

**Social Equality in Education: A Comparative Historical Study
of France and England.**

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Abstract

This thesis will explore the concept of social equality in education in relation to France and England within their historical contexts from 1789 to 1939. It will compare and contrast how both countries have gone about reducing social inequality in education. The thesis will emphasise the importance of the ideological legacy at the heart of both systems for understanding this i.e. Republicanism in France and Liberalism in England.

French education emphasises equality and secularism. This is a legacy from the French Revolution, which brought the state centre stage in education. It also emphasises unity since Napoleon imposed a unified framework for its administration. In France these characteristics of centralism, unity and secularism have been perceived as offering the best possibility of providing equality of opportunity for all pupils regardless of social background, religion, ethnicity or geographical location.

Equality was not a founding principle of English education, as it was in France; the concept evolved more pragmatically as a way of dealing with the more unfair aspects of the system. Liberalism with its values of freedom and diversity and the political and economic doctrine of laissez-faire have had the most enduring influence on English education

The method of enquiry undertaken in this thesis will be drawn from comparative historical sociology. It uses comparative historical analysis to understand the variation in how both countries have gone about reducing educational inequality and why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education. Three factors: persistence of ideology, social-class alliances and the nature of the state are put forward to explain the variation between both countries in relation to social equality in education.

The final section of the thesis reflects on how the histories of both countries have impacted on their current education systems.

Declaration and Word Count

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Word Count: 83,239

Signed:

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Methodology

Social equality is an important area of research and given that the social contexts in which educational systems operate are largely based on inequality, is particularly relevant to education. The comparative method is most advantageous for understanding this relationship in a systematic and coherent way. Comparison is particularly helpful in uncovering the similarities and variations between educational systems and how they go about reducing social inequality in education.

France and England¹ have many similarities in terms of (i) their polity: liberal democracies with representative and accountable institutions and multiple political parties; (ii) their economy: advanced level of capitalist development; and (iii) their welfare and education: universal health care and education with democratization of secondary education initiated in the 1960s. Nevertheless, there are major differences between them which are manifested in their education systems and this difference is a consequence of the variation in their political and cultural histories. In order to understand this variation, a comparative historical analysis of both countries is most appropriate.

Much of the research on French and English education systems has focused on their distinctiveness in terms of: exemplars of centralised and decentralised systems respectively (Archer, 1979), different modalities of state formation (Green (1990), and different forms of curricular control (Broadfoot 1985). The outcome of interest here is different and has not been researched systematically before. It focuses on the key concept of social equality in education and sets out to explain the variation in how both

¹ England is taken here as the unit of comparison. However, it is unavoidable that Britain and the UK (United Kingdom) will be referred to in the comparative analysis especially when referring to the unitary nation state which, depending on the period following the respective Acts of Union, will refer to England and Wales (after 1536) or England, Scotland and Wales (after 1707) or England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (after 1801), or England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (after 1922). Responsibility for education has also been devolved to the separate countries.

countries have gone about reducing social inequality in education². Its starting position is that a discourse of egalitarianism has an importance in French education that is not the case in English education which places a higher value on freedom and diversity.

This emphasis on equality in France can be traced back to the French Revolution (1789-1799) which was a critical conjuncture (Mahoney, 2000) in French history and extremely consequential for the trajectory followed afterwards. The values of equality and secularism, which came to the fore during the revolutionary period continue to underpin the French education system. It is claimed here that events during this critical period gave rise to a revolutionary ideology which has persisted thereafter (albeit in attenuated form over the past 30 years) and has had a major influence on educational policy particularly in relation to social equality in education. In contrast to this, liberalism has had the most enduring influence on English education and allied to this the political and economic doctrine of *laissez-faire* emphasising voluntarism and self-help. This can also be traced back to the end of the 18th century which was a period of great significance for England, marking as it did the beginning of its dominance as a commercial and industrial world power. This was also a critical conjuncture in English history and of major consequence for the trajectory followed there both politically and for education. In contrast it will be argued that a liberal ideology has persisted to the present although this has alternated, particularly following World War II, with a more universal discourse allied to the welfare state. Liberalism has remained the more dominant default discourse which comes to the fore particularly in times of crisis. As a result, equality was not a founding principle of the education system; it has evolved more pragmatically in relation to the more unfair aspects of the education system.

This thesis sets out to show how these trajectories have differed over the period from 1789 to 1939 and to explain the reasons for this variation with its consequent impact on the outcome of interest i.e. the reduction of social

² Whilst some reference will be made to all levels of education, the thesis will focus mainly on primary and secondary levels.

inequality in education. This is an under-researched area of research, however, as no other substantial work carries out a systematic study into how France and England differ in relation to the reduction of social inequality in education. It will not only compare and contrast these educational systems in relation to this outcome of interest but will also put forward explanatory factors to explain it. The explanatory factors have been identified following a thorough examination of the literature. As social equality in education is strongly influenced by societal forces external to education, the literature examined here will be based on political, sociological and historical as well as educational research. These resources will inform the chapters and sections of this thesis which relate to these areas. The ideological legacy of republicanism and liberalism is a major factor used here to explain the variation in how both countries go about reducing social inequality in education and represents the originality of my contribution to comparative educational research. Here ideology will be treated, not as an abstract concept but as to how it is manifested within the socio-economic relations of production within the capitalist system and in the political relations within society. For that reason social class alliances will also be analysed here as an explanatory factor. The difference between the nature of the state in both countries will also be examined and its influence on educational inequality will also be tested within the historical period under review here.

This brief introduction leads to the following research question. This question is concerned with the way in which political ideologies in France and England have impacted on social equality in education and why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education. The aim of this thesis is to explain through comparative historical analysis, the variation in how both countries have gone about reducing social inequality in education. The next section will outline the methodology used for carrying out this research and will identify three factors which will be used throughout the thesis to explain this variation.

Methodology

The method of enquiry undertaken in this thesis will be drawn from comparative historical sociology. The approach taken will be comparative historical and comparative sociological. Comparative history has long been associated with sociological enquiry because of the general usefulness of looking at historical trajectories in order to study social change (Skocpol and Somers, 1980). . The founders of the social sciences, such as Marx and de Toqueville pursued comparative history as a source of investigation, as did the classic scholars of sociology, for example, Durkheim, Weber and Bloch. All of these were preoccupied with the monumental changes brought about by the major dislocating transitions from traditional social forms to modern industrial capitalism. All of these 19th century scholars operated from a comparative historical viewpoint to search for a universal theory to explain societal phenomena, for example, Durkheim's theories of the division of labour, Weber's work on Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism. According to Mahoney and Rueschmeyer (2003), the early scholars of social science were unavoidably drawn to comparative historical analysis for the following reasons:

They found it essential to focus on comprehensive structures and large-scale processes that provided powerful clues to the patterning of social life, both at a macroscopic level and at the level of groups and individuals. Such big processes and structures were – and still are – most appropriately studied through explicit comparisons that transcend national or regional boundaries. In addition, these fundamental processes could not – and cannot – be analyzed without recognizing the importance of temporal sequences and the unfolding of events over time (Mahoney and Rueschmeyer, op. cit, p. 7).

This mode of investigation, after a period of decline in the mid 20th century has reasserted itself as an area of research which is of major importance for the social sciences. Mahoney and Rueschmeyer (op. cit.) define comparative historical analysis by its concern for causal analysis, its emphasis on processes over time, and by its use of systematic and contextualised comparison. Thus, this mode of analysis is concerned with the 'explanation and the identification of causal configurations that produce

major outcomes of interest'. Furthermore, it deals with events, such as, social revolutions, state formation, and dictatorships etc., which are seen as processes that unfold over time.

As well as this, it is engaged in systematic and contextualised comparisons of a small number of cases. The study of a small number of cases presents the problem not only of the non-generalisability of its outcomes but, according to some critics, can only lead to the generation of hypotheses that need to be tested in other more numerous case studies. Rueschmeyer in Mahoney and Rueschmeyer (op. cit) argues against this and states that a single case or a small number of case-studies can not only force the rejection of a previously held theory, as with the classical Marxist 'economistic' theory of class formation, following E.P. Thompson's, *The making of the English Working Class* (1963), but can also develop new theoretical ideas, put them to the test and use the results in the explanation of outcomes. Thus, although this approach does not aim at generating universally applicable knowledge, it facilitates moving backwards and forwards between theory and historical evidence which can lead to new concepts, explanations and theoretical refinements.

Comparative historical sociology so defined is the approach taken in this thesis. It is distinct from history in that historians write at a lower level of generalization. These use mainly archival and primary sources whereas comparative historical sociologists' writing is more thematic, often moving between theory and historical narrative and using more secondary sources. It is this reliance on secondary sources for making inferences about the past that has been open to criticism by scholars. One notable critique in Goldthorpe (1991) argues that the links 'between evidence and argument tend to be both tenuous and arbitrary to a quite unacceptable degree'. Because what he terms 'grand historical sociology' uses wide-ranging and expansive comparisons they are dependent on derivative or secondary accounts for their basic data which, he argues, reduces the theses of major exponents as Barrington Moore (1966) in his major work *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* and Theda Skocpol (1979) *States and Social*

Revolutions to offering 'interpretations of interpretations'. The position of comparative historical sociologists has been strongly defended. Whilst the disadvantage of not using primary sources has been acknowledged, it is argued that to allow this to halt the scholarly endeavours of this major tradition, favoured by the founding fathers of sociology, such as Weber, would be absurd as also to ignore the variety of ways which are undertaken to minimize the risks of not using primary sources (Mouzelis, 1994). One way that the latter can be achieved is through the application of rigorous standards in relation to published research (Bryant, 1994). As Bryant (op. cit.) points out, works of 'scholarly synthesis' are an indispensable component of every branch of science, which itself is a collaborative process and 'Given that many sociological questions require extensive knowledge of different times and places, a cautious and critical reliance upon the reportage and interpretations of specialists is obviously essential for advances in such areas (p. 14).'

Scholarly collaboration is important and leads to knowledge accumulation and the accumulation of causal findings. Mahoney (in Mahony and Reuschmeyer, op. cit.) explains how causal hypotheses are tested by an iterative process and the original research is either replicated or new data and cases are used to test the hypothesis with the goal of increasing confidence about its validity. For example, Barrington Moore's thesis on the social origins of dictatorship and democracy, which was singled out for criticism in Goldthorpe (op. cit.) has prompted much hypothesis testing on the original as well as on deviant cases. This has led to evidence which provides limited or conditional support for the original hypothesis, but has provided an accumulation of knowledge with regard to this area of research.

The Comparative Method and its variants

The comparative method (Smelzer, 1973, Ragin, 1981) is the classic way of conducting comparative historical analysis. It is a method which allows the analysis of historical phenomena in a way that is in keeping with experimental design (Smelzer, op. cit. Ragin, op. cit.). The experimental method, on the other hand, is the optimal scientific method for determining

causality. This involves the manipulation of variables by the researcher and the isolation of conditions relevant to a particular outcome from conditions which are not or less relevant. However, in comparative historical analysis, experimental design is not possible because the phenomena to be analysed is in the past and because it is not possible to manipulate conditions involving large masses of people. It is only through the occurrence of naturally occurring data that these phenomena can be analysed in a way that approximates to experimental design. This logical comparative method approximates to experimental rigour, as Ragin (1987) explains 'by identifying comparable instances of a phenomenon of interest and then analyzing the theoretically important similarities and differences among them (p. 31)'

The other method used to approximate experimental design in the social sciences is the quantitative or statistical method which uses statistics to manipulate mathematically rather than situationally as in an experiment (Smelzer, op. cit.). (This method will not be discussed in any detail here as it will not be used in this thesis.) Ragin (1981) argues that the comparative method has the advantage over the statistical method in that it is better able to deal with multiple causation as it tends to work with configurations of the preconditions of the social phenomenon to be explained and examines cases within their contexts. This method, which Ragin (1987) also calls the case-oriented method, is particularly attractive to scholars interested in the explanation of events of major significance because it is sensitive to chronology and context. It is also well suited to the analysis of variation in historical outcomes which requires complex explanations involving combinations of causes which fit together in a particular setting and contrast with those in another setting. Also case-oriented researchers, unlike statistical researchers work with a small number of cases - usually between two and eight cases. This allows the researcher to identify similarities with relative ease, but as the number of cases increases the likelihood of any cause being common to all cases decreases (Ragin, *ibid*). Thus the researcher will have an in depth knowledge of the different cases and context will be paramount. What is gained, however, through remaining faithful to context is lost in the limitation of generalisability for in this method causality is

normally limited to the cases under consideration (Skocpol and Somers, 1980, Ragin, *ibid*).

Skocpol and Somers (*op. cit*) present variants of the comparative method which they refer to as (i) the contrast of contexts method and (ii) the macro-causal method. The contrast of contexts method is used in comparative history to highlight the historical uniqueness of each case and in this way contextual integrity is respected. The weakness in the contrast of contexts approach, as Skocpol and Somers (*op. cit.*) point out is that whilst the author can present a rich and chronologically varied account of contrasting case-studies, it doesn't provide any causal explanation for these. In contrast to this, the macro-causal method in comparative history is used primarily to make causal inferences. Systematic controlled comparison is used to test hypotheses and provide explanations about cause and effect relationships (Green, 2002). Macro-causal analysts tend to move backwards and forwards between alternative explanatory hypotheses. They try to specify different configurations of conditions favourable or unfavourable to the outcome they wish to explain (Skocpol and Somers, *op. cit.*). The purposes Skocpol and Somers assign to these two methods are similar to those of the case-oriented or comparative method in its interpretive and explanatory aspects respectively. Rather than seeing these purposes as mutually exclusive, Ragin, (*op. cit.*) states that there is no necessary contradiction between historical interpretation and causal analysis. What Ragin (*ibid*), Skocpol and Somers (*op. cit*) and Mahony and Rueschmeyer (*op. cit.*) have in common is an emphasis on major outcomes, causality and processes over time in comparative historical analysis.

These authors, like many comparative scholars, have been inspired by John Stuart Mill's work on experimental inquiry in *A System of Logic* (1888). He puts forward three methods of comparison i.e. the Method of Agreement, the Method of Difference and the Indirect Method of Difference. The first of these involves comparing cases that share the outcome to be explained. Where only one of several possible causes is present in all the cases then this is the cause of the outcome. The second method involves comparing

instances in which the phenomenon to be explained does occur with instances, in all other respects similar, where it does not occur. The latter method Mill refers to as 'the most perfect of the methods of experimental enquiry'. In the social sciences, Mill admits of the impossibility of obtaining the conditions necessary for his preferred method. In his third method, the Indirect Method, instead of taking two cases which are similar in all respects except for the presence or absence of a given circumstance, two sets of instances are compared which respectively agree in nothing but the presence of the circumstance on the one side and its absence on the other. The aim of this method is to use the negative cases to reinforce the causes drawn from the positive cases (Wiborg, 2009).

