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## *The Council of Europe's Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture: Hope for democracy or an allusive Utopia?*

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## Abstract

Democracies around the world are increasingly polarized along political and cultural lines. To address these challenges, in 2016, the Council of Europe (CoE) produced a model of twenty competences for democratic culture. In 2018, this same model became the basis of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). The RFCDC provides pedagogical instructions to help implement these competences. Together, I call this set of materials "the Framework".

This thesis begins with the premise that utopia has long played an important role in the way power is maintained or resisted in democratic education. It questions the assumption that democratic culture can be cultivated instrumentally through policy-based competences without imposing power on subjects and views this assumption to be utopian. It thus excavates the potential utopian ideals at play in the Framework using 'hidden utopias' as a conceptual lens and method, which draws inspiration from the theories of Michèl Foucault, Ernst Bloch and Ruth Levitas.

It investigates how using 'hidden utopias' as a theoretical lens might facilitate a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of the Framework, how implicit utopias might be at play, how this could be problematic and how these theories might shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical contexts. The contribution of this thesis is to make visible potential utopias at the heart of the Framework. It suggests that making implicit utopias visible in democratic education can help educators and learners engage with these discourses in critical and innovative ways and think beyond them.

# The Council of Europe's Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture:

# Hope for democracy or an allusive Utopia?

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## Statement of Copywrite

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# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| ECHR | European Convention on Human Rights |
| ECtHR | European Court of Human Rights |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development |
| PISA | Program for International Student Assessment |
| RFCDC | Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture |
| UDHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights |
| UNCRC | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |

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# Dedication

To the memory of my late father, Jerry whose political perspective was quite different from mine, but his utopian aspirations were not. He taught me to love history, to take an active interest in politics, to spend time in forests and to always be true to oneself.

I also dedicate this thesis to my mother Pam who has always believed in me and gifted me with a lifelong passion for learning. I have tried to keep their utopias in mind while writing this thesis as well as the utopias of those who have helped me see the world in an unexpected way.

# Chapter 1: The "Crisis" of Democratic Culture and the CoE Framework

Democracy around the world is increasingly said to be 'in crisis' (Freedom House, 2022; Waks et al., 2021) There is growing distrust over democratic processes, distrust in traditional gatekeepers of knowledge, increased suspicion of those who are politically and culturally 'other' and increased support for authoritarian solutions (Tourbier, 2021; Varieties of Democracy Institute, 2022). Populists and political opportunists increasingly sow doubt over electoral processes and configure political disagreement as a 'culture war' between political camps (Hunter, 2001). At the same time 'culture' and 'identity' have become discursive tools for dividing democracies into rivalling factions of 'them' and 'us' (Hunter, 2001; Laclau, 2018; Mouffe, 2018a; Mudde, 2004). To this end, researchers have noted a general shift towards polarization in liberal democracy's worldwide (Carothers T & O'Donohue A, 2020). While polarization is not new to democracy and differs with respect to how it is expressed in different contexts, the trend towards polarization has been exacerbated with the rise of the internet, social media, online chat forums, politicized journalism, rising economic disparity and growing tensions between the West and Russia over the wars in Ukraine and Israel. Thus, in what might seem to be a timely response to these trends, the Council of Europe (CoE) has produced a conceptual model of twenty competences to help educators and learners navigate the growing diversity and complexity of modern liberal democracy.

The competences were first unveiled as a conceptual model in the publication entitled *Competences for Democratic Culture: Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (See: https://rm.coe.int/16806ccc07). In 2018, the competences were expanded into the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC). Together, the model and associated materials provide detailed guidance to policymakers and educators for cultivating the competences the CoE says, 'need be acquired by learners if they are to participate effectively a culture of democracy and live peaceably together with others in culturally diverse democratic societies' (Barrett & et. al, 2016, p.9). This thesis seeks to unpack these ideals in light of the growing polarization through the conceptual lens of 'hidden utopias'. It contends that implicit utopias help to shape what democratic culture is imagined to be, who its ideal citizen is and what kind of future is desirable. It further suggests that making 'hidden utopias' visible can help educators and learners engage with these discourses in critical and innovative ways and potentially think beyond them.

The CDC Model, viewable below, is partitioned into sets of values, skills, attitudes, knowledge, and critical understanding, which in turn are intended to be 'teachable, measurable and assessable'(Barrett, 2022).



**Values**
- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

**Attitudes**
- Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices
- Respect
- Civic-mindedness
- Responsibility
- Self-efficacy
- Tolerance of ambiguity

**Competences for Democratic Culture**

- Autonomous learning skills
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Skills of listening and observing
- Empathy
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- Co-operation skills
- Conflict-resolution skills

**Skills**

- Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability

**Knowledge and critical understanding**

*Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture*

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In 2018, the above competences were expanded into the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* or "RFCDC" (Council of Europe, 2018)(See: https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture). The intent of the RFCDC is to further help policymakers implement the competences outlined in the above CDC Model in educational settings. The RFCDC spans three volumes:

**Volume 1** explains the 'context, concepts and model'. (See: https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/rfcdc). While the CDC Model is described again in this volume, the reader is directed to use the 2016 publication for more information on its development, rational and technical

details (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.11). This makes the original 2016 CDC Model an invaluable resource for investigating the motivating factors and logic which led to the development of the overall Framework.

**Volume 2** identifies 'descriptors and competences' to support curriculum planning, teaching, learning and assessment of competences (Council of Europe, 2018b) (See: https://rm.coe.int/prems-008418-gbr-2508-reference-framework-of-competences-vol-2-8573-co/16807bc66d).

**Volume 3** provides 'guidance for implementation'. (See: https://rm.coe.int/prems-008518-gbr-2508-reference-framework-of-competences-vol-3-8575-co/16807bc66e) This volume includes advice on curriculum planning, pedagogy, assessment, teacher education, promoting the 'whole-school approach', and on 'building resilience to radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism' (Council of Europe, 2018c).

I refer to the 2016 publication as the 'CDC Model' and to the 2018 guidelines to help implement the competences as the 'RFCDC'. I use the term 'Framework' to refer to these publications together as a comprehensive whole. The CoE suggests that the driving force behind current threats to democracy stems from 'increased migration, growing diversity, the boom in information technology, [and] globalisation [which] are having a profound effect on people's identities' (Barrett, et al, 2016, p.7). While the CDC Model states that democratic institutions, laws and political processes are first necessary for a democracy to survive, the CoE asserts institutional structures are 'not enough'. What is needed, they contend, is a functioning 'culture of democracy'(Barrett & et. al, 2016; Council of Europe, 2018a).

To this end, the Framework is presented as an empirically supported, and presumably 'neutral' guide to help policymakers and educators maintain and/or cultivate a 'culture of democracy' and it is intended to be usable within all levels of education (Barrett & et. al, 2016; Council of Europe, 2018a). The question is whether the Framework offers policymakers, educators and learners a useful guide for moving beyond the trend towards polarization or whether there are utopian ideals underpinning its assumptions which require further scrutiny?

Depending on one's background and position in society, the stories we accept regarding how the present came to be and the future one desires can place citizens and non-citizens at a

advantage or disadvantage in modern liberal democracies depending on one's background. As Edward Said observes, the West constructed 'the other' so that it could imagine itself into being (Said, 2019). Said writes, 'notions of modernity, enlightenment and democracy are by no means simple and agreed-upon concepts that one does or does not find'. Rather, he explains, it begins with a notion that there are people over there who are 'not like us', who lack an appreciation of 'our values' (Said, 2019 p.xii). In other words, the West constructed its conception of self by extracting what was seen to be aberrant, primitive, savage, feminine, non-rational or 'other'. As Horkheimer and Adorno observe, the Western conception of self is deeply enmeshed in the myths of the Enlightenment, which privilege liberation from ignorance and the capacity to reason above all else. They argue that by embracing these myths, important aspects of the human experience are overlooked, while the tools of science and reason enable Western thinkers to dominate those facets of life which are excluded from this self-conception (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002).

In Foucault's view, the political zeitgeist we find ourselves in owes its present form to multiple junctures in history where other possible visions of society might have emerged (Bourbeau, 2018; Koopman, 2008, 2013; Tamboukou, 1999). Moreover, in Foucault's telling, history is always constructed to the advantage of the victor (Foucault, 2020). The stories we accept about how the present came to be, shape what is deemed to be possible and desirable in the social and political realm (Foucault, 2020).It is through such narratives that power is produced and reproduced and subjects come to monitor and 'govern' their behaviour to play their role in the further production of these discourses (Foucault, 2007, 2020; Lorenzini, 2018a). Foucault uses the terms 'to govern' and 'to conduct' interchangeably in order to convey the idea that power does not merely flow downwards from the state to subjects, but rather it flows through discourses which are transferred from person to person and normalized in institutions and society. He sometimes describes these discourses as 'regimes of truth' to refer to how subjects come to govern themselves according to the logic of these 'truths' (Cremonsini, 2016; Foucault, 1991c).

The CoE's Framework presents an interesting point of departure for philosophical inquiry in that it has been produced by drawing from 101 'conceptual schemes' with the aim of cultivating democratic and intercultural competence among learners. It was circulated amongst 'academic experts, educational practitioners and policy makers' and was 'strongly endorsed' and approved by the Council of Europe (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.10). This makes it an exemplary

document regarding the dominant conception of how education for democratic culture is conceptualized among academics and policy-makers across the 46 member states of the CoE.

The goal of this thesis is to problematise the Framework within the present context of heightened political polarisation through the conceptual lens of 'hidden utopias'. The concept of 'hidden utopias' was born out of the idea that implicit utopias are proliferating within the present context of rising populism and authoritarianism(Tourbier, 2021). My assertion is that implicit utopias can be used to govern subjectivities and political allegiances so long as it remains implicit or 'hidden'. I strive throughout this thesis to make visible any utopias, which might implicitly be at play in the Framework by considering the deep history which made Framework possible in the first place by using Foucault's theories on the history of the present and Western modernity (Foucault, 1986, 1990, 1991a, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2008, 2020; Foucault & Smith, 2002). Crucially, the intent of this thesis is not to dismiss the potential benefits of using the Framework in a critical or even emancipatory manner. Rather, its intent is to provide the means for educators and learners to see how these narratives my reproduce relationships of power and thereby undermine the Framework's intent of producing autonomous, free-thinking subjects.

The conception of utopia used in this thesis is drawn from Ernst Bloch (1880-1959) and Ruth Levitas. For Bloch, utopia emerges out of the desire for what is "not yet" in the world and the drive to fulfil this desire (Bloch, 1986; Levitas, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2017). For Levitas, whose work is inspired by Bloch, "utopia is the expression of the desire for a better way of being or of living, and as such is braided through human culture….utopia in this sense is analogous to a quest for grace which is both existential and relational" (Levitas, 2013 pp.xii-xiii).

Defining utopia in this manner differs significantly from notions, which understand utopia to be merely a blueprint for society, as leading to a totalitarian state, or those which understand utopia to be merely a literary genre (Levitas, 2010, 2013). Levitas argues that once utopia is conceived as the desire for a better way of living, it can become a useful analytic tool for engaging with different visions of society(Levitas, 2013). In other words, rather than merely describing discourses containing utopian ideals, Levitas strives to unpack how utopias function in social reality. Thus, it matters more what these utopias do or do not do and their potential effects than their actual form (as a literary genre, etc.) (Atanasova, 2021; Levitas, 2010, 2013). The section which follow: (i) provide a conception of democracy and democratic culture, (ii)

distinguish ideology, utopia and 'hidden utopias' from one another, (iii) describe my motivation and positionality, (iv) identify my research questions and benefits of this research, and (v) outline my structure.

## 1.1 Conceptualising democracy and democratic culture

Before delving into a critique of the Framework, it is important to provide a conceptual definition of democracy and democratic culture. Yet, doing so reveals just how complex and fraught with internal tensions these terms are. This section seeks to unpack these terms by (i) highlighting the tensions and contradictions that helped birth modern representative democracy, (ii) distinguishing between minimalist, deliberative, agonistic, and 'democracy to come' conceptions, (iii) assessing the CoE conception of democracy and finally (iv) by providing my own conception.

### 1.1.1   Tensions and contradictions that helped birth modern representative democracy

The concept of democracy originated in the unique context of the Ancient city-state of Athens from around 508/507 BCE to 404 BCE. Etymologically, the two terms combined were intended to characterize a form of government where it was presumed that it was 'the people' (demos) who ruled (kratos). Yet, even in its original context, 'the people' excluded foreigners, slaves, women and children from participating in government (Ober, 2011a, 2011b).Thus, from the very the outset, democracy promised an idealized vision of society that it never fully delivered.

For much of Western history, the ancient form of democracy associated with Athens was treated either as an antiquated concept only applicable to a specific historic/geographic context and not applicable to nation-states or it was held up as an example of what should be avoided (Innes & Philp, 2015). Innes and Philip note how in the eighteenth century, 'democracy' was an obscure term known only to those with a classical education and typically associated with Ancient Greece and Rome. Rather than implying a specific set of institutions and practices, 'democracy' at this time was associated with excesses and tendencies that were by and large characterised as negative. This includes:

> *"Crowd activity; popular pressure on government; demagogues bidding for crowd support; impulsive politics; coercion or punishment of those who opposed the popular will; and in general tumult and instability… perhaps culminating in the emergence of a strong man who, either in the name of the people or in the name of order, might attempt to impose himself as an all-powerful leader, a tyrant or despot"* (Innes & Philp, 2015 p.1 ).

While the CoE depicts democratic culture in a positive light within the Framework, Ancient Greek philosophical elites were by and large critical of their democratic institutions and the culture it produced(Ober, 2011b, 2011a). Plato described the direct democracy of Ancient Athens as, 'a pleasing, lawless, various sort of government, distributing equality to equals and unequal's alike'. As he described it, 'democracy' was something which demanded no special training or qualification beyond, 'the profession of patriotism' (Plato, n.d. p.132-133). It was, in part, against his distaste for the Athenian democracy that Plato sought to imagine a better society in *The Republic*.   In Plato's view, governing was an art that demanded aquiring skills of the highest order (Jones, 1953; Plato, n.d.).

In *the Politics*, Aristotle took a more pragmatic, 'scientific' approach to government, refusing to commit to a universal ideal (Aristotle, 1992). He surmised that what works in one context may not be applicable to the next.  Indeed, he was one of the first to openly acknowledge the totalitarian 'seeds' in Plato's utopia (Claeys, 2020 p.200).However, Aristotle too invoked ideals that might be described as 'utopian'. For Aristotle, the ideal polity should provide an environment where virtue can thrive so that citizens might live a happy or '*eudaimonious'* life. Saunders explains:

> *'the best constitution, in order to produce happiness, must consist of and be operated by men who are 'utilizing virtue' and are therefore 'sound'…[in terms of] 'nature, habit and reason'* (Saunders in Aristotle, 1992 p.426).

Aristotle was similarly sceptical of democracy's ability to produce a flourishing and just society. However, in contrast to Plato, he suggested that democracy might be workable in instances where democracy's natural inclination towards 'extremes' were kept in check(Aristotle, 1992). Aristotle identifies four different levels of democracies with each level becoming increasingly extreme: First there are forms of democracy where members of the

citizenry are effectively equal, and the poor do not possess more advantages than the wealthy. Aristotle's fear was that democracy privileged the poor who were larger in number and had little time for leisure and personal development. For Aristotle leisure time was essential to cultivate the virtue and sensibilities citizens needed to become 'good' and 'virtuous' citizens. Second, according to Aristotle, there are democracies where property serves as a qualification for office. This similarly limits the ability of those lacking in financial means to participate in governance. Third, there are democracies where only those who consistently follow the law can participate. In these democracies, the law rules. Finally, at the most extreme end, there are democracies where the multitude rules, but not the law. This is the form of democracy that Aristotle believes is most vulnerable to being swayed by demagogues. By contrast, Aristotle views the first form to be stable, particularly if applied to agrarian societies. This is because he suggests that in agrarian societies the peasantry would be least likely to exercise their right to participate in democratic life (Aristotle, 1992 pp. 367-371).

In essence, while Aristotle did not outright dismiss democracy, he worried that a civic culture lacking in 'virtue' could veer towards extremes and be easily swayed by demagogues. He thus recommended balancing democracy with other forms of government including oligarchy or monarchy in a mixed constitution (Aristotle, 1992 pp. 372-375). He further suggested that it might be necessary to provide financial support to those in need stating that, 'the duty of the true democrat is to see that the population is not destitute, for destitution is a cause of a corrupt democracy' (1992, p.375). In this sense, Aristotle was one of the first to argue that a healthy democracy depended on general prosperity among the citizenry as a whole and that economic disparity could lead to extremes. However, he also betrayed an elitism that would bolster debates among aristocrats during the American and French revolutions in his claims that a presumed lack of 'virtue' among the poor might make them unsuitable for participating in matters of government.

For much of the two millennia following the end of democracy in Ancient Athens, it was not Athenian democracy which was invoked when imagining alternatives to hereditary rule, but Republics. Machiavelli is perhaps better known for his advice to Princes that rulers must be skilled in the art of deception, willing to adopt immoral behaviours to retain power and use whatever means necessary to respond to threats to authority (Machiavelli, 2011). However, this was only one the first form of government that Machiavelli addressed. Machiavelli acknowledged that there were two possible forms of government in his day: principalities and

republics. While *the Prince* was Machiavelli's attempt to theorize what skills for governing are appropriate for Principalities his second work, *The Discourses*, represents Machiavelli's attempt to provide a theory for Republics (Machiavelli, 2003). It is this second work which has proven to be a generative resource for scholars of republicanism as well as scholars of agonism or populism (Skinner, 1991; Vatter, 2012). In *The Discourses*, Machiavelli so much as admits that popular government was in fact preferable to governance by princes if it could be achieved and maintained (2003, p.256-257). He states that whereas:

> *'the brutalities of the masses are directed against those whom they suspect of conspiring against the common good; the brutalities of a prince against those whom he suspects of conspiring against his own good.* (Machiavelli, 2003 p.256-257).

Vatter (2012) notes there is much debate amongst scholars as to whether or not Machiavelli was interested in promoting Republics *per se* or promoting a form of populism where, 'the plebs achieves hegemony with the populous while wrestling control of the state from 'wealthy' elites' (Vatter, 2012 p.242). However, Machiavelli is widely acknowledged to have founded the modern science of politics (Viroli, 1991). A key aspect of this contribution was his sceptics of human nature. Machiavelli broke with the Ancient belief that politics is aimed at 'preserving the good community' and introducing the ideas that, 'the goal of politics is the pursuit of power and that the 'political man' cannot be the 'good man of the ancients'(Viroli, 1991 p.143). He thus argued that popular government could only flourish under the following 'extraordinary' convergence of conditions:

> *(i)[t]hat there is respect for custom and tradition; (ii) that towns dominate the country; (iii) that a large middle class exists; (iii) that popular power is institutionalized; that civic spirit or virtù has not decayed; and (vi) that there is knowledge of these things"* (Crick in Machiavelli, 2003 p.43).

In other words, a society's 'civic spirit or virtù' played an key role in its survival. What these virtues actually consisted of in Machiavelli's vision is less clear. Pocock contends that this spirit refers to a form of 'militarization of citizenship' that depends on the republic's 'ability to conquer '(Pocock, 2016). In Pocock's interpretation, 'the republic can be morally and civilly virtuous in itself only if it is lion and fox, man and beast, in its relationship with other peoples' (p. 213). A citizen, in this view, must beastly and cunning in battle in order to be deemed

worthy to participate in civic culture at home. By contrast, Clark (2013) argues that while Machiavelli admired Rome for its efforts to contain power through the rule of law and by promoting a civic spirt to support it, his ultimate aim to make visible how such loyalties could potentially place republican liberty in jeopardy (M. T. Clarke, 2013). In Clark's view, Machiavelli's goal was not to promote a civic spirit that would govern every aspect of citizen behaviour. Instead, it was to develop a new portrait of citizenships where it might sometimes be necessary to be subversive when personal mores come into conflict with those of the society at large (Clarke, 2013 pp.317 & 328). To fully engage with these debates is beyond the scope of this thesis. What matters here is the influential role that Machiavelli's scepticism of human nature played in the development of modern representative government and the continued tension between the republican vision where only elites ruled on behalf of the people and the more 'democratic' vision which would extend participation in governing to the broader population (Vatter, 2012). As Vatter notes, at the heart of this debate is a fundamental 'quarrel between populism and republicanism' and it a debate which continues to be relevant to debates concerning representative government to this day.

For Hobbes, democracy was little better than anarchy. This is a point he sought to emphasize in his suggestion that in the state of nature all are equal and free, but that this freedom led to an all-out war of every man against every man (Hobbes & Brooke, 2017 pp.100-105). In this dystopian depiction of mankind in the state of nature, rule by the people and for the people was perceived by Hobbes to be a recipe for civil war(Foucault, 2020). Hobbes surmised that any rational individual would naturally agree to give up their freedom to an absolute or groups of sovereigns for the sake of security. This idea forms the foundation of Hobbes social contract and it will become particularly relevant as we bring in Foucault's theories of how absolutism continues to operate in modern liberal democracies despite claims to promoting freedom and equality (Foucault, 2020).

Locke is considered to be a foundational thinker in the development of modern representative democracy, but he described the form of government he was promoting as a commonwealth. He writes, 'By commonwealth, I must be understood all along to mean, not a democracy, or any form of government, but any independent community, which the Latins signified by the word civitas, to which the word which best answers in our language, is commonwealth…'(Locke, 2018 p.119). A key feature of this conception of democracy was the right to property. Locke believed that it was humankind's 'providential duty' to turn wild nature

into property by applying his labour to it. It is what Purdy calls the 'providential utopia'. Purdy argues persuasively that it was through Locke's providential vision that property became permanently linked to modern conceptions of democracy (Purdy, 2015).

In Locke's view, leaving nature in a pristine state as it had been by Native Americans in the Americas was akin to leaving wilderness to 'waste' (Purdy, 2015 pp. 25 & 51). Since indigenous populations had not actively turned nature into 'property' in this manner, they were presumed by Locke's theories to have forfeited any rights to the land (Locke, 2018; McNally, 1989; Purdy, 2015; Richardson, 2011). Locke furthermore provided justification for slavery by describing it as, 'the state of war continued, between a lawful conqueror and a captive' that can only be ended by those who had lawfully gained the rights of the captor (Locke, 2018 p.83). Slaves thus had no rights unless by the grace of their master, they were granted freedom. Women were simply assumed to be naturally dependent on men. Locke's conception of a commonwealth helped to bolster calls for liberty in the American and French revolution, while justifying the continued exclusion of indigenous peoples, slaves, freed black men and women. Purdy explains,

> *The irony of this great expansion of democracy was that it drew a hard line between, on the one hand, the white men who were citizens of the new Unites States and, on the other, the Native Americans, enslaved people, and free blacks whom the new country shut out* (Purdy, 2015 p.67)

Rousseau was similarly sceptical of democracy, describing it as a form of government suited to Gods and not men. He explained that the ideal of democracy created a conflict of interest between those who make the laws, those who are tasked to actually implement the laws and private interest (Manin, 1997 p.75; Rousseau, 2014). Rousseau writes, '[i]n the strict sense of the term, a genuine democracy never has existed, and never will exist…it is unimaginable that the people could remain constantly assembled to attend public affairs, and it is readily apparent that it could not establish commissions to do so without the form of administration changing'(2014 pp.213). For Rousseau then, the best form of government was a Republic. A key theme was that humankind was basically good in the state of nature, but that it was institutions and modern society which corrupts that nature. Thus, rather than striving to imagine better institutions, Rousseau theorized that this liberty might be restored on the concept of 'the general will'(Doyle, 2002). Doyle notes that while this conception was 'highly theoretical', it

came to be associate with the 'will of the majority' and came to produce its own form of absolutism during the French revolution by denying any potential opposition to that will (Doyle, 2002 pp.53-54)).

Manin makes the point that these histories demonstrate how despite modern claims to nation-states being 'democratic', that for much of modern history, elites have sought to find ways to actively limit popular rule(Manin, 1997). Cotler traces the history of modern uses of the term democracy to the context of the American and French revolutions(Cotler, 2015). Before the American revolution beginning with 1776, the term democracy was rarely mentioned except in the context of as a synonym for 'mob rule' or in the context of a republic. However, as Cotler explains, by the 1790s in the spirit of the French and American revolution,

> *the most radical self-described democrats of the 1790s invested the term with a more utopian meaning. Democracy to them was the great moral imperative of their revolutionary age. Its implications spilled far beyond the boundaries of formal politics, calling upon citizens to work towards a more just world marked by a rough degree of social and economic equality governed by a radically participatory and inclusive system* (Cotler, 2015 p.14).

How then, did this revolutionary concept come to be welded to with the more conservative, republican structures of modern representative democracy? In the context of the early US, James Madison argued for the need to create a large republic as a defence against, 'the inconveniences of democracy consistent with the democratic form of government' (Cotler, 2015 p.19; Ketcham, 2003 p.51). Seemingly echoing the Machiavelli's understanding of human nature, Madison's concern was to limit the ability of faction to, 'take over the machinery of government to the detriment of minorities' (Cotler, 2015 p.19). In Madison's view, the geographic distances of the United States combined with the model the features of a Republic would help give help prevent minority factions from gaining power over the majority(Dahl, 2005; Madison, 1788).

In France, Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748-1846) argued instead that a representative form of government in the republican tradition was preferable in commercial societies so that citizens has the time to pursue leisure and their own professional interest(Sieyès, 2014). To this end, Sieyès felt that government should be a special profession and not the responsibility of ordinary

citizens (Manin, 1997 p.3). For these thinkers who helped to imagine the foundations of the modern representative system, the ideal society was not radically participatory and inclusive, but one which was primarily governed by an elite class of career politicians on behalf of the populous.

In this way, the modern representative system of government inscribed the utopian and revolutionary promise of democracy into a system, which was by design, meant to privilege elites whose 'wisdom' in the words of Madison, 'may best discerned the true interest of the country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations'(Madison, 1788 p.41). These tensions between the democratic promise and what is actually delivered have come to fore of struggles for greater liberty at multiple points in history. They can be seen at play in the American civil war (1861-1865), the Women's suffragettes movements (1848-1920), the civil rights movements of the 1960s, the Occupy wall street movements (2011), demands for gender equality in the #metoo movement (2017), in the *Black lives matter* protests (2020), Climate change protests (2019-present) and the Covid-19 (2020-2021 protests) etc. These tensions have been inherited as democracy has spread to different contexts around the world

### 1.1.2 Minimalist, deliberative, agonistic and 'democracy to come' conceptions

This section highlights prominent approaches to democracy in the modern context. To do so, I draw inspiration for Dallmayr who identifies four key conceptions of democracy before presenting his own. These include the (i) minimalist conception, (ii) the deliberative conception, (iii) the agonistic conception, (iv) Jacques Derrida's conception of democracy as the promise of an ideal 'to come' and (v) his own (Dallmayr, 2017)[1]. It is beyond the scope of

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[1] Sant (2019) has recently identified eight different approaches to democratic education in a recent review of theoretical literature in the field of democratic education. These include elitist, liberal, neoliberal, deliberative, multicultural, participatory, critical and agonistic approaches to democracy and education. Cosmopolitanism is also discussed in her article, but Sant makes the point that it is almost always used in conjunction with the categories already identified as in 'liberal cosmopolitan, multicultural cosmopolitan, critical cosmopolitan' etc. (Sant, 2019 p.661). I acknowledge the useful of these categories when discussing current educational models derived from policy objectives. However, for providing a conception of democracy in

this thesis to consider all possible approaches. The concepts chosen here were chosen for the usefulness in considering the CoE approach and for providing a foundation for my own conception.

### a. The minimalist conception

The first conception to consider is the minimalist conception. Proponents of the minimalist view place value on the procedures and legal norms needed to ensure non-interference in individual lives. Minimalists often present their policies as neutral and devoid of any conception of a better world and place their faith in the democratic process. In the minimalist view, there is no specific need for a particular form of democratic education. However, it is often linked to concepts which promote elitist forms of education where different social groups receive different forms of education relative to their economic status or intellectual ability. Following Joseph A. Schumpeter's and Walter Lippmann's understanding, minimalism posits that politics should be limited to an elite few whose wisdom and understanding can assure the long-term stability of democracy(Sant, 2019 p.662). Sant explains that this approach further aligns with proponents of general education in the liberal arts or those which advocate promoting knowledge of democratic institutions and procedures.

Neoliberalism can be included in the minimalist view in that it conceptualizes citizens as rational consumers where politicians compete for votes in the pursuit of economic policies. Neoliberalism typically reduces democratic education to those skills necessary for participation in the labor market and voting as citizen-consumers (Sant, 2019 p.665). Thus, its education policies might not be minimalist, but its conception of democracy is. The minimalist approach further aligns with liberal and libertarian vision of politics. In both visions, policy decisions are typically reduced to a simple matter of calculous where voters cast their vote with minimal interference from the state (Dallmayr, 2017).

Any tensions or contradictions assumed to be inherent in the minimalist approach to democracy are pragmatically treated as inevitable since in an idea popularly attributed Churchill, democracy is merely assumed to be the best form of government amongst a whole host of other

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general, I find Dallmayr's categories more useful. As such, I fit Sant's categories into Dallmayr's categories.

poor alternatives. It thus presents itself as devoid of utopian aspirations. However, its faith in the ability of minimalist economic policies to be beneficial and fair to all members of society is in my view equally utopian. Such a view denies the systematic features that limit the ability of marginalized groups from participating in the minimalist conception of democracy. These include hierarchies based on race, culture, education, wealth, social networks, language, dialect and confidence. This further includes knowledge of the dominant culture or norms and history as well as knowledge of one's own history. Much of the democratic education promoted in the minimalist conception tends to be an education *about* democracy, one which occurs *within* education or designed to produce a specific conception of citizenship where citizens are held to be responsible for their own welfare (Sant, 2019). Thus, it's aim is primarily to preserve and conserve society and its structures.

### b. The deliberative conception

Secondly, there is the deliberative approach. Deliberative democracy begins with the ideal that laws and norms achieve their legitimacy through 'processes of public deliberation' by a 'constituted political community'(Lefrançois & Ethier, 2010 p.272). For deliberative theorists, democracy proceeds as ongoing, interactive dialogue between impartial, rational subjects who strive to work towards moral and equitable solutions using a dialogic approach and logically defending their perspectives. Gutman explains:

> *A democracy is deliberative to the extent that citizens and their accountable representatives offer one another morally defensible reasons for mutually binding laws in an ongoing process of mutual justification* (Gutman, 1999 pp.45-47).

The deliberative conception presumes that participants will have the capacity and motivation to achieve rational consensus by engaging with in dialogue with others. It thus values the *intersubjectivity* rather than the subjective experience of the democratic process (Sant, 2019; Biesta, 2007; Dotts, 2016; Johnston, 2012). Such interactions are assumed to take place in space where 'free' and equitable dialogue can take place between citizens treated as equals (Lefrançois & Ethier, 2010; Sant, 2019). Deliberative democracy tends to de-emphasize how such interactions often take place in asymmetrical relations between subjects (Lefrançois & Ethier, 2010 p.273).

The deliberative approach traces its roots to enlightenment ideals which conceptualizes human beings and capable of reason if they receive the appropriate education. It draws inspiration from Kant, Rawls, Habermas and Dewey. Sant notes that the deliberative approach is 'one of the most highly supported versions of democratic education in journals on educational philosophy and pedagogy, particularly in English-speaking countries' (2019 p.669). Democratic education associated with the deliberative model tends to be intentionally designed *for* democratic citizenship. Thus, it tends to promote 'skills and values for public deliberation' (Fraser-Burgess, 2009; Haav, 2008; Lefrançois & Ethier, 2010; Sant, 2019). Key thinkers among deliberative theorists include Seyla Benhabib, Amy Gutman and Dennis Thompson (Sant, 2019).

In my view, the deliberative approach carries with it its own form of utopianism. This is because it assumes that citizens have the *time* to engage in such activities, that there are adequate opportunities for all citizens regardless of age or social status to deliberate in public spaces and that such deliberation will have an actual impact on policy. Importantly, it places faith in current structures rather than recognizing how modern liberal democracy was often made possible by appropriating land from the poor and 'others' in the industrialization/ colonization process, both at home and abroad. This is not to say that its aims are not admirable, only that there are natural tensions between 'the people' whom the system is imagined to favor and elites. This leads to the third approach.

### c. The agonistic conception

Thirdly, there is the agonistic approach. Agonism takes its name from the Greek term *agon* meaning 'contest' or 'strife' (Wenman, 2003 p.31). It traces its heritage from Machiavelli, Freud, Nietzsche and Hanna Arendt. Rather than depicting history as an unfolding narrative of human triumph over unreason, agonists argue that the 'tragic vision' portrayed by the early Greeks prior to Socrates or Plato is the more accurate vision. In Laclau's telling, 'the people' at the heart of democracy is effectively an 'empty signifier' (2018, pp.164-167). This is a term which absorbs meaning and emotion rather than emitting it. It can thus come to symbolize whatever the occupants of that space embrace as an idealized conception of 'the people' and it often becomes invested with the whatever emotions the received attaches to that ideal. In the

agnostic view, democracy is invariably locked in an ongoing struggle between a plurality of identities and value orientations that is understood to be irreconcilable (Dallmayr, 2017 p.30).

Laclau and Mouffe turn to populism as a possible means of engaging with this struggle over the content and meaning of democracy. Mudde is often cited for describing populism as a 'thin-centred ideology, [which is]… is easily combined with very different ideologies including communism, ecologism, nationalism and socialism' (Mudde, 2004 p.544). He thus argues that populism's core beliefs are cobbled together by a narrow set of political concepts, which are only held together in the belief that 'the people' and what or whom they stand opposed to rather than providing a specific policy or program. By contrast, Laclau and Mouffe argue that populism is a way of *doing* politics that is central to the democratic process and neither good nor bad *per se*(Laclau, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Mouffe, 2013, 2018b, 2020). What matters is the objective of this strategy and who it is designed to benefit. These ideals are often linked to a radical vision of democracy, which seek to give voice to those who have typically been marginalized in the hegemonic struggle for power. To this end, Laclau and Mouffe contend that if populism were to be aligned with the democratic values like equality and liberty, it could serve as a counterforce to challenge the dominant hegemony of elites who have been able to maintain power by setting the terms of who counts and who is excluded/marginalized in this conception (Laclau, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Mouffe, 2013, 2018b, 2020)

Agonists emphasize the importance of emotions in politics and the 'positive value of conflict'(Wenman, 2003 p.46). Mouffe's interest is in how the emotions generated through conflict might be wielded to turn antagonism conceptualized as the 'struggle between enemies" into a more workable *agonism* described as the 'struggle between adversaries'. She writes,

> *What liberal democratic politics requires is that the others are not seen as enemies to be destroyed, but as adversaries whose ideas might be fought, even fiercely, but whose right to defend those ideas is not to be questioned* (Mouffe, 2013 p.7).

Agnostic thinkers are highly critical of the deliberative approach and often position their conception of democracy in opposition to it. They argue that the solutions arrived at in the deliberative process through consensus often treat a particular solution as a final solution. They make the point that the very act of arriving at consensus often produces a frontier between those whose interests a solution a decision suits and those who are excluded from this vision

(Ernesto Laclau, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Mouffe, 2013, 2018b). While acknowledging the uses of deliberation, Mouffe argues that more often than not, consensus through deliberation often serves to support dominant norms and practices, rather than arriving at just and equitable solutions (2014, p.8).

In recent years, a number of philosophers of education have attempted to apply be apply agonism and its associated theories including populism and radical democracy to educational contexts (Koutsouris et al., 2022; Lo Florida, n.d.; Mårdh & Tryggvason, 2017; Ruitenberg, 2009; Sant et al., 2021; Todd, 2010, 2011; Á. Tryggvason, n.d.; A. Tryggvason, 2018; Zembylas, 2014). Each of these contributions offer unique approaches to how democratic education might better address populism and antagonism in the modern representative system. However, as Wenman notes, they can at times be *unrealistic* in their belief that the universal can be avoided (Wenman, 2013). While I agree with agonists that struggle is an important concern for democracy, my concern with the agonistic approach is that that by making conflict central to its ideals, it risks solidifying political divides rather than seeking more peaceful resolutions and identifying possible points of convergence.

### d. The "democracy to come" conception

The fourth conception of democracy is Jacques Derrida's conception of a 'democracy to come'. Derrida argued in the wake of 9/11 that the modern representative democracy suffers from what is effectively an 'autoimmune disorder' (Derrida, 2004). Much like a body which mistakes features intrinsic to its biological makeup as the enemy, Derrida theorises that Western liberal democracy was born with the tendency to turn its internal defences against its own life-giving organs. This means that within democracy there is always the risk of the body-politic turning against itself and attacking its component parts. It is a suicidal tendency, which Derrida says, emerges out of irreconcilable features fundamental to democracy itself. These features include tensions between sovereignty and democracy; between equality and freedom; between free expression and giving the vote to those who would seek to overthrow free expression; and between the present failings of democracy and the ever-present possibility of a more democratic future 'to come' (Derrida, 2005).

The first of these internal contradictions, according to Derrida, is the necessary tension inscribed between sovereignty and the rule of the people. Without sovereignty, there would be no borders and no boundaries to democratic rule. This would make its logic unworkable and vulnerable to being taken over by other states (Derrida et al., 2005). While necessary, Derrida says that by adopting the concept of sovereignty to demarcate the boundaries between who belongs and who does not, modern democracy incorporates heterogeneity into its very makeup. This means it will always incorporate individuals and groups into its population whose make-up and ideals may challenge the narrative of what a society imagines itself to be.

The second of these internal contradictions is the ongoing struggle within democracy to reconcile the freedom 'to do as one pleases' with the equality democracy purports to promote. Derrida notes that the promise of freedom to 'do as one pleases' is always at odds with the promise of equality, when one person's freedom can impede the freedom of others (Derrida et al, 2005 p.23). This inherent contradiction recently came into full view when numerous protesters took to the streets to exercise their 'right' to protest measures taken to curtail the spread of Covid-19, which invariably enabled the virus to spread further, endangering more lives. More than twenty-five significant protest movements around the globe were linked the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020(van der Zwet et al., 2022).While the intent of pandemic protection measures may have been to protect members of the population equally, these measures were perceived by protesters to be an infringement of their own individual freedoms extracted from those of society at large.

Derrida's third contradiction refers to the ongoing dance between free-speech and anti-democratic speech. This is because democracy must both allow a measure of anti-democratic speech to operate freely within it, while simultaneously granting the vote to citizens who might choose to limit or suspend democracy. Derrida notes that failure to make allowances for anti-democratic speech ultimately undermines the very principles democracy purports to protect (Derrida et al., 2005 p.33).

Given these inherent tensions and contradictions, Derrida suggests that true democracy never really exists in the present, nor can it. Rather, it is more accurately viewed as a 'democracy to come' *(á venir)* (Derrida et al, 2005) In this conception, democracy presents a promise that can never fully be fulfilled. This is because any concerted attempt to resolve these tensions would effectively nullify the promise of democracy by instilling a form of absolutism in its logic and

structures. Unlike the deliberative approach, which assumes that rationalism can overcome the tensions at the heart of democracy, Derrida's approach acknowledges that the tensions and contradiction are part of an ongoing struggle for a democratic ideal that is in itself aspirational.

Derrida's conception of a 'democracy to come' openly acknowledges that it is 'messianic'. This is in part because the term was fashioned by Derrida as response to the messianism he discerned in the neoliberal pursuit of 'the new world order' in the post-Cold War era (Derrida, 2006). The messianism of a 'new world order' harnessed liberal democracy alongside market capitalism to justify militaristic pursuits in the Middle East through discourses which purported to bring the 'the good news', to the non-democratic 'other' (Derrida, 2006 p.72). In the *End of History and The Last Man* Fukuyama notoriously wrote,

> *we have become so accustomed by now to expect that the future will contain bad news with respect to the health and security of decent, democratic political practices that we have problems recognizing good news when it comes. And yet, the good news has come* (Derrida, 2006 p.74; Fukuyama, 1992 p.xv)

In Derrida's view, it is not the messianism of the neoliberal conception of democracy which is is problematic. What is problematic is the act of proselytizing an absolutist and particular vision of democracy as having arrived. In Derrida's conception of justice as a deferred ideal, the messianic impulse is transferred from the present where democracy is assumed to have 'arrived' to an indeterminate future. In essence, it is the distinction between the Christian conception of the Messiah having arrived on earth and the Jewish conception where the Messiah is yet to come. For Derrida, the metaphysics of Western modernity produces binary oppositions between one term, which exemplifies the 'true' presence of an ideal versus its opposite (i.e. justice/injustice), which represents a loss of this presence. As Ferri notes, the concept of a 'democracy to come' for Derrida does not allude to, 'an ideal future, which is opposed to existing political systems. Instead, it embodies the irreducible element that eludes the system of oppositions established in the metaphysics of presence' (Ferri, 2018 p.51). To this end, it recognizes that the aspiration for a 'democracy to come' as an ideal which is never fully present, always in a state of flux and something which emerges in the gap between its 'infinite promise' and the 'necessarily inadequate forms of what has to be measured against this process' (Derrida, 2006 p.81). He concludes that is necessary *not* to give up on the emancipatory promise of democracy as a just ideal and to remain committed to the aspiration for a 'democracy to come' which might be both 'just'. However, this aspiration must remain

yet absolutely open and undetermined. He explains that just as one might leave a space at the table for the arrival of a stranger, one might leave a space at the table for democracy (Derrida, 2006 p.82). For Derrida, this necessarily implies maintaining an *unconditional* hospitality to 'otherness', which cannot take the form of something one offers to a friend or withdraws from an enemy.

Ferri observes that Derrida's 'reluctance to enclose the practice of dialogue and the exercise of political deliberation within a totalizing dimension that would lead to closure…' enables Derrida to avoid the totalizing tendencies in debates between multiculturalism and universalism (Ferri, 2018 p.53). In this view, it both 'complements' Habermas's imperative of need to achieve of rational consensus through discursive democracy while, 'leaving open the possibility for further dialogue' (Ferri, 2018 p.53) The challenge, she notes, is that Derrida maintains two distinct aporias with respect to the 'promise of understanding' in intercultural communication which effectively reproduce the aporia at the centre of Kantian ethics. That it, 'one intended in terms of final reconciliation and universal tolerance, and the other in terms of deferred understanding' (Ferri, 2018 p.53).In other words, the idea of 'tolerance' inherent in Derrida's notion of 'otherness' produces an internal aporia between accepting the differences between the self and the 'other' and the aspiration for a final resolution to differences in 'unity' (2014).

For Güven, the problem with Derrida's conception of a 'democracy-to-come' is that it is coupled by Derrida's emphasis on the need to be open to 'the other' even if this 'other" is a sworn enemy of democracy, while simultaneously recognizing democracy's need defend itself against this 'other'(Derrida et al., 2005 p.36; Güven, 2015 p.107). As Guven notes,

> *Democracy only appears to lend a voice to forces that attempt to undermine it. Yet democracy cannot and does not lend a voice to alterity unless this alterity is transformed into a voice within democracy… What Derrida considers to be a 'positive' aspect of democracy to come manifests itself as <u>the</u> colonial force of democracy…[which] consequently colonizes the future, the foreign, and hospitality* (Güven, 2015 p.107).

I will offer potential ways to think beyond these aporias and contradictions, when I return to my own conception. However, if we assume that democracy as an ideal truly has not yet arrived

and that what exists is merely a shadow of what democracy otherwise might become, then the future would only be colonized if that future were assumed to be dictated by former colonizers in advance. If, we leave a space at the table for democracy that is itself a stranger in that is absolutely open and undetermined then the future would not necessarily be colonised. Furthermore, if as I assume all learners are empowered within intercultural and democratic situations to unpack how democracy might have otherwise been conceptualised and constructed and what it might otherwise become, then the idea of democracy can potentially become unmoored from its Western origins to consider how it might have been developed differently. Isakhan and Stockwell's Companion to the History of Democracy, which troubles the notion of democracy being a specifically Western invention might offer a step in that direction(Isakhan & Stockwell, 2012). Similarly, ideas about the past and the future need not be conveyed linguistically or rationally when engaging with Bloch and Levitas conception of utopia their definition of utopia embraces non-linguistic expressions of a better world.

Having said that, Ferri (2018) and Güven (2015) provide important lesson for the multiplicity of ways the discourses of Western modernity continually re-produce binary oppositions between an ideal in where 'truth' is presumably present against and its polar opposite which exemplifies the absence of this truth. The drive to unify the particular can further result in a colonising tendency to non-democratic contexts such as Eastern Europe or former colonies. These are the very tools, which populism trades in and can lead to authoritarian solutions to either exile or silence the 'other'. Indeed, Ferri warns that the 'Master's tools will never dismantle the master's house', in that solely engaging with Western philosophy will not likely enable us to decolonize intercultural communication or democracy for that matter (Ferri, 2022). I would agree to the extent that I believe these tools need to be used in conjunction with non-Western conceptions of democracy and philosophy. Alternatively, it might be more generative to begin with non-Western conceptions first and then later engage with the Western tradition. However, I do not believe this warrants completely abandoning the Western philosophical tradition. In my view, it is only in the synergy between diverse conceptions of democracy and genealogically reconstructing diverse conceptions of the past and future that new possibilities for 'democracy' and the future might be born.

### 1.1.3 The CoE conception

Of the conceptions of democracy and democratic culture presented in this section, it is the deliberative vision which most aligns with the vision promoted by the CoE. That said, as I show in Chapter Four, many of the assumptions regarding how democratic culture is to be cultivated can readily be instrumentalized to suit a number of utopian ideals. The CoE does not an explicit definition of democracy in these documents. Instead, it describes and emphasizes the 'culture of democracy' it presumes to be necessary for democracy to survive. This includes 'competence citizens, suitable political and legal structures and procedures to support citizens' exercise of their competence'(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.17). Additionally, it identifies the importance of 'opportunities for active engagement' against those which would dissuade engagement by specific groups. Examples include denying the right to vote to first generation migrants or providing few 'institutional channels or bodies through which citizens can communicate their views politicians and policymakers' Thus, the CoE emphasizes the need for an 'abundance of places and spaces for dialogue' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.17).

A key aspect of the CoE's conception of democratic culture is the need for both democratic and intercultural competence. These are defined as, 'the ability to mobilize and deploy relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or critical understanding in order to respond effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by democratic and intercultural situations'(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.11). 'Intercultural situations' are defined as any situation 'when an individual or group perceives another person or group as being cultural different from themselves' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.10). In terms of its emphasis on dialogue, competence and intersubjectivity, the approach to democracy and democratic culture presented by the CoE would thus appear to be largely deliberative and dialogic in its emphasis. However, the emphasis on dialogue belies that anyone who disagrees with the CoE's conception of democratic culture or subjects unable to express their voice dialogically would effectively be silenced through the deliberative conception. It is the objective of this thesis to make any such silences visible through the concept of 'hidden utopias', which according to Bloch, need not be merely dialogic, but can be expressed through multiple forms of cultural expression including music, art, poetry, clothing, story-telling etc. (Bloch, 1986).

### 1.1.4 My own conception

Ferri (2022) and Zhu (2020) argue that it is important for researchers to take a stance in their research. This section is my attempt to do so while leaving the path open to later refine these views beyond this thesis. To begin, my own view is that democracy is not simply confined to as a set of institutions, procedures and laws, but is an ideal of government which should ultimately seek to assure justice and a 'good life' for its inhabitants. I thus reject the minimalist approach. Akin to Aristotle, my own conception of democracy necessarily assumes that some conception of the good life or *eudemonia* should be assured for all inhabitants. In this respect, I share an optimism with enlightened philosophers who championed the capacity of humans to conceptualise and fashion more liveable and just societies. Such a conception betrays my own aspirations for democracy to be utopian, a point I readily acknowledge. However, I am also wary of any approach that would seek to engineer a specific vision of society from above from a position of power. In my view, it is far more beneficial to identify ways to empower communities and diverse citizens from below and facilitate teachers in designing their own education initiatives which embrace 'otherness' and remain open to the coming event of *democracy*. Moreover, I agree with Aristotle that inequality breeds corruption and ultimately sews the threads of its unravelling.

Thus, my own conception of democracy strives for a greater balance between the supposed core democratic values of *liberté*, *egalité*, and *fraternité*. The latter concept which is often least valued in democracy is key to my own conception, which places emphasis on community bonds between neighbours, friends and nature in addition to the values of freedom. However, unlike current conceptions of democracy, which are presentist in their preoccupation with election cycles, my own conception emphasizes the responsibility to past and future generations and the long-term sustainability of local and global eco-systems. To this end, I embrace conceptions of democracy, which seek to decolonize Western liberal democratic ideals and consider our responsibility to our ancestors, other lifeforms and to generations to come. This might mean letting go of linear conceptions of time and progress and embrace conceptions which are more cyclical and in tune with the cycles of nature. I am not suggesting that we should abandon the Western liberal democratic theory in its entirety. Rather, I suggest that all these ideas need to be considered in light of our relationships to each other, to nature, to normativity and to the reproduction of the mechanisms of power which ultimately undermine the promise of democracy.

As a 'white' colonial settler in the US and Australia countries, I feel a particular responsibility to listen to the stories of those who were brutally pushed aside or enslaved to make the dream of democracy and my own privileges possible. I believe we can learn from these radical conceptions of democracy to rethink modern priorities and our responsibility to future generations, other lifeforms and each other. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson of the Nishnaabeg tribe in Canada writes:

> *Indigenous nationhood is a radical and complete overturning of the nation-state's political formations. It is a vision that centers our lives around our responsibility to work with our Ancestors and those yet unborn to continuously give birth to a spectacular Nishnaabeg present. This is a manifesto to create networks of reciprocal resurgent movements with other humans and nonhumans radically imagining their ways out of domination, who are not afraid to let those imaginings destroy the pillars of settler colonialism*(L. B. Simpson, 2017).

I further acknowledge the point made by agonistics who conceptualise democracy as a site of struggle to determine *who* counts among 'the people'. (Laclau, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Mouffe, 2013, 2018b, 2020). However, I reject the agonistic overemphasis on conflict to demarcate discursive frontiers between 'them' and 'us'. My view is that this only serves to essentialize and foment these differences along cultural and political lines. As Dallmayr puts it,

> *Are we not led back here into a myopic identity politics? Does the rejection of anything resembling a general "measure" not lure us in the direction of an obstinate particularism or relativism? I realize that some proponents also speak of "agonistic respect" and "receptive generosity." But how can one be receptively generous while holding the other (or others) at bay as an adversary? (p. 31).*

Thus, rather than adding further fuel to antagonistic fires, my own emphasis strives to identify possible points of convergence in order to nurture environments where new ways of approaching democracy and democratic culture might be born. I draw particular inspiration from Derrida in conceptualising 'democracy' as the coming of an event worth striving for, but one which necessarily remains open, indeterminate and always engaged with the way in which historic discourses work to place some at the centre of history and 'others' as peripheral or

completely outside Western rationality. I furthermore embrace the possibility of dialogue for transcending cultural and democratic divides. However, I do not view it as the sole means through which this might be accomplished. Indeed, I maintain that in many cases non-dialogic forms of political expression such as music, dance, poetry, the sharing of food, or simply gazing into the eyes of a cultural/democratic 'other' might be better suited for transcending antagonistic binaries. Accordingly, a democratic culture aligned to my own conception would be eminently open and strive to move beyond the dominance of presentism in politics and recognize democracy as an ongoing project of 'becoming', not a form of society that is already perfected or must be defended in its current state.

For Claude LeFort (1924-2010) the core of democracy is necessarily an "empty place", lacking in a fixed centre of power or agreed to meaning as to its content. In LeFort's view, it is the attempt to fill this 'empty place' with a definitive ideal of democracy which leads to totalitarianism (Dallmayr, 2017 p.8; LeFort, 1988 pp.217-226). As Dallmayr notes, LeFort's 'empty place' is not completely devoid of content. Rather, it stands as a signifier for an imagined ideal of 'the people'. In LeFort's conception, democracy is a place brimming with the potential of a yet to be identified 'people' that carries with it the 'present absence' of that ideal (Dallmayr, 2017 pp.7). This is pertinent since Bloch argues that utopia and utopianism emerge in the gap between what is desired and what is 'not yet' in the world(Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). By promising government by 'the people' in its very etymology and then reducing participation to electoral processes, lobbying and protest, modern representative democracy produces a 'present absence' that Bloch would recognize as ripe for the production of utopias.

In my view, it is in the 'empty space' between democracy's promise and reality that the desire for utopia and its aporia's are produced. In this conception, political opportunists can tap into these desires and promise futures that idealize certain identities and futures at the expense of those who lie outside this conception. Furthermore, the desire to fill this 'empty space' with content can serve to universalize a particular ideal of who 'the people' are imagined to be and thereby what democracy and democratic culture is imagined to be. At the same time, I feel this 'empty space' can be particularly generative when viewed in conjunction with Derrida's notion of a 'democracy to come'. In my view, what is at stake in democracy is the very struggle for the utopian ideals we invest in the term. Democracy, thus stands in as a signifier for what we imagine democracy to be and the struggle for that imaginary. Derrida's idea of a 'democracy to come' enables that centre to remain forever deferred and undetermined. Using Derrida's

notion of 'the stranger', my understanding is that rather than seeking to impose a presentist vision on what democracy might become, democracy might instead take on the persona of the stranger who may or may not arrive, but who we cannot know in advance. That said, democracy is at heart a contradictory term. This thesis does not purport to resolve these tensions. Indeed, its aim is to expose them and show the challenges they bring to the Framework in different contexts.

