoolteacher's view of Filipinised English. Rafael examines the 1963 essay 'The Language of the Streets', written by Filipino writer Nick Joaquin under his *nome de plume*, Quijano de Manila (1980). The essay analyses Tagalog slang, which draws heavily from colonial vocabularies, borrowing words from both Spanish and English. Joaquin calls it a language that is 'created by the masses, out in the open to express their lives, to express their times, and just for the fun of it. That's why it promises to be a great language because it's being created for the sheer joy of creating. *Happy-happy lang!*' Rafael cites long passages from Joaquin's essay peppered humorously with Tagalog slang derived from English words.

For Rafael, Joaquin's account challenges the hegemony of languages. English is no longer the imperial language that banishes the vernacular to the shadows; rather, there is more parity here between the two languages. Tagalog-speakers demonstrate their appreciation of the sound of the English language, liberally borrowing from it, playing with it, transforming the meanings of English words and incorporating them into the vernacular. Tagalog and English here are imagined as friends.

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[15] Rafael is speaking here of the first generation of Filipino pupils to learn English as an additional language, in the early 20th century. Yet one wonders, reading these lines, whether he, a Filipino scholar now based at the University of Washington where he writes and teaches in English, might also not be speaking about himself, or about all Filipinos in post-colonial Philippines who have learned English as a second, third, or sometimes fourth language.

For Rafael, a foreign language can be adopted and adapted by a colonised people, who then recreate the language itself. This perspective fills a gap in Cassin's work. Cassin does acknowledge the inventiveness of language, and alludes to the ways in which individuals (like Arendt) are able to reimagine meanings of individual foreign words, thus producing new meanings. However, both language as *ergon* and language as *energeia* presume that language must be associated with *work*: either the work of learning and using the language, or the work of using language to produce new ideas. Moreover, Cassin's account still assumes that the boundaries between languages are largely fixed. In a telling sentence, she speaks of how a person must be able to speak at least two languages to know that he or she is speaking one: at no point does Cassin question the boundary between languages that define one as distinct from the other.

I read Rafael's presentation of Joaquin's analysis of slang to be an introduction to a third way of conceptualising language-adoption: language as *play*. Influenced by the postcolonial understanding of hybridity, Rafael goes beyond Cassin's idea that language can be *used* creatively; for Joaquin and Rafael, language itself is the object of creativity. Language itself is not bound strictly by norms of correctness; so fluid is it that even the borders between languages become permeable. An English word spills into the Tagalog lexicon, its original meaning challenged and changed, its original grammatical rules broken down in favour of the grammatical rules of a new language.

Joaquin's account, as interpreted by Rafael, may call to mind the more academic attempts in the Philippines to argue that a language of colonialism can be appropriated creatively by a colonised people. This has, for example, been an underlying presumption among linguists studying Philippine English as a form of English distinct from, say, standard American or standard British English. Ruanni Tupas (2004) chronicles the struggle among Filipino linguists in the second half of the 20th century to argue for the legitimacy of Philippine English and its equality to other forms of English. These were bookended by the 1969 publication of Teodoro Llamzon's 'radical' work, *Standard Filipino English* (1969) , and Bautista's publication in the year 2000 of the landmark *Defining Standard Philippine English: Its Status and Grammatical Features* (2000). These works, and the many that came between them, constituted the Philippine contribution to the dominant and growing literature of the time supporting the so-called 'world Englishes paradigm' across post-colonial English-speaking countries, championing the legitimacy of multiple Englishes.

Nonetheless, I argue that Joaquin's (and Rafael's) imagination of the relationship between Filipinos to their indigenous languages and the colonisers' languages is potentially more radical than what the advocates of Philippine English dreamed. Tupas argues that the attempt to legitimise Philippine English is a political project that is unfinished, as American English continues to be viewed as the gold standard of English in the Philippines, and the global structures of economic and political inequality make it unlikely that this will change any time soon. In my own part-time work as an editor of

manuscripts being prepared for submission to academic journals, clients, mostly academic scholars residing in East Asia, must indicate if they want their manuscript to be edited according to either British English or American English conventions; there are no other options. But even if, hypothetically, the acceptance of Philippine English did become widespread, the project these linguists undertook, the *standardisation* of Philippine English, would have only momentarily disrupted American English before settling Philippine English once again into the mould of language as *ergon*.

With his focus on Taglish (Tagalog–English) slang, Joaquin describes a moment of linguistic creativity and creation in his essay, but unlike the champions of Philippine English, he does not describe it as a moment *on the way to* a new linguistic standard. Rather, he is interested in the liminal space itself where the disruption takes place. Slang changes swiftly, constantly escaping standardisation. So it is with Taglish. The Taglish Joaquin captures in his 1963 essay was not the Taglish of my own youth in the 1980s and 1990s, nor is it the Taglish on Philippine streets today. I have heard anecdotes about the shelves of the University of the Philippines Department of Linguistics, filled with dissertations of students attempting to capture urban slang, only for these dissertations to become obsolete a few years later. Joaquin himself had to add an appendix to his original 1963 essay when it was republished in an essay collection in 1980. Slang had changed so much since the essay was first published, that he had to update his essay with new slang words.

Joaquin observes that slang is created for both self-expression and 'for the sheer joy of creating', each of which brings out an additional element of the word 'play'. The focus on slang as self-expression uncouples language from instrumentality. This understanding of language, in fact, hews closer to Arendt's own understanding of speech than even Cassin's interpretation of Arendt does. In Arendt's tripartite distinction of labour, work, and action, she identified action as a type of human activity that takes place between people. Unlike labour, it is unnecessary for biological survival; unlike work, it has no concrete output. It might be directed towards goals, but the unpredictability of action means that there is no guarantee those goals will be met, and the actual effects of action are an infinite chain that has no clear ending, like ripples when a pebble is thrown into a pond. Speech, then, while it might be useful when undertaking labour and work, is most revelatory of its essence when it accompanies action. Speech that accompanies action also has no concrete output or fixed end: it is self-expression at its purest.

Joaquin's account also inserts a dimension of levity in the act of linguistic creativity. The significance of this image is stark when juxtaposed against the image evoked by the frustrated American schoolteacher cited by Rafael. Read through Cassin's lens, American teachers in the Philippines originally saw the English language as something that pupils were meant to learn with correctness and precision. The pupils' failure to do so led to feelings of frustration, both for the teacher and likely for the pupils as well. In contrast, outside the classroom, away from the teacher's censure and punishments, Filipino pupils

played freely with the English language on their own terms, deciding what to appropriate, what to transform, what to mutilate.

There is an additional dimension to the word 'play' that makes it an especially rich metaphor for our purposes. This is the sense in which, our own creativity in play notwithstanding, that which we are playing also extends beyond ourselves. When we play a game, for example, we exercise our creativity within that game, but the experience of playing is such that we are never fully in control. Arguably, this lack of control is what makes the game enjoyable. Whether we are playing a racquet sport against an opponent, or a child's game of hide-and-seek, our enjoyment of the game often deepens the more we allow ourselves to be immersed in the game, and the closer we approximate the feeling of no longer playing the game, but being played by the game itself.

These reflections demonstrate the potential of imagining cultural and citizenship education as play. The colonial English language might be seen as a metonym for education that seeks to develop in pupils any type of cultural identity, more broadly. It presents an alternative to the modernist conception of using schools as instruments to develop a certain national identity. The modernist perspective assumes that these cultural identities are *ergon* or, at best, *energeia*. I propose, however, to think of classrooms as places where children can *play with* the different cultural identities of which they are inheritors, in different ways, thus acknowledging children's potential to be co-creators of those cultural identities. This is the idea I explore in the sections that follow: the notion that the classroom be reimagined as a cultural playground.

To more clearly distinguish between the exploration of cultural identities as work/*ergon* and as play, in the next section, I use the case of Amartya Sen's description of cultural identities as an example of the former.

7.2   Cultural Identities as *Ergon*: The Case of Sen

From my analysis of Cassin and Rafael's insights in the previous section, I propose that the relationship between language and the speaker of the language can be understood in two different ways. In the first way, language has a largely fixed structure which the speaker of the language must then master. In the second way, as seen in Joaquin's example of Taglish slang, the speaker of the language is a co-creator of language. I have proposed that this distinction between language as largely inherited and language as recreated can be seen as a metonym for the way people engage with the multiplicity of their identities. As with languages, one might imagine the navigation and choices one makes regarding their multiple identities with the presumption that each of these identities is largely fixed. Alternately, one might imagine making such choices in a way that foregrounds the understanding that each identity is in flux, and that one's own engagement with this identity is part of its re-creation.

To further clarify this point, I describe in this section how Amartya Sen's reflections can be seen as an example of the former: of cultural identities that are not themselves malleable and changeable. I choose Sen precisely because on many other points, his arguments converge with mine. In contrast with a cosmopolitan approach, he confirms the value of cultural identities to individuals. Also, he understands that identities are multiple rather than singular. Finally, he highlights the importance of agency; he understands that individuals do make choices about their cultural identities and choose between cultural identities. However, as I demonstrate in this section, in the process he recommends for people to navigate their multiple identities, he ultimately reveals a presumption that the cultural identities themselves are inherited and fixed. I focus specifically on Sen's book *Identity and Violence*, which first appeared in 2006, on the heels of the debates in the 1990s involving communitarian, multiculturalist, and cosmopolitan views on identity and community. While Sen makes a broader argument about how identities are publicly portrayed (he was reacting to Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* [1997/2007]), I focus specifically on the points he makes about personal choice and identity.

I begin with an overview of how Sen uses the word 'identity' in his work. (For a more detailed analysis, see Appiah 2009.) Sen does not use the term 'identity' to refer to a stable sense of remaining a singular self that persists through one's lifetime. Rather, he uses the term in two ways: firstly, to refer to the sense that one belongs to a particular group, to which others also feel a sense of belonging. Secondly, reminiscent of recognition theory, he also uses it to refer to the attribution by an institution, public discourse, or scholarly theories that an individual belongs to one such group (cf. Qizilbash 2009). Using the term in the first sense, Sen demonstrates that a person may have several identities:

> I can be, at the same time, an Asian, an Indian citizen, a Bengali with Bangladeshi ancestry, an American or British resident, an economist, a dabbler in philosophy, an author, a Sanskritist, a strong believer in secularism and democracy, a man, a feminist, a heterosexual, a defender of gay and lesbian rights, with a nonreligious lifestyle, from a Hindu background, a non-Brahmin, and a nonbeliever in an afterlife (and also, in case the question is asked, a nonbeliever in a 'before-life' as well).... (p. 19)

This sense of belonging to such a group is grounded in objective realities, though the objective reality that is the basis for one's sense of belonging to that group may not be the same for all people who feel a similar sense of belonging. For example, the objective basis for calling oneself 'Filipino' may be, for some, the fact of having been born in the Philippines; for others, it might be the experience of having lived in the Philippines for the majority of one's life; for others, it might be the fact of having Philippine citizenship despite never having set foot in the Philippines.

Common to most of the examples of identity that Sen mentions, as well as the examples that he focuses on in the rest of his book, is that they pertain to a *culture* or family of cultures, that are more or less shared by people who also consider themselves to belong to the same group. I use the word 'culture' here in its broadest sense, and this could pertain to a set of mores that have developed amongst a community, a set of religious or political beliefs, or even a set of professional norms.