Mill's methods are not applicable in their pure form to historical comparisons because historical and societal phenomena cannot be broken up into separate variables that can be manipulated as in the natural sciences. All that can be done in the comparative method is to select cases in a way that approximates to an experiment (Wiborg, op. cit.). Many comparative historians have adjusted Mill's methods to the qualitative methods of comparison. Haydu (1998) finds that despite its supposed inappropriateness for historical explanations, Mill's logic continues to guide scholars in the selection and conceptualization of cases and provides rules of thumb for the analysis undertaken by many scholars.

This thesis will explore the concept of social equality and how it has evolved in France and England. It sets out to explain the variation in how France and England go about reducing social inequality in education and why the discourse of egalitarianism appears stronger in France than in England. The hypotheses developed to explain this will be tested systematically against the empirical evidence of one hundred and fifty years of history. The overarching question outlined above will serve as a central theoretical framework for the thesis.

The comparative method or as it is also called, the case-oriented method (Ragin, 1987) will be used in this thesis. This method is particularly well-suited to my study because it allows the comparison of whole cases i.e.

France and England here. It is also sensitive to chronology and this study is examining patterns that emerge over one hundred and fifty years from the end of the eighteenth century to the present. I will use elements from Skocpol and Sommers (op. cit.) contrast of contexts method because this allows the historical integrity of each case to be respected and because the significant features of one can be contrasted with the other.

The case histories chosen for illumination here lend themselves optimally to this comparative method because they represent contrasting trajectories in the evolution of education and in the reduction of inequality in education. In the case of France, there is an emphasis on egalitarianism and secularism in its educational discourse, whilst in the case of England its educational discourse emphasizes the liberal values of freedom and diversity. These contrasting characteristics will be described and compared in a systematic fashion using the historic period from the French Revolution of 1789 to the outbreak of World War II. Skocpol and Sommers (op. cit.) point to a weakness in the contrast of contexts approach which is that whilst the author can present a rich, deep and chronologically varied account of contrasting case-histories, it doesn't provide any causal explanation for these contrasts. As well as this any themes or questions that are provided at the outset remain implicit. This thesis, however, will not simply juxtapose these two case histories in order to provide contrasting narratives about each. It will attempt to provide causal explanations for these differences. Thus the purpose will be not be simply to interpret the divergence of outcomes between both cases, but will seek to explain them. –It will therefore use elements of the macro-causal method which uses comparative history for the purpose of making causal inferences about macro-level structures and processes (Skocpol and Somers, op. cit). In the macro-causal method, different configurations of conditions favourable or unfavourable to the outcome are specified as, for example, in Wiborg's (op. cit.) study of comprehensive schooling in Europe. Wiborg compares Scandinavian countries with their radical and nonselective type of comprehensive school system with two countries where the system has selective secondary education as in Germany and, to a lesser extent, England. Alternatively, this

thesis compares two countries, France and England, which are at intermediate rather than at opposite levels of difference.

Selection of Cases

The cases chosen here are carefully selected and in keeping with the comparative method. France and England have many similarities in terms of level of development, population size, European Union membership, former colonial powers and both with sizeable immigrant populations. This case selection is important because it is acknowledged to be more fruitful to study variations in societies that are culturally close to one another in many respects (Smelzer, op. cit.). This is also conducive to the isolation of those factors most pertinent to explaining the variations in outcomes between the two cases, and to control for those common characteristics.

The more similar two or more societies are with respect to crucial variables, the better able the social scientist is to isolate and analyze the influence of other variables that may account for the differences he wishes to explain comparatively (Smelzer, *ibid*, p. 75).

However, a study such as this that compares only two countries does lend itself to the problem of selection bias. This problem is particularly acute for comparative research, because unlike in experimental and statistical methods which use random selection, most comparative studies involve 'intentional selection' (Landman, 2002) and this study is no exception. Landman (*ibid*, p. 50) provides three examples of selection bias as follows: (i) selection on the dependent variable; (ii) intentional selection of historical sources to fit the theory; and (iii) problems relating to time period when, for example, a contemporary time period is selected to draw inferences about longer-term processes. In relation to (i) above, Todman suggests the solution of choosing a dependent factor that varies e.g. countries in which the outcome has occurred compared with countries in which it has not. In my study I compare France, where the outcome, the promotion of social equality in education is present, with England where this outcome is not present. As regards (ii) Todman puts forward the solution of using multiple sources to arrive at a 'mean' account of the events and identifying the tendencies within

each source to acknowledge possible sources of bias. This study will pursue a rigorous selection of key and reliable texts, mostly secondary but also from primary sources, on which to form the basis of the evidence to test my hypotheses. In relation to (iii) Landman suggests that the solution to time-period bias is to provide generalisations by comparing whole systems over long periods of time. This thesis will test the hypotheses over a relatively long period of time i.e. 150 years. This historical period will provide a sufficiently long period to test the variation in the outcome. The time period will end in 1939 prior to the outbreak of World War II because the latter brought about major changes in the social, political and educational arenas in both countries which justify a separate work of scholarly research. As well as this, the scale of this thesis does not justify incorporating this period of major change. Therefore, throughout this thesis care will be taken to offset and avoid as much as possible the problem of selection bias.

Selection of time period

The historical period between 1789 to 1939 is selected as the time period during which the empirical data will be presented to test the hypothetical arguments put forward in this thesis, that is, to explain the variation in how France and England set about reducing social inequality in education and why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French education than in English education. It is important to start the thesis at the end of the 18th century when the French Revolution took place and when the revolutionary ideology originated. It was also important for education as the Revolution marked the beginning of the assumption of responsibility for education by the French state. The end of the 18th century was also a period of great significance for England, marking as it did the beginning of its dominance as a commercial and industrial world power and when the liberal and *laissez-faire* ideology came to prominence. I have ended the historical period in 1939, prior to the outbreak of World War II because of the major changes in both countries since then - as explained in the previous paragraph. As well as this the scale of this thesis does not justify incorporating this period of major change.

Explanatory factors

In relation to the twin purposes of contrast and causality in this thesis, three interlinked factors are identified, which will be used to describe and explain the variations in the outcomes for France and England. These three factors will serve as ‘configurations of conditions’ favourable or unfavourable to the outcome of interest here – a discourse of egalitarianism and its absence.

The factors selected are the following:

- Persistence of republican/revolutionary ideology
- Progressive social classes alliances in the nineteenth century
- Centralized state.

These factors are tabulated in Table 1 where it shows that they are present in France and absent in England.

Table 1: Contrast of Contexts

Country	Dominant ideology	Nature of the state	Social class alliances in 19 th century
France	Revolutionary/Republican	Centralized	Progressive
England	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative

Table 2: Macro-causal factors

Country	Revolutionary ideology	Centralised state	Progressive social class alliances in 19 th century
France	√	√	√
England	X	X	X

√ = present; X = absent.

Selection of Factors

1. These factors have been carefully selected after a lengthy review of the literature on both countries. These are not the only factors that are relevant here but they are perceived to be most essential to explaining the variations in the differing trajectories and the outcome of interest here. As stated above, the similarities between both countries allows the controlling of many similar conditions so as to focus on these explanatory factors. Of crucial importance here is the fact that these factors i.e. persistence of revolutionary ideology, centralized state and progressive social class alliances are present in France and absent in England. In this way they are essential for explaining why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education. These three factors are interlinked and although for the purposes of the research they are separately analysed, it is important to point out that they are interrelated and are not competing with each other. Thus the analysis will not seek to find which of these is most important for explaining the different outcomes, it will alternatively show how the factors work together to bring out the explanation. Viewed from the point of view of the contrasting contexts of both countries the thesis sets out to show that:

- (I) the dominant ideology is revolutionary/republican in France and liberal in England;
- (II) that social class alliances in the nineteenth century were progressive in France and conservative in England; and
- (III) the form of the state is centralized in France and liberal in England.

Hypotheses

In relation to the three factors outlined above, the following three hypotheses are formulated.

- (i) Persistence of Ideology

The republican/revolutionary ideology originated in The French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. This ideology took root when the initial goal of the revolutionaries towards a liberal monarchy was superseded by that of pure democracy. The opposing ideals coalesced in republicanism which has persisted as the dominant ideology in France along with a discourse of egalitarianism. As a result equality remains an important core value in the education system. In contrast to this, an ideology of liberalism has been dominant in England. This has its origins in the philosophies of political economy and of laissez-faire which originated in the eighteenth century and dominated for most of the following century. Its values of freedom, diversity and voluntarism have had a major impact on the development of the education system.

(ii) Social class alliances

In France, alliances were forged during the nineteenth century between the bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the lower middle classes (and for a short period during the Revolution, the urban masses). Whilst these alliances fluctuated throughout the century there remained a staunchly middle class political dominance overall resolutely opposed to encroachment by the aristocracy. This resulted in a more quintessentially middle class secondary education which was credentialist and with the baccalauréat at its pinnacle. In contrast, in England, the main alliance was between the landed upper class and the upper middle class. This impacted on education which was sharply divided on class lines at secondary level and with a political elite for a large period opposed to the implementation of universal education. The former alliance was progressive and conducive to promoting egalitarianism while the latter was not.

(iii) The state

The French state is centralized as is its education system. The intense period of state formation during the French Revolution brought the state centre stage in education. This centralized education system which promoted uniformity and standardisation in education, has since been

regarded as most conducive to reducing social inequality in education. The nineteenth century English state, in keeping with liberal and laissez-faire traditions was minimalist. As a result the state was late to intervene in education and consequently an education system was slow to develop which had negative consequences for social equality in education.

These three factors are interlinked, as the dominant ideology in each country is materially related to the social class alliances, and in turn is related to the formation of the centralized state in France and the minimal state in England. As a result there will be some overlap in how each of these factors impact on education and social equality in education. The hypotheses and factors will be elaborated on in Chapter 2. The education system is influenced by social forces that exist outside of it and therefore the explanation which is offered, supported by these factors, will be drawing on social and political theories which impact on education.

The structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into two parts, one which is theoretical, the other which is empirical. The next two chapters will be theoretical and analytical. They will be followed by four substantive historical chapters. These will be followed by the report of the findings and conclusion.

Chapter 2 will set out a conceptual framework for the thesis. It will elaborate on the three hypotheses outlined and the explanatory factors identified in Chapter 1. For each hypothesis it will provide a detailed explanation, a definition of the inherent concept and explain how it will be applied to social equality in education.

Chapter 3 will explore different definitions of the key concept of social equality and how this has evolved over time. It will explore how the principle philosophies of social justice relate to equality and how in turn these are incorporated as values in education. Sociological and Marxist critiques of the ability of schooling to reduce social inequality will be evaluated, for example there will be an engagement with relevant literature including, Bowles and

Gintis, Althusser and Bourdieu. The chapter finishes with a working definition of social equality in education that will be used to focus the historical analysis. It will make it clear that the concept of social inequality will be explored in relation to social background and that the reduction of social inequality will involve reducing the link between social class and attainment. It will not, however, be dealing with other areas such as race, ethnicity and gender although it acknowledges that important inequalities exist which relate to these categories.

Chapters 4 will trace the evolution of education in France from the end of the eighteenth century until 1870. It will analyse the legacy of the French Revolution and argue for its importance in providing the blueprint for a secular state-controlled education and as a vehicle for social equality and enlightenment. It will show how the state control of education was consolidated with Napoleon's institution of a highly centralized and unified system which encompassed all levels of education and survived the demise of Napoleon. The expanding state bureaucracy, it will argue, gave rise to a limited meritocracy with the link between education and state employment giving rise to a form of educational capital. The historical data in the chapter will be analysed in terms of each of the explanatory factors.

Chapter 5 will trace similarly trace the period from the end of the 18th century up to 1870 in English education. The legacy of liberalism and laissez-faire philosophy in England will be analysed and it will argue that the doctrine permeated upper and middle class politics which were hostile to state intervention in education. As education expanded it was unsystematic, hierarchical and differentiated on strict class lines which was not conducive to social equality. The historical data in the chapter will be analysed in terms of each of the explanatory factors.

Chapter 6 traces the evolution of education in France between 1870 and 1939. In France this was the period of the Third Republic which consolidated Republicanism and its institutions setting up free, secular and universal education at primary and higher primary levels. It will trace how a movement for common secondary education developed following World War I. The

historical data in the chapter will be analysed in terms of each of the explanatory factors.

Chapter 7 will similarly trace educational development during the same period. The 1870 Act in England laid the foundations of a national system of education which was brought to fruition in 1902. This system was regulated at local level rather than at state level with the voluntary system allowed to continue alongside the public system. The historical data in the chapter will be analysed in terms of each of the explanatory factors.

Chapter Eight will be a concluding chapter based on the findings from testing the hypotheses in the substantive historical chapters. These will be summed up in relation to the main question related to the variation in how both countries go about reducing social inequality in education. The thesis will end with a concluding and reflective section.

This thesis has a further ambition that the dissemination of its findings will form part of the collaborative process within the area of comparative historical analysis and comparative education and that it will add to the accumulation of knowledge in the field. Although the causal explanation posited here is not generalisable beyond these cases, it is hoped that it will be tested on new cases or sets of cases and thus to explain important differences in educational trajectories.

Chapter 2

Further Elaboration of the Hypotheses

France and England: Contrasting systems of education

Chapter 1 has outlined the methodology to be used in this thesis and has identified the factors that will be used to explain why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in the French than in the English educational system and puts forward three hypotheses relating to these. Educational systems are influenced by social and political forces that exist outside of education and these will be accounted for within the hypotheses. The objective of this chapter is to expand on these and to demonstrate their importance for explaining the variations in how both countries go about reducing social inequality in education. In particular it will focus on the importance of the dominant ideologies and their impact on the educational systems. It will be argued that as political and educational models France and England are different and that this difference is a consequence of both countries different political and social contexts. In order to do this, each hypothesis relating to the relevant explanatory factor will be elaborated on for each country according to the following structure:

1. Explanation of the hypothesis.
2. Definition of the inherent concept.
3. Explanation of how it will be applied.

Hypothesis 1: Persistence of Ideology

Explanation of the hypothesis

According to this hypothesis, it is posited that a particular ideology, revolutionary/republican in the case of France and liberal in the case of England, has persisted over the period covered in this thesis from the end of the eighteenth century until the outbreak of World War II.

In France the revolutionary ideology has its origins in the French Revolution of 1789-1799 which abolished, firstly the Absolutist State and then the monarchy and the residual vestiges of a hierarchical feudal system, replacing

the sovereignty of the king with the sovereignty of the people. The framing principles, enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, 1789, of liberty, equality, and added to these in the Constitution of 1791, fraternity, have since been inextricably linked to the French state. This slogan along with the tricolour flag and the Marseillaise are powerful symbols of the French nation and all have origins in the Revolution of 1789-99. The original ideology of the early revolutionaries, which was liberal and aimed at the installation of a liberal monarchy, was superseded by that of pure democracy. While the early revolutionaries expressed the ideas of Montesquieu, the later period, took its inspiration from Rousseau and his concept of the general will.