This section has sought to show that the tensions and contradictions which emerge in this thesis with respect to democracy are inherent to the concept of democracy itself. The concept described here does not purport to definitively resolve the tensions and contradictions that have plagued Western democracy throughout its history. Indeed, my aim is to trouble the CoE's promotion of a particular form of democracy and democratic culture within a universal Framework by exposing the tensions and contradictions at the heart of democracy itself and highlighting the important role that utopia plays in conceptualising what democratic culture is imagined to be in the Framework and elsewhere. My hope to offer tools for engaging with these tensions and contradictions from below since a universal conception of democracy asserted from above can undermine the very autonomy democracy says it promotes. The next section seeks to unpack the distinction between ideology and utopia and consider why I believe utopia to be the more useful term for addressing democracy in the present zeitgeist.

## 1.2 Ideology, utopia and 'hidden utopias'

This section considers the unique relationship between ideology and utopia and how the role that each of these play in the concept of 'hidden utopia'. Utopia and ideology are two distinct, but interconnected concepts. As such, it can be challenging for the observer to determine where one concept ends and the other begins. This section considers the distinct history of each concept, how conceptions of 'ideology' and 'utopia' have become increasingly entangled over time and how utopianism came to be increasingly expressed and harnessed in implicit ways in the age of neoliberalism and populism.

### 1.2.1 A brief history of ideology

The term 'ideology' was first proposed in 1796 by Antoine Louis Claude, Comte Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836) to describe what he perceived as an emerging 'science of ideas' in the projects of Enlightenment thinkers (Kennedy, 1979; Stråth, 2013). The concept of ideology was thus born in the volatile period of the French revolution when the very presumptions of enlightenment philosophers were being called into question. Not long after its embrace by enlightened philosophers, the term came to be appropriated by Napoleon to denigrate any thinkers or thinking which he associated with the enlightenment as 'ideologues' (Stråth, 2013). Thereafter, ideology came to be increasingly used as a popular invective against intellectual elites by politicians hoping to appeal to the masses (Kennedy, 1979; Stråth, 2013).

Over the course of the nineteenth century in the USA, Germany and France, the concept of ideology sat at the centre of political debates over whether or not politics should be based on principles or whether politics was by necessity, 'decoupled from theory' (Stråth, 2013 p.5). During this time, it was used by conservatives and socialists alike to denigrate any intellectual program deemed to be unrealistic. Marx sought to distance his own philosophical project from ideology claiming that his own communist principles were based on science. In fact, he labelled all those he associated with bourgeois capitalism as 'ideologues' (Kennedy, 1979; Marx & Engels, 2017; Stråth, 2013).

It was not until the early 1900s that the term came to be taken seriously again as a somewhat useful, neutral term among sociologists and philosophers (Freeden, 2003; Stråth, 2013). This is when ideology came to be understood and analysed as 'coherent chains of thought' produced by groups that were ultimately 'part of the cultural milieus that shaped and were shaped by human activities' (Stråth, 2013 p.10). By the mid twentieth century, the term sat at the epicentre of the Cold War and came to symbolize what appeared to be an insurmountable intellectual divide. In this context, both Marxists and Capitalists alike came to describe each other's program as 'ideological'. By the 1960s, a counter-discourse emerged against the term itself by those claiming that 'ideology' had run out of steam and that we had in fact arrived at the 'end of ideology'(Bell, 1988; Moyn, 2012).

Daniel Bell, first coined the phrase, *The End of Ideology* in his 1960 book of the same name where he argued that the ideological battles of elites no longer represented the realities of ordinary people (Bell, 1988). Many of these arguments arose from conservative circles uncomfortable with the student led social movements of the 1960s. It was a question which became increasingly relevant after the failure of student-protest movements in the 1960s to bring about the utopian societies they imagined.

### 1.2.2 A brief history of utopia

The concept of utopia has an even longer lineage than ideology. Thomas More coined the term in his 1517 book to describes a fictional voyage to a purportedly perfect society. The term combines by combining the Greek terms *ou-topos* meaning 'no place' or 'nowhere' with *eu-topos* meaning 'good place' (More, 2012). Following More's Utopia, numerous thinkers drew inspiration from More in seeking to imagine their own perfect worlds, either as a serious thought experiment or like Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* to satirize the pretentions of intellectuals in assuming they might be able to perfect society. Where More's *Utopia* sought to ease the passions that made humans into competitors and enemies, Bacon's *New Atlantis* remade the human condition, not by quelling human appetites, but by expanding scientific power to satisfy human desire (More et al., 1999; Purdy, 2015 p.121).

During the Enlightenment, a number of key thinkers began to imagine how that such musing might be applied to the real world by applying science and reason to justify non-hereditary forms of society or the continuation of absolutism by imagining life returning to a fictionalized 'state of nature'. Such thinkers include the likes of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. While none of these thinkers would have described their work as 'utopian', the very pretence that it is possible to theoretically conceptualise a better society is arguably a utopian act.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century utopianism produced numerous notable works of fiction and in a few notable cases led to implementation of experiments in communal living (Claeys, 2020, 2022). Marx initially embraced utopianism. However, he eventually came to reject utopia and these communal/socialist experiments as promoting a 'premature vision of

social change'(Geoghegan, 2004 p.135). He thus characterised his own theories to be at odds with many of these real world experiments with utopia in the nineteenth society.

Sargent proposes that utopia can best be conceptualised as having 'three faces'. These include literature, intentional communities and 'utopian social theory' (Claeys & Sargent, 1999; Sargent, 1994, 2013). It is utopian social theory which Sargent argues is most entangled with ideology and it is utopian social theory which is the primary concern of this thesis (Sargent, 2013). However, to understand utopia and its unique relationship to democracy, it is first necessary to disentangle utopia from ideology.

### 1.2.3 Disentangling utopia from ideology

Claeys explains that the first time that utopia and ideology were considered together as serious objects of study was in Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* (Claeys, 2022). For Mannheim, ideology is oriented towards the past where utopianism is oriented towards an unattainable future (Mannheim, 1979). In this view, ideology is invested in preserving society as it has been constructed while utopia aims to 'shatter' reality as it is and transform society (Mannheim, 1979 p.173). The former are 'antiquated modes of belief', while the latter are 'in advance of current reality' (Geoghegan, 2004 p.124). Yet, the whole point of identifying ideology or utopia for Mannheim is to identify those 'relatively rare' instances where ideology and utopia can be fully extracted from discourse in order to discover 'reality' itself. For Mannheim, 'only a state of mind that has been sociologically fully clarified operates with situationally congruous ideas and motives' (Mannheim, 1979 p.175). Geoghegan explains that in this view, 'most people on most occasions are in the grip of ideological and/or utopian distortions' (Geoghegan, 2004 p.126). On this point, Geoghegan observes that Mannheim's very presumption that 'reality' can be extracted from ideology, invokes its own kind of utopia (Geoghegan, 2004).

Notably, while Mannheim believed it to be possible to do without ideology, he did not believe it was possible to do without utopia. He states,

> *The disappearance of utopia brings about a static state of affairs in which man himself becomes no more than a thing. We would be faced then with the greatest paradox imaginable, namely, that man, who has achieved the highest degree of rational mastery of existence, left without any ideals, becomes a mere creature of impulses…with the relinquishment of utopias, man would lose his will to shape history and therewith his ability to understand it* (Mannheim, 1979 p.236).

The implication is that while ideology is an artificial construction typically imagined by elites, the ability to imagine utopia is part of what makes us human.

While utopia was an important concept for the first generation of theorists within the Frankfurt school, by the 1970s the idea of utopia had fallen out of favour amongst critical theorists. Marcuse declared the 'end of utopia' in his 1967 lecture of the same name (Marcuse, 1970). Jurgen Habermas refused to engage with utopia in his promotion of communicative reason in his 1970 publication of *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics*(Habermas, 1970). Benhabib argues that this move by Habermas is significant because it marked a shift within the Frankfurt school away from utopia and towards the more 'pragmatic' ideals of communicative reason(Benhabib, 1986).

The next key thinker outside the Frankfurt school to take utopia seriously was Paul Ricouer. Ricouer first addressed utopia in1976 in his article, *Ideology and Utopia as Cultural Imagination* and ten years later in his published lectures on *Ideology and Utopia*(Ricoeur, 1976, 1986). Ricouer, identified three characteristics of ideology. These include: (i) ideology's capacity for distortion, (ii) ideology's use for legitimizing ideas, norms and practices and (iii) how ideology integrates disparate ideas to produce identities (Ricoeur, 1986; Sargent, 2013). In comparison, Ricoeur argues that the three characteristics of utopia are: (i) the production of fantasy, (ii) utopia's ability to function as an alternative to power and (iii) the ability of utopia to facilitate imaginative speculation of the possible (Ricoeur, 1986 p.310; Sargent, 2013).

In Ricoeur's depiction, both ideology and utopia can be understood to 'have a positive and negative side, a construction and destructive role, a constitutive and a pathological dimension' (Ricoeur, 1986 p.1; Sargent, 2013 p.444). Thus, for example, an idea like nationhood might meet Ricouer's description of ideology by distorting the past, legitimating certain ideals, norms and practices and helping to produce a sense of identity. Yet, nationhood also has the capacity to become utopian if the imagined ideal of a nation is depicted as having been lost or in need of restoration. Discourses of a return to an imagined past tap into fantasies of what the nation once was. They provoke explorations regarding how that past vision might be restored and function as a form of power to make that vision a reality. In this definition, ideology seeks to conserve *what is* while utopia is aimed at what *might be* (Sargent, 2013).

The distinction made between the two in Ricouer's telling also depends on one's subject position. I might imagine that I am conserving a vision of society that another might believe is no longer viable or may have only existed in myth. From a different perspective this utopian vision might be described as ideological. Leonardo makes the point that where utopia is often 'owned by its creator', few would knowingly describe their own program as ideological (Leonardo, 2006 p.86). Indeed, ideology is typically used as an invective against others rather than to describe oneself. Similarly, Ricouer makes the important point that we tend to be more sympathetic to utopianism than to ideology (Ricoeur, 1986).

Following this logic, I would suggest utopia is the less divisive of the two since the concept of ideology, which is almost always used in the context of labelling another's discourse as 'ideological', distancing oneself from that ideology and consequently has the effect of producing an ideological 'other'. Utopia, by contrast, is as Leonardo notes, something we are simultaneously willing to own and recognize as problematic(Leonardo, 2006). In this sense, utopia can serve as a critical tool when used in intercultural and democratic situations for questioning what might be problematic about one's own utopian assumptions. At the same time, it can help interlocutors to identity points of possible convergence and provide creative possibilities for thinking about democracy in new ways.

Manheim posited that it might be possible it for 'free-floating intellectuals' to transcend the ideology and utopia of one's positionality by moving between social classes(Mannheim, 1979). It is an assertion that has received such vigorous critique that it has came to be described By Clifford Geertz as the 'Mannheim Paradox' Critics against this idea assert that Mannheim's

'free-floating, intellectual' standpoint fails to recognize the biases that are produced by the groups intellectuals belong to or aspire to belong to (Sargent, 2013). Ricouer makes the point that it can be particularly difficult to recognize ideology from the inside. This is where Ricouer believes utopia can be useful. He suggests that utopia can provide theorists an exploratory tool for thinking outside ideology(Ricoeur, 1986). It works, so to speak, by lifting the veil on ideological self-deception and provides a space from which to 'critique' ideology (Leonardo, 2006 p.79). Used in this manner by oneself and for oneself, utopia emerges as a means for crucially engaging with the delusions we might be blind to in addition to making visible the points of convergence in terms of aspirations for a better future. Having said that, Ricouer is less definitive as to whether or not it is possible to step outside utopia or ideology (Leonardo, 2006). In this sense, Ricouer's interest is in critically engaging with the two to balance the ability of both ideology and utopia to distort reality.

For Sargent, the distinction rests on recognising ideology as (i) 'a system of beliefs' where utopia presents itself as (ii) 'hopes, desires, a dream for improvement' (Sargent, 2013 p.449). He notes how the distinction between the two in the twenty-first century is even less clear than it was for Mannheim or Ricouer. He writes,

> *Today ideology and utopia are best seen as intimately connected in that there is a utopia at the heart of every ideology because all ideologies have some notion of the better world that will come about if the ideology is fully implemented. And one can become the other. A successful utopia can become an ideology and a failed ideology may become a utopia (Sargent, 2013 p. 448).*

My own definition of ideology draws inspiration from Sargent's in that I treat ideology as a 'system of beliefs' as opposed to utopian, 'hopes, desires and a dream for improvement' (2013, p.449). I also embrace Leonardo's point that while utopia is often 'owned by its creator', ideologies tend to be an 'invective' against others and a means of producing divides from 'them' and 'us' (2006, p.86). In my view, utopia differs in its ability to expose points of convergence. That is, we may not agree in all our hopes, desires and dreams for improvement, but we can likely find points where our utopias overlap. I also agree with Mannheim (1979) that while it might be possible to do without ideology, it is less easy to do without utopia. Sargent contends that it is important to keep the two separate. I acknowledge though that this is not easy to do in the age of neoliberalism, something I explore in the next section.

### 1.2.4 Utopia and ideology in the age of neoliberalism

Neoliberalism can be understood as having both utopian and ideological features in that it is deeply entwined with stories about how the present came to be and the idea that we have already arrived at the best of all possible futures. In the neoliberal dreamscape, democracy functions best when government intervention is minimal, and the market is allowed to operate with few restrictions. Harvey explains:

> *Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices* (Harvey, 2007 ).

In this story, the best society we can hope for is one with lower barriers to trade, where the interests and needs of consumers are privileged and the state provides the 'institutional frameworks' to support this vision of minimalist state intervention in the lives of individuals. Neoliberalism stems from theoretical ideas promoted by Friedrich Hayek (1899–1992) and Milton Friedman (1912–2006) as an alternative to socialism. When liberal democrats in the West sought to meld socialist policies with democracy, Hayek labelled this aspiration 'The Great Utopia', noting that democracy could not be melded with state control over economic policies (Hayek, 1962 Ch.2). He sought to theorize a response to those who, in his view, naively thought it possible to meld socialist policy with economics. It was this idealistic utopianism that Hayek sought to bring an end to. Yet, far from bringing an end to utopian aspiration as Hayek desired, in the modern context neoliberalism appears have enabled utopianism to take on new form and proliferate in implicit ways.

The failure of the idealistic revolutions of the 1960s to bring about a better world bolstered faith in neoliberalism during the 1970s (Harvey, 2007; Moyn, 2012). Westad (2017) notes however that it was only after the fall of the Berlin Wall that the West come to interpret the downfall of the communist dream as victory for its own ideological project.(Westad, 2017) This assertion was best expressed by political theorist Francis Fukuyama when he suggested

that we might be witnessing 'the end of history' (Fukuyama, 1989, 1992). Refering to Hegel's idea that history had a beginning, middle and end, Fukuyama's suggestion was that it appeared from his vantage point that the democratic-egalitarian vision of society would prevail at the 'end of history' instead of the Marxist-Leninist vision. It was a statement that Fukuyama would come to retract or at least temper. However, it is significant in how the overwhelming acceptance of 'end of history' also came to be coupled with the idea that we had reach the 'the end of utopia', or at least any form of utopia that promoted societal egalitarianism (Claeys, 2020, 2022; Kumar, 2010; Levitas, 2010)and the 'end of ideology' at the same time.

The very existence of a counter-discourse to capitalism in the international sphere helped keep the egalitarian-utopian aspirations for a better world at least minimally alive during the Cold War (Moyn, 2012).Such aspirations were largely silenced with the economic collapse of the Soviet Union. The prevailing assumption thereafter by many in the political realm following the Cold War was that we had entered a *post-ideological age* where aspirations for a more egalitarian communities were replaced with the pragmatic logic of neoliberalism (Kumar, 2010; Levitas, 2010 p.x).This post-ideological age was a world where conceptions of a future beyond capitalism increasingly came to be understood as 'foolhardy'(Levitas, 2010; Moyn, 2012).

Democracy increasingly came to be linked to neoliberal conceptions of society, where minimal government was understood to represent the best of all possible forms of government (W. Brown, 2004). Margaret Thatcher's famous slogan, 'There is No Alternative' (TINA), would thereafter come symbolize the domineering logic that there was no alternative to neoliberalism (Mouffe, 2018 p.4). The dominant presumption was that it was no longer necessary to engage with notions of utopia in the public realm since the only legitimate space for pursuing utopia was in the private realm through market-based mechanisms.

In the neoliberal mode, the utopian drive came to be commodified and, 'reduced to an instrument of capital accumulation and turned into a form fitting the confines of commercial consumption' (Atanasova, 2021 p.27; Murtola, 2010). In this new 'unorthodox utopia' the desire for a better world could be catered to through consumerism. As such, the utopian impulse could be shaped and catered to through the market. This led to a 'shift from the collective to the individual, from structures to experience and from a distant future to here and now' (Atanasova, 2021; Bauman, 2007). Any desire for utopia or a better world came to be 'hyper-

individualized' promising that individuals could transform their present, 'in the perpetual hunt for positive sensations' and potentially regain their control over an increasingly unpredictable world (Atanasova, 2021). Why wait for utopia, when that desire can be catered to today by purchasing products or experiences which promise to fulfil that desire?

Returning Mannheim's distinction between ideology and utopia, neoliberalism can be understood as ideological in that is invested in preserving society as it has been constructed over the last thirty years to support laissez-faire economic policies. At the same time, it is utopian in that it seeks to *transform* the state by promoting deregulation, privatisation, fiscal conservatism and reduced safety nets. As Wendy Brown argues, neoliberalism proceeds as a 'stealth revolution' as it quietly transforms, '[t]he institutions and principles aimed at securing democracy, the cultures required to nourish it, the energies needed to animate it, and the citizens practicing, caring for or desiring it' into the rational of minimalist economic intervention (Brown, 2015 p.17).

Using Ricouer's definition of ideology, neoliberalism can be understood as ideological in that it distorts reality by reducing all human relationships and pursuits to economics, it legitimises minimalist policies and for those who embrace it, it provides a sense of identity in those who imagine themselves to be self-sufficient individuals who will never be in need of support of state assistance. It can be understood as utopian Ricouer's definition in that (i) it promotes the fantasy of 'trickle down economics' where everyone is imagined to receive their just rewards, (ii) and it operates as an alternate form of power. Where it fails Ricouer's definition is in providing an imaginary space to explore alternatives to the present(Ricoeur, 1986 p.310(Ricoeur, 1986). This is because it in a move akin to Mannheim, it presents its fantasy as realistic" and forecloses any utopian musings beyond the logic it promotes. Indeed, since it is presented as the only alternative by those who embraces, neoliberalism effectively quashes any utopian musings that might seek to provide a better solution to the problems of the present. Indeed, Zygman Bauman notes, that neoliberalism is best understood as a:

> *A strange, unorthodox utopia—but a utopia all the same, promising the same unattainable prize brandished by all utopias, namely an ultimate and radical solution to human problems past, present and future.... It is unorthodox for having moved the land of solutions and cures from the 'faraway' to the 'here and now'* (Bauman, 2007 p.108).

Turning to Sargent's definition, neoliberalism clearly emerged in the theories of Hayek and Freedman as a 'system of beliefs'. However, while neoliberalism emerged out of theory, few outside academia are aware of these origins or how this system of beliefs operate in a theoretical sense. In other words, the idea of neoliberalism has become largely decoupled from its theoretical foundations and been reduced to accepting personal responsibility for oneself and one's welfare, being willing to pay for services which were previously gratuitous, low taxes and the promise that hard work will lead to financial rewards and a better life. To this end, I would argue that the discourse of neoliberalism better aligns with Sargent's definition of utopia as consisting of 'hope, desire, a dream for improvement' (Sargent, 2013 p.449). Indeed, Sargent acknowledges that, '[u]topia is easier to deal to with than ideology because it at least starts without being ideological, whereas all ideologies have a utopian dimension, albeit quite small in some cases and quite controversially so in others' (2013, p.448). I would argue that this is particularly true in the case of neoliberalism. Many learn of neoliberalism through its utopian discourses and never come into contact with the philosophical treaties and systems of believe that imagined them into being in the first place.

Drawing inspiration from Bloch (Bloch, 1986) and Levitas (Levitas, 2010, 2013), I take the view that neoliberalism both disavows the necessity of utopia while operating as its own utopia or at least, 'the most we can hope for'. In so doing, it produces a gap between what is lacking in the world and what is desired. It is in this gap, that I suggest that a multiplicity of counter-utopias are able to emerge and proliferate in implicit ways seeking to fill this gap. The next section considers why I consider utopia to be the better frame of reference for the present zeitgeist.

### 1.2.5 The relevance of utopia versus ideology as a frame of reference

Sargent argues that while it is difficult to distinguish between utopia and ideology it is important to keep them distinct. To make this distinction, he argues that ideology can be discerned in its capacity to structure 'a system of beliefs' where utopia is best characterised by its capacity to, 'reflect, hopes, dreams, a dream for improvement' (Sargent, 2013 p.448). To this, he adds that utopia does not usually do so unless it is part of a system of belief.

However, I propose that utopia is perhaps better understood as an overarching concept, which may or may not include ideology. Hence, while it might be possible to live without a 'system of beliefs', I align with Ricouer's belief that it is less conceivable to imagine a life without utopia (Ricoeur, 1986). Furthermore, I maintain that utopia offers a less adversarial frame of reference for addressing discursively constructed ideological divides between 'them' and 'us'. It implies that there is emotional investment in a vision by the holder of a vision and that it will take more than discursive persuasion to convince an interlocuter to abandon that perspective. It will take the capacity to place oneself in another person's imaginary, hopes and aspirations in order discern what makes a specific emotionally appealing to another human being.

Moreover, from a Blochian perspective, there is no space outside of utopianism. The concept of utopia can make visible the role that images, impressions, music and even art play in producing utopian desires and impressions that are less tangible than ideology understood as a system of beliefs. Thus, while ideology might continue to be relevant as a frame of reference for those who follow a structured system of beliefs, I argue that utopianism is more productive concept in an age where political perspectives are shaped more by implicit impressions and desires we form while engaging in social media, entertainment and politicized journalism than critical engagement with facts.

### 1.2.6 The concept of 'hidden utopias'

The concept of 'hidden utopias' was born out of the idea that implicit utopias are proliferating within the present context and that these utopias can function to 'govern' both desire and subjectivity so long as they remain implicit or 'hidden'(Tourbier, 2021). This thesis begins with the premise that utopia matters to how democratic culture is conceptualised in education

policy and in discourses adopted by citizens. It matters who 'we' imagine ourselves to be and who is excluded from that vision. Utopias carry within them the potential for genuine change, meaning that they are not in themselves positive or negative. I treat utopias in this thesis as intimately connected to dystopia. Utopia can contain elements that might be recognized as dystopian while dystopias can effectively project the best society possible, by showing the disastrous results of certain ideals taken to extremes.

What matters from a Foucauldian perspective is the potential effects such discourses and the way power is transmitted, preserved or resisted through such ideas. For Bloch, utopia is a driving force in human history and what leads to progress and change (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). In this view, utopia is the engine which enables societies to move forward. Alternatively, as Bauman argues, utopianism can manifest in the desire to return to a past era to rectify the perceived failings of society leading to a form of 'Retrotopia' , which (i) seeks to rehabilitate the 'tribal mode of community', (ii) return to the concept of an essentializes concept of self and (iii) promotes an essentialized notion of the 'civilized order' and who belongs or does not belong in that order (Bauman, 2019 p.9). As those who equate utopianism with a blueprint for society have long warned, it *can* be used to promote a totalized vision of society, however this path is not inevitable. As Bernard de Jouvenel warns, tyranny resides within, 'the womb of every utopia'(de Jouvenel, 2011 p.; Tourbier, 2021). Given these dangers, it would be tempting to give up hope for utopia and simply concede that a better world is impossible and that the present form of liberal democracy married to *laissez-faire* capitalism is the best we can hope for. However, it is arguably the pursuit of utopian desire that helps breathe life into democracy and keep citizens ever striving for 'the good society', however that may be conceptualized. In such a view, utopias are both potentially dangerous and necessary. Additionally, I suggest often provide the governing logic through which subjectivities are produced. However, I take the view proposed by Koopman and Lorenzini that the ultimate point of these problematizations in Foucault's work is to make visible the possibilities implicit in the missed opportunities and paths not taken in what is taken for granted as natural and normal in the present (Koopman, 2008, 2013; Lorenzini, 2020).

## 1.3 Positionality and motivation

Zhu (2020) argues that it is important to be transparent regarding one's positionality and motives for undertaking research. This section unpacks the complexity of my own subject position through a number of vignettes in order make visible my own subject position, reveal how my background shapes my own conceptions of democracy and utopia and describe my motivation for undertaking this research.

### 1.3.1 How my background shapes my view of democracy and utopia

My subject-position is that of an Anglo-American female educator and curriculum designer who grew up in small towns in the rural American West. For the past twenty years, I have lived as an expatriate between Germany, the UK and Australia. Over the course of my life, I have often found myself having to navigate tensions between conflicting conceptions of democracy and utopia. These experiences have helped to shape my particular view of democracy as an ongoing contest between utopian imaginaries. The following vignettes are intended to help contextualise this background and positionality.

I experienced the first clash between my utopia and those of others when my ideal of an equal and diverse world collided head-on with that of my Grandparents. Theirs was a racially hierarchical utopia. My grandparents were from West Texas where the legacy of the Civil War continued to play an important role in their political imaginary. They were conservative by nature, yet voted consistently Democrat. Lincoln had been a Republican and the loss of the Civil War (1861-1865) by the southern states continued to play an important role in their political views. My grandmother's imaginary was shaped by her family connection to the Confederate South and 'the lost cause' ideals. In my grandparent's youth there was a concerted push in southern states to rebrand the Confederate south as a lost ideal in school textbooks and national monuments (Chaput, 2021; Cox, 2019).  This narrative taught the slavery was not the central cause of the civil war and that had at times been a 'benevolent' institution. In my grandmother's utopia, young 'white girls' were to behave like 'ladies' and not associate with other races, except perhaps in a cordial manner.

My grandmother grew up exceptionally poor in a large family whose survival depended on the money the children earned working in the fields, picking cotton alongside the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of former slaves. She prided herself on the fact that while both she and these racial 'others' had only dirt floors, her family swept theirs and that her family wore the clothes they constructed from flour sacks with 'class', these racial 'others' did not (on this practice see: https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_1105750). In this vision, my grandmother portrayed her socio-economic position as temporary and that of the descendants of former slaves as permanent and 'natural'.

I was a child in the early seventies when the new culture of the civil rights movement was being promoted in schools and on public television. While the US never explicitly promoted multiculturalism, it did promote the ideals of diversity in schools and on television. As Nieto notes, the American creed of *E Pluribus Unum*, (out of many one) has long promoted the idea that unity should be the ultimate outcome of pluralism, yet this has meant that it has long had to juxtapose its ideals of equality and fairness alongside its historic colonialism, slavery, and racism (Nieto, 2009 p. 79).

I embraced the utopian ideal of a diverse America. From an early age I collected friends from diverse backgrounds without my grandparent's knowledge. When I was four, my grandparents came to visit and discovered I was playing with two African American girls. One of the girls was older. I remember how accepted she made me feel and I truly thought both girls were beautiful. My Grandparents were not pleased by my 'inter-racial' friendship and my grandfather questioned me several times asking if I knew just *what* 'they' were. After much prodding, I finally told them that I did know- in fact, they were 'Baptists just like we were'. My efforts to show how they were religiously one of 'us' rather than racially 'other' worked at the time. However, much of my youth was spent navigating the tensions between the diverse future I aspired to and my Grandparents' aspirations for a return to a racially divided past. While these experiences do not exempt me from unintentional racism through my own implicit biases, I feel it is important to acknowledge how racism has operated in my own life as a subtle and oppressive force by dictating *who* I could associate with based on my gender and in what capacity. Hence, I do not take the position that racism is a practice we have moved on from or that it is overemphasized by the 'left'. It has something which has shaped and continues to shape my life and give me advantages that those who are not 'white' do not necessarily have.

The next set of utopias I was compelled to navigate was between the romantic of utopia and the providential vision. I grew up in the rural towns of Montana and Arizona steeped in heroic myths of the American frontier. My mother began her career teaching young adults on a nearby reservation and later worked for a local community college. My father was a fervent Republican and Reagan supporter who worked for the local forest service. He had little trust in the government and would have had us living deep in the wilderness, living disconnected completely 'off-grid', hunting game and cultivating our own food if he had had the choice. His attitude of childhood and education mirrored that of like Jean-Jacques Rousseau's conception of childhood and education expressed in *Emile*(Rousseau, 1979). My father valued time spent in nature above all else and most weekends were spent hiking or exploring the forest. Much like *Emile*, I was given maximum freedom to explore the outdoors and was able to express my opinion in most family matters (Rousseau, 1991).

My parents divorced and my mother remarried when I was eleven. As a result, my adolescent years were spent living between two households. My stepfather grew up on a farm. In his ideal, children were expected to listen to their elder's advice, not question their parent's decisions and contribute daily to household labour. A proponent of the Protestant work ethic, in my stepfather's utopia, children were expected to be constantly contributing to the maintenance and development of the family property. Schoolwork and free time came second to these priorities.

Purdy (2015) describes how the US was built through competing utopian approaches to the 'American' frontier. One of these, traceable to Rousseau is the Romantic Utopia. This utopia was first exemplified in the early French trappers who lived alone in the wilderness or amongst the native population. As Purdy notes, it could later be seen at play in the mentality of Theodor Roosevelt (1858-1919) who viewed the forests and national parks to be fundamental to the preservation of a certain ideal of citizenship and 'manhood' (Purdy, 2015 p.159). It was in the wilds that citizens could best discover their 'essential' selves by communing with nature(Izenberg, 1992; Purdy, 2015). This utopia animated a national movement led by John Muir and the Sierra Club to set aside national parks where citizens could commune with nature. However, it also led to the building of roads into these parks so that citizens could access public land, which in turn the commercialisation of these experiences (Purdy, 2015). My early ideals of 'America' and democracy were shaped by these ideals and family visits to these parks. Yet,

these very landscapes, which were my holiday playground, were often sacred to native peoples who were often no longer able to interact with these landscapes in the same way.

An additional key utopia Purdy describes is the providential utopia and it is traceable to the theories of John Locke. For Locke, it was man's providential duty to 'subdue natural and [nature] and make it bloom' (Purdy, 2015 p.76). The only way this could be accomplished in Locke's view was by mixing one's labour with nature to produce something new. Not doing so was in Locke's view 'waste' and practically against the providential duty of 'mankind' (Locke, 2018 ; Purdy, 2015). Purdy notes that it was the providential vision which helped drive the expansion of American westward turning the continent into private property.

This providential vision helped to underwrite the dignity of labour in America's conception of democracy and democratic culture. In this conception, liberty depended on acquisition and development of land, which sanctioned the displacement of Native Americans from their ancestral lands(Purdy, 2015; Richardson, 2011). This vision continues to be seen at play in the way American has promoted this conception of democracy and capitalism well beyond its borders.

Viewed in retrospect, I can discern the Romantic utopia in my father's ideals and the providential utopia in the worldview that underpinned life with my new stepfamily. Each of these utopias promoted very different ideals of freedom and childhood and often became a source of conflict as I navigated different familial and political imaginaries. Yet both utopias contributed important ideals to the frontier imaginary. As Leipnick notes, the Reagan era drew on these myths of the American frontier(Leipnik, 2023). Ronald Reagan had frequently portrayed cowboys in cinematic Westerns and was thus able to capitalise on the myth of the American frontier by characterising himself as the quintessential cowboy president willing to stand up to the USSR who stood in this myth as the archetypal villain. Leipnik argues that although Trump is essentially a 'New Yorker', he has been able to build on this imaginary by portraying himself as an 'urban cowboy'(Leipnik, 2023)

On weekdays, I lived with my siblings in a property we had all helped build by clearing away a small section of forest. We spent our free time exploring this forest and ancient ruins. The legacy of the Old West and the battles which forged the frontier imaginary seemed to pulse through this landscape. The forest and land we lived on stretched in one direction to Apache

(Ndee) reservations. Further north, the land stretched to the Navajo (Diné) and Hopi (Hopituh Shi-nu-mu) reservations. In 1848, this land was ceded to the US following the Mexican American war. Before that, it belonged to New Spain.

The land where we lived was settled by pioneering ranchers and Mormon families in the 1880s, made possible by the forced displacement of native peoples to local reservations. Many of the Native Americans displaced were part of the long walk where an estimated 9,000 native peoples were 'escorted' on foot for several hundred miles with little food to Fort Sumner near Bosques Rodondo, NM. Many died on the journey or during their incarceration (Iverson, 2002; Robinson, 2000). While these tribes were eventually able to return to nearby lands now enclosed in reservations, from the 1860s to the 1960s, native children increasingly became the target of federalist policies seeking to 'Americanize' children by treating indigenous children through the deficit approach as lacking in American (and thereby democratic) values(Deyhle & Comeau, 2009). This entailed voluntary and forced removal from family homes to boarding schools where their culture, tradition and languages was systematically targeted for eradication.

In my own schooling experience, the most notable feature of these peoples' was their notable absence. They lived on 'their land' and those who did attend our school were exceptionally quiet and kept to themselves. While Native Americans were present in my history books in stories like that of the defeat of the great Apace warrior Geronimo, *their* history was typically treated as a tragic, but inevitable passing of the 'noble savage' and a triumph for development and progress. Present day Arizona is now home to a diversity of people from all corners of the globe. This deeply diverse history is often lost in discourses which promise to 'Make America Great Again'. Indeed, one has to ask, just whose America is being embraced through in this utopian imaginary?

Debates surrounding multiculturalism and interculturalism often centre on accommodating the 'newcomer' who threatens a nation's conception of self (Gagnon & Iacovino, 2016; Loobuyck, 2016; Parekh, 2016; C. Taylor, 2016; Zapata-Barrero, 2016) . In the context of Arizona, 'we' were the 'white' English-speaking 'newcomers' who had gained our rights to these lands through colonial conquest facilitated through the discourse of 'democracy'. I was never asked to learn Spanish or native languages or show competence in local customs and or their cultural/spiritual values. I carry this positionality with me as a 'coloniser' in my new home in Australia where I am once again a 'newcomer' living on lands taken through colonial conquest.

When I was fifteen, my life changed irrevocably when my father's life was taken in an act of violence that seemed to mirror a Cowboy Western . The event shattered my world and altered my life's trajectory in a number of respects. On one hand, the inheritance I received, meant that while I previously did not know how I would be able to afford university I suddenly had the financial means to attend university and even travel abroad. On the other hand, the inheritance provided me with advantages and an expanded world view that many in my community and family simply did not have. Over time, I found myself increasingly at odds with the frontier imaginary of my youth.

By the time I attended university, I had friends from many continents and cultural backgrounds. A friend once commented that a weekend meal at my home was like a visit to the United Nations. I majored in politics and my minor was in psychology during my Bachelor's degree. I travelled as an exchange student to the UK and found myself working as an intern to a far-left Labour backbench member. This gave me a completely new perspective of the leftist ideals I once feared. While I did not completely embrace these ideals, I became much more progressive in my views. In the early 90s, I travelled to Germany where I lived during the first Gulf War among students opposed to the very war my country and many of my peers and family back home supported. I became fluent in German having to explain my country's actions at weekly 'end of the world' parties, who held the view that Germany should not allow the US to use German soil as a base for engaging in military conflict.

In my early twenties I began to embrace cosmopolitan values and the belief that the world was moving towards a more globalised legal order. I eventually studied international law and human rights in Australia. However, the transition to Australia was not easy. By this stage, I was a young mother living in a foreign land far from my home and found myself struggling to contend with discourses of freedom and individuality when my whole life was suddenly consumed by a newfound responsibility to care for another human life. The experience of motherhood brought home to me how the responsibility to 'care' for others was largely absent from the majority of the treaties I encountered. Instead, they were largely concerned with securing political or civil liberties for individuals who were 'free' to pursue jobs and economic opportunities. I came to realize that these very liberties often depend on unpaid/low-paid labour largely carried out by women or low-paid domestic help to make these individual pursuits possible in the first place. At the same time, by securing the right to privacy, such rights often

ignored that women and children are often threatened within the private sphere(Charlesworth et al., 1991).

In my thesis, I applied a feminist critique to the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). I considered how the treaty effectively ignored how women, girls and even those from a transgender/LGBT background experienced racism differently than men. Feminists have argued that since the beginning, human rights have ignored the particular interests and needs of women in their construction (Charlesworth et al., 1991). Since it was a treaty on racial discrimination, it meant further needing to contend with my own positionality as a 'white' Western woman and the racism of my Grandparents. I furthermore had to contend with the tensions within feminism between 'white', Western, educated feminists and 'non-white' female scholars who challenged the essentialism they perceived as endemic to the feminist project. To navigate these tensions, I made explicit my positionality and drew inspiration from non-white feminists who had been developing a 'multidimensional perspective' by seeking to build bridges between mainstream 'white' feminists and non-white feminists (Hernandez-Truyol, 1996). While I found the treaty to be skewed towards laissez-faire economic liberalism and the needs of men, I remained (and continue to remain) optimistic regarding the potential of the human rights regime to *eventually* produce a more just and peaceful world.

I was confronted once again with the tensions between utopian ideals when I returned to the US. This is when it quickly became clear to me that my newly adopted utopia of international law and human rights conflicted with many local conceptions of America as an 'exceptional' country. I met with lawyers who told me outright that human rights and international law were generally not considered to be 'real law' in the context of Arizona. The dominate position embraced was political realism where the international legal order was treated as an idealistic utopia which had no effect. As Ignatieff explains, externally the US positions itself as a leader in championing the values of human rights and international norms, when in reality it takes pains to ensure that these norms do not directly apply to US law through 'reservations, nonratification and noncompliance' and by ensuring, 'the self- contained authority of its own domestic rights tradition' (IGNATIEFF, 2005 pp.2-3). Through such practices it is able to maintain a 'double standard' by applying a more permissive criteria to itself and its friends regarding violations of human rights than it does to enemies (2005, p.2). This effectively undermines any perceived 'universality' to human rights norms and standards. I increasingly

found that my embrace of these ideals and experience living abroad branded me as an 'outsider'. Using Puwar's (2004) term, I increasingly felt as if I were a 'space invader' in my homeland.

I began working at a for-profit university to bring American curriculum to India, Germany, the Netherlands, Brazil and Mexico. In this role, I was charged with adapting US curriculum to international contexts. The position was exciting in that I was able to travel to many of these countries and work with local academics. However, I was confronted with the frustration that academics abroad experienced when they were compelled to deliver classes whose objectives had been determined in advance by US 'experts' and then attached to content provided by powerful publishers. My role was to help 'localise' the curriculum to these diverse contexts. The reality was that there was often little room for local academics to provide their own take on the curriculum. In reality, it often felt like I was facilitating a new form of colonialism. In this role, I experienced first-hand how international higher education policies aligned with neoliberal objects could function as a new form of colonialism when applied from a position of power. When in an organisational restructure I was called on to justify my role, I was unable to extol its merits.

For the next ten years, I worked as an adjunct faculty member teaching politics and intercultural perspectives in person and online 'part-time' living between Germany and Australia. As a for-profit higher education provider, my university was on the forefront of universities casualising academic jobs. Allmer describes such positions as 'precarious, always-on and flexible'(Allmer, 2018). My students were working adults who had missed out university in their youth. Some were US soldiers, many were single parents, many had multiple jobs, many were Hispanic, African Americans, Native Americans, Asian, some were housewives and others came from 'white' middle-class America. The vast majority hoped to be the first in their family to earn a college degree. I enjoyed working with these adults who taught me a great deal, but I was hoping to pursue a doctorate, so I began looking for opportunities to pursue higher research at this time.

I connected with a rural school in Cambodia whose parents had lived through the horrors of the Khmer Rouge who was seeking to bring innovative education to young people through its English curriculum. I thought I might not only help the children break out of the cycle of

poverty by developing metacognitive skills so they might 'think about their own thinking', but also developing skills which might pave the way to democratic attitudes. The presumptions driving this desire to cultivate democratic attitudes were presumptions I would later need to unpack after Trump came to power and Brexit. This is when I began to question if even the liberal democratic West truly had the democratic attitudes it often promoted to countries beyond its borders.

As these vignettes exemplify, I have often found myself situated at the intersection of multiple identities and competing conceptions of politics, democracy, education, rights and economics. At times I have been in a position of power a 'white', American, native-English-speaker linked to a colonial past. At other times I have been disempowered as a woman, as a mother, as a casualised academic, as a rural student without the financial means to attend university, as a 'progressive' living in a state dominated by conservative politics and as a resident 'alien' unable to participate in elections in Germany and Australia.

### 1.3.2 How I came to this research

I first encountered the competences for democratic culture in 2016 while living in Germany as a US citizen and volunteering at a 'temporary' refugee village. My task was to help young refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia and Nigeria with their homework as part of a local integration initiative. While the optimistic ideals extoled in the Framework were at first appealing to me, it soon became clear that implementing the competences in an environment with diverse asylum seekers from diverse circumstances who had no clearly defined rights would have been problematic from an ethics perspective. As asylum-seekers, many of the families I was working with were caught in a legal grey area between various human rights conventions and had no guarantee that they would be able to remain (Grigonis, 2017). In 2016, there was substantial political pressure to return asylum seekers to so-called 'safe areas' in Afghanistan where they had few family networks and would be stigmatized and potentially targeted by the Taliban upon return (Majidi, 2017).

I found myself at the intersection of a number of complex subject-positions in this role. On one hand, my directive was to help 'integrate' the children into the local school system in terms

of culture and language while helping them complete homework. As Walters and Holzberg note, humanitarian workers who help facilitate such processes often create their own implicit 'humanitarian border' and thus play a key role in deciding who can stay and who must go (Holzberg, 2021; R. Walters, 2017). I was also an American citizen. This meant that my own country had been directly involved in the conflicts many of the asylum seekers I was working with were fleeing. I was also somewhat of an outsider myself in this environment. Being a 'white' American female who spoke English gave me advantages from a position of power that other newcomers did not have. Yet, it also meant that I was sometimes viewed with suspicion by the integration team for not quite understanding the 'German values' I was charged with imparting on the children.

### 1.3.3 From the 'white saviour complex' to unpacking the Framework

Teju Cole describes the 'White Savior [sic] industrial complex' as 'the fastest growth industry in the US… [which] supports brutal policies in the morning, founds charities in the afternoon, and receives awards in the evening'(Cole, 2012) . Playing on Hannah Arendt's phrase, the 'banality of evil' he writes that there is also a 'banality of sentimentality' which must be acknowledged (Cole, 2012). He explains that its objective is to 'satisfy the needs of white people and Oprah', and to have emotional experiences that 'validate privilege'. He emphasizes that the industry focused on the injustice of warlords, but not on America's own injustices pursued in the name of peace including the or the '1.5 million Iraqis who died' in America's 'war of choice'(Cole, 2012). In this respect, he warns that this practice can be deadly.

The more I began to reflect on the ethics of conducting research with asylum seekers from divergent linguistic, cultural and religious circumstances or even to return to Cambodia, the more I realized that my own subject-position made doing so ethically problematic. How could I be certain that I was not essentially positioning myself as a 'white saviour' to these children (2012)? How could I be sure that I would not impart my own values or anxieties on learners or that I was not merely 'mining' the experience vulnerable subjects for my own benefit? How could I be sure that the children would actually benefit from this research? Importantly, did the CoE, US or any other country in the West truly know what education for democratic was or was it a mere utopia? I eventually came to the conclusion that unpacking the competences from a theoretical/philosophical perspective might help me to engage with these questions. At the

same time, my homeland was becoming increasingly polarized and I realized that considering the Framework through a philosophical lens might help me consider its causes and potential solutions.

### 1.3.4 Motivation

The motivation for this thesis is driven by a genuine concern for the the democratic ideal and the injustice I have witnessed in my lifetime all carried out in the name of 'democracy'. If tensions and contradictions arise in this thesis, it also stems from my own inner conflict between my belief in this ideal and dissatisfaction with injustice carried out in the name of democracy. Over the past ten years, I have witnessed my own family and friendships becoming increasingly fragmented and split into political and cultural camps between 'them' and 'us'. In my view, this is not because of any essential differences between us, although our different life circumstances and education clearly plays a role, but because it suits political and journalistic interests to suture divides among citizen-consumers in the service of political and financial gain. In this sense, this thesis represents a deeply personal journey. The intent is therefore not to undermine the work that has gone into constructing the Framework. Rather, it is my own attempt to consider how the Framework might be applied in increasingly fragmented contexts using the concept of 'hidden utopias'. My further hope is that it can be harnessed from a bottom-up perspective, rather implemented by those in power to reproduce relationships of power.

### 1.3.5 A personal utopia

Since this is a thesis about 'hidden utopias', it is important for me to acknowledge my own utopian aspirations. Growing up during the Cold War in the frontier mentality of the American West, I worried incessantly that an irrational, non-democratic 'other' might target my hometown with nuclear weapons. To cope with these fears, as a child, I developed an imaginary world- a perfect world which I could retreat to when I was feeling anxious. I imagined this world would be built inside a large glass dome in Antarctica where a paradise of greenery would keep my fellow citizens and I sheltered from the outside world and international conflict.

Money would not be needed and agricultural production would be communal and flourish. In my mind, this world would be a democracy, but there were no term limits to my rule, there was no press to speak of or even the possibility of 'fake news', no elections and I could decide who would be let in and who would be kept out. Like most utopias, it was problematic and it was more perhaps more accurately described as a benevolent dictatorship. However, it was my way of processing complex political realities that I could not fully understand and it offered me a sense of hope that an alternate future was possible. Indeed, it was reflecting on this world in conjunction with this research, which led me to consider how 'utopianism' might provide a useful lens through which to view the Framework and present political realities in the first place. It also gave me an awareness that we can all lean into authoritarian solutions when we are fearful or confused by political realities.

As an adult, I have presumably learned to be objective, rational and unbiased when it comes to matters of how democracy or democratic culture might best be conceptualized, yet I recognize I still embrace utopianism in my democratic ideal. It is a utopianism which gives me hope for the future of democracy, but it also something that I need to be constantly prepared to unpack. My strongest desire at present is for a more peaceful world (something which is increasingly allusive), a 'just' world (thought how I define that may differ from others), one which embraced compassion and where decisions are made by communities working together at the neighbourhood level with an eye for the global consequences of local action, a world where we view our relationship to others and our embodied selves in a more connected and compassionate way which will hopefully lead us to a sustainable, survivable future. I believe indigenous people have much to teach us regarding our approach to nature, time and community. Importantly, I view all these ideas to be an opening or a point of departure for engaging with with others regarding their aspirations for the future, rather than a definitive solution.

I furthermore agree with Claeys vision of a post-consumerist society when he argues that any vision of society to come must be both environmentally sustainable and desirable in some way (Claeys, 2022 pp.500-507). In this view the promotion of future austerity is less likely to bring citizens together in working towards a common cause. Drawing inspiration from Charles Fourier (1772-1837), Claeys proposes a future where festivals, green spaces, musical entertainment and opportunities for self-fulfilment that are sustainable (Claeys, 2022 pp). I find these ideas to be inspirational and a good place to begin discussions, but not the only or best

solution. Indeed, I maintain that any utopia proposed from a position of power, risks closing down debate on what democracy or democratic culture might become. For this reason, I believe it is important to remain open and listen to others, particularly those who stem from marginalized positions, so that utopia can serve as a means for those whose utopian aspirations have typically been silenced to speak 'truth to power'(Foucault, 2007b).

### 1.3.4 Method of research and how positionality is addressed

Foucault's conception of power and genealogical interrogation of modernity has proven to be especially useful in the quest to understand how power often operates to undermine the promise of democracy in this thesis. What I discovered from this research reflecting on myself, in the dreams shared with me by refugees, Cambodian children, working adults and from my peers was the pervasive role that utopia plays in what democracy and society is imagined to be and its ideal subject. This led me to consider how the framework might be approached through the lens of 'hidden utopias' as a way of addressing any gaps or silences in the Framework, but also for helping educators, researchers and learners engage with their own implicit utopias when it comes to democratic education. I unpack the details of my method in Chapter Two.

Next, I needed to address my positionality. While it would be impossible to be completely unbiased in attempting such a critique, I took several steps to overcome potential biases throughout my thesis. First, I consulted a broad range of literature across multiple disciplines in the hopes of gaining a broader view on democracy outside my own. I drew from material across a number fields including democratic education, intercultural communication, philosophy, law, political theory, history and utopian studies. Most of the material consulted was written in English. However, I did consult a few articles written in German. I drew heavily from European, British and Australian philosophy, much of it stemming from the continental tradition since this thesis is approached with the continental lens in mind. I further consulted literature attempting to decolonise Western ideas regarding democracy and Western conceptions of the present. This includes work by Seyla Benhabib (Benhabib, 2006c; Benhabib et al., 2010), Partha Chaterjee (Chaterjee, 2015), bell Hooks (hooks, 1989; Hooks, 1994,Saba Mahmood (Mahmood, 2011), Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Moreton-Robinson, 2015), Edward Said(Said, 2019; S), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (Santos, 2015), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Spivak, 1988), and Ann Stoler (Stoler, 1995) to name a few. I was able to build on my research

on race and racism from my Master's degree (Craig, 1997). I found the *Edinburgh Companion to the History of Democracy*, which seeks to trouble Western dominant discourse on democracy's history to be particularly helpful. It highlights research on democratic history from Africa to the Middle East, to China and premodern Europe to indigenous peoples in Oceania and the Americas.

Furthermore, I turned to key historic and philosophical literature to compare and contrast present conceptions of democracy to those of the past in order to unpack their utopian aspirations and consider how these discourses and the technologies they produced might still play a role in modern democracy. This method was drawn from Foucault's invitation to search for threads of continuity and discontinuity in how discourses and 'truths' both evolve over time and produce different relationships to power.

Finally, I turned to friends and colleagues from diverse political, cultural and racial backgrounds who have helped guide me in this journey and helped to enlighten me to my own biases in the process. Many of the ideas expressed in this thesis came out of these discussions including the insidious nature of racism through daily microaggressions. Other friends reminded me of the need to leave room for discussions on non-Western perspectives of democracy and democratic culture. The idea of 'hidden utopias' was further born out of a desire to trouble dominant conceptions of democracy and democratic culture and make room for bringing new ideas regarding what democracy might be or become into democratic and intercultural situations.

This thesis begins with the premise that there is no way to truly stand outside utopia, nor is it desirous to do so. Rather, it assumes that what is needed in an increasingly polarized present is the ability to recognize the powerful role that utopia plays in democratic discourse, critically engage with it and re-imagine what democracy or democratic culture might become. It thus begins with the assumption that any democratic education which aims to address utopianism in democratic culture would necessarily need to help cultivate these attitudes and capacities.

## 1.4 Research questions and benefits of this research

The Secretary General of the CoE, Thorbjørn Jagland, explains that the aim of this set of competences 'is not to teach students what to think, but rather how to think, in order to navigate a world where not everyone holds their views, but [where] we each have a duty to uphold the democratic principles which allow all cultures to co-exist' (Barrett & Council of Europe, 2016 p.7). I share this vision. However, I suggest that to move beyond the growing polarization in liberal democracies it is important to engage with any implicit utopias in the Framework and elsewhere that might be discerned at play.

Accordingly, this thesis seeks to answer the following:
1. How might using hidden utopias as a theoretical lens facilitate a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of the Framework?
2. What the history of the CoE and how is this history relevant to understanding the Framework's object and purpose?"
3. How might implicit utopias be discerned at play in the Framework and why might they be problematic?
4. How do these theories shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical contexts?

The benefits of this research are numerous. First, it is aimed at problematizing the Framework so that educators using the Framework can recognize utopias at play in the Framework and elsewhere and critically engage with them. Second, it is potentially useful for educators who would like to harness the Framework to help empower learners to engage individually and collaboratively with utopianism in critical and creative ways. One way of potentially overcoming these tendencies is to cultivate the capacity in learners to recognize utopias at play in discourse and in their own lives. Another is to have learners work critically together to imagine different futures while remaining mindful of who or what they may inadvertently privilege or exclude. Thirdly, it helps to make visible the long-standing relation between democracy, education and utopian aspirations. The view taken here is that the aspiration for utopia is neither good nor bad. Rather, as Foucault's theories suggest, utopian aspirations are most problematic when left implicit because they can be used to govern subjects while purporting to facilitate freedom. Finally, it can provide a potential means and justification for

foregrounding philosophy and philosophical questions in democratic and intercultural education

### 1.5 Structure

In Chapter Two, I develop the conceptual lens of 'hidden utopias'. It aims to answer my first research question of how using the concept of hidden utopias as a theoretical lens might facilitate a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of the Framework? It begins by explaining Bloch and Levitas' conception of utopia, how utopianism can be understood in terms of Foucault's theories and finally how these relate to the conceptual lens of 'hidden utopias' used in this study.

Chapter Three seeks to answer my second research question regarding what the specific histories of the CoE and is and how this history is relevant to understanding the Framework's object and purpose? I pay particular attention to the CoE's choice to emphasize intercultural competences over multiculturalism.