Sen argues that the many identities held by an individual are not necessarily experienced as coming into conflict with one another. Nonetheless, he also points out that an individual likely prioritises different identities at different moments and in different situations. Sen's insight into how individuals shift the prioritisation of different identities can be deepened by looking once again at the metonym of language. I take myself as an example. As someone who, like Sen, has different identities – Filipino, British, Londoner, philosophy teacher, academic, Roman Catholic, friend, mother, spouse – I speak with different registers and even different languages in the different groups to which I belong. The reason for this is partly because I adjust my register and language to the person or people with which I am in conversation, in the same way that they likely make adjustments for me. However, the reason for my adjustment is also partly because the identity that I prioritise differs in different conversations. I might not be fully conscious of these adjustments that I make. However, they are sometimes revealed in the pronouns that I use. When speaking in the Filipino language to other Filipinos, for example, I might refer to British as '*sila* [they]' and to Filipinos' as '*tayo* [the inclusive form of "we"]'. However, when speaking in English to other Britons, I might find myself using the word 'we' to refer to the British public. There is, then, a performative aspect to my prioritisation of identity, that becomes perceptible in the way that I speak.

Finally, Sen also points out that there are times when the different identities held by an individual do come into conflict with one another, or, in his words, 'compete for ... attention' (p. 13). During such moments, an individual retains the ability to make choices between competing identities. As with all choices, the choices a person makes when faced with a conflict between their identities are choices made within certain constraints; nonetheless, Sen, insists, within those constraints, choices remain.

Thus far, the ideas from Sen that I have outlined are not controversial. However, Sen spoke of competing identities not merely descriptively, but also as a *normative ideal* to 'tame' (to use Appiah's [2009] word) such identities, or to 'moderate their loyalty' to one group (p. 21). This is where I find Sen's argument to be more problematic. Sen agrees with those who say that cultural identities can be dangerous because of their potential to be used to stoke violent extremism. This is one of the key problematics that drives his writing of the book. His claim is that the root of these dangers lies not in the presence of cultural identities themselves (as some cosmopolitans might argue), but rather, in what he calls the 'myth of a singular identity' or 'myth of singularity'. That is, cultural identities

become dangerous because certain groups lead some individuals to mistakenly believe that they only have one primary identity, and moreover, that they are incapable of making a choice to have a different identity (what he calls the 'illusion of destiny'). For Sen, the first myth can exacerbate the second: an influential group or institution that emphasises one primary identity over other identities can inhibit a person from making reasonable choices that could tame their person's cultural identity and prevent it from becoming violent.

For this reason, Sen levels much of his criticism in his book against institutions, books, and types of public discourse that he believes exacerbate these myths. One target is the British government of the 1990s, whose approach to multiculturalism he disagrees with. Sen claims that the British approach categorises people according to specific singular identities associated either with an ethnicity or a religion. He considers this approach dangerous in the way that it perpetuates the idea that members of those communities identify primarily with one identity, and not with others. Similarly he criticises the public funding of faith schools in Britain also because he believes that faith schools contribute to this myth. Sen's primary concern, then, is that being identified by an institution (the government or a school) based on one identity inhibits one's ability to make reasoned choices about that cultural identity.

For Sen, it is important, then, that a person is attentive to alternative identities in order to prevent any single identity from taking priority over all others. This for him is what makes a person capable of making reasonable choices about identity. These identities might be either 'contrasting' or a 'noncontrasting' identities, a distinction he makes early in his book (pp. 28–29). Contrasting identities are those that belong to the same category: Filipino and British, for example. Noncontrasting identities are those that belong to different categories, such as mother and Catholic.

I find a number of steps in Sen's argument to be questionable. The first question that comes to mind is, is it really the case that the so-called 'myth of singularity' is the root cause of violence that is done in the name of cultural identities? Sen accuses communitarian writers for being guilty of perpetuating the myth of singularity in their emphasis on, for example, a person's single ethnic identity over other identities. Many of these communitarian arguments have emerged from the experiences of historically oppressed and marginalised indigenous people, such as the First Nations in Canada, and have been deployed in public debate by those same people to lobby for the recognition of their rights such as to their ancestral domains and cultural practices. The political processes that have been used to arrive at such changes are farthest from the kind of extremist violence that Sen fears.

A second problem is that he does not clarify what the conditions are that would cause such an institutional focus on a single identity to inhibit one's ability to choose. He does not clearly distinguish between the types of groups or institutions who are more likely to

inhibit people's ability to make such choices. Presumably, most institutions focus on one particular identity held by an individual depending on their relationship with that person. The British Home Office, for example, focuses on my identity as a British citizen, whereas the university where I teach focuses on my identity as an employee. It does not seem reasonable for Sen to be criticising all institutions, but he does not clarify which ones are vulnerable to his criticism. Apart from this, he also fails to clarify what the conditions are that might make some people fall for the myth of singularity, but not others. Despite his frequent reference to some people's ability to make choices between different identities, in other parts of his book, he appears to be sceptical about the degree to which other people are able to stand back and weigh the identity emphasised by the institution over another identity. He offers no clear distinction between the first and the second group of people other than a vague reference to intellectual sophistication, when he refers to 'common beliefs that flourish in *not particularly intellectual* circles' (p. 44, emphasis mine).

For the purposes of this thesis, however, the problematic part of Sen's argument I wish to focus on the way he characterises culture in the context of making choices about identity. For Sen, a person can only make well-reasoned choices about identity if presented with alternatives to that identity. The way he frames this makes it appear that the act of choosing is primarily an act of choosing *between* many different cultural identities (whether these are contrasting or non-contrasting) or between the prioritisation of many cultural identities: At this moment, I may choose to prioritise being Filipino. In another context, I may choose to prioritise being a student.

However, Sen refuses to explore the act of choosing that takes place *within* one particular identity. 'What kind of philosopher (or Hindu, or economist, or Bengali) am I choosing to be?' is not a question that figures strongly in Sen's account. Ironically, when he takes institutions and public discourse to task for attributing characteristics to particular cultures, he does emphasise that cultures are not immutable, and that they emerge within broader societal changes does acknowledge that cultures change. However, he does not connect these broader cultural changes evident in society to the individual choices that people make about how they live out their culture. This, despite all his emphasis on individual freedom and choice.

My diagnosis of this is that Sen ultimately assumes cultural identities, as experienced by individuals, to be largely static, like different items of clothing worn and then taken off, where each item of clothing itself does not change. The dynamism that occurs in Sen's picture of choice-making only lies in the act of selecting one item of clothing over another. It is for this reason that Sen assumes that any school that identifies with a particular ethos (say, a religious ethos) impedes pupils' ability to make choices. He appears to imagine that these schools will *necessarily* present any identity to pupils as something that is fixed and unchanging, rather than one that is malleable and that children themselves have the power to participate in creating. Might it not be possible for

a school to be a space where a pupil can think more deeply and reflectively about the different dimensions of a *particular* identity, thus helping pupils eventually make more reasoned choices about how they might wish to shape that identity as they grow up, as a member of that community, without excluding the possibility that the pupil might eventually choose not to be a member of that community at all?

An additional criticism can be made regarding this whole conception of choice in the face of cultural identity. Sen demonstrates a rationalist confidence in the ability of human's to choose among identities. However, beyond his expression of regret that those who 'not particularly intellectual' might have a more inhibited ability to choose, he refuses to acknowledge that, his critique of the 'illusion of destiny' notwithstanding, there are a myriad of ways in which our ability to choose remains partly constrained.

Ultimately, I agree with Sen that children ought to be given the space to make choices about their cultural identities. In contrast, however, to Sen's approach, I focus not only on choosing between identities, but also on the choices that they make *about* each identity, notwithstanding the acceptance that the ability to make such choices is not clear-cut.

In the next section, I give examples of what this might look like in a classroom setting, highlighting two dimensions of the term 'play' that I find useful in reimagining the way that questions of cultural identity are approached in education. Firstly, the term 'play' implies flexibility and creativity, and in this sense has conceptual conceptions with the creative connotations of Arendt's understanding of 'natality' and Bhabha's conception of 'hybridity'. Secondly, the term also 'play' connotes a levity that contrasts it with the seriousness and gravity usually associated with the notion of 'work'. I explore both these ideas in the next section.

7.3   Creativity and Levity: Postcolonial Ambivalences and Playful Possibilities

The notion of creativity that is connoted by the term 'play' gives us a way to frame a different approach to choice and cultural identity in the context of schools. As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the notion of creativity in play maps onto the generative aspect of hybridity borrowed from Homi Bhabha, as discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. This is the first way that we can understand reimagine teaching identity: by focusing on its creative potential.

Whereas Sen assumes that identities are fixed, Bhabha sees them as malleable objects of creative agency. In fact, for Bhabha (1994), the very spaces of ambivalence are themselves the spaces of creativity. Where postcolonial subjects find themselves either torn between two identities, or where two identities appear to come into conflict with

each other: these are also the spaces of hybridity, where new possibilities of identity emerge.

In emphasising the creativity of hybridity, Bhabha provides an alternative to both the anti-colonial nostalgia for an imagined indigenous purity, as well as to the anti-colonial longing for future cultural coherence. Bhabha acknowledges that the post-colonial condition generates feelings of displacement and discomfort stemming from the tension between the cultures of the colonisers and the colonised. One may imagine that, at the moment when indigenous lands were first suddenly invaded and its people first subjugated, the first generations of people may have felt, at different moments, the need to choose between the invading culture and the 'original' culture. (In Philippine culture, this tension is captured in various literary texts, and famously in Nick Joaquin's frequently-restaged stage-play from 1950, *A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino*.) It may have been a choice made more difficult with the passing of time as the invading culture transformed the local culture. Nonetheless, even after generations of colonisation and neo-colonisation, colonial literature is still filled with expressions of a longing for the 'unspoiled' indigenous, pre-colonial culture, a longing sometimes voiced, for example, by nationalists. Bhabha's response is to reject the essentialist notion of cultural purity: both the colonised nostalgia for indigenous purity, as well as the coloniser's illusion of protecting their own cultural purity through, for example, segregation or the creation of a caste system. For Bhabha, the concept of hybridity expresses the reality that cultures not only inevitably intermingle with each other but also inevitably transform each other, a process of 'cultural miscegenation'.

Apart from displacing this nostalgia for the unspoilt culture of the past, there are also, in the postcolonial imagination, frequent expressions of longing for a future coherent culture expressed not only in literature but also in state policies that seek to create that sense of coherence. The present-day mix of cultures is thus assumed to be problematically chaotic. Yet Bhabha likens the present-day moment to the liminality of a stairwell, which is neither upstairs nor downstairs, but in between. He counters the view that this liminal space is problematic by presenting it as a space of creation and generation.

To see the present moment as this creative space for shaping identity answers one of the two tensions problematised by Arendt, and fleshes out a possible image of what it might mean to imagine school as a 'social' space. As discussed in the previous chapter, in seeking to articulate the role that she thought schools ought to play, Arendt wrestled with a tension between enculturation and natality. On the one hand, she believed that schools ought to play a role in enculturating students, that is, in introducing children to the culture of the community to which they belong. On the other, she also valued the children's natality; she did not wish to dispute nor challenge the way that each new generation would likely change culture.