An important aspect of this hypothesis is its linking of the revolutionary ideology with social equality. Poulantzas (1968) analysis of the nature of the French bourgeois ideology, (famously contrasted with the British bourgeois identity which was tainted with aristocratic characteristics), is helpful for understanding its relationship with social equality. This went beyond the classic bourgeois notion of equality based on formal political liberty and equality *vis-a-vis* the state. Poulantzas argues that the social content which is present in Jacobinism is not a contradiction that is immanent in bourgeois ideology, nor does it contain, as many earlier Marxists claimed, the early germs of proletarian social democracy; but it is related to the aspirations of the small peasantry, artisans and *sans culottes*. Poulantzas argues that:

The social content of Jacobinism is a direct contradiction of bourgeois political democracy. This contradiction can be schematized as that between Rousseau's ideology and the political ideology of Montesquieu and Constant: but it must be noticed that the social content is due to the insertion into bourgeois ideology of ideological elements stemming from different classes (namely the small-scale producers) whose interests are contradictory to those of the bourgeoisie (ibid, p. 179).

I have found Furet's (1981) analysis of the change from liberal to revolutionary ideology helpful in explaining how the revolutionary ideology has persisted. He explores how the transformatory power of this ideology led to significant change in public opinion not only during the period of the Revolution but in the centuries following it. Furet analyses the dynamics of

the revolutionary ideology and at the same time provides an explanation for its endurance. This is done by showing how the ideology of popular sovereignty was at the Revolution's core and from which it derived its legitimacy. The struggle for power between 1789 and 1794 was to do with occupying the symbolic position of representing the will of the people. Politics was a discourse and power was in the hands of those who could embody that position. Furet emphasises the symbolic power of language which was substituted for power for it belonged to the people, was public and could be open to scrutiny. The salient feature of the period between 1789 and 9 Thermidor 1794 was the conflict between successive assemblies (which embodied the legitimacy of representation) and militants of the *sections* and the clubs (which represented direct democracy) for the dominant symbolic position i.e. that of the people's will. He emphasises how this discourse has endured over time as he affirms:

The Revolution ... must be seen as not so much a set of causes and consequences as the opening of society to all its possibilities. It invented a type of political discourse and practice by which we have been living ever since (op. cit. p. 46).'

This is of utmost importance here as Furet is referring to the endurance of a revolutionary discourse of equality which is at the heart of this thesis.

The endurance of the revolutionary ideology owes much to the persistence of its mythological elements. Dominique Schnapper (1994) explains how, through the myth of the Revolution, the French people saw their revolution as a universal model for the rest of the world which could proclaim on behalf of the world the rights of all men. She goes on to describe how, given the change of legitimacy from one based on religion and the divine right of kings, since the Revolution the French people have glorified themselves for having given the world its first experience and the first ideology of the modern nation.

C'est selon le mythe national, sa révolution, qui, modèle universel, aurait affirmé à la face du monde le nouveau principe de la légitimité et proclamé pour la première fois au nom de l'univers entier la déclaration

des droits de l'homme, de tous les hommes. Le patriotisme pouvait ainsi se fonder sur le mythe de la Révolution, ce qui permettait de réconcilier l'idée nationale et l'ambition universelle: les Français le pensaient et le vivaient comme la plus pure incarnation des droits de l'homme (op. cit. p. 68).³

The Revolutionary legacy in France is divided and is manifested on the one hand by liberalism, and on the other by egalitarianism and both of these have left and right strands each with its own factions. The liberal and egalitarian traditions have survived and coalesced within republicanism. It is for this reason the dominant ideology for France is referred to here as revolutionary/republican. The persistence of this ideology has had important implications for social equality in French education and this will be elaborated on in the section on the application of the persistence of ideology hypothesis to education.

In England an ideology of liberalism has been dominant. This ideology did not result from political revolution as in France. At the time England had gained world supremacy as a commercial and industrial power. During the 18th century a liberal state had been evolving as a result of pressure from the emerging middle classes with the emerging industry and commerce. The liberal state was so-called because its function involved the guaranteeing of rights and liberties of the individual (Gregor, McLennon, Held and Hall, 1984). Its political form was the Liberal Monarchy with its independent parliament whereby power was shared by the monarch and representation by an oligarchy based on the property franchise. Therefore Absolutism had been ousted earlier than in France. Its ideals revolved around the concept of various liberties: of religion, of trade and from arbitrary arrest. Interference with any of these liberties had to be sanctioned by law (Gregor et al, *ibid*, Gamble, *op. cit.*). The political system however, was opposed to universal

³ It is, according to the national myth, its Revolution, which [as a] universal model, would have affirmed before the world the new principle of legitimacy and proclaimed for the first time in the name of the entire universe, the Declaration of the rights of man, of all men. Patriotism could in this way be founded on the myth of the Revolution, which allowed the reconciliation of the idea of the nation with universal ambition. The French thought it and lived it as the purest incarnation of the rights of man. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

suffrage and universal education. It was these liberal ideals that the early French Revolutionaries pursued before they were 'highjacked' by the more egalitarian ones of the Jacobins.

The economic variant of liberalism was an even more important factor due to its relation to the position of capitalist supremacy which the country maintained for the most part of the 19th century. Indeed the most important function of the liberal state was to provide the infrastructure for free trade and capitalism to flourish. The philosophy of political economy and *laissez-faire* theories originated most importantly in the work of Adam Smith. In as much as Smith wanted free trade and for economic forces to work in a free market his theory was designated liberal economics. This theory also encapsulated a concept of society, for according to Smith, full potential of economic growth would be achieved by leaving everyone to pursue their own self-interest, and since society was itself only the sum of individuals in it, then the general welfare would be served by the collective pursuit of individual welfare. Smith's famous dictum described how it is by pursuing his own self-interest a man 'is led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention' (cited in Fraser, op. cit. p. 92). This theory, therefore, justified in political terms the minimal state.

The social philosophy of utilitarianism developed in the 19th century and was closely allied to that of Adam Smith. The most important spokesmen for this were Jeremy Bentham and James Mill and their utilitarian philosophy was based on the premise that the overriding motivation of human beings is to 'fulfill their desires, maximise their satisfaction or utility and minimise their suffering (Held, 1987). This philosophy provided a justification for a liberal state which would act as an umpire while individuals pursued their own interests in civil society according to the rules of open competition and free exchange.

It will be argued that the persistence of liberal ideology in England as in the case of the revolutionary/republican ideology in France has had major implications for social equality in education and this will be elaborated in the

section on the application of persistence of ideology hypothesis to education. The following section will be concerned with exploring the concept of ideology in more abstract terms and the theories underpinning it, in a way that relates to this thesis.

Definition of Ideology as used in this thesis

Ideology is a concept which has undergone several and varied interpretations from the Enlightenment through to Marxism through to post-modernism, post-structuralism and beyond. The French Enlightenment interpretation is of relevance here particularly in view of its emphasis on education and because of its influence on the French revolutionaries, many of whom were involved in that movement. The Enlightenment *philosophes* used the concepts of superstition and prejudice which impeded humans from attaining true knowledge and these were propagated through the deceptive ideology of religious dogma. The virtues of education and science were put forward as the remedy for overcoming prejudice, hence Helvétius's famous dictum, *l'éducation peut tout*. Education by liberating people from superstition and prejudice through the use of reason, would lead to progress and happiness (Lorrain, 1979).

With Marx the term ideology surpasses the critique of religion and encompasses all forms of distorted consciousness. Crucially he introduced a new element to its definition which referred to historical contradictions. Up to then the various interpretations of ideology remained at the level of cognition i.e. distortions impeded true cognition of reality. It had not up to then been studied from an historical perspective. With Marx was introduced the connection between mental distortions and the historical development of the social forces and relations of production (Lorrain, *ibid*). According to Marx, it was practice that mediated between consciousness and material reality – a reality produced by man's (sic) activity. Yet man became alienated from the products of his labour, at that historical period by the capitalist relations of production. According to Marx, it was revolutionary practice that would lead to the resolution of contradictions at the heart of society. In his later work

Marx works out more scientifically in *Capital* the way in which humanity through practice produces material reality and analyses how the forces of production become antagonistic. Here the issue of class and the division between classes is crucial and the necessity of ideology is revealed. As Larrain (ibid) explains:

As the conditions under which productive practice is carried out are always the condition of the rule of a definite class, the ideological hiding of contradictions necessarily serves the interests of that class. Ideology is not only a result of the division of labour and of the objectivation of practice into contradictory classes, it is also a condition for the functioning and reproduction of the system of class domination. It plays this role precisely by hiding the true relations between classes, by explaining away the relations of domination and subordination. Thus, social relations appear harmonious and individuals carry out their reproductive practices without disruption. (p. 47).

Initially the class making the revolution, for example, during the French Revolution, the bourgeoisie, does represent the interests of all dominated classes, and it is the former forces of domination whose ideology is a distortion of the reality whereby hierarchical social relations are justified. Therefore in ousting the First and Second Estates of aristocracy and the Catholic Church, concepts such as freedom and equality come to the fore as well as reason and secularism and become part of the revolutionary discourse. For Marx, ideology has an historical character and it changes as contradictions evolve. Thus the revolutionary discourse, as bourgeois social relations become more antagonistic, turns into a rhetoric and what remains is the mythology of the revolution. In England where revolutionary practice was not undertaken to oust the ruling class, a revolutionary discourse will be absent. Instead the antagonistic contradictions within society will be masked by a liberal ideology whereby values of freedom and diversity, as well as voluntarism and a suspicion of state intervention will come to the fore.

Marxist structuralists such as Althusser rejected the theory of ideology as 'false consciousness'. For Althusser ideology does not originate in the consciousness of individuals; its source is to be found in material reality itself. It is indispensable for individuals to form a representation of their world and

their relations to it but this representation is already a 'given' and exists like the economy, before they were born. As Larrain (ibid) explains, Althusser describes ideology as a 'cement' which makes possible the adjustment and cohesion of men in their roles. (This metaphor is borrowed from Gramsci who uses it to denote the social function of ideology.) In this way it is an essential element of all societies: *'Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life* (Althusser, 1977, p. 132, cited in Larrain, ibid, p. 156).

Thus ideology is a structural feature of society with the function of securing cohesion among individuals and between individuals and their social positions. In class society it has the function of maintaining domination of one class over the others. As Larrain explains although it is a structural feature of society and indispensable, ideology is nonetheless false and not a true cognition of the world. Althusser argues that:

.. the distortion of ideology is socially necessary as a function of the very nature of the social totality, more precisely, as a function of its determination by its structure, which is made, as all the social, opaque for individuals who occupy a place determined by this structure. The opacity of social structure makes necessarily mythical the representation of the world necessary for social cohesion (Althusser, 1966, p.55, in Larrain, ibid, p. 156).

Poulantzas (1968) explains how ideology is related to class society and how it differs from science:

It is derived fundamentally from the relation between ideology and human experience in a formation, and to the imaginary form which this relation takes on. As opposed to science ideology has the precise function of hiding the real contradictions and of reconstituting on an imaginary level a relatively coherent discourse which serves as the horizon of agents' experience; it does this by moulding their representations of their real relations and inserting these in the overall unity of the relations of a formation. ... As opposed to the scientific notion of system, ideology refuses to allow a contradiction within it, but attempts to resolve any contradiction by excluding it. In other words the structures of ideological and scientific discourse are fundamentally different (op. cit., pp. 307-8).

Althusser sees science's function as the unmasking of ideology, but unlike Marx, excludes revolutionary practice to resolve social contradictions substituting for it theoretical practice. Thus in a curious way his solution to the problem of ideology is similar to that of the Enlightenment *philosophes* i.e. at the level of general cognition.

For Althusser the reproduction of the relations of production is achieved in the main by means of 'the exercise of state power in the State Apparatuses, on the one hand the (Repressive) State Apparatus, on the other the Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1971, p. 141, in Larrain, *ibid*, p. 147). The latter he lists as education, family, legal system, trade unions, communications, politics, culture, religion. From this comprehensive list he identifies education, which for our purposes here is crucial: Education ISA has predominance in capitalist societies. Althusser (*ibid*) states:

I believe ... what the bourgeoisie has installed as its number-one i.e. as its dominant ideological state apparatus, is the educational apparatus, which has in fact replaced in its functions the previously dominant ideological State apparatus, the Church (ibid, pp 145-6).

*.. it takes children from every class at infant-school age, and then for years ... it drums into them ... a certain amount of 'know-how' wrapped in the ruling ideology ... or simply the ruling ideology in its pure state
...Each mass ejected en route is practically provided with the ideology which suits the role it has to fulfil in class society: the role of the exploited ... the role of the agent of exploitation ... of the agent of repression ... or of the professional ideologist (Althusser, 1971, p. 147, cited in Larrain, *ibid*. p. 159).*

This section has explored the concept of ideology and certain theories underpinning it, notably those of Marxist social theorists. The next section will portray how this concept will be applied in relation to French and English education and how the persistence of revolutionary/republican and liberal ideologies respectively impacted on the reduction of social inequality in France and England.

Application of the persistence of ideology hypothesis

The revolutionary ideology left a discourse of laïcité and egalitarianism at the heart of the French education system. The educational plans of the revolutionaries left a blueprint for education as a universal right for all children of the republic and not a privilege. It advanced the ideal of a common education not only at primary but also at secondary level. It had material implications in the development of meritocracy through education which was initiated in the Revolution and carried through during the First Empire by Napoleon (Green, 1990, Skocpol, 1979, Anderson, 1975). It will be argued that a revolutionary/republican ideology survived, albeit in attenuated form throughout the 19th century and was given a new lease of life under the Third Republic. This ideology gave form to an egalitarian discourse which particularly affected the discourse within education formulated by politicians of the Third Republic and encapsulated within the various Education Acts of the period. As a result of these secular education was enforced in all public schools and universal primary education was established and the common secondary school was introduced in experimental form before 1939. It will be argued that this ideology has been conducive to an egalitarian discourse in education and had a beneficial effect on reducing social inequality in education.

The most important legacy of liberalism for education was the limitation of state intervention in education. As Green (1990) points out, individualism and the hands-off attitude towards the state was a positive impediment to the creation of national institutions, in particular that of education. Rather than the state taking the lead in educational development, it was the voluntary and religious organisations which provided popular education at elementary and secondary levels. While voluntarism chimed with the liberal values of self-help, diversity and private initiative, it was unsystematic and varying in its standards and in effect it provided an education that was divided strictly on social class lines. Nonetheless the discourse of liberalism within education gave primacy to voluntarism and the evolution of state control in education, initially by stealth, was a slow and tortuous one. This meant that universal access to education, the primary stage towards social equality in education was not achieved until the end of the 19th century. For similar reasons the

goal of common schooling, such as the French *école unique* was virtually absent from official educational discourse until after World War II which is outside the period of this thesis.