Chapter Four, seeks to answer my third research question be considering how implicit utopias might be discerned at play in the Framework and why might they be problematic? I turn to Foucault' 1975-1976 lectures on *Society Must be Defended* here, which helps make visible key visions of society and discursive threads from history which continue to shape what democracy and democratic culture is imagined to be as well as its expected trajectory. To this end, I discern four key conceptions of society or 'utopia' that can be discerned within the Framework. These include the Hobbesian utopia, the Humanist Utopia, the Romantic Utopia and finally the scientific/biopolitical utopia.

In Chapter Five, I address my fourth research question regarding how the results of the previous chapters might shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical contexts. This includes distinguishing 'hidden utopias' from the hidden curriculum, considering how the concept might be applied to content-oriented and process-oriented utopias. I consider how Foucault's theories ethics might be applicable to personal utopias in educational settings. I further consider how archaeology, genealogy, ontology and architecture might be used in classrooms to critically engage with utopia and utopianism. Finally, I address potential dangers.

In Chapter Six, I present a discussion where I summarize key findings, discuss what might be problematic about the utopias disclosed and what possibilities they might reveal. I further engage with emerging critiques of the Framework by placing this research within the context of that literature.

I conclude by summing up the thesis, highlighting potential limitations and pointing towards directions for possible future research.

## 1.6 Chapter Summary

Every crisis brings with it the opportunity to rethink who we are and what we are aiming for. Yet, in the neoliberal rational, the discourse of crisis is typically harnessed to promise a cure to societal ills through governmental interventions. Such interventions can render opaque the histories which have helped to produce the discourses adopted and who or what they privilege. This thesis aims to excavate these discourse in order to help learners recognize these discourses at play, think beyond them and imagine a different kind of future. The following chapters aim to unpack the ideals underpinning the CoE's Framework with the hope of helping educators and learners engage with the Framework in critical and creative ways.

# Chapter 2: Theorising 'Hidden Utopias'

This chapter describes the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of "hidden utopias" and how they are useful as a conceptual lens for analysing the Framework. In so doing, it brings together Foucault's (Foucault, 1982, 1991b, 1991a, 2001, 2020) theories of governmentality, subjectivity, and resistance into conversation with Ernst Bloch's (1986) and Ruth Levitas' (2013) conceptualizations of utopia as an unconscious desire. The aim is to demonstrate the compatibility between the ideas of these three thinkers, and to examine how this convergence can generate a useful lens through which to view the CDC Model and the Framework.

Where utopia has long been associated with 'irrelevant fantasies', a literary genre or a blueprint for totalitarianism leading to violence, Bloch and Levitas seek broaden understanding of utopia, by conceptualizing utopia first and foremost as the desire for a better world(Bloch, 1986; Levitas, 2010, 2013). Foucault's theories add a critical bent to these conceptions by making visible the role that utopia and utopianism can play in governing subjectivities through discourse.

In this chapter, I strive to answer how using hidden utopias as a theoretical lens might facilitate a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of the Framework? I begin this chapter by defining utopia, utopianism and utopian studies, I identify key points in Bloch's conception of utopia. I then consider how this conception can be applied to Foucault's theories. I outline Levitas' conception of utopia as method and connect these to Foucault's theories. Finally, I provide a theory of 'hidden utopias', which I suggest can be used in two ways: first to problematize utopianism in discourse and second, to help make visible possibilities for critical engagement with utopianism in educational settings.

## 2.1 Defining utopia, utopianism and 'hidden utopias'

More's Utopia was published at a time when explorers were still discovering new lands and it was still possible to imagine that explorers might one day discover a society more perfect than their own. Once every corner of the planet had been explored, that same drive to imagine a better society that might exist 'out there' was transferred to an imagined future towards which society might progress (Moir, 2018). More's classic text thus set the template for those who

wished to use the genre as a critical commentary on their own society while imagining how that society might be made better(More, 2012). As noted in the previous chapter, utopia played a prominent role in helping enlightened thinkers like Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau speculate about society and help to imagine modern conception of democracy and democratic education into being.

For Bloch, utopia is expressed in the desire for what is 'not yet' in the world and the unconscious drive to satisfy that longing (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). In Bloch's conception, the desire for a better world can be seen at play in daydreams or longings that are infused in symbolic form, including in fairy tales, novels, fashion, music, political discourse etc. In this view, utopian discourse can be discerned in almost every product of human culture, which includes education policy.

In a similar vein, Levitas describes Utopia as, 'the expression of the desire for a better way of being or of living.... as such [it] is braided through human culture' (Levitas, 2013 p.xii). Levitas builds on Bloch's definition by theorising that it can be harnessed as a method for social analysis. Levitas emphasizes that her approach does not attempt to invent a method from scratch. Instead it,

> *identifies processes that are already entailed in utopian speculation, in utopian scholarship and in transformative politics and indeed in social theory itself. It names methods that are already in play with the intention of clarifying and encouraging them (Levitas, 2014 p.iv).*

Both Levitas and Bloch situate utopia as the desire for the world to be different than it is which emerges in the gap between the promises of society and reality. It is also the gap between reality and its promise which arguably helps to makes utopia an intrinsic and ever-pervasive feature of democracy. As noted, for the Derrida and in my own conception, democracy is understood to be an ideal that is never achieved in the present. To this end, democracy always exists as an aspirational ideal 'to come' (Derrida, 2004, 2006).

Utopian studies itself is an interdisciplinary field with diverse conceptualisations that traverses the fields as diverse as philosophy, history, political science, psychology, literary studies, architecture, environmental studies etc. Given the long-standing relationship between utopia, democracy and democratic education, there is a surprising dearth of studies which seek to

unpack the utopian discourses in such policy. To my knowledge, the only other researcher who has sought to bring Foucault and Levitas theories to bear on education policy is Van Dermijnsbrugge and Chatelier's recent article on using Utopia as Method to analyse the policy of the OECD (Van Dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022).

As noted in the previous chapter, Sargent suggests that there are three 'faces' of utopian studies. These include (i) those which approach utopian studies as a social theory, (ii) those which approach it as a literary genre and finally, (iii) those which are concerned with utopian practice in experimental communities (Sargent, 1994). Levitas and Bloch's approach falls within the first approach in that it strives to locate utopianism in society while Levitas' theories provide a method for doing so. What has not yet been sufficiently explores is how utopia might be used as a tool for critically and creatively engaging with utopian in democratic and intercultural situations.

To this end, the concept of 'hidden utopias' serves two key functions: Firstly, it can function as a conceptual lens for making explicit the unconscious role that utopianism often plays in the formation and implementation of education policy. Secondly, it can potentially be used in classrooms to help educators and learners critically and creatively engage with any implicit utopias in policy, in public discourse or in personal spheres. The idea that utopias are 'hidden' implies they must first be detected, then critically engaged with in terms of considering their possible merits and dangers potentially acted on.

Utopias are conceptualised here as neither good nor bad. Instead, it is their potential uses and misuses in democratic and intercultural education, which is the concern of this thesis. To this end, the concept of 'hidden utopias' is designed to serve as a critical lens for revealing the unsaid in the stories we accept about how the present came to be, the desired futures attached to those stories and how these discourses work to shape and govern behaviour. To fully understand this concept, it is necessary to provide more detail on the specific contribution each of these thinkers makes to the concept of utopia.

## 2.2 Bloch's concept of utopia as unconscious desire

Bloch was born in the industrial town of Ludwigshafen, Germany in 1885 (Bloch, 1986). Having been brought up during the Industrial Revolution meant that he witnessed first-hand how capitalism brought prosperity to some and misery to countless 'others'. Bloch recognised that all forms of Western society since the Enlightenment had depended on the utopian desire for a better world. Indeed, he argued that it is this desire, coupled with what is lacking in the world, which is the fundamental driving force behind progress and change in human history (Moir, 2018).

Bloch's *Principle of Hope* was first published in 1954 in German. It was only translated into English in 1986, shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of what Brown describes as a 'politics of fatalism' (W. Brown, 2004). Though it was written over a half a century ago, there are numerous aspects which make it especially relevant to the modern context. This is because many of the assertions Bloch makes are directly applicable to a world where misinformation is on the rise and where far-right parties and xenophobic policies are gaining a foothold in liberal democracies around the globe. To that end, it is worth noting that a *Principle of Hope* was written as a response to Bloch's own experience with fascism as a Jewish/German philosopher in exile, his subsequent expulsion from Communist East Germany after disagreeing East Germany's interpretation of Marxism and his antipathy for American Capitalism. He is said to have lamented that America would likely one day become be the inheritor of the fascism he had sought to escape in Europe (Bloch, 1986 v.1 p.xxiv).

Bloch recognised how capitalism simultaneously produced utopian desire while leaving individuals partially satiated and hungering for more. Bloch observed that capitalism cultivates an endless cycle of desires and solutions which leave consumers only temporarily satisfied (Moir, 2018). This ensures that consumers will return next month for the next gadget, the latest fashion or more corporate training.

While Bloch was loosely connected to the Frankfurt School, his philosophy was not directly influenced by it, nor did it have a strong influence on the Frankfurt School's members. Bloch is said to have had the strongest influence on Adorno. However, Bloch was critical of Adorno's failure to consider utopia as a possible tool for enabling social transformation (Bielik-Robson, 2019).

Bloch never gave up hope for Marxism. However, his approach radically differed from the standard Marxist line in the early twentieth century. Moir (2018) explains that Bloch divided Marxism into two different streams: there was first the cold stream of Marxism which would come to be the dominant approach. This stream remained sceptical of metaphysical desires and was firmly committed to 'unmasking' ideologies. Secondly, there was the warm stream of Marxism. This stream rejected revolution through violence and tended to be more hopeful (Moir, 2018 p.6). Bloch belonged to this second stream. He was an avid proponent of peace. For Bloch, it was the human desire for what was not-yet in the world, or rather, the desire for Utopia, which was the fundamental driving force of human history (Bloch, 1986).

*The Principle of Hope* was originally titled *Dreams of a Better World* and it is described in the English edition as 'an encyclopaedia of human hopes for the world from the Ancient Greeks to present' (Bloch, 1986 xviii). Moir argues that the primary aim of this compendium was to change the way people thought about Utopia. She suggests that Bloch achieved this in three ways: First, he viewed utopia as a tendency to aim for perfection within the very fabric of reality. Second, he viewed human culture to be a latent product of this drive towards perfection. As such, it could be used to, 'read and realize the world's latent potential' (Moir, 2018 p.4). In other words, the possibility of a better world could be discerned in human cultural outputs as varied as daydreams, fiction, cinema, poetry, fairy tales, architecture, fashion, music, advertising and philosophical treaties (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). Third, he believed that 'by activating the unfulfilled claims of the past in this way, we can work towards creating a future of peace, plenty, and harmony with nature' (Moir, p.4). In this sense, Bloch maintained the belief that a better world continued to smoulder even in the most dire of circumstances.

At the same time, Bloch also recognised the danger of darker fantasies. These might be discerned in criminal fantasies of achieving the good life, in fascism and in the Klu Klux Klan, who promote fantasies of white racial superiority (Bloch, 1986). If Bloch were alive today, he might discern these dangers in QAnon's fantasy of a 'Great Awakening', in the dreams of making one's nation somehow 'great' again, or in the desire to return to a world where humans utilize only 'natural medicine' and seek to 'trust' in their own immune systems. Each of these fantasies demarcates a clear boundary between who or what belongs and who or what should be kept out.

Bloch furthermore makes the distinction between *abstract* and *concrete utopias*. Abstract utopias do not challenge the status quo or are mere fantasies with no means of being realized—

for example, the dream of winning the lottery (Bloch, 1986). In the case of abstract utopias then, nothing changes except one's personal circumstances (Levitas, 2010 p. 15). These are fantasies which do not question the current the social order, but instead desire a better position within the social order. Concrete utopias, by contrast, are those which pose a fundamental change to society as it is currently constructed, exploring what is possible within an emerging future. Martin Luther King's *I Have a Dream* speech provided such a specific and concrete vision. King's desire was that his 'four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color [sic] of their skin, but by the content of their character' (King Jr, 1963). Even though this vision has not yet been achieved, it encompasses a concrete ideal of an anticipated future that continues to serve as inspiration to countless citizens around the world.

There are echoes of Freud in Bloch's philosophy, though Bloch differs to Freud in his approach to the unconscious. Like Freud, Bloch believed human culture to be a product of unconscious desire. Unlike Freud, Bloch did not emphasize repressed memories. Instead, he was interested in the 'not-yet conscious' or 'preconscious' utopian desires for the future (Moir, 2018). This might be expressed as the desire to return to an imagined past or country that never was, or it might be for a future that is decidedly more just, more technologically, or more economically or socially 'advanced' than any society which has come before it. Such desires take shape in symbolic form in everything from novels to television series, in travellers' tales, fairy tales, political theories, slogans, fashion, music and even advertising (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018).

The daydream plays an important role in Bloch's work. Moir emphasizes five key features in Bloch's conception of the daydream: (1) an active ego, where dreamer is understood to be an active participant. This presents a stark contrast to the passive experience of the Freudian nightmare where the therapist can interpret and diagnose the patient; (2) the daydream is freely chosen; (3) the utopian daydreams are those daydreams which aim for world improvement, in contrast to those where the world remains the same, but only one's status within the world improves so that fantasies of adoration or revenge do not count in Bloch's view as concrete utopias; (4) the utopian daydream is accompanied by an implicit drive towards that utopia's attainment; and (5) in contrast to nightdreams, the utopian daydream has a goal (Moir, 2018 p.9) Importantly, the wishful desire for a better world contain with them a minimal conception regarding 'what is to be done' (Moir, 2018 p.10).

Dewey (2016) recognises a similar impulse in human thought. Dewey emphasises on how imaginary worlds can create a contradiction between (a) an acted out complacency to current circumstances in the actual world, and (b) a rejection of societal rules in the realm of what is imagined. In *Democracy and Education*, he writes:

> *When we find the successful display of our energies checked by uncongenial surroundings, natural and social, the easiest way out is to build castles in the air and let them be a substitute for an actual achievement which involves the pains of thought. So in overt action we acquiesce, and build up an imaginary world in, mind* (Dewey, 2016 loc 5499).

Such drives are first felt as at a basic level as a loathing or craving against, or for, something even before that feeling begins to become invested in a Utopian ideal (Bloch, 1986 p. 71).

For Bloch, utopia is suffused with emotions generated by how likely it is that that utopia is to be achieved or experienced by an individual (Moir, 2018). He suggests that the utopian urge begins its life as a 'naked striving' or an unsatisfied wish, and that there are two forms of emotion which underpin the drive towards a utopian goal (Bloch, 1986 pp.45-47). These are firstly, emotions generated out of rejection, which might include emotions generated by the rejection of a parental figure, rejection in love, rejection in one's job or status etc. Such emotions can become expressed through secondary emotions of fear, anger, contempt or hate. The second form of emotions are those of inclination, expressed as, for example, contentment, generosity, trust or love. Additionally, confused and even contradictory emotional impulses can occur. Revenge can operate in this manner, for example, one might strive to glorify the self at the expense of those who are perceived to have done harm (Bloch, 1986 pp.45-47).

Bloch notes that emotions driven out of rejection are typically given a lower-order status, while those which are invested towards inclinations are given a higher order status by the perceiver (Bloch, 1986 p,73). However, he argues, neither form is more or less truthful; each is generated by a particular experience of society (Bloch, 1986). Thus, a recognition of this utopian longing as a basic driving force in human endeavours can be a useful guide for understanding societal failings and the potential that lies dormant within them. Given the deeply felt nature of utopian hopes then, Bloch's conception of utopian longing is an embodied, ever-changing experience, given one's life, stage of life and circumstances. This is because the attainment of utopian desires, and the actualization of a better world, can appear more or less achievable depending

on one's circumstances, including age, level of education and/or social status. The utopian longings of the young differ from utopian longings of the middle-aged and utopian longings of the elderly (Bloch, 1986 pp.29-35). Similarly, utopian desire differs according to one's economic or social privilege.

In this sense, utopias are deeply emotional. Research into emotion and cognition has begun to take seriously the role that emotion and affect play in the development of culture and cognition. Asma and Gabriel argue that the roots of cultural expressions which make us feel most human are grounded in feelings of 'caring, longing, fear, loneliness, awe, rage, lust, [and] playfulness' (Asma & Gabriel, 2019). For Bloch, these are the very forms of culture and feelings that become saturated with Utopian desire. Importantly, for Bloch, the most powerful driving human emotion is that of hope (Bloch, 1986 p.75).

Against Freud, Bloch contends that hope is a stronger driving force than trauma, hunger or even sex. Rather, Bloch argues that it is hope which compels individuals forward— the *expectation* of overcoming deprivation rather than the trauma itself (Bloch, 1986 p.11). In this manner, hope and utopian striving 'become a directing act of a cognitive kind', where emotion, cognition and action meet (1986, p.12). Hence, it is not only important to recognise how and what humans crave, but what they wish for, and how wishes can become 'stamped' into ideas about how things should be, or how they might be otherwise. Even when there is recognition that nothing can be done about a particular longing, the wish remains (Bloch, 1986). These wishes can become attached to wanting, and become a 'driving method' for that which comes to be desired (Bloch, 1986 p.46-47).

It is in interpreting the production of the wish, conceptualised here as utopian longing, that I suggest Foucault's theories are particularly relevant. As mentioned, wishful images contain within them a suggestion as to 'what is to be done' (Moir, p.10). Bloch writes,

> *Bare desire and its drive principally hold on to what they have, but the wishing in them that pictures intends more. It remains unsatisfiable, that is, nothing that exists gives it proper satisfaction. In all of this, drive as definite striving, as a desire for something, remains alive (Bloch, 1986 p.47).*

In this way, Bloch conceptualises the hope for a better world as an unfulfilled desire that has evolved into a driving impulse or 'definite striving'. Moreover, Bloch views this utopian

impulse to be a driving force in both history and culture (Bloch, 1986). In contrast to traditional Marxists, Bloch recognised the value of folk culture and longing for traditions of the past. He notes, for example, how the desire for '*heimat'* was significant during the German Industrial Revolution, where the notion of 'home' in the German tradition came to connote the innocence of childhood and an idyllic way of life on the land steeped in folk traditions (Bloch, 1986 p.529). Bloch understood how this longing had been effectively hijacked by the Nazi party to promote a nationalist agenda, which was oddly coupled with the promise of a technologically modern Utopian future (Moir, 2010 p.3)

Moreover, unlike traditional Marxists, Bloch was unusual in taking seriously the need for humans to engage with metaphysical questions (Moir, 2018). As Moir puts it, Bloch recognised metaphysical ideas ' as perhaps the oldest and most widespread form of utopianism' (2010, p.10). Beilik-Robson observes that even though Bloch described himself as an atheist, he believed that the fantasies promoted by religions contained within them some of the most 'daring' and 'bold' projects that had ever been imagined (Bielik-Robson, 2019). Indeed, Bloch argued that religion was not inherently antithetical to the Enlightenment project. Rather, he viewed it to be fundamental to discussions about how society might be made better. In this sense, Bloch believed that religion needed to be treated as fundamental to the project of hope rather than rejected outright as inherently totalitarian or backward.

Plaice, Plaice and Knight argue in their preface to *Bloch's Principle of Utopia* (1986) that Bloch was not seeking to bring into being any totalizing vision of utopia. Rather, his aim was to promote engagement with the utopian daydreams of everyday citizens to confront the effects of empire, fascism and avoid war. They write,

> *From the beginning, [Bloch] was a tireless opponent of imperialism, fascism and war. From very early on, he was aware of the potential of nuclear weapons, of the negative Ultimum, of the destruction to which man's scientific innovations could be turned (in Bloch, 1986 p.50)*

Thus, Bloch's attention to utopian yearning in 1954 are every bit as relevant today as they were then. With the rise of populism, racism and Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine, dangers which were believed to have been resolved have once again emerged as genuine threats to democracy and life on the planet. These authors further state that,

> *'The Principle of Hope', Bloch's central work, is a historical and collective statement of hope against this annihilation, but also a practical guide to living in late capitalist society, in cultural decline, where the possibility of a truly human society seems remote and the dominant emotion is fear* (Plaice et. al. in Bloch, 1986 xxxiii)

To this end, they argue that Bloch's theories offer up 'a socialist theory of emotions based instead on the strongest of human emotions—hope' (in Bloch, 1986 p.50). In this thesis, I argue that it is therefore crucial to keep the future open by thinking beyond discourses that trigger emotions and merely repeat the ideological battles of past generations. To this end, I argue that bringing Bloch's broad conception of utopia into conversation with Foucault and Levitas can be of great value.

## 2.3 Engaging with utopianism with Foucault

Foucault's theories lay the foundation for exploring how Bloch's and Levitas' conceptions of Utopia can be applied to reveal 'hidden utopias'. Foucault describes his theories as a 'toolbox' of concepts and methods which can be used by researchers to problematize taken-for-granted assumptions and practices in the present (Garland, 2014 p.366). Foucault thus carefully avoids providing any form of an overarching grand theory or explanation about the world at large in his work—there is no distinguishable or absolute 'Foucauldian Theory' *as such* (Olssen, 2007). Instead, his books, lectures and interviews provide various concepts and methods for uncovering how regimes of truth come to constitute subjects in the West. However, it is up to the user to choose which might be used and how they might be applied (Garland, 2014).

The emphasis on 'the West' matters, because Foucault is primarily known to be a scholar of the peculiarities of *modern*, 'Western' culture (Helliwell & Hindess, 1999; Stoler, 1995). Some have criticized Foucault for overemphasising the difference between Western and non-Western cultures (see Helliwell & Hindes, 1999 p.3). However, by re-framing the modern 'West' as a product of a specific history which is *peculiar* to a time and context, Foucault's methods provide a means for researchers to step outside the monolithic perspective of Western modernity and critically engage with its own constructs including democracy and what is imagined to be 'democratic culture'.

## 2.3.1 Historicizing the present

For Foucault, it is necessary to historicize the present in order to understand how the current dominant logic or systems of truths came to be accepted as 'true' and 'normal' in the first place. Foucault sought over his lifetime to reconstruct various histories, such as those of the asylum, the clinic, the prison and sexuality, in order to make strange these institutions, practices and institutions of power. In a similar manner, he sought to reveal how specialized 'technologies of the self' related to the practices of these institutions came to be normalised and re-appropriated in new contexts(Foucault, 1982). For example, Jeremy Bentham's *panopticon*, where the structure of a prison enabled all prisoners to be seen at all times, never actually existed in the real world. However, the basic concept brought into play a modern method of governing prisoners, the infirm, students, workers etc. who would regulate their own behaviour through the sense that they were constantly under regulation (Foucault, 1991a).

The point of Foucault's histories was to show that the present is *contingent*. This contingency means that present constructions of society are more the result of happenstance than the expected result of an inevitable unfolding of stages in the development of civilisation (Koopman, 2013). Crucially, Foucault suggests that present societal structures and mechanism of power, as structures that are accepted as natural and normal, could have been otherwise constructed (Foucault, 2002, 2020; Koopman, 2013).In other words, the electoral processes, accountability and accessibility of political representatives, the mechanisms and institutions through which truths are constructed, normalisation of those who are deemed to be representative of the populous, and relationships with nature and Indigenous peoples are all aspects of society that could have been otherwise imagined and brought into being. This is a theme which is reiterated throughout Foucauldian scholarship.

The idea that the present is contingent supports Bloch's notion of the 'not-yet' that exists within the world—i.e. that which is indicative of what is missing in the world. This aspect of 'not yet' indicates that while something may not be in the world, it remains possible (Moir, 2018 p.6). Koopman and Lorenzini (Koopman, 2013; Lorenzini, 2020) make the point that although Foucault's theories tend to be used as tools for 'problematizing the present', Foucault was equally interested in exposing the possibilities that lie dormant within histories. Lorenzini describes such use of Foucault's theories as 'possibilizing the present' (2020).

Thus, Foucault compels us to ask how does the present vision of society differ from what came before it? What it is that makes the Framework necessary, when it was not deemed necessary in the past? Moreover, what does this need say about the Framework and its possible uses/misuses? Bringing Foucault's theories into conversation with those of Levitas and Bloch can reveal how the present contains not only conceptions of history that could have been constructed otherwise, but imagined utopian futures. At the same time, this methodology helps to reveal how the Framework can be used to privilege certain expectant futures over 'other' possible conceptions, futures which might be more emancipatory or more sustainable, for example.

From a Foucauldian perspective, diagnosing the present fundamentally begins with a problem in the present, posed in the present (Foucault, 1991b; Garland, 2014; Koopman, 2013).It demands looking to the past to reveal the strangeness of current ways of thinking. The whole point of looking at the prison system for Foucault was to reveal what had become hidden in modern experience (Garland, 2014). That is, the relationships between technologies of power and knowledge had become obscured in modern ways of thinking. However, these practices were revealed to be strange by tracing how the clinic and prison came to be, and how these practices might be adopted in new contexts such as the school. In *Discipline and Punish* (1991), Foucault writes,

> *I would like to write the history of the prison, with all the political investments of the body the air gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present* (Foucault, 1991a p.30).

In addition, Foucault seeks to unveil how different eras in history adopt unconscious rules that dictate which discourses are taken seriously by thinkers in any given era. He calls these cultural-historical frames *epistemes*. In *The Order of Things* (Foucault, 2002), Foucault identifies three different historical eras through which the frames and possibilities of knowledge underwent a fundamental ontological and epistemological shift: (1) the Renaissance *episteme*; (2) the Classical *episteme*; and (3) Modern *episteme*. In his later years, as Foucault began turning to ethics, he began exploring the *episteme* of Ancient Greece.

In Foucault's hands, the modern *episteme* stands out as perhaps the strangest. Rather than relying on either a sovereign to discipline subjects, the threat of torture/humiliation/death or

Greek practices of ostracism, the modern *episteme* relies on elaborate institutions, disciplinary mechanisms and discourses to govern and manage populations(Foucault, 2002a). From Foucault's perspective, it is perhaps no coincidence that the disciplinary structures, institutions and techniques—like those of the prison and the clinic—arrive on the scene just as democracy is being re-imagined in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe and America. This is when the absolute power of the sovereign, described in Hobbes's *Leviathan*, shifts from the monarch to an abstract ideal of 'the people' (Chaterjee, 2015).

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault traces how punishment evolves from one which was a political ritual, which was designed to instil fear--by placing criminal on a scaffold for public viewing—to one which by the eighteenth century rejected torture and had to resort to more subtle techniques, which relied on a two-step process (Foucault, 1991a). First, the criminal was objectified so that they might be reconfigured as a object of power- the criminal or 'despot' who stands outside the law. The second aspect of this technique was through ideological power. Foucault quotes Servan as saying, 'A stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas' (Servan in Foucault, 1991a pp.102-103).

In Foucault's view, it was not until the classical age that the human body became an 'object and target of power' (Foucault, 1991a p.136). This is when, according to Foucault, bodies came to be understood as 'useful', 'intelligible'... and something to be 'manipulated, shaped, trained' through hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement, and examination(Foucault, 1991a Ch. 2). At the centre of these new techniques can be found the objective of producing docility. Foucault writes, "A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault, 1991a p.136). Foucault observes that these same disciplinary structures, institutions and techniques of power, originally perfected in prisons would later come be adopted elsewhere, particularly in schools (Foucault, 1991). Coincidentally at this time, the move from absolutism towards representative government paved the way to the objectification of subjects and eventually to the need for schools who could produce docile citizens who could regulate their behaviour according to societal expectations (Foucault, 2020).

For Foucault, each stage in history is limited by cultural norms, frames, discourses and what is taken to be 'known' and 'knowable' in a given era. He provides the example of how in the sixteenth century it was believed that the Divine left messages in the world to be read and interpreted by humans, in order to enable them to pass into the next world. He explains, 'the

world was a book, an open book in which one could discover the truth, or rather the truths taught themselves in the form of their reciprocal cross-references, that is to say in the form of resemblance and analogy'(Foucault, 2007b p.236). Scholarly knowledge and 'truth' in the Renaissance era thus entailed the ability to interpret the signs of God's intention for humankind's salvation in the world by discerning the resemblances of the Divine in nature. This outlook necessarily included a wider array of possible forms of knowledge, such as magic and divination, so that these signs, affinities and resemblances might be uncovered. Foucault notes that, '[d]ivination [was] not a rival body of knowledge; it is part of the main body of knowledge itself ' (Foucault, 2002 p.36).

Such epistemological Frameworks are vastly removed from the present where empirical practices rely on observation and demonstration. While sixteenth century methods of gathering knowledge about the world seem insufficient from the modern perspective, our methods of gathering scientific data to measure educational effectiveness and behavioural outcomes would likely have seemed inadequate, if not absurd, to the sixteenth century scholar(Foucault, 2002) Modern knowledge from a sixteenth century perspective arguably lacks attention to the search for deeper ontological meaning in its pursuit of knowledge.

For Foucault, the existence of the presumption that human beings can 'know' and 'be known' depends on the development of the human sciences, which emerge in the nineteenth century. After this time, the 'figure of man [*sic*]' emerges as both 'an object of knowledge and a subject that knows' (Foucault, 2002 p.340). He further writes, 'man appears in his ambiguous position as an object of knowledge and a subject that knows: enslaved sovereign, observed spectator, he appears in the place belonging to the king, which was assigned to him in advance... but from which his real presence has for so long been excluded' (2002 p.340). Herein lies the great irony of the promise of liberal democracy for Foucault. We might assume that we govern ourselves, but in reality we are subject to a whole series of mechanisms, institutions and practices which work to shape our identities and govern our behaviour according to expected norms.

Notably, Foucault is highly critical of the human sciences, which he contends were born out of the peculiar cultural frames of the modern 'West', which were ultimately designed to defend the a certain conception of 'society' and the status quo (Chaterjee, 2015; Foucault, 2002, 2020). According to Foucault, these 'sciences' must not be mistakenly understood to be *neutral* or somehow divorced from the norms, values and political concerns of the society in which they exist. In fact, as Roberts explains, the human sciences are 'thoroughly enmeshed' in these

norms, values and practices (Roberts, 2005). Moreover, they are readily harnessed to facilitate the exercise of power over subjects in order to 'refine and intensify' the monitoring, coordination and control of human beings (Roberts, 2005, pp.35- 37). However, it is not merely the monitoring and control of subjects that these sciences are implicated in. In Foucault's view, they provide the essential technologies through which humans are made to be subjects of power and produce the norms which subjects come to govern themselves by.

Foucault argues that at the very same time as the academic disciplines were being (re)formed in the nineteenth century. This is when in Foucault's view, the function of these disciplines was altered to 'defend society' or at least an imagined ideal of society, particularly in the form of the nation- state (Foucault, 2020). This idea of society, or what society must be, is in many ways similar to Bloch's conception of utopia. Utopia emerges in the gap between society's ideal and its reality. I suggest that it is through such mechanisms that the concept of society itself becomes saturated with utopian desire. This is particularly the case for modern liberal democracy, which has been described as an 'essentially contested concept' (Gallie, 1955), a 'floating signifier' (Laclau, 2018) that is understood to be 'empty' at its centre (LeFort, 1988), and takes on whatever meaning the listener would like to ascribe to it. In this understanding, the contents of the concept of modern liberal democracy are conceptualised differently by different subjects and invested with different forms of emotion depending on who is imagined to constitute 'the people' at the centre. Hence, 'society' as invoked by Foucault is more accurately understood as a utopian ideal of what society *could* or *should* be, rather as signifying something that actually exists in the world.

For Foucault, the modern Western concept of 'society' masks its violent origins. Chatterjee (2015) asserts that the modern academic disciplines, particularly the social science disciplines, were effectively designed to defend the 'truths' that Western society promotes in order to present those truths as 'structurally irreversible'. Chaterjee summarizes Foucault as saying,

> *Rulers might be changed, yesterday's downtrodden could stand up today and make themselves heard, but certain fundamental institutions produced by actual histories of violence and domination must nonetheless persist. European conquest and settlement of the Americas, the Atlantic slave trade, the primitive accumulation of capital, the dispossession of peasants and artisans, colonial wars – they may all merit the severest moral condemnation but the structural transformations they have wrought cannot be undone* (Chatterjee, 2015).

Foucault's and Chatterjee's point is that for much of the history of the human sciences, human beings have been assumed to possess both agency and an essential core of identity. Accordingly, the 'agent' must come to 'know themselves' in order to exercise this agency. This is something, which I will show became increasingly important in the romantic era, but which would later become harnessed by human sciences in the late nineteenth century (Foucault, 2020). In so doing so, he says, the human sciences actually produces an essentialized 'figure of man', shaped by and through these sciences as he or she comes to know him or herself as a subject of 'culture' and 'society' (Helliwell & Hindess, 1999).

As soon as a child is born, he or she is given a gender, a culture, race and religion which comes pre-packaged with a loose narrative of expected trajectories(Butler, 2011, 2016). It is possible to embrace an identity of intersection between these categories, or to later choose different categories, but it is much more difficult to shape the categories anew—and this is particularly true with regard to one's sexual identity. Foucault suggests that, while the 1960s and 1970s promised to break with the oppressive Victorian governance of sexuality, new demands on behaviour emerged. Garland explains:

> *The normalizing powers of this apparatus impose upon us the insistent, multi-form demand that we put sex into discourse, that we confess, that we regard our sexual preferences as somehow constitutive of our individual selves, and that we pursue our sexual identity in the service of authenticity and truth* (Garland, 2014 p.377).

In Foucault's view, the conundrum of modernity is that the modern citizens are taught that they are 'free' and autonomous agents, while the human sciences work to shape and place limits on what that they can do, what they can become or even what they can critique. This is not to say that subjects prior to modernity were any freer or happier than in the past than in the present. However, there prior the classical era, there was no illusion of freedom nor any expectation to perform specific role as normalized 'free' subjects.

2.3.2 From Archeology to Genealogy

Foucault scholars typically divide Foucault's research rather crudely into three historical periods: the 1960s, where Foucault emphasised the *archaeological method*; the 1970s, where Foucault emphasised the *genealogical method*; and the 1980s, where Foucault began to focus on *ethics* (Golder, 2007). This section addresses specifically Foucault's methods of archaeology and genealogy. Some scholars suggest these periods should be treated as a change in direction in scholarship while 'others' view these transitions as part of an evolving project or *Oeuvre* that should be understood as a comprehensive evolutionary whole. The debate is ongoing. However, I take the latter perspective since, as Koopman argues, Foucault never actively sought to reject archaeology as he turned to genealogy or genealogy as he began to focus on ethics (Koopman, 2008).

Philosophers move through time, space and changing contexts as all lifeforms do. As such, both philosophy and philosophers evolve over time. Even beyond his death, Foucauldian scholarship continues to evolve and be taken up in new ways as old interviews and lectures are discovered and translated into English for the first time and Foucault's philosophy is re-interpreted to reflect changing societal concerns. In this way, Foucault's theories are being taken up and re-imagined by a new generation of scholars who are bringing fresh perspectives to his work and conceptualizing it in new ways.

For this thesis, I will be drawing much of my understanding of Foucault's theories from this new generation of scholars who draw inspiration from his late work. Examples include Daniel Lorenzini (2020; 2018; 2016a; 2016b), a philosopher who emphasizes the importance of counter-conduct/resistance in Foucault's work as a possibilizing force; Cremonsini et. al (2016)), a group of scholars who are rethinking Foucault's work on subjectivity in the modern context; Ben Golder (2010, 2015)who attempts to de-centre the 'human' in human rights; and Bernard Harcourt (2020, 2018) who asks, 'What can be done?' and emphasizes the need to synthesize theory with practice.

From *Madness in Civilisation* (1961) through to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), Foucault referred to his methods as 'archaeological', a method that seeks to historicize the present. An archaeological approach means to chip away, as an archaeologist might do, at concepts, institutions and practices, in order to uncover how present concepts and configurations of society came to be in the first place. In so doing, the archaeological method

uncovers the stories, concepts and discourses we construct as a *continuous* thread from past to present, as well as those which have been discontinued along the way. Koopman (2013) likens these *continuities* and *discontinuities* to 'threads'. Where traditional historians might look for a single 'golden thread' or narrative to explain history, Foucault emphasises instead the complex interplay of multiple 'threads' of discourse in the exercise of power. These discourses are then linked to networks of 'mechanisms operating in different institutions' (Foucault in Koopman, 2013 p.3).

With the publication of *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1991a), Foucault began his transition to *genealogy* as method. It is at this point that he began to ask how mechanisms of power worked to determine conceptions of what is 'true' or 'false' within a given era. At this time, Foucault became increasingly interested in how the specific breaks in history function to reorder power and knowledge. Koopman (2013) argues that Foucault's genealogies are best understood as located at the intersection of philosophy and politics. Koopman calls those who use genealogy as a political tool in this manner as 'cultural critical philosophers'. He explains:

> *Characteristic of this form of philosophical practice is a reflection on conditions of possibility of contemporary cultural, social, political, and ethical problems. Cultural critique for the genealogist does not, or at least need not, take the form of taking a position or assuming a side in present debates. Rather it takes the form, at least primarily, of articulating the conditions of possibility of the fraught debates in which we find ourselves enmeshed* (Koopman, 2013 p.26).

To this end, I propose that there are synergies here to be discerned between Bloch's conception of utopia and cultural critics who harness genealogy as a tool to uncover how history is ultimately a struggle over how the present came to be and whose history matters. Tamboukou notes that Foucault's interest in genealogy stems from his desire to uncover the *struggle* between forces of domination over time. She describes genealogy as the 'history of such fights' (Tamboukou, 1999 p.203). I would add that genealogy is the history of how struggles *in* the past and struggle *over* the past contain within them assumptions about what is possible and desirable in the future. In my view, bringing Foucault's theories into conversation with Bloch and Levitas' conception of utopia, can further extend these genealogies to the struggles over imagined futures.

### 2.3.3 Governmentality

A central concept in Foucault's theories is *governance*. For Foucault, 'governmentality' is a much broader concept than the visible practices and mechanisms of nation-states. He argues that the concept of governance only really emerged as a workable concept in the sixteenth century as feudalism was being dismantled and the power of the sovereign was beginning to recede (Foucault, 2007b p.76). It is at this point that 'governmentality' emerged, along with the idea of a 'population' which can be counted, managed and even policed (2007, p.315). Foucault notes that the broader view of governmentality which emerged at this time was linked to the concept of 'conduct'. Conduct is an important concept for Foucault. It can refer to (1) the act of conducting someone, (2) to be conducted by another (3) to conducting oneself (Lorenzini, 2016 p.9; Foucault, 2007 p.193) In his 1982 lectures on the *Subject and Power*, Foucault explains:

> *The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome…. This word must be allowed the very broad meaning which it had in the sixteenth century. 'Government' of children, of souls, of families, of the sick* (Foucault, 1982 pp.789-790).

Foucault contends that governmentality resides in no singular space. Instead, it is distributed throughout society between different mechanisms of power and reaches into the internal depths of individuals. It is not just interested in directing the external behaviour of groups or individuals, but it strives to direct the very conduct of souls (Foucault, 2007 p.193). As such, governmentality extends to the practice of governing one's own soul. It thus taps into the individual's innermost desires, their ways of thinking and their ways of constructing the world. This is where Bloch's and Levitas conception of the desire for a better world can be particularly useful. Public discourse works to shape what is deemed desirable for one's future self and for society in general, and (as Bloch notes) can be seen at play in novels, fairy tales, political treaties, documentaries, music, advertising or wherever desires for the future are invoked.

Foucault contends that it is no coincidence that just as soon as the concept of governmentality emerges, the 'physiocrat' arrives on the scene (Foucault, 2007 p.73). According to Foucault, the physiocrats works to produce desires so that those desires can then be fulfilled. This is different than the feudal model, where the task of the sovereign was to say 'no' to the desires

of subjects. In the case of government, physiocrats work to harness economics and politics to produce desires that can then be fulfilled.

Over time, law itself receded as the primary mode for directing behaviour. Instead, tactics emerged for directing behaviour, which would necessitate the emergence of the human sciences, which would generate experts in 'conducting' populations. Such 'technologies of control' were then distributed throughout society so that the process of 'governing' has today become almost ubiquitous with public institutions like the school. In modern society, Foucault contends, 'many people govern—the father of a family, the superior in a convent, the teacher, the master in relation to the child or disciple—so that there are many governments…' (Foucault, 2007 p.93). To support the consolidation of the human sciences, statistics emerged so that populations could be managed 'in depth, in all its fine points and details' (Foucault, 2007 p.106).

### 2.3.4 Subjects & Subjectivity

Importantly for Foucault, the ultimate purpose of governance and governmentality is to produce subjects of power who come to govern themselves according to the practices of governance that come to be accepted as 'natural' and 'normal'. Indeed, while Foucault came to be known as a theorist of power in the 1970s, towards the end of his life he would come to clarify that it was the subject which had been his primary interest all along (Foucault, 1982). Specifically, Foucault says that he was interested in how subjects came to conduct themselves through discourses, how they internalized mechanisms of power and how power works to make and shape 'free' subjects (Foucault, 1982 p.778). In other words, while Foucault was interested in how modern society governed free subjects, he was far more interested in how free subjects were enticed into governing themselves in accordance discourses that dictate what is 'normal' and expected of individuals.

This emphasis on freedom becomes especially important for Foucault's understanding of neoliberalism's production of subjectivities. He explains that neoliberalism demands that subjects be free in order for power to be exercised (Foucault, 1982 p.790). From Foucault's perspective, neoliberalism's emphasis on 'freedom' is in fact the means through which we come to be governed. Lorenzini explains that neoliberalism,

> *produces, organises and consumes freedom…freedom is something produced by power itself, or better, by neoliberal technologies of government, and which constitute their very existence and functioning* (Lorenzini, 2018 p.159).

Hence, subjectivity involves a complicated interplay between 'governors' and 'subjects'. In this interplay, subjects must freely choose to be governed by neoliberal 'truths' so that they can, in turn, govern themselves. The subjectification process demands that subjects must first internalise a discourse, which they are in principle free to accept or reject. By accepting said discourse, they effectively make it their own and consequently become a disciple of it (Foucault, 1982).

This process can take occur in two ways: in cases where the individual is *required* to tell the truth about him or herself in order that he or she might be governed by certain mechanisms of power, the act of avowal is called 'subjection' (Lorenzini, 2016a). This is recognizable when a child is accused of having done something deemed to require correction or punishment. This scenario often entails an admission of guilt, whereby a child is required to 'confess' to a misdeed. Adolescents who arrive at new schools after fleeing from war-torn contexts might have learned that the skills for survival they learned on the route to safety actually do them a disservice in the context of a 'safe' suburban school. Where they might have learned to fight back as a form of self-protection in a refugee camp, fighting back can mean punishment from school authorities or loss of one's 'right' to attend a school in the first place in the context of a European school. Uncovering the 'truth' in these cases is less about ascertaining the causal factors of these fights and more about obtaining a confession as to who hit who first and thus broke the legal codes of the school.

Lorenzini calls the second form of adopting a discourse or 'truth', 'subjectification'. An example of subjectification is when a learner is compelled to construct his or herself through a set of practices or techniques by the self on the self. This necessarily requires a reactive moment

whereby one first becomes de-subjectivized from a previous set of 'truths', in order that one is then 'free' to take on a new set of discourses or 'truths'(Lorenzini, 2016a). While less subversive than the process of subjection, it ultimately has the same goal of normalizing subjects.

Foucault explains how many of these processes of subjectification come together in educational settings (1982, p.787). He writes:

> *The activity which ensures apprenticeship and acquisition of aptitudes of types of behaviour is developed there by a whole ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions and answers, orders, exhortations, coded signs of obedience, differentiation marks of "value" of each person and of the levels of knowledge) and by a means of a whole series of power processes (enclosure, surveillance, reward and punishment, the pyramidal hierarchy (*Foucault*, 1982 p. 787)*

For those deemed to be 'outsiders', adapting to such processes might be described as 'integration'. In order to integrate outsiders, members of the host culture might contribute to the normalization of subjects by means of language-training, cultural training and the guiding of new arrivals in what is considered acceptable behaviour. However, this can come at a cost as the initiate is required to shed an old identity to take on the 'truths' of the host culture. A young girl might proudly wear a *hijab* as a right of passage, a symbol of pride for her religious conviction, only to be subtly told by a friend or mentor that she is much 'prettier' without it. Such discourses work to subtly shape an adolescent's behaviour in subtle, but powerful ways depending on the relationship between the speaker and receiver of statements.

In Foucault's early work, he was accused of depicting subjects as victims of the diffuse forces of power. As a seeming response to such accusations, Foucault later began to consider the role that the subject plays in his or her own subjectification process, and the possibilities this affords for resisting the specific terms through which one comes to be a subject of power. It is simply that this choice is most often hidden or obscured by those who govern. To this, Foucault states:

> *"I believe the intellectual's role is in fact to show, perpetually, how what seems to go without saying in what makes up our daily life is in fact arbitrary and fragile, and that we can always rise up*" (Foucault in Cremonsini et al, 2016 p.43).

A key point for Foucault is that, in order for one to be governed, the will must remain intact. While the possibility of resisting governance is ever-present, governmentally produces discourses which work to "neutralise" this freedom of choice, thus giving the impression that there is no choice but to submit to the logic being promoted (Lorenizini 2018, p.92). As Lorenzini notes, Foucault's theories work to 'unmask' such 'traps' and make visible the choice not to be conducted in this way (Lorenzini, 2016 p.73). The young girl described above has the choice *not* to give into pressure. Saba Mahmood emphasizes that the girl can decide instead to 'inhabit' one's own tradition as a form of counter-discourse (Mahmood, 2011). Thus, what might look like an act of submission to the patriarchal norms of a non-Western culture from an outside perspective might effectively be an act of self-constitution from the girl's point of view. This is because it resists the dominant discourses of Western conceptions of what freedom for a woman should look like and enables her to set the terms of governance.

According to Foucault, the technologies used to facilitate the subjectification process have their roots in Christianity. To that end, Foucault refers to these technologies as 'pastoral power'. Foucault traces pastoral power—and the technologies and practices which accompany it—to the early Christian church. Drawing inspiration from the Apostle Paul, Foucault notes that in the early European Christian church, the pastor was effectively seen to be a shepherd of men. It was the shepherd who kept a lookout and who watched over his or her flock (Foucault, 2007 p. 127)( Acts 20:28-32). The pastor was charged with both caring for the flock as a whole and for ensuring the salvation of each and every soul (Golder, 2015 p.165). Therefore, the role of the pastor was to ensure that not one individual for whom they were responsible ventured astray. Alluding to the parable of the lost sheep, Foucault writes, 'The shepherd counts his sheep; he counts them in the morning when he leads them to pastor, and he counts them in the morning when they are all there, and he looks after each individually' (Foucault, 2007 p.128). Foucault argues that these pastoral practices have come to characterize Western civilization itself. He writes, '[f]rom the end of antiquity to the birth of the modern world, no civilisation or society has been more pastoral than Christian societies' (Foucault, 2007 p.165). Foucault argues that it was this Christian Pastorate which,

> *gave rise to an art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding, taking in hand, and manipulating men, an art of monitoring them ... collectively and individually throughout their life and at every moment of their existence* (Foucault, 2007 p.165).

The purpose of pastoral care in the early Catholic church was threefold: first, it promised salvation to both individuals and communities. Second, it sought to ensure that individuals and communities submitted to the order by obeying the law/God's command. Third, earning salvation and submitting to the law required that one accept, profess and believe the prescribed truth (Foucault, 2007 p.167).

According to Foucault, the next technology introduced by pastoral care is the technology of 'individuation' in the West, which is enacted by confessing to salvation, the law and truth and so on. Foucault states that, '[s]ince the Middle Ages at least, Western societies have established the confession as one of the main rituals we rely on for the production of truth' (Foucault, 2008 p.58). Thus, a psychiatrist demands to hear a patient admit that he or she is 'mad' in order that he or she might be cured. This same practice is extended to prison and even school settings. This then ties into a 'whole network of servitude', where the individual is constituted through the act of producing a secret, hidden truth which they will be forced to embrace or renounce (Foucault, 2007p.184; Lorenzini, 2016 p.14). Foucault writes, '[s]tarting from oneself, one will extract and produce a truth which binds one to the person who directs one's conscience' (Foucault, 2007 p. 183). Crucially, the need for the subject *to want to submit* is key to the relationship between the master and the disciple in pastoral care.

In this way, an individual actively constructs his or herself 'as a subject through a certain set of practices or techniques of the self' (Lorenzini in Cremonzini et al., 2016a p. 71). In so doing, the subject first 'reacts' to a specific truth regime, when one effectively becomes de-subjectified from previously held-truths. The act of constructing oneself relies on a 'creative moment' where this new form of subjectivity is embraced. Drawing from the practices of Christian spiritual direction, this process implies a series of 'practices of freedom' and the inauguration of new ways of life, as an individual must both internalise and make this new subjectivity their own(Foucault, 1997 pp.282-283; Lorenzini, 2016a p.71). It is akin to Baptism symbolised by death of the old life and resurrection into the new life. In this thesis, I suggest that one way self-construction occurs is when individuals adopt certain utopian narratives about the past or anticipated future that tap into deep-seated desires for a better world, or the desire to return to an imagined past that never was.

Miguel de Beistegui in Cremonzini et al. argues that the management of desire plays an important role in the way individuals come to be governed and subjectified under

neoliberalism. He notes how the 'real genius of contemporary capitalism is perhaps to have turned desire into the very engine of the economy, to have capitalised on desire itself'' (de Beistegui, 2016 p.140). In a post-Covid-19 world where both children and adults spend countless hours each day online, we are increasingly subjected to algorithmic regimes which seek to collect data on every click, every viewed webpage, and keyword searches, and then link these to our social networks in order to create 'profiles' of our innermost desires. A simple search for a vacation spot brings a deluge of advertisements for accommodation in that locality. These algorithms then target those algorithmically deduced desires, feed into them and link us further to purchasable products and ideologies. De Beistegui thus argues that in the modern context, 'desire is a key assemblage of knowledge and power…through which we learn to recognise and govern ourselves' (de Beistegui, 2016 p.144).

Corporations and political opportunists can harness such data to tap into emotions and deeply held insecurities that lurk below the surface of assumed rational actors, subtly shaping political beliefs and (re)forming subjectivities. These opportunists can both produce and harness utopian narratives about the future or an idealized past to promote implicit utopias that may be possible or mere fantasy. Such discourses can become a means of curating identities and enacting neoliberal forms of governmentality. As Lorenzini writes,

> the neoliberal subject is an 'entrepreneur of herself' who tries to effectively manage her natural talents and acquired skills within a space of freedom which seems unlimited. It therefore becomes extremely difficult for her to perceive that this very space of freedom, together with her own subjectivity, are profoundly shaped by neoliberal government technologies (2018 p. 161).

Thus, in addition to desire, the 'truths' of neoliberalism work together to produce the neoliberal subject who imagines him or herself to be 'free' and 'responsible' for financial or economic hardship. Pyysiäinen et al. (2017) explain that neoliberalism taps into 'active psychological/discursive sense-making' discourses to produce citizens who view themselves as autonomous and free agents, able to make calculated rational choices as part of a market-consumerist logic in order to place responsibility on citizens for their own welfare (Pyysiäinen et al., 2017 p. 220). As Rose (1996) and Pyysiäinen et al. (2017) have argued, neoliberal subjects are told that they need to take responsibility for their own suffering as if they are the cause of their own 'misfortune'. Thus, for example, neoliberal policies in Australia place

demand that Australian farmers take responsibility for socio-economic hardship rather than considering environmental or structural factors that governments might be better suited to address(Halpin & Guilfoyle, 2004). A sudden rise in interest rates on one's home loan, company layoffs illness are all beyond an individual's personal control and yet, the atomized economic subject is compelled to take responsibility for life's misfortunes, find a way around the situation and adjust. This might mean a change in career or moving to a new city which might mean uprooting one's family, needing to build new career and social connections and a loss of personal control. This enables a subject to be governed by a fear of losing personal control. In this way, 'subjectification and responsibility-taking are closely interlinked' (Pyysiäinen, 2017 p.216).

## 2.4 Foucault's ethics and the possibility of resistance

Koopman (2013) and Lorenzini (2020) have suggested that beyond merely providing individuals with tools to problematise the present, that Foucault's tools can be used to resist and rethink the narratives of how the present came to be and our role within it. Koopman writes, 'Foucault was interested rather in the historical conditions of possibility that constrain singular forms of thought in the present'(Koopman, 2013 p.15). Koopman's emphasis is on the conditions that *constrain* possibility and the limit of what is imagined to be achievable or thinkable within a given time-period. Lorenzini (2020) explains that much Foucauldian scholarship either seeks to vindicate concepts or 'unmask'/'debunk' concepts. Thus, it becomes necessary to problematize how the present came to be. Lorenzini adds another dimension that can fit between these categories—that of possibilizing the present (Lorenzini, 2020b). To this end, Chapters Three through Four are aimed at problematizing the Framework and how it came to be. However, my ultimate aim is to follow Lorenzini's lead and 'possibilize' the Framework, which is the aim of the final chapters. Lorenzini explains that,

> *each genealogy constitutes a different, specific, but structurally open 'we': a 'we' made by all the men and women who endured and struggled against the particular power/knowledge formation delineated in the course of a given genealogy, and by those who, in the present, are carrying on or will carry on their fight* (Lorenzini, 2020b p.15)

In my view, utopia provides a lens through which to problematize the 'we' contained with the Framework while providing the means to expose new possibilities for imagining who 'we' might become.