In similarly challenging both the nostalgia of a pure identity in the past and a longing for a stable identity in the future, Bhabha's concept of hybridity is a promising way to

address this tension. If hybridity is the conceptual foundation for teaching national identity, then cultural identities and markers of such would be presented to children as having a past that was contested and a future yet to be created. This would therefore both introduce children to the culture of the community and at the same time encourage them to see themselves as co-creators of that culture.

To take the current Philippine curriculum as an example: there are a number of opportunities in the current curriculum for a discussion with pupils about the contested nature of national identity in the Philippine context. One of the mandatory topics in the social science curriculum, for example, is a discussion on who counts as 'Filipino', a topic first introduced in the curriculum for Grade 1 (six- to seven-year-olds) and then returned to several times over the years. The standard approach, as suggested in most textbooks, is to look at the word 'Filipino' primarily as a legal status of citizenship, and to enumerate the different ways that a person might acquire citizenship based on current Philippine citizenship laws. An alternative approach, one that assumes identity to be malleable, could be to lead students into an exploration of how those laws have changed in history. Moreover, a more explicit acknowledgement of the difference between 'Filipino' as a citizenship and 'Filipino' as identity can be explored, such as in the context of a discussion of how communities belonging to the Philippine diaspora, many members of whom are not Filipino citizens but who self-identify as Filipino because of familial ties. For older students, a more sophisticated exploration can lead to conceptual connections with larger questions about the meaning of the word 'nation'. Such an exploration might include, for example, how the meaning of the word 'Filipino' changed through colonial and post-colonial history (see, for example, Megan Thomas, 2012/2016, p. 54), or how the legal category of Filipino citizenship has been used to include and exclude people across colonial and post-colonial history (see, for example, Aguilar 2010).

Similarly there are many opportunities in the Philippine curriculum to allow students to explore how national identity is continually being created. A topic first taught in Grade 5 (10- and 11-year-olds) that is likewise returned to through secondary school is the history of the Philippine revolution against Spain. Currently, most textbooks take a historical narrative approach: identifying important dates and significant people during the revolution. An approach that can explore how national identity continues to be created can use this topic as a departure point. It can, for example, extract from the texts of the period – anti-colonial poetry and fiction, essays written by the leaders of the nationalist movement, and the documents of the revolutionary government – the principles, attitudes, and characteristics that the writers thought Filipinos in a sovereign state ought to have. This can then lead into a discussion during which students can express what kinds of principles, attitudes, and characters are important for Filipinos to have in the present and in the future.

Thus far in this section, we have built on Bhabha's and Arendt's thinking to imagine how the topic of cultural identity might be addressed in the classroom, focusing on the ideas of hybridity and natality as cousins of the concept of play. The concept of play, however, connotes something slightly more radical than what I have just outlined. Returning to the contrast I made at the beginning of this chapter between play and *ergon*, play connotes freedom, a liberation not only from the past but a freedom even from any teleological future. There need not be any 'point' to play.

Beyond mere creativity, I return to the metonym of language in Nick Joaquin's essay about slang, mentioned in the first part of this chapter (Quijano de Manila 1980). What makes Tagalog slang a potentially 'great language', Joaquin argues, is that it is created 'for the sheer joy of creating', 'just for the fun of it'. By uncoupling language from instrumentality, this image of language that Joaquin paints is most reminiscent of Arendt's view of regarding the radicalness of 'natality'. It is this uncoupling from instrumentality that gives play the dimension of levity. If there is no standard by which it needs to be judged, no hard rules to pin it down, then language divests itself of the weight that prevents its exploration from being joyful and fun.

A creative approach to teaching national identity is similarly in danger of being weighed down by instrumental motivations. National identity, for example, might be presented to children as a 'problem' that they must 'solve.' This is not to say that national identity is not problematic. For instance, the way that certain ways of thinking about national identity are perpetuated also replicate with them historical cultural injustices, such as those related to race, ethnicity, or cultural hierarchies. The problematic nature of national identity may therefore lead some teachers to find it preferable to encourage children's creativity by adopting a 'problem-solving' approach to these issues, whereby students might be asked to think of ways that the injustices surrounding such issues can be addressed. Such an approach suits frameworks that imagine discussions of cultural or political issues in class as forms of 'citizenship preparation', a way of solving present-day political problems through the curriculum being undergone by citizens of the future.

While I recognise the value in such an approach, a lighter touch aligned with non-instrumental views of education (see Standish 2007) can be an alternative approach. To the extent that many artifacts of culture are themselves non-instrumental self-expressions, a 'playful' approach to exploring national identity can liberate pupils from moralised judgements about patriotism or a lack of such.

Recent Philippine children's literature offers a model of such an approach. Between 2004 and 2011, children's writer Christine Bellen wrote a series of retellings of children's stories originally written in American-era Philippines. These stories were part of *Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang* [*Grandmother Basyang's Tales*], a series of children's stories written by Severino Reyes (1861-1942) and published in the Tagalog weekly magazine *Liwayway* between the years 1925 and 1942. Numbering more than 500 in all, the popularity of these stories was evident in the numerous ways they were told and retold even after Reyes'

death, in comics, on radio, on television, and in film. Bellen selected 20 of these stories to be retold, re-illustrated (by different illustrators), and republished as a series of books.

Both the original and Bellen's retellings are characterised by cultural syncretism, a feature that has been central to two recent analyses of these stories, by Anna Katrina Gutierrez (2009), and by Garces-Bacsal, Tupas, and Hernandez (2016). Garces-Bacsal, Tupas, and Hernandez describe the original Lola Basyang stories as an appropriation and indigenization of Western fairy tales in the spirit of the Brothers Grimm, and note elements that are reminiscent of Cinderella, Snow-White, and Pinocchio, even though the stories themselves may have been of Filipino characters or located in Philippine settings. Gutierrez, on the other hand, focuses on how Bellen's books combine global and local expressive elements. She notes, for example, 'the evident influence of, and at times, mimesis of Western and Asian drawing styles, in particular the Disney style' which are then 'syncretised with Filipino things, iconography, and colour' (p. 169).

The potential for these books to be models for cultural play in the classroom is expressed by Gutierrez's observation that these books are channels for imagining new identities. Citing Ronald Robertson's conception of 'glocalisation', she describes the books as a 'dialogue between the local and the global [that] thus produces a dynamic culture and an identity based upon the interaction of the two forces'. These books can be presented to children as an example of how an encounter between two or more cultures – the colonial (or global) and the local – can be a space for creativity. Rather than force a children's story to only either be 'foreign' or 'indigenous', the Filipino children's story goes beyond these two categories.

By paying attention to such syncretism, children might have models for their own exploration of the ambivalences of their identities. A teacher who uses Bellen's books in the classroom can point out to children these syncretic features, and encourage children to do something similar to what Bellen and the books' illustrators did. To explore the tension between the foreign and the indigenous, children can be encouraged to take a foreign story and imagine how they might indigenise it, for example. A similar approach can be taken to help children negotiate other loci of ambivalence, such as the tension between their local ethnic identities (i.e., the ethnolinguistic subgroup they identify with) and their broader national identity, for example. In these ways, children may undergo the experience both of recognising the roots of their identities but also creatively reimagining them.

To be clear, Bellen's books can and have been interpreted not purely as non-instrumental self-expression, but as books infused with political purpose. Garces et al. use decolonial and neo-Marxist lenses to situate describe Bellen's books in an ongoing decolonial and anti-capitalist struggle:

> the punishment of greed with capitalistic undertones, the mockery of the ruling political class's excesses of authority, the ascribing of agency and self-

determination to society's weak and marginalised, and the denunciation of racism in intercultural contact. (pp. 26–27)

Similarly, Gutierrez reminds us that Reyes' original indigenisation of Western story motifs were an act of 'subversively writing a Filipino identity that was clever, imaginative and strong enough to overthrow colonial hegemony' (pp. 161–162). And it is certainly possible (even likely in Reyes' case) that Reyes, Bellen and the illustrators may have had these political intentions when crafting these books. What makes creative writing (or creative drawing) creative, however, is that such motivations are not necessary. An author might choose to write a story with a specific political intent, but might also choose not to. The playful approach I suggest here is that the teacher presents possibilities to pupils for creative cultural exploration, without dictating beforehand any extrinsic purpose other than the creative exploration itself.

Such an approach has resonances with Arendt's belief, discussed in the previous chapter of this thesis, that education ought to be protective of children's vulnerability by resisting the temptation to become a political indoctrination. While I agree with many of Arendt's critics that teachers unavoidably bring their political inclinations into the classroom, I also believe the teachers have the capacity to prudently regulate the expression of such. In a drawing session in an early years classroom, teachers regularly stop themselves from taking the pencil from their pupils' hands and drawing for them. Rather, they ask the children what it is that they are trying to draw, and, at most, offer suggestions as to how the child might form the image in their mind. Similarly, a teacher facilitating their pupils' exploration of national identity might make the prudent choice to adopt an agnostic political position in the classroom to prioritise the pupils' exploration of their own cultural identities.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have proposed an alternative framework for teaching national identity in schools, which is to approach the exploration of identity as *play*. I contrasted Barbara Cassin's and Vicente Rafael's reflections on language with each other, highlighting how Rafael's reflections reveal a way of looking at language-adoption as *play*. Using language-adoption as a metonym for the exploration of national identity, I then further illustrated what it means to explore identities in a playful way first *via negativa*, by showing how Amartya Sen's understanding of cultural identities, despite its parallels with the approach I am proposing, is *not* playful. Finally, I gave examples of what a playful approach to exploring national and cultural identities in the classroom might look like, emphasising two dimensions of play, creativity and levity.

Thus far in this thesis, I have argued for a postcolonial approach to teaching national identity. Unlike the approaches that have been criticised in the debates about patriotic

education (Hand 2011b, R. W. Miller 2016; see also Chapter 3 above), the approach I propose does not aim to inculcate patriotic nationalism. Rather, its aim is to help pupils understand the different historical sources of national identity, provide a space where they can express and work through their ambivalences about their cultural identities, and allow them to glimpse the possibility of shaping these identities.

In the next chapter, I consider and respond to possible criticisms of this approach.

Chapter 8: 'Amor Mundi' and the Danger of Insularity

For a work that has drawn heavily from the thought of Hannah Arendt, I have arrived at a position that appears to contradict some of the opinions that Arendt herself held. Similarly, having drawn heavily from postcolonial thought, I have also arrived at an approach that may be vulnerable to the same kinds of criticism that have been levelled against the postcolonial tradition, mostly by Marxist and neo-Marxist thinkers (see, for example, Chibber 2013). Both from an Arendtian perspective and a postcolonial perspective, the vulnerability of my position is the same: it lies in the warning that has been expressed numerous times that an emphasis on communitarian identities may lead to the insularity either of a sub-community vis-a-vis the larger political community (as Arendt had worried) or of the individual as a citizen of the larger community. The feared consequence of this insularity for both Arendt as well as the Marx-inspired thinkers is that this would eventually lead to some form of political quietism.

What is the likelihood that such insularity might occur in the educational approach that I have outlined? As an approach that has not yet been put into practice, it is difficult to answer this question with certainty, but I seek in this chapter to consider this possible objection through a speculative exercise. In the first section of this chapter, I present a reading of the *Bildungsroman*-like novel *Patron Saints of Nothing* (Ribay 2019) as a way of imagining how the danger of insularity might emerge in an educational setting.