The persistence of ideology hypothesis will be applied by examining the aims of education and how these were put forward in the official documents relating to education for France and England during the period covered within the thesis. For this analysis primary sources mainly will be used. Official documentation such as, education acts, reports, speeches, decrees etc. related to educational reform will be analysed to elicit how educational policy by the government in power or the political opposition was favourable to or restricted social equality in education. It will also examine non-official documents such as philosophical literature, pamphlets, taking into account the fact that ideology exists not only at political level but within cultural and mythological forms.

For France I will examine the plans, blueprints and policies for education from the Revolution up to 1939, and looking to see whether and to what extent a discourse of egalitarianism and *laïcité* is put forward there. For England I will similarly analyse official documentation to discover whether a discourse of liberalism was put forward there and whether it will show that government policy was opposed to state intervention, compulsion, and secularism for free and universal education. I will examine documentation, speeches and media to elicit whether a liberal ideology persisted with an absence of egalitarianism in its discourse.

Hypothesis 2: Social Class Alliances

Explanation of the hypothesis

According to this hypothesis it is posited that the nature of social class alliances in France and England was different during the period under review here. It will be argued that social class alliances in France were generally progressive (although for some periods, for example, the Bourbon restoration, this was not the case) whereas in England they were conservative. This

factor is central to explaining the difference between both countries in relation to social equality in education. A progressive social class alliance i.e. democratic social forces, will tend towards the reduction of social inequality and promote policies favouring it. By the same token conservative social forces will tend to impede policies in favour of social equality. It is posited here that this variation will similarly impact on social equality in education with the former alliance resulting in policies to reduce social inequality in education while the latter will tend to impede it.

In France alliances were forged during the Revolution between the bourgeoisie, the peasantry and up to the fall of Robespierre, the urban masses (*sans culottes*). Gramsci (1971) argues that the Jacobins demonstrated how the aspirations of a social class, the bourgeoisie, could be stretched beyond their limits and become the focus for the people as a whole. Gramsci analyses how this was achieved saying that:

They literally imposed themselves on the French bourgeoisie, leading it into a far more advanced position than the originally strongest bourgeois nuclei would have wished to take up, and even more advanced than that which the historical premises should have permitted – hence the various forms of backlash and the function of Napoleon I (op. cit. p.77).

Here Gramsci portrays the Jacobins as most instrumental in making the political forces more revolutionary. He omits the crucial role of the urban masses, the *sans culottes* in forcing the Jacobins, the vanguard of the bourgeoisie, into even more radical action, as has been portrayed by historians of the Revolution, for example, Soboul and Furet. The more advanced position which Gramsci refers to above was brought about in the political and the economic areas at the instigation of the *sans culottes*. They campaigned for the trial and execution of the king, hostile to free trade they called for property rights to be circumscribed and for a maximum price applied to basic commodities and incomes and they succeeded in having put in place taxation and the nationalisation of external trade and munitions. They also took a keen interest in *instruction* and campaigned for free universal education (Palmer, 1985). Certainly the Jacobins as a party not only represented the bourgeoisie but also the revolutionary movement as a

whole. They were successful in forming a bond with the peasantry, on the one hand, through agrarian reform, and on the other, with the urban *sansculotterie* as indicated above.

Poulantzas (1968) challenges the presentation of the French Revolution as 'the *example* of a successful bourgeois revolution' such as that put forward by Gramsci and other Marxists and according to which the bourgeoisie were able to take political power and mould the political structure to its own benefit due to the optimal social and juridical conditions of the period. He explains how, while the French Bourgeoisie did obtain political power, unlike their equivalents in England, they did so at the price of depending widely on the small-scale peasantry and the petite-bourgeoisie and at times on the urban masses, the *sans culottes*. According to Poulantzas, the revolution laid a firm foundation for small-scale production both for agriculture and for the petite-bourgeoisie. Thus there was a large-scale set of relations between the bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the *petite-bourgeoisie*. This social class alliance for the most part prevented the French bourgeoisie from forming an alliance with the nobility, as occurred in England. As Poulantzas (*ibid*) explains the small-holding peasantry and the petite-bourgeoisie continued to play an important role on the French political state and the latter established a firm base as a result of the policy of the Convention.

This petty bourgeoisie did not (like its German counterpart) throw in its lot with capital from the start: while it opted for the bourgeoisie in 1848, it took the side of the proletariat during the Paris Commune. It remains nonetheless an extremely important social force in France, as we can see from the phenomenon of radicalism (op. cit. p. 174).

On the other hand, Tilly (1992), in his explanation of the administrative changes at regional level during the Revolution showed how the displacement of the old intermediaries i.e the landlords and Church, by lawyers, manufacturers, merchants and other capitalists and under their remit as local powerholders, the large farmers, led to a new alliance between the bourgeoisie and the well-to-do peasantry.

The hegemonic position of the bourgeoisie was maintained with the support of the peasantry throughout the 19th century apart from short periods, mainly during the Bourbon restoration when attempts were made by the Church and the aristocracy to regain former supremacy and to roll back the gains of the Revolution. These attempts were short-lived and by the mid-19th century the aristocracy were a spent force politically in France.

Recent scholarship has focused on Barrington Moore's (1966) seminal work on comparative historical research, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, which traces the varying paths to democracy, fascist dictatorship and communist dictatorship. This is of interest here because of its focus on social class. One of his hypotheses was that a strong bourgeoisie was vital to the creation of democracy because it prevented the latter i.e. the bourgeoisie from forming an alliance with landed elites as a subordinate partner against the peasantry. What was crucial was the weakening of landed elites through revolution – as with the French and English examples. His hypothesis was received with partial support in relation to France but has been challenged in the case of England, notably in Skocpol (1993), because, as will be described in the section on England, English landlords played a very powerful role in English politics in the late 19th century yet England developed a democratic regime.

Another important development within comparative historical scholarship has been to do with research into the relationship between political parties and social classes and how the former mediate the interests and demands of the latter (Mahony and Rueschmeyer, 2003). Luebbert's (1991) research into various social class coalitions which produced liberal democracy, social democracy and fascism in Europe during the interwar period shows how political parties forged various social class coalitions. After the extension of the suffrage and especially with universal manhood suffrage in France during the 1850s, political parties became more prominent and were forced to formulate policies which were in the interests of its electorate. Despite the violent suppression of the working class leaders during the Commune which led to virulent anti-statist attitudes and militant trade unionism, a socialist

broad-based movement came to the fore committed to the defense of a beleaguered republic. Hodge (1994) explains how it was support from the urban middle class and workers as well as from anti-clerical peasants that held together the republic in its early decades. According to Luebbert (op. cit.) it was the alliance between socialists and radical republicans prior to World War I which secured the liberal democracy in the interwar period.

In England social class alliances were different. Perry Anderson (1964) argues that following the settlement after the English Civil War in the 17th century, the social hierarchy remained unchanged and that the landed aristocracy continued to rule England. This class also permeated the mercantile and financial world. At the same time many merchants and bankers became landowners. English capitalism embraced both the aristocracy and the financial and industrial middle classes. Marx similarly points to the early capitalist nature of the landowning class and explains that the English Revolution could be followed by an alliance between the landed and bourgeois interests. Marx's (1973) analysis of political power was characterized in terms of 'delegation' and a masking of the power of the new industrial bourgeoisie which was gaining in economic supremacy and political power – the latter in particular following the increased franchise in 1832 and 1867. This argued that whilst the landowning aristocracy would occupy the leading positions in the state, they could rule only on behalf of the bourgeoisie whose positions they shared. Gramsci, like Marx, saw that in England there was an alliance between the aristocracy and the rising bourgeoisie with the latter failing to become a hegemonic class leaving government in the hands of the aristocracy.

Poulantzas (op. cit.) refines and clarified Marx's analysis in his examination of the English agro-financial context. He cites 1688 as the turning point in the revolutionary process of the change to a capitalist mode of production. Although the revolutionary period appeared premature because the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie were insufficiently developed to lead the revolutionary process, it was ripe for the dominance of the capitalist mode of production to gain the upper hand over earlier modes of production

both feudal and small-scale. This process had to be initiated by a fraction of the nobility which was establishing its independence from the feudal aristocracy. The transition to capitalism was achieved principally by means of large-scale ownership of ground rent.

The constitution of a capitalist form of agriculture destroyed the medium and small landowners. The latter would not play any role subsequently as a political force, as they had done in France as was shown above. This result was not confined to the countryside but extended to all small-scale production. According to Poulantzas:

...this particular process in which the dominance of the CMP [capitalist mode of production] was established by destroying the possibility of small-scale agricultural production and gave the commercial, industrial and, later, financial bourgeoisie, an opportunity for an exceptional development (op. cit. p. 170).

Because of the particular nature of this process, as outlined, the bourgeoisie appeared initially on the political scene through the intermediary of the nobility.

Yet the traditional ideology of the landowner class with its mystique of hierarchy and privilege, favouring the educational supremacy of the Anglican Church was waning whilst ideas of liberal political economy were becoming dominant. According to Perkin (1969) it was entrepreneurialism which triumphed during Victorian England up to the 1880s. The landed class held a clear majority in Parliament – in the House of Commons until 1885, the cabinet until 1893, the House of Lords until after 1981 when its powers were reduced. It dominated the civil service until 1870, the Army until 1871 and local government until 1888. Nevertheless, the bourgeoisie ruled by remote control and the laws that were passed by landed parliaments were those that were demanded by businessmen and financiers.

The following section will examine the concept of social class alliances and the theoretical principles underpinning it.

Definition of the concept: social class alliances

Whilst the previous section has dealt with social class and alliances forged between them within specific historical periods and the variation between these in the two cases studied here, this section is concerned with arriving at a more abstract understanding of the concept and the theories underpinning it.

The social context in which educational systems operate is based on social inequality and this is related to the social relations of production and social class conflict. For this reason social class is taken here as a central category of the analysis. This is not to deny that other factors such as race, gender and ethnicity are also important factors in the production of social inequality and which can deepen and cut across class divisions. However, it will not be within the scope of this thesis to include these factors in the analysis. Prior to discussing alliances of social class I will first of all define social class itself.

In its most simple terms, social class relates to social divisions among the population based on the ownership of property, status and power, and are linked to economic divisions in society. Thus these economic divisions are reflected at the societal level in terms of distinctions of power and status which result from wealth and correspondingly in terms of life style. Marx formulated, that men (sic) enter into definite relations of production which correspond to a particular stage of development, for example, e.g. capitalism. In its primary form, under capitalism, these relations of production refer to labour and capital or the worker and the capitalist, which due to the nature of these relations are antagonistic. This antagonistic relationship between classes is the result of exploitation whereby the surplus value of labour is expropriated from the labourer. This is common to all class societies and those who control the material means of production will become the dominant class. For Marx it is through revolutionary class struggle that class contradictions and antagonisms will be resolved.

This leads to the question of why class alliances come about given that class society is based on antagonistic social relations. Much can be learned in relation to this from the work of Marx and Weber whose theories revolved around explanations of the major dislocations that occurred in the transition between traditional feudal and industrial capitalist society. As has been explained Marx recognized new emerging classes, for example, the bourgeoisie with its financial and industrial fractions and which originated at intermediate level between the landowning aristocracy and the peasantry. Yet this intermediate class would become the ruling class, sweeping away ancient hierarchies of rank and the social bonds that held together dominant and dominated classes heretofore, replacing an economic system based on ownership of land with one based on capital and the extraction of surplus value. Whilst for Marx the most important classes in the capitalist relations of production were those at both extremes of the spectrum i.e. the capitalist and the worker, other classes of significance also emerged, that is, the new middle classes. On the other hand Weber emphasised the importance of the intermediate class of administrators and professionals who emerged in increasing numbers due to growth in bureaucracy and the change from the single entrepreneur to the corporation. These new middle classes added greatly to the complexity of the class structure to the extent that, according to Weber, revolutionary class struggle would be blocked (Bradley, 1992, in Hall and Gieben). This complexity would increase divisions in society not only those at capitalist-worker level but also between the white-collar workers and the proletariat as well as between skilled and unskilled workers.

Weber introduced two factors, social mobility and social interaction and communication which provide further distinctiveness between classes. Thus a social class can be set off from another by the ease or difficulty with which it can achieve social mobility within or between generations, and by the tendency for interaction to be confined within class boundaries (Rueschmeyer et al, 1992). These tools, according to Rueschmeyer can allow the analysis of classes within their various functions e.g. skilled craftworkers and unskilled workers and whether these may merge within a unified working

class or become distinct from each other depending on the historical conditions.

The long slow process of industrialisation was paralleled by the political rise of the bourgeoisie (and other intermediate classes) and the demise of the aristocracy. It also involved the increased prominence of the working class. Rueschmeyer et al (op. cit.) in their major comparative historical study of developed and developing countries argue that capitalist development is associated with democracy because it strengthens the working class, as well as other subordinate classes, and weakens large landowners i.e. the movement of labour from agriculture into industry was much more favourable for collective action. It was also conducive to the formation of class alliances as Rueschmeyer et al (ibid) explain:)

The potential allies of the working class do not, however, emerge independently of the class structure. They can hardly be understood as groupings in a class-neutral political structure that happen to present themselves as allies of labor because of the accidental play of politics or by reason of democratic principle. It is primarily other previously excluded classes that constitute such potential allies (ibid, p. 59).

This process can also involve strategies of compromise in changing contexts. Elster (1985) in his critical examination of Marx's analyses around social class conflict explains how the conflict between two strong classes i.e the dominant landowning class and the ascendant bourgeoisie, could lead to gains for the weak class, the working class. The strong contenders could each solicit the weaker class as an alliance partner leading to gains for the latter, for example, in terms of extended suffrage and education. Alternatively this tripartite confrontation could work in the opposite direction with the strong classes forming an alliance against the weak as in Germany and as occurred with the suppression of the Chartists in England.

The vehicle that is paramount for the formation of class alliances has been the political party. Established parties tended to represent an upper-class electorate, e.g. Whigs and Tory parties in England, while competition between these for political power led to their attempts to coopt fractions of the working-class who made this conditional on the granting of industrial and

political reform. The way in which these inter-class alliances and compromises were played out varied according to the social and political contexts. This variation in relation to France and England has been examined in the previous section and where the importance of this factor as an explanatory hypothesis in this thesis has been elaborated. The following section will set out how the social and political context relating to this hypothesis can be applied to education and how this will be demonstrated in the historical chapters 4 to 7 of this thesis.

Application of the social class alliances hypothesis

The difference between social class configurations in France and England had an important impact on education. It will be argued that the progressive social class alliance was conducive to reducing social inequality in French education while the conservative social alliance in English, on the other hand, did not promote social equality in education, during the period under review in this thesis.