Foucault's problematizations of 'truths' are often accused of nihilism as if there is no deeper meaning or 'truth' to be found in history. In this sense, using Foucault is reduced to an unmasking/debunking exercise where all truth is relative. A reading that emphasizes possibility helps support the assertion that Foucault's theories contain a moral/ethical dimension as well. Foucault's late work on ethics turns to the Greek and Stoic world not to show how it is problematic by comparison to the ancient ethical standards, but rather to look for possibilities of ethic beyond universalist/relativist paradigms. This is one where ethics might be combined with art in a way whereby leading one's life fully, becomes an artistic practice in itself— something which is sometimes referred to as 'an aesthetic of existence' (Peters, 2005). To this end, there are four concepts which Foucault developed in the early 1980s, which open up new possibilities for approaching the model. These include his concepts of (a) counter-conduct; (b) *parrhēsia* and (c) and care for the self.

### 2.4.1 Counter-conduct/the critical attitude

Foucault introduced the idea of 'counter-conduct' in his 1977–1978 lectures on *Security, Territory and Population* as a way of countering the omnipresent forces of governmentality used to 'conduct' 'others'. Counter-conduct is the struggle against the processes implemented for conducting 'others' (Foucault, 2007 p.201). Foucault is careful not to equate counter-conduct with dissidence, since counter-conduct is meant to undo the ways subjects are 'conducted' through governmentality, but is not a form of anarchism which rejects governmentality all together (Foucault, 2007 p.201). Therefore, Foucault is not saying we should give up one set of governmental mechanism in order to be governed by no governmental mechanism. In fact, Foucault would likely view the presumption that one can live without governmentality to be naïve. Rather, counter-conduct is the act of resisting certain ways of being governed, by certain governors and in certain contexts ((Foucault, 2007c; Lorenzini, 2016b)). For Foucault, this choice not to be governed in a specific way is always there. Counter-conduct relates to and arguably re-enforces the concepts which follow, namely *parrhēsia* and care for the self.

## 2.4.2 Parrhēsia

Next, Foucault theorized that *parrhēsia* was necessary for overcoming governmentality. *Parrhēsia* is often characterised as a form of frank speech. It is the act of speaking 'truth to power', which was a concept developed in the democratic practices (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019)ce (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019). *Parrhēsia* was specific to situations in Ancient Greece where speakers of unequal status agreed to speak sincerely, without regard for social pretence or power relations. Foucault contrasts it with the Greek notion of *isagoria*, which refers to the right of members of the *demos* to say anything and is much more in line with the liberal democratic conception of free speech than parrhēsia, which adheres to stricter rules (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019 p.60). By contrast, *parrhēsia* is an ethical relationship between the truth-teller and listener. It is a commitment to honesty. Moreover, it requires a willingness to expose oneself to danger. Foucault explains:

> *The parrhēsiast is something different, somebody different from the wise man, but he is in a way the democratic version of the wise man…There is a kind of proof of his sincerity, and that is his courage. The fact that he says something dangerous, the fact that he says something different from what the majority thinks, that is the sign that he is a parrhēsiast (*Fruchard & Lorenzini, 2019 *p.81)*

*Parrhēsia* represents a 'courage to truth'. As such, it is a concept which Foucault argues has political, ethical and philosophical implications (Gros & Luxon in Fruchard & Lorenzini, 2019, p.15-16). *Parrhēsia* should not therefore be confused with the sort of speech of the populist who breaks taboos in order to simply gain political support. Rather, it is an ethical commitment to come as close as possible to 'truth' within a certain context and place. There is a truth-speaker and a truth-listener where the person to whom a truth is told is obligated to listen. *Parrhēsia* furthermore takes place between a speaker of lower-status and higher status with only the person of lower status considered to be the parrhēsist. Foucault emphasizes,

> *Parrēsia comes from "below" and is oriented towards those "above." The parrhēsiast is less powerful than his interlocutor. He is weaker than the one to whom he speaks and to whom he addresses his critiques*(Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019 p.79).

For *Parrhēsia* to be possible, it must be characterised by this unequal relationship. Moreover, the parresist must take a risk in telling the truth because *parrhēsia* requires an act of courage. Without risk, there can be no *parrhēsia* (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019 p.67) Many intercultural and democratic situations will involve numerous such power dynamics.

### 2.4.3 Caring for the self

Foucault emphasizes self-care as a possible means of resisting societal forces of governance. I have noted in this chapter the significant role that the demand to 'know oneself' plays in the modern context. Foucault helps to make visible how modern neoliberal pedagogies of self-regulation and self-efficacy, which demand that subjects have 'knowledge of self', are best understood as technologies which contribute the subject-making process. I further noted how these technologies are tied the demand to 'tell the truth about oneself'. This might occur in classrooms and intercultural situations. From Foucault's perspective, such techniques of power work to inscribe a sense of self or identity, which is can be used to govern subjects by those in power.

Foucault contends that ancient conception of 'knowledge of self' (*gnōthi seauton*) was in fact subsumed within the precept of 'caring for the self' (*epimeleia heautou*). Foucault makes the point that while the ancient conception of self-knowledge began with looking within oneself to better understand oneself and ethical relations with 'others', the modern conception looks to the external world for its cues (Foucault, 2005 loc. 894).To this end, modern conceptions are often crafted in a way that suits society, but not necessarily the individual.

Drawing inspiration from Christopher Lasch's Book, *The Culture of Narcissism*, Besley & Peter (2007) make the point that pedagogies which emphasize self-knowledge before attending to self-care feed into a the self-absorbed consumerist culture (Besley T. & Peters, 2007 p.9). They note that the emphasis on identity in schools has infected both faith-based schools and non-religious schools. They argue that in such identity-centred curriculum has helped to facilitate the 'return of the fundamentalist self', whereby 'truth-telling' becomes an aspect of

identity-formation that exacerbates cultural and religious divides between 'them' and 'us'. They note,

> *It does not take much imagination to see the relevance of education as forming 'cultures of self' not only in the senses explicit in Foucault's work…but also in profiling the great interrelated problem of subjectivity (knowing one's mind) and intersubjectivity (knowing 'other' minds), which stand at the heart of learning, self-formation, identify, culture and ethics (2007, p.11).*

Furthermore, while self-care itself be interpreted as self-indulgent, Foucault contends that caring for 'others' actually begins with caring for the self (Foucault, 1986). Levy writes, '[t]he care for the self does not exclude caring for 'others', but is its condition' (Levi, 2004 p.27). In Foucault's view then, it was Christianity which inverted the idea that care for the self begins with a sacrifice of the selfhood to 'others' (Foucault, 2000 p.278) (Foucault, 2005b). In the modern context, this 'selflessness' has evolved into a codification of values, morals and ethical practices which function to replace the ancient idea that ethics begins with self-care, where self-knowledge only constitutes one aspect of self-education. Instead of focusing entirely on excavating an essentialized core identity, self-care requires a willingness to be transformed and become 'other' to oneself and to 'others'. Thus, for Foucault, education is much more than the activity of crafting a specific kind of citizen who possesses the competence to interact in intercultural and democratic situations. Instead, genuine education would require cultivating a kind of relation with oneself and 'others'. It would enable learners to be both transformed and to help to transform 'others' think beyond seemingly intransigent paradigms.

Foucault provides a poignant idea of what just such a pedagogy might look like when he compares life to a work of art:

> *What strikes me is the fact that in our society art has become something that is only related to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something which is specialized or done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house be an object, but not our life?* (Foucault, 2000 p.261).

If we take Foucault's assertion to heart and begin with the premise that schooling might have something to do with making one's 'life a work of art', then the question emerges as to how

the task of making one's 'life a work of art' differs from the vision of democratic culture as consisting of specific competences?

## 2.5 Conceptualising 'hidden utopias' with the aid of Levitas

Levitas' philosophy in many ways provides the bridge to bring together the ideas of Bloch and Foucault. Levitas extends Bloch's conception of utopia (as the desire for a better world) by reconfiguring utopia as a method for engaging with the way society is structured and imagining how it might be made better. For Levitas, utopia has archaeological, ontological and architectural dimensions.

First, it has *archaeological* dimensions in that it can be used to excavate assumptions about the good society that are at play within particular utopian impetuses, including considerations of who or what is marginalised through such a vision. Foucault would extend Levitas emphasis on archaeology to genealogy and ask how the ideals underpinning the utopian discourses under analysis have been made possible in the first place? Whose histories do they promote? What counter-discourses do they render silent and what kind of relationship to power are they poised to produce? In other words, Foucault would seek to unpack the historic production of these ideals and further consider the imagined subject at the centre of this ideal. Taken together, Foucault and Levitas conception of utopia can be used to unmask how past conceptions of the 'good society' have been silenced along the way though discourses of how we came to be and the implied visions of where we are heading that these discourses further imply.

Secondly, Levitas argues that utopia has an *ontological* aspect. This means that it brings up questions about what constitutes a life well-lived and, 'the potential contents and contexts of human flourishing' (Levitas, 2013 p.xi). When uncovering utopias, she says, it is important to ask:

> *[W]hat kind of people particular societies develop and encourage. What is understood as human flourishing, what capabilities are valued, encouraged and genuinely enabled, or blocked and suppressed, by specific existing or potential social arrangements: we are concerned here with the historical and social determination of human nature* (Levitas, 2013 p.153).

This is especially generative because it adds to Foucault's conception of how subjectivities are produced by revealing the deeper moral lessons that historic constructions of the present carry with them, as well as what they imply about what is possible or desirable in the future.

A cogent example of this is the neoliberal utopian view which posits that the present economic system is 'the most we can hope for'(Brown, 2004). Rather than presenting purporting to provide the perfect society, it promotes the idea that utopias might be achieved in some small way through individualised pursuits in one's private life. In this dream, the life well-lived is one where children are educated in the skills they need to enter the labour market and contribute to the economy in some way. It is a utopia that is built on the idea that hard work leads to merit, which leads to financial independence and equates to a well-lived life. The good life is imagined to be waiting for those who work hard and are deserving. Those who do not follow the prescribed path in this narrative are seen to be lazy and reliant on the hard work and taxes of 'others' to survive. In this way, the neoliberal utopia which presents itself as a pragmatic alternative to ideology because it fails to consider the eventuality that certain groups might face insurmountable obstacles to access this dream.

Applying utopia as an *ontology* means asking difficult question about the utopian ideals we embrace and who or what they privilege. In the example provided above, an ontological use of the concept of Utopias in educational settings would prompt learners to consider what a life well-lived means for those who do unpaid labour to care for loved ones, or for those whose disabilities render them unable to contribute economically in cultural accepted ways.

Thirdly, *architecture* is perhaps Levitas' boldest contribution. It entails creatively imagining what a better world might look like.  While all three of Levitas' conceptions of utopia from archaeology to ontology and architecture provide important analytic tools for pedagogy, it is the architectural method which demands criticality, creativity, self-understanding and active engagement with age-old philosophical questions. What constitutes human flourishing? Human dignity? Equality? What constitutes a worthwhile occupation? What is the role of money? What is the role/place of care in society and who performs it? (Levitas, 2013). However, Levitas is adamant that the relationship between archaeology, ontology and architecture is a never-ending cycle. Just as soon as a new world is architecturally imagined, it needs to be further subjected to critique. In this manner, engaging with utopia demands an ongoing cycle between critical reflection and imagination.

Unpacking ontology and imagining alternative futures through architecture would invariably require the capacity for self-reflection, particularly with respect to the discourses we invariably govern ourselves by. In this respect, Foucault's conceptions of *self-care*, *counter-conduct* and *parrhēsia* can potentially provide a means for reflecting on the historic discourses which we implicitly accept about how the present came to be, our place in the democratic story and the futures we imagine. Foucault's concept of self-care would require the space and opportunity for learners to reflect on their selves, their ethics, and their purported 'place' in society. *Counter-conduct* would ask that learners be given space and capacity to engage with questions of how subjectivities are produced in society. Engaging with implicit utopias in education would demand that at least by adulthood, students are able to critically challenge the governing norms of these subjectivities and creatively imagine a better world collaboratively with 'others'. Foucault's concept of *parrhēsia* demands that learners are both capable of speaking 'truth to power' by revealing the dominant dreamworld that is being promoted, while seeking to imagine futures that are more equitable, more sustainable and more in touch the wrongs of the past etc. In this way, making utopia visible can serve as a method for critically and creatively interrogating the present in educational situations. These will be ideas I will be returning to in Chapter 5 as I consider the pedagogical recommendations of the Framework.

## 2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to bring Ernst Bloch, Michèl Foucault and Ruth Levitas into conversation in order to answer how the concept of 'hidden utopias' might function as a conceptual lens. For Bloch, the concept of utopia refers to the desire for what is 'not-yet' in the world while Levitas understands utopia to be a desire that is 'braided throughout human culture' (Levitas, 2010 xii). Foucault's theories work to excavate historical discourses about how the present came. As such, these discourses can reveal past struggles over knowledge and reveal possibilities for thinking the present differently.

Santos (2018), reminds us that what we presently call 'knowledge' was made possible through a what was effectively an 'epistemicide' of indigenous and subaltern ways of knowing and being in the world. We still live with the consequences of that epistemic loss in modern relationships to nature, with Indigenous populations, to the legacy of the slave-trade and in the

forging of nation-states in the third world by colonial powers (Chaterjee, 2015; Said, 2019; Santos, 2015; Spivak, 1988). At the same time, woman's voices and the voices of nature who cannot defend itself were also left out in these visions of society.

As democracy heads increasingly towards an uncertain future, future generations will need to be cognisant that current structures were designed to defend one historically constructed vision of society over 'others' in order to fashion a different future. I suggest that bringing these three thinkers together to contemplate how the present was forged through both embracing and silencing utopian desires can potentially help educators and learners think beyond the dominant paradigms of the present and perhaps even aspire to 'change the world' in some small way. The next chapter seeks to unpack the utopian discourses which have animated the CoE since its founding and place those in the context of the Framework's launch in the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo shooting on 7 January, 2015 in Paris. This chapter thus sets the context for unpacking the 'hidden' utopian ideals in the Framework itself.

# Chapter 3: Excavating the History of the CoE and Framework

This chapter seeks to answer: 'What the history of the CoE and its Framework is and how this history is relevant to understanding its object and purpose?' It does so by, (i) explaining the sources and method used in gathering sources for this chapter and how they help produce a particular narrative, (ii) identifying key discourses which helped birth the CoE, (iii) considering how human rights emerged as a companion to neoliberalism, (iv) considering how the CoE became 'mid-wife to the EU', (v) analysing discourses on the 'war on terror' and the CoE's move from a discourse of multiculturalism to interculturalism and by (vi) situating the birth of the Framework within the context of the Charlie Hebdo attacks. The trajectory traced is one where the CoE evolves from an entity which was understood to provide a form of soft-security against the Soviet Union to one where it effectively served as 'mid-wife to the EU' and finally to one where it was reconceptualised is role as needing to democracy an internal 'other'.

## 3.1 Sources and method

Sources accessed and used in research ultimately tell a particular story. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the sources gathered by one researcher from a particular subject perspective might well have produced a different archive of resources and a different story than the narrative presented here. In this regard, I do not believe it to be possible to completely unbiased in the gathering resources. The method used in this chapter is inspired by Foucault's methods of archaeology and genealogy, which seeks to reveal the discursive threads which continue and discontinue in our conception of how the present came to be. These are useful since these threads can make visible who or what is conceptualised as 'other' or who is silenced for forgotten in these narratives. Following Koopman (Koopman, 2008), I understand archaeology to be Foucault's method for excavating what discontinues in the way dominant narratives are told and genealogy is associated with what continues and how power is re-inscribed in new narratives over time. I thus sought to excavate what discourses have continued and which were discontinued in terms of the CoE's understanding of its mission.

To the extent possible, I sought to cast my net wide in order to gather information from a variety of sources and perspectives. I endeavoured to gather dominant narratives, less dominant

narratives and to consider who or what might have been excluded or silenced through these narratives. Given that the objective was to engage in a 'critique' admittedly many of the sources cited are weighted more heavily towards critical theory since my objective was to problematize the Framework rather than to embrace it without question. That said, my goal from the outset was not to reject the Framework in its entirety, but to 'poke holes' in the implicit discourses it adopts regarding democracy and democratic culture that share continuity with the past or pose a break with the past in order to problematize how those might be used to produce a specific kind of subject to maintain present hierarchies of power. This means that I have always approached it as something potentially generative and even emancipatory if space is made for making utopianism visible and using the Framework from a ground-up position rather than implemented from a position of power. At no stage did I outright embrace or reject the Framework.

An additional challenge of this research is that I am a working adult living outside Europe and do not directly have access to materials that might be available to someone working within the Council of Europe. This research also took place during Covid-19 and during lockdown in Australia. This meant I was often limited to material that could be accessed through Durham University's online library, material which was publicly available via the internet and that which I could purchase as physical text or eBook online. That said, I was able to access both primary and secondary resources in this endeavour. I analysed each using the critical lens of Foucault and considering the utopianism they might implicitly promote, in both a positive and problematic sense.

The research took place over several years over several stages. In the first stage, I sought to understand the context in which the competences were unveiled. Using Foucault's terminology, I sought to consider disentangle the 'history of the present' in order to consider what made the Framework thinkable in the first place when viewed historically. In other words, how is it that we can imagine that something as intangible as democratic culture can be promoted through a Model in the first place, and what is specific features and assumptions does it incorporate which might have been conceptualised differently in a different set of circumstances?

Martyn Barrett is the primary author of both the CDC Model and Framework. I thus began this research with Martyn Barrett's published research and descriptions of how the Framework's history provided in the CDC Model and Framework (Barrett & et. al, 2016; Barrett, 2013,

2020). I then accessed publicly available material provided by the Council of Europe regarding the actual policies and initiatives which led to the Framework's production. This revealed that the war on terror and the rejection of multiculturalism formed the backdrop of the production of the Framework. Recognizing that the Framework was unveiled in a time of rising populism took me in a different direction regarding the specific links between populism and neoliberalism.

This second period of research took me into research on populism by Mouffe and Laclau(Laclau, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Mouffe, 2013, 2020). This helped to provide a contrasting history to dominant narratives of globalisation, which until this time had portrayed globalism as the inevitable evolutionary outcome of Western progress. This led to research on neoliberalism and its increasing entanglement with global institutions and norms.

A third stage took me in a different direction using Foucault to excavate the deeper history of how modern representative came to be embraced as democracy in the first place. I then sought to contextualise traditional narrative of 'Western' liberal democracy by considering what continues in modern narratives and what was lost or silenced to make Western liberal democracy possible. Some of this research has been integrated into Chapter 4. Where possible, I sought to include non-Western and non-traditional narratives. As this chapter is specifically concerned with narratives of the CoE and the birth of the Framework, this chapter is largely drawn from literature written by Europeans within the context of Europe in English.

In the fourth stage, I sought to trace the history of the CoE itself. To this end, I used Martyn Bond's primer on the Council of Europe to gain a comprehensive overview of its history and evolving conception of its own purpose. As part a wider series of books on global organisations the editors contend that books in this series:

> *include the general purpose and rationale for organizations, developments over time, membership, structure, decision-making procedures, and key functions. Moreover, current debates are placed in historical perspective alongside informed analysis and critique*(Bond, 2012).

This text thus helps provides the backdrop of what is taken to be the dominant perspective on the history of the CoE in this chapter. I used this material in conjunction with other documents

of the era to contextualise and provide counterpoints to this more standard narrative. Furthermore, given how the Council of Europe and the European Union are often associated with progressive ideals, I found Duranti's research on the conservative contribution of the development of the CoE to be particularly useful for making this specific 'forgotten' aspect of CoE history visible (Duranti, 2017). Finally, I sought to overlay these sources with critical scholarship I had found regarding critique of human rights and its increasing entanglement with neoliberalism. Samuel Moyn's scholarship on utopianism in human rights proved to be particularly useful in this regard (Golder, 2010, 2015; Moyn, 2012, 2018, 2015). These threads of continuity and discontinuity related to Foucault's methods of archaeology and genealogical historical investigation are brought together in the conclusion of this chapter.

In reading this chapter, it is thus important to acknowledge that the sources and narratives in this chapter represent those I was able to gather at a particular point in history within a particular context and convey a particular story that could have otherwise been constructed. My hope is that the narrative presented in this chapter and the next will help educators and learners engage with the discourses in the Framework to think beyond dominant conceptions of democracy and any presumed 'culture' needed to sustain it.

## 3.2 Discourses which helped give birth to the CoE

There are several narratives which emerged from my research which appear to have helped give birth to the CoE. The first of these was the imperative to move beyond the divisive discourse of nation- state's in the aftermath of WWII which had led to two World Wars and build a narrative of European unity. The second of was the development of common values- namely human rights- inscribed in law that nations would agree to abide by. The third of these was the soft-security role the CoE would come to play in defending European values conceptualized as democratic values and human rights the communist ideals promoted by the Soviet Union.

To begin, a crucial figure in helping to bring the CoE into being and constructing the narrative of a unified Europe was Winston Churchill. In a historic speech in Zurich, Churchill proclaimed that, 'we must re- create the European family in a regional structure called, it may be, the

United States of Europe, and the first practical step will be to form a Council of Europe' (Churchill, 1946).

Such a narrative clashes with the mythical narratives promoted in pre-Brexit speeches in 2016. This is a narrative which characterised Britain as a 'lone wolf' crusader under the leadership of Winston Churchill against the Nazi menace. Starkey et. al explain:

> *Brexit spoke to British fantasies of exceptional power and heroic British individuals, quintessentially represented in the seminal figure of Winston Churchill, regularly voted Britain's greatest ever leader...The myth of Churchill is of an heroic leader singlehandedly saving the world from Nazi domination and this remains one of the great British epics* (Starkey et al., 2021 p.29).

It is perhaps surprising then to return to this era and discover the crucial role that British conservatives like Winston Churchill played in helping to imagine the CoE into being. Legal historian, Marco Duranti, has conducted research across twenty archives in six different countries and presents a radically different view to those who assert that the Council of Europe and the EU are leftist projects (Duranti, 2017). Duranti's research highlights the crucial role that conservative Europeanists like Churchill played in crafting the narrative and building the desire for a united Europe that was needed to form the CoE. In Duranti's telling, it was the combination of a build-up in momentum towards European unity generated by 'the European Movement' combined with Churchill's influence that helped generate the political will needed to bring the Council of Europe into being. In other words, it traces its roots to idealism that was not left or right, but unified in the utopian ideal that Europe might one day operate as a cohesive entity in the political sphere.

Writing in 1959, Walton states,

> *It was Churchill who organized the 'United Europe Movement' in England and it was Churchill who took the lead in bringing together other like-minded groups into an international committee which then proceeded to organize the Congress of Europe.* (Walton, 1959 p.740).

The British Labour government of Clement Attlee, which held the majority in British parliament in the years following the WWII, was by contrast, highly suspicious of efforts to

unify Europe (Carolan, 2008). By contrast, British conservatives viewed the prospect of a united Europe more favourably (Duranti, 2017). Thus, while the UK did not initially actively participate in the formation of the CoE, it was made possible by conservatives pursuing its formation as private citizens. One such citizen was Winston Churchill.

The League of Nations, which preceded the United Nations, had proven to be an ineffectual body with little legitimacy (Henig, 2010). For Churchill to suggest that nations might come together to form a federal union akin to the United States was radical, particularly since it was an idea proposed by such an emblematic figure of British conservatism. While it is not clear exactly how Churchill imagined this Federal States of Europe, it appears clear that British conservatives at the time felt that a European Union of sorts would both be in the interest of Great Britain and fully compatible with conservative ideals.

The Congress of Europe met in The Hague from the 7–11 May 1948 to discuss just such a vision. There were 750 delegates from across Europe in addition to observers from the US and Canada. Rather than being formed by heads of state, the Congress of Europe was somewhat unusually made up of individuals and non-governmental organisations acting in their private interest (Walton, 1959). The gathering brought together idealists and realists from all points on the spectrum and included famous politicians, prominent clergy, professors, poets, unionists, 'professional propagandists' and multinational private organisations from around Europe. Notably, representatives from the UK were almost all from the Conservative party (Walton, 1959).

Loveday, notes that the movement for a United Europe was both an emotional and a rational response by Europeans across national borders who dared to imagine a future beyond nation-states(Loveday, 1949). This imagined future was one where the Council of Europe would play an important role in helping to imagine the United Nations into being and the Council of Europe was meant to play a significant role as a partner in this vision. Yet not all present at the Congress were in favour of a united Europe. There was a countermovement gaining force, pushing for 'intensive political fragmentation' both in Britain and in France (Walton, 1959 p. 739). What was needed was a narrative that could unite and inspire disparate parties and Churchill came to play a significant role in fashioning this narrative.

Churchill served as chair of the Congress of Europe, and from this position who was able to craft the narrative that would become the driving force behind the commitment to European

unification after WWII (Duranti, 2017). Churchill's achievement was to characterize dramatic change by appealing to an imagined past when Europe was supposedly united in common values. In particular, he appealed to a 'mythical Christian Europe of a bygone era' (Duranti, 2017 p.2).

The Congress was set in the Knight's Hall of the Hague, which undoubtably helped set the tone for Churchill's speech. He was particularly intent on bringing the French on board. Charles de Gaule was at the time intent on restoring the 'grandeur' of France (Hoffmann & Hoffmann, 1968). The stakes were high for producing a narrative that would gain support from the divergent groups assembled. But Churchill aimed to do so by appealing to King Henry IV of France's attempt to bring Europe together in a Grand Design. Churchill states:

> *There are many famous names associated with the revival and presentation of this idea, but we may all, I think, yield our pretensions to Henry Navarre, King of France, who, with his great Minister Sully, between the years 1600 and 1607, laboured to set up a permanent committee representing the fifteen – now we are sixteen – leading Christian States of Europe. This body was to act as an arbitrator on all questions concerning religious conflict, national frontiers, internal disturbance, and common action against any danger from the East, which in those days meant the Turks. This he called 'The Grand Design'. After this long passage of time we are the servants of the Grand Design* (Churchill, 2013).

To draw attention to the significance of space and context, Churchill highlighted attempts by Henry Navarre to bring Europe together in a bygone era. By doing so, Churchill was tapping into a narrative that imagined Europe held together by common Christian values dating back to Rome. This is a narrative which Foucault argues became the dominant discourse of Western history following the English Civil War and Aristocratic Rebellions in seventeenth century France (Foucault, 2020). Churchill named a growing danger from the east and indicated that this threat would require that that Europe band together as a unified front against those enemies who did not share its common values. (Duranti, 2017). At that stage, the growing threat of communism was viewed by many to be a greater danger than fascism. Duranti notes that Churchill went on to characterise the previous three decades of war as an aberration that amounted to a 'pan-European civil war in which there were no true victors' (Duranti, 2017 p.35).

In Churchill's telling, Europe shared a common civilisation, common values and common culture. Rather than invoking rivalry with fascism or the Nazis, Churchill characterised the past World Wars not as wars between nation-states, but as indicative of a Europe that had lost its way and which had become engulfed in civil wars, where Christians had turned against Christians. It was not so much an appeal to defend the Christian religion, but to defend a Europe united through a common Christian heritage (Duranti, 2017).

It was within the context of The Hague conference and the European movement that the idea was birthed that 'Europe was the source of universal values and remained capable of fulfilling its mission to spread European civilisation to the rest of the world' (Duranti, 2017 p.18). The superiority of Europe and European civilisation and culture was taken for granted as a natural and normal aspect of the future to come. The Hague conference concluded by parties agreeing on the need to 'urgently' bring together a European Assembly, which would become the Council of Europe.

When the CoE Charter was agreed upon a year later, the Charter retained its emphasis on the need to preserve and further cultivate a specifically European heritage. The third paragraph of the preamble to the CoE Charter states:

> *Reaffirming their devotion to the spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of their peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy* (Council of Europe, 1949).

Central to the CoE mission then is the preservation of those spiritual and moral values, which are the common heritage of the peoples whose states sign onto the convention. Thus, the imperative emerged to inscribe those spiritual and moral values into law. Absent from this text was any specific reference to Christian values. However, as Moyn argues, many of the key ideas of these rights are grounded in Christian ideals, particularly in the idea that rights are universal and inalienable. Moyn writes that by characterising rights as 'universal',

> *Christian human rights were injected into tradition by pretending they had always been there, and on the basis of minor antecedents now treated as fonts of enduring commitments* (Moyn, 2015).

Once the CoE was established, a commission was created to begin preparing a Human Rights Charter (Bond, 2012). The future assembly would be charged with creating a Court of Justice capable of applying the sanctions to ensure adherence to commitments made by states to the Charter. On 5 May, 1949 the Statute of the Council of Europe was signed, effectively giving birth to the CoE. The first states to sign the treaty were Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK. Turkey and Greece joined shortly afterward (Bond, 2012).

### 3.2.1 Becoming a soft-security companion to the hard-military power of NATO

Cold War rhetoric was by this time growing increasingly confrontational, beginning to draw ideological battle lines between those who supported the liberal democratic values of the West, and those who supported the communist ideals promoted by the Soviet Union. Thus, as Bond notes, the CoE was widely understood at its birth to effectively function as a soft-security companion to the hard military power of NATO (Bond, 2012):

> *When it was set up in 1949, it was appreciated by a wider public as the necessary 'soft power' complement to the 'hard power' of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), established just a few weeks earlier. It was a vital element in the complex of international organizations that reconstructed western Europe after World War II. It concentrated on defending the ethical underpinnings of the liberal democracies of the region, promoting human rights and the rule of law* (Bond, 2012 p.1).

While these were aspects of the CoE which could be agreed upon, it proved much more difficult to work out how a 'United States of Europe' might function in practice. Twenty-four different proposals were presented, ranging from those which would establish a political union with 'limited functions and real power', to those which would function as an administrative economic and technical organization with control over representatives in member states (Bond, 2012 p.84).

### 3.2.2 Becoming overshadowed by the ECSC and its own Court of Human Rights

While these debates continued, in May of 1950, Robert Schuman proposed a plan to bring the French and German coal and steel unions under a single authority. In 1950, the French foreign minister Robert Schuman proposed the creation of a pan-European coal and steel alliance. In 1951, six states (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany) responded to this call and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was born. The alliance was a pragmatic solution to greater unity in Europe. It combined both federal and integrationist elements and it offered a way beyond the impasse between those who desired to maintain strong nation-state structures and those who were pushing for stronger international institutions and laws (Bond, 2012).

In 1957, the ECSC was renamed the European Economic Community (EEC), which is when a customs alliance was established. From early on, the Council of Europe had to compete for visibility with the fledgling body that would eventually become the European Union (Bond, 2012). The EEC, which would one day become the EU would come to be better known and more visible than the CoE itself. Moreover, the EEC would take on many of the symbols of the CoE, creating further confusion between the two since the CoE gave the EEC permission to use the same flag and same national anthem (Bond, 2012).

In 1950, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) was drafted. In 1953, it was ratified and came into force. By 1959, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) was established to ensure its implementation and the CoE became the parent organisation of the ECtHR. In a similar manner that the EU came to outshine the CoE, the ECHR and ECtHR would come to be better known and more visible than their parent- organisation (Bond, 2012). The foundational document for all subsequent conventions is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) agreed to in 1948. However, where the UDHR contains several rights which place obligations on states to provide social support to individuals, often described as 'positive rights', many of these are noticeably missing in the ECHR. To this end, the CoE began to promote a particular form of rights that increasingly de- emphasized any social and economic rights that were originally conceptualized as universal human rights in the UDHR.

### 3.2.3 Towards a particular vision of rights based on civil liberties

The ECHR is notable in its distinction from its parent document the UDHR in how many of the social, cultural and economic rights (positive rights) are strangely absent from this document. Article 3 of the UDHR provides the right to 'life, liberty and the security of person', typically understood to be a 'negative right', that same right is provided under Article 5 of the ECHR. By contrast, Article 25 of the UDHR promotes the 'right to a standard of living' which includes rights to health, well-being, food, clothing, housing, medical care, social services, welfare support as well as 'special care' for motherhood and childhood, no such rights are provided in the ECHR. Bond explains that the reason for this can be attributed to the fact that:

> *States in the West differentiated themselves from the East by stressing first generation [negative] human rights in the civil and political field, such as personal liberty and freedom of expression, as enshrined in the ECHR and subsequent protocols added to it over the years. Communist states rated more highly second generation [positive] social and economic rights, such as the right to work, to pensions, and housing. This distinction reflected the ideological split between capitalist and communist systems in Europe* (Bond, 2012 p.8).

In Moyn's view, the emphasis on human rights as they developed during the Cold War and provided the perfect 'doppelgänger' to neoliberalism (Moyn, 2018 p.3). This was because they only set out what states should not do in order to ensure personal freedoms as opposed to demanding finances or resources as positive rights do (Moyn, 2018). Thus, the human rights imaginary promoted by the CoE during the Cold War was largely based on an idealized self-sufficient individual citizen whose primary need was protection is from the state.

### 3.2.4 How the rights in the ECHR were extended to a number of former colonial states

Many of the original members of the CoE and signatories to the ECHR were former colonial powers. Opinions varied between idealists who continued to promote the development of Idealists and realists who sought to maintain the sovereignty of colonial powers. Where idealist politicians would have seen rights extended to colonial contexts, realist politicians argued that the Convention should be limited to Europe (Richard, 2022; Tomuschat, 2008). The result was

that Article 26 of the ECHR, which gave states the choice of whether or not to extend the Convention overseas, notes that in doing so, 'it [the Convention] would be applied with 'due regard, however, to local circumstances' (Council of Europe, 1950).

The effect was that different states were allowed to apply the Convention based on their own interpretation (Richard, 2022). Belgium opted not to apply the Convention overseas. France did not ratify the Convention until 1974 (Richard, 2022).Britain did eventually apply the Convention overseas, but not to Hong Kong (A. W. B. Simpson, 2004 p.839).

As former colonies gained their independence and put in place new constitutions, Colonial officers sought to ensure that these Constitutions contained suitable civil and political rights and anti-discrimination measures that would have previously been protected under the ECHR (A. W. B. Simpson, 2004 p.871). These rights were not always embraced. In one example, the Advocate-General of Saudi Arabia wrote to the colonial office complaining that the chapter on human rights had been 'thrust' upon them by the colonial office and that they had no idea what they meant (A. W. B. Simpson, 2004 p.872). In other words, from the perspective of countries like Saudi Arabia, the so-called 'universal values' that former colonies were required to sign onto were not in fact shared, but foreign to their situation and context. In effect, the ECHR could be used as 'an instrument whereby the civilising mission of British Colonialism could be perpetuated in the post-colonial world' (A. W. B. Simpson, 2004 p.873). This history will be important to bear in mind as these values which seemed so strange outside the Western context become entangled with neoliberalism and military action in the discourse of 'new world order' and subsequently 'the war on terror'.

## 3.3 Neoliberalism emerges as a companion to human rights

The second key point in the CoE's evolution is when in the early 1970s the human rights regime conceptualised as civil and political liberties begins to become increasingly tangled with neoliberal (Moyn, 2012, 2018). Friedrich von Hayek (Hayek, 1962)developed his theories on economics to counter the utopian forces of fascism and communism during WWII. Yet, his theories were also intended to counter the aspirations of democratic socialists who sought 'freedom from necessity' by ridding humankind of 'physical want' (Hayek, 1962 p.77). He described such purported delusions as 'The Great Utopia'. In contrast, Hayek's policy

imagined that human wellbeing could be achieved 'by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade' 2(Harvey, 2007 ). For Hayek, state intervention should be kept to a bare minimum, since he did not believe it was possible for states to have enough information to promote the wellbeing of individuals, and 'powerful interest groups [would] inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit' (ibid).

Moyn makes the case that since the 1970s, human rights have been co-opted almost as a 'doppelgänger' to the neoliberal agenda (Moyn, 2012, 2018). In part, this is enabled by the way that civil and political rights continue to be privileged in both Europe and in the United Nations. Moyn writes:

> *Human rights politics and law went some way to sensitizing humanity to the misery of visible indigence alongside the horrific repression of authoritarian and totalitarian states—but not to the crisis of national welfare, the stagnation of middle classes, and the endurance of global hierarchy (Moyn, 2018, pp. xi-xii).*

In Moyn's view, human rights have effectively come to function as a 'Last Utopia' (2010). He argues that while rights advocates have in recent years sought assiduously to trace the origins of human rights to the French Revolution or the aftermath of WWII, they only came to be embraced *en masse* in the early 1970s once a whole host of 'other' Utopias had failed. These failed utopias include nationalism, socialism, anti-colonialism and anti-communism (Moyn, 2012). For Moyn, human rights effectively fill a void where 'other' ideological utopias once stood.

It was not until neoliberalism's embrace by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s that neo-liberalism became connected to popular consent (Mouffe, 2018). It was this move which enabled neoliberalism to seep into the political culture of both countries, reconfiguring the hegemonic practices of the Keynesian welfare state and eventually taking hold as a global hegemonic discourse (Mouffe, 2018). Thatcher was able to re-imagine politics as a struggle between an entrenched system of bureaucrats, unions and those who depended on hand-outs versus the hard-working industrious 'people' on the 'other' side (Mouffe, 2018a).Mouffe argues that Thatcher's strategy was in fact a populist one, in that it managed to reconfigure politics by presenting neoliberalism as an economic and political 'truth' to which

there was no alternative. However, until the collapse of the Soviet Union, and up until the point where Thatcher was waning in popularity, neoliberalism remained largely confined to the English-speaking world (Harvey, 2007).

It was therefore only due to a unique configuration of events that liberal democratic countries began to interpret the break-up of the Soviet Union as the triumph of the marriage between liberal democracy and neoliberalism (Harvey, 2007). This triumphalism was best articulated in Francis Fukuyama's claim, just before the fall of the Berlin wall, that we might well be witnessing 'the end of history' (Fukuyama, 1989). At the same time, Margaret Thatcher's famous slogan, 'There Is No Alternative' would come to be combined with 'neoliberalism' to symbolise that it was now the only economic system worth considering (Mouffe, 2018).

These discourses combined with the triumphalism at end of the Cold War led to a perception at the time that we had entered into a 'post-ideological age' and the end of the outward embrace of utopian ideals (de Berg, 2016; Jacoby, 2000; Kumar, 2010). As Kumar explains, the end of the Cold War brought about a sense that a previous age was ending and a new age had appeared. 'Endism is rampant, and likely to become even more so as we get closer to the end of the second millennium' (Kumar, 2010 p.63). He writes, 'There is no need to imagine anything new. We already live in the millennial new age, the last age' (Kumar, 2010 p.63). As these authors note, it became increasingly taboo to outwardly embrace ideas that might be perceived as utopian. Neoliberalism was presented as the best that could be hoped for (Metcalf, 2017). It simultaneously recognised that the world was imperfect while placing complete faith in the market. Any utopia to be pursued after this point was to be confined to the musings of science fiction novels or relegated to the private realm (Thompson & Žižek, 2020).

However, as Harvey and Mouffe note, neoliberalism only really became a dominant global ideology once it was embraced by the political the political left in Britain and the US(Harvey, 2007; Mouffe, 2018). Mouffe argues that the true breakthrough for neoliberalism came when Tony Blair came to power as leader of the Labour Party in the UK. Blair sought to distance himself from the more leftist members of the UK Labour party who promoted a democratic form of socialism. Blair offered instead what seemed to be a middle path between left and right by drawing inspiration for Anthony Giddens's 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1999).Giddens imagined it would be possible to harness market forces to pursue social justice, rather than relying on traditional statist solutions to address economic inequality. US president Clinton had followed a similar strategy in the US. In essence, the 'third way' silenced any utopian musings upon

alternatives to neoliberalism. Mouffe (2018 p.4) argues that what this amounted to the left's retreat from its concern for equality in its embrace of neoliberal ideals. It is the dominance of neoliberalism alongside the rise of the internet, social media, rising precarity and populism, which helped prepare the groundwork for what I argue are 'hidden utopias' competing for dominance.

## 3.4 The CoE's role emerges as 'midwife to the EU'

The third key moment in the CoE's evolution was the end of the Cold War. This is when the CoE effectively became mid-wife to the EU (Bond, 2012). In 1993, the EEC became officially became the European Union (EU). As the CoE and EU evolved, they evolved different, but often overlapping functions. One of these functions in the wake of the collapse of communism was to facilitate the transition from formerly 'communist values' to the liberal democratic values of Western Europe as a pre-requisite for EU membership.

States who sign onto Council of Europe membership agree to be bound by the legal obligations set out in the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), and to face the(CoE, 2022) ECtHR when they are found to be in violation of the Treaty. One of the benefits of membership in the CoE is that it provides a forum for member-states to work together on what are thought to be common concerns for liberal democratic states. This includes cooperation on issues of legal, social and cultural concern. Signing onto the ECHR offers a legal means for bringing cases against 'other' states who have violated their treaty obligations. It also offers citizens an additional right of appeal in terms of grievances concerning human rights (Bond, 2012). However, members also must agree to inspections and monitoring by peers though agreed-to procedures to ensure adherence to the ECHR (Bond, 2012). It furthermore provides a pathway to EU membership and a means of proving a state's credentials to security organisations like NATO.

The first states to join the CoE in 1949 were Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In 1950, Greece, Iceland, Turkey and Germany also joined. Gradually, other states within Western Europe became members. The next pivotal moment for the CoE was the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. For proponents of the positive value of Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis, the number of

former communist states who joined the CoE after the end of communism seemed to confirm his claim (Bond, 2012 p.156). The end of the Cold War ushered in a wave of Eastern European states who began acceding to the Treaty in order to become members of the CoE. The CoE thus grew from twenty-three states after Finland's signature of the treaty in 1990, to forty-seven by 1999, as former Eastern Bloc countries were fast-tracked to CoE membership. That number has now receded to forty-six, with Russia having recently left the Council following its actions in Ukraine (Resolution CM/Res, 2022/2).

Joining the CoE became a first step for many nations to 'shake off' both communism and the 'ruling ideology of Russian domination' in the post-Cold War period, signalling independence from Moscow and a political choice for democracy (Bond p.112). Yet membership for former communist states was, in the early years following the Cold War, offered to former communist states with 'few if any conditions attached' (Bond, 2012 p.113). As membership grew, core members became increasingly concerned that many of these states lacked the capacity and values needed to be truly democratic. Soon tougher conditions were put in place for those wanting to join. However, even with these conditions, Russia was able to join in 1996. As the Secretary General argued at the time, it was better to have Russia *in* than outside the CoE, as it gave CoE member states an official forum and set of procedures for negotiating with Russia (Huber, 1999).

In the period following the end of the Cold War, the CoE increasingly came to facilitate the transition of Communist states to democratic values. In other words, it came to serve as the 'midwife' to EU membership (Bond, 2012). In this function, the CoE helps integrate new member-states into the core values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law ascribed to by core EU states. The end of the Cold War was a key moment of change for the CoE, since this is when the CoE began to concentrate much of its efforts on cultivating its core values in members that had formally stood in opposition to human rights and democracy. This is when the CoE began to develop tools to monitor and assess the commitment of states to liberal democratic values. Bond writes:

> *Through missions to review what happened in practice, it began to check on how well new states converted their rhetorical support for the broad values of the CoE into effective policies inside their own societies. Monitoring became an established part of the activity of the CoE, extended to cover all member states, not just those newly joined,*

*and carried out at governmental, parliamentary, and local authority level, on occasion also with the involvement of non-government organizations* (Bond, 2012 p.2).

From a Foucauldian perspective, this means that there is an uneven relationship within the CoE between States deemed to possess 'democratic culture' and those perceived (actual or otherwise) as lacking in these values. The Cold War's end also brought with it what initially appeared to be a sense of solidarity between former rivals. The first test of solidarity among world powers at the 'end of history' came in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The invasion appeared from a legal standpoint to be a clear violation of Article 2(4) of the UN Convention, which states that '[a]ll Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any 'other' manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations'(*Article 2(4)*, 1945). While this was not the first time such an act had occurred in the UN's history, it was the first time that world powers felt empowered to intervene collectively through powers which had long laid dormant—known as Collective Security (for a critical analysis see: Orford, 1996). It was in this environment that President Bush Sr. stood before Congress on the 11 September 1990 and proclaimed that a 'new world order was...struggling to be born':

> *... A world quite different from the one we've known. A world where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle. A world in which nations recognise the shared responsibility for freedom and justice. A world where the strong respect the rights of the weak* (Bush Sr, 2009 p.130).

Bush Sr. effectively promised a world where states would be held accountable for ignoring their commitments under the UN Charter. The 1991 multilateral effort to liberate Kuwait in the Gulf War was supported by thirty-nine countries and led by the US. The war was relatively brief, lasting just over a half year, and was initially embraced as evidence of what could be accomplished when the principles of the UN were enforced multilaterally (Orford, 1996). The apparent 'success' of the war initially led to a sense that this vision of a new world order, where international law and human rights would 'supplant the law of the jungle', was coming true. What eventuated instead was that the Gulf War led to a protracted presence by the US and allied forces in the Middle East. When the US led a multilateral intervention in Somalia in 1993, resulting in the death of eighteen troupes, the US public began to lose enthusiasm for its role in this new world order (W. Clarke & Herbst, 2018). When news of the Rwandan genocide emerged in 1994, there was little political will to become involved, signalling that the rule of

law would only be enforced when it was seen to be strategically and economically advantageous (ibid).

Much of the CoE's energies in the 1990s were spent on integrating former Eastern European states into the human rights regime; helping to transition these regimes towards democratic values was deemed vital to becoming full-fledged members of the EU. In 1997, The CoE Heads of State met in Strasbourg to create an Action Plan, emphasizing the need for education in democratic citizenship and 'reaffirming' the importance of protecting 'our Europeans' cultural and natural heritage', along with encouraging promotion and awareness of this heritage (Council of Europe, 1997). One of the primary assumptions of the Plan is that 'social cohesion is one of the foremost needs of the wider Europe and should be pursued as an essential complement to the promotion of human rights and dignity' (CoE, 1997, p.3). In this vision, it is social cohesion—not valuing cultural diversity—which is seen to complement human rights and dignity. One of the decisions made to bring about this cohesion was a 'social development fund in the financial field', as well as developing legislation to complement all forms of exclusion, also ensuring better protection for the weakest members of society' (CoE, 1997, p.3).

However, in this vision there was not yet any specific mention of 'democratic culture' or a 'culture of democracy'. Instead, 'democratic values and cultural diversity' are treated as two separate but interlinked ideas related to 'education for democratic citizenship', 'enhancement of European heritage' and 'new information technologies'. 'Culture' is further linked to the campaign 'Europe, a Common Heritage' (Council of Europe, 2000), a campaign developed out of the Action Plan. The campaign included European Heritage Days; an international photographic competition and three transnational projects which included: the ancient universities route, decorative arts workshops and the performance of traditional European musical heritage.

Brumann argues that the emphasis on cultural heritage is a form of 'utopian politics' or alternatively, an 'anthropological utopia'. In this vision, heritage is fully enmeshed in a wider assemblage of universalist discourses promoted by institutions like UNESCO which actively contribute to 'world-making' and 'building the world in our minds' (Brumann, 2018 p.1205). Landscapes, sites and traditions become a crucial part of this 'world-making'. At the same time, these visions can be packaged and marketed to a burgeoning tourist industry or a serve as a basis for codifying diversity in law, so that it can be normalized and regulated (Brumann, 2018;

Gnecco, 2015). In a similar vein, the cultural diversity promoted in the Action Plan is 'based on existing or prospective partnerships between government, educational and cultural institutions, and industry' (Council of Europe, 1997 p.4). In other words, cultural diversity needs to be respected through the lens of the normalizing governing institutions and apparatuses which produce the dominant conceptions of cultural heritage. This includes museums and schools. Brumann's makes the point that within the World Heritage movement, Eurocentrism prevails in overt and covert ways where European sites and traditions tend to be privileged over non- European sites and traditions (Brumann, 2018 p.1204). As such, the power to determine what does and does not count in these imagined worlds plays an important role in conceptions of place, 'culture' and heritage.

Gnecco makes the point that while the ideal of the heterogenous homogenous nation-state was replaced long ago with that of multiculturalism, these discourses were effectively grafted onto previous attempts to craft a narrative of unified 'us' (Gnecco, 2015). Once the idea of a nation as a unified whole came to be replaced by the 'amorphous' ideal of multicultural societies, it was no longer as easy to craft a unifying narrative. The discourse of world heritage a provided a crucial mechanism at this time for managing these multicultural stories. By appealing to humanity at large, multicultural landscapes, traditions, arts, and crafts could be packaged, managed and marketed to tourists as part of an essential human story. At the same time, heritage which had previous been conceptualized as national or local was reconfigured as world heritage. This helped ensure 'the (mercantile) access of humanity to what were previously local resources'(Gnecco, 2015 p.271). He notes that within this framing, the lived experience of inequality is more easily masked and 'unbearable inequalities appear as desirable diversity' (Gnecco, 2015 p.267).

Indeed, one of the key challenges at this time was how to include the 'other' within the story of multiculturalism when they had formerly been 'banished' from this story(Gnecco, 2015). In the early 2000s, the imperative to integrate the 'other' into the story of 'us' took on a sense of urgency in the war on terror when a growing consensus emerged among policy-makers in Europe that multiculturalism had 'failed'. This is when the CoE discursively discontinued its embrace of multilateralism in lieu of a discourse of interculturalism. In Kymlicka's view, the purported abandonment of multiculturalism in this context was not so much a wholesale retreat from multiculturalism, but rather an attempt to construct a "new myth" for addressing diversity (Kymlicka, 2016 pp. 162 & 164). In the next section, I contextualise these debates and consider

their implications to our understanding of any 'hidden utopias' that might be discerned within the Framework.

## 3.5 The 'war on terror' and the move from multiculturalism to interculturalism

The fourth stage in the CoE's evolution came after 9-11 with emergence of a new discourse concerning the 'war on terror'. In a similar manner to the world's shared collective moment of euphoria as the Berlin Wall fell, the events of 9/11 would come to serve as a collective moment of 'rupture' from the political logic of the previous decade across the liberal democratic West. Hutchison & Bleiker (2008) describe this and other similar attacks as producing a shared experience of terror. It was particularly so for Americans, but according to these authors it was also experienced as a trauma for countless people around the world who witnessed the events unfolding on live television or the internet from abroad. This shared terror was facilitated through visual images of real-time television coverage and photography shared instantly across the globe. These authors note that terrorist events 'disrupt the normal course of life' and in so doing, they shatter our sense of what is normal and possible in the world (Hutchison & Bleiker, 2008). Moreover, the experience of trauma often renders individuals 'without the symbolic or linguistic tools ordinarily used to locate and share meaning' (Hutchinson, 2016 p. 7). They argue that shared trauma gives leaders the ability to give words to these experiences and thus shape the public response to the intense emotions which linger.

Rather than attempting to heal the shared trauma, educate the public on the complexities of its causes or take direct action to try and defeat Al Qaeda, Hutchinson & Bleiker observe that President Bush and Prime Minister Blair chose to instead appropriate the shared trauma and public confusion to gain support for a much broader response to a terror attack than would typically be expected (Hutchinson & Bleiker, 2008). In this manner, the events of 9/11 were reconfigured as a global need to respond to a growing threat of terror. As Holland argues, emotion, culture and discourse were brought together in a constellation of concepts to configure a global 'war on terror' (2021).

Drawing from Foucault, international relations scholar Julian Reid argues that the historical political foundations of liberal democracy are built on an inherent contradiction. This is because liberal democracy is shaped by the ideal of peace, and yet its growth and expansion has been facilitated by 'a gradual increase in military capacities among liberal societies' (Reid,

2006 p.2). Reid makes the point, that while Kant dreamed of the possibility of perpetual peace, liberal democracies have since this time sought to defend the dream of liberal modernity by increasing their capacity to *take* human life, particularly the lives of non-democratic 'others' (Kant, 2006; Reid, 2006). Thus, where Western liberalizers once sought to 'civilize' the world, the modern variant, which seeks to 'democratize the world' can be understood as sharing a line of continuity with earlier colonizing discourses.

Human rights and purported efforts to bring about the rule of law and democracy thus played a key role in helping to justify the invasion of Afghanistan (2001-2011) and Iraq (2003-2011). Both invasions would lead to protracted military conflicts, which would be fought in the name of human rights, democracy and the rule of law while including, in the case of the US, actively engaging in torture through tactics of waterboarding to gain confessions from captured presumed combatants (Tierney, 2016). At present, many of these combatants remain incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay in what Carl Schmitt has called a 'state of emergency' (Schmitt, 2011) and Giorgio Agamben has called a 'state of exception' (Agamben, 2004). This is often a vision of democratic culture that is often left out of idealised promotion of 'rights'.

The terror events which followed 9/11 helped perpetuate fears of 'others'. 9/11 was followed by the Bali Bombing (23/10/2002), the Madrid Train Bombing (11/3/2004) and the London Transport Bombing (7/7/2005). Accompanying this fear were bolder and more pointed attacks, particularly against those of the Islamic faith. Democracies became increasingly concerned that the values of the West were under attack. It is within this context that the impetus for the Framework first emerged. Following the 9/11 attacks and terrorist events that ensued in its wake, the CoE became increasingly interested in the role that education might play in promoting the values of human rights as a form of prevention against radicalization, as well as mitigating against xenophobia, stereotyping and racist attacks against minority groups (Barrett, 2020; Bond, 2012).