Having lain out the danger of such insularity in an identity-based cultural education, what possible remedy might there be? If insularity is a kind of turning away from the world, then it would appear that an appropriate principle to prevent this from happening might be one that encourages students to turn towards the world. Arendt appears to hint at such as an educational principle in the final two sentences of 'The Crisis in Education', which read as her manifesto of sorts for education:

> Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from that ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable. And education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world. (CE, p. 196)

Whereas previous readings of 'The Crisis in Education' have interpreted these sentences by focusing on the idea of natality, in the second and third sections of this chapter, I unpack the meaning of these sentences in a slightly different way, treating the notion of 'love of the world' (or, *amor mundi*, as she referred to it elsewhere) as its crux. First, I unpack what she meant by love of the world by 'pearl-diving' in some of her previous texts – both her public and private writings – focusing specifically on the aspects

of this principle that have some bearing on education. Then, I seek to uncover her thinking behind the notion that this general principle of *amor mundi* might save young people from 'ruin', building on Susannah Young-ah Gottlieb's earlier analysis of the meaning of the word 'ruin' in *The Human Condition*.

Having arrived at a deeper understanding of the Arendt's notion of *amor mundi*, in the fourth section of this chapter, I demonstrate how it can be helpful as a principle that might prevent the framework that I have proposed from leading to insularity.

Let us turn now to Ribay's novel.

8.1 Patron Saints of Nothing and the Pathologies of Cultural Exploration

Randy Ribay's *Patron Saints of Nothing* is a *Bildungsroman*-type novel that centres around the character of 17-year-old American high school senior, Jay. I choose this novel as the point of departure for this reflection because Jay's journey embodies a cultural exploration similar to the one I have been imagining in this thesis. Jay, who is also the narrator of the novel, is of half-Filipino ancestry. After hearing that his cousin and childhood pen-pal Jun has been murdered in the Philippines in President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war, he decides to spend ten days in his father's country of origin to find out both the events surrounding Jun's murder, and to fill in the gaps in his knowledge about Jun's life, during the years that the cousins were out of touch.

Although his cousin's murder is the direct impetus for his return to the Philippines, a country he has not visited for several years, he comes to see his stay in the Philippines also as a journey of cultural education and cultural exploration. In the course of seeking answers about Jun's death and life, he also arrives at various insights about different aspects of Philippine society. Author Ribay takes pains to show how this supposed cultural education transforms Jay's persona. At the beginning of the novel, Jay identifies an American teenager who happens to have a Filipino father, who is told by his best friend that he is 'basically white'. By the end of the novel, however, he identifies as a Filipino son who listens to Filipino pop music, unflinchingly eats 'exotic' Philippine food (pork blood stew), and considers the Philippines 'home'.

From my perspective as a Filipino reader, however, the transformation that Jay undergoes is unconvincing, and the reason is that Jay's entire journey does not feel like a deep-enough engagement with Philippine culture to lead to him 'becoming Filipino'. The elements of Philippine culture that Jay has 'learned' during his stay in the Philippines are tokenistic: eating 'exotic' Philippine food, wearing Philippine traditional attire (a point I return to at the end of this chapter), and learning a few greetings and polite phrases in Tagalog. While it is not surprising that a mere 10-day stay in the Philippines would be insufficient for any deep immersion in a culture he barely knows, an attentive reading of the text uncovers what is perhaps a more significant reason for Jay's shallow engagement

with Philippine culture, and this is the self-absorption that he displays throughout his trip.

Jay's self-absorption is most evident in the way that Jay's late cousin, Jun, is treated in the novel. Jun is one of the characters in the novel that symbolises Jay's aspiration to become Filipino: he is complex, thoughtful, generous, and politically aware, traits that Jay obviously admires and even envies. But Jun's character functions as a mere foil who must die for Jay to take his place. In some ways, this replacement is almost literal. Staying first with Jun's family, then later with their aunts, Jay sleeps in the same bedrooms that Jun slept in. In Jun's family he steps into the role both of disappointing son to *Tito* [Uncle] Maning and older brother to Grace. To *Tita* [Aunt] Chato and her partner *Tita* Ines, he temporarily takes Jun's former place as their foster child. And even with their priest uncle, Father Danilo, he takes Jun's place as spiritual advisee. The letters that Jun wrote to Jay, that he has brought with him on the trip, become, at the end of the novel, Jay's own words. And finally, after the memorial service that finally brings reconciliation to the family, Jun's homeland becomes Jay's homeland.

Jun's relegation to a mere device for Jay's transformation is also apparent in Jay's attitude towards his cousin. Although the entire plot is motivated by Jay's desire to find out the truth about Jun's death, he barely seeks to find more about Jun's personality beyond what he already knows from their childhood letters to one another. In his conversations with the characters in the novel, he is barely interested in finding more about Jay's personality, his interests, or his likes, beyond what he already knows. These titbits, rather, are volunteered by his relatives: 'Do you know Jun was an insomniac?' his aunt says (p. 282). One of his favourite bands was The Eraserheads. Jay, however, mostly just acknowledges these facts; they barely seem to arouse his curiosity and he rarely pursues the conversation further. Similarly, after discovering that part of the reason why Jay disappeared for four years was because he had fallen in love with Reyna, he barely tries to get to know more about Reyna herself. This may partly be because of the language barrier (Reyna does not speak English, and everything he learns about her, he learns through another character, Mia, who translates and carries the conversation with her). Altogether, the levels to which he tries to probe more deeply into Jun's persona are rather limited. Similarly, Jay exerts little effort to want to get to know more about Mia, his love interest in the novel and the other character who symbolises his interest in the Philippines. All their conversations are about Jay's concerns. The few times he does ask about her, he does so because he thinks her answers can help him find out more about Jun. If Jun and Mia are meant, then, to symbolise Jay's attraction to the Philippines, Jay seems more content to hold onto the abstract ideas he has of the Philippines in his mind, rather than explore the Philippines as it really and concretely is.

The author of the novel, himself closer in experience to second-generation immigrants (like the novel's protagonist, he moved from the Philippines to the United States when he was a year old), does take pains to dispel both the romanticised and patronising

notions of the Philippines that some children of the diaspora may have. If Jun is taken to be a symbol of the Philippines, Jay's journey of discovery about Jun is partly a dispelling of the perfect image he has of Jun in his head. This same message is transmitted directly as well, in the voices of Jay's father and Mia. Jay's father explicitly cautions him from having too romantic of a notion of the country. Mia scolds Jay for turning a conversation about Reyna's abuse into a conversation about himself: 'Just listen,' she tells Jay (p. 240). And in a symbolic scene when he goes ice-skating with Mia, she gently chides him for presuming she did not know how to ice-skate. 'Why did you assume that I didn't?' she asks (p. 55). This question, *Why did you assume that I, a Filipino, was less knowledgeable or skilful than I actually am?*, is a question that can often be asked of visitors to the Philippines, including children of the diaspora. Jay appears to learn some of this lesson: on his trip to a Manila slum area, one of his main realisations is that people who live in slum areas don't live in lives of constant misery; as he puts it, they do 'the same things any of us do – only in smaller spaces ...' (p. 229).

Despite this, however, and notwithstanding Mia's rebuke, on the whole, Jay's character ends up more eager to talk about himself rather than listen to the characters around him. Towards the end of the book, Jay reflects didactically on his realisations from his trip:

> We are not doomed to suffer things as they are, silent and alone. We do not have to leave questions and letters and lives unanswered. We have more power and potential than we know if we would only speak, if we would only listen.' (p. 365)

The last phrase, 'if we would only listen,' however is almost an afterthought, a lesson that Jay himself has not fully internalised. This is evident in Jay's nascent political awareness. His trip to the slums and the exposure to Reyna's backstory, as a survivor of human trafficking, make him realise how sheltered his upbringing has been. However, when he returns to the house of his aunt, a lawyer who works to rescue women from trafficking rings, he foregoes the opportunity to ask her more about her work.

This is also visible in the final scene of the book, set back in the United States. After Jay's father picks him up from the airport, the two have a long conversation that lasts through the morning. In this scene, though, Jay does most of the talking. He asks for permission to take a gap year in the Philippines to discover more about his Filipino heritage. The closest connection to his heritage is sitting right beside him, a potential source of learning about that heritage, but rather than take the opportunity to listen to his father, it is his father who hands Jay a cup of coffee, sits down and asks Jay, 'So, tell me more' (p. 366).

Thus, if Jay's trip to the Philippines is to be understood as a 'cultural education', both the teacher and the object of learning have been deemphasised. Jay is surrounded by people who are in a position to introduce him to Philippine culture, but he does not stop to ask what he can learn from them. As a result, Jay's appreciation of the object of

learning is also limited. Jay's reflections remain initial, shallow impressions, rather than fruits of deep engagement and reflexivity.

To be fair, in constructing the novel this way, Ribay is in fact repeating an important trope of the *Bildungsroman.* Amidst debates about how broadly or how narrowly the category of *Bildungsroman* ought to be defined (Boes 2006), its distinguishing feature is that it is a story of self-development and self-discovery, the emphasis on *self* signifying the protagonist's maturation into adulthood.

At first glance, the shallowness of Jay's transformation might be interpreted to mean that *Patron Saints of Nothing* is a novel of failed or stultified *Bildung*: Whereas *Bildung* aims for a transformation that results in a person's deeper engagement with society (Løvlie and Standish 2002), in this novel the character engages in a mere navel-gazing exercise focused on assuaging feelings of discomfort. However, is it plausible to also read *Patron Saints of Nothing* in another way: as a novel that epitomises the problems with *Bildung* alleged by its critics? I shall return to this point later in the chapter.

What is clear is that we have seen in this novel an illustration of a cultural education that is flawed. In opposition to the insularity of this type of cultural education, I propose Arendt's concept of *amor mundi* as a guiding principle that might prevent cultural education from developing this way.

8.2   A Genealogy of *Amor Mundi*

As is typical of many Arendtian themes, there is no one place where Arendt developed the concept of *amor mundi* or 'love of the world' extensively. Nonetheless, commentators agree that this was one of the main themes that animated her thought (Bernauer 1987). She originally intended for *The Human Condition*, the most philosophical of all her books, to be entitled *Amor Mundi* (letter to Jaspers; Young Bruehl, p. 324), but the theme is prevalent throughout her work, and the broader theme of love bookended her academic life. Her doctoral dissertation, *Der Liebesbegriff bei Augustin* [Love and Saint Augustine] was an exploration of different kinds of love, and her reflections on the relationship between thinking and *Eros* featured significantly in her unfinished final book, *The Life of the Mind.*

Young-Bruehl interprets Arendt's acquiescence to make her personal papers public as an 'implicit charge to those who write about her life: see what the anecdotes of private destiny have to say about the work and the world, the public things' (p. xviii). In this section, I attempt to pursue this direction with a short genealogy of the phrase *amor mundi* in her work, drawing from two sources of her personal writing: her *Denktagebuch*, and her correspondence with Karl Jaspers, from the year 1955, while she was in the midst of writing the manuscript that would become *The Human Condition.*

Other commentators have sought to illuminate the concept of *amor mundi* by contrasting it with other possible attitudes towards the world that Arendt described in

her opus. Young-Bruehl (p. 234) has contrasted it with the medieval Christian contempt for the world and its materiality (*contemptus mundi)*, expressed as well in the philosopher's retreat from the world to engage in contemplation. Marikei Borren has contrasted it with *odium mundi*, the 'ideological hatred of the world' found in totalitarianism and metaphysics (Borren 2009, p. 14). *Amor mundi* has also been contrasted with the other forms of love that she wrote about, such as the intimate, intersubjective love between people – what Borren calls, *amor hominis* (p. 14) – that Arendt considered to be inimical to the public-political realm. These interpretations of *amor mundi* emphasise the term *amor* and try to illuminate the meaning of the phrase by drawing contrasts between *amor mundi* and other attitudes towards the world, or other forms of love. In contrast, I highlight the fact that when Arendt reflected in her personal writings on the phrase *amor mundi*, mindful that it was the concept of the world, *mundi*, that she wrote about more extensively.