The progressive alliance of social classes in France resulted in a form of education that was organised to fit the needs of the middle classes and promoted the sciences as well as the classics. The most important effect of this alliance was in impeding the Catholic Church from regaining control of education. Although the struggle between the Church and state school continued throughout the century, the model of state-controlled education was seen as essential to post-Napoleon elites and was never dismantled by them. It was anti-clericalism which provided the cement which maintained the earlier alliance between the upper and lower middle classes, the peasantry and the working class. When this alliance held sway, progressive education initiatives to further the development of popular education were taken. This social class alliance resulted politically in the triumph of the Republicans under the Third Republic and was instrumental in bringing about the institution of free, secular and compulsory primary education. After World War I a different constellation of political and social class alliances came to the fore. The formation of left-wing and particularly the unified socialist party

was foremost in promoting and campaigning for legislation in favour of social equality in secondary education. This social class alliance was progressive and more dominated by lower middle and working class elements than heretofore.

The most important effect of the conservative social class alliance on English education was that secondary education was strictly divided on class lines during the 19th century and provided a narrow education based on the classics. The endowed grammar schools and the two universities, under the control of the Church of England, were the preserve of the upper classes and Roman Catholics and Dissenters couldn't attend them until after 1828. Rather than attempting to wrest control over education from the elite of church and state, the dissenting sector undertook a strategy of substitution by establishing their own schools (Archer, op. cit.). The middle class, however, was in favour of popular schooling and for a time formed a temporary alliance with the working class in campaigning for universal primary schooling. They were represented in Parliament by Radical Whigs who put forward various bills in favour of free state schooling for the poor. These were opposed in parliament by the Tories who were opposed to educating the workers and by the Liberals because they smacked too much of state interference.

Whilst the middle classes favoured popular schooling, as burgeoning capitalists they needed a huge labour force, including young children, in order to continue expanding at national and international level. After the 1832 and 1846 Acts which gave them the vote and after the defeat of the Chartists, they sought to assimilate more and more with the upper class ascendancy. The public schools which expanded and increased in number, during the second half of the 19th century, swelled with the new bourgeoisie who wanted their sons to be educated as gentlemen. The relatively late emergence of the Labour Party as a contender in English politics combined with the resurgence of the Conservatives in the early 20th century undermined attempts to introduce progressive educational reforms.

This hypothesis will be tested by demonstrating within the historical chapters how the particular formations of social class alliances were formed. It will analyse the contradictions between the different social classes and how these were managed and reconciled. In particular it will examine what educational policies the political parties representing these alliances put in place and whether and to what extent they promoted or restricted social equality in education. In carrying out this examination, it will use secondary sources from the works of eminent scholars in the fields of history, sociology and politics and in comparative history, sociology and politics .

Hypothesis 3: The Nature of the state

Explanation of the hypothesis

According to this hypothesis it is posited that the nature of the state in France and England during the period covered by this thesis was different. It will be argued that the French state was centralised as was its educational system and that the state in England was liberal. This difference in the nature of the state is of major importance for social equality in education. For that reason it is a central explanatory factor in this thesis. I will now review some of the literature that relates to the state and which is helpful in underlining its importance in relation to this hypothesis.

In his comprehensive account of the evolution of European history over the last millennium, Tilly (1992) investigates the late emergence of the nation-state from the varying types of states that preceded it. His major study follows on from Barrington Moore, and others inspired by his research, into the variations in the pathways followed by states across Europe. This research had demonstrated how states and their rulers were conditioned by the particular social class constellation that dominated at any period and how regions where early urban development and active capitalists prevailed produced different kinds of states from those where landlord power was dominant. Tilly (ibid) puts forward coercion (predominantly for war-making) and capital as explanatory factors in the process of state formation and to explain the variation between states. As well, international relations among

states via war and positioning within its pecking order was also significant. States followed varying pathways depending on their propensity towards concentrated coercion or concentrated capital or a combination of both. France and England, according to Tilly's framework, held an intermediate position, where a concentration of coercion and of capital developed side by side. The trajectories of these two states are much more similar than say Venice and Russia which are at opposite poles on the capital-coercion spectrum, yet it is the contrast between the French and English trajectories towards state formation that interests us here.

For Tilly (ibid) the English state was built on a conjunction of capital and coercion which allowed it immense access to taxation for war making but made it dependent on bankers and landlords who could use parliament as the bulwark of ruling class power. Tilly argues that England was closer to the capital intensive pathway in the 18th century than was France who similarly relied on the nobility for local government but didn't have the same easy access to capital and as a result needed to build up a significantly larger state apparatus than did England. As the French revolutionaries completely restructured administrative rule throughout the country and abolished all previous territorial jurisdictions creating a whole new network of *départements* and *communes* etc. and standardizing taxes, this resulted in a system of uniform centralized direct rule which became the model for other states.

What Tilly's thesis fails to explain, however, was that the limited state apparatus that England maintained was not simply a corollary, i.e. a natural consequence, of its capitalist trajectory. It was the case that the minimal state was part and parcel of liberal ideology which prevailed throughout the 18th and for most of the 19th century. England succeeded in achieving commercial and industrial dominance in the world during this period with little intervention from the state. According to Gamble (1994), there was a clear separation between the English state and the sphere of private interests, property and exchange and unlike in France, this involved the subordination

of the former to the latter. What differentiated the English from the French state was not just the fact that it did not have a uniform centralized system as did France, although this was important, but that it was a liberal state. As Hobsbawm (1968) argues, world dominance was achieved by creating and maintaining the optimum conditions for capitalism – a self-regulating and self-expanding system – so as to maximize the ‘wealth of nations’. This meant dismantling all vestiges of mercantilism, a system which in economic terms meant protectionism of a country’s wealth and industry by an interventionist state and in social terms the traditional social policy of a paternalist government. The protection of trade was abandoned and with the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 Free Trade became policy. According to Hobsbawm:

By the middle of the nineteenth century government policy in Britain came as near laissez-faire as has ever been practicable in a modern state. Government was small and comparatively cheap and became even cheaper by comparison with other states (op. cit. p. 233).

The only function of government commensurate with this orthodoxy was for defence, law and order enforcement, overseeing low taxation, a balanced budget and control of the currency. The triumph of English capitalism was achieved therefore with little intervention by government, yet within this exceptional success lay the seeds of its later decline. Gamble (op. cit.) and Marquand (1988) broadly echo Hobsbawm’s theory of early success leading to later decline explaining how England as the first industrial and world power owed its precocious superiority not only to the genius of early inventors such as Watt and Cartwright, but relied on labour intensive methods and relatively rudimentary skills. Early industrialization and the individualism that underpinned it was not accompanied by educational development supported by the state necessary for skills and technological development. Other countries, such as Germany, U.S. and France which came later to industrialize could not depend on a policy of *laissez-faire* and were supported by a national drive for development through education which hadn’t occurred in England (Green, op. cit.). France was able to use its well-developed bureaucracy to provide an education system appropriate for technological

development. Despite social class conflict and opposition from reactionary forces which often forced compromise, the French state succeeded in implementing policies to reduce social inequality in education. The way in which this variation between the nature of the state in France and England is applied to education will be outlined in the relevant section below on the application of the nature of the state hypothesis. Before that I will put forward a definition of the concept as is relevant in this thesis and to its centrality as an explanatory factor in this thesis.

Definition of the concept: the nature of the state

The modern state and its formation have come to be viewed by social theorists as a powerful explanatory tool for explaining large-scale societal and historical phenomena, for example, revolutions and social or economic transformations. Major proponents of structural analysis, such as, Theda Skocpol and Charles Tilly, have invested the state with a central place in macro-level explanations of social and political change. Skocpol (1979, 1985) in particular argues for the state's importance as a factor for understanding these societal phenomena within programmes of comparative historical research. The classic Marxist approach had been to see the state as '

.. a feature of all class-divided modes of production; and invariably, the one necessary and inescapable function of the state – by definition – is to contain class conflict and to undertake other policies in support of the dominance of the surplus appropriating and property owning class(es) (Skocpol, 1979, p. 65)'.

Yet the idea of viewing the state solely as an instrument of the dominant class(es) has been reacted to by Marxist intellectuals in the 1970s, such as Perry Anderson, Nicos Poulantzas and others. These have raised the issue of the relative autonomy of the state. Skocpol goes further than these and argues that social transformations particularly revolutionary transformations did not simply bring about changes in class structures, but brought about changes to state structures as well. For example, French revolutionaries were involved in destruction of the *Ancien Régime* and the formation of the

revolutionary state. The state, Skocpol argues, is 'a set of administrative, policing and military organizations, headed by, and more or less co-ordinated by, an executive authority (ibid, p. 29)'. These state organisations, are 'potentially autonomous from direct dominant class control (ibid, p. 29). She admits that state autonomy as with relations between social classes and state structures varies greatly between states and depends importantly on national political culture.

The differentiation of the state from the overall structure of economic power and wealth in society as an important aspect of the process of democratization has been explored in Rueschmeyer, Stephen and Stephens (1992). This differentiation of the state from dominant social classes, he found, was a vital aspect of democracy. Only in this way could those at the bottom of the socio-economic scale participate in discussions that are binding for all. Rueschmeyer et al (ibid) identify the tension between democracy and social inequality which co-exists in modern societies. Earlier societal forms, such as feudalism, where power and wealth were tied up with ownership of land and control of the population living on it, meant that no real differentiation existed between political and economic power and were incompatible with democracy.

Yet although democracies may have succeeded in achieving differentiation between the state and the structures of economic power and wealth, it is equally recognizable that the modern monopoly capitalist state depends on the success of the banks, financiers and owners of capital, particularly in relation to economic growth. It is this dependency that constrains state autonomy in modern societies. It is also important in this discussion of the differentiation of the state *vis-à-vis* civil society, to indicate that this autonomy does not necessarily point to democracy. The autonomy of the state can go in the opposite direction, particularly where it becomes totally autonomous and overly strong when it could lead to autocracy or dictatorship. The fact that modern states reserve the right to a monopoly over coercive powers within their borders through the military, police and judicial system is an important factor for this. In both France and England, the state has achieved

and retained a certain autonomy from the socio-economic structure of wealth, power and prestige. However, the nature of this autonomy has been different. Skocpol (ibid) illustrates this difference referring to Pierre Birnbaum. She states:

According to Birnbaum, the centralized bureaucratic French state, sharply differentiated from society, fostered anarchist or Marxist orientations and political militancy among French workers, whereas the centralized but less differentiated British "establishment" encouraged British workers and their leaders to favor parliamentary gradualism and private contractual wage bargaining (Skocpol, op. cit. p. 25-26).

This section has put forward an explanation of the importance of the state as an explanatory tool for analyzing social inequality in society and the importance of the degree of autonomy of the state in relation to this. The following section will demonstrate how this factor will be applied to education.

Application of the Nature of the State hypothesis

It will be argued here that a centralised state will have a certain autonomy from dominant classes and the structure of economic power and wealth. The more autonomy it achieves the more it should serve to provide services that are universal and applicable to all. In a centralised and standardised education system, it should follow that education resources would be distributed more uniformly. The French Revolution brought the state centre stage in education for the precise reason of creating a level playing-field where all regardless of social class and socio-economic background should gain access to the same services. The English state, on the other hand was liberal and less centralised. Education was therefore more prey to market forces and with the focus more on diversity rather than equality educational resources were more unequally distributed.

Important research has been carried out by Andy Green on the relationship between the nature of the state and education, and as he chooses France and England as contrasting models in his analysis of the relationship of the development of educational systems and the state, his theory is important for

this hypothesis. In his major work, *Education and State Formation* Green (1990) locates the social origins of national systems of education within the process of state formation. Green argues that countries where the process of state formation was most intense had the earliest national education systems, and in countries where this process was more gradual, these systems were delayed. France, which had undergone major transformation politically, socially and economically following the French Revolution epitomised the former model. England had undergone an early stability of the state under the Tudors, and developed industrialization ahead of other countries in the first half of the 18th century. Its political system developed gradually during this century and was essentially liberal with important *laissez faire* features and thus followed the latter model. This resulted in a more retarded development of its state education system.

Green cites the radical social and political upheavals in France surrounding and following the French Revolution as the major impetus for the reorganisation of education paralleling that of the new state which consolidated under Napoleon. Unlike the minimalist state which was deliberately maintained in England, thus clearing the way for the 'invisible hand' of economic forces, the burgeoning nation-state of revolutionary France inherited from the Absolutist State a centralized state apparatus which was reflected in the administrative forms of the state throughout the 19th century (de Toqueville, 1955). This form of central control was well placed for developing nationalized systems of education and for promoting national ideologies. The significance of a national system under state control was seized on by the revolutionary authorities in their quest to lay the foundations for a new society based on the Declaration of the Rights of Man. As Green (op. cit.) wrote:

In terms of the state apparatus itself the Revolution had both completed and transformed the work of the absolute monarchs, creating a unified and centralized bureaucratic machine exercising its powers over the whole nation, and committed now to furthering the essential interests of the bourgeoisie (p. 148).

Yet the political stalemate which occurred between the revolutionary and reactionary forces impeded the successful establishment of a national system of education. According to Archer (1984) the revolutionaries, the 'assertive group' successfully implemented a strategy of 'restriction' to destroy the control of the Catholic Church over education. They failed, however, to move from the destructive to the constructive phase of replacement. According to Archer, replacement was the mechanism which accounts for the emergence of state education. This occurred under Napoleon who through coercive power succeeded in using the central legal machinery to organise the public financing of education. He implemented a highly unified and centralised system merging all educational establishments under the control of the state. He established a standardized system of secondary education with national diplomas which promoted meritocracy based on careers open to talent. This centralised system would not be dismantled by succeeding regimes and the state system expanded with primary education becoming systematised under state control. It will be argued that this centralised and standardised system was conducive to the reduction of social inequality in education.

In the case of England, according to Archer (op. cit.), the 'assertive' group, rather than employing a restrictive and replacement policy, carried out a strategy of substitution leading to the development of alternative educational networks outside the control of the dominant Anglican Church. The latter was never eliminated and competition within an educational market ensued. In this way, according to Archer, education was decentralised as opposed to the centralised system in France. Green (op. cit.) emphasises the liberal nature of the English political system with its *laissez-faire* features which was deliberately minimalist. As a result there was a retarded development of state education. Whilst the centralised/decentralised polarity is of importance here in showing the difference between both educational systems, it is the liberal aspect of the English polity that has persisted during the period under review and is most significant for the explanation put forward in this thesis. It will be argued that the liberal state was not conducive to reducing social

inequality in education and this will be demonstrated in the historical chapters 5 and 7 of this thesis.

The nature of the state factor will be analysed for both France and England. It will explore to what extent the French state, during the period under review, was centralised and whether this had a beneficial impact on reducing social inequality in education. In the case of England it will examine to what extent England was a liberal state and will seek to show the effect that this had on the reduction of social inequality in education. It is important also to show what impact the state had not only at policy level but also in terms of outcomes. It is important, in other words, to examine whether the policies of a centralised state gave rise to a more inclusive recruitment than those of the liberal state. In order to show this effect it will look at the statistics in both countries to show what level of enrolment there was in primary schooling. It will also look at the statistics for secondary schooling and the levels of enrolment as well as the proportion of non-dominant social classes i.e peasantry, lower middle class and working class in these schools.