Barrett explains that the Framework essentially brings together two policy strands, one old and one new (Barrett, 2020 p.2). The first strand owes its roots to the CoE's existing work in developing *education for democratic citizenship* (EDC) and *human rights education* (HRE). Much of this material had been developed as part of the CoE's role in integrating the former Eastern Bloc states into the values of the EU. The second strand emerged from the development of a new move towards the need to promote interculturalism in member states (Barrett, 2020). The intercultural strand owes its origins to a combined sense that Europe was becoming

increasingly diverse, as people and ideas began to travel more frequently across borders through the processes of globalisation, but also to a growing belief that multiculturalism had failed (Barrett, 2013, 2020).Barrett states:

> *[t]here was a widespread perception that multiculturalism had failed because it had encouraged different cultural groups to live in parallel communities that did not interact with one another, and because it had weakened national identities within countries. The interculturalist paradigm was conceived as an alternative to multiculturalism (Barret, 2020 p.2).*

However, it is also significant that the Framework emerged at the Warsaw summit of 2005 within the context of the 'war on terror'. It was here that the CoE first identified the need for a framework of education for democratic culture in its Action Plan at the Third 2005 Warsaw Summit. Underneath Section III, entitled *Building a more humane and inclusive Europe*, it states:

> *We are convinced that social cohesion, as well as education and culture, are essential enabling factors for effective implementation of Council of Europe core values in our societies and for the long-term security of Europeans. The Council of Europe will therefore promote a model of democratic culture, underpinning law and institutions and actively involving civil society and citizens* (Council of Europe, 2005).

In this document, culture is associated with core values, including the rule of law, democracy and human rights, which are now largely de-coupled from heritage. These values are furthermore deemed to underpin law and its institutions, and demand active involvement in civil society by its citizens. In a similar manner that the Fundamental British Values (FBV) is characterized as the opposite of religious extremism, the humanist values linked to the rule of law and human rights are increasingly coupled with the idea of intercultural dialogue, conceived as an antidote to extremist activity (discussed in detail in the next chapter). As Gnecco states, '[I]f modernity turned out to be an unfinished (and violent) promise, resorting to humanism would heal all wounds' (2015, p.270). In the hands of the Framework's designers, an idealized human would be characterized as an intercultural, multilingual being.

The CoE made explicit its desire to move away from a discourse of multiculturalism toward a discourse of intercultural dialogue in the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (CoE, 2008). In this document, the CoE states that intercultural dialogue:

> *...is a mechanism to build a new identity balance, responding to new openings and experiences and adding new layers to identity without relinquishing one's own roots. Intercultural dialogue helps us to avoid the pitfalls of identity polices and remain open to the challenges of modern societies* (Council of Europe, 2008 p.18).

This White Paper further states that, '**no sphere should be exempt** [sic] from engaging in intercultural dialogue' (Council of Europe, 2008 p.10). A key assumption is that, in order for such dialogue to occur, citizens need to be 'interculturally competent'. The report concludes that education systems needed to be harnessed to help develop both the capacity for intercultural dialogue and for intercultural competence (Council of Europe, 2008) (Barrett, 2020). For the CoE, at this stage, the risk of not developing the capacity for intercultural dialogue was breakdown of dialogue within and between societies which could lead to the 'exploitation of some, of extremism and indeed terrorism' (CoE, 201p.16). Bond notes that from this point onwards, 'the CoE has been concerned with issues affecting the security of citizens within their societies as much as with the concept of security between member states' (2012, p.130).

A key aspect of this security is both the cultivation of 'intercultural dialogue', but also what Secretary General, Thorbjørn Jagland called 'deep security' (Jagland, 2011). This 'deep security' would be grounded in a much more extensive human rights regime that would secure many of the economic, social and cultural rights to members that were left out in the ECHR through the Revised European Social Charter (European Social Charter , 1996). This charter is meant to account for the 'social progress', which has occurred in Europe since the 1960s. However, since states can choose to opt out of some of the provision, the actual coverage of these rights across the CoE is uneven (Bond, 2012 p.131). Lähdesmäki et al note that, 'The emphasis on intercultural dialogue in the Council of Europe and the European Union can be interpreted as an attempt to increase stability in Europe and to create a new narrative about European community and communality' (Lähdesmäki et al., 2020 p.). In this regard, the emphasis on intercultural dialogue is one that invokes security by creating a narrative of Europe as a community.

### 3.5.1 How multiculturalism and interculturalism are conceptually different.

Rather than simply accepting the discourse that multiculturalism has 'failed' and that interculturalism is its natural successor, it is important disentangle how multiculturalism and interculturalism are conceptually different. Etymologically, multiculturalism implies that cultures, language-groups, religious groups, and those who systematically experience racism are conceptualised as discernible categories. By harnessing such categories governments can respond to discrimination or the potential loss of culture by ensuring that these groups can freely associate, maintain traditions/linguistic practices and potentially provide or support educational initiatives which can ensure the continuation of culture or target discrimination against specific groups. It is therefore positioned to manage the delicate balance between the majority/minority dichotomy and provide minority groups with a political means for demanding recognition. It thus begins with the presumption that all humans, including cultural minorities are 'worthy' of equal respect (Levey, 2016 p. 209; Taylor, 1995 p.41). In Levey's view, a distinction needs to be made between 'hard multiculturalism' and 'soft multiculturalism'. The former emphasizes that government intervention may be needed, while 'soft multiculturalism' merely seeks to cultivate a society that is welcoming to cultural otherness(Levey, 2016). Arguably, this soft vision is less easy to distinguish from interculturalism.

Interculturalism, by contrast, implies intercultural interaction and cross-cultural dialogue (Meer et al., 2016). These ideas are influenced by Habermas who views dialogue to be a 'powerful regulative ideal' (Meer et al., 2016 p.13).Thus, rather than emphasizing 'preconceived' categories of diversity, interculturalism recognizes that individuals typically belong to and or identify with a multiplicity of intersecting cultural identities (Zapata-Barrero, 2016 p.53). In the CoE depiction, 'culture' is viewed broadly. It extends to shared material resources between groups (i.e., 'tools, foods, clothing'); shared social resources, (i.e. 'language, religion rules of social conduct'); and subjective resources (i.e... 'values, attitudes, beliefs and practices which group members commonly used as a frame of reference for making sense of the world') (Barrett & et. al, 2016). The boundaries within and between such groups tend to be imprecise and 'fuzzy'. It moreover recognizes that identities are always apt to change and potentially become 'hybridized' (Zapata-Barrero, 2016 p.59).

Hence, where multiculturalism tends to emphasize group membership, interculturalism's emphasis is on individuals and the cultures they identify with. Where multiculturalism tends to emphasize 'intranational differences', interculturalism tends to emphasize differences across national boundaries (Cantle, 2016). Cantle argues that interculturalism is better positioned to deal with what Vertevec and Wessendorf call the 'super-diversity' of our age(Cantle, 2016; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010).

The CoE's White Paper on interculturalism characterises multiculturalism as 'no longer fit for purpose' and thus in need of replacement with interculturalism(Council of Europe, 2008; Meer et al., 2016). It is a discourse that fits well within the narrative promoted by the likes of Cameron, Sarkozy and Merkel that multiculturalism had 'failed'. However, it is important to unpack the assertion that multiculturalism has failed and contextualise how the term has been applied in different contexts in order to consider what is meant by moving from a discourse of multiculturalism to interculturalism.

### 3.5.2 Unpacking the assertion that multiculturalism has 'failed'

Vertovec and Wessendorf identify five core idioms used in support of the assertion that multiculturalism has 'failed'. These include: (i) that it a single doctrine—even a form of utopia, (ii) that it stifles debate that lead to a tyranny of political correctness (iii) that it fosters separateness, rejects national values and effectively produces 'parallel societies; (iv) that it denies any challenges in integrating ethnic minorities or immigrants (v) that it supports 'reprehensible practices' particularly towards women such as 'unequal treatment of women, forced marriage, honor killings and female genital mutilation' particularly against women and (vi) finally that it 'provides a haven for terrorists' (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010 pp. 6-12).

Many of these caricatures of multiculturalism, particularly those promoted by populists imply that multiculturalism promotes entitlements to minorities, which effectively undermines and threatens the majority culture. Modood suggests that equality between groups does not mean that the cultural majority should be denied its own customs, but rather that entitlements for minorities should be comparable to those of the majority culture(Modood, 2016). It is this vision, which appears to be most overlooked in caricatures of multiculturalism.

Banting and Kymlicka have shown through their research that in practice multicultural policies across 16 Western countries were in fact strengthening to a modest degree, even during the period they were being described as a 'failure' (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013; Kymlicka, 2016). However, it is important to emphasize that multiculturalism has evolved in complex ways in different circumstances. This means that any promotion of interculturalism via the Framework is bound to take on different meanings and lead to different effects in each new context.

Grillo notes that the UK has never actively pursued a policy of multiculturalism. He explains that approaches to diversity in this context have evolved from discourses concerning race and race relations in the 1950s and 60s to a discourse of 'ethnicity', then 'culture' and in the present context, 'faith'(Grillo, 2011 p.50). In the wake of the London Transport Bombing in 2005, the UK began to develop its controversial counter-terrorism policy, *Prevent*, which would eventually give birth to the UK's Fundamental British Values (FBV) policy (Germaine Buckley, 2020). *Prevent* targeted communities deemed to be at risk of recruitment into extremist activity. FBV's values are defined as 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs' (Home Office, 2011). As Buckley suggests, the policy depends on the assumption that British Values provide an effective antidote to religious extremism, particularly Islamic extremism (Germaine Buckley, 2020). Ward makes the point that rather than providing the antidote to extremism, in fact these values 'bear a troubling resemblance to the pattern of fascist propaganda critiqued by Adorno' (Ward, 2021).

Prins and Saharso note that the Netherlands pursued policies of assimilation from the 1950s up until 1982 and that this was followed by a period of 'pillarization', which promoted integration alongside the right to organize oneself according to one's religion. By 1994, the government began to officially embrace multiculturalism, however it was a conception which placed considerable emphasis on individual responsibility and care as opposed to collective rights (Prins & Saharso, 2011). However, the murder of the openly gay anti-Islamic activist helped to solidify the trend in Netherlands away from official multicultural policies towards the embrace of a 'new Realism', which placed emphasis on the 'civic integration' and the promotion of 'Dutch Values'(Prins & Saharso, 2011).

Similarly, Hedetoft notes that where Sweden has embraced an active policy of multiculturalism, Denmark, has never openly embraced multiculturalism and calls Danish multiculturalism an 'oxymoronic notion' since its policy has been to promote a form of 'Danish

Values' and tighten the border in the face of increasing diversity. Hedetoft argues, that for small nation-states like Denmark seeking to preserve national myths, multiculturalism is 'too politically contradictory, too culturally essentialist, and on a subjective level, to unable to combine ethnic and civic dimensions of allegiance and belonging in a stable yet forward-looking way' (Hedetoft, 2011 p.125).

France has never openly embraced multiculturalism. Simon and Pala note that the multicultural debates in France are often framed as a continuation or rejection of the legacy of colonialism depending on the narrative one wishes to convey(Simon & Pala, 2011). The first supports a need to specifically address inequalities, while the latter ignores the need to provide any socio-economic assistance to citizens of former French colonies. Debates often ensue over urban riots, the role that socio-inequality plays and how to measure discrimination by introducing categories into statistics (Prins & Saharso, 2011 pp. 100-105). One prominent debate often perpetuated through the media is the wearing of headscarfs by girls in public schools. Since 2004, the wearing of any sign or clothes which conveys religious affiliation in French public schools is strictly forbidden (Simon & Pala, 2011 p.102). Simon and Para notes that despite progress on anti-discrimination measures in recent years, France maintains an uneasy tension between its official policy of 'integration' which it adopts from the EU and its own attempts to effectively 'erase' difference by asserting France's fundamental commitment to equality while denying that any inequality that emerges is linked to race or ethnic identity (Simon & Pala, 2011 p.106).

In the context of Germany, Schönwalder notes that although Germany has officially adopted a welcoming policy to immigrants, it has long existed alongside negative attitudes towards ethnic and religious difference(Schönwalder, 2011). In 2010, then Chancellor Angela Merkel claimed that Germany's longstanding policy of multiculturalism, which saw Germany inviting countless guestworkers beginning in the 1960s, had 'utterly failed' and had led to the development of 'parallel societies' (Merkel & Connolly, 2010). Kymlicka argues that despite the rhetoric of multiculturalism having failed, in fact it was never a policy which Germany had actively pursued in the first place, except in the form of a 'returnist multiculturalism'. He notes that in the German context, 'the goal wasn't to make immigrants feel welcome and at home in their new country, but on the contrary to reiterate that their real home was in the country of origin to which they should return' (Kymlicka, 2016). Thus, for example in the cases where mother-tongue education was introduced, its intent was not enacted to support minority cultural

rights, but to better enable children to return and integrate into their country of origin(Gogolin, 2005; Kymlicka, 2016; Schönwalder, 2011). Since the introduction of the 2016 Integration Bill, Germany has pursued an explicit policy of differentiation between those 'likely to stay', and those considered 'unlikely to stay' regarding who should be 'integrated' and how (Hinger & Schweitzer, 2020). This necessarily extends to educational contexts as well.

Iacob et al. (2020) note that within Eastern Europe, discourses of multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and political correctness are often characterised as existential threats to what is perceived to be local 'Europeanness'. These authors note that it is not driven by a rejection of European values, but rather, what is perceived as the defence of 'the 'true' – white, Christian, heterosexual – Europe supposedly abandoned in the West'(Iacob et al., 2020). The seeming 'imposition: by the German chancellor Angela Merkel of a 'welcome culture' and seeming, 'western- supported erosion of traditional family values and gender roles' is exacerbated by the loss of population these areas have experienced through migration to Western Europe (Iacob et al., 2020 p.124). As noted, the CoE is tasked with imparting the values, skills, attitudes knowledge and critical understanding of democratic culture to states seeking EU membership. The promotion of intercultural competence in such environments, risks being interpreted as further imposition of 'Western values' on what are perceived to be the 'true European values' in such contexts.

There has never been an official policy of multiculturalism in the United States. Nevertheless, multicultural policies can be seen at play in affirmative action and education policy. It is often linked to civil rights movement in 1960s and 1970s and the struggle for equality among African Americans and education (Gay, 2010; Sleeter, 1996; Solano-Campos, 2016). More recently, it has come to be associated with critical multiculturalism, which draws from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and critical pedagogy. Each of these theories considers how power is reproduced through institutions such as education (Solano-Campos, 2016 p.180). Ironically, these very which were meant to empower marginalized populations have become a target for populist populations. Such discourses feed into the polarization in the US, which is fed by a 'cultural backlash' against the move away from social conservatism grounded in Christian values amongst those who feel they have 'strangers in their own land'(Hochschild, 2018; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Proponents typically include, 'the Interwar generation, non-college graduates, the working class, white Europeans, the more religious, men, and residents of rural communities' (Norris & Inglehart, 2019 p.15 ). Those who reject multiculturalism in this

context view it to be an idea promoted by elites that place the needs of immigrants and minorities above those seen to be hard-working and 'white'. Moreover, one of their key targets is the purported 'naïve' cosmopolitanism of elites (Norris & Inglehart, 2019 p.78).I will return to this example in the next chapter. Here, it is simply important to note that a discursive shift towards interculturalism is not likely to have much sway in such contexts where the dividing line is drawn between 'a people' who feel they have been duped by elites who are characterised as being 'in cahoots' with the 'other'. As historian Sophia Rosenfield shows, the tactic of rejecting 'truths' promoted by elites has a deep heritage in the US tradition and can be traced to the very foundations of US democracy(Rosenfeld, 2019 p.1350).

English-speaking Canada has long been a champion of multiculturalism, so much so that multiculturalism has long been considered fundamental to the English-speaking conception of Canadian identity(C. Taylor, 2016). Yet, despite this embrace, multiculturalism as a term was rejected in Quebec in lieu of interculturalism(ibid). In Quebec, multiculturalism is criticized as means for English-speaking Canadians to ignore the 'French/English duality' that has divided Canada since the very beginning. Furthermore, the policies of multiculturalism are seen as a means of defeating the efforts of Quebec to integrate new immigrants into Francophone society(ibid). Taylor argues that for Quebec, the embrace of interculturalism make sense in that its culture and language are genuinely under threat. Thus, from Taylor's perspective interculturalism is the more productive concept for Quebec's unique socio-historic context since it encourages immigrants to learn its language and culture and 'integrate' into the community rather than to remain in English speaking enclaves. Both Taylor and Bouchard suggest that the Quebec's conception of interculturalism can provide inspiration for Europe where many national languages and cultures are similarly threatened by globalisation (Bouchard, 2016; Taylor, 2012).

Solano-Compos notes that while interculturalism is often presented as a response to multiculturalism, the concept of *interculturalidad* evolved in Latin America not as a response to immigration, but rather to the particular 'dynamics' of colonial and post-colonialism(Solano-Campos, 2016). *Interculturalidad* is thus meant to respond to the 'cultural clashes' and mixing of races born out of colonial conquest (Solano-Campos, 2016 p.183). Indigenous proponents of *Interculturalidad* were particularly concerned with the ability to participate, territorial rights and support for the preservations of indigenous languages and identity. This makes it a potentially useful approach for considering elsewhere. However, *interculturalidad* has not been

successful at addressing these concerns regarding segregation of races and religion. In this respect, multiculturalism might be better positioned to address the 'damaging effects of assimilation policies accompanied by mestizahe discourses' in the Latin American contexts (Solano-Campos, 2016 p.183). She argues therefore that discussions of diversity require a 'contextual approach', which considers how these concepts take on different texture in different contexts. At the same time, she suggests that each approach offers potential avenues for "cross-pollination" between multiculturalism, interculturalism and *Interculturalidad* to consider how each of these ideas might promote more 'equitable relations between different cultural universes'(Solano-Campos, 2016).

Levey notes that Australia's approach to multiculturalism is 'textbook liberal nationalism' in that it promotes the ideals of a multicultural society while simultaneously embracing the legacy of its 'British Heritage', beginning with colonial conquest (Levey, 2016 p.206 & 217).However, the tensions between colonial and Australia and multicultural Australia have recently come to the fore in the recent attempt by the ruling Labour party, 'to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice'(https://voice.gov.au). A recent survey by the Australian National University has shown that while there was initially support for the proposed change, many voters expressed the fear that the proposal would 'divide the nation'.  Of note, the survey revealed that non-English speaking were among those most likely to change their vote from 'yes' to 'no' during the campaign. Those who voted 'no' most often stated that giving 'special' rights to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders was 'unfair'(ANU Communication, 2023). Such findings add a new layer of complexity to Australia's relationship with 'otherness'.

### 3.5.3 Effects of moving from a discourse of multiculturalism to interculturalism

The examples above illustrate how the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism can take on different meanings in different contexts. Thus, it is important to consider what is meant by moving from a discourse of multiculturalism to interculturalism. In Kymlicka's view, the transition from a discourse of multiculturalism to interculturalism by the CoE and other governmental bodies is merely an attempt to rebrand multicultural policies by creating a 'new myth' (Kymlicka, 2016 p.166-165). It is thus a way to strategically position interculturalism as 'new, innovative, realistic' as a fix to the 'tired, discredited, naïve' policies of multiculturalism. His point is that the discursive switch effectively positions multiculturalism as a 'handy

scapegoat' for political failings of a waning commitment to policies that target diversity. He warns however that doing so effectively legitimizes populist narrative that liberal elites, 'cannot be trusted to protect the core values of the society'(Kymlicka, 2016 p.166). Thus, by adopting a discourse linked to the 'war on terror' and portraying multiculturalism as a 'poisoned term', the Framework risks alienating both populists and young Islamic citizens who are now portrayed as potential victims of brainwashing where they might, 'turn their back on democratic life' (Jagland in Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.7).

However, there are important consequences for this discursive shift that need to be considered. The first of these is that instead of diagnosis of the problem as a societal problem, the problem shifts to the individual's level where the ability to navigate superdiverse societies is now conceptualised as one of competence. Kymlicka notes that interculturalism tends to diagnose tensions between cultures as 'individual capacities and dispositions to interact across ethnic and religious lines'(Kymlicka, 2016 p.171). Thus, the problem is shifted from the government level to educators and classrooms where other discourses/policies may compete with the demand for intercultural competence, particularly discourses of nationhood. His point is that doing so effectively 'renders invisible the privileging of nationhood… [which] effectively consigns control over nationhood to conservative and populist forces'(Kymlicka, 2016 pp.168-173).

Critics of interculturalism tend to note that dialogue is 'no substitute for justice' and that it 'underestimates existing and entrenched hierarchies' (Meer et al., 2016 p.11). This leads to the second important consequence. That is, the move to interculturalism deflects attention away from entrenched hierarchies by treating culture as a choice. As the CoE states, 'the enforced assimilation of cultural minorities to a majority culture should never be condoned. All individuals have a fundamental right to choose their own cultural affiliations, beliefs and lifestyle'(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.47). In this idealized depiction of democracy, the groups and cultures one belongs to are chosen. Interculturalism, in this sense, underappreciates how it is often more than a matter of choice to supersede entrenched hierarchies between cultures.

### 3.5.4 Linking interculturalism to intercultural communication and dialogue

The field of intercultural communication which informs research on intercultural dialogue and intercultural competence has its own unique history that differs markedly the field of democratic education and human rights. Intercultural communication can be traced to efforts of the US Foreign institute in the 1950s to train diplomats in intercultural awareness (Ferri, 2015; Moon, 2011). Where Churchill depicted culture as rooted in a common history and spiritual heritage, the intercultural training industry reduced culture to standardized modes of behaviour.

The work of Geert Hofstede extended these to the workplace and emphasized the difference between collectivist and individualist cultures (Hofstede, 2001). The anthropologist Edward T. Hall divided cultures between high/low levels of assertiveness and high/low levels accordingly(Hall, 1995). For both Hofstede and Hall, cultures could be categorized according to their dominant style or tendency. Ferri notes such a conception depends on 'the ideal of an intercultural performer who can apply the skills of intercultural training in a number of contexts, such as education, management, tourism and intercultural mediation, contributes to the creation of what can be defined as an intercultural industry' (Ferri, 2014 p.9).

As such, what was required was knowledge of the language needed for communicating with the 'other', an awareness of their culture, 'self-awareness' and an aptitude for negotiating these differences (Ferri, 2014). In this ideal, intercultural dialogue is perceived to be an activity that takes place in intercultural situation between two speakers, where speakers employ specific knowledge, skills and attitudes in accordance with the assumed cultural norms of the 'other' speaker (Ferri, 2014, 2018). Much like one can learn to play tennis, speakers are imagined to become increasingly more adept or competent in intercultural communication through practice and exposure. To this end, a key feature of the Framework is exposure to intercultural and democratic situations. While democratic situations are not explicitly defined, the CoE defines intercultural situation as:

> *Intercultural situations arise when an individual perceives another person (or group of people) as being culturally different from themselves. When other people are perceived as members of a social group and its culture rather than as individuals, then the self is also usually categorised – and may present itself – as a cultural group member rather than in purely individual term* (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.20).

Thus, intercultural dialogue can occur, wherever individuals or groups who perceive themselves to be culturally different come together and can apply to, 'people from different countries, people from different regional, linguistic, ethnic or faith groups, or people who differ from each other because of their lifestyle, gender, age or generation, social class, education, occupation, level of religious observance, sexual orientation' (Council of Europe, 2018a, p.31). Thus, the distinction between intercultural and democratic situations would appear to be almost 'liquid' in that the two concepts almost flow into one another. However, the intended purpose of these situations can be discerned within the same paragraph where it is assumed that the such situations will lead to 'intercultural dialogue', which is further defined as, 'an open exchange of views, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, between individuals or groups who perceive themselves as having different cultural affiliations from each other'(Council of Europe, 2018a p.31).

Phipps (2007) argues that such instrumental approaches de-value the complexity of human interaction and the 'messiness' of the complexity of human relations (Phipps, 2007). Phipps makes the point that when communication becomes instrumentalised words can become 'emptied of content' and instead 'become slogans for political enterprise' (Phipps, 2014). Moreover, she notes that concepts like 'intercultural dialogue' depend on an idealised intercultural situation, free from conflict or power imbalances. Describing a situation where a facilitator sought to teach intercultural dialogue in the Gaza Strip as bombs were being heard nearby, Phipps makes the point that, 'once concepts migrate into 'other' political contexts, they lose their anchoring in the careful disciplinary rituals of the scholarship from which they were first formed' (Phipps, 2014). How intercultural dialogue and the intercultural situation came be idealized is the story of the next section.

Returning to the first policy strand of policy aimed at *education for democratic citizenship* (EDC) and *human rights education* (HRE), much of this material had been developed as part of the CoE's role in integrating the former Eastern Bloc states into the EU. To support these objectives, a large body of materials for educators, students, administrators, policy-makers and NGOs was designed. As such, the two policy strands continued to progress in separate spheres until 2012 when Andorra was serving as the Chair of the Committee of Ministers. This is when Andorra made education the CoE's priority and began to 'reflect on how education may be used to create the conditions required for living peaceably in culturally diverse democratic societies' (Barrett, 2020 p.3). This was the pivotal moment which brought the two policy

strands of *Democratic Citizenship* and *Human Rights Education* together with an education for intercultural dialogue (Barrett, 2020).

## 3.6 The birth of the Framework and the impact of the Charlie Hebdo attacks

This final section discusses the events within which the CDC Model and RFCDC were developed. In 2012, at the 24th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE), it was decided to undertake the development of a reference framework that would help member states develop competence-based education for democracy and intercultural dialogue (CoE, 2013 para 21.4). An expert *ad hoc* group drawn from the fields of history, languages, higher education and teacher education was tasked with the framework's implementation (Barrett, 2020, p.4). One of first recommendation of the expert panel was such a framework should be based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This meant that language learning and the ability to listen, read, speak and write in a language 'other' than one's mother tongue would play an important role in the conceptualization of intercultural dialogue and the CDC Model.

However, the languages being promoted in European schools are primarily European languages with few formal opportunities for citizens of host countries to learn the languages of new immigrants (McDermott, 2017). This is in line with the CoE's white paper on intercultural dialogue, which states:

> *The interculturalist approach recognises the value of the languages used by members of minority communities, but sees it as essential that minority members acquire the language which predominates in the state, so that they can act as full citizen* (Council of Europe, 2008 p.29).

In this vision, the intercultural approach must first and foremost facilitate integration into the language of the host society, but it does not seek to actively promote opportunities where host citizens might learn the language of new citizens, or for children of migrants to learn to read and write in their mother tongue. McDermott (2017) notes that there are two possible approaches to language learning that the CoE might take. These include those which tolerate/do

not discriminate against minority languages, and those which actively promote and help support minority languages (McDermott, 2017). Where the CoE has actively worked on the non-discriminatory front, there is 'only partial focus placed on active support in public policy or legislation'. The result is that the onus is on the minority language speaker to integrate, while host citizens merely 'tolerate', but do not attempt to learn the language of new immigrants or facilitate its continuation among the young.

A pivotal moment for the development of the Framework came in 2015 after the terrorist attack on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris (Barrett, 2020). This is when it was decided by the CoE that the competences being developed might be harnessed to 'combat radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism' (2020). The event catalysed the Council's resolve that the RFCDC should also provide guidance to educators for 'for building resilience to radicalisation in young people and for equipping them with the competences that are required to live peacefully with 'others' with full respect for the dignity and rights of 'others'' (Barrett, 2020 p.6). Consequently, *The Fight Against Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism-Action plan* was developed as a response to the attacks (Council of Europe, 2015) Within this plan, the Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture was identified as pivotal to implementing the goals of that plan. Volume 1 of the Framework received unanimous approval by the European Ministers at their standing conference in Brussels in April of 2016 (Council of Europe, 2018).

2015 was the same year that 1.3 million refugees began their journey to seek refuge in Europe, from mainly Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to Europe, an event which Lucassan describes as having been produced through the 'perfect storm' of circumstances (Lucassen, 2018). The Syria conflict had been caused by the US leaving Iraq leaving a vacuum and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had not brought peace to the region despite the desire to bring democracy and human rights to these regions. Neoliberalism had led to uneven development throughout the world and growing inequality. The EU had grown from twelve nations in 1993 to a supranational body of twenty-eight nations.

Within the Schengen Zone, of which twenty-fives states are members, the free movement between states was guaranteed. However, since the establishment of the Schengen zone, the EU had been gradually working with border-states to securitize entrance to the EU by hardening borders and implementing a visa regime. This meant that where refugees in earlier decades would have entered the EU less visibly through porous borders, the hardening of

borders meant refugees had to seek more dangerous routes, making their numbers more publicly visible, deaths more likely and making their migration a source of media attention (Lucassen, 2017). This also gave rise to an entire industry of smugglers who profited from the desperation of refugees. With mounting pressure to respond, German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced that Germany would accept the refugees mounting at the borders of Europe.

For populists like Nigel Farage, Merkel's decision to open the doors to refugees was an open invitation to refugees to not only enter Europe, but to flood the UK. For Farage, such a decision made without consulting the UK was an afront to British sovereignty (Abbas, 2020; Cap, 2019; Hopkin, 2017). Growing precarity among working classes, combined with access to social media, became a breeding ground for populism. Populism has a long history in democracy, but it is particularly adept at harnessing fears in order to vilify and 'enemy-other' against a victimized 'us'. Often this is accomplished by framing educational elites as giving unfair advantages to the 'enemy-other/'outsiders', at the expense of those who are characterised as the 'the people' or 'us', who have inadvertently been 'duped' by elites.

Mudde defines populism as, 'an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people ' versus ' the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people'(Mudde, 2004 p.543). Mudde's describes populism as a 'thin-centred' ideology, which lacks which is attached to a 'narrow range of political concepts' (2004, p.544). From a somewhat different perspective, Ernesto Laclau and Chantel Mouffe argue that populism is a way of *doing politics* that provides a means of simplifying politics and harnessing discourses against dominant hegemonic norms that are unjust (Laclau, 2018 p.18).

Regardless of how populism is defined, by 23 June 2016 the UK had voted to leave the EU, just three months after the competences for the conceptual model of the Competences for Democratic Culture were first published (Barrett & et. al, 2016). By November the following year, Donald Trump had been elected as the 45th president of the US on the campaign promise to 'build the wall' against the threat of immigrant outsiders and 'to make America Great Again'. As noted at the beginning of this thesis, as a result of these events, liberal democracy is increasingly said to be 'in crisis'. To this end, the CoE's CDC Model and Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture would seem to offer educators a practical way to address these conflicts through education, particularly those who work in the sphere on intercultural and democratic education.

## 3.7 Chapter Summary: Untangling continuities and discontinuities

This chapter has sought to explore: 'What the history of the CoE and its Framework is and how this history is relevant to understanding the Framework's object and purpose?'. To do so, I used Foucault's methods of identifying how different threads of discourse either continue or discontinue in historic narratives as a means of reproducing or resisting relationships to power. In this chapter, a number of key continuities and discontinuities have come to light.

First, the CoE was born in the aftermath of WW2 where many proponents, including the European Movement and Churchill aspired for a world government. The initial aspiration for the CoE was for it to function as a 'United States of Europe' where nations would agree to give up a level of sovereignty, that would have in theory been answerable to the United Nations. Thus, while the aspiration for a world government was discontinued in its discourse, a universalizing impulse appears to have continued within the very logic and structures of the CoE. This can be exemplified through its promotion of the universal norms of human rights and the network of relationship it shares with other global institutions including the United Nations, UNESCO, WHO, OECD etc to ensure the development of international legal norms and practices.

Moreover, in the beginning the outward assumption was that any universal norms and values embraced would necessarily be European much like Churchill sought to construct an imaginary of a Europe which had shared common values, a common civilization and common culture held together by its shared Christian heritage (Duranti, 2017). While this discourse was later discontinued in lieu of an emphasis on the World Heritage movement where Eurocentrism continues to play out in implicit ways while World Heritage ensures market accessibility to governance of sites designated as 'world heritage' (Brumann, 2018; Gnecco, 2015).

Second, this narrative of 'human' rights was determined in the beginning by its opposition to the Soviet Union during the Cold War. This meant that the laws promoted as 'universal' were a particular set that excluded social, economic and cultural rights. This represents a discontinuity from many of the social right which initially encompassed in the UDHR. Moreover, while the CoE has since sought to bring social and economic rights back into legal structures through the European Social Charter, however since many states continue to opt out of these provisions, the initial bias towards civil and political liberties remains.

Third, by the end of the Cold War, the had CoE emerged as 'mid-wife to the EU' in that it helped facilitate the transition by formerly communist states to the EU (Bond, 2012). This represented a new role for the CoE since prior to this time it was assumed that all member states would necessarily possess the appropriate democratic values and culture or they would not choose to become part of the CoE. Now, it was assumed that all former communist European states would desire and be willing to embrace the norms and values associated with Western European liberal democracy.

Fourth, in the aftermath of 9-11 and the 'war on terror' the CoE emerged as the defender of interculturalism, which came to be embraced after asserting the presumed 'failure' of multiculturalism (Council of Europe, 2008, 2018c). However, the assertion that multiculturalism has been or needs to be abandoned was problematized in this thesis noting how multiculturalism often shift problem from societal level to individual level --as in the development of specific competences—it renders invisible the privileging of nationhood, particularly when coupled with nationalist discourses connected to values and it tends to underestimate the entrenched hierarchies in society (Kymlicka, 2016; Meer et al., 2016). In this sense, what is altered or discontinued in the shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism is who becomes responsible addressing cultural diversity. Furthermore, it is important to note that the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism plays out differently in different contexts. This means that a discursive shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism from a position of power will likely have varied and unintended effects in different contexts.

Finally, following the attacks against the French satirical tabloid Charlie Hebdo in by Islamic extremism, the CoE committed itself to incorporating competences and guidelines which would mitigate 'Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism-Action' in the RFCDC(Council of Europe, 2018c). In other words, where the dangerous 'other' in the 1960s was conceptualized as the Soviet Union and its ideology, the threat is understood as potentially emerging from within culturally diverse societies by cultural others who reject 'democracy' in the Framework. This reproduces the binary in Western liberal democracy where some are seen to possess 'democratic culture' against those where this culture is absent. By the late 2010s, the colonial 'other' was no longer perceived to be living in colonized states when the ECHR was extended to a number of former colonies. By this stage, the presumed dangerous 'other' was imagined to be living among us and in need of development intercultural and democratic competences.

In many ways the potential threats and strains to democracy have multiplied in the short timespan since the CDC Model's conceptualisation and the Framework's design. The conceptual framework of Competences for Democratic Culture was unveiled in 2016 in the wake of a protracted war in Afghanistan (2001-2021) and Iraq (2003-2011), the 2008 financial crisis, the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris and just as refugees were clamouring at the door to Europe in 2015. Historically speaking, it is important to note that this was before Brexit, before Donald Trump came to power in the US, before the #MeToo movement in 2017, and before the wars in Ukraine and Israel.

The CoE further unveiled the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture in 2018 (Council of Europe, 2018a). While the unveiling of the RFCDC might appear to be more contemporaneous, it is further important to historically position the publication of the RFCDC development before the *Black Lives Matter* protests spread around the world after the death of George Floyd (2020), before the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-present), before the storming of the German Parliament in Berlin in 2020, before the storming of the US Capitol on 6 January 2021, and before Russia's invasion of the Ukraine on 24 February 2022. In other words, the subterranean forces working to destabilize democratic culture have intensified and further evolved since the CDC Model and RFCDC were first conceptualised.

This evolving and increasingly volatile context should be kept in mind when viewing the Framework. In the introduction to the CDC Model, Barrett et al explain that the Model was not designed from scratch. Rather, it is the product of a systematic analysis of 101 similar schemes (Barrett et al, 2016 p.10). In essence, the Framework brings together and consolidates competences from a broad range of educational discourses that were already in use at the moment of conceptualisation. In so doing, it also carries with it the assumptions, desires and aspirational futures of the past. The next chapter attempts to unpick some of those threads by viewing the Framework through the lens of 'hidden utopias' using Foucault's 1975-1976 lectures on *Society Must Defended* (2020) as a Guide.

# Chapter 4: Unpacking the Framework through the lens of 'hidden utopias'

This chapter seeks to answer: How might implicit utopias be discerned at play in the Framework and why might they be problematic? To do so, I draw particular inspiration from Foucault's 1975-1976 lectures at the Collège de France: *Society Must be Defended* (2020). While these lectures were never intended to be published, as Olssen notes, it is in these lectures that it becomes possible to piece together Foucault's theory of democracy (Olssen, 2007). However, it is further necessary to consider his later works on ethics beginning in the 1980s where Foucault addresses self-creation, *parrhēsia*, the critical attitude and the history of sexuality(Foucault, 1983, 2005; Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019; Lorenzini, 2016b; Olssen, 2007).

As Olssen notes, Foucault's conception of democracy depends on a conception of ethics that is developed through self-constitution in relation to oneself and others. It is therefore one which is aimed at the overall 'equalisation' of power relations (Olssen, 2007 p.208). It would thus necessarily exclude government policies which would inhibit the ethical cultivation of the self by the self on the self. It would emphasize the need for time and space for self-care and opportunities to speak truth to power through *parrhēsia* (Olssen, 2007). Furthermore, Olssen notes that Foucault would seek to promote pluralism over any attempts at 'monism'.

For Foucault, the present is made logically possible though multiple junctures and pathways in history which could have led to a different present. In other words, the present is a contingent construction that could have been constructed otherwise (Koopman, 2013). Thus, the concepts and technologies of power produced in previous eras are often harnessed in new ways to meet the needs of changing circumstance. This thesis is particularly interested in how power can insert itself into the discourses of the Framework and how it might be implemented in local contexts.

Other notable political theorists, such as Machiavelli are not explored in this chapter as I am focussing on those utopias which appear to be most influential for Foucault's modern conception of 'society' and thereby democracy (Olssen, 2007). As a number of authors have noted, it is Hobbes and not Machiavelli who is most influential to Foucault's genealogy of Western modernity (Chaterjee, 2015; Neal, 2004; Olssen, 2007; Stoler, 1995).

To this end, it is important to acknowledge that a different researcher, writing at a different point in history, using a different philosophical text and/or theoretical lens might have made different theoretical choices. I acknowledge that I speak from a number of subject positions, many of them from a position of power (Kramsch, 2006). The utopias chosen here are what I consider to be most significant when viewing the Framework through a Foucauldian lens using these specific lectures in order to trouble how discourses within democratic education can reproduce binaries between the self and 'other'. This necessarily includes binaries constructed between white/non-white, male/female, Western-Christian/non-Western/non-Christian, elite/non-elite, heteronormativity/gender-fluid, able-bodied/disabled, scientific rationalist/myth, humanity/nature etc.

My contention is that utopia matters to the role that power plays in these conceptions what democracy and democratic culture are imagined to be. It is not the intention of this thesis to definitively identify the only utopias which might be discerned in the Framework. Indeed, I would encourage future researchers to explore additional utopian imaginings and to trouble the way implicit utopias function as a means of dividing 'them' from 'us' in democratic discourse. Accordingly, this chapter will be divided into four parts and consider the: (i) how 'Society Must be Defended' connects to 'hidden utopias' (ii) the Hobbesian utopia, (iii) the legal-humanist utopia, (vi) the Romantic utopia, and (v) finally, the scientific/biopolitical utopian ideals might be discerned. at play and why it might be problematic

## 4.1 *'Society Must be Defended'* and 'hidden utopias'

Much of Foucault's *oevre* is dedicated to revealing the tensions and contradictions between modern claims to democratic freedom and how the state uses practices and mechanisms of power to effectively undermine that freedom by inducing subjects to govern themselves through dominating 'regimes of truth'(Lorenzini, 2016a). One of most crucial tensions, which emerges in Foucault's theory of modern liberalism is between democracy's promise of freedom and the subtle ways that state practices operate to control that freedom. This is a tendency, which in Foucault's genealogy can be traced from Hobbes. The Hobbesian impulse towards absolutism later weaves its way into practices inspired by humanism, into romantic discourses and finally into scientific/biopolitical practices where the human sciences begin to be used to defend a dominant conception of 'society'. As Fletcher explains, 'a technology is any human-

made thing that helps to solve a problem'(Fletcher, 2021 p.20). For Foucault, each new era contributes different technologies to defend a specific idealised vision of 'society'. In this thesis, I treat these visions as 'utopias' in order to make visible how the practices these visions of 'society' they produced continue to operate in implicit ways in its governing practices.

Foucault begins in *Society Must be Defended* by noting how in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, a discursive shift occurred in the way history was told in Western modernity(Foucault, 2020). Foucault argues that up until this time in the Western European context, history had been told through tales of glory designed to legitimize the Monarch's right to rule over his or her subjects by tracing a line of inheritance from Ancient Rome (Foucault, 2020). However, he points out that at this time, a number counter-discursive movements emerge to challenge the older narrative (ibid). This shift will have consequences for how narratives of the state and the state's right to govern subjects will evolve into modern liberal democratic practice.

Foucault recounts how in sixteenth century England, the Levellers and Diggers sought to assert their right to rule over the conquering Normans. Similarly, in seventeenth century France, the nobility sought to reject the king's right to rule by showing how they were among the conquering Franks who granted the king's right to rule in the first place (Foucault, 2020). In both cases, these movements were seeking to establish their right to rule against or alongside the Monarch by asserting that they were descendants of an 'original' or 'conquering' people. What is significant is how both movements harnessed the discourses of history to establish the people's right to rule over that of the Monarch(Foucault, 2020).

Foucault presents Hobbes as among the first to assume that he could use science and reason to universally resolve such political conflicts. Hobbes was an avowed Monarchist who was essentially seeking to ensure that the English Civil War he experienced during his lifetime could never re-emerge. Foucault explains that Hobbes' aim was to eliminate the conflicts between those who defended the king's right to rule and those who rejected this right. In Foucault's view, Hobbes' explicit aim was to convince citizens what they really wanted was safety from the dystopia he depicted in the state of nature rather than freedom from Monarchical rule (Foucault, 2020).

Hobbes begins by conducting a thought-experiment where he imagines humankind in a state of nature where everyone is presumably 'equal' and 'free'(Hobbes & Brooke, 2017). However,

rather than depicting this as a good thing, Hobbes surmises that this state of universal self-governance leads to what is effectively a dystopia, and all-out war of every individual against every other individual. He surmises that since humans would naturally wish to avoid as state where life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short' and where the only rational choice according to Hobbes was for humans to enter into a social contract where they would give up their personal sovereignty to an absolute ruler or 'Leviathan' for the sake of security (Foucault, 2020; Hobbes & Brooke, 2017). Foucault characterizes Hobbes as saying,

> *war or no war, defeat or no defeat, Conquest or covenant, it all comes down to the same thing: "It's what you wanted, it is you, the subjects, who constituted the sovereignty that represents you." The problem of the Conquest is therefore assumed to be resolved (Foucault, 2020 p.98).*

The power relationship Foucault identifies, is an individualised relationship to the Monarch whereby every person has effectively entered into a personal contract with hegemonic order. In so doing, Hobbes effectively disavows any idea of 'the people' existing as a unified force who might rise up and demand their right to rule against that authority. This solution effectively produces an atomized relationship between the individual subject and authority while delegitimizing any group claims to power. Foucault emphasizes, however, that rather than resolving these conflicts, the Hobbesian solution ushered in a whole string of dividing practices which become inscribed in Western conceptions of democracy and its mechanisms of power(Foucault, 2020).

The concepts of 'sovereignty' along with the social contract would come to be adopted by later democratic theorists and animate the revolutionary impulses in France (1789-1799) and the American revolution (1775-1783) where 'the people' would demand sovereignty from the king. Foucault's claim is that sovereignty was never truly handed over to 'the people' once liberal democracies were established. Rather, it was handed over to bureaucrats, social services, educational institutions, the police force and so forth, so that power of the Sovereign or 'Leviathan' could continue to operate implicitly in the name of securing the civic order (2020). Foucault further suggests that this same logic was extended to colonial contexts where the right to rule inherited by the Normans is extended to contexts like America and elsewhere. He states,

> *It should never be forgotten that while colonization, with its techniques, its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it*

*also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanism of power in the West, and*
*the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an*
*internal colonisation on itself (Foucault, 2020 p.103).*

In Foucault's telling, the techniques of power first perfected by colonizers on the colonized were brought back to European contexts where they continue to be used as a means of controlling populations(Chaterjee, 2015; Foucault, 2020). These practices work in multiples ways to control populations at home and abroad in Western liberal democracies. At the same time, Foucault's concept of 'boomerang effects' assures that these tensions will continue on in more subtle ways within liberal democratic states, between those who deem themselves to be among the 'original people' and those constituted through such discourses as outsiders or 'other' (Foucault, 2020).

For Foucault, the struggle between conquerors and the conquered constituted in the name of a unified whole is reproduced through the administrative apparatus of the state, and in the production of historical and political knowledge (Foucault, 2020). In Foucault's telling, historic-political knowledge invariably places some individuals on the side of history while others find themselves external or peripheral to these narratives (Foucault, 2020). Foucault key point is that, 'history does not simply analyse or interpret force, it modifies it' (Foucault, 2020 p.171). History thus becomes a key technology through which power is constituted and reconfigured in Western liberal democracies.

In effect, 'society' gains authority in the production of historic narratives that determine who or what belongs, who must be confined and who must be kept out. It is through such discourses and practices that people and lifeforms come to be divided, scientifically classified and objectified so that 'society' or at least a utopian vision of society can be defended against dangerous elements within (Foucault, 2002, 2020). This leads to multiple levels of subjugation from that 'of child to adult, progeny to parents, ignorance to knowledge, apprentice to master, family to administrations, and so on' (Foucault, 2020).

For Foucault, concepts like 'society', 'the nation' and 'race' all inscribe and reproduce the very conflicts Hobbes sought to eliminate by presenting a veil of unity, while simultaneously producing disunity in its construction of 'others' (2020). In other words, of all utopias described in this chapter, it is from the Hobbesian utopia that later utopias gain the tendency to strive to

reinsert the feudal relationship between the king and his or her subject into democratic practice. The section which follows thus provides the foundation for how subsequent utopias will work to reinsert power into everyday lives.

## 4.2 The Hobbesian utopias

This section considers four such ways that the Hobbesian utopia might potentially be perceived at play in the Framework and re-inscribe new relationships between subjects and power. The first of these in the (i) shift in discourse in CoE documents from a specifically 'European culture' towards a 'democratic culture'. The second, considers (ii) the consequences of emphasizing culture over history. The third, looks at (iii) how the Framework seems positioned to manage identity politics by emphasizing democratic culture. Finally, this section (iv) considers how values and competences function much like Hobbes vision of the social contract.

### 4.2.1 From a 'European culture' to 'democratic culture'

Thorbjørn Jagland begins the preface to the 2016 CDC Model by invoking the European Cultural Convention (ECC) of 1954, noting how member states have agreed to: 'encourage the study of languages, history and civilisation for the sake of unity: to help safeguard and realise the ideals and principles which are [our] common heritage' (Barrett & Council of Europe, 2016 p.7). This reference to the ECC is noteworthy since the preamble to the ECC states that its aim is 'to safeguard and encourage the development of European culture' (Council of Europe, 1998). In turn, it links 'European culture' with the need to, 'promote the study of [the Member State's] language or languages, history and civilisation' (Article 2).

By contrast, in both the CDC Model and RFCDC, the emphasis is placed on the desire to promote a general 'democratic' rather than a particular notion of 'European culture'. Thus, while the CoE grounds the impetus for the Framework in the ECC, its modern take on the culture it promotes is no longer specifically European. Thus, while the study of language and history remains, the specifically 'European' aspect of the CoE's conception of 'culture' has been dropped. Moreover, there is no longer any explicit reference to 'civilisation'.

Bond provides a potential explanation for this discursive shift by noting that by the early 2000s, 'the different values that migration—and the larger phenomenon of globalization—brought to Europe were not simply of concern in the neglected quarters of European cities, where Islam was already well established' increasingly there was concern that states within the CoE were moving away from democratic values (2012, p.133). Turkey, which had long been a member of the CoE had recently elected a leader of the Islamic political party, Abdullah Güll, as president. Moreover, '[i]ssues which the founding fathers of the original member states of the CoE had settled in the ECHR for their societies more than half a century earlier were pressing for consideration anew because of the changing composition of modern European society (Bond, 2012 p.33). In Bond's view then, the shift from 'European culture' to 'democratic culture' was thus motivated by a desire to address growing tensions between the West and Islam and the move away from democratic values within Europe.

In his introduction to the CDC Model in 2016, Jagland states that, 'increased migration, growing diversity, the boom in information technology, [and] globalisation are having a profound effect on people's identities' (in Barrett, et al, 2016 p.7). The assertion is that there was once unity, and this unity is now under threat as the internet and migration blur the lines between borders, cultures, and ideas.

Foucault would note that however that while this disunity within European democracies is treated as a relatively recent occurrence, this disunity is essentially woven into the very fabric of liberal democracy and carries with it the legacy of past internal conflicts and colonial conquest. He would furthermore note that while reference to European 'civilisation', has been dropped, its basic logic, which assumes that there is a non-civilized 'other' against whom Europe must defend itself can continue to operate in implicit ways (Foucault, 2020).

Jagland states, '[more than ever, within our communities we find people living side-by-side who hold different beliefs, backgrounds and outlooks' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.7). A few paragraphs later, the impending danger is named as the, 'recent surge in foreign terrorist fighters: radicalised Europeans who been brainwashed into turning their back on democratic life' (in Barrett et al, 2016 p.7). In other words, the cause of this disunity are identified as would-be terrorists, implicitly portrayed as Muslim terrorists, who are conceptualised as having been 'brainwashed'.

The Meriam-Webster dictionary defines brainwashing as (1) 'a forcible indoctrination to induce someone to give up basic political, social, or religious beliefs and attitudes and to accept contrasting regimented ideas' and/or (2) 'persuasion by propaganda or salesmanship' (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/brainwashing). Brainwashing in this instance thus implies that a citizen existing within society who is persuaded to abandon the norms of society and wage war against it. Yet, what is lacking from this conception of 'brain-washing' is how many of these individuals are constructed as 'other' through multiple overlapping practices and discourse where subjects come to be objectified and differentiated as 'other' in the first place. Such individuals have arguably never had the opportunity to feel fully accepted as 'European' in the first place.

Implicit practices of 'othering' often take place in public spaces such as schoolyards, classrooms and neighbourhoods where children pick up or fail to pick up 'contextual clues' regarding what is considered to be 'normal' in local circumstances. This can occur in the way that, 'code, dialect and style switching processes' is expected to be performed linguistically and, 'as well as choice among lexical and syntactic options, formulaic expressions, conversational openings, closings and sequencing strategies' (Gumperz, 1982 p.131). In other words, it is not merely the content which is conveyed, but the meaning produced between subjects in the process of communication which can serve as a means of determining who 'fits' within a specific social order and who does not.

As Welply shows, the experience of 'otherness' can be remarkably similar across in what appear to be divergent policy contexts. France, for example, approaches inclusive education as a means to obtain a 'French unitary culture' where the official approach in schools is to ignore or rather be 'indifferent to difference' (Welply, 2020 p.43). By contrast, England, which does not explicitly embrace a policy of multiculturalism, approaches inclusive education by acknowledging 'difference' in its education policies. Schools thus strive to support different languages, religions, cultural backgrounds through a 'celebration of diversity' (Welply, 2020 p.43). However, despite what would appear to be opposing policy approaches, Welply's research shows how racism is often naturalized in school settings by distancing oneself from racism. This is achieved by simultaneously embracing 'racist truths' perpetuated through framing difference in stereotypical attitudes to otherness which imply that 'they' are not like 'us' (Welply, 2018). Such practices normalize whiteness while 'pathologizing otherness'.

Similarly, discourses of 'tolerance' can disempower victims when those who call out racism are characterised as 'oversensitive' (Welply, 2020 pp. 379- 380). Subjects of 'othering' can internalise and reproduce these discourses of 'otherness' in the friendships they make and the ways in which they navigate inclusion/exclusion between the public and private sphere when home and family values differ from school values (Welply, 2020). As Welply notes, explicit discourses of multiculturalism are often underpinned by implicit perceptions of monoculturalism (Welply, 2020 p.384). As Foucault would describe it, the legacy of past conquests against 'others' plays out in a multiplicity of ways by producing discursive frames which link implicitly 'democratic culture' to Western, European and 'civilised' people against those imagined to be non-European and thus apparently 'lacking' in this civility.

### 4.2.2 'History' as a subject of knowledge vs. a technology of power

This section considers the specific challenges Foucault would see in treating 'history' as a subject of knowledge within the curriculum as opposed to a technology of power. It further considers how possible it is for the subaltern to 'speak' in the history curriculum. Where the ECC once encouraged the 'study of languages, history, and languages for the sake of unity' (Council of Europe, 1954), history takes on a less central role in the Framework. Indeed, while 'culture' and 'intercultural situations' are foregrounded throughout, 'history' is addressed primarily as a subject in the curriculum. This has several important consequences for how uneven relationships of power might enter the curriculum when using the Framework.

To begin, 'history' appears as a subject alongside eleven 'world knowledges' within the category of 'knowledge and critical understanding' in the CDC model (Barrett & et. al, 2016). From a Foucauldian perspective, approaching history as a mere subject of knowledge to be taught and learned rather than acknowledging it role in producing subjectivities enables history to work in implicit ways to defend a society's conception of self. As Foucault states, '[h]istory does not simply analyze or interpret forces: it modifies it'(Foucault, 2020 p.171).