The phrase *amor mundi* appears in her *Denktagebuch* (her thinking journal), among the entries dated March and April 1955. In March 1955, she wrote: '*Amor Mundi – warum ist es so schwer, die Welt zu lieben?* [Amor Mundi – why is it so difficult to love the world?]'[16] In an April 1955 entry, she wrote the phrase again in what appears to be a draft outline for *The Human Condition*. After her notes on the introduction to the book, she apparently experimented with possible questions that would frame the book, writing in English:

> Then a series of treatises all dealing with one question: What is it in the Human Condition that makes politics possible and necessary? Or: Why is there somebody and not rather nobody? (The double threat of nothingness and nobody-ness.) Or: Why are we in the plural and not in the singular? (*Denk. 1*, p. 523)

Interestingly, there is evidence that part of Arendt's development of the concept of *amor mundi* around this time may have originated from some friction between her and Karl Jaspers. She wrote a letter to Karl Jaspers in July 1955 laying out plans for her annual visit to Jaspers in Basel, and ended the letter abruptly, seemingly overcome with a wave of melancholy: 'I'm not much in the mood for writing anymore. Everything has suddenly become so close' (*Corresp.*, p. 261). Replying two weeks later, Jaspers indirectly asked whether she was upset with him, possibly over one of their prior conversations, or his previous criticisms of the *Rahel Varnhagen* book: 'It seems to me as if a conflict has emerged that, in view of the basis of reliable solidarity we share, could be even more significant and stimulating. I haven't grasped its nature yet, and perhaps I am mistaken about it. We'll need some leisurely hours to explore this matter.' He then continued:

> Perhaps I'm too old to do battle with you anymore. If so, then we'll enjoy our time together some other way. You bring with you shared memories of a lost

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[16] I am grateful to Remmon E. Barbaza for the translation of this line and other excerpts from *Denktagebuch* found in this chapter.

past. You bring the wide world as it is today. You hear from us two old people how we are spending our quiet years and how we have not forgotten the past, and above all you bring something I cannot express in words and which cannot be expressed in words: a human reality that you, together with your husband, have built for yourselves in this world and in spite of this world. (*Corresp.*, p. 262)

These lines from Jaspers gesture to some of the themes that later would become central to Arendt's conception of the world as she developed it in *The Human Condition*: plurality ('a conflict has emerged'), the 'basis of reliable solidarity', mortality and immortality ('a lost past' and 'two old people … spending our quiet years'), and the world as something that is built by humans ('You bring the wide world …. You bring … a human reality that you … have built for yourselves ….').

In the same month, Arendt wrote three paragraphs reflecting on the phrase *amor mundi* that brought together these themes. She wrote that *amor mundi* was related to the world '*in der wir dann unsere Gebäude errichten, uns einrichten …* [in which we then erect our buildings, establish ourselves …]' (p. 539): a preview of her reflections on the world as a product of human work, which would become a central theme in *The Human Condition*. She further wrote that the motivation for erecting this world was a desire to transcend mortality, along with an initial contrast between the concepts of 'eternal life' and 'eternal presence' which would become more developed in her commentary on medieval Christian mysticism in *The Human Condition*:

> Wir hängen nicht am Leben, das sich von selbst erschöpft, wir hängen an der Welt, für die wir ja seit eh und je das Leben zu geben bereit waren. Die Todesangst ist Angst vor Schmerz, in dem wir lebendigen Leibes der Welt verlustig gehen. [We do not cling to life, which exhausts itself. We cling to the world, for which we were ready since time immemorial to give our lives. The fear of death is the fear of pain in losing the living body of the world.] (pp. 539–540)

Beyond the motivation for building a world, the paragraphs also clearly connect the concept of the world to plurality, and she appears to use the words 'world' and 'Between' interchangeably, prefiguring some of her reflections in *The Human Condition* as seen from these longer quotations from which the phrases above were excerpted:

> sobald Menschen im Plural sind … (das reine Zwischen) — (der Welt), in der wir dann unsere Gebäude errichten, uns einrichten … insofern wir im Plural sind, der wir ewig fremd bleiben, sofern wir auch im Singular sind, von deren Pluralität her wir überhaupt unsere Singularität nur bestimmen können. Sehen und Gesehen-werden, Hören und Gehört-werden im Zwischen…. Kenntlich sind wir nur im Zwischen der Welt, der Name haftet uns im Zwischen an. Im reinen Innen gibt es keine Namen; nur ich und du, die verwechselbar sind. [As soon as human beings are plural … (the pure Between) – (the world), in which we then erect our buildings, establish ourselves … insofar as we are plural, (to this world) we will remain forever

alien, insofar as we are also singular, from our plurality we can at all determine our singularity. To see and be seen, to hear and be heard in the Between…. We are recognizable only in the Between of the world. The name clings to us in the Between. There is no name in what is purely within only you and I, each of which can be mistaken for the other.] (pp. 539–540)

Three weeks after Jaspers wrote his letter, Arendt replied with a reassuring tone, 'I'm so glad that it's all right with you if we do argue a bit again' (*Corresp.*, p. 263). She also reflected on his words: 'You write about our "conflict on a basis of reliable solidarity"…. The basis always remains the same ….' Then in response to his description of her '[bringing] shared memories of a lost past' to Jaspers and his wife, she wrote:

> Yes, I would like to bring the wide world to you this time. I've begun so late, really only in recent years, to truly love the world that I shall be able to do that now. Out of gratitude, I want to call my book on political theories 'Amor Mundi'. (*Corresp.*, p. 264)

This exchange between Jaspers and Arendt, and Arendt's notes in her thinking journal, help us to understand the concept of *amor mundi* more deeply. These personal writings suggest that Arendt thought about *amor mundi* as the basis of the solidity (to borrow Jaspers' words) that allowed her to disagree and debate with her friend and mentor. Jaspers had contrasted his intellectual friendship with Arendt to his relationship with other people whom he loved but with whom 'no discussion takes place' (*Corresp.*, p. 262). We might extend this insight to point out that without this shared love of the world, disagreement is unpleasant and tiresome. At the same time, love for one another without a shared love for the world is also insufficient.

In the published version of *The Human Condition*, Arendt dropped the concept of *amor* but retained the notion of *mundi*, developing them further in her discussions of *publicity*, *world*, *work*, and *worldlessness*. To express the opposite of the attitude of worldlessness, she chose, instead of the phrase 'love of the world', the idea of having an 'interest in the common world' (*HC*, p. 53). Her reason for dropping the term *amor* or this form of love from her book is not clear; she did not change her mind about the importance of *amor mundi* per se, given that the phrase 'love of the world' does reappear in her later works (such as 'The Crisis of Education' and much later, in her posthumously published *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* [*LKP*, p. 50]). It may be then, that in *The Human Condition*, she was hesitant to use the word 'love' because it required a complicated parsing into different kinds of love (as she had done in *Love and Saint Augustine*), one of which – Christian love – she was critical of in her discussion.

The change in wording notwithstanding, the idea of *amor mundi*, taken here, at minimum, as an interest in the common world, is a central point in *The Human Condition*. By 'world', Arendt was clearly inspired by Heidegger's notion of *Welt*. She used the term to refer to the collection of physical manmade objects that are meant to endure

among a community — buildings, roads, monuments, artwork and cultural artifacts, and so forth — as well as the institutions that humans built. She took these metaphorically to be both an expression of the human desire for permanence, as well as a way of conceptualising human commonality that was located outside humans rather than within human interiority such as in the case of a human nature or a general will;[17] it was paramount for her that humans be viewed as plural – each unique and distinct from every other – because of the totalising tendencies of viewing people primarily as a collective. Yet the fact of this uniqueness did not close off the possibility of agreement or cooperation: what allowed for concerted action was the common grounds on which humans stood, which was the world, about which they could agree or disagree. Thus Arendt conceptualised the world as the 'in between' that both 'connected' humans but also 'separated' them, preventing them from 'collapsing into one another' or for that matter, from being collapsed into one another by, for example, a tyrannical government.

However, the ability of the world to both connect and separate humans was weakened when humans lost an interest in the common world, a phenomenon that had appeared, for example, among medieval Christian mystic communities as well as under tyrannical states that enforced the isolation of citizens from one another. Arendt considered the loss of interest in the common world to also be a defining characteristic of the modern political age, brought about by modern consumerism and mass society. This diagnosis of modernity was a central theme of *The Human Condition*, which she would return to in many of her later essays and books. The specific notion of Amor Mundi was one which re-emerged in one of her educational essays, *The Crisis in Education,* to which we turn next.

8.3   Amor Mundi, Education, and 'Saving the World from Ruin'

By the middle of the spring of 1956, Arendt had written much of the manuscript for *The Human Condition*; she had also changed her mind about the title, intending now to call it *Vita Activa* instead of *Amor Mundi* (*Corresp.*, p. 283). As mentioned above, in its published form, Arendt did not write about love of the world, but rather an 'interest' in a common world, and the only comments she made about love were a critique of love in the intersubjective sense of *amor hominis* (see Borren 2009), and a reflection on Christian love as an otherworldly, transcendent principle.

Arendt did, however, return to the formulation 'loving the world' soon after *The Human Condition*, in her 1958 essay 'The Crisis in Education'. In the last paragraph of this essay, she advocated for a view of education as an act of the adults in a political community that was motivated by love – not in the religious or moralistic sense – but

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[17] See her later critique of Rousseau's 'general will' in *On Revolution*.

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rather, a more secular sense of love for the world and love for children.[18] The world, Arendt said, was 'created by mortal hands to serve mortals for a limited time', and for this reason always 'wears out' (p. 510). Arendt had in *The Human Condition* discussed the way that human-made objects, despite being designed to last, inevitably wore out with use. Metaphorically, however, Arendt appeared here to be speaking about the way the structures we build in society – political institutions, for example – are constructed in ways fit for specific historical time periods, and that to insist that they not change would 'only lead to destruction' (p. 510); it was by allowing the world to change and be renewed that it could be preserved. Thus, she argued that to educate children ought to be an act of '[loving] the world enough to assume responsibility for its preservation and ... save it from ... ruin', and that it also ought to be an act of '[loving] children enough ... to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world.'