Chapter 3

Towards a Definition of Social Equality in Education

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the key concept of educational equality from its philosophical origins from the late eighteenth century onwards. Chapter 2 has elaborated on the three hypotheses outlined in Chapter 1 and the factors related to these to explain the difference between how France and England go about reducing social inequality in education. Chapter 3 has the objective of defining social equality in education and how it will be interpreted in this thesis. It will do this by exploring this key concept within its philosophical origins from the 18th century onwards and incorporating modern social theorists and their definitions of social equality in education. It will take into account these definitions and literature on equality in order to arrive at a definition of social equality in education. This definition will be used to constitute a framework for analysing the historical data in Chapters 4-7 and for interpreting the findings in Chapter 8. It will focus on the link between social class and inequality. It will not, however, be within the scope of this thesis to include race, ethnicity and gender in this analysis, although, it acknowledges, there are important inequalities which relate to these factors.

The concept of social equality derives from the fundamental normative principle at the basis of modern society that is: that all people are equal and have equal rights before the law. This notion of equality before the law has its origins in the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen' proclaimed at the outset of the French Revolution in 1789. The Revolution introduced a system of uniform laws and taxes, which meant that all were equal before the law and all could enjoy the same political rights without distinction. There is an inherent weakness here in this interpretation of equality in that it has little impact on social and economic inequalities. This simple concept of legal and political equality has been supplemented by social and economic elements of which the universal social welfare system is a prime example.

For people to exercise their rights equally and participate in society, for example, through universal suffrage, depends on a certain level of education. Thus the basic principle of equality of human rights transfers into the educational domain as the right of access to education. Furthermore, the principle of equality of opportunity takes as its point of departure that one's place in society is not determined by inherited wealth or position and that society should therefore put in place mechanisms for promoting social mobility. The equality of opportunity ideal is broadly accepted as a normative principle in democratic societies. While this principle can be interpreted in several ways it may be optimally defined according to Rawl's second principle of justice which states that while the distribution of wealth and income are not equally distributed, this should be arranged in a way that is advantageous to everyone, and that positions of authority and responsibility should be accessible to all (Rawls, 1999, p. 53). The operationalising of this principle of action has taken different forms according to the particular period and place (Dupriez, V., Oriane, J-F. et Verhoeven, M, 2008) and has been the arena of much struggle and controversy. .

Any discussion of equality of educational opportunity necessitates a discussion of how it relates to social justice and to the broader theories of distributive justice. It is interesting to note here the distinction between the distribution of social and natural goods. Primary goods such as rights, liberties, opportunities, income and wealth and self-respect are social goods (Rawls, op. cit.). Primary goods such as health and vigour, intelligence and imagination are natural goods which while they are influenced by the social structure are not directly under its control (Rawls, *ibid*). The distribution of social goods, in particular that of educational opportunity, is what will be dealt with in this thesis.

Principal theories of Social Justice and Equality

The following section will outline the ideas of two contrasting theorists of social justice, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith. They are chosen

because of their contribution to the philosophies of egalitarianism and liberalism respectively. Their ideas have also had a large impact on the revolutionary and liberal ideologies, which, this thesis argues, lie at the heart of French and English education systems respectively.

Rousseau's theory of justice and equality.

More than any other philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau propounds a theory of egalitarianism in its purest form. The essence of Rousseau's theory of justice and equality is contained in the *Social Contract* (1762, trans. in Dent, 1913) which sets out in detail the principles and institutions whereby human society can live in a state of freedom and equality. For Rousseau, humans in their primitive conditions achieve a certain harmony and live according to a natural order which cannot endure in society beyond a certain point when humans need to act in cooperation with others. As society developed the division of labour and private property led to divisions and inequality between people. Human beings became increasingly competitive and at the same time dependent on one another. A new social order based on reason founded by means of a social contract was needed. Thus for Rousseau, human nature is good but what is evil in human society derives from bad institutions and these can be replaced by better ones (Hall, 1973).

The natural order represents for Rousseau a harmony which is lacking in forms of social organisation based on the principle of the private ownership of property. Individual and collective interests would be reconciled through a political order which embodies the application of reason to social life. Political sovereignty for Rousseau originates in the people and encompasses the general will whereby, through the submission of individuals to its sovereignty, inequality and injustice can be eradicated (O'Brien and Penna (1998).

Freedom and justice are achieved by the subordination of individual interests to the general, or common good which is defined by equality rather than inequality (O'Brien and Penna, op. cit. p. 14). This notion of the alienation of

each member of the society of his/her rights to the community, i.e. the state, has been controversial and has been criticised for tending towards totalitarianism. In this situation the community could dominate individual citizens and minorities would be forced to consent to the decisions of the majority. Such conceptions of sovereignty where the limits to the scope of political action are not demarcated should be treated with caution (Hamilton, in Hall and Gieben, 1992).

Rousseau saw a difficulty in individuals retaining certain rights that could not be subject to the law, or the general will, which would mean limited sovereignty. At the beginning of Book II, Chapter I, Rousseau declares:

The first and most important deduction from the principles we have so far laid down is that the General Will alone can direct the State according to the object for which it was instituted, i.e. the common good: ... (Rousseau, op,cit, p, 20)

The implication is that the sovereign people has the right to enforce whatever the general will requires and where this requires state intervention, no appeal can be made against it on behalf of individual rights. The state cannot justifiably intervene, however, except when the common interest requires it. Cole, in the introduction to his translation of *The Social Contract* (Rousseau, op. cit.), argues (in answer to the critics who hold that civil liberty has sacrificed individual liberty) that a certain amount of state interference is necessary to secure liberty and that individuals are more free when restrained from doing damage to each other. Rousseau differentiates between the will of all and the general will with the latter taking account only of the common interest while the former 'takes private interest into account and is no more than a sum of particular wills'.

The idea of the general will is essentially ethical and is a principle of moral conduct applied to political behaviour. This process is referred to in *The Social Contract*, Part I, Chapter VIII where Rousseau states:

... We might, over and above all this, add, to what man acquires in the civil state, moral liberty, which alone makes him truly master of himself;

for the mere impulse of appetite is slavery, while obedience to a law which we prescribe to ourselves is liberty (Rousseau, op. cit., pp. 15-16).

The general will was Rousseau's solution to the problem of how humans can associate with each other without losing their freedom. This can be obtained if each individual does what is in the interest of all, instead of what is in his/her own interest, without reference to the interests of others. What is also important is that the interests of all include our own interests (Hall, 1973, p. 73).

Rousseau's theories have been influential in his own century and down to the present. His political ideas gained prominence during the French Revolution, particularly its radical phase following the proclamation of the Republic in 1792, when they were espoused particularly by Robespierre. Rousseau's egalitarian arguments were influential in early socialist-utopian and non-utopian ideas and when communist ideas were being developed in France towards the end of the 19th century (Hobsbawm, 1982). Rawls, the most recent of social contract theorists (see above p. 55) is indebted to Rousseau in his theory of justice as fairness (Hall, op. cit., p. 140). Hall sees Rousseau's general will theory as similar to Rawl's two principles of justice as fairness in two ways: (i) 'that the just principle must serve the interests of every participant', and (ii) 'that liberty has, for each individual an independent value. Rawl's hypothetical agreement, according to Hall (ibid.) is analogous to Rousseau's social contract in the following way:

Both Rousseau and Rawls recognise that self-interested individuals will not put the common interest before their own interest on particular occasions unless subject to constraint, and that the constraint must be accepted by all and known to be so before the practice can be accepted as just (Rawls) or the society as legitimate (Rousseau). Both maintain that such acceptance will only be forthcoming if the rules to be enforced are such as to promote the common interests of the participants (p. 143).

(For a discussion of Rawls theory of justice as fairness see below in this chapter, pp 66-67.)

Adam Smith and political economy

The previous section has put forward Rousseau's philosophical theory of egalitarianism and the general will. In direct contrast, this section sets out Adam Smith's theory of political economy. Smith's theory with its exposition of the division of labour and the market has been interpreted as a philosophical justification of capitalism. His philosophy has also had a profound influence on liberalism.

Adam Smith in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), published fourteen years after the *Social Contract*, put forward the principles of political economy which incorporated a theory in direct contrast to Rousseau's egalitarianism. Rousseau and Smith were contemporaries of the commercial society, the precursor to capitalist society, whose critiques differed dramatically. Both were concerned with how individuals could live together in a society where they were increasingly in competition as well as dependent on one another. In contrast to Rousseau, this competitiveness was of benefit to the whole economy and the public. Also, rather than having the interest of the individual as subordinate to the collective interest as was proposed in Rousseau's *Social Contract*, social advantage would be achieved, according to Smith (1776) by allowing the individual to pursue his own self-interest. The pursuit of self-interest by the sum of individuals that make up society would also lead to the wealth of the nation.

Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage indeed and not that of society which he had in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally or rather necessarily leads him to prefer that employment which is of most advantage to the society (op. cit. I, p. 398, cited in Fraser, 1973, p. 92).

Smith gives the quasi-religious explanation that this felicitous change from self-interest to the interest of society as a whole occurs by means of the individual being 'led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention'. This is directly opposed to Rousseau's viewpoint when he wrote how private interest and general good are mutually exclusive

(Rasmussen, 2008). As opposed to Rousseau, Smith saw the interdependence of people through economic exchange as the means which gave its unique strength to commercial society. Rather than trade breeding corruption Smith thought that it brought a new kind of freedom and independence from a particular lord or feudal master through the impersonal market and its contractual social system (Porter, 2000, p. 391-2).

By linking the individual's natural instincts towards self-interest with the good of society, Smith is arguing that there exists a fundamental harmony between the profit-seeking imperative and the general good. By emphasizing this relationship, Smith is thought to be separating politics from economics to the advantage of the latter and at the same time is arguing against the involvement of the state in the economy. He is also arguing that the public good does not depend on the 'general will' but that it would be promoted through the interplay of particular wills (Porter, op. cit.). This also has implications beyond economics for it is individual happiness and material well-being which were given a higher value than moral virtue – and at the public level this implied an emphasis on the republic of commerce rather than on the Rousseauan republic of virtue. Smith's words quoted below capture the ethos of the emerging capitalist society.

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages (Smith, 1999 I, Ch. 2. P. 119).

Smith identified the mechanism of the responsiveness of competitive market price to the supply and demand principle and showed how the free market could exist. This analysis along with the notion of the 'invisible hand' as well as labour theory of value came to form the basis for the 19th century doctrine of laissez-faire and advocated the non-interference of government in the economy. This doctrine dominated during the 19th century and was to become an essential component of the ideology of liberalism.

Another economist, David Ricardo, went on to develop and refine Smith's political economy and used it to criticise the non-productive landowning class

and to champion the emergence of capitalism. Later Karl Marx with the publication of *Das Kapital* (1867) challenged Smith and argued that *The Wealth of Nations* was an ideological defence of capitalism which he maintained was characterised, not by a harmony of interests, as Smith claimed, but by an irreconcilable conflict between capital and labour. Marx emphasized the exploitation of the working-class and called for the overthrow of capitalism (Brown, in Hall and Gieben, op. cit.).

Philosophies of Social Justice

Moving from particular theorists it is appropriate now to consider the principal philosophical schools of distributive justice, that is, libertarianism, utilitarianism, egalitarianism and liberal-egalitarianism, and to distinguish within them the degree to which interventionism to achieve educational equality is involved. Much of the following section is based on Dupriez, Orianne et Verhoeven (2008) who have drawn together these 'philosophical schools of distributive justice'.

Libertarianism

From a libertarian viewpoint freedom of choice is most important and much importance is accorded to procedures and rights. Thus parents would be free to choose the most appropriate schooling for their children and teachers would be free to offer the kind of curriculum they preferred (Dupriez, Orianne et Verhoeven 2008). The role of the state would be limited to protecting against crime, violation of fundamental rights and to ensuring that contracts are respected (Dupriez, Orianne et Verhoeven op. cit., Howe, 1997). Thus little intervention would be permitted in the pursuit of equalising educational opportunity beyond a formal equality of access. As long as the pupil's right to education is respected, inequality in school careers does not pose a problem from the libertarian perspective.

Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a theory of rational choice whereby each person makes his/her choice on the basis of their own self-interest and whereby this pursuit of self-interest will lead to desirable social institutions through the action of

the 'invisible hand' as Adam Smith described it (Coleman, 1990). From the utilitarian viewpoint, utility or well-being and efficiency are of major importance. Unlike the libertarian, the utilitarian is interested in results principally in order to maximise utility and efficiency in society, for, given the correlation between the level of income and well-being on the one hand, and the level of education and income, on the other, utilitarians are interested in maximising the level of education (Dupriez, Oriane et Verhoeven, op. cit.). Educational meritocracy and the equalising of opportunity on the basis of talent is important from this theoretical perspective. However, meritocratic utilitarianism, because of its commitment to efficiency and economic productivity can militate against equalising educational opportunity. The criterion of efficiency is indifferent to the issue of distribution and inequalities of distribution are not reduced through market forces (Coleman, op. cit., p. 34). In education, an example of this would be if a cost effectiveness focus caused a shift in investing resources to specific categories, such as, scientifically gifted pupils to the detriment of those less advantaged (Howe, op. cit.).

Egalitarianism

For egalitarianism, unlike in utilitarianism, the reduction of inequalities in education is paramount, independently of its effect on average achievement or efficiency. Thus equality of educational achievement would be more important than average achievement and policies would be advocated which would further the former rather than the latter situation, although these may not necessarily be in conflict. Compensatory and positive discriminatory policies through public action would be called for, for example those which would allow for the distribution of educational resources in a differentiated manner so that individuals or groups who are disadvantaged would receive a greater investment of resources than those who are more advantaged. Another example of egalitarian educational policy would be the demand that the proportion of places in schools should reflect the demographic characteristics of the population. If, for example, there are 10% of a minority ethnic or socio-economic group in a country, a redistributive educational

policy should ensure that 10% of pupils in good schools, or in universities are from the minority group ((Dupriez, Orianne et Verhoeven, op. cit.).

One difficulty with a strict form of egalitarianism is the preoccupation with results to the detriment of the causes of these. It does not, for example, take into account the characteristics of the pupils, for example, talent, effectiveness or effort which could contribute to inequality of results as well as unequal distribution of resources (Dupriez, Verhoeven et al, *ibid*). It is also true to say, that motivation, effort and effectiveness are not altogether independent of social background, whereby some families, because of their higher class background, are highly motivated to ensure that their offspring make use of the opportunities provided by schooling (Ball, 2003, Power, 2003)

It is important to distinguish between strict egalitarians who look for an absolute equality of outcomes, and social egalitarians who take into account the natural distribution in ability between individuals. The latter seek to eliminate the association between social class and family background and outcomes. What is being sought here is not complete lack of variation in achievement, but the removal of the social determinants, such as, social class, gender and ethnicity in educational outcomes.