Foucault notes that by the eighteenth-century historical knowledge and other academic disciplines came to be normalized, placed into hierarchies and centralized (Foucault, 2020 p.181). Foucault's observation is that, among the disciplines, it is history which provides the the foundational logic in which other disciplines are able to operate. He writes,

> *History constitutes… for the human sciences, a favourable environment which is both privileged and dangerous. To each of the sciences of man it offers a background, which establishes it and provides with a fixed ground, as it were, a homeland; it determines the cultural area- the chronological and geographical boundaries- in which that branch of knowledge can be recognized as having validity'* (Foucault, 2002 p.405 )

History, in this sense is not merely a subject in the curriculum, but a force through which power can be legitimized and maintained *across* the disciplines. In this depiction, history works to determine the 'cultural area' and 'chronological and geographical boundaries', which give validity to the other disciplines (ibid). In so doing, it is able to define the terms through which other disciplines are able operate. In Foucault's theories, the disciplines then work together to defend Western norms and traditions, which come to be codified in law (Chaterjee, 2015; Foucault, 2020).

Foucault notes that beginning in the eighteenth century 'humankind' comes to be conceptualised as 'an object of knowledge' and as a 'subject of knowledge' whose history could be studied and 'known' (Foucault, 2002 p.340). He explains that experts emerge this at this time using specific 'methods', perceived to give those experts a privileged access to 'truth'(Foucault, 2002, 2020). Historians thus play a crucial role in shaping what is taken for granted in how the present came to be (Foucault, 2020).

For Foucault, historians are not merely passive recorders of historical events. They select, interpret and ultimately frame historical events which suit specific narratives. Foucault asks us to consider, '[w]hat types of knowledge are you trying to disqualify when you say that you are a science? What speaking subject…what subject and experience are you trying to minoritize when you begin to say…I am speaking a scientific discourse and I am a scientist?(Foucault, 2020 p.10).

Foucault would advise educators and learners that it is important to consider the specific effects of objectifying historical knowledge and assuming the role of the disinterested researcher. Who is included in this knowledge and who is absent or peripheral to this knowledge? By treating history as an objective discipline, it can readily become a key technology for diving 'us' from 'them'. Subjects who do not identify as 'white', male, heteronormative, able-bodied, property-

owning elites, for example, often appear as peripheral, abnormal or are completely absent from such histories.

Foucault suggests that while it might be desirable for individuals to strive for objectivity when reading historical accounts, this can be especially challenging to achieve given the multiplicity of ways we are shaped by our cultural and historic circumstances. It is therefore notable that a key descriptor promoted in the Framework is that learners should be able to:

- *reflect critically on how histories are often presented and taught from an ethnocentric point of view'* (Council of Europe, 2018 p.23 & )

The key word in this phrasing is that history is 'often' presented and taught from an 'ethnocentric point of view'. This wording implies that there are also times when histories are *not* presented from an ethnocentric point of view. In effect, learners are asked to assume the role of the disinterested historian and seek to extract what can be identified as 'objective facts' and details from these narratives. Foucault would note, however, that dividing the 'ethnocentric' from 'objective' in history often serves to sift out what is deemed to be 'legitimate' knowledge from what is considered to be 'mythical' or 'other'. As Horkheimer and Adorno observe, the West is often blind to its own embrace of mythical beliefs that reason and science would eventually lead to the eradication of superstition and tyranny (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002). Foucault shows that beneath the surface of official historic narratives, a binary persists between those whose norms/values are portrayed as belonging to the true 'race' against those portrayed as deviating from these and thus threatening this heritage (Foucault, 2020 p.61). This practice can be seen most acutely in postcolonial contexts.

Andrews notes that Australia as a political nation has only recently come to acknowledge that Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders have a history. This is despite that fact that Australia has been continually inhabited by native peoples for the past 65,000 years (Andrews, 2022). She notes that up until recently Indigenous people in Australia were understood to have 'culture', but they were not granted the privilege, of possessing *history* or valid law for that matter. Thus, the distinction between 'culture' and 'history can serve as a dividing practice where 'history' is attached to 'white', 'British, colonial history and everything beyond that is relegated to 'culture'.

Moreton-Robinson further explains how Australian Prime Minister John Howard promoted the historic ideal of the essential Australian through the figure of the 'white' male war veteran or 'digger'. For Howard, 'the digger' came to represent quintessential Australian values, which included 'mateship, egalitarianism, and a fair go' (Moreton-Robinson, 2015 loc. 681). 'White' Australian women are portrayed as subordinate in this narrative, but indigenous woman and woman of other nationalities are completely absent. She notes that the implication for those who embrace this imaginary is that migrants and indigenous people are lacking in such values. Such discourses can play into white supremacist and misogynist conceptions of history where 'white' European women are implicitly understood to perform a reproductive role in the continuation of a racialized conception of identity. She notes that these practices are not confined to Australia and that globally indigenous histories have been ignored, treated as external to history or brutally erased.

In this way, the narratives of 'whiteness' are inexorably woven into national narratives in which the national self are inextricably linked to the possession of land, capital, gender and whiteness (Moreton-Robinson, 2015 p.248). In the United States, the conservative backlash over Critical Race Theory (CRT) has slowed efforts to bring Native American education into public schools despite federal mandates to do so (Adams, 2021). Where the tension lies in these cases between a coloniser and an original people, in Cyprus the divide is between, 'two different views about the balance of history of the island and the two communities' perceived motherlands (Greece and Turkey)'(Perikleous et al., 2021 p.133). This leads to the teaching of history and national identity in Cyprus through two different competing and often antagonist narratives- one which is Helliocentric and the other which is Turkocentric. These examples illustrate how the choice of determining whose history is 'ethnocentric' and whose history is 'objective' is often shaped and determined from a position of power.

Each of the descriptors in the Framework begins by stating that learners should be able to 'reflect critically…' on the specific feature related to history. However, the implication is that the learner must be able to *speak* or express their opinion in some way. The question emerges as to whether or not the subaltern truly can truly speak their history given their positionality within the structures of power?

Spivak makes the point that cultural factors, language, and power imbalances can inhibit the ability of subaltern subjects to speak as colonized subjects in different contexts. As history

educators in the field of decolonial studies have noted, the ability to 'speak' one's history can be inhibited by a number of factors including (i) the need to de-mythologise history and the history curriculum, (ii) the need to acknowledge the land and liberty taken from indigenous peoples in the colonisation process, (iii) the way that colonial languages have been privileged in the history curriculum, (vi) that 'insufficient voice has been given to indigenous peoples, cultures and perspectives, and (v) the need to challenge top-down hegemonic and nationalist narratives of history (Brett & Guyver, 2021 p.3). Moreover, while these authors note that teaching history from below appears to be promising, they admit that these methods are increasingly colliding with historians and politicians who,

> *'disapprove of critical, negative or so-named black armband (that is seeing the nation's past as negative and overly mournful, failing to see the positive aspects of nationalism and nation building) views of a nation's past'* (Brett & Guyver, 2021 p.4)

These collisions can render subjects further unable to 'speak' their history. Furthermore, relationships between learners can be further complicated in the history curriculum where gender and race collide with misogyny and racism. Andrews notes that white supremist and misogynists can reify white power by depicting 'brown women' as 'primitive' (Andrews, 2022).

Indeed, it is important to note that White supremist and misogynists are often united in their embrace of myths which promote a racialized and masculine conception of national identity. This is an identity which imagine that some embodied subjects are more 'evolved' or 'civilized' than 'others'. Stoler explains that technologies of power related to sexuality, race and identity are reinforced through discourses and practices in the private sphere where gendered appraisals related to 'parenting, children's sexuality, servants, and tropical hygiene' work to determine what it means to be 'European', 'masculine', 'feminine' or to possess 'good breeding' (Stoler, 1995). Racism and sexism are ultimately directed at maintaining power and social status. They construct, legitimize, and perpetuate relationships of domination and subordination which are purportedly based on obvious biological differences. They treat 'others' as 'different' for the purpose of 'excluding, exploiting or containing' the 'other' in order to make the user feel better about their own identity(Pettman, 1992 p.60).

Spivak asks whether it is possible for the 'brown' feminine subject to speak when their history has been written by the colonizers and laws put in place to effectively 'save brown women from brown men'. She writes, '[c]an the subaltern speak? … Clearly if you are poor, black, and female you get it three ways (Spivak, 1988). She notes how in particular, '[i]mperialism's image as the establisher of the good society is marked by the espousal of the woman as *object* of protection from her own kind'(Spivak, 1988 p.94).

Indeed, Spivak suggests by making visible the binary in Western discourse between what is deemed to be 'true' and 'other', Foucault's theories neglect to take into account how otherness is historically situated and experienced and can in themselves reify 'otherness' (Spivak, 1988). Spivak would thus caution educators who might wish to 'enlighten' learners to their oppression and effectively save the 'subaltern' that this can lead to its own form of oppression. In other words, the 'white saviour' can emerge to affirm their own privilege while offering no real benefit to the marginalized populations these practices are intended to serve(Cole, 2012). This is a fair warning and a practice I believe Foucault would caution educators to avoid.

However, while it may be true that Foucault maintained his gaze on the genealogy of the liberal democratic West and did not fully seek to engage with the complexities of the 'other', I believe there is space for the 'other' to find a voice in Foucault's theories. Indeed, I suggest that Spivak's critique depends on understanding Foucault's subject as 'defined entirely by external knowledge and power relations' and thus lacking in autonomy' (Ucnik, 2018). This is a not an uncommon reading of Foucault. However, it is one which has become less prevalent since the publication of his lectures at the *Collège de France*. This is because these lectures provide readers with the sense that his trajectory was moving towards an ethical self-constituting subject(Ucnik, 2018).

In recent years there has been considerable development on Foucault's late work on ethics (Besley, 2007; Besley T. & Peters, 2007; Foucault, 1986, 1990, 2005, 2008; Ucnik, 2018). These ideas are further linked to his promotion of *parrhēsia* as an act of 'speaking truth to power' from a subaltern position (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019; Lorenzini, 2015a). Moreover, using non-Western theorists are increasingly finding agency for a complex multifaceted 'other' in their work. Saba Mahmood, finds agency when applying Foucault's theories to the women's piety movement in Cairo in how, 'the capacities and skills required to undertake particular kinds of moral actions…[are] bound up with the historically and culturally specific disciplines

through which the subject is formed'(Mahmood, 2011). As I show in the Romantic utopia Foucault's Foucault's concept of self-care offers one way that subjects can resist being externally defined through the discourses of history.

A final point worth noting that all the descriptors directly referencing history are identified hierarchically as 'advanced'(Council of Europe, 2018a p.51). In other words, learners appear to be expected to pass developmentally through different levels of academically rigorous material from 'basic' to 'intermediate' before being called onto 'reflect critically on the processes of historic investigation' at the 'advanced' level. This would be problematic from a Foucauldian perspective since it would depend on waiting until marginalized learners have fully embraced dominant societal norms before asking learners to critically engage with 'the processes of historical investigation'.

### 4.2.3 Addressing identity politics by promoting a common 'democratic culture'

An additional aspect of the Framework that can be understood as Hobbesian is how the Framework appears be aimed at managing identities by promoting a unified set of values, which all citizens embrace. For Fukuyama (2019) the recent surge in populism can be attributed to identity politics (Fukuyama, 2018). While the Framework does not explicitly state that identity politics are to blame, it lists 'difficulties with personal identity' as one of ten predisposing conditions that can lead to radicalisation and potentially violent extremism. The CoE explains,

> *People sometimes experience a diffuse, confused, uncertain or unstable identity where they do not have a clear and secure sense of themselves and are not sure about how they would describe or define themselves, what the purpose of their life is, what their real interests are, or what their future ambitions should be (Council of Europe, 2018c p.5)*

In the CoE's estimation then, it is dangerous for certain young people to be lacking in a personal identity, '[b]ecause violent extremist and terrorist organisations offer a sense of certainty and can provide a strong sense of identity to their members based on fierce loyalty to the cause'

(Council of Europe, 2018c p.5). Where the CoE views lack of identity to be dangerous, Fukuyama blames an *over-emphasis* on identity by the political left for the current rise in populism. He suggests that what is needed instead, is an overarching 'creedal identity' that can constitute an identity beyond one's race, gender or sexuality. The aim of a creedal identity would be to promote principles of 'constitutionalism, the rule of law, democratic accountability and the principle that, 'all men are created equal' (now interpreted to include all women'' (Fukuyama, 2018 p.158).

The CoE appears to have arrived at a similar conclusion in its choice to emphasize specified values through the imagined unifying ideal of 'democratic culture'. However, while on paper creeds appear to unify, it is equally possible that these identities can become attached to partisan projects. As Ward notes, when the UK sought to promote the creedal identity of Fundamental British Values (FBV), the logic of this endeavour arguably resulted in  the UK extracting itself from Europe (Ward, 2021). In other words, creedal identities can serve to bring about new forms of nationalism or, in the case of the CoE, regionalism. Where society has been constructed at the expense of embodied others, either through revolution or conquest, the promotion of creedal identities can work to erase counter-histories and/or cement identarian divides.

 In the preface to the 2016 CDC Model, Jagland states that the growing diversity of Europe is 'to be celebrated'. However, he warns in the same sentence that ,'it also requires us to think carefully about how we nurture a common set of values around which to organise. How do we resolve clashes between competing world views? What are the attitudes and behaviours we cannot accept?(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.7).

Few liberal democrats would reject the idea that democracy needs to defend itself against illiberal attitudes and behaviours. However, it is important to interrogate what is causing these 'clashes between competing world views' and how these clashes are conceptualised differently by different theorists depending on context(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.7).

As noted in the previous chapter, Norris and Inglehart collected cross-national surveys from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States(Norris & Inglehart, 2019 p.33). Their conclusion from the analysis of these surveys is that cultural clashes currently feeding

into populism are attributable to a 'backlash' amongst social conservatives who are experiences 'existential' insecurity and as such feel they have lost their cultural hegemony(Norris & Inglehart, 2019). They hypothesize that, 'socially liberal values are spreading through intergenerational population replacement and demographic shifts, causing traditionalists (concentrated among the less-educated and older birth cohorts) to feel threatened, perceiving that respect for their core values and social mores is rapidly eroding' In their view, these clashes are driven by changes in social and moral codes that have occurred too swiftly for traditional conservatives regarding, 'equal rights for women and minorities, flexible sex roles and gender identities and LGBT rights, environmental protection, and secular rather than religious values'. They further write, 'The nativist component of authoritarian populism is sharply at odds with cosmopolitan values, which favor open borders, international engagement, and global cooperation' (Norris & Inglehart, 2019 p.78). In other words, it is the very universal cosmopolitan values which the CoE promotes that Norris and Inglehart identify as partially responsible for these clashes.

For Charles Taylor (1995), the heart of this discord can be attributed to what he calls, 'the politics of recognition'. Beginning from the context of Canada Taylor argues that clashes with cultural groups like the Quebecois are generated out of the existential fear of cultural erasure (Taylor, 1995). For Taylor any solution to resolving such clashes begins by cultivating societies that are 'hospitable' to difference, assuring recognition, reciprocity and mutual respect for different cultural communities. For Taylor, it is respect for difference and a reciprocal respect for difference that is brought together in a 'common project' (as opposed to common values), which leads to unity among competing cultural interests (Taylor, 1995 p.48).

For Seyla Benhabib, 'cultural clashes' are the result of legal practices of inclusion and exclusion which continue to reproduce, 'an outmoded Westphalian conception of unbridled sovereignty toward those who are on the outside'. She explains, 'the negotiations regarding insider and outsider status have become tense and almost warlike' (Benhabib, 2006b p. 47). Benhabib recounts the example regarding policies of *laicite* in France that forbid women from wearing the headscarf because of the assumption that it presumably disempowers women. However, because women have not been asked, she noted the law is simply applied to women without asking women the intent of this item of clothing. Benhabib suggests instead that an 'iterative democracy' which would give those who have traditionally been left out of democratic decision-making a deliberate say in law-making. As she describes it, an 'iterative

democracy' would be a gradual, unfolding process where each new generation, regardless of background or culture, would have the chance to become co-authors of the law rather than simply existing as subjects of the law(Benhabib, 2006a; Tourbier, 2020).

In this sense, Benhabib imagines that individual subjects from diverse backgrounds might contribute in an 'iterative' manner to the gradually unfolding universal norms and practices that will become increasingly 'universal' and eventually lead to co-solidarity and hospitality across borders(Benhabib, 2006a). In Benhabib's vision, an 'iterative democracy' could potentially lead to a mode of democracy which is no longer attached to what she calls 'the ethnos', but one which views each member as part of a wider 'demos', which has become decoupled from ethnic membership. Drawing inspiration from Derrida, she describes this vision as a 'cosmopolitanism to come' (Benhabib, 2006 p. 178). Yet, it's important to note that Phipps point that it is not always possible to engaging in rational deliberation when conflict has become so acute that it is no longer plausible to solve conflict through rational deliberation alone (Phipps, 2014).

The CoE defines 'democratic culture' as:

> *Among other things.... a commitment to the rule of law and human rights, a commitment to the public sphere, a conviction that conflicts must be resolved peacefully, acknowledgement of and respect for diversity, a willingness to express one's own opinions, a willingness to listen to the opinions of others, a commitment to decisions being made by majorities, a commitment to the protection of minorities and their rights, and a willingness to engage in dialogue across cultural divides (Barrett & Council of Europe, 2016 p.15).*

On the surface, the CoE presents an idealistic, even 'utopian', conception of democratic culture. Yet, there is an underlying sense that while some possess these values, others are lacking in these values. In the example by Norris and Inglehart that portray the cause of these clashes as a rejection of cosmopolitan discourses by more traditional members of society. Taylor's theories suggest the commitment to the majority opinion can silence the very minorities this conception says it protects (C. Taylor, 1995). Benhabib's theories show that the norms promoted in the Framework have not yet become truly cosmopolitan and universal since they

are often applied to 'others' through a conception of the 'ethnos' rather including all members of the 'demos' in the making of the law and human rights(Benhabib, 2006a).

Ferri furthermore highlights the challenges of educators being asked to harness universalist discourses, which can produce 'otherness' when educators are themselves 'embodied' and embedded within a 'network of power relations' and carry with them this positionality and personal agendas into classrooms (Ferri, 2022 p.383). Indeed, while the concept of 'democracy' is presented in the definition above as a presumably unitary ideal that we can all can presumably recognize, as noted in Chapter One, democracy carries with it a multiplicity of tensions and contradiction between its promise and what it actually delivers. Moreover, the term itself can be interpreted in a myriad of ways depending on one's background and the context in which it is deployed. Consequently, '[d]emocratic culture' can readily become a signifier for utopian conceptions of democracy, which favor some and not others.

As Ferri notes, deploying such discursive tools at the intersection of privilege and marginality without deep reflection on one's own positionality can be highly problematic (Ferri, 2022). I noted in Chapter One the complexity of my own colonial positionality as a 'white' American citizen, having been raised on lands taken from indigenous people to make way for 'white' settlement.  As educators, we often bring our own utopian aspirations and agendas into our practice. My own conception carries with it the messianic hope that democracy and democratic culture might one day be more just, more equal, more compassionate and its free from its long and complicated relationship with colonialism. However, because I speak from a number of subject positions that place me in a dominant position, this places me in a complex position as a democratic educator working with learners who have been marginalized. Having been treated as an 'outsider' in my homeland, can potentially give me a small sense of what it is like to feel disempowerment as marginalised subjects. However, it is likely something I will never fully understand.  Ferri's point is that we need to keep these motives and our own positionality firmly in view when using the 'Master's tools' when working at the intersection of privilege and marginality (Ferri, 2022).  This can prove particularly problematic when working to 'manage identities using the 'Master's tools'. It can become even more challenging when we are embedded within neoliberal educational contexts that monitor our teaching practice and the learning that takes place in classrooms through deliverables, competences and performative measures.  This leads to the next Hobbesian move- how competences can function as a form

of social contract between learners, educators, administrators, accrediting bodies, employers and policymakers.

### 4.2.4 Competences and values as a Hobbesian social contract

Volume 2 of the RFCDC is designed to turn the described competences into descriptors which are measurable, teachable and assessable (Council of Europe, 2018b). In this way, each of the 20 identified competences can effectively function as social contract between educators, administrators, accrediting bodies, employers and policymakers to ensure that the expected competences are demonstrated by learners. The act of identifying specific competences can thus readily become a means to ensure that power relationships between educators, learners and policymaking can be monitored, measured and maintained, which effectively undermines the very freedoms of democracy the Framework is said to promote. Similarly, presenting the competences in a conceptual model that seemingly sets in stone what is to be valued, monitored and measured in future democratic education. The competences thus are presented as timeless and immutable as if anyone from a different background or historic vantage-point would invariably arrive at a similar conception of democratic culture. Whether or not this is the case, the very fact of not enabling learners to critically engage with these competences is similar to the Hobbesian move of assuming any logical person would be necessarily agree to those terms in advance.

The novelist Jenny Erpenbeck recounts how many East Germans were forced to accept the values the West had identified for itself in advance when the Berlin Wall fell. She writes:

> *Freedom wasn't given freely. It came with a price, and the price was my entire life up to that point. The price was that everything that had been called the present until then was now called the past. The majority had defeated the minority and done away with socialism, and the minority, which believed in the continued existence of a socialist system in improvements, replacements, wasn't even asked any more* (Erpenbeck, 2021 p.77).

From Erpenbeck's perspective, East Germany entered the struggle within the capitalist world as a minority or 'outsider' expected to adapt to rules determined by the West in advance. No one asked if East Germany had something positive to contribute to the democratic ideals embraced at this point. Foucault argues that Hobbes' move is to turn the struggle within societies, between majorities and minorities, between those who are seen to be the 'people' and 'outsiders' into a contract.

As the example from Erpenbeck suggests, those who might question these values are simply asked to accept values and 'competences' determined in advance by those in a position of power rather than empowered to critically engage with the competences themselves. These are then translated into teachable, learnable, and measurable outcomes that ensure that the state is able to maintain a unified, sovereign conception of self. From a Foucauldian perspective, this would be a Hobbesian move in that the power of sovereign is able to continue operate through these discourses by monitoring and potentially measuring the specific competences learners would invariably be expected to demonstrate.

Educators wishing to use the Framework in more emancipatory ways might wish instead to empower learners with the ability to question the competences and consider whether they would have arrived at a different set. How might education for democratic culture have been conceptualised differently in a different set of circumstances and/or at a different historic vantage point? Who or what might be absent from the assumptions made?

## 4.3 The legalist/humanist utopia

The second utopian discourse which I explore in the Framework is the legalist/humanist utopia. For Foucault, humanism and, in particular, the human sciences is a central mechanism through which a certain conception of 'society' comes to be defended against an implicit dangerous 'other' (Chaterjee, 2015; Foucault, 2020). In Volume 2 of the RFCDC, the CoE makes explicit its promotion of humanism, noting that the competences stem from: a long education tradition, based on humanistic ideas and reflected in the concept of '*Bildung:* the lifelong process enabling people to make independent choices for their own lives, to recognise 'others' as equals and to interact with them in meaningful ways' (Council of Europe, 2018a p.15). This means

learners are considered to be actively responsible for their own learning, not mere receivers of knowledge or the objects of the transmission of values. However, as noted, Foucault was often critical of humanism and how it has come to be used in the West as a means of governing subjects. He states:

> *Humanism… is a theme or rather a set of themes that have reappeared on several occasions over time in European societies; these themes always tied to value judgments have obviously varied greatly in their content as well as in the values they have preserved. Furthermore, they have served as a critical principle of differentiation…From this we must not conclude that everything that has ever been linked with humanism is to be rejected but that the humanistic thematic is in itself too supple too diverse too inconsistent to serve as an axis for reflection'* (Foucault, 1988 p.44)

Golder notes, humanism is central to the concept of human rights as it is understood in the liberal democratic West(Golder, 2015). Indeed, Siedentop (2015) notes how when viewed historically, the concept of the individual as a bearer of rights is an anomaly that was born in the particular historic, religious and cultural circumstances of Europe aligned to the humanist ideal. For Moyn, human rights are best understood as a *Last Utopia* because they effectively function to fill a void where 'other', larger ideological utopias once stood (Moyn, 2012). He traces the role that numerous Christian groups played in helping to place rights on the global agenda for developing comprehensive legal norms in the aftermath of WWII. He explains that for such groups, '[p]ast atrocities mattered far less than future ascendancy. For them, human rights were a moralizing project, not simply a moral reaction' (Moyn, 2015 p.15). Thus, human rights are described in the CDC Model as, 'universal, inalienable, and apply to everyone without distinction' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.36). As Moyn notes, describing rights as 'universal' has the effect clothing rights in a sacred aura as if rights came from a higher power at the time of creation (Moyn, 2015).

Golder (2015) notes that, while Foucault does not outright reject humanism, he sees a danger in the way it has been used in the past and continues to be used to promote a specific kind of human to suit a specific vision of society. In the sense, the rights Foucault would endorse, says Golder, would need to be contingent, rather than set in stone, he would understand rights as

both potentially 'liberatory and subjectifying' and still contain within them the possibility of becoming a 'strategic political instrument' (Golder, 2015 p.22). Thus, while Foucault would hold the potentially liberating aspect of frights, he would problematize any educational project which does not interrogate the intended subject at the centre of human rights and what form of life it invariably promotes. Thus, I suggest it is important to examine the utopian ideals animating the CoE's conception of rights and the humanist utopia which informs it.

### 4.3.1 Making visible the unspoken hierarchies within human rights

Rights are often placed into separate 'categories' or 'generations' of rights. While Jensen (2017)argues that the generational approach is so problematic that it should be 'put to rest', the generational approach is useful for explaining how the implicit hierarchies within the human right regime function in practice. That is: (i) civil and political liberties are valued first and foremost; (ii) economic social and cultural rights as secondary and (iii) collective or solidarity rights/environmental rights as only worth pursuing once these first two generations of rights have been thoroughly established.

The idea for 'generations of rights' was first proposed in a brief article in the UNESCO Courier by Karel Vasak. For Vasak, rights could be placed into categories, which matched different aspects of the French principles: *liberté*, *egalité*, *fraternité*. To begin, there are 'first generation' rights, which encompass civil and political liberties and emphasize the French principle of *liberté*. Such rights are typically characterized as negative rights since all that is required from states is not to interfere in private lives. Next, there are second generation rights. These refer to economic, social and cultural rights, which are intended to match the French principal of *egalité*. These are typically described as positive rights since they encompass the notion of welfare and require that states provide the financial means for citizens to access such rights. Finally, there is the form of rights known as 'third generation rights' or rather 'collective or solidarity rights', which are said to by Vasak address the French principal, *fraternité* (Vašák K, 1977).

This final set is associated with those who live in developing contexts and includes 'the right to development, the right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment, the right to peace, and the right to ownership of common heritage of mankind [sic]' (Vašák K, 1977 p.29).

Arguably, third generation rights are made up of both positive and negative rights since they might require, for example, that states abstain from exploitation of natural resources or indigenous lands etc. On the other hand, they might require that states provide funding to remedy past wrongs. Each set, effectively represents a different level in a developmental hierarchy. While the hierarchy is a matter of controversy, the basic order described here tends to match their status in terms of the level of legitimacy they are accorded in the human rights regime.

The distinction between generations of rights was intended to bolster rights to development, particularly for those demanding third generation rights. What eventuated instead is that these distinctions came to be wielded as political tools for infighting over which rights mattered and to whom. These debates led to what Freedman and Mchangama (2016) describe as 'rights proliferation', whereby voting blocs manoeuvre to bring different forms of rights to the human rights agenda while refusing to sign onto other sets (Freedman & Mchangama, 2016). As these authors note, many developing world states used the generational categorization to support third generation rights, in lieu of supporting first or second-generation rights. The reality is that attempting to capture values, morals and the human condition in the form of legal rights is destined to leave out some key aspect of what it is to be human.

This final set is associated with those who live in developing contexts and includes 'the right to development, the right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment, the right to peace, and the right to ownership of common heritage of mankind [*sic*]' (Vašák K, 1977 p.29). Arguably, third generation rights are made up of both positive and negative rights since they might require, for example, that states abstain from exploitation of natural resources or indigenous lands etc. On the other hand, they might require that states provide funding to remedy past wrongs. Each set can be linked to different conventions, which have different levels of support and legitimacy in international law.

Signing onto the ECHR commits member-states to guarantee to citizens the right to life, liberty, a fair trial. They prevent citizens from being punished for something which was not against the law at the time of the offence, guarantee respect for family and private life, ensure the right to marry and start a family, not to be discriminated against in respect of these rights, to protection

of property, to education, to participate in free election and the abolition of the death penalty. It further secures freedom from torture, slavery, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly (Council of Europe, 1998). With the notable exception of education, all of these are civil and political rights and are associated with the first category.

As noted in the previous chapter, the privileging of civil and political liberties developed in part as a consequence of the CoE's role in supporting NATO as a soft-security companion (Bond, 2012). The perceived imperative to protect NATO objectives against the Marxist-Leninist values of the East led resulted in the CoE's emphasis on civil and political liberties from the very beginning, rather than on the economic, social and political rights that were being promoted by the Soviet Union. While some allowances have been made for social rights since the admission of formerly communist states to the EU with the adoption by some states in the EU of the European Social Charter, the privileging of civil and political liberties remains (European Social Charter , 1996).Bond notes that the emphasis on civil and political liberties 'reflected the ideological split between capitalist and communist systems in Europe' (Bond, 2012 p.8).

Feminist scholars have long critiqued the privileging of civil and political liberties in international law as serving the interest and needs of white European males. Thus, first generation rights tend to assume that individuals either have no dependencies, or that those who are dependent are able to be looked after by free domestic labour in the home or can outsource care for a fee (Caswell & Cifor, 2016; Fisher & Tronto, 1990; Wright, 1988). Marylin Waring's seminal work exposed how rights regimes are linked to economic policies that fail to count women's domestic labour as work (Waring, 1999). Such liberties furthermore ignore what it means to be a sexualized vulnerable subject (Charlesworth et al., 1991; MacKinnon, 1983; Wright, 1988). Feminists further argue that first generation rights imagine a world where dependents are safe in their homes from domestic and sexual assault, since the right to privacy often shields abusers from the law (MacKinnon, 1983). Hooks and Pettman challenge the fantasy of civil and political liberties rights by pointing out the specific vulnerabilities encountered by those whose race and sexuality were not considered in the production of those rights (hooks, 1989; Hooks, 1994; Pettman, 1992; R Hunter, 1996).

Posthumanists like Upendra Baxi observe that the tendency of civil liberties to emphasize human rights above non-human rights places people above nature. In this way, it assumes a natural right to exploit the resources of the planet (Baxi, 2008, 2011). Thus, it is argued that it is important to view humans in social and relational terms rather than as atomistic entities, as 'connected to other sentient beings and the environment' (Zembylas & Bozalek, 2014). Proponents of secondary rights, like the former Soviet Union, promoted a utopian imaginary where civil and political liberties would not be necessary, since the basic needs of food, shelter and education were presumed to have been met by the right to employment. Life satisfaction would be achieved by working together to achieve a communist utopia, rather than through free speech. For citizens in the liberal democratic West, a world of socio-economic rights without civil liberties would readily lead to a totalitarian state. Feminists have often embraced economic, social and cultural rights as perhaps more important to women or at least equally important to women as civil and political liberties. However, even here, Wright (1988) argues that there remains a problem with the assumption that economic, social and cultural rights can address the particular needs of women in different contexts. Here, it is worth quoting Wright at length:

> *Civil and political rights are not the antithesis of economic and social rights, but the individual manifestation of problems within cultures and societies. Neither are economic and social rights especially relevant to individuals in society in a way fundamentally different from political rights. They too are a reflection of the need to protect individuals within a social context. Both kinds of rights are predicated on the notion of accessibility of these rights through States or international agencies, either to specific political freedoms, or to enhance economic or social position. Both tend to ignore the problem women have in relating to such rights that make no allowance for the primary role women are expected to play in most political and social structures, i.e. to give up their own 'individuality' in the care and service of others* (Wright, 1988).

In other words, each set of rights is essentially aimed at fixing problems generated by society by beginning with an essentialized notion of what it is to be human.

Third generation rights emphasise environmental laws, humanitarian assistance, rights to peace, and rights of linguistic and cultural communities. In this respect, they are perhaps the most utopian of the different generation of rights in terms of their achievability in current

economic climate. However, given the pressures of a warming planet, the current economic and environmental impact of the war in Ukraine, they can arguably be positioned as the most important of all. This set of rights imagines a world where the effects of industrialisation, poverty, war and exploitation of nature can be overcome (Baxi, 2008, 2011; Zembylas & Bozalek, 2014). Returning to the generational conception of rights, all of these generations of rights can be shown to be problematic in the way that they effectively essentialize different experiences of human life. Important here is that the hierarchy they produce ensures that some rights area perpetually put off until a later stage when presumably society will have the financial resources or have reached a sufficient stage of development to fully support all sets of rights. However, the challenge of what to value and what to exclude begins with the term 'rights' themselves. At heart this challenge rests on the atomized conception of liberal subjects grounded in humanist ideals.

### 4.3.2 Problematizing human rights as a unifying discourse

Human rights are a core value promoted in the Framework alongside the value of cultural diversity. The question is whether these values, which are grounded in Western European humanist ideals will become a source of unity or further serve as a means producing subjectivities? Douzinas makes the point that human rights have come to function as a sort of universal system of morals, values and ethical norms since the end of the Cold War. This is because many believe that human rights hold the power to 'unite' those who would otherwise be traditional enemies (Douzinas, 2013 p.52) Given the presumption that human rights can 'unite' citizens, it is useful to consider how rights claims where culture and specific rights conflict are actually determined in the practice of the ECtHR. As I have noted elsewhere[2], CoE is not only the producer of rights in the ECHR, but it serves as parent to the ECtHR which determines what judgements are made when culture and rights conflict(Tourbier, 2020). Considering ECtHR case law can potentially reveal the ideal subject and society that is privileged in the Court, and by extension, the CoE.

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[2] This section appeared in my previously published article:
- Tourbier, M. (2020). The council of Europe's competences for democratic culture: Employing Badiou and Plato to move beyond tensions in the values it promotes. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *52*(1), 22–33.

Gozdecka, Ercan and Kmak (2014) observe that European policies on human rights have gradually evolved since 9/11 from an emphasis on 'multiculturalism' towards five specific trends: (i) '[a]n excessive focus on gender inequality within traditional minority cultures'; (ii) a shift away from focus on ethnicity to religion; (iii) an 'increased emphasis on social cohesion and security', (iv) a focus on 'the emergence of new forms of racism' (v) and 'relativization of international and transnational human rights law'. While these trends tend to be directed at the general population, the authors argue that the imagined 'enemy within' is often a young Muslim male or veiled female immigrant (Gozdecka et al., 2014).

At the same time, gender-related violence and/or oppression are increasingly portrayed not as problems of societies in general, but as problems associated with 'certain groups' (Gozdecka et al. 2014). Discussions of ethnicity often centre on those religious symbols and religions which are imagined to be incompatible with democracy and freedom (Gunn, 2005).The 'good migrant' is portrayed as someone who needs to be 'integrated' and the 'bad migrant' as someone society needs to be 'secure from' (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 55). Crucially, the authors argue that new forms of racism have emerged insofar as the 'other' is constructed as lacking the values of democracy and human rights, into which they need to be 'conditioned' (p. 57). This is especially relevant when considering how valuing human rights might be interpreted and promoted in local settings. Presumably, if one can be competent in terms of understanding and valuing 'human rights', then it is equally possible to be identified as 'incompetent'. This begs the question of whether not fully embracing human rights might lead produce insiders and outsiders in classrooms.

The fifth trend, relativization of human rights law, is particularly relevant when assessing the Framework. Gozdecka (2016) notes that since 9/11, the jurisprudence of the ECtHR has evolved from one in which pluralism was simply 'tolerated', to one whereby pluralism is seen to be the 'cornerstone of democratic society'. This is particularly the case with respect to the interpretation of Article 9 of the ECHR which states that, 'Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Gozdecka, 2017). However, rather than benefitting religious minorities, Gozdecka et al. (2014) note how this logic has over time come to bolster constitutionally entrenched religious practices of those in power. In one example, an applicant complained about a state school in Italy displaying crucifixes. The court ruled against the applicant stating that such displays were permissible in reflecting the 'profound moral views of a nation' (Lautsi v. Italy) (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 57). Whereas, when confronted with

cases concerning Islamic headscarves in Dalhab v. Switzerland, Sahin v. Turkey, and Dogru v. France, the court ruled in favour of the principle of secularism in educational settings, citing the need to 'preserve national systems' and 'non-interference' (Gozdecka et al. 2014, p. 58).

With respect to court decisions, the 'freedom to manifest one's religion' found within the ECtHR appears to depend at least in part on whether or not one's beliefs coincide with those of the 'national system' or not, and whose freedom is in question. Since the parent organization of the ECtHR is the CoE, it is worth asking if these same tendencies to privilege nationalist narratives, when they conflict with minority cultures, will be extended to local settings. At the same time, rights remain controversial. For some on the political right, they are perceived as a means for supranational organizations exerting control over citizens in far-flung countries (Lagon & Schulz, 2012). Thus, the challenge of bringing human rights together with the demand to value cultural diversity is that it ignores how the hierarchies within the human rights produce 'otherness' in the assumptions they embrace regarding the figure at the centre of rights.

In the 2016 CDC Model, the second key descriptor states that learners should have:

> *knowledge and understanding that human rights are universal, inalienable and indivisible and everyone does not only have human rights, but also has a responsibility to respect the rights of others, irrespective of their national origins, ethnicity, race, religion, language, age, sex, gender, political opinion, birth, social origin, property, sexual orientation and other status* (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.53).

The complexity of identities listed here is indicative of the challenges policymakers have in trying to capture the concept of an individual bearer of rights and their specific identities through legislation. Yet, what is ignored or forgotten is how rights-discourse itself can produce the very identities it is designed to protect so that the law can be applied to those identities. As Brown notes, rights are not merely attached to subjects; they produce and regulate the subjects to whom they are assigned (W. Brown, 2004).

### 4.3.3 Thinking beyond humanist rights

Thinking with Foucault means recognizing that history is contingent and therefore could have developed differently in a different set of circumstances. At the same time, the human rights which learners are asked by the Framework to value promote a particular vision of human rights to suit a particular vision of what it is to be human. These are rights that imagines humans as masters of their environment rather than part of it. Looking for the silences and historic constructions in the concepts in the Framework can potentially provide the context and means for learners to recognize these silences, to consider the imagined futures that were lost along the way and to think beyond them.

Santos (2018) notes, offers a that the Pachama of Ecuador 'see nature not as a natural resource but rather ... as a living being and source of life, to which rights are ascribed as to humans'—a worldview acknowledged in the Ecuadorian constitution (Santos, 2015 p.10). Santos further notes that rights are seemingly antithetical to concepts like *Ubuntu* in South Africa that 'demand an ontology of co-being and co-existence' (p.10). While human rights treaties have now expanded to include Indigenous rights and cultural rights, like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the rights with the greatest legitimacy in law continue to be those civil and political liberties which favour the economic policies of neoliberalism.

Numerous thinkers have noted how rights discourse is largely ineffectual at tackling extreme poverty, inequality, climate change, violence in the home, the use of force between states and the extinction of non-human sentient lifeforms around the planet (Baxi, 2011; W. Brown, 2004; B. E. . Harcourt, 2018; Moyn, 2018; Zembylas & Bozalek, 2014). Moyn contends that human rights are best understood as a *Last Utopia* because they effectively function to fill a void where 'other', larger ideological utopias once stood (Moyn, 2012). Yet, this does not mean that they are not worth pursuing. It merely suggests that educators and learners need to think beyond the humanist subject at the centre of human rights and ask deeper questions regarding what it is to be human and how might rights be made more just for future generations. For As Moyn puts it:

> *In the era of human rights, many (though by no means all) have become less poor, but the rich have been even more decisive victors. It follows that human rights must be kept*

*in proper perspective, neither idolized nor smashed, to recognize the true scope of our moral crisis today and the melancholy truth of our failure to invent other ideals and movements to confront it. Human rights, focused on securing enough for everyone, are essential—but they are not enough (Moyn, 2018 loc.98).*

## 4.4 The Romantic utopia

The Romantic utopia was at heart born out a rejection of the Enlightenment tradition. Where eighteenth century philosophers emphasized the important role that education would play in leading to enlightened subjects, romantic thinkers emphasized the need for free subjects to develop naturally and cultivate their emotional sensibilities(Hansen, 1996; Rousseau, 1991). Gouldern and Hansen argue that the romantic movement carried with it a number of contradictory tendencies (Gouldner, 1973; Hansen, 1996 p.61). On the one hand, they note that its emphasis on individualism, non-conformity and a return to nature could be emancipatory. On the other hand, they emphasize that 'its essentialism also contained grains that through later political mediation lend themselves as inspirations to xenophobic nationalism racism and totalitarian thought'.

### 4.4.1 The danger of decoupling self-knowledge from self-care

Foucault's early work was often critiqued for presenting subjectivity as entirely shaped by external forces and power relations and thus offering little room for resisting such practices(Ucnik, 2018). Foucault's conception of self-care can be understood as a response to these critiques. Davidson notes how self-knowledge becomes a means of governing populations for Foucault, the moment Descartes announces that humankind can both think for himself or herself or know him or herself in the absence of spiritual practices of self-care (Foucault, 2005 loc 392). Foucault's point is that where previous eras emphasized the importance of deriving self-knowledge through spiritual practices of self-care, after Descartes, philosophy became preoccupied with, 'what it is that allows the subject to have access to the truth' and what conditions should determine and limit the 'subject's access to the truth' (Foucault, 2005 loc. 1027). By contrast, he notes that self-care in the ancient Western tradition emphasized the conditions that would enable a subject to have access to truth. Foucault explains:

(a) 'he must be changed, transformed, shifted, and become, to some extent and up to a certain point, other than himself...'.

(b) 'truth is a kind of work. This is a work of the self on the self, an elaboration of the self by the self, a progressive transformation of the self by the self…'

(c) [and finally], 'in the truth and in access to the truth, there is something that fulfills the subject himself, which fulfills or transfigures his very being' (Foucault, 2005 loc 1016-1059).

Foucault argues that up until Descartes, self-knowledge and spiritual practices of self-cultivation were intimately entwined and often treated as more important than self-knowledge (Foucault, 2005; Ucnik, 2018). However, by the Romantic period, the demand to 'know oneself' came to be linked to two key technologies that invoked subjects to govern themselves. The first of these was the secularization of the practice of confession. The second was how encounters with 'otherness' became a means for developing essentialized identities.

### 4.4.2 The art of confession during the Romantic Period

Rousseau ushered in a tradition of writing confessional works among Romantic writers (Levin, 1998). Gutman explains that Rousseau's confessions differed from those which came before. This is because rather than being internally focussed on spiritual development as St. Augustine's was, Rousseau's project had external and secular aims,

> *In order to defend himself against the grand conspiracy that tries to demean him everywhere, Rousseau must create himself as a character with a history. He must exhibit everything, expose himself to completely before the public gaze… So we see that Rousseau's confessions develops as a response to a social accusation, that it consists of total exposure and that its revelations are to be exposed to the external (and judging) gaze* (Gutman, 1988 p.3)

Gutman explains in reference to Foucault's theories, that Rousseau effectively divides himself so that he can conduct 'countless analyses' not for himself, but ultimately so that he can perform an examination on himself by dividing head from heart, reason from emotion, nature from society, country from city, and self from nature(Gutman, 1988 p.4). In so doing, Gutman observes that Rousseau unwittingly provides a key means through which modern subjectivities

are produced. This includes, the emergence of, (i)'a unique individuated self', (ii) the practice of dividing oneself within oneself and from others, (iii) presenting 'the self as object' to be examined under the public gaze and (iv) the development of written confession, which demands completeness leading to absolute exposure of one's inner thoughts. Yet, Gutman notes that it was dissatisfaction with these practices which exposes the lack in society and a demand that society must be transformed. In other words, these very technologies carry with them the tensions and contradiction of the French revolution. That is, a recognition of the various ways we are governed by society and the demand that humanity must be reclaimed (H. (1988) Gutman, 1988).  It is to this final dissatisfaction, which I believe Foucault's conception of self-care to be directed and which seeks to answer how can we find autonomy in a world defined by externally produced 'regimes of truth' and power relations?

In *Wrong-doing, Truth-Telling*, Foucault shows how confession operate when subjects become objectified, so that they can be treated and cured(Foucault, 2014). He recounts an interaction which presumably took place between in the 1840s between a doctor and patient (Butler, 2016; Foucault, 2014). In this scene, a delusional patient promises his doctor he will not dwell on his delusions and vows to never speak of his delusions again. Each time the patient speaks, the doctor tells him he is delusional and therefore has broken his promise to disavow his delusions. The doctor continues exposing the patient to freezing showers. Each time, he asks the patient, 'Are you mad?'. The patient at first denies that he is mad, but the process of exposing the patient to freezing showers continues until eventually the patient confesses his madness to the doctor (Butler, 2016; p.78 Foucault, 2014b pp.11-12).

Reflecting on this scene, Butler notes that 'by engaging in this very speech act [i.e. the promise to disavow his delusions], the patient takes on the identity ascribed to him by the doctor and thus submits to a diagnostic category. It is an act of self-making where the subject binds himself to power'. The subject thus, 'conforms to a certain regime of truth and, in so doing, constitutes himself as a legible subject' (Butler, 2016 p.78).

While the example might appear extreme, the demand to produce one's identity in educational contexts and confess can emerge in subtle and not so subtle ways. Confession can be seen at play in practices which subtly divide those who are deemed to be legitimate members of 'society' from those who are deemed to be dangerous to it. It can be seen in more benevolent practices where learners are simply asked to reflect on their learning. A young Muslim refugee

might be asked to read the conversion experience of an American evangelical Christian. The intent of the exercise might benevolent enough. It might hope to bring different learners from different religions together into dialogue, but to the young girl, the demand to provide live through the confessional diary of an evangelical Christian and comment on it for a grade can be experienced by the learner as an act of violence. For Foucault, the key to understanding these practices is to ask where the locus of power lies and what are its effects. Where some forms of assessment may seem benign, to others they might be experienced as a form of oppression.

### 4.4.3 How encounters with 'otherness' can produce 'essentialised' self-knowledge

Despite the desire promoted in the Framework that intercultural and democratic encounters will help learners develop a more nuanced sense of identity, the lesson of the Romantic era is that it can lead to deeper distinctions between 'self' and 'other' when self-knowledge is decoupled from self-care.  Hansen, Schkar and Gouldner note, many romantics were deeply interested in discovering an essentialised 'self' that was externally derived through encounters with 'otherness' (Gouldner, 1973; Hansen, 1996; Shklar & Moyn, 2021). However, this essentialized conception of self was often externally derived through encounters with 'otherness' or through performative confessions that were ultimately meant to establish oneself as an authentic writer in the eyes of one's peers. Drawing from Goethe, Shklar explains that in the Romantic view '[e]ach one of us is gifted with an inner 'daemon' which he can develop but never change'(Shklar & Moyn, 2021 p.41). One of the ways that 'inner daemons' of self were discovered was through encounters with exotic lands, literature and otherness.

Tales of travel to exotic destinations proliferated in the Romantic period and were a crucial technique used by the Romantics to discover oneself by encounters with cultural otherness (Hansen, 1996; Izenberg, 1992; Kitson et al., 2020; Stelzig, 2009; S. Taylor, 2004). In Britain, tales of exotic far-off lands were made all the more enticing by the notion that entering these foreign places had been made possible through the expansion of the British Empire and that the desire to know these places was an important aspect of self-realisation (S. Taylor, 2004). As a subject of the British Empire living in the nineteenth century, one was not merely part of

Britain, but part of a colonial empire and a whole series of relationships between conquerors and the conquered.

Said notes that once the 'Orient' was invented, a whole series of subject-experts on the 'Orient' emerged who could interpret these societies so that the West might better know itself by distinguishing itself from the peculiar and less civilised 'other' (2019). In Said's telling, the Romantics gave the liberal democratic West the 'oriental other', so that it could hold up a mirror to itself, imagine who or what it wanted to become and who or what it wanted to exclude from that vision (Said, 2019).

Foucault died prematurely and was thus never able to fully develop his ethical project.. In his 1981-1982 lectures on the *Hermeneutics of the Self*, he explicitly describes self-care or 'epimeleia heautou' as 'an attitude towards the self, others, and the world'(Foucault, 2005). However, as Ucnik notes, while there is the sense in Foucault's late work that self-care is something to be undertaken with 'others' and 'the world' it is an area in his work he was never truly able to flesh out (Ucnik, 2018 p.63).

### 4.4.4 The foregrounding of 'culture' while de-emphasizing 'race'

As Hansen and Gouldner have argued, the romantic utopia contained 'grains' of thought which later contributed to racism and distinctions between embodied selves and others (Gouldner, 1973; Hansen, 1996). Barrett notes that it was in part the sense that multiculturalism had failed that led the CoE to replace an emphasis on multiculturalism with an emphasis on interculturalism (Barrett, 2013). Yet, as Lentin notes, one consequence of the new 'orthodoxy' of multiculturalism's perceived 'failure', is that 'culture' has been shifted to the centre of policy debates while the concept of 'race' has faded into the background (Lentin, 2014). Lentin argues that following WWII, racism was effectively decoupled from statist notions of race that had dominated discourse in the nineteenth century and became attached instead to the legacy of slavery in the US (Lentin, 2014). It was out of this post-racial politics that multiculturalism was born and post-racial politics enabled 'culture' to operate within the space where multiculturalism once prevailed. Lentin writes,

*because the language of race and racism has been abandoned for that of 'different but equal' culture, the terms of the debate fail to incorporate both the experience of racism and the struggle for equality and justice that anti-racism involves (Lentin, 2014 p.1275).*

Foucault's driving theme in *Society Must be Defended* is that there is an implicit 'race war' underlying the structures, mechanisms and institutions of modern liberal democracy that can be traced to Hobbes's attempts to cover over these tensions through the concept of sovereignty (Foucault, 2020). He emphasizes that while 'race' was a much more general concept in previous eras that could employ one's nation, one's social clash or even linguistic group, it was not until the nineteenth century, around the time of the romantic period, that race became explicitly linked to biology.

The choice to emphasize culture over race is made most visible in the CoE's Framework when conducting a basic word search. The CDC Model refers to race only twice (Barrett & et. al, 2016). In the first case, it is referred to as an aspect of the competence whereby learners should value democracy, justice, fairness equality and the rule of law. In the second case, it is referred to as an aspect of the competence for knowledge and critical understanding of the world. Culture, by contrast, is mentioned 125 times in the 2016 version of the Model (Barrett & et. al, 2016).

These same frequencies are replicated in Volume 1 of the RFCDC (Council of Europe, 2018a). In Volume 2 of the RFCDC, which unpacks the Model's descriptors to help policymakers and educators with implementation, a word search reveals that the term race is not mentioned once out of 2059 key descriptors (Council of Europe, 2018b). Presumably, the concept of race is assumed to be encapsulated in broader language. Yet, this is precisely the point Lentin makes regarding how culture has come to dominate discourse so thoroughly that it occludes racism as a distinct societal pathology and lived experience (Lentin, 2014).

In the final volume of the RFCDC, racism is mentioned as a possible predisposing condition, which might lead to radicalisation. Racism thus only appears to be a matter of particular concern from the CoE when it is identified a potential causal factor in radicalisation. The danger is that by de-emphasizing racism, the Framework risks bolstering far-right discourses that treat racism as a no longer explicitly relevant to modern life. Such an assumption underappreciates

the impact of countless racialized 'microaggressions' that many individuals experience in their daily lives. Sue explains,

> *The power of microaggressions lies in their invisibility to perpetrators and oftentimes the recipients. The definition of oppression includes imposing 'abusive messages' (microaggressions) that both reflect and perpetuate false beliefs about people of color. Those beliefs cause humiliation and pain, reduce self-determination, confine them to lesser job roles and status in society, and deny them equal access and opportunities in education, employment, and health care. Most of the pain and detrimental impact of racism does not come from that of overt racists but from ordinary, normal, decent people who believe in life, liberty, and the pursuit of justice for all* (Sue, 2010 pp.6-7).

Racism, as such, is not merely a potential cause of radicalisation, but a practice that keeps racialized bodies subjugated in a multiplicity of complex ways. Microaggressions work to temper hopes and aspiration for a better world. This is part of what made Barak Obama's campaign slogan 'hope' so powerful to racialized minorities in the US but is also why it led to such disappointment when, as Taylor notes, Obama approached politics as though we had reached a 'post-racial' moment in American history rather than intervening on behalf of those who had been oppressed through systematic racism (K. Taylor, 2017).

Culture is described in the CDC Model as consisting of material resources (i.e. 'tools, foods, clothes'), socially shared resources (i.e. 'language, religion, rules of social conduct) and subjective resources (i.e. 'values, attitudes, beliefs and practices which group members commonly use as a frame of reference for making sense of and relating to the world) (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.19). Culture thus consists of resources which an individual can freely choose to use in social situations, which implies that culture consists of attributes that one can choose to adopt, modify or reject. Yet, as Foucault notes ever since the nineteenth century, race has become linked to biology. One can choose to adopt or reject cultural values or resources. However, it is not so easy to choose or reject the racial categories one is externally placed into based on one's visual appearance.

### 4.4.5 Applying Foucault's conception of self-care to the Framework

The question is whether the Framework's conception of 'knowledge and critical understanding of self' provides adequate space for the practices of self-care and self-cultivation. Barrett et al, note that there are several aspects to self-awareness necessary for democratic cultural competence. The first of these relates to an individual's 'cultural affiliations' (2016, p.51). Self-knowledge in this instance, appears to be externally determined. The learner begins with externally produced category of one's 'cultural affiliations' and then deconstructs those categories the multiplicity of categories one belongs to. While potentially useful, absent of self-care, it can potentially be used to draw attention to one's difference, particularly in contexts where subjects feel 'othered'.