It is not easy from this essay alone to discern exactly what kind of ruin or destruction Arendt had in mind when she penned these lines. This paragraph is often cited in the secondary literature to summarise Arendt's conception of education, but what exactly Arendt meant by 'ruin' is often glossed over. However, because Arendt conceptualised education as an act of love that provided the antidote to ruin, understanding her conception of education as an act of love necessitates understanding what she meant by ruin. Why did Arendt assume that the world is headed towards ruin? To be sure, much of Arendt's writings were her attempts to think through various political and social catastrophes of the age. Did she, however, think that such ruin was inevitable?

Susannah Young-ah Gottlieb (2011) has taken up this question, stimulated by another sentence in Arendt's opus where she used the word 'ruin'. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt wrote, 'The miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs, from its normal, "natural" ruin is ultimately the fact of natality, in which the faculty of action is ontologically rooted' (p. 247). Gottlieb mines three bodies of work to decipher what Arendt meant by 'ruin': Heidegger's early discussion of ruination, Arendt's critique of *Bildung*, and Arendt's essays about Kafka. She convincingly argues that Arendt's conception of 'ruin' can only be fully understood in the context of her critique of *Bildung*.

For Gottlieb, the first key to unlocking Arendt's conception of ruin is the young Heidegger's early analysis of *Ruinanz*, or ruination (Heidegger, 1921, in Gottlieb). For Heidegger, factical life was always in danger of collapse; ruination consisted in 'attempting to make oneself secure against ruin' (Gottlieb, p. 112). One manifestation of such ruination was *Bildung*. Although *Bildung* appeared to be desirable because the immersion in high humanist culture resulted in upward social or cultural mobility, Heidegger criticised it for '[denying] the facticity of factical life by transforming it into

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[18] Her conception of love in this context was decidedly neither a moralistic nor religious conception of love. Both in her *Denktagebuch* (Arendt 2016) as well as in her Kant lectures (Arendt 1992), her reflections on the phrase 'love of the world' referred to Machiavelli, apparently specifically to his rejection of moralistic or religious conceptions of the political life.

something non-factical' (p. 112) by seeking to stabilise factical life. The proper alternative to ruination was instead 'philosophical interpretation' which allowed 'the sense of collapse to collect and re-collect itself' (p. 112).

Gottlieb argues that Arendt took Heidegger's insight and adapted it in her own analysis of *Bildung*, scattered across her work: from her biography of Rahel Varnhagen, to her book reviews in which she criticised the state of elite culture both in Germany and the United States, and finally in her essays on Kafka. It is in these works where Gottlieb finds the second key to unlocking Arendt's conception of ruin. Arendt's review of Hans Weil's *Emergence of the German Principle of 'Bildung'* (RLC, pp. 24–30) provides one clue to Arendt's thinking. In the essay, Arendt praised Weil for attempting to demystify *Bildung*, but criticised him for ultimately presenting *Bildung* as a natural process involving a human who was 'as a plant growing toward the sun', rather than a process that was both contingent and only possible because of freedom. Gottlieb then moves onto Arendt's essay, 'Franz Kafka, Appreciated Anew' where she further developed this critique of *Bildung*-as-nature. In that essay, Arendt presented *The Trial* as a portrayal of such. In the novel, K.'s path towards becoming cultured was in essence a path of conforming one's self to a predetermined set of norms (as Rahel Varnhagen had also found herself compelled to do), culminating in his own compliant surrender to his execution. In this sense, *Bildung* also led to a ruin similar to the inner ruin that the person seeking *Bildung* sought to escape. Gottlieb quotes in full this sentence from Arendt for emphasis:

> Just as surely as a house built by men according to human laws will fall into ruin as soon as men abandon it, so surely the world fabricated by men and constituted according to human and not natural laws will once again become part of nature, and will be surrendered to catastrophic destruction when man decides to become part of nature himself – a blind but highly precise instrument of natural laws (FKAA, p. 101)

Nature itself is ruinous, and the submission to any 'natural' process of development, though it may have the illusion of progress, ends up in the same ruinous decline which ultimately ends in death.

Gottlieb demonstrates how, in the Kafka essay, Arendt also proposes an alternative to the conception of *Bildung*-as-nature. Arendt portrayed culture – as suggested by its Latin root, *colere* – as the act of tending to a house to prevent the overgrowth of nature from taking over. The image of having to tend connotes the faculty of the will, and Arendt insisted that 'Only salvation, not ruin, comes unexpectedly, for salvation and not ruin depends upon the liberty and the will of men' (*EU*, p. 74).

Gottlieb's analysis provides a context that helps to illuminate the connections that Arendt makes between education, love of the world, and ruin in 'The Crisis of Education'. It becomes clearer how the political catastrophes of the 1930s and 1940s informed Arendt's conception of ruin, and how the conception of education she developed in the 1950s developed from her earlier criticisms of *Bildung*. Although

Gottlieb focuses on Arendt's criticism of *Bildung* as Weil portrayed it, this image of *Bildung* described in natural or organic terms appears elsewhere as well (Kontje 1993, cited by Boes 2006). Arendt did not question the presumption that she believed to be embedded in the ideas surrounding *Bildung,* that simply leaving things be (such as leaving society be or leaving a child to their own devices) would be ruinous. She did question the view that to avoid this ruin required a type of growth and education that itself was imagined to follow a natural process of development, as she claimed was the case with *Bildung.* Ironically, then, while advocates of *Bildung* envisioned it as a path to personal freedom and autonomy, in Arendt's view, it led to the opposite.

Loving the world and children, then, meant a commitment to avoid two kinds of ruin. On the one hand, it meant avoiding the kind of overgrowth that would cause an abandoned house to collapse. Refusing to act in political society could lead to such a collapse and we can speculate that Arendt perhaps had in mind the image of the Hobbesian or Lockean state of nature, in line with her own modernist views of human development evident elsewhere in her work. On the other hand, it also meant avoiding the kind of ruin that might result from abandoning children to a process of 'cultivation' that was itself assumed to be historically inevitable. An educational programme built upon unchallenged ways of thinking, which children would merely be expected to imbibe, would itself be ruinous, as Arendt believed the catastrophes of the 1930s and 1940s laid bare, and as she also hinted at in her warnings in the 1950s about McCarthyism and mass society. In the context of education, love of the world was thus expressed in the decision to take responsibility to *act*, and to allow children to *act*, that is, to exercise one's freedom upon the world and make things new.

This also, then, explains Arendt's emphasis on the role of the teacher in 'The Crisis of Education', a position for which she is often labelled as a 'conservative', and often in a disparaging way. To leave children to their own devices is, in fact, *not* to help them develop their freedom, because such stems from a presumption that children will somehow develop their freedom 'naturally'. Behind her emphasis of the role of the teacher, then, lies her belief that freedom *to act* is cultivated in our relationships and dialogues with others. For the child at school, of particular importance is the intergenerational dialogue between the teacher and the pupil.

8.4   Patrons of Something Rather than Nothing

It is clear from the above exposition that, taking the triangular relationship between the adult, the world, and the child, Arendt was most explicit about love being the attitude of the adult towards the world. It is consistent with her view, however, to also imagine that Arendt hoped that education might lead the child as well to develop a love, or at least an interest, in the common world.

Arendt did not develop her thoughts on what such an education might look like; she was more explicit on what she thought education ought *not* to look like. Nonetheless, we can build on her thought to imagine a kind of education that takes seriously her warnings. I attempt to do this now in the next paragraph, repeating some points I have already elaborated on elsewhere in this thesis, but which I revisit now with a different emphasis.

In terms of content, an Arendtian education would be one that endeavours to show students the world as it is. This might include exposing children to the literature and cultural artifacts that have led to society's self-understanding. At first glance this may look very similar either to *Bildung* or to a conservative education. But because it differs from these both in intent and scope, the way these are introduced to children and even the scope itself might be very different. A conservative education might present such cultural artifacts as the embodiment of values and ideals to which children ought to aspire, ideals that have defined and ought to continue to define the society to which we belong. An Arendtian education would do no such thing. Rather, these cultural artifacts would be presented historically, as an expression of a society's ideals in a particular era, itself contingent. Such literature and culture then, would not be valourised, but presented to children *as it is*. This would also repudiate then any attempts to present a sanitised menu of literature, culture, or history. To understand one's society would require students to reckon with its sins and struggles as much as its victories, the latter of which a conservative education tends to do. Such would then be an education that, in Jaspers' words, teaches 'memories of a lost past' and brings to children 'the wide world **as it is** today' (*Corresp.*, p. 263, emphasis mine).

Doing this does not guarantee that children will love the world. However, the presentation to children of the world beyond their narrow private lives is at least a precondition to developing any such love, and the prerequisite to what Masschelein (2011) has called a 'decentring' and 'de-subjectification' of the self. Such would also be the precondition for any possibility of discussion with others. Being educated about the world would provide, to use Jaspers' words again, an intergenerational and intragenerational 'basis of reliable solidarity' that could allow for discussion and debate rather than a mutual turning-away in the midst of a disagreement.

Such a triangulated understanding of education that equally emphasises the teacher, the student, and the content of education has been written about before (Aldridge 2019). Of particular interest for our purposes is the treatment given by Paul Standish (2014), who arrives at a sketch of such a triangle at the end of his reflection on impudence and *eros* in education. He demonstrates that in the Platonic view of education, natural desires are rescued from impudence or shamefulness by being refined towards beauty, and then goodness and truth. In the *Symposium*, Socrates facilitates this refinement not through brute (impudent) interrogation but through gentle questioning that leaves space for occasional meandering, accepted as part of the process. This process, Standish cautiously

concludes (aware that such reification of the idea might itself be seen as a form of impudence), might be imagined as the movement drawn across and among three points of a triangle, the dynamism of which avoids the 'inflammation' of overemphasising any one of the three points (p. 260). The teacher is emphasised, for example, when she is viewed as the supreme fount of all knowledge, or in an 'educational version of the cult of personality' (p. 260); what is to be learned is overemphasised when, for example, content overshadows students' personal engagement; and the learner is overemphasised when learners' interests hinders them from discovering new objects of study, the value of which they may not yet see. In a footnote, Standish also adds other possible forms of inflammation, such as the overemphasis of two of the three points of the triangle, such as the personal relationship between the student and teacher. All of these inflammations could '[take] the life-blood away from what we might think of as the conversation of education': a conversation that must 'be between people and about something' (p. 261).

Despite his hesitation about ending his paper with such a diagram, the image that Standish proposes gives us the language and metaphor to help us reflect more deeply about Jay's navel-gazing in *Patron Saints of Nothing*. Perhaps, the novel illustrates a type of pathology in which both the learner and the learned are overemphasised, at the expense of the teacher. Although potential teachers abound, Jay misses many opportunities to refine his understanding of Philippine culture because he never pauses long enough to listen to any of them. His educational journey is instigated not by an adult who is motivated by a love for the world, but rather, by himself. On the one hand, this is not surprising and it fits the structure of the story: as a novel written in the loose form of a *Bildungsroman*, such a choice emphasises that Jay is on the cusp of adulthood and therefore still on the cusp of becoming responsible for his own self-education. However, because his educational journey is self-directed – that is, because his questions determine the scope of his education – Jay remains unmindful of his own ignorance.