Liberal Egalitarianism

This theoretical position is most optimally defined in the work of John Rawls in his theory of justice which sets out to create a theory of social order based on contract theory (Coleman, 1990). Whilst the egalitarians look to procuring a strict equalisation of opportunity, the work of Rawls seeks to find a compromise situation between equality, freedom and efficiency.

Similarly to utilitarianism, Rawls' theory is based on rational choice. However, it is sharply different from it in its theoretical starting point and aims. Whilst utilitarianism is based on the pursuit of self-interest, Rawls' theory addresses the issue of distributive justice and the fair distribution of resources such that social inequalities are arranged to the advantage of all. He formulates two principles of justice.

First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others.

Second: Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all (Rawls, 1971, p. 50).

The first principle is to do with securing equal basic liberties; the second with 'the aspects [of the social system] that specify and establish social and economic inequalities'. It is notable here that Rawls is referring to managing inequalities and not in securing equality. Thus Rawls is not contemplating an equal distribution of wealth, rather that any inequalities inherent in the system should be to everyone's advantage. Here, a social inequality could refer to representative persons holding various social positions to which a certain expectation of well-being would be attached (Rawls, op. cit.). He adds a proviso that 'the higher expectations of those better situated are just if and only if they work as part of a scheme which improves the expectations of the least advantaged members of society (p. 65)'.

Although Rawls' theory was directed to primary goods and not to education, it is appropriate to draw here on his principle of redress i.e. 'the principle that undeserved inequalities call for redress; and since inequalities of birth and natural endowment are undeserved, these inequalities are to be somehow compensated for (Rawls, p. 86)'. Rawls would not, however allow this principle to militate against the improvement of the average standard of life or the advancement of the common good. Compensatory policies in education would equate most fully to Rawls principle of equitable equality of opportunity and the transferral of the principle of difference to the educational area.

An approach to equality of educational opportunity based on the distribution of resources

Another way of framing the concept of equality of educational opportunity is related to the distribution of educational resources. The equality of opportunity ideal, by means of various public policies, has been transformed into a principle of action (equalisation of opportunity). This approach allows a way of viewing the different stages undertaken by public action, i.e. the State,

towards the operationalising of equality of opportunity in education. Equality of access to education is the earliest and most basic stage in this development towards educational equality. The right to education was seen here as a resource (Verhoeven, Oriane et Dupriez, 2005). The rights of all to at least an elementary education was the focal point of the struggle in the most advanced states of Europe and the US throughout the nineteenth century. The institutionalising of an elementary education that was gratuitous and obligatory coincided with the establishment of national education systems in these countries. However, the financial barrier to secondary education remained with only a very small proportion of school-age pupils attending this level of schooling - around 2.5% in France and England at the beginning of the 20th century (Harrigan, 1980, Green, 1990, Ringer, 1979).

Contemporary critiques of the principle of equality of opportunity and Marxist interpretations of social inequality in education.

Most philosophical theories of education portrayed the educational arena as neutral, as a provider of the means and resources which allows those who take advantage of it to climb the ladder of social mobility. The dynamic relationship between the economy and education was ignored. However, the extent of schooling's potential to further equality of opportunity was called into question more and more by sociological scholarship and the notion of bringing about equality of opportunity in education incrementally was seen as attempting to reform a system within a society which was structurally unequal and therefore mistaken.

As Cole (1989) states:

Social-class differentials in educational achievement were attributed to an unequal distribution of resources rather than to structural inequalities in the system. Hence its assumptions were that dysfunctional elements in the system could be planned away and working-class pupils and students could succeed given the right set of circumstances and a certain amount of affirmative action – comprehensivisation, extra money for inner city schools, mixed ability teaching and so on (op. cit. p. 2).

The traditional Marxist approach has been that education in capitalist societies reproduces the capitalist relations of production, that is, the domination by the capitalist class and its representatives, of the working

class. According to Althusser (as outlined in Chapter 2), education is the primary 'Ideological State Apparatus' (along with religion, family, law, politics, trade unions and culture) which operates by inculcating the dominant ideology to facilitate the reproduction of these social relations (Althusser, op. cit.).

The 'correspondence principle' put forward by Bowles and Gintis in *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) is the most blatant example of the 'reproduction theory' i.e, the facilitation by schools to reproduce the social relations in society. The 'correspondence principle' is directly related to Marx's theory of the correspondence between social production and social relations and between social relations of production and the superstructure. As Marx (1964) stated:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness (ibid, p. 20).

Bowles and Gintis (op. cit.) argue that;

The educational system helps integrate youth into the economic system, we believe through a structural correspondence between its social relations and those of production. The structure of social relations in education not only inures the student to the discipline of the work place, but develops the types of personal demeanor, modes of self-presentation, self-image, and social-class identification which are the crucial ingredients of job adequacy (p. 131).

The hierarchical nature of social relations are reflected in the hierarchical nature of the relations between administrators and teachers, and between teachers and students. Students are alienated from their studies by their lack of control over their schooling and in the deflection of motivation towards the attainment of grades and away from the intrinsic pleasure of knowledge and the learning process itself.

Whilst the correctness of their position in pointing to the relationship between education and the economy is not in question, Bowles and Gintis have been

critiqued for their lack of attention to the complexity of this relationship and to the struggles and contradictions that exist within the school and for the over-deterministic nature of their correspondence theory (for example, Apple, 1982). One critique which will resonate with practitioners was that pupils were not blank canvasses on which ideal images of how to behave could be imprinted but were capable of resistance through forms of counter culture which may be interpreted as a kind of class struggle within the school. Paul Willis's, *Learning to Labour* (1977) 'turned this correspondence principle on its head' (Cole, 2008) by portraying the resistance of working-class boys to school culture through their own informal language and 'having a laff' etc and their non-compliance with school norms, which in an ironic way, prepared them for surviving in the work conditions of the shop floor.

Cole (2008) in his assessment of Marxist theory and education, discusses Rikowski's (1997a) critique of Bowles and Gintis (op. cit.) which criticises the correspondence principle for its determinism and because it engenders fatalism. This, Cole considers to be valid, but points out that Bowles and Gintis's final two chapters, where the authors are concerned with the development and articulation of a socialist alternative to the status quo is not fatalistic.

Some Marxists and non-Marxists emphasised the cultural reproduction of the capitalist relations of production. One of the most influential theorists, the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, argued that the education system is the mechanism for cultural reproduction.

The education system reproduces all the more perfectly the structure of the distribution of cultural capital among classes (and sections of a class) in that the culture which it transmits is closer to the dominant culture and that the mode of inculcation to which it has recourse is less removed from the mode of inculcation practiced by the family An education system ... offers information and training which can be received and acquired only by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and of the inculcation of the culture (Bourdieu in Karabel and Halsey, 1977, pp. 487-511).

Cultural reproduction not only reflects the reproduction of social relations but also relates to cultural bias in relation to school knowledge and culture. Bourdieu's analysis of cultural reproduction can shed light on the dilemma for equalisation of opportunity in education due to the unequal social and educational backgrounds of students. Bourdieu uses the concept of 'habitus' in relation to this process which is also linked to 'taste', and encompasses the qualities of habit and habitat (Bilton et al, 2002, p. 284). 'Habitus' denotes 'a socially acquired, yet ... generally *invisible* disposition that human beings carry with them into the full range of social milieus, for example, the school (Bourdieu, 1977, in Moore, 2000, p. 94) in which they operate as a student or as a teacher. Bourdieu refers to these social milieus as 'fields' which individuals make sense of in a particular way and whose perception of these 'fields' is likely to be affected by their individual 'habitus'. Crucially, the 'habitus' is likely to affect how the individual's perceptions of what is achievable, and can set limits to personal ambitions and expectations (Moore, op. cit.).

Bourdieu refers to 'symbolic violence' to describe the arbitrary assertion via the education system of one set of cultural forms and preferences and knowledge which are those practiced by the dominant class and which are set above other cultural forms and knowledge. This selection of knowledge and culture which makes up the content of the school curriculum may be viewed as arbitrary because it is culture-specific (Moore, *ibid*).

Those pupils, i.e. middle class, whose culture is closest to that of the school, are at a distinct advantage compared to those from working-class and ethnic minority backgrounds. Those who can take advantage of what the school offers are those who are already endowed with the requisite attributes, i.e. 'cultural capital' which is transmitted by inheritance and invested in order to be cultivated (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 201).

Thus the discourses of the 1950s and 1960s relating to the equalising of educational structures which led to the institution of the *école unique* in France and the comprehensive school in England, gave way to an engagement with issues to do with social and cultural reproduction. Similarly to Bourdieu, the debates around school knowledge were taken up by other sociologists in the 1970s and 1980s notably Bernstein (in relation to

language) and Young (in relation to curriculum). At the same time, while Bourdieu and other sociologists were focusing on cultural reproduction, an alternative theory was being worked on by Boudon (op. cit.) which engaged with educational structures as well as family culture. Boudon's theory is based on a rational action model and therefore less deterministic than that of Bourdieu for it is related to choices made by different social classes in relation to school careers. Boudon argues that the ways in which similar opportunities are taken up by different social classes may be centrally involved in the production of inequality (Nash, 2003). Since the advent of mass education and the increase in the time spent in compulsory education, Boudon (op. cit.) points out, families want to increase their control over school programmes. This is borne out by the continuous increase in the demand for parental choice in education. Ironically, the reforms which set out to bring about a uniformity of the curriculum are resulting in an increase rather than a decrease in the variety of courses and curricula as well as in the differentiation between institutions. Boudon (ibid) emphasises the social causes of inequality of educational opportunity:

The general consequence deriving from the foregoing analysis is that society rather than school is responsible for IEO [Inequality of educational opportunity]. More explicitly, we have seen that even if schooling were highly effective in reducing cultural inequality (which it is not), a high amount of IEO would probably still be observed (Boudon, ibid, p.114).

Conclusion

As Duru-Bellat (2003) states, social inequality in its broadest sense is:

... the result of an unequal distribution, in the mathematical sense of the expression, between members of a society, of the resources of that society, due to the structures of that society and which gives rise to a feeling of injustice in its members (op. cit., p. 1 cited in Mons, 2004, p.20.) (Translation by the author of this thesis).⁴

⁴ ... le résultat d'une distribution inégale, au sens mathématique de l'expression, entre les membres d'une société, des ressources de cette société, due aux structures mêmes de cette société et faisant naître un sentiment d'injustice au sein de ses membres

What Duru-Bellat is referring to here are the social resources of a society, such as opportunities i.e. educational, occupational etc., wealth and income.

This chapter has explored the theoretical basis for this key concept. There has been an exploration of how the principal philosophies of social justice relate to equality and how in turn these have been incorporated as values within education. There has been an engagement, in particular, with Rousseau, Smith and Rawls's principles of justice and their implications for equity in education as well as with modern social theorists.

Equality of opportunity, it has been posited, has been an important normative principle in democratic societies, particularly within education. Since the late 19th century there has been a massive increase in access to all levels of education with the attainment of universal education for all up to 15 or 16 years in most developed western countries. In the following chapters 4-7 the process of this development will be traced from the end of the 18th century until 1939. In tracing educational development during this period in France, it will examine what progress was achieved during the French Revolution in transcribing the notion of universal human rights to education and the revolutionary espousal of universal education for all. It will trace French educational development following the revolution up to 1939 and will examine the educational policies put in place to achieve or restrict this ideal. These will be examined in relation to the three explanatory factors which were outlined earlier. Particular attention will be paid to the development of an egalitarian ideology and what impact this has had on educational policies. It will similarly analyse the historical data in relation to progressive social class alliances and whether these have contributed or not to breaking the link between social class and educational attainment. It will examine how the French centralised state has contributed to or impeded the reduction of social inequality in education.

Similarly the process of the development of equality of opportunity in education in England during the same time period will be traced in the historical chapters 5 and 7. This will be analysed in terms of the explanatory

factors outlined earlier. It will examine the impact of an ideology of liberalism on education and whether this had the effect of promoting or impeding social inequality in education. It will analyse the effect of a conservative social class alliance on educational policy to explain whether it promoted or impeded the reduction of social inequality in education. It will similarly examine whether the liberal state contributed or impeded social inequality in education.

Equality of opportunity, depending on the educational structures in place at a given time and place, can give rise to different degrees of social inequality. Thus in school systems with a structure based on selection, such as the tripartite system (introduced initially after the Spens Report of 1938 and more purposely following the 1944 education act in England) resulted in upper and middle class children being over-represented in the grammar and private schools and working class children in other schools. School systems where the structure equates to equality of experience, such as the traditional *école unique* in France, where schools are standardised through mixed ability classes and non-differentiated curriculum, should be more conducive to reducing social inequality in outcomes than in a system where the school experience is more differentiated. Yet, although an educational system may have a highly standardised structure, with schooling providing equality of experience for students, as long as societies remain divided along social class lines, social class differentials in outcomes will remain.

This thesis defines social equality in education in the following way. The key concept of social equality as it applies to education has to do with the reduction of social inequality. This involves breaking the link between social class and attainment. It acknowledges there will be variation between individuals because of natural characteristics but it advocates the elimination of the association of social class and social background with educational outcomes. This definition of social equality will be used in my analysis of the historical material to test the educational policies pursued at different times in France and England from the end of the eighteenth century to the outbreak of war in 1939.

Chapter Four

The Development of Education in France from 1789 to 1870.

Chapter Three has explored different definitions of social equality in education. It gave an overview of how the concept has evolved over time since the late eighteenth century when equality before the law of all citizens was proclaimed as well as equality of access to education. Chapter Four will engage with the evolution of education in France from the end of the eighteenth century to 1870 and will focus on whether the system of education set up there contributed to the promotion of social equality in education.

The French Revolution: France From 1789-1799

In tracing the concept of social equality in education in France, it is fitting to start with the period of the French Revolution. Although there is a divergence of opinion among historians as to whether the French Revolution marked a complete end to or a continuity with the Ancient Régime with, for example, Furet (op.cit.) and Soboul (op. cit.) respectively, offering divergent views on this (see Chapter Two), it can be said with assurance that the earth-shattering events of that period have had a profound impact on the subsequent political and social history of France if not the rest of Europe. It can also be stated that the modern French education system has its roots in the French Revolution, underpinned by the theoretical principles of the Enlightenment, for two important reasons: (1) The education system of the *Ancien Regime*, which preceded it, was destroyed by its policies and legislation, and (2) The enduring legacy of egalitarianism and secularism which are predominant values of the system, can be traced back to that period.