Secondly, the CoE states that learners should possess knowledge and understanding of one's 'perspective on the world and its cognitive, emotional and emotional aspects and biases' and the 'assumptions and preconceptions' which undergird these perspectives' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.51). Notable here is how one should begin with having a perspective on the world and only afterwards identify the cognitive, emotional and motivational aspects of the biases which inform those perspectives. Foucault's conception of ethics would recommend instead engaging first with one's 'cognitive, emotional and emotional aspects and biases' and then only later considering how those influence one's approach to the world. In schools where pastoral care is promoted, it might mean beginning first with building caring and trusting communities and only later engaging with political debates.

Aspects three and four proceed using similar logic where externally derived knowledge is used to produce internal truths. However, the fifth aspect, which emphasizes awareness of one's own 'emotions, feeling and motivations, especially in contexts involving communication and co-operation with other people' is particularly interesting (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.51). Key for Foucault is that personal agency can only begin once we have accounted for the various ways that power becomes inserted into our everyday lives. If, in principle, self-knowledge is achieved by oneself by engaging with oneself in a self-reflective manner and all other criteria for the competence subsumed under self-care, then cultivating such an 'awareness of one's emotions, feelings and motivations' could be interpreted as moving towards Foucault's conception of self-care. However, given that this aspect only appears as fifth on the list and

other aspects are largely concerned with externally produced self-knowledge the vital role that self-care plays in in self-constitution could easily be overlooked by educators.

The final aspect is that subjects come to know and understand the 'limits of one's own competence and expertise'(Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.51). Again, what matters for Foucault is how this competence is derived. Is it this self-knowledge produced elsewhere and later internalised or does it originate from the subject through deep reflection and self-cultivation?

For educators interested in bringing Foucault's conception of self-care into practice, there are a number of key points that educators might want to consider. First, he suggests that self-care reflects a way of being in the world that is exemplified in 'an attitude towards the self, others, and the world' (Foucault, 2005 loc. 945). The point is that, rather than simply focussing myopically on one's personal needs, self-care demands self-reflection on oneself in relation to oneself, to others and to the world at large. In this sense, it would require giving learners adequate time for self-discover. This is a very different conception of self-care that is currently marketized through the self-care industry.

Secondly, Foucault explains, '[t]he care of the self implies a certain way of attending to what we think and what takes place in our thought' (Foucault, 2005 loc. 945). As Ucnick notes, explains, 'Foucault's practices of self-care are unspecified, and revolve around notions of personal responsibility, accountability, and a consistency between the truths a person holds publicly and privately, as well with words and deeds'(Ucnik, 2018 p.6). While the Framework emphasizes the need to understand our motivations, the act of attending to one's thought for linking one's thoughts and sense of responsibility for one's thoughts to how one's actions in the world.

Thirdly, this form of education,'…always designates a number of actions exercised on the self by the self, actions by which one takes responsibility for oneself and by which one changes, purifies, transforms, and transfigures oneself' (Foucault, 2005 loc. 946). Self-care thus promotes a form of self-regulation that is more than simply reflecting on one's behaviour and regulating it as many schools currently use it. Genuine self-care demands that one thinks reflexively about one's thinking, the moral systems one ascribes to, the meanings derived from these practices, the responsibilities revealed in these, and importantly, one's spiritual relationship with oneself and others (Olssen, 2007).

Finally, self-care constructed in this way demands, more than simply knowing one's cultural affiliations, one's cognitive, emotional and motivational aspects and biases, or the limits of one's own competence. It would be focussed instead on promoting transformational experiences where learners might develop a personal ethos and an 'art of living' where one is less governed by external expectations and discourses. As Olssen argues, it would be aimed at the well-being of others so that one might take one's place in the city, community and in relationships with others (Foucault, 1991b; Olssen, 2007).

## 4.5 Making visible the scientific and biopolitical utopias

This section considers how scientific and biopolitical discourses might be discerned at play in the Framework. It explores the discourses in the Framework by (i) considering the Framework's use of psychological resources, (iii) its emphasis on responsibility and finally (iv) its promotion of resilience to thwart radicalisation.

### 4.5.1 Managing democratic culture through psychological resources and competences

By the end of nineteenth century, in Foucault's telling, this same gaze turned from the task of government towards normalising populations through biopolitical technologies of power that harness humans science to defend a certain conception of society (Foucault, 1991a, 2002a, 2007b, 2020).Foucault is highly critical of the way the human sciences and psychology, in particular has been used since the nineteenth century to 'defend' a specific vision of society through biopolitical practices aimed at the population as a whole (Chaterjee, 2015; Foucault, 2020). By limiting knowledge to that which is gained in a specific way according to a certain practice in a specific context, Descartes and Bacon provide a blueprint for scientific reasoning that could be used by both the physical and human sciences alike (Bacon, 1963; Descartes, 1999). Since this time, the scientific utopia has assumed a dominant role in society. Science is increasingly called on to answer questions that prior to Descartes would have been unthinkable. This includes promoting evidenced-based education policy, influencing voter behaviour, managing pandemics, identifying solution for climate change, and in cultivating democratic culture through a Framework of competences. This does not render science useless, but it does

ask for a measure of intellectual humility when it comes to how far science can go in producing something as amorphous as a 'culture of democracy'.

The competences provide important clues to the CoE's imagined ideal society. The CoE states,

> *Cultural affiliations are fluid and dynamic, with the subjective salience of social and cultural identities fluctuating as individuals move from one situation to another, with different affiliations – or different clusters of intersecting affiliations – being highlighted depending on the particular social context encountered. Fluctuations in the salience of cultural affiliations are also linked to shifts in people's interests, needs, goals and expectations as they move across situations and through time (Barrett et al, 2016 p.20).*

This society portrayed in this passage appears to be constantly in flux. It is one where borders are porous, and citizens are constantly meeting citizens from different cultural backgrounds and political beliefs. Even culture itself is characterized as unstable and shifting. In effect, it presents in a positive light what Zygmunt Bauman describes as 'Liquid Modernity' (Bauman, 2000).

For Bauman, this state of constant change and flux is produced by neoliberalism and one which he identifies as the root cause of modern insecurity. 'Liquid modernity' metaphorically refers to the disappearing and 'melting away' of social structures and institutions, which once provided a stable foundation for reality. In this reality, there are no longer any permanent features that individuals can grasp onto or cling to in order to find meaning in the world. Jobs come and go. In the gig economy, people of all ages move from contract to contract with no stability, and in some contexts, no insurance or retirement. Workers are told they need to be flexible in their jobs and in their ability to adapt. Networks of security can be dismantled at a moment's notice (Bauman, 2000).

Bauman's point is that this liquid form of society leads to instability in one's life and one's circumstances and leads to increasing precarity. Such a world makes discourses that offer simple narratives about who 'we' are and where we are heading particularly appealing. In part, this liquidity is what makes populist, racist and xenophobic discourses so appealing. They tell

us who we are by showing who we are not and often place the blame for societal problems and instability on elites and others (Laclau, 2018; Mouffe, 2013, 2018b; Mudde, 2004).

In the definition of cultural affiliations described in the Framework cited above, the increasingly fluid nature of society is presented as natural and normal, the way things are—the reality to which we are all expected to adapt. While it may be difficult or impossible to dismantle such practices, the idea that this neoliberal reality is the 'most we can hope for it undervalues how much this liquid world is producing further fragmentation in democracies(W. Brown, 2004, 2015). For many, the desire to return to stability, leads to the idealisation of a bygone age, leading many to long for what Bauman's conception of *Retrotopia*—an imagined past when national and cultural structures are imagined to have been stable and predictable (Bauman, 2019). Bauman's point is that this 'competitive frenzy' of the liquid present leads to a Hobbesian dystopia where everyone is in competition with everyone else. This leads to a longing for strong-men leaders (Bauman, 2017 p.13-48). Arguably, the CoE's globalized imagined society of porous borders is the world many academics and elites inhabit. Yet, it remains a world where only those able to obtain passports, purchase tickets and navigate the complexity of international visa systems truly benefit.

Dermijnsbrugge & Chantalier note that neoliberalism is generally antagonistic towards 'institutional structures such as the state'. In their view, supranational institutions increasingly provide comparative measures between education systems as a means of exerting influence (Van Dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022 p.12). They emphasize in particular how the OECD works with UNESCO to promote pragmatic policies, which privilege economic global economic growth as the highest value of society. These organizations make aid to less 'developed' states dependent on the adoption of neoliberal policies of governance. They further predicate aid on the adoption of evidence-based education that can be linked to outcomes and compared cross-nationally (Resnik, 2006).

In this way, international organizations work together in various ways to produce a 'global education culture', to foster the production and expansion of human capital (Resnik, 2006) (Resnik, 2006). Through PISA, the cross-national comparative test of specific competences of fifteen-year olds, the OECD has become a major agent of educational reform Ball 2016(S. J. Ball, 2016). It is too early to tell how many nation-states will adopt the Framework or whether it might be linked to comparative measures of democratic education.

However, given the CoE's role in the political and security architecture of Europe, it is not unfeasible that the competences will be used as a soft-security measure to help states gain entry to the EU, or lead to curriculum changes in education because certain forms of democratic pedagogy are more easily assessed. While thesis does not suggest that this is the intent of the designers, it is something which remains possible given that the competences can be readily instrumentalized as assessed. Foucault would warn however that they could effectively be used to impose democratic practices unilaterally. The question which constantly needs to be asked when working with the Framework how might the Framework be used to reinsert the absolutism into democratic practice?

### 4.5.2 Responsibility, selves and cultural 'others'

This section considers how responsibility is treated within the Framework in relation to selves and others. Within the field of intercultural communication, Guilherme, Keating and Hoppe (2010) propose that intercultural dialogue entails an ontological shift whereby one becomes an 'intercultural being', and this naturally engenders a form of 'intercultural responsibility'. Drawing inspiration from Emmanuel Levinas, Ferri theorizes that the ethical dimension of intercultural responsibility to the 'other' reveals itself in the 'saying', a moment where the self 'renounces control in favour of unpredictability'(Ferri, 2018 p.65). It is in such moments of unpredictability, where the self lets go of the ego, that a moral and ethical responsibility to the 'other' might emerge.

Guilherme (2020) argues that for Levinas, responsibility with respect to the 'other' is 'utterly compassionate and altruistic, which completely erases prejudice, for even subjectivity is conceived in ethical terms' (Guilherme, 2020 p.14). The weakness in such an approach, she argues, is that it disregards the autonomy of the 'other' and assumes the 'other' to be 'weak and vulnerable'. In this way, the subaltern is one who must be cared for. What this amounts to, she contends, is a responsibility-for-the-other position where the Western subject remains in a superior position. Guilherme advocates a form of intercultural responsibility that instead begins from the position of the epistemologies of the south. Beginning from the epistemologies of the south means decolonizing knowledge and promoting a 'multicultural perceptions of human

rights' that moves beyond an individualist dualism constituted by an opposition between the 'I' and the 'other'. Instead, Guilherme recommends a move whereby 'we' becomes an intersubjective community, who are together responsible for change. Drawing from Mignola and Walsh, she argues that this change would require a 'conceptual, epistemological and social structural transformation, that is, a being otherwise (Guilherme, 2020; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

Within the Framework, the competence of responsibility is said to be aimed at 'moral responsibility' (Barrett et al, 2016, p.41). In the CDC Model Barrett states that, 'Moral responsibility is an attitude towards one's own actions. It arises when a person has an obligation to act in a particular way and deserves praise or blame for either performing that act or failing to act in a way' Barrett notes that moral responsibility can mean having the courage to take a 'principled stance' against 'the norms of a community, or challenging a collective decision that is judged to be wrong' (Barrett et al. 2016, p.42).

Further aspects of moral responsibility described in The Framework include holding oneself accountable for the 'nature or consequences of one's decisions and actions', and 'a willingness to appraise and judge the self', taking action as an autonomous agent. This is a much more individualized approach to responsibility. In this wording, one only need only be responsible for oneself and one's own actions in the world. Such a conception is compatible with neoliberal approaches which make individuals solely responsible for their moral actions.

As Rose (1999) argues with respect to neoliberal practice, it is as if the agent is solely responsible for his or her own misfortune (Rose, 1996). Pyysiäinen et al (2017), note that responsibilizing subjects in this way is a key governing practice of neoliberalism (Pyysiäinen et al., 2017). It enables the reduction of welfare services and protections provided by the state by calling for 'personal responsibility' (p.26) and does so by tapping into the personal desire for freedom. Citizens can be treated as autonomous individuals who make autonomous 'choices'. Furthermore, responsibility is said in the CDC Model to require: 'The identification of one's duties and obligations and how one ought to act in relation to a particular set, based on value or a set of values' (Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.42).

Thus, the responsibility emphasized appears to be individually focussed on governing oneself and one's moral actions based on the humanist values prescribed by the CoE. This form of

responsibility does not demand responsibility for the 'other' as Levinas might recommend, nor does it demand the form of responsibility for change as suggested by Guilherme (2020). Rather, it demands only responsibility for oneself and for exhibiting the values already identified in the Model, which have been built on utopian impulses of the past that privilege some and exclude others. Critically and creatively engaging with utopian ideals might provide one way of using the Framework in diverse settings, in order to promote a broader conception of responsibility as a means taking into account humanity's joint responsibility for imagining a better future.

### 4.5.3 Promoting resilience to thwart radicalization

The final section considered the CoE's choice to pair the concept of resilience with resistance to radicalisation. One of the key resources provided in the Framework is a guidance document for '[b]uilding resilience to radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism'. It aims to 'boost individual' resilience to the conditions that can initiate radicalisation' (Council of Europe, 2018c p.102).

Bourbeau has genealogically traced the origins of resilience from multiple junctures in time across several fields, from psychology to social work, engineering and ecology (Bourbeau, 2018). In the field of psychology, resilience is focussed on individual adaptability to adversity and trauma; in the field of social work, resilience looks at the resilience of communities when faced with external pressures or even catastrophic events; in engineering, researchers are interested in how materials can be formulated to 'bend and not break' while ecology looks at how ecosystems might 'bounce back' from disaster (Bourbeau, 2018). In the political realm, resilience can refer to resistance of authoritarian regimes to pressures of democracy. The study of resilience is interested in determining the factors that make an individual, substance or system robust in the face of life's challenges and external pressures.

A number of critical theorists register concern with how the concept of resilience makes agents responsible for their own welfare. Joseph argues that the demand for resilience 'encourages active citizenship, whereby people, rather than relying on the state, take responsibility for their own social and economic well-being' (Joseph, 2013 p.42). In this sense, resilience provides the perfect companion to neoliberalism, since primary responsibility for developing resilience is

placed on individuals, although in the case of children, the responsibility for cultivating resilient children is often placed on parents and teachers.

Some scholars suggest that resilience is actually indicative of a move into a post-neoliberal age. David Chandler has argued that the tendency to emphasise resilience in a hyper-complex age, where there are incalculable 'unknown unknowns' serves as a means of governing those 157 unknowns (Chandler, 2014 p.50). For Schmidt (2015) the need to cultivate resilience stems from the inability to account for these unknowns (Schmidt, 2015). Another group of scholars view the act of emphasizing complexity as a mere continuation of neoliberal discourse. Joseph notes how the need to be resilient in the face of complexity plays into the narrative of a world that is 'beyond our control'(Joseph, 2013 p.43). This is a world that is unpredictable, where the threat of terror or environmental disaster could strike at any moment. It is a world which seems very much in line with that addressed in the Framework's materials. Joseph notes that there is a clear trend in government documentation following 9/11 of highlighting the need to develop capacities in citizens and communities to deal with such 'external shocks' (Joseph, 2013).

While noting that there is 'variability in the radicalisation process', the CoE lists a number of predisposing and enabling conditions which can lead to radicalization and then extremism or terrorism. Predisposing conditions include: 'problematic family background', 'estrangement from other people or from society', 'difficulties with personal identity', 'simplistic thinking style', 'lack of exposure to positive role models and alternative points of view', 'racism and discrimination', 'deprivation and marginalisation', 'grievances and injustices', 'disillusionment with politicians and conventional politics' and 'Disillusionment with democratic forms of citizen participation'(Council of Europe, 2018c pp.106-108).

It is in the face of these predisposing conditions that recruiters are said to be able to attract militants and radicals to their cause. Thus, as Jagland notes, young Europeans might be contacted by outsiders and 'brainwashed' into 'turning their back on democratic life and waging war on their fellow citizen'(in Barrett & et. al, 2016 p.7). In this way, it reflects the utopian ideal that radicalisation can be effectively addressed through scientifically determined models that conceptualize terrorism and the potential terrorist as knowable societal ailment that is potentially treatable through education.

The CoE notes that there are relevant enabling conditions that can lead to radicalisation as well. This includes being exposed to extremist ideology through social groups or networks that provide a sense of belonging (Council of Europe, 2018c). Would-be militants can access extremist material via the internet or written materials. Violence can satisfy the psychological needs of individuals by provoking a 'moral, religious or political awakening'. Finally, exposure to extremist ideology can offer 'a 158 sense of adventure, excitement and heroism (Council of Europe, 2018c pp.10). Educators should presumably both be on the lookout for these predispositions or enabling factors while cultivating competences for democratic culture, which the CoE says can 'boost individuals' resilience to the conditions that can initiate radicalisation…' (Council of Europe, 2018c).

Bourbeau presents an alternative approach to resilience. For Bourbeau resilience can be understood in three different modes: The first mode is 'maintenance'. This means that resilience is effectively used to maintain the status quo after some pressure or event; this emphasizes the capacity to 'bounce back'(Bourbeau, 2018 pp.24-26). The second model is 'resilience as marginality'. This mode merely demands resilience at the margins and does not challenge the basis of policy. The third mode, however, is 'transformational resilience (Bourbeau, 2018 pp.28-31). This mode of resilience harnesses resilience to challenge and transform the basic policy assumptions themselves. Bourbeau argues that such resilience enables a 'bouncing forward' and 'the potential remodelling of social structures'(Bourbeau, 2018 p.31).

There is danger in reading the CoE's approach to resilience from the first two of Bourbeau's modes, either as a means for maintaining the current order or as a mode for seeking to promote change at the margins without changing core policies. The ideal citizen in the first two of Bourbeau's modes can weather the challenges thrown at them, roll with the punches and still actively participate in democratic life without questioning dominant hierarchies or the way the present came to be. However, there is silent force that sustains resilience, that is not explicitly stated—that is hope (Bloch, 1986).

For Bloch, it is the hope of a better world that keeps individuals moving forward towards an anticipated future. It is one's preconscious expectation of what is to come that may be expressed through daydreams, and that either keeps individuals invested in the social order or leads them to look elsewhere for hope's fulfilment(Bloch, 1986). This means that a fundamental aspect of

resilience, from a Blochian point of view, is investment in the dreams presented by society — ideas that an individual embraces in their private thoughts and desires.

By contrast, the Framework solution to radicalisation is not to treat the symptoms rather than the cause of radicalisation by '[boosting] individuals' resilience to the conditions that can initiate radicalisation' (Council of Europe, 2018c p.102). Yet, while resilience is emphasized as something educators must strive to cultivate in learners, the Framework does not provide guidance to educators regarding what conditions might lead to resilience and why that might be more difficult to achieve in some situations where certain members of society have been systematically marginalized.

There is furthermore no mention of the role that the desire for a better world can play in luring a citizen towards extremism or producing the above dispositions. From a Blochian perspective, the science used in the framework to ward off radicalisation is missing a fundamental driver that can either undermine democracy or potentially transform it. Returning to Bourbeau, resilience can be approached as something which maintains an imagined ideal of democratic culture, where individuals 'bounce back' from hardship, only seeking change at the margins— or alternatively, resilience can become a resource for 'bouncing forward', offering 'the potential remodelling of social structures'(Bourbeau, 2018 p.31).

## 4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to answer, 'How might implicit utopias be discerned at play in the Framework and why might they be problematic'? To do so, I applied various aspects of Foucault's theories on democracy to identify techniques and practices in the CoE's Framework of competences of democratic culture, which might effectively undermine the very freedom it purports to promote. I traced these implicit utopias through multiple historical eras in Foucault's work an effort to identify the technologies they produced, and how they have been taken up in new ways to ensure that the feudal relationship between those in power and subjects of power is able to remain intact.

I first considered how elements of the Hobbesian utopia of absolutism emerges in the Framework. The first point I noted was in how the seemingly general and potentially universal conception of 'democratic culture', shares a direct line of heritage to discourses which were previously embraced as specifically European. I noted Foucault's point of how history is a technology of power and questioned whether the subaltern subject would be able to 'speak' their history in various contexts. I then further noted the potential danger of merely 'covering over' the polarising cultural divisions of identity politics with the concept of 'democratic culture', which can itself function as a tool to produce 'otherness'. Finally, I noted how each competence can be effectively harnessed as a social contract between learners, educators, administrators and policymakers from a position of power to induce subjects to adopt and hegemonic norms and narratives.

Secondly, I addressed the specific challenges that the legalist/humanist utopia presents to the implementation of the Framework for those who hope to use human rights as a common set of values. This is because human rights carry within them specific utopian ideals regarding what it is to be 'human' and internal hierarchies which privilege some groups of rights over others. I thus suggested that rights are perhaps best approached as an unfinished project.

Thirdly, I addressed how the logic of the Romantic utopia can still be seen at play in modernity in the way it invoked subjects to 'know themselves' by externally defined terms of 'knowledge' without giving subjects the time and opportunity to produce their own sense of self-through what Foucault describes as practices of 'self-care'. I noted how the practice of confession as a technology of power emerged at this time and can still be seen at play in schools, asylums and prisons. I noted how intercultural encounters with 'otherness' without self-care can produced essentialised self-knowledge. I considered Lenton's critiques on the potential danger of subsuming the concept of 'race' within the concept of culture(Lentin, 2014). I then considered the possibilities of using 'self-care' alongside the Framework.

Finally, I considered how the biopolitical/scientific utopia can be discerned at play in how the human sciences are harnessed to manage learner psychological resources. I further noted the neoliberal practice of inducing subjects to become responsible for their own misfortune and what this means in terms of how the competence of responsibility is interpreted in some contexts. Finally, I noted the potential dangers in seeking to cultivate resilience to thwart radicalisation without addressing underlying causes.

This chapter has problematized the CoE's Framework by making visible the utopias which within its discourse and the idealized intercultural subject it is positioned to produce. However, as Lorenzini and Koopman note (Koopman, 2013; Lorenzini, 2020a), Foucault's theories are not merely useful for problematizing discourse, but for breaking open what is taken for granted in the present and exposing its possibilities. Thus, the next chapter aims to answer, how might using Foucault, Bloch and Levitas' theories to engage with hidden utopias shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical contexts?

# Chapter 5: Possibilities for engaging with the Framework

This thesis has thus far sought to make visible the history and function of the CoE context as well as the circumstances and ideals which gave birth to the Framework. It problematized the Framework by revealing some of the utopian discourses which can be seen at play in the Framework's discourse while providing examples of how these ideals are being translated into new contexts. However, as noted, the objective of such problematizations is ultimately to reveal new possibilities.

This chapter thus seeks to reveal the possibilities of the Framework when used to engage with implicit utopias. It thus asks, 'How might the concept of 'hidden utopias' help to shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical contexts?' It thus posits ways that teachers/curators/artists might utilize with the concept of utopian impulses and discourse when using the Framework. I begin first by (i) explaining the concept of hidden utopias and how this might be used by educators to critically engage with the Framework. I then (ii) critically engage with the pedagogical recommendations of the Framework, I consider (iii) the application of democratic processes in the classroom by drawing inspiration from Foucault's ethics (iv) the danger and potential of assessment, (v) possibilities for creatively engaging with hidden utopias and finally (vi) the potential dangers of making utopian impulses visible in educational contexts.

## 5.1 'Hidden utopias' and why they matter

Throughout this thesis I have suggested that implicit utopian impulses can be discerned at play in the CoE's Framework and in political discourse in general. If one accepts Bloch and Levitas definition that utopia is a desire or a basic impulse in human culture then it follows that utopia and utopianism is fundamental to how 'democratic culture' is imagined. For Bloch, that desire is a basic human impulse and a driving force in history (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018).

This thesis begins with the premise that 'hidden utopias' are proliferating in implicit ways[3]. Evidence for this can be found on the left or right of political discourse and even in the Framework. On the progressive left, it is still possible to hear the Enlightenment dream that education and law can help bring about a more rational politics. This dream appears to be alive and well in the Framework's scientific-humanist approach to democratic culture and even its conception of human rights. Those who participated in the *Black Lives Matter Movement* of 2020 were united in Martin Luther Ling's utopian dream, that one day America might be a nation where a child would 'not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character'(Tourbier, 2021).

On the political right, Bauman notes how in recent years, *retrotopian* thinking has become increasingly common (Bauman, 2019).This is when citizens no longer dream of a utopian future but look to the past as an ideal age. These implicit worlds express themselves in the promise to 'Make America Great Again' or in the Brexit appeal to an imagined past, when Britain was independent of Europe and in control of its own destiny. Yet not all utopias on the right look to the past. Many white supremist groups promote the dream of a genetically engineered white ethno-state as an alternate future (Stern, 2019). QAnon supporters believe that Trump is in a secret battle against the 'deep state', paedophile rings and Satan worshipers which will lead to a 'Great Awakening', a time when the masses will come to realize the truth of these beliefs (Forest, 2021).

Beyond the left-right paradigm, Hegghammer et al. reveal how Jihadi recruits have been lured through artistic mediums of poetry, *a capella* song, music, visual culture, cinematography and dreaming to the promises of an Islamic Utopia (Hegghammer, 2017 p.xi). And since the Covid-19 Pandemic, an anti-vax utopia has emerged in full force promoting natural remedies in lieu of vaccination. Lucia observes that while this movement draws inspiration from indigenous and 'Indic' religions, adherents tend to implicitly imagine their own form of 'White Utopia' (Lucia, 2020).

Foucault theorised that implicit discourses circulate throughout society as a form of power, tap into desires and shape identities to suit those desires (de Beistegui, 2016; Foucault, 2008). In

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[3] Parts of this section appear in a previously published article: Tourbier, M. (2021). A Crisis of Hidden Utopias. Dewey Studies Journal , 5(2), 564–578. http://www.johndeweysociety.org/dewey-studies/files/2022/06/DS-5.2-36-Tourbier.pdf

the digital age, where private thoughts can become instantly public and algorithms work to reinforce these thoughts, the ability to recognise hidden utopias at play can provide citizens a means of resisting such forms of domination. Foucault would caution educators that students should not be forced to 'confess' the secret worlds they hold dear, since this is in itself a key technique of domination (Tourbier, 2021). As Foucault states it, 'avowal incites or reinforces a power relation that exerts itself on the one who avows' (Foucault, 2014). However, his theories also reveal that it is possible to resist such modes of governance. It might not be possible or desirable to resist all governing practices, but as Foucault argues, it is possible to refuse to be governed 'like that, by that, in the name of those principles', and this is where agency emerges (Foucault, 2007c p.44). At times, utopias might not be recognized as utopian as such. At other times, they may be more obvious. The point of calling them 'hidden' is to make explicit what is often hiding in plain sight. The next section considers how the concept of hidden utopias might be used alongside the Framework to apply its recommendations for pedagogy.

## 5.2 Critically engaging with the pedagogical recommendations of the Framework

The Framework promotes two different forms of pedagogy, which can be found in volume 3 of the RFCDC. The first are process-oriented pedagogies, the second are product-oriented pedagogies. As content-oriented approaches are more vulnerable to becoming instruments of governmentality, I will consider content-oriented approaches first and then move onto the possibilities for engaging with implicit utopian impulses through process-oriented approaches.

The Framework states that content-oriented pedagogies harness the existing curriculum and work within subjects. To do so, the RFCDC volume 3 advises educators that they might harness the existing curriculum, turn to team-teaching, or expose the hidden curriculum (Council of Europe, 2018c). I will address each of these, in turn, and then discuss how exposing the hidden curriculum might be used in educational settings in conjunction with the Framework.

### 5.2.1 Content-Oriented Pedagogy:

#### a. Harnessing the Existing Curriculum

First, volume 3 of the RFCDC provides suggestions to educators who they might use the RFCDC within existing curriculum. To this end, the CoE makes the point that:

*Taught in a conscious and purposeful way, all subjects, within their existing curriculum, can harbour learning activities that teach the values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding that learners need to be able to contribute to a democratic culture* (Council of Europe, 2018c p.38).

In other words, democratic culture focused learning is not confined to specific subjects but is pertinent to every subject in a school's curriculum. It is for this reason that the CoE dissuades schools from providing citizenship education as a single subject, without attending to its relevance in other disciplines. At the same time, the CoE warns against 'sprinkling' concepts here and there throughout the curriculum and suggests instead a 'whole school approach' to democratic culture education (Council of Europe, 2018c p.38). The CoE document notes how topics on race, gender and violence might be taught in language and literature subjects through novels or poetry. On the other hand, they suggest that a math teacher might discuss the historical significance of certain civilisations to mathematics.

The problem with these suggestions and the content-approach in general, is that content-oriented approaches often take for granted the historically constructed 'truths' that are promoted in such content. While, for example, it might be useful for a math teacher to bring up the contribution of early Islamic thinkers to mathematics or science, a teacher would need to go beyond the prescribed content in order to consider lesser-known contributions to mathematics in history. Foucault would emphasize how keeping subjects within their respective 'silos' makes it easier to maintain the hierarchies between different disciplines. While working cross-curricularly can help to improve collaboration between disciplines, it is important to ask, how does the content we teach reproduce hierarchies and perpetuation entrenched thinking about what is possible and desirable in the future? If the curriculum we teach conveys the message that what matters in life is one's job or career, for example, what does that mean for young people who enter a world of work where jobs are increasingly precarious?

### b. Team-Teaching

Secondly, volume 3 of the RFCDC recommends that team-teaching might be helpful in content-oriented approaches to teaching democratic culture (Council of Europe, 2018c). While larger teaching teams increase the odds of diverse expertise, the content approach still depends on the *prescribed* content, which is produced in textbooks, which are increasingly produced by multinational companies. Ball (2012) notes that the textbook industry has come to be dominated by a small number of multinational companies who treat content as a product to be marketed, sold and reproduced globally, often carrying with them neoliberal demands of a competitive marketplace and a testing industry that emphasizes competition and demand performativity (S. Ball, 2012).Thus, even if educators are desirous of promoting equality in classrooms, content-based approaches are difficult to extract from the powerful arm of multinational companies and organisations, which seek to measure and compare outcomes locally, nationally and internationally. Given that the Framework is designed to be teachable, measurable and assessable, it too could readily be tied into performance measures and compared cross-nationally with respect to how well teachers in different contexts produce 'democratic cultural competences' in their students.

The document further recommends that teachers coordinate between disciplines to support one another in the teaching of democratic cultural competence. This could potentially bring new perspectives to content that might not have previously been considered. However, it could also simply lead to cross-curricular dissemination of the dominant discourse. In other words, teachers might readily teach the same message across subjects without questioning the utopian ideals underlying those messages. At times, this may be driven by education policy designed to produce a specific story of the present. This can be seen at play, for example, in textbook depictions of 9/11 around the world (CAVE & AL-HLOU, 2021), in 'myopic' productions of national identity in Australian textbooks (Fozdar & Martin, 2021) or through the way Europe and the EU is represented in German and UK textbooks (E. Brown et al., 2019).

*c. Moving from the Hidden Curriculum to Hidden Utopias*

The final approach to content-based learning that the Framework recommends in Volume 3 of the RFCDC is attending to the 'hidden curriculum'. The CoE treats the 'hidden curriculum' as the 'often unquestioned status quo' (Council of Europe, 2018c p.41). The document notes that it is important to look for 'implicit messages' in the curriculum, in which resources are used and the messages conveyed in accompanying illustrations. For example,

> *if literature classes never include authors from different walks of life and geographical places, or if language course books only contain pictures and stories of white middle-class families visiting tourist sights, then one may consider whether students are being subjected to a hidden curriculum, and if through the power structures of knowledge and culture, teachers are made to continue discriminatory practices* (Council of Europe, 2018c p.41)

The CoE emphasizes that attending to the hidden curriculum means paying careful attention to the, 'hidden practices and messages' in the curriculum. One way of resolving such curricular issues, according to the CoE, is to 'align the ethos of the school with CDC values and attitudes' (ibid). However, the assumption is that the CDC values are themselves transparent, coherent, and comprehensive in their holistic approach. Yet, this thesis has shown that many of these carry with them and invoke multiple and often conflicting conceptions of democratic culture.

It is therefore useful to briefly unpack the history of 'the hidden curriculum' as a concept to situate it within the history of democratic education. Margolis et al. (2001) trace the origins of the term 'hidden curriculum' to the late 1960s in Phillip Jackson's work, Life in Classrooms (Margolis, 2002). Jackson became concerned, during his investigation of classrooms through an anthropological lens, that the complexity of schooling meant that reform would invariably have unintended consequences. Schools needed a complex understanding of the classroom and, in particular, its 'hidden curriculum'—a phrase he coined to describe the different ways that learners needed to subjugate their desire to the will of teachers, and subdue their own 'actions in the interest of the common good' (P. Jackson, 1968 p.36). Around the same time, Robert Dreebon argued that the purpose of schooling was to teach social relationships. He argued that young people would 'submerge much of their personal identity, and accept the legitimacy of categorical treatment' (Dreebon, 1968 p.148). Dreebon portrayed this as a positive aspect of schooling.

Jackson and Dreebon were functionalists, sometimes referred to as 'consensus theorists'. This approach drew inspiration from Emil Durkheim's belief that the purpose of schooling, for better or worse, was to cultivate societal homogeneity (Margolis, 2002). Marxists added to this research by noting that the norms, values and attitudes that could be discerned in the hidden curriculum were associated with class, and thus worked to reproduce social hierarchies (Margolis, 2002). Theorists like Pierre Bourdieu argued that such forms of socialization lead to class 'habitus', where students gained the 'cultural capital' associated with their class (Bourdieu, 2010).Thus, rather than education being the great equalizer, the 'hidden curriculum' was understood to help reproduce the habits, tastes and norms that kept social hierarchies firmly entrenched. Basil Bernstein further applied these ideas to the linguistic codes that students learned in school arguing that children from working classes enter school having been brought up with a 'restricted code' while middle class children are brought up with an elaborated code. According to Bernstein, these codes give middle class children a significant advantage over working class kids and impact learner outcomes of the long run (Bernstein, 1977).

It was not until conceptions of the hidden curriculum came to be theorized by critical theorists that the hidden curriculum came to be associated with social control and domination, or alternatively as a medium for resisting domination (Margolis, 2002). In his 1982 work, *Education and Power*, Michael Apple argued that schools were sites of conflict, compromise and struggle (Apple, 2012). In *Talking Back* (1989) and *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), bell hooks argued that students could transgress and resist regimes of governance that sought, in particular, to make particularly young African-Americans feel that they are less worthy than other Americans (hooks, 1989; Hooks, 1994). Paolo Freire invoked the idea of utopia in his *Pedagogy of Hope* (Freire, 1998). Freire advocated developing literacy among the oppressed in addition to a form of critical consciousness. Importantly he suggested that both history and imagined futures must keep the dream of a better world alive. He lamented that this was something that the pragmatic discourses of neoliberalism were loath to do. In his view, Freire laments that such discourses treat the future as if it were predetermined, as expected to produce more of the same and nothing else. He writes,

> *whenever the future is considered as a pregiven—whether this be as the pure, mechanical repetition of the present, or simply because it 'is what it has to be'—there is no room for utopia, nor therefore for the dream, the option, the decision, or*

*expectancy in the struggle, which is the only way hope exists. There is no room for education. Only for training* (Freire, 1998 p.98).

In this way, the politics of fatalism that Wendy Brown describes effectively becomes baked into the 'hidden curriculum' of the neoliberal zeitgeist (W. Brown, 2004). The future must proceed along in a 'business as usual' mode even when 'business as usual' seems a dangerous path to continue forward on with ecological disaster looming. What is needed instead, Freire argues, is a 'pedagogy of hope'. Giroux has recently sought to resuscitate Freire's contention that utopia and the dream of a better world matters to building an emancipatory pedagogy. He suggests that reviving the dream of a better world is important because it is,

> *part and parcel of refusing to give up the dream of a just and equitable society, once again imagining a world governed by social justice and ecological sensitivity, a decolonizing world in which matters of critical literacy, education and pedagogy are mutually sustaining to help develop an authentic democracy in the true sense of the word'* (Giroux, 2021 p.302).

Giroux marks a clear distinction between 'vulgar utopianism' that is narrowly conceived to benefit only some, and the 'healthy' form of utopianism which can be emancipatory (Giroux, 2021). Arguably, a critical democratic pedagogy requires both the ability to discern utopias at play in the curriculum and also the capacity to imagine a better world that would be aligned with a healthy form of utopianism. Essentially, it would be one which attends to the hidden curriculum *and* the hidden utopias encapsulated within its assumptions about how the present came to be, along with its possible futures.

Foucault would warn against individualistic pedagogical approaches where students are required to 'confess' their deeply held utopian ideals. This is because doing so could effectively become a means of governing and monitoring those deemed to be dangerous and 'other'. It is worth asking what animates the dreams of those attracted to extremism in the first place. Might understanding the drivers of these dreams provide a means for helping educators take the dreams of youth seriously, before they become drawn into webs of extremist discourse?

To this end, the concept of hidden utopias can potentially add to the concept of the hidden curriculum and be further applicable beyond the boundaries of the classroom. It recognizes that utopianism flows throughout modern discourse. As such, it can be discerned at play in mediums

as diverse as political rhetoric, journalism, social media, cinema, serial televisions series, novels, poetry, music and video games. Such utopian discourses can function as a means of producing subjects of power as well as recognizing techniques of domination for what they are. Foucault asserts that we actively constitute ourselves by ourselves as subjects of power. With respect to the dream of a better world, we have the choice to accept or reject the visions provided. The next section considers how educators might help learners engage with utopian idealism by turning to the CoE's recommendations regarding process-oriented pedagogy.

### 5.2.2 Process-Oriented Pedagogy

In volume 3 of the RFCDC, the CoE further recommends several methods of process-oriented pedagogy. These include: (i) modelling democratic attitudes and behaviours; (ii) employing democratic processes in classrooms; (iii) providing opportunities for co-operative learning; (iv) project-based learning and (v) service-based learning. I will be considering each of these in turn, particularly how co-co-operative learning, project-based learning and service-learning might be used to engage critically and creatively with 'hidden utopias'.

#### a. Modelling democratic attitudes and behaviours

The first way the CoE suggests that educators can apply a process-oriented approach to developing Framework competences is by attending to the way they implicitly transmit their values and communicate with learners through the behaviour that they model in the classroom. The CoE notes that students can learn about, for and through democracy when teachers provide opportunities for students to *learn by doing*, in addition to providing democratic experiences in a safe environment.

As Jackson (1968) discovered in his research on the hidden curriculum, classrooms are complex microcosms where teachers bring their own perspectives and aspirations to classrooms(P. Jackson, 1968). This can be a challenge in culturally diverse situations, where learners come from diverse backgrounds and teachers find themselves at the frontlines of these cultural rifts, charged with promoting democratic culture, 'values' or integrating the 'other'. Language education is one such space where the teacher's role and perceptions of the 'other' can lead to modelling, which inadvertently carries the message that migrants, refugees or

children from lower-socio economic classes do not exhibit the appropriate behaviours expected of 'good citizens'. The subtle ways that teachers respond to 'otherness' can convey their own imagined utopian views of society to which learners are expected to conform.

Applying the concept of 'hidden utopias' in such a situation would therefore begin with educators themselves questioning their own utopian assumptions about the good society. Who or what belongs in that world and who or what is marginalised in that society? What are the implications of this vision for educators' everyday practice and how might this vision be conveyed in their own behaviours and attitudes? The Framework promotes the attitude of openness to cultural otherness. Extending this openness to valuing alternate visions of the future is one such way that educators might better model democratic attitudes and behaviours that take into account both the problematic nature of 'vulgar utopianism' and the productive possibilities of 'healthy utopianism', which Giroux describes (Giroux, 2021).

### b. Applying democratic processes in the classroom

The second process-oriented approach the CoE recommends is to apply democratic processes in classrooms. The CoE notes that decisions in classrooms can be arrived at democratically in various ways, such as electing classroom representatives, using suggestion boxes and ensuring that processes used are non-discriminatory and promote equality in the classroom. Democratic processes can furthermore be combined with education activities. These might include mock campaigns, mock trials, using democratic procedures to arrive at decisions, role-plays, simulations, trying out different positions of authority, taking on the role of a journalist and actively encouraging free speech (Council of Europe, 2018c p.32).

### c. Co-operative learning

Another process-oriented approach the CoE recommends is co-operative learning. This is where students work in pairs or teams to deliberate through intercultural or democratic dialogue on issues presented by the teacher. The CoE explains:

> *By applying co-operative learning principles in their work, teachers deconstruct traditional classroom practices and dislodge inherited and deeply rooted ideas and beliefs about learning and learners, removing hierarchical, judgmental and anti-democratic systems and transforming classroom practices*(Council of Europe, 2018c p.32).

A positive aspect of co-operative learning is how it disrupts traditional hierarchies in classrooms. It can provide opportunities for *parrhēsia* or speaking 'truth to power' where there are unequal relationships based on race, gender, language or culture, where there is a truth-teller and a truth-listener. It can also encourage learners from different backgrounds to work on ideas as a team. However, as the CoE suggest, such co-operation requires an environment of trust in classrooms that begins with ground-rules. From the perspective of *parrhēsia*, one ground rule might be that learners might be compelled to listen to a truth spoken by teammates in its entirety before commenting or perhaps not even commenting at all. Sometimes, it is simply important to listen. The CoE notes that the advantage of such activities is that they encourage inter-dependence among learners, where learners can provide support to one another and reach common explanations, solutions and answers together.

The CoE notes that co-operative learning further leads to accountability where every learner is required to contribute. There is 'no hiding', so to speak (Council of Europe, 2018c p.33). For some, the inability to hide may be disconcerting while under the gaze of authority, based on their background and the pressure to produce a 'correct' democratic response much like Foucault's description of Bentham's panopticon (Foucault, 1991a). In other words, while seemingly emancipatory, there is the danger that co-operative learning might also be used to make visible those deemed to be 'at risk' of radicalisation.

The CoE further notes that co-operative learning increases active participation from learners. This itself can become a means of governance, in that one is no longer able to be a passive citizen, but rather, must perform democratic citizenship in a classroom setting. For those who already feel marginalised by these processes, the pressure to perform may be perceived as a governing process, rather than being a process for developing competences for democratic culture.

Volume 3 of the RFCDC acknowledges that, 'co-operative learning may produce situations in which students who are academically low achieving and/or who are socially isolated are

excluded from the interactions in the group' (Council of Europe, 2018c p.34) To mitigate such circumstances and other challenges that can accompany co-operative learning, the CoE provides a number of questions for educators to consider in their planning. These include whether a particular co-operative learning activity will truly lead to inter-dependence among learners, whether the activity meets the needs and wishes of learners, whether the structure promotes equal participation and whether learners can achieve their individual learning goals through such activities (Council of Europe, 2018c p.34).

The authors note how the Jigsaw classroom has proven to be a particularly successful for promoting co-operative learning. This is where homegroups are made up of 'specialists' among the children. Specialist within each group meet with other specialist groups and report back to the home team. Within these groups, roles might be assigned, including for example, 'tracers', 'encouragers', 'timers' and 'writers' (Council of Europe, 2018c pp.44-45). Such groups would be well-suited to seeking out utopia and utopianism in discourses or working together to imagine their own better future. Learners could be instructed to critically and creatively engage with the challenges that the concept of utopia, and the implicit presence of utopian impulses, brings to the concept of democratic culture.

Learners might work in pairs or groups to 'detect' utopian impulses and narratives in the personal worlds they encounter in their everyday life. What do these worlds say about the form of society they promote? Whose interests do they serve? What desires do they tap into and why are they problematic? Yet, like most forms of education, co-operative learning can reproduce dominant discourses and power relationships. This can occur where learners merely seek to produce the 'correct' or socially desirable response. On the other hand, it might occur in settings where learners who produce a response that goes beyond societal norms become fearful of sharing their ideas. Such pressures to conform can take place within the specialist groups, homegroups or outside formal settings. Thus, it would be important for educators desirous of empowering learners to pay attention to where power to constitute subjects resides in the learning situation.

### d. Project-based learning

The next form of pedagogy recommended in volume 3 of the RFCDC is project-based learning (Council of Europe, 2018c). The CoE notes that project-based learning is particularly well-suited to developing 'attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding, as well as to developing values'. They note that project-based learning can be applied in small-group settings or with the whole class. The CoE provides an example called Project Citizen (Council of Europe, 2018c pp.48-49) where a class takes ten to twelve weeks to investigate a local public policy issue, collect information on it, produce a comprehensive portfolio, present results at a local meeting, preferably of government, and reflect on how the activity achieved key competences.

Depending on who those learners are, a potential danger is that this could serve to emphasize the relative lack of power that learners have in their community, particularly where democracy is not yet fully accepted and where authoritarian or non-democratic rule has long been the dominant form of governing populations. In other words, for better or worse, such projects can emphasize the disparity between the aspiration for democracy and what the appreciation for the values of democratic culture in the community. To this end, utopia can serve as a useful concept for engaging with the difference between what is desired and real-world examples.

### e. Service-learning

Finally, the CoE advocates service-learning projects as a useful means of cultivating democratic culture (Council of Europe, 2018c). The CoE notes that service learning is more than community service. It requires that educators act as facilitators, while helping to assess the needs of the community, in addition to providing a 'learner centered approach'. Learners are expected to assess community needs, prepare tasks, take action, present work and reflect on the learning process.

As numerous theorists have argued with respect to critical service-learning, it is important to aim towards social justice that begins from the perspective of empowering the subaltern first rather than, as described above, learning designed solely to achieve outcomes for elites (Hayes, 2011; Wasner, 2019). For Hayes, critical experiential learning 'empowers people to recognize,

expose, and eradicate the social injustices that structure their lives within a hegemonic social order' (Hayes, 2011 p.48). Ross (2012) emphasizes the need to build communities of reciprocity, which 'disrupt' and 'recalibrate' centres of power (Ross, 2012).Additionally, Ross argues that there is the need to develop 'authentic relationships' between individuals of different backgrounds.

The danger is that without deep self-reflection, the activity can work to affirm difference in status between helpers and those being helped. Breithaupt notes, for example, how what he describes as 'dark empathy' can lead in some circumstances to a 'heroic, humanitarian or helper' mentality (Breithaupt, 2019 p.134). Such a mentality can leave those of a higher social standing feeling better about their own social position. At the same time, it can lead to those who have been helped feeling worse about their social standing and emphasize their dependence on the good will of those who life circumstances are better off.

Wasner conducted a service-learning project with students in an elite International Baccalaureate program. Noting the challenges of coming to terms with facilitating service-learning in an elite school that produces 'Western Knowledge', Wasner writes:

> *Being critical in my pedagogy does not mean that this is at the expense of my own responsibility as a teacher. Being critical and being responsible go hand-in-hand in my view; I am not about to lead my students into a revolution without looking after their wellbeing, or ignoring the risks that such a process may involve for them. In seeking to begin a culture of change agents in my school through my inquiry project, I am acting from a stance of caring, which is, as I see it, fundamentally ethical* (Wasner, 2019 p.42).

A stance of caring in this manner can potentially serve as a way of subverting pity or envy in unequal relationships of power. Providing opportunities for learners and the communities to share their utopian desires might equally serve as a mean for developing caring learners. Such projects might further serve to change student perspectives about what is desirable and possible in the world, and can help empower those who feel powerless to make a difference to the future.

## 5.3 The Danger and potential of Assessment

This section considers briefly how democratic culture is to be assessed using the Framework and whether there might be any competences 'missing' from the Framework. First, assessing democratic competence is fraught with ethical challenges. The act of determining who is democratically 'competent' and who is not can become a means of teachers exerting authority over subjects, of reproducing hierarchies or lead to students being poorly marked simply because the teacher does not agree with a learner's political view. At a national level, it could be used to assess of school systems. As supranational level, it could be used to determine whether or not a country's culture is moving towards or away from democracy. Thus, assessment presents the danger of becoming a dividing practice.

In Volume 3 of the RFCDC, the CoE makes the distinction between assessment and evaluation in order to recognize that testing is only one form of assessing competence and in the case of democratic competences, perhaps not the best form. This is because assessment is understood as something which should be a holistic process, exhibit coherence between what is taught and what is assumed to be learned. It should be based on cooperative learning methods and combined with individual reflections or peer assessments in order to 'maintain an atmosphere of mutual support and trust' (Council of Europe, 2018c p.54). It thus treats assessment, as something which should be aimed at *empowering learning*. Viewed as a potential means of empowerment, the CoE emphasis that assessment should aim to be transparent, coherent, comprehensive and take a wholistic perspective. To this end, the guide states that assessment should furthermore be valid, reliable, equitable, transparent, practical and respectful (Council of Europe, 2018c). Yet despite such efforts, many educators might not recognize how their own utopian perspectives of what a democratic culture should look like and who the desired subject of that culture is invariably colour assessment decisions. Characterising assessment as valid, reliable, equitable, transparent, practical and respectful can become a means of covering over these implicit assumptions and desires.

The CoE notes that judgements will need to be made whether to follow a course of high-stakes or low-stakes assessments. High-stakes assessment might take the form of national examinations, end of course tests, be used to determine the next stage of education or computer-based. Low stakes assessments might consist of 'confidential portfolios', testing proficiency in real-world scenarios, mid-course assessment or through behavioural observation (Council of

Europe, 2018c). The CoE does not take a view regarding which of these is more appropriate. Volume 3 of the Framework states, for example, 'It may be judged that it is important to lift education for democratic citizenship out of the status of a less prioritised matter in education, and that this can be best achieved by using high-stakes assessments'(Council of Europe, 2018c p.59). However, it does note that where values and attitudes are concerned, many such assessments are subjective rather than objective. From a Foucauldian perspective, the act of making a judgement is supported by mechanisms, structures and practices which all validate and re-enforce hierarchical structures that are inherently biased. In other words, it is simply not possible from a Foucauldian perspective to be fully objective in assessing an ideal, which has been shown in this thesis to reflect a multiplicity of utopian ideals. Thus, any form of assessment where one person assesses another person's competence for democracy would invariably be a means of governing subjects in some way.

One form of assessment which appears to give power to learners are portfolio assessments, which enable learners to judge their own learning. A 'Young Learners' version and a 'Standard version' is available (https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/portfolios). The Young Leaners Portfolio (Barrett et al., 2021) provides space for learners to produce their own (i) personal statement, a (ii) statement of democratic context where they live and how their behaviour is shaped in this environment, a (iii) statement of purpose created between learners and teachers regarding why they are creating a learning portfolio, (iv) evidence of developing competences and (v) reflections on the activities. While the younger version does not ask children to explain their imagined future or aspirations for democracy or critically engage with the competences themselves, the fact that learners are able to critically consider with their teachers how they are shaped by their environment and further reflect on competences could potentially empower learners to present their vision for democracy and critically engage with that vision. In this form of assessment, the pamphlet itself does not determine where the power resides in the interpretation of democratic culture in classrooms. In this case, it would depend on the relationship between teachers, students and the community of learning developed in the particular setting. The challenge would be where learners and educators do not feel empowered to think beyond the competences and critically engage with them.

The Standard Portfolio of CDC is more challenging for educators desirous of promoting a democratic culture in classrooms that in that it provides more detailed guidelines (Barrett et al.,

2021). This means that there is less room to critically engage with the implicit expectations and conceptions of the 'good society' implicitly at play in the Framework. It provides much more detail regarding the form of response learners are expected to provide. This makes the guidelines arguably more vulnerable to promoting a specific vision of society how democratic culture should be imagined from a position of power. Again though, if teachers work with learners to engage with utopian visions that are being produced elsewhere and in the Framework to produce their own, then arguably such a personal portfolio could become a means of empowering learners. From a Foucauldian perspective, assessment of democratic competence in a culture of non-domination would depend on where the power to make a judgement call resides.

In addition to the guidelines on assessment provided in Volume 3 of the RFCDC, a separate guide has been developed called 'Assessing Competences for Democratic Culture: Principles, Methods, Examples'(Barrett & et. al, 2021). The fact that there are so many materials to facilitate assessments is arguably indicative of a vision of society where democratic culture can be readily promoted by an instrument developed by experts and presumably produced in different cultural and political contexts. Taken together, the sheer volume of materials linked to assessments risks constituting, reinforcing and operating as a 'regime of truth'(Lorenzini, 2015b, 2016a). This is not to say that the materials cannot be linked to emancipatory objectives. Rather, that the instrumental approach makes it less likely that they will be used to promote non-domination and an equalization of power, enable the critique regarding dominant visions prescribed and the opportunity for learners to critically and creatively engage with their own vision of a 'democracy to come'(Derrida et al., 2005).To this end, the next section considers possibilities for critically and creatively engaging with hidden utopias alongside the Framework.

## 5.5 Possibilities for creatively engaging with hidden utopias

In Chapter Two, I noted Levitas' theoretical differentiation between archaeological, ontological and architectural aspects to utopian ideas. In this final section, I will be bringing these ideas together with Foucault's conception of genealogy to reveal how the Framework might be used alongside the concept of 'hidden utopias' in more emancipatory ways through genealogy (Foucault), archaeology, ontology and architecture (Levitas, 2013). In other words,

the goal of this next section is to reveal possibilities for using the Framework to critically and creatively engage with utopia.