On the meta-level of the writing of the novel, this is true of the author himself. Although the novel appears to be generally well-researched, there is a glaring mistake when Jay is portrayed to have been required by his uncle to wear a *barong*, traditional men's wear, to regular Sunday Mass. The *barong*, especially the type described in the novel, made of pineapple fibre, is typically only worn during the most formal of occasions, such as one's own wedding. It may be the case that Ribay's own exposure to a Catholic Mass in the Philippines was at a wedding, leading him to mistakenly conclude that the attire worn at weddings was typical Church attire. Whatever the reason for the mistake, it is a glaring example of an error that would easily have been avoided if the author had asked someone more knowledgeable than he about Philippine culture to read through his manuscript text. It is, in other words, the sort of mistake that arises in an educational experience when the role of the teacher is weak. This scene is one that might be characterised as a mild form of 'impudence'.

As we saw in the previous section, the 'ruin' that Arendt feared children would fall into because of the crisis of education primarily had to do with schools failing to help pupils' develop freedom, in the sense that she understood the term. However, my reading above of *Patron Saints of Nothing* demonstrates that an educational journey that is not undertaken with a teacher can have an additional cost. When that educational journey is meant to be a cultural education, such as an education about national identity, the lack of a strong teacher presence to 'induct' the child into the culture can lead to a tokenistic, navel-gazing cultural experience. For Arendt, the type of education that happens in schools ought to be a particular kind of conversation, and a particular kind of friendship: an intergenerational one. The experience and, hopefully, wisdom of the teacher prevents the process of pruning or cultivation from being haphazard, a process that can lead to true refinement. The teacher's attentiveness to the process makes education an act of human will rather than a 'natural' process of inevitability.

8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have anticipated and responded to a possible objection to the approach to teaching national identity that I have recommended in this thesis. I derive this objection from critiques that have been previously made about ways of political thinking that have emphasised communitarian identities. In summary, these criticisms coalesce around the worry that such approaches may lead to an insularity that inhibits political engagement.

Although the approach I am recommending is an educative rather than political one, I have speculated how the same danger might be present in a cultural education such as an education for national identity. Through a reading of the novel *Patron Saints of Nothing*, I have shown that this indeed can be a danger, especially if the student's interest in cultural exploration occurs without the strong presence of a teacher who directs the student's interest to the facts and artifacts of that culture.

I then explored Arendt's concept of *amor mundi* as a possible principle that may be a counter-weight to this. I first drew on Arendt's public and private writings to uncover the potentially educative dimensions of *amor mundi*. To unpack Arendt's explicit mention of *amor mundi* in relation to education, in her essay 'The Crisis in Education', I built on Susannah Young-ah Gottlieb's analysis of her use of the term 'ruin'. By reading Arendt's depiction of *amor mundi* in 'The Human Condition' alongside the texts where she develops her idea of ruin, it becomes evident that Arendt understood *amor mundi* to be a commitment to the principle of freedom to act.

In relation to education, Arendt conceived *amor mundi* to be central to the role of the teacher. *Amor mundi*, a love of the world, motivated an adult to take responsibility for the world, to protect the principle of freedom that remained the constant safeguard against

the possible destruction of the political sphere. This same love of the world, though, motivated an adult to take responsibility for children, i.e., to love children, and by this, she meant, to be their teacher, educating them in a way that nurtured their own freedom as future citizens of this same beloved world, through the intergenerational dialogue that took place in the classroom.

From this reading of Arendt's work, it becomes clearer how *amor mundi* can be understood to be a possible remedy against the danger of insularity in cultural education. Extending Arendt's thoughts on *amor mundi*, we might imagine *amor mundi* to be the hoped-for aim of education as well, not as an outcome to be mechanically achieved, but as an ethos to be introduced and cultivated. The balance of teacher, pupil, and content can prevent a teaching of national identity from becoming a mere navel-gazing exercise.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The key insights of this thesis can be categorised into two. The first is the main claim that I have argued in this thesis, in response to the overarching question research question that has guided my thinking. The second are the additional insights that do not compose the premises of the main argument, but are nonetheless significant enough to indicate future directions of scholarship. I begin this concluding chapter by summarising each of these in turn.

9.1   The main argument of the thesis

From the age of eight up to the time I graduated from secondary school, I studied at a school that, because of the inclusion of Mandarin in its curriculum, catered primarily to students from the ethnic Chinese community, the largest immigrant community in the Philippines. It was there where I was first struck by the incongruence between the Philippine curriculum on national identity and the lived experience of residents of the Philippines. The textbooks we used at the time spoke of 'our ancestors' when referring to pre-colonial inhabitants of the Philippines, even though most of my classmates did not identify any of the people we were reading about in our books as 'their ancestors'. The textbooks described cultural practices that were alien to many of my classmates.

My sensitivity to this grew as I grew older, and it became clearer to me that this incongruence applied not only to descendants of immigrant Filipinos, but also to millions of Filipinos who did not identify with the lowland Christian Filipino way of life described in our textbooks. One textbook, for example, described roast pork as a 'national dish' in spite of the significant percentage of the population who not only did not eat pork for religious reasons, but who saw their religion as a central part of their identity and the identity of the majority population of one entire region of the Philippines. If an entire geographical region objected to eating our supposed 'national dish', was the textbook excluding that region as a part of our so-called 'nation'?

Recollecting these experiences as an adult and novice scholar helped me to see how Philippine education for national identity was driven by an aspiration to build a monocultural nation-state. This disturbed me because of the way that it minimised the multiculturalism of the Filipino people.

At the same time, I was not satisfied with the solutions and alternatives proposed in the academic literature. Most of the discourse about the teaching of nationalism in schools came from Western contexts. I intuited that the way that the issue had been framed, and the solutions that had been proposed were not applicable to the Philippine context.

My aim, then, in this doctoral project was to reimagine the teaching of citizenship education in the Philippines. This first required characterising the way that citizenship education is currently taught, and exploring its historical roots. Thus, in Chapter 2, I gave an account of how ideas about Philippine national identity are perpetuated through schools, and explored, using both primary documentary evidence as well as the secondary literature, the theoretical origins of these ideas. This historical exploration revealed how the racial ideologies of the American colonial period underpinned the initial attempts at identity-making, and how certain aspects of social Darwinism – specifically, the equation of monoculturalism with political progress – were retained throughout the twentieth century, its vestiges visible in the present curriculum and school rituals that seek to inculcate for national identity.

Exposing these historical roots uncovered their contingency: education for national identity had been largely unquestioned in the Philippines, but it did not *have* to be driven by these presumptions. In Chapter 3, then, I explored the existing debates in the literature about the teaching of national identity in schools. These debates, however, have been centred on the West, and do not take into account the postcolonial experience. My aim in Chapter 3 was to destabilise and then nuance many of the key concepts in the discussion of the issue, from a perspective informed by anti-colonial thought. I explored how Homi Bhabha's reflections on postcolonial identity revealed a more ambivalent experience of national identity in the post-colonial context. I also explored how decoloniality theory provided a schema that allowed for thinking about identity in terms of power relations. Engaging with Bhabha's reflection on the creativity of the colonial and post-colonial condition allowed me to rethink the way that national identity is understood. This let me to propose an alternative heuristic to the traditional civic/ethnic dichotomy still frequently used in accounts of national identity, one that sees identity as either fixed or malleable. Together, Chapters 2 and 3 were my attempt to develop a postcolonial lens through which to view the teaching of national identity.

In Chapters 4 to 6, I ventured down a different path of thinking, conversing with Hannah Arendt, with the aim of exploring how questions of cultural identity might be explored in schools. In chapter 4, I explored Arendt's thoughts on cultural belonging, as anchored on her concept of the 'social'. I first performed a genealogy of the concept, noting how she used the term to think through her questions, first about Jewish identity, then about cultural identity more broadly. This exploration revealed that Arendt had a more nuanced, more complicated view of the social than is usually described in the literature. Especially in her reflections about education, Arendt recognised how learning about one's cultural identity can be a preparation for entry into the political realm.

I carried this question into Chapter 5, where I sought to better understand her characterisation of schools as 'social', focusing on her controversial essay 'Reflections on Little Rock'. Reading the essay exegetically, I demonstrated how the concept of the 'social' was an attempt to describe a space that could hold the balance between the desire

to introduce the world to children and prepare them for the political realm, and the need to protect both their vulnerability and their natality. Pondering on Arendt's insights allowed me to begin reimagining the role that the school might play in relation to children's national identity.

In Chapter 6, brought the insights of Chapters 4 and 5 together, considered some of the criticisms of Arendt's position, and demonstrated the continued usefulness of Arendt's insights in thinking about present-day educational issues. After showing how Arendt's ideas are relevant to some of the present-day debates about the common school, I focused more specifically on the potential fruitfulness of using Arendt's concept of the 'social' as she applied it to schools to think about issues of culture and national identity in postcolonial educational settings.

These explorations, through Chapters 2 to 6 of this thesis, laid the foundation for the argument I would make in Chapter 7, which constituted the main claim of this work. In Chapter 7, I emerged from my conversations with postcolonial thinkers and Hannah Arendt, and set out on the task of developing an alternative way of thinking about the teaching of national identity in postcolonial schools. I proposed the idea of 'play' as a way to think about the educational activity of exploring the question of national identity with children, and considered the image of schools as 'cultural playgrounds'. To develop my thoughts on this, I reflected on the word 'play' by bringing French philosopher Barbara Cassin and Filipinist Vicente Rafael into a conversation with each other about the concept of 'mother tongues'. From this, I considered what it might mean to approach the question of national identities 'playfully'. I further clarified this idea in two additional ways. First, I discussed Amartya Sen's approach to cultural identities as a counter-example of the playful approach I had in mind. Secondly, I ended with some examples of what a playful approach to the discussion of national identities might look like in a Philippine classroom.

The penultimate chapter of this thesis was my attempt to consider a possible objection to the framework I had proposed. I anticipated an objection similar to a common criticism of identitarian politics, that such forms of political thinking create a sense of insularity that inhibits political engagement. I speculated how the same danger might be true in the approach to teaching national identity I had proposed, and I imagined how this might happen through a reading of the young adult novel *Patron Saints of Nothing*. I then set up a recommendation that Arendt's principle of *amor mundi* be used by practitioners as a remedy to such insularity. I did this by first exploring the meaning of *amor mundi*, focusing on its educative potential, through an intertextual reading of Arendt's public and private writings. This led to the insight that the educative approach I have proposed ought to be guided by a principle of *amor mundi* that equally emphasises the guiding role of the teacher, the freedom of the student, and the reality of the world that is the object of intergenerational discussion in the classroom.

The 'outcome', or more properly, the arrival point, of this journey is an approach to teaching national identity that addresses my misgivings about the civics education I received as a child. Central to the approach I have proposed is the understanding that national identity is continually being constructed. Teachers can lead children to understand the malleability of national identity by introducing them to how cultural identities have been constructed in the past. Through an intergenerational dialogue in the classroom, teachers can also encourage pupils to imagine how they might wish to shape national identity in the future, and to imagine the possible consequences of these acts of shaping.

The approach to teaching national identity that I have proposed is novel in two ways. First, it uncouples questions about the teaching of national identity from the question of the desirability of patriotism. The identification with a nation is understood to be a phenomenon that children already undergo to different degrees, and not necessarily in a way that is associated only with feelings of patriotism. The closest approaches to this one have been the approaches suggested by (Hand 2011a) , which is to teach patriotism as a controversial issue, and (McDonough & Cormier 2013), which is to teach *about* the phenomenon of nationalism and the skill to distinguish between their legitimate and illegitimate forms. Neither of these approaches, however, have centred the potentially ambivalent or negative feelings that people may have even towards a nation with which they strongly identify. By beginning from a postcolonial perspective, in which such feelings are more pervasive, the approach I have proposed has highlighted this.

Secondly, by emphasising the malleability of national identity, the approach I have proposed provides a space for pupils to reflect on how they might participate in shaping national identity. In this sense, my proposed approach is underpinned by an Arendtian understanding of education, one which introduces children to the facts and artifacts of history while also protecting the freedom of the next generation to imagine the political community differently.

9.2 Additional Insights

My close engagement with a variety of texts to help me think through my main question has led me to arrive at new interpretations of familiar texts, and novel ways of framing old debates. In this section, I summarise the ways that I hope my work may contribute to two additional areas of scholarship, Arendt studies and national identity studies.

Themes in the Works of Arendt

My main philosophical interlocutor in this thesis has been Hannah Arendt. In chapters 4, 5, and 6, I have engaged critically with her works, seeking to unlock some of her more cryptic discussions about education. Arendt objected to systematic presentations of

philosophical thought, preferring an approach to thinking that was like 'the wind', constantly unsettling and de-solidifying concepts. To interpret her thought, Arendt scholars typically find that they have to 'dive for pearls', dipping in and out of her various works to arrive at a deeper understanding of her main themes.

In this thesis, I have adopted a similar approach in my engagement with Arendt, but I have also been guided by a biographical and historical principle, the recognition that her thinking about these ideas changed over time as she herself responded to the different events going on around her or the events of her own life. Thus, in each of the chapters where I engaged with her works, I did not seek to remove any of her writings from the context in which they were written; rather, I sought to deepen my understanding of these works by looking at other writings – both public and private, including unpublished archival documents – written prior to or around the same time as the text I was focusing on.

In Chapter 4, I applied this approach to Arendt's concept of 'the social'. My aim in this chapter was specifically to understand what she meant by the 'social' in her 1950s educational essays, 'Reflections on Little Rock' and 'The Crisis in Education'. To this end, I wove together a genealogy of the concept in her work, beginning from its appearance in one of her earliest book-length works, the biography of Rahel Varnhagen (published in the 1950s but mostly written the 1930s), and including not just her published works since then, but also her lecture notes and classroom syllabi. Through a careful reading of these works, I concluded that Arendt found that the phenomenon of the 'social' manifested in four ways: in 'good society', in 'cultural identity', in 'mass society' and in 'the social'. Although the overarching argument in my work focused on the third of these four manifestations of the social, by enumerating the different manifestations of the social as Arendt saw them in her works from the 1930s to the 1950s, I hope that this reading helps future Arendt scholars who may also be interested in exploring other dimensions of the theme in the rest of her *opus*.

Building on the previous chapter, Chapter 5 of my thesis focused on Arendt's characterisation of the educational realm as 'social' in the essay 'Reflections on Little Rock'. This chapter offered a new interpretation of this controversial essay, highlighting the twin tensions that saw in the schooling. First, she viewed the school as a space that ought to prepare children for the political world while also protecting them from the difficulties of political struggle. Second, she viewed the school as a space in which teachers ought to introduce children to the world without hindering their natality and spontaneity. In this chapter, I demonstrated how Arendt's characterisation of schools as 'social' was a response to these two tensions.

In this thesis, I have shown how the characterisation of schools as an 'in-between' space has been a useful heuristic for addressing my own main research question about the teaching of national identity. However, this characterisation of schools may be helpful to think through other educational issues in which such tensions also appear. One example

of such an issue is the phenomenon of student political protests, in the face of which teachers and school leaders may feel torn. Should teachers support student-led political activism? Should they draw on their own adult experience to instruct them on how to most constructively engage with the political issues about which students are passionate? Or should they dissuade students from participating in movements where they might be harmed? Which the best answers are to these questions are likely to differ across contexts, but Arendt's articulation of the tensions that are at play in such situations may be helpful in any theoretical analysis of these questions.

In Chapter 8, I once again engaged exegetically with Arendt's works, this time with reference to her notion of *amor mundi*. In this chapter, my aim in engaging with her works was to decipher her description in 'The Crisis of Education' of love of the world as a central principle of education. To this end, I pearl-dove once again through her public and private writings of the period, and extended the insights of other Arendt scholars. I came to the conclusion that the theme of *amor mundi* was closely tied to Arendt's understanding of the world as a site of intergenerational dialogue, such as that which occurs between a teacher and a student. This insight helped me to imagine how *amor mundi* might be a helpful principle to prevent cultural education from fostering insularity. This insight can be helpful in future scholarship on Arendt's educational theory as well.

Postcolonial Disruptions of Discourses on National Identity

Another set of insights that I have arrived at has to do with discourses on national identity. One set of insights is specifically about Philippine citizenship education. Adding to Milligan's (2005) previous work that looked at the racial discourse surrounding American educational policy specifically in the Moro Province, in this thesis I looked at educational policy in the rest of the Philippine archipelago as well. In so doing, I drew out the racial-ideological roots that have underpinned Philippine citizenship education since the turn of the 20ᵗʰ century, shaped by the ideological thinking that motivated the American colonisation and governance of the Philippines. This gave a historical-ideological explanation for the desire, evident in the Philippine curriculum and Philippine school practices, to construct the state as a monocultural rather than a multicultural one. This insight might be useful to future policymakers and curriculum-writers of citizenship education in the Philippines, as well as Philippine studies scholars and scholars of Philippine citizenship education.

Another set of insights has to do with the discourse about national identity, both among philosophers of education, as well as in the broader field of nationalism studies. In Chapter 3, I enumerated some of the ways that a postcolonial starting point challenges some of the presumptions that underlie educational discussions about patriotic education. Each of these questions that I raised may be taken up further by scholars working on those fields. In the same chapter, I also proposed a heuristic for evaluating the portrayal of national identity: one that identifies whether national identity is being

portrayed as *fixed* or *malleable*. This heuristic may be helpful, not just to philosophers of education, but also to other scholars who are thinking about nationalism more broadly.

9.3 Limitations

In this work, I have focused mainly on reimagining the teaching of national identity in post-colonial contexts. There are a number of limitations to my scholarly approach, and these limitations also indicate some possible areas for future exploration.

In this thesis, I have engaged with Arendt's thought in a fairly unusual way, conversing with her in an attempt to think through issues related to multiculturalism, national identities, and postcolonial conditions in education. This move was unusual because, as I acknowledged in the introduction to these thesis, these themes are not plain in Arendt's thought. Nowhere in her work did she discuss all of these themes together. In addition, as alluded to in Chapter 7, she herself, especially in the latter part of her career, came to be increasingly opposed to a political approaches that were focused on group identities, preferring instead to focus on the plurality of individual members of a political community, rather than the plurality of *groups* of citizens. Because of this, Arendt's work provides neither thorough nor systematic accounts of these themes that allow them to directly address the questions that motivated this thesis.

This limitation has had an implication on the approach that I have had to take in this thesis. Rather than drawing ideas from Arendt that either she already clearly enunciated or that have since been clearly enunciated in the secondary literature, I have had to engage exegetically and intertextually with Arendt's work to draw out the reasons for her description of school as 'social'. Nonetheless, despite its challenges, this approach has proven to be fruitful. The need to make sense of ideas that were vague in her writing uncovered the different considerations that she was trying to balance, which in turn illuminated the tensions of my research question. In other words, although Arendt's work offered no packaged answers to my question, her thinking helped to clarify the different issues underlying my question.

A second limitation of the thesis has to do with the context that I have chosen to focus on, the post-colonial context. The post-colonial condition is the reality for most of the countries in the world. Nonetheless, in delimiting the scope of my study as such, I did not in this work explore the applicability of these ideas to other contexts. This might be one direction for future research. Two obvious contexts where these ideas might be applicable are in settler colonial contexts, where anti-colonial struggles are ongoing, and settings with minority immigrant populations, such as is the case in much of Europe. The premises that I have built my framework on, such as the ambiguity of national identity, may be evaluated in terms of whether they are also true of such contexts, or particular groups of people within these contexts. If so, it may be the case that with some

adaptation, these frameworks may be useful in these settings as well. In relation to this, the implications that my insights might have on the dominant populations within these contexts might also be explored. As the anonymous reviewer of a journal manuscript I submitted based on this thesis asked me: what implications might my insights have on the teaching of national identity to children who identify with coloniser nations? This might be another fruitful direction for future scholarship on this topic.

A third limitation is the theoretical nature of my approach. In this thesis, I have recommended a framework for teaching national identity in post-colonial contexts, described the principles underlying this framework, and sketched out some examples of what such an approach might look like. The work remains to be done, however, to create actual curricula and learning materials based on these ideas, implement them and evaluate them. I hope in the future to continue engaging in conversations with curriculum framers, teachers, and other educational practitioners – as I have already begun to do – to explore these directions further.

9.4 Epilogue (London, 2021)

As I write these words, I find myself stranded in England because of a global pandemic. Our family originally planned to return to the Philippines in June 2020, in time for my older son to begin his first year of secondary school at his father's *alma mater*. Instead, we found ourselves faced with travel bans and cancelled flights, as the Philippines closed its borders in the hopes of preventing additional cases from reaching its shores. Amidst the uncertainty, we extended the lease on our north London flat for another year, enrolled my son at a local comprehensive secondary school, and a few months later, applied to extend my husband's leave to remain in the United Kingdom for another two and a half years. What was originally going to be a two-year-long British adventure for my children extended at least to three, and with each month that passes it is becoming more and more possible that my children will spend a significant part of their childhood here.

Uprooted from the only home they had previously known, my children are now starting to negotiate their hybrid national identities, just as their mother did as a child. My younger son, who has by now spent half his life here, claims to speak 'British' at school and 'English' (by which he means, Philippine English) at home. My older son loves his school here and has fast friends, but occasionally speaks wistfully of the path he did not travel, the high school experience he was meant to have. Both of them are slowly beginning to forget a lot of the Tagalog vocabulary they knew as younger children. But both of them often say, unprompted, 'I miss the Philippines', a country that, at least for now, they still think of as home.

As a researcher and novice philosopher of education, I do hope that the insights that I have arrived can nudge scholarship in a different direction and affect the way that

practitioners think about the teaching of national identity in schools. But as a mother, I hope that the words I have stumbled upon in these pages give me the language to support my children as they shape their own ways of being both British and Filipino.

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Appendix: List of Publications

Material in various chapters has been published elsewhere or incorporated into publications. The following is a list of these publications.

Azada-Palacios, Rowena A. 2019. 'Arendt and teacher authority'. In Peters, M. A. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Teacher Education*. Springer. doi:10.1007/978-981-13-1179-6_17-1

Azada-Palacios, Rowena. 2021a. Schools as social spaces: Towards an Arendtian consideration of multicultural education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education.* doi:10.1111/1467-9752.12577

Azada-Palacios, Rowena A. 2021b. Hybridity and national identity in post-colonial schools. *Educational Philosophy and Theory.* doi:10.1080/00131857.2021.1920393