### 5.5.1 Possibilities for Archeology: history as a series of ruptures

The first method that educators might employ when using a critical utopian lens alongside the CDC Model is archaeological. Levitas and Foucault have a slightly different take on archaeological historical method. For Levitas, archaeology involves excavating 'the models of the good society underpinning policy, politics and culture, exposing them to scrutiny and critique' (Levitas, 2013 p.154). Foucault does something similar by chipping away different eras of history as an archaeologist might do, to reveal how different historic eras construct knowledge and the power of those who hold it differently. In his early archaeological period, typically associated with the 1960s and his work in *the Order of Things* and the *Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 2002; Foucault & Smith, 2002) (Foucault & Smith, 2002), Foucault sought to juxtapose different eras of history with the present. The emphasis was on discontinuity between the past and the present rather than continuity.

It is often difficult to distinguish between archaeology and genealogy in Foucault's work. Koopman makes the distinction clear by noting that '[t]he archaeologist asks about what has existed in the past. They do not concern themselves with how that which existed came into being' (Koopman, 2008 p.354). The image of the archaeologist slowly and methodologically sifting soil can thus serve as a metaphor for the learner, educator or researcher who strives to unearth the logic that undergirds imagined utopias past and the present.

Educators seeking to use the archaeological method to expose hidden utopias at play in educational settings might ask learners to identify implicit utopian impulses and models at play in public discourse. Alternatively, they might ask learners to excavate a work of art such as a novel, painting, piece of music, film or television series, video game or item of fashion etc. to reveal the utopian dimensions at play in cultural products. Such activities could be undertaken collaboratively in groups comprised of diverse cultures or political beliefs, or undertaken as a cross-cultural comparison. To encourage the intercultural aspect of the framework, learners might consider what utopian dreams appear to be seen at play across multiple cultural settings.

### 5.5.2 Possibilities for Genealogy: how power continues & discontinues

The second method that educators might employ when exploring utopian ideals as a method alongside the CDC Model is genealogical. Genealogy is not employed by Levitas. However, I contend that a genealogical approach to history is crucial to understanding how utopian ideals operate as a means of reproducing relationships of power, knowledge and ethics. There is much debate over Foucault's turn to genealogy in the 1970s. Some argue that this transition constitutes a rejection of archaeological method. However, Koopman provides a convincing argument that the move towards genealogy is not a change in method itself, but a change which adds a new dimension to the archaeological methods Foucault was already using (Koopman, 2008). According to this view, and the view which has been taken in this thesis, is that genealogy is methodologically *additive* with respect to archaeology, rather than offering a complete change in methodological direction or acting as a substitute for archaeological method.

It is only once Foucault turned to genealogy that he could begin a proper inquiry into the relationship between power, knowledge, ethics and how we come to constitute ourselves as subjects of that power (Koopman, 2008). Foucault thus became interested not only in problematizing the present through his inquiries, but in revealing its possibilities. Koopman explains: 'An inquiry into the conditions of the possibility of the present enables us to understand who we are, where we have come from, and where we may go' (Koopman, 2008 p.347). In this sense, Foucault's transition to genealogy can be interpreted as a supplement to his archaeological project. Genealogy is not merely interested in what has existed in the past and what differs, but in how the present came to be in all its the continuities. Foucault transitions from a focus on what discontinues between the past and present, to a focus on what, specifically how power continuities on and reinscribes old techniques in new ways. It was at this stage that Foucault began to look at the 'historical conditions which have enabled and disabled different forms of power and knowledge [to operate]... the genealogist wants to know how that which existed came into existence in the first place' (Koopman, 2008 p.354).

In considering utopian ideals and impulses, educators and learners might contemplate not only how a specific conception of utopia came into being, but how it became thinkable in the first place. For example, before H.G. Wells could imagine *The Time Machine* there first needed to

be a linear conception of time (Wells, 2007). This was not obvious to the Greeks nor is it to many Indigenous cultures. Imagining time as linear has consequences. It assumes that time has a beginning and an end. In the western tradition, we generally assume that we are progressing towards something better. Implicit in Well's novel is the idea that the imagined 'utopia' we anticipate in the future is in fact a dystopia. In that respect, *Well's Time Machine* was possibly an earlier expression of the politics of fatalism. Uncovering the historically produced assumptions which made the utopias we embrace thinkable in the first place is one way that genealogy might be used in educational settings.

Bringing genealogy as a method for engaging with utopia is not something that could be expected of teachers who have no background philosophy or history. The ability to implement such activities would require teacher training that encourages teachers to think about their own epistemology and the epistemological assumptions behind the material they are asked to teach. This does not mean that educators would need a deep knowledge of history or philosophy. What they would need is recognition that the ideals we embrace have histories and a curiosity to explore with learners how these concepts came to be and the potential subjectivities they are poised to produce.

Educators and learners might for example take an idea like 'woke', which in the present context can be negative or positive and consider the utopia it invokes for those who view wokeness to be positive and the history of 'wokeness' for those who view it as an ideal that has been taken too far. It's a generational concept in that young members of the population understand it better than older generations. In the UK, those who understood the concept were roughly split along political lines regarding whether they viewed it to be a positive or negative concept Duffy et al., 2022). Where Labour, young people and Remainers were more likely to think of the term in positively, Conservatives tended to view the concept negatively (Duffy et al., 2022). By conducting a genealogy, learners and educators can see how the term evolved and the different meanings that have been ascribed to it along the way. Educators and learners might further consider how the term has come to be appropriated by certain brands and what utopian vision they capitalize on to promote their products (Rhodes, 2022).

Where critical theory might have once been an optional extra provided in teacher-education for those who are interested in research, critical theory/and education philosophy would likely need to take a more central role in teacher education. In other words, it is not so much that educators would need a specific knowledge of history to use archaeology in education, rather what is

needed is an awareness that the concepts and technologies we harness often have histories that could have developed differently in a different set of circumstances.

For Bloch, utopia itself is the combination between what is 'not yet' in the world and the drive for completion. This becomes the key driving force in human history (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018).As Foucault moved from archaeology to genealogy, he moved from an interest in history as a series of ruptures and problems, towards an emphasis on continuity and solutions to problems of the past. Koopman explains, 'Foucault's historiography thus came to look toward a temporality in which continuities and transitions, repetitions and differences, enabled one another' (Koopman, 2008 p.36). If we accept Bloch's assertion that utopia is a key driving force of these transitions, then utopia can become a means for educators and learners to contemplate where we have been, where we imagine we are heading and why these images or anticipated futures might themselves be problematic. This was the lesson Wells' *Time Machine* conveyed, and is what makes applying genealogical inquiry to the utopias we harbour, and to those we discover in 'democratic culture', potentially so generative in educating for democratic culture.

Much of this thesis has sought to historicise the present by exposing the different ways society as an imagined ideal and thereby 'democratic culture' has been conceptualised at different points in history. The goal has been to make visible how many of these past utopias can still be seen at play in the concepts and logical choices made in Framework's. As such, it recognizes that present conceptions of democracy have a heritage that can be traced backwards, not necessarily in a linear fashion, but more in the form of a family tree—where different ideas of the past give birth to new generations where these are reconfigured or discontinued (Bourbeau, 2018).Foucault uses genealogy in a similar manner to expose how the mechanisms of power work to determine what is seen to be 'true' or 'false' within a given era.

What if Descartes and Bacon had never sought to confine knowledge to a specific set of practices, conducted in a specific way, by a specific knower- the scientist? What if Hobbes had never linked sovereignty to the social contract? What if humanists had never imagined humans as separate from nature or privileged Western/Christian ideals? What would happen if Romantic utopian impulses were never born? How would our sense of self and our relation to culture and nation differ without the emphasis on individual self-realisation and essentialised ideas of culture and nation? Activities exploring imagined alternate possibilities could use collaborative or project-based pedagogy. Turning to literature, they could consider the

biopolitical practices of dystopian and utopia fiction and critically engage with those practices. All of these processes could harness drama, art, storytelling, fanfiction and or game design to imagine how democracy might be better or worse with respect to how historical events unfolds in this imagined retelling of history.

Learners might further take key concepts of democracy that have come to be infused with emotion like 'freedom', 'rights' or even 'democracy' to consider how those concepts were understood differently at different points in time and produced different forms of relationships to power. This could be accomplished through historic research or by interviewing different generations of family members to ask how these terms were viewed in their youth, to compare with how they are imagined today. The goal would be to disrupt the notion that such terms are constant over time and reveal the utopian ideals which undergird them at different moments in history. Thus, although Levitas does not include genealogy as a method for engaging with utopian hopes, genealogical methodology represents a vital method for educators and learners in unpacking how power is produced and reproduced through utopian discourses.

### 5.5.3 Possibilities for Ontology

The third method that educators might employ when using utopian discourse as a method alongside the Framework is ontological. Engaging with utopian impulses is at heart an exercise in engaging with ontology—questions about what it is to be in the world, what it is to flourish and what it is to 'become'. Levitas argues that engaging with utopia through the ontological mode is necessary for two reasons. The first reason is because discussions of utopia invariably carry with them an implicit idea regarding how society might be made better than it currently is. She explains, 'It entails both imagining ourselves otherwise and a judgement about what constitutes human flourishing' (Levitas, 2013 p.177). Furthermore, Levitas argues that ontology captures the affective features of utopia, which accompany the spiritual quest for grace. She explains, that '[if] utopia is understood as the expression of the desire for a better way of being, then it is perhaps a (sometimes) secularized version of the spiritual quest to understand who we are, why we are here and how we connect with each other' (Levitas, 2013 p.12).

Utopian drives are thus infused with spiritual import. Drawing inspiration from Sayer (2012), Levitas notes that this drive stems from a combination of what is lacking in the world and a drive to satiate the hunger (A. Sayer, 2011 p.114 ; Levitas, 2013 p.181). Educators in secular education often set ontological questions aside, as if ontology belongs to a separate sphere outside the realm of education. Yet ontology follows educators into classrooms just as it follows policymakers as they produce policy documents like the CDC Model and RFCDC. Van Derminjnsbrugge & Chatlier (2022) and Mills (2018) have recently argued that not only is ontology an area typically ignored by education scholars, but that failing to address questions of who, what and why in education risks 'failing to transgress existing utopian footprints' (Mills, 2018; Van Dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022). While it might be argued that such questions should be left to philosophers rather than educators, Foucault's theories suggest that recognizing ontological discourses at play and the way they are used to shape or direct citizen behaviour is a necessary pre-condition of the very freedom democratic culture purports to promote. Thus, if educators hope to promote democracy, then the ability to cultivate learners who can critically engage with these utopian ideals would seem to be crucial to this task.

Van Derminjnsbrugge & Chatlier (2022) argue with specific reference to the OECD that such organisations pursue their own ontological objectives in their desire to produce globally or interculturally competent citizens (Van Dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022).The same could be said of the CoE. The task for educators then is to empower learners to formulate and carve out their own ontological objectives in this space. Again, this would mean that educators would need to be equipped to engage with ontological questions in the first place. This could be provided through teacher-training workshops and/or within teacher education programmes themselves. As Foucault argues, by separating subjects into disciplinary silos, policymakers are better able to dictate the norms and values of society (Foucault, 1986, 1990, 2008, 2020). However, if subjects are to become active participants in their own subject-making process, then they would necessarily need to be able to recognize these discourses at play and critically engage with them.

### 5.5.6 Possibilities for Architecture

The final method that educators might employ when interpreting utopian discourse in education for democratic culture is architectural. For Levitas, the architectural approach harnesses the

imagination to think 'potential alternative scenarios for the future, acknowledging the assumptions about and consequences for the people who might inhabit them'.(Levitas, 2013 p.153) She notes that, 'these [imaginings] in turn must be subject to archaeological critique, addressing the silences and inconsistencies all such images must contain, as well as the political steps forward that they imply' (Levitas, 2013 p.154). The architectural mode thus requires two moves: firstly, imagining alternative scenarios for the future and secondly, acknowledging the problematic assumptions which may undergird then. In this sense, the architectural mode is both creative and critical because it asks learners to actively imagine a better future while considering who or what they privilege.

Learners might 'experiment' with different utopias by creating imaginary societies based on 'perfect freedom', the 'perfect community', 'perfect sustainability', or 'perfect well-being'. Explorers could then be invited to experience each group's utopia through different mediums (Tourbier, 2022). This might be achieved through drama, literature, videogames, gardening, modelling different visions of society, etc. Explorers would need to be able to reflect on the utopias they encounter and provide critical feedback regarding what aspects are productive and what or who might have been left out of this vision.

Such opportunities to imagine alternate worlds might provide those from marginalised sectors of society the opportunity to express their own ideas about how the world might be made better. Doing so might function as an act of *parrhēsia* for members of marginalised groups who have traditionally been ignored in deciding what is best for society. Importantly, such work could lead to actual recommendations for change.

An important aspect of the architectural approach for Levitas though, is that it requires critically engaging with the archaeological *and* ontological aspects of the utopias which inform it. In other words, it is not merely enough to creatively imagine a new world; it is important to recognize how these worlds are comprised of problematic assumptions and aspirations that may be dystopian for others. This recognizes the hubristic tendency of blueprint approaches to utopias, which uncritically promote an idealistic future without considering who or what might be left out of this vision.

Levitas and Bloch both recognize the dangers such visions pose. Yet, they simultaneously emphasize the danger of avoiding discussions of utopian ideals, when these are understood to be fundamental human impulses and driving forces within human culture. Levitas explains that

an architectural approach requires a 'call to judgement, or to judgement on a judgement, rather than simply the presentation of judgement in itself' (Levitas, 2013 p.219). It places critical responsibility both on those who imagine such a world and the audiences who receive these visions. It thus demands calling out those utopias which merely seek to replace one form of domination with another. Much like *parrhēsia* then, an architectural approach to discourse requires a speaker and a listener, and it demands critical reflexivity by visionaries and receivers of such visions. Levitas thus describes architecture as a: *method of simultaneously critiquing the present, exploring alternatives, imagining ourselves otherwise and experimenting with prefigurative practices is all around us (Levitans, 2013 p.219)*

As such, Levitas argues that the architectural method is both 'situated in the world' and conscious of the conditions of its production. For scholars like Fatima Vieira, who argue for a form of utopian pragmatism, such engagement can lead to a recognition of the danger of blueprint visions, while pointing the way to change which may be slower, but more effective (Vieira, 2010). Vieira suggests that engaging with utopian ideals can provide 'a direction for man to follow, but never a point to be reached' (Vieira, 2010 p.22). In this sense, the architectural method as proposed by Levitas is best understood as a critical tool for democratic education. It is one which remains open and resists closure. At the same time, it does not 'evade specificity' (van Dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022 p.14). This means that we can both speak openly about specific desired futures while recognizing their potential dangers, a point I return to in my final chapter.

### 5.5.7 Possibilities for engaging with Foucault's ethics

As mentioned in previous chapters, Foucault's ethics can serve a a source of inspiration for helping to equalize power relations in relation to implicit utopias. For example, educators might provide opportunities for *self-care* in classrooms through self-writing. This would be different from learning journals which are meant to serve as a form of assessment. These books would be a resource for working on the self by the self or they could take the form of letter-writing to a trusted friend, loved one or even to an imagined correspondent in a utopian world. Foucault notes how letter-writing and journaling were crucial aspects of self-care in the Ancient world (Foucault, 1986). Such an activity would employ all the techniques mentioned previously from archaeology to genealogy, ontology and architecture and return to critique. As Levitas theories

suggests it would not be an activity where one arrives at an imagined utopia and never engages with this world again. It would be an ongoing process of critique and creativity. However, it would be one which is always one which relates to others, one's place in the world that considers the potential impact of that world on others.

Foucault's concept of *self-care* is further vital to Foucault's conception of *counter-conduct* ant the *critical attitude*. The aim of liberty, in Foucault's view is that one should fashion oneself for oneself, so that one attends to oneself as if one's life were a work of art. Thus, while the idea of counter-conduct might suggest aberrant behaviour, as Olssen, describes it, counter-conduct is perhaps better characterised in classroom situations as *non-domination* (Olssen, 2007). Thus, the aim of a democratic education would be to arrive at or be developing towards a state of non-domination, so that one can fashion oneself rather to be fashioned by others(Foucault, 1986 p.47). In other words, the point of counter-conduct is not to avoiding being governed/conducted by others. Rather, it is to have the capacity, attitude and capability of choosing how one will be governed, by what ideals, by whom and in what capacity (Foucault, 2007c).As Olsen notes,

> *Foucault's understanding of the care of the self involves a politically active subject acting in a community of subjects, involving practices of self that require governance as well as practical politics...For liberty or civic freedom to exist, there must be a certain level of liberation conceived as the absence of domination. Thus, the subject's activity is intrinsically mediated through power, which co-exists with freedom in that relationships of power are changeable relations that can modify themselves* (Olssen, 2007 p.207).

To this end, self-care and the critical attitude are interdependent. Such a form of autonomy would necessarily require the ability to reflect on desired worlds, what it means to flourish and importantly how those worlds would impact the ability of others to flourish. Foucault's theories further suggest that educators desirous of empowering learners might want to provide opportunities for those in subaltern positions to speak 'truth to power' *parrhesia* by sharing their world as an act of *parrhesia* (Fruchaud & Lorenzini, 2019). This might mean sharing one's vision for the world even when it is risky. Since this would be from a subaltern position, it would require that someone of authority listen to that vision. For those working in contexts with learners whose visions of the future or whose pasts have been erased from dominant

discourses of history, engaging with utopia as an act of *parrhēsia* might be particularly generative.

## 5.6 Potential Dangers

Finally, it goes without saying that engaging with concepts of utopia has its dangers. Utopian ideas, at least in the form that imagines an alternate form of society, are almost always problematic. They invariably seek to totalize one vision of the world at the expense of other visions. In so doing they often leave significant people or ideas exiled from the conceptions of a better world. One person's utopia is more often than not another person's dystopia. I have noted already the danger of asking a person to 'confess' his or her utopia, based on insights from Foucault. This is because doing so can itself function as a form of domination. It is akin to a therapist asking a patient to 'confess' so that the patient can self-diagnose in order to become 'cured' and 'compliant' with the better world imagined by the therapist (Butler, 2016; Foucault, 2014).

From this perspective, we have all likely embraced problematic utopias at one time or other. For Bloch, the embrace of utopia was, after all, quintessentially human trait. However, where in the past, such utopian imaginings might have remained private, in the digital age private thoughts can become public through social media. Moreover, algorithms can feed into private desires and longings. Hence, the ability to critically engage with such ideals and discourses is becoming increasingly vital to the democratic ideal. At the same time, utopia can offer hope that the current trajectory of economics, democracy or the planet is neither natural nor inevitable. There is always the possibility of thinking and being otherwise.

This is, in part, what makes utopia so generative as a tool. Engaging with utopia provides both a means for making visible the problematic assumptions in daydreams that drive voter behaviour and action in the world, as well as a means for working across political and cultural divides to think beyond past paradigms. I would suggest that educators are crucial in this role in helping learners approach utopias with compassion and help make visible the moral consequences of those worlds.

Bloch's lesson is that utopia can be found in almost any form of human cultural expression, and this necessarily includes an artifact such as the Framework (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). Such cultural outputs may not be at first be recognized as carrying utopian impulses, but as

Bloch argues, cultural products are invariably invested with the desire for what is not yet in the world (Bloch, 1986). It is therefore important to acknowledge how the capacity to recognize and engage with utopian impulses in oneself and others, in both critical and creative ways, is any increasingly important capability in a world where the boundaries between reality and fantasy are easily blurred. As Foucault notes, '*everything is dangerous* (Foucault, 1983 pp.231-232*)*. However, this should not lead us to a position of apathy. His message instead is that*, 'if everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do'.* The fact that utopianism is potentially dangerous should give us all the more reason to strive to make it visible in democratic education.

## 5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has sought to answer: How might the concept of 'hidden utopias' shed light on the application of the Framework in pedagogical context? To this end, I have shown how the concept might be used in conjunction with the Framework to help educators and learners engage with their imagined ideal of the 'good society' and the 'good subject' attached to that ideal. Much of this thesis has sought to problematise the CoE's Framework in order to make visible the utopian ideals which undergird it and which are at play in its discourse. This chapter has sought to move beyond these problematisations and turn what has been disclosed as potentially problematic in the discourses in the Framework into possibilities for critical and creative engagement with the utopian ideals they promote. Just as every utopia is in some way problematic, they harbour possibilities once revealed. In this manner, engaging with what is problematic in utopianism alongside what is useful offers one possible way that the Framework might be made more emancipatory.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

In this final chapter I sum up (i) what is problematic about the utopias disclosed, (ii) the possibilities these finding present to educators hoping to use the Framework in critical and innovative ways, (iii) the significance of this research and finally (iv) it places this research within the context of emerging critiques.

### 6.1 What is problematic about the utopianism disclosed in the Framework?

This thesis has exposed a number of potentially problematic features implicit the Framework that need be taken into account when implementing the Framework in diverse political and cultural contexts. First, it shows a number of ways that the Framework has been contingently produced. This includes the fact that it was produced by a specific actor (namely the Council of Europe), at a specific context in history (during the war on terror and refugee crisis), while harnessing discourses and technologies with them their own conception of society that they were designed to defend at different points in history. To this end, I have sought to uncover how many of these idealized visons of society continue to operate in subtle ways within the discourse of the Framework.

In Chapter One, I introduced the motivation of this thesis and the tensions and contradictions which emerged between the concept of democracy and my own positionality. To do so, conceptualised democracy and democratic culture in order to make visible the tensions and contradictions at the heart of the liberal democratic tradition. I provided my own conception, which is based on Derrida's idea of a 'democracy to come' in combination with LeFort's 'empty place'. In this vision, what is at stake in democracy is the very struggle for the utopian ideals we invest in the term. Democracy, thus stands in as a signifier for what we imagine democracy to be. Derrida's idea of a 'democracy to come' enables that centre to remain forever deferred and undetermined. Using Derrida's notion of 'the stranger', my understanding is that rather than seeking to impose a presentist vision on what democracy might become, it is best to imagine democracy as a stranger who may or may not arrive, but who we cannot know in advance. That said, democracy is at heart a contradictory term. This thesis does not purport to resolve these tensions, but merely to expose them and show the challenges they bring to the Framework in different contexts.

I then described the difference between ideology and utopia and explained why I believe utopia to be the more useful concept for engaging with the Framework. I then described the difference between ideology and utopia and explained why I believe utopia to be the more useful concept for engaging with the Framework. This is particularly true for a world that increasingly trades in impressions, images, algorithms and desires that 'hopes, desires and a dream for improvement' rather than operating as a coherent 'system of beliefs' (Sargent, 2006, p.86). This is not to say that the difference between is easy to discern, simply that they are conceptually different and that utopia offers a different frame of reference for engaging with political discourse. While ideology is often used to describe the distorted thinking of 'others', utopia is often acknowledged by the user and incorporates not merely explicit ideas embraced, but the desires, impulses and implicit imaginaries of a better world which shapes those ideas. From a Foucauldian perspective, utopia can be recognized in discourses which seek to govern populations through an imagined ideal society, and also in the utopias subjects embrace and promote in order to resist externally imposed imaginaries. I further noted utopia's possible uses for engaging with difference and identifying points of convergence. Finally, I described my own positionality and the responsibility and challenges this carries with it when approaching the Framework and in working with subjects at the margins.

In Chapter Two, I explained the theory of 'hidden utopias', which brings together theories of how subjectivities can be produced through external discourses and how these can be resisted into conversation with Bloch and Levitas conception of 'utopia' as both the 'desire for another world' and something which is 'braided through human history'. My assertion is that utopia can function as a discourse to shape and govern subjects, as a form of resistance and as a means for engaging with difference and finding points of convergence in democratic and intercultural situations.

In Chapter Three, I noted how the CoE was first imagined into existence via the European Movement and championed by conservative proponents like Churchill in the aftermath of WWII. As such, I sought to tease out continuities and discontinuities between this legacy and how it presently views its role within the international order of supranational institutions. While initially conceptualised at least by Churchill as a United States of Europe, what eventuated instead is that early on the CoE came to be overshadowed by the fledgling EU that emerged as a pragmatic alternative to its idealism and its own court of human rights, the ECtHR. Within

this context, the CoE forged a role for itself within Western Europe as a soft-power protector of specifically Western European Values of democracy--human rights and the rule of law. As Bond describes it, the CoE came to be understood as the 'soft-security' companion to the hard military power of NATO.

The CoE took on a new role, serving as 'mid-wife' to the EU following the Cold War. In this function, the CoE's charge was to effectively help give 'birth' to democratic structures and ideals in formerly communist nation-states. In this role, it both facilitated and monitored Eastern European state's in their applications to EU membership as they transitioned towards democracy (Bond, 2012). This means that the Framework could potentially be used to instrumentalize that process and effectively 'govern' what democratic culture is imagined to be and how it should emerge in these contexts. Alternatively, it could be used in more emancipatory ways if it is embraced from below and considered alongside implicit utopias.

However, it was only within the context of a global war on terror and subsequent refugee crisis that the impetus for a competence model and Framework to help cultivate democratic competence among citizens gained traction as a political objective within the the CoE. The attack against the French satirical tabloid Charlie Hebdo by Islamic extremism in 2015 played a particularly formative role in that the Framework was to incorporate specific competences and guidelines to help mitigate extremism and radicalisation linked to terrorism. This history matters when viewing the Framework because of who and what is perceived to be a threat to the CoE's imagined ideal. That is, it begins with the assumption that threats to democracy are largely produced at the extremes of society, rather than born out of tensions and contradiction sutured into the very features of the Western liberal democratic tradition. These are freatures which have been exacerbated in recent years by the pressures the pressures of rising inequality, consequences of military intervention, changing societal values and competing utopian imaginaries.

Secondly, this thesis has revealed the complex ways that techniques and practices designed to defend utopian conceptions of society in the past continue to play out in the way democratic culture is conceptualised in the Framework and how these might inadvertently work to produce subjectivities in diverse contexts. I began by noting Foucault's point that the Hobbesian utopia of a reconciled truth which covers over the inherent discord intrinsic to democracy effectively enables absolutism to continue working in the liberal democratic tradition in the way that it strives to cover over conflict by promoting universal solutions from a position of power. I

noted how the transition from a European to a democratic discourse in CoE dischourse shows that the CoE's conception of democratic culture carries it implicit ideals regarding European civilisation and assumptions regarding its privileged position in the promotion of democratic culture both within Europe and potentially beyond. I noted the possible consequences of treating history as a subject of knowledge when Foucault treats it as a technology of power which constitutes subjectivities and the possible danger of treating the competences as a social contract between learners, educators, administrators and policymakers.

I noted the CoE's emphasis on humanism alongside Foucault's sustained critique of humanism and its uses to defend a specific kind pre-defined ideal of what it is to be human in order to enact power over subjects. I problematised the promotion of human rights in the Framework as a universal 'good' by making visible the unspoken hierarchies which play out in the human rights regime between different 'generations' of rights where some sets of rights are treated as more defendable than others. I showed how the atomized subject of human rights is a product of Western and particularly Christian logic and noted how this might be problematic when promoted in intercultural situations.

Next, I considered the various ways that technologies promoted in the Romantic utopia might emerge in the Framework. I noted Foucault's warning of how self-knowledge decoupled from self-care can function as a means of governing subjects through external knowledge. I explained how the art of confession emerged in the Romantic period as a secular practice where subjects confess their inner failings in the form of writing or as a form of therapy, so that they may be effectively treated, cured and come to govern themselves accordingly. I noted how encounters with otherness emerged at this time not to trouble one's positionality, but rather to produce essentialised self-knowledge and how this tendency might emerge where self-care is ignored. A further finding of this thesis is that despite the legacy what Foucault describes as an implicit 'race war' (2020), which underpins modern depictions of the present, the concept of 'race' is largely missing and appears to be subsumed with the concept of 'culture'. I then discussed how Foucault's conception of self-care might be applied to the Framework's promotion of 'knowledge and critical understanding of self'.

The final utopia discerned in this thesis was the scientific/biopolitical utopia. This is a utopia which, in Foucault's telling, emerged in the late nineteenth century and harnessed the human sciences to manage bodies, populations, accepted norms and their compositions. It's ultimate goal, was to defend an imagined ideal of society. To this end, I noted how conceptualising

competences as a psychological resource could function as a technology of power from a Foucauldian perspective. I noted how responsibility to self can be wielded to promote self-governance and bolster minimalist economic policies. Finally, I unpacked how resilience when attached to policies intended to thwart radicalization can have a similar effect in that it can demand that individuals simply develop coping mechanisms for dealing with adversity and trauma or that learners 'bounce back' in the face of that trauma. Bourbeau notes that what is missing in this approach is the cultivation beyond merely coping with adversity in the face of an increasingly unpredictable world and seeks instead to cultivate communities that can transform themselves and 'bounce forward' (Bourbeau, 2018). Using Bourbeau's recommendation, it might be more useful to imagine how communities can work together to grow from such experiences so that young people feel that they have a say in the future. This led to Chapter Five where I sought to move beyond merely problematizing the Framework to expose its possibilities through the lens of hidden utopias.

The purpose of problemitizing the Framework in this thesis is not to discredit the positive ways the Framework is currently being used. Rather, it is simply to make educators and learners aware how the Framework might inadvertently shape subjectivities through external discourses and technologies of power rather than producing the autonomy that democracy purports to deliver. Foucault would note that the key distinction resides when using the Framework. If it is embraced from below to engage with the desires and aspirations subjects have for the future, then the Framework can potentially be emancipatory. This is assuming that subjects have the capacity to develop a deep sense of who they are (having gone through the process of self-creations) and can set the terms of this transition into democracy. If, however, the Framework becomes a means for monitoring schools and governing subjects through external knowledge, then Foucault would warn that this would undermine the very ideals the Framework purports to promote.

## 6.2 What possibilities were revealed?

Recognizing the need for educators to have some sort of guide in educating democratic culture, I sought to conceptualise how making utopias explicit in educational situations might provide a potential means for educators and learners to critically engage with problematic discourses in the Framework and elsewhere. Chapter 5 considered how the pedagogical recommendations

in volume 3 of the RFCDC might be approached through the lens of 'hidden utopias'. In this regard, I considered how it might be applied to content-oriented pedagogy and process-oriented pedagogy noting that it is perhaps most amenable to the latter form. I drew from Foucault's ethics to theorize how it might be applied to the learning process in classrooms. I posited how Foucault's concepts of self-care, *parrhēsia* and counter-conduct/the critical attitude might be developed in learning settings when used to disclose hidden utopias in discourse and policy as a learning activity. I further considered the challenges of assessing such projects given how assessment often occurs from a position of power. I then explained how the concept of 'hidden utopias' might lead to critical and creative engagement with utopia in classrooms.

Drawing on Levitas, I highlighted how educators might choose to employ her archaeological, ontological and architectural methodologies for engaging with and interpreting utopian impulses and ideals. Drawing on Foucault, I discussed how his genealogical approach to historical and social critique provides a useful method for engaging with utopian impulses. This is because unlike the archaeological method, which is primarily interested in differences between the past and present, genealogy considers both what continues and what comes to be discarded along the way in order that power can continue to operate in the service of the victors of history (Koopman, 2008, 2013). I further suggested that Foucault's ethical concepts like *parrhēsia*, self-care and the counter-conduct might be particularly helpful in classroom-settings. This Counter-conduct does not imply that learners should be taught to disrespect adults or classroom authority. Rather, it implies that learners should be capable of recognizing utopian discourses at play, critically engaging with them and potentially thinking beyond them. In other words, a critical attitude to governing forces does not merely imply external discourse, it can be applied to the problematic utopias we implicitly embrace as well. In my reading of Foucault, liberty only becomes possible where we have a say in the rules we come to be 'conducted' by. While it is not possible to avoid being governed altogether, Foucault's ethics suggest that we do have some agency in the truths we accept. In other words, we can choose:

> *how not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them* (Foucault, 2007 p.44).

Making the determination of what norms to accept and be governed by requires deep introspection and self-care, something which is becoming increasingly difficult in educational

settings, due to a crowded curriculum that demands to see measurable outcomes linked to the goals of the state.

Finally, I considered potential dangers of making utopian impulses visible in educational settings. In particular, I emphasized how forcing learners to confess the utopias they hold dear could lead to the domination of subjects from a Foucauldian perspective (Butler, 2016; Foucault, 2014).I further noted that it is important to make visible the danger of totalising visions that would privilege some at the expense of others. Despite these dangers, I have argued that ignoring utopian hopes is perhaps even more dangerous, given that my assertion that utopia and utopianism is proliferating in the modern context (Tourbier, 2021). Thus, the capacity to discern, critically evaluate and reflect upon utopian impulses will be needed in future if democracy, and the best aspects of it, are to survive. At the same time, fostering these capacities in classrooms implies the need for care and sensitivity among educators and learners in classrooms.

## 6.3 Significance of this research

There are a number of reasons why this research is significant. First, it exposes how the Framework can be used to produce an idealised subject from a position of power. This subject is largely characterised in the Framework as an intercultural citizen, potentially multilingual, who participates actively in the political sphere. While such a subjectivity may be desirable within a diversifying Europe, it can also sit in tension with those who feel marginalised by these rapid changes. Making this utopian visible in classrooms can potentially provide those who feel silenced by this vision a chance to critically engage with the vision proposed in the Framework and potentially make a case for their own vision.

Second, it is significant in that it exposes the role that utopianism plays in the Framework and in democratic culture in general. The assumption underpinning the concept of 'hidden utopias' is not merely that the Framework carries with it 'hidden utopias', but that utopia and utopianism is a basic human impulse that can be found in multiple cultural productions from daydreams, to fiction, cinema, poetry, fairy tales, architecture, fashion, music, advertising, policy and philosophical treaties (Bloch, 1986; Moir, 2018). Educators can apply these insights to a

multiplicity of cultural outputs to help reveal the utopias implicitly promoted regarding what is possible and desirable for democracy in the future.

Third, this thesis is significant be it problematizes the instrumentalist approach to the cultivation of democratic culture. To this end, the very act of selecting certain competences over others to be taught and produced 'as if by machinery', as Smith argues, necessarily begins with making a judgement (Smith, 2006). This judgement means that decisions will be made at multiple levels regarding who or what counts in democratic culture, who decides and whose utopia will ultimately be promoted. The Framework then treats democratic culture as a science where in a biopolitical fashion, democratic culture is assumed to be something that can be managed by turning to experts to produce an instrument to help produce that vision. I suggest that rather than treating the education of democratic culture as a science that can be instrumentally produced and regulated from above, it is better approached as an art that begins with learners embedded and the context in which they live.

Fourth, it is significant because it suggests a number of implications for teacher- education. These include: (i) the need for educators to recognize 'hidden utopias' and how they can function as a means of producing subjects of power (ii) it suggests a key role for philosophy in teacher education and in classrooms and (iii) the capacity for and freedom to produce activities where learners can engage critically and creatively with implicit utopias in the Framework and elsewhere. This might entail teaching-training that encourages creative approaches to uncovering such discourses.

Fifth, it makes visible the dangers of using the Framework as a potential solution to address what are perceived to be democratic deficits in populations. In a recent article, Tenenbaum et al. report using the RFCDC to roll out an educational 'intervention', asking whether the RFCDC could help to 'increase children's rights endorsement and knowledge' (Tenenbaum et al., 2022). The activity does not indicate that rights might in any way be problematic, contain an essentialised conception of what it is to be human or what is to be valued and therefore something which might require critical engagement. The fact that the project was labelled an 'intervention' attests to Foucault's concern for ways in which the human sciences are used to diagnose and treat democratic 'deficits'.

Tenenbaum et. al is further instructive of how the Framework can and is being used to promote moral development of subjects. Foucault's theories suggest that such approaches risk

producing subjects of power rather than liberty conceptualised as non-domination. The article states, '[m]oral development is central to understanding and development of human rights...In contrast, not endorsing children's rights is associated with social conventional reasoning'. Thus, not endorsing human rights is assumed to be the result of under-developed moral reasoning. Again, this is indicative of a 'deficit approach'. Social conventional reasoning is a reference to Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development (Kohlberg, 1984)which have themselves long been a source of critique in that in that they stem from cognitive development traditions (Witherell & Edwards, 1991). Feminists like Noddings, argue that such traditions reduce moral reasoning to a cognitive skill that fails to consider the role that caring for other human beings plays in moral reasoning (Noddings, 2006, 2013, 2016, 2003).

Tenenbaum et al's study does not question whether or not teaching children rights is an appropriate means of cultivating moral reasoning and linking it to democratic competence via the Framework. Rather, the underlying assumption appears to be that we can forego the teaching of ethics in classrooms simply by teaching children which 'rights' they have. The fact that children are rarely able to access the legal mechanisms intended to support these rights in their daily lives goes unquestioned in the study. For example, Article 6 of the UNCRC states the children have the right to a full live. The question is, who determines what a full life is intended to look like and who enforces this right when a child feels that right is not being respected?

Olssen notes that, 'Foucault's understanding of ethics and liberty invoke a particular form of community' (2007, p.207). Thus, Foucault emphasizes ethics rather than moral development which begins with a particular concept of self-care linked to a conception of the good life that draws inspiration from Ancient Greece. To this end, Foucauldian ethics are aimed at developing a, 'politically active subject acting in a community of subjects' (Olssen, 2007 p.207). This is not to say that Foucauldian ethics are the only form of ethics which might be taught as an aspect of democratic culture. Foucault's theories suggest that in order for an education to be democratic, that is an education in non-domination of the subject, that subjects would necessarily need to be co-producer of the ethics and or morals they are compelled to adopt.

Tenenbaum's 'intervention' of teaching human rights to children was applied in Bulgaria, Italy, Norway, Romania and Spain. All countries are members of the CoE, yet oddly the study does not use the ECHR, but instead uses the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child

(UNCRC). Tenenbaum et. al (2022) make the point that the UNCRC was signed by almost all member states to the UN, except for the US. This suggests that the UNCRC has overwhelming legal legitimacy in Tenenbaum's view. However, the fact that the US has refused to sign the convention is not insignificant. If the UNCRC is such a vital resource for producing moral reasoning, then why would a country which perceives itself to be a beacon of democracy refuse to sign the treaty? What does the US refusal to sign such other such treaties say regarding CoE's claims of 'universal' human rights? An important lesson of this research then is that there are dangers in using the Framework as a tool for moral development of democratic citizens when learners are not given the opportunity to question the norms they are expected to adopt.

Finally, it points to the need to recognize that the Framework promotes a contingent ideal of democratic culture, that was conceptualised during a specific context- by a specific entity, the CoE that it could have been constructed otherwise at a different time, by different designers, in a different set of circumstances. Thus, it contains within it missed opportunities and silences that could be brought to the surface in democratic and intercultural situations.

## 6.5 Placing this thesis in context of other critiques of the Framework

This research is not the sole critique of the Framework. Zemblyas argues that it produces a form of 'affective governance' (Zembylas, 2022). The research in this thesis adds to this conclusion by showing that it is not merely *affect* that the Framework produces, but a specific vision of the world, a utopia that has been made possible by past utopian imaginings. Li, Simpson and Dervin have argued that the Framework is Eurocentric in its vision (Li & Dervin, 2018; A. Simpson & Dervin, 2020). The research in this thesis helps to show that not only does that Eurocentricity have deep roots, but that that these roots carry with them utopian images about how the present was constructed and what is possible and desirable in the future. Jónsson & Garces Rodriguez (Jónsson & Garces Rodriguez, 2021) view the Framework from a Deweyan perspective and contribute what they propose would be Dewey's list of competences, which they contrast with those proposed in the Framework. These include (i) discursive competence, (ii) competences for conflict resolution, (iii) critical re-evaluation, (iv) competences for communal living, (v) competences for forming a conception of the good life, (vi) competences for respecting the natural boundaries of human beings. While some of these

are covered in the Framework, some such as communal living, forming a conception of the good life and respecting the boundaries of human beings are less obvious in the Framework. These authors further argue that Framework neglects to consider to what end these will be directed. The examples provided add evidence to this argument and further shows how they can be used to promote a specific vision of the 'good' or 'utopian' society.

Others have suggested that attempts to promote intercultural dialogue by the CoE and European Union are designed to 'increase stability in Europe and to create a new narrative about European community and communality' (Lähdesmäki et al., 2020 p.7; Wilk-Woś, 2010). This evidence from this research suggests that while it might be designed to promote stability that it is less aimed at producing a new vision and more intent on defending an imagined ideal that has long been in place. Scholars such as Lähdesmäki (2020) and Wilk-Woś (2010) see the Framework as an attempt to address 'democratic deficits' (Lähdesmäki et al., 2020 p.7; Wilk-Woś, 2010). Lähdesmäki et al. (2020) further suggest that the CoE's work promotes its own particular imagined future. This research had helped make visible that this imagined future is one which continues in a 'business-as-usual' fashion and does not question the neoliberal utopia that its competences are effectively designed to support. With respect to the future then, Kowalczyk makes the point that there is actually something conservative and nostalgic about the imagined future encapsulated in such 'reforms', insofar as they appear to be:

> *...meant to reclaim some quality or ideal for the future, to indeed 'save' the nation through the student, and thus transform children into citizens of a particular kind, who must have a stake in the nation's future as in their own. That future is not wholly new, but also tied to an idea of the nation that is to provide continuity with the past'* (Kowalczyk, 2010 p.6).

For educators hoping to interrogate this paradigm, the conceptual lens of 'hidden utopias' might offer a way to both use the Framework, while empowering learners to question or even defend the vision it promotes.

# Chapter 7: Conclusion

Across the globe, once stable liberal democracies are increasingly said to be 'in crisis'. There is growing distrust in democratic institutions, journalists, educated elites and growing support for authoritarian solutions that would assure greater security for borders, identities and the imagined futures tied to those identities. Furthermore, there is growing suspicion of those who are culturally 'other', battles over 'truth' and rising populism. To address these challenges, the Council of Europe has thus produced twenty competences for democratic culture comprised of values, skills, attitudes, knowledge and critical understanding to help educators cultivate citizens who can respond to these challenges in intercultural and democratic situations. In 2016, these competences were first unveiled as a conceptual Model (Barrett & et. al, 2016). In 2018, the competences were further developed into a comprehensive Reference Framework (RFCDC) to help educators teach, assess and measure the development of those competences in classrooms (Council of Europe, 2018a, 2018c, 2018b).

For educators who wish to cultivate learners who can confidently navigate an increasingly ambiguous, diverse and 'liquid' world, the CDC Model and its accompanying Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture are likely to be received as a welcome support. Yet, this simplicity belies the complex history which helped to make the Framework thinkable in the first place and the utopian ideals it inadvertently adopts. To unravel these ideals and make visible the utopian ideals which help inform these competences, I have harnessed Foucault's theories alongside Bloch and Levitas conception of utopia to help uncover implicit utopias informing the model and the governing technologies associated with them. I describe the conceptual lens developed in this thesis as a 'hidden utopia' in order to emphasize the role that utopianism plays in education policy in producing subjects of power and because identifying utopias as 'hidden' both demands a pedagogical response and highlights the importance of engaging with utopias in democratic education. In this manner, the concept of 'hidden utopias' can potentially provide a critical lens to educators to reveal the unsaid within the Framework and in the in the stories we accept about how the present came to be and in the imagined future attached to those stories.

## 7.1 Limitations

It is important to emphasise the limits of this critique and define the boundaries of what this thesis is not. To begin, it is important to be clear that what is presented here is largely a *Western* history. The reason for this is that Foucault's primary interest was to expose the peculiarity of Western thinking in order to make the West effectively strange to itself. As such, Foucault spent comparatively little time attempting to search the archives beyond the Western canon in order to incorporate non-Western thinking into his theories of power-knowledge relationships, regimes of truth, governmentality and ethics (Stoler, 1995).

As Stoler argues (1995) this inattention to sources outside western history limits their usefulness beyond the West. Stoler's aim is not to discredit Foucault's methods, but rather to highlight the need to expand the archival material used in Foucauldian scholarship beyond the Western context. This call to bring in non-Western histories into Foucauldian scholarship remains relevant today. Such an undertaking in the context of education for democratic culture could prove generative for future research. However, since both Foucault and the CDC model are largely European focussed, the scope of this thesis is limited to Western notions of democratic culture.

As noted, the Western approach to democracy as a specific culture will prove most relevant is in Foucault's assertion that colonialism brings with it certain 'boomerang effects' (Foucault, 2020; Isakhan & Stockwell, 2012). In Foucault's view, the practices and mechanisms of power implemented by colonizers in colonial contexts invariably have effects in the colonizing country. Similarly, the archive within democratic scholarship remains itself stubbornly skewed towards Western histories. Recognizing the need to expand this archive, a small number of scholars have attempted to expand the Western conception of democracy and democratic culture beyond the Western imagination. Isakhan & Stockwell's (2012) *Edinburgh Companion to the History of Democracy* represents one such attempt to push the historical boundaries of democracy well beyond the West and deep into human history(Isakhan & Stockwell, 2012). Here, democratic culture is discovered in cultures as diverse as ancient hunter-gatherer societies, pre-colonial Africa, Maori & Aboriginal tribes, the Iroquois nation of the North America, Ancient China, India, Assyria, Phoenicia, the Levant, Confucianism and early Islam to name a few. Many of the authors who contribute to the volume further make the claim that the Athenian and Roman Republican models of democracy actually borrowed ideas and

practices from non-Western sources such as those in Ancient Assyria, Israel & Phoenicia, and possibly even India (2012).

Such interventions help to trouble any potential conceit that democracy is a purely Western ideal or that it is the natural result of modern economic development. Foucault would be quick to note that Western forms of liberal democracy must be necessarily understood as the result of contingent processes that could have been otherwise and might have developed elsewhere in different ways. However, it is also important to recognize that in constructing a *world* history of democracy and linking it to a singular idea of 'democratic culture' there is the potential danger of treating 'democratic culture' as a singular universal ideal which is both 'discoverable' and which might be applied to new contexts. This is something Foucault would view to be dangerous since, in his view, the 'universal' invariably covers over and silences the particular.

From the beginning this thesis has been a conceptual/philosophical project. While I began working on this thesis while living in Germany, I have since moved to Australia were I worked on these ideas at a distance from the European context. This helped to provide me with an outside perspective, which was at time beneficial, for example helping me to recognize how democratic culture carries with it legacies of colonialism in the way it controls the narratives of this history. However, the fact that this thesis was written during the Covid-19 pandemic meant that I was unable to visit schools employing the Framework. One area of future research would be to conduct field studies to investigate whether or not hidden utopias can be discerned in future applications of the Framework.

Furthermore, I would like to make explicit here what this thesis does not purport to do: First, this thesis does not seek to promote one 'utopian vision' over another. Rather, it seeks to make the workings of these discourses and visions of utopia visible, so that exclusionary and totalitarian utopias might be seen for what they are and enable educators and learners to imagine new futures in commune with others while remaining aware that one person's utopia is often another's dystopia. Secondly, it is not a plea for a plea for relativism or anarchy, both charges which are often wielded at Foucault's work. In line with my interpretation of Foucault, it seeks to peel back the layers of how truth functions as a conduit for power in order to make change possible and actively engage with the governing discourses we choose to adopt.

Thirdly, it does not set out to discredit the model or misrepresent the intentions of the Framework's designers. Rather, it seeks to problematize the Framework and push it to more emancipatory ends. In other words, rather than falling back into the tendency to merely defend an imagined ideal of society, this thesis hopes to encourage educators and learners to think beyond seemingly intransigent paradigms that divide 'us' from 'them'.

## 7.2 Possibilities for further research

This thesis has sought to take seriously emerging critiques of the Framework while recognizing the desire and practical need for educators to possess tools to help them navigate the complex waters of contemporary 'democratic culture'. This is where I believe research which includes an understanding of the role that utopian ideals and discourse plays in democratic culture can be helpful. This might involve on-site research into the utopian ideals at play in schools implementing the Framework. However, it could easily be applied to other projects promoting democratic education. I believe that educators and children and fully capable of engaging with such questions. However, as Foucault suggests power readily flows through attempts to apply interventions to populations and can invariably end up reproducing the status quo. Thus, it would be important to make these relationships to power visible in such settings. I would furthermore caution against any approach that promotes a 'what works' approach and confine such research to qualitative studies or further philosophical contemplation. One possibility for research not yet mentioned is the potential for investigating heterotopias in relation to 'democratic culture'. On heterotopias Foucault writes,

> *There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society— which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted'* (Foucault, 1984 p.3)

Heterotopias are spaces or 'emplacements', which 'have the curious property of being connected to all the other emplacements [i.e. cafes, movie theatres, beaches etc], but in such a way that they suspend, neutralize, or reverse a set of relations that are designated, reflected or represented...by them]. Foucault notes that such spaces might be thought of as utopias, but in

Foucault's definition, '[utopias ] are societies perfected or the reverse of society, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally and essentially unreal' (1984, p.178) On the other hand, he states,

> *There are also, and probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places, actual places, places that are designed into the very institution of society, which are sorts of actually realized utopias in which the real emplacements, all the other real emplacements that can be found within the culture are, at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed, sorts of places that are outside all places, although they are actually localizable* (Foucault, 1984 p.3).

Llewellyn proposes that online worlds and fanfiction might as heterotopias for LGBTQ individuals in the way that they provide marginalised communities with spaces to move beyond normalised identities and build communities that disrupt what taken to be normal. She notes that while such communities can create barriers to some while that such spaces, 'enable forms of resistance to power and discourse that are not currently possible in the normative physical world' (Llewellyn, 2022 p.2). For Foucault, there are many such spaces where heterotopias might be found. He notes that in more primitive societies there were crisis spaces. These are, 'privileged, sacred or forbidden places reserved for individuals in a state of crisis with respect to society. Adolescents, menstruating women, women in labor [sic], old people and so on'. There are furthermore, heterotopias of deviation which might include psychiatric hospitals, old people's homes and even prisons (Foucault, 1984). There are also spaces which disrupt temporality, which might include museums or libraries. Foucault then goes onto include the theatre, the cinema, the garden, spaces whereupon one can only enter after certain rituals of purification religious colonies, etc. He views the sailing vessel to be 'the heterotopia par excellence' (Foucault, 1984 p.9). What these spaces all seem to have in common is that they are transitional/liminal spaces where selves, norms and cultures might be transformed.

In other words, where Bloch (1986) conceptualise utopia as the desire for another world and the drive to bring that world into existence, Foucault emphasizes spaces of transition. Heterotopias thus exist in between reality and the world desired, where both the norms of the social world might be transformed and the world itself. Some educational spaces might arguably achieve such a goal, though to meet Foucault's definition of non-normative spaces they would need to be spaces which are less outcome-oriented, more experientially focussed and organically enable transformation by both learners and educators. Such heterotopias might

include intercultural exchange trips, camps in nature, involvement in protest movements etc. The key is that they would need to be spaces where the transformation of norms and power relationships are made possible and it might prove particularly to discover heterotopias that also meant the CoE's concepton of democratic and intercultural situations.

As noted, the research in this thesis largely confined to Western conceptions of democratic culture. However, there is further need to explore hidden utopias from a non-Western perspective in democratic and intercultural situations. For an overview of non-European utopias, Claeys points to a number which deserve further exploration (Claeys, 2020 Ch. 3). Some of these include Aboriginal, Native American, Indigenous, Norse, Celtic, Hindu, Islamic, Confucian, Buddhist, Shinto, Daoist, African and millenarian fundamentalist movements.

For those who recognize the present as a product of historical happenstance, making utopianism visible in discourses surrounding democracy and democratic culture provides a potential means for enabling future citizens to resist specific forms of governance while serving as a critical and creative tool for imagining a democratic future 'to come'. If these questions are not being asked in educational settings, where are they being asked and who will be empowered to answer them?

Bernard Harcourt argues that since the Middle Ages the purpose of philosophy and critical theory has been (i) contemplation of the world and (ii) to 'change the world' in some way. His lament is that critical theory in the latter half of the twentieth century became reticent to embrace this second purpose(B. E. . Harcourt, 2018). Yet, educators are often tasked with carrying out visions produced by policymakers from positions of power. In this sense, educators are asked to change the world or defend a specific, utopian vision of society, without being given the critical tools or license to engage with those visions. This can be particularly problematic when that vision is determined in advance and promoted through instruments like those provided the Framework, which make it increasingly difficult in classrooms to engage with deeply philosophical questions regarding the implicit visions contained within those policies and in public discourse and to contemplate what world 'we' (as educators, researchers and learners) aspire to bring into being and why that matters. The proposal here is that making utopia visible in classrooms offers one potential way forward and that it can be used alongside the Framework to help guide such contemplation. '

Leszek Kolakowski (1982) once suggested that when it comes to utopia, philosophy needs both *diggers* (those who seek to find utopia) as well as *healers* (those who seek to unmask the premises of utopian beliefs) (KOLAKOWSKI, 1982). I propose that in order to address the apparent crisis in democratic culture, educators should seek to cultivate learners who can excavate the hidden utopias at play in their lives, in discourse in general and critically contemplate their own imagined futures. In this way, education for democratic culture might be reconceptualised as an activity which enable learners from a diversity of background to become *diggers* and *healers* of the utopian imagination. This research has sought to contribute a step forward by problematizing the CoE's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and simultaneously pointing to its possibilities by viewing it through the lens of 'hidden utopias'. Much like education for democratic culture, engaging with implicit utopias is never a finished project. Rather, it is a lifelong conversation with oneself and others that requires a constant interplay between critique and the imagination.

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