The Revolution succeeded in destroying the monopoly of the Catholic Church and in dismantling the educational structure. It did not succeed, according to Archer (op. cit.) in providing a replacement of the educational facilities because it lacked the political capacity to mobilize sufficient resources. It can be held, however, that the Revolution marked the

beginning of the assumption by the state of its prerogative to take responsibilities in the domain of education, to take the place of the Catholic Church which for centuries had seen this area as fundamental to its mission and to transform the concept of education from that of charitable enterprise to that of a human right and eventually to that of public service (Mayeur, 1981). It was dogged from the beginning by a crippling lack of resources and also, it must be recognized, by the lack of sympathy from many parents and often many municipalities, leading to failure with regard to the implementation of primary education. Yet the overall picture showed some remarkable successes in secondary and higher education during the revolutionary period. More than anything else, it was the preoccupation to the point of obsession with which the revolutionaries threw themselves into creating a form of education which would bring about the foundation of a new era. It is this, according to Mayeur (op.cit.) which made the Revolution 'a reference point, positive and negative, throughout the 19th century in education as in every other sphere' (op. cit. p 56).

Despite the inauspicious circumstances, the issue of education was ever-present on the agenda of the Revolutionary assemblies. A Committee of Public Instruction was set up to the three assemblies and 12 reports were presented during the period 1789-1795. There was a 'family likeness', a thread of familiar themes recurring throughout the various schemes which were put forward during the revolutionary period (Barnard, 1969). These included a reaction against the curricula which had gone before with its emphasis on the classics and the arts and with an espousal of the scientific disciplines as the basis for its school curricula, there was an opposition to church control of education with an emphasis on the laicisation of public education, and there was an emphasis on the teaching of Republican principles, the Declaration of the Rights of man and on the rights and duties of citizens. Above all there was a belief in the fundamental right of all citizens to receive a level of education which would equip them with the basic skills necessary for life in the new society based on liberty and equality and for the realisation, as much as possible, of their talents. Thus, here can be

seen an affirmation of the concept of social equality in education and a first basic step towards educational equality.

Condorcet's theoretical framework for *Instruction Publique*, more than any other has subsequently received most acclaim. He believed in education as a universal right that should be equally shared as much as possible, giving the opportunity for all to avail of the entire range of human knowledge during its different stages. Condorcet's report incorporated four stages of instruction: Primary schools, secondary schools, institutes and *lycées*. At the summit of this system would be the National Society of Sciences and Arts which would supervise and direct it. Condorcet's plan when presented to the Committee of Public Instruction of the Convention was rejected. It was accused of elitism – referring to the National Society which it was feared would be another corporate body like the Church and accused of being too indifferent to the attainment of genuine equality (Palmer, op. cit.).

The most egalitarian educational scheme of the period was that of Lepeletier which was presented when the *Montagnards* (the victorious Jacobins of 1793) was in control of the Convention and reflected the extreme stage that the revolution had reached. It was presented in July 1793, one month after the acceptance of the new Republican constitution which provided for universal male suffrage and which contained a reference to education. Lepeletier's plan was espoused by and presented posthumously by Robespierre, after Lepeletier had been assassinated by a royalist for voting for the execution of the king. Lepeletier's scheme would apply to all children alike, regardless of social class and would be both gratuitous at all its four stages, as Condorcet also had stipulated and obligatory at primary stage.

I ask you to decree that between the ages of 5 and 12 for boys and until 11 for girls, all children without distinction or exception will be brought up in common at the expense of the state and that all, in the sacred name of equality, will receive the same uniform, food, instruction and care. (M Pelletier de St Fargeau, Plan d'éducation nationale (présenté aux Jacobins par son frère (Paris, 1793), (in Vaughan and Archer, 1971, p. 122.)

Although the scheme for maisons d'égalité was adopted in 13 August 1793, it was rescinded on the following 20 October.

It was not until the final year of the Convention that the fruits of all the deliberation about *instruction publique* were realized with Lakanal's project for primary education being accepted in November 1794 and for secondary schools in December 1794. These were finalized by the Daunou Law *Loi sur l'Organisation de l'Instruction Publique* of 1795. The primary schools would teach pupils the essentials of reading, writing and elements of arithmetic and ethics and teachers would be housed free of charge. It decreed, however, that those pupils who could afford to would pay a fee which was not in keeping with the egalitarian spirit of the previous period.

It was the Central School, at secondary level, which stands out for the boldness of its innovatory vision. What distinguishes this system from what had gone before or since, was its unit of organisation, which was based around the course rather than the class. There were ten courses arranged in three sections, each section lasting two years and children must be at least 12 years of age before being admitted to the first section. There was no upper age limit for leaving school. As with the primary schools, about a quarter of pupils would be exempt from paying fees on grounds of poverty. The Convention ceased to exist on the day after the passing of the Danou law, so it was left to the Directory to implement the system. There was great diversity in the standards and effectiveness of the Central Schools. They were subject to the major difficulty of recruitment which was a feature of the revolutionary period. This was exacerbated by financial difficulties as well as by the fact that the training of teachers was not included in the Danou law of October 1795. Nevertheless, the Central School represented a first step towards a modern secondary curriculum which gave priority to teaching the sciences and modern languages and which was relevant to the rising bourgeoisie.

It was in the area of higher and professional education that the Revolution, made its most outstanding contribution, due to the endurance of the institutions established at that time and referred to as the *Ecoles Spéciales* subsequently referred to as *Les Grandes Ecoles*. The most famous of these

included the *Ecole Polytechnique*, specialising in engineering and scientific study, the *Ecoles de Santé*, specializing in medicine, the Museum of Natural History, *Ecole des Mines*, *Bureau des Longitudes* (now the Meteorological Office), *Conservatoire des Arts and de Métiers*, *Conservatoire des Beaux Arts*, *Conservatoire de Musique* and *Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes* – although all of these apart from the *Ecole Polytechnique* were reconstructed survivals from the Ancien Regime. The main Faculties were abolished in 1793 but continued to exist in some form. They were restored in 1808, but remained under direct control of the state. In 1896, under the Third Republic, the Faculties were regrouped into corporate universities and given a certain autonomy (Barnard, op. cit.).

Napoleon and the consolidation of the Bourgeois State

The Directory came to an end in 1799 and was succeeded by the Consulate presided over by a 'Triumvirate', but the real authority and legislative power was in the hands of Napoleon, the First Consul. He grasped firmly the reins of power and appointed prefects to administer the departments, sub-prefects in every *arrondissement* and mayors in every municipality and thus created a unified and centralised system under his individual control.

In July 1801, Napoleon signed the Concordat with the Pope, which put an end to the schism created during the revolution. Catholicism was restored as the state religion and this led to the gradual return of the congregations. Under the consular decree of 1803, the Christian brothers were authorised to resume their teaching and all of these congregations were incorporated into Napoleon's national system of education. While the freedom to organise schools was restored to the Church, this was under the control of the state and the prefects.

The Fourcroy Law of April 1802 was a compromise between the democratic reforms of the previous revolutionary projects and a highly centralised system of national education and brought to an end the Central schools after six years in existence (Barnard, op. cit.). Napoleon's vision for the future of education in France under a highly unified and centralised system came into

being with the laws of May 1806 and March 1808, which created the *Université de France*. This represented the merging of all educational establishments under one corporate body directly under the control of the state and uniquely responsible for education. The Imperial University was divided into 34 regional academies (which are still in place, in extended form today), each presided over by a rector. Its Head of Administration was the 'Grand Master'. The *Université* was unique to France with no institution like it in other countries. It operated at two levels: on the one hand it was an administration which ran the state schools and supervised private ones and at this level went on to become the ministry of public instruction in 1824; on the other hand it was a corporate body of state teachers in secondary and higher education (Anderson, 1975).

The most important legacy of Napoleonic educational policy, as well as the *Université*, was the foundation of the *lycées* which replaced the *écoles centrales*. They were completely under state control and upheld uniform standards with the aim of developing, as Green, op. cit. p. 152, points out, 'a loyal, nationally-minded and competent educational elite to supply the state with its technical and administrative experts'. They were fee-paying, but also were to receive twenty per cent of funds from the state. They followed a strict discipline, but corporal punishment was forbidden – a reform introduced during the Revolution which remained permanent in France and distinguished it from the practice in England and other countries (Palmer, op. cit.). The establishment of a standardized system of secondary education was important for promoting a limited meritocracy based on careers open to the talents. Napoleon, while distrusting the religious orders was conscious of the importance of their teaching for social control and religious education was, as it had been in the *Ancien Régime*, an important aspect of this (Green, op. cit.; Vaughan and Archer, op. cit.). Primary education for the mass of the population was not seen as a priority and entrusted to the religious orders. While independent schools, such as those of the religious orders were allowed, these, as with all state schools, were under the control of the *Université*. Ideological orthodoxy and geographical uniformity was achieved by the standardising of the curricula and making all qualifications

national (Vaughan and Archer, op. cit.). Napoleon's attitude towards the Catholic Church was ambiguous in that it represented a divergence between the social and political levels. He saw the Church as important for the maintenance of social order and saw religion as a vehicle for increasing this. He was complicit in the church's role in education as long as it was happy to render to Napoleon what was Napoleon's and to God what was God's. But he mistrusted the Church politically. Thus his compromises with the clergy were prompted by the dictates of social policy rather than any ideological sympathy and his religious policy in education was double-edged with the aims, on the one hand of controlling the church in the state and, on the other, controlling the people in society.

Relations between Church and State in education

The climate after the fall of Napoleon in 1815 was ideal for the Catholic Church to seek to regain its supremacy. The struggle continued throughout the century and the next between the Church school and the state school, and depending on the political regime in power, there was a see-sawing between the control of the one followed by a relinquishing of its power to the other.

Several new orders of brothers came into being during the restoration and took charge of teaching in the small villages and hamlets of the French countryside. During the same period there was a huge proliferation of orders of nuns with around 880 in 1816 (Mayeur, op. cit.). The orders of brothers and nuns gained authorisation, which from time to time was rescinded, to exchange the *brevet de capacité* (introduced as a teaching certificate in 1816). for the 'letter of obedience' from their order.⁵ While all schools, both public and private were under the control of the *Université*, one institution that escaped this was the *petit séminaire*. There were several of these across the country and their stated role was for the preparation of young boys for the priesthood, although many of those who were educated there did not go on to become priests. They outnumbered the lycées (then called

⁵ The *lettre d'obédience* refers to an order given to a member of a congregation by his/her superior to teach in a primary school.

colleges royaux) by more than three-to-one (or by more than five-to-one if unauthorized schools are included (Pontheil, Histoire de l'enseignement en France, 1966, p. 174, in Horvath-Peterson, 1984).

The Loi Guizot (1833) brought about a balance of power between the Church and the state. The Church had a monopoly in the primary sector and had got a foothold in public secondary education through the schools of the teaching orders of brothers, with the state holding the monopoly in the secondary sector and maintaining overall control through the *Université*. The Church wishing to strengthen its incipient power started to agitate against the monopoly of the *Université* and organised a campaign for *liberté d'enseignement*. The balance of power was to be tipped in favour of the Church with the passing of the *Loi Falloux* in 1850.

Primary Education and the struggle for universal education

The issue of primary education, neglected during Napoleon 1's regime, was taken up during the Bourbon Restoration but with more serious intent during the July Monarchy. An ordinance in 1816 requiring each commune to maintain a primary school for boys and free for those unable to pay for it was followed by another in 1820 requiring the same provisions for girls. Although this led to a large increase in the number of primary schools the public will was not sufficiently strong to enforce this requirement (Horvath-Peterson, op. cit.).

It was not until the July Monarchy that the first important legislation relating to primary education occurred with the Loi Guizot in 1833. This decreed that every commune or group of communes should have a primary school and every *department* or group of *départements* should have an *école normale primaire* for training primary teachers, and an *école primaire supérieure* in every commune over 6,000 inhabitants. The latter was an important initiative which allowed more able pupils to continue schooling for another three years and promoted social mobility. The law was a major landmark in French education in providing the country with its first primary education system under state control. At the time apparently about one third (11,500) of communes didn't have a school and of those that did, most were unfit for

purpose and the teachers were in the main incompetent and uneducated (Nique, 1999). The revolution of 1830, when the liberals were victors, gave hopes for the provision of a public educational system which would rectify this situation. Guizot toyed with the idea of obligation, but, in keeping with the liberal spirit of the times, decided against it. Although Guizot had hoped that his Law would apply to girls' education, it was felt at the time that including girls would compromise efforts to get the education bill passed. Three years later the lesser known Loi Pelet set out the regulations and conditions for the creation of girls' schools but did not make it a requirement that they be established (Horvath-Peterson, op. cit.).

Guizot improved greatly the dire situation of the *instituteurs*. All would need the *brevet de capacité* (organised by a commission in each *département*) and a certificate of morality from the Mayor. There would be a salary of 200 francs for primary teachers and more for higher primary teachers which communes were required to pay. They would also receive the fees paid by pupils. As well as this, he legislated for the setting up of a bank for the provision of a pension fund. This made teaching a somewhat more attractive proposition than previously.

The schools would be managed by an alliance of Church and state with the latter in the dominant position. The state would be in charge of administration, curriculum and the training and sanctioning of teachers (Nique, op. cit.). Guizot's preoccupation was primarily for the moulding of minds to accepting the status quo and for loyalty to the July Monarchy and for the provision of skilled labour for an increasingly industrialising country. Guizot instituted a corps of Departmental inspectors in February 1835 who would have responsibility for primary, as well as higher primary schools, schools for poor under school-age children, and adults' classes. This represented the first step in the formation of administration at departmental level independent of local authorities. Two years later, in 1837 he appointed sub-inspectors to help them in their mission. This gave the public administration a dominant position with regard to the local notables who also saw themselves as supervisors of the school. The inspectors were also

important for the strengthening of the morale of the teachers who felt supported in ways against the power of the local notables (Mayeur, 1981, p. 345 and 441).

The revolution of 1848 which ended the July Monarchy, brought back into prominence the ideals of the Revolutionary period, not least in the educational sphere where they were championed by the Second Republic's Minister of Education, Hippolyte Carnot. In favour of universal and common education and the power of education to unify the nation, he set about preparing an education bill to bring about free and compulsory primary education. At the same time, there was a backlash by the propertied class alarmed by the revolutionary events and in education this was reflected in the struggle between the *instituteurs* and the parish priests fomented by the agitation of the Catholic Church in alliance with conservative politicians with aspirations to bring back the absolute monarchy. Carnot used the teachers to influence opinion in the election campaign of April 1848. The elections returned a republican majority but this success was to be short-lived. Social tensions increased culminating in a working-class rising in June which was brutally suppressed. This resulted in a climate of conservatism with many pointing the finger of blame at the *instituteurs* for propagating socialist doctrine.

The firing of Carnot from the ministry was made a condition of the support of the conservative right for the candidacy of Louis-Napoleon for presidency. Thus Carnot's education bill was suppressed and replaced by the *Loi Falloux* in 1850. This law had been hailed as a major turning point of the century for education, tipping the balance in favour of the Church. In fact, what was conceived of as a compromise position between the Université and the Church, was in practice to mark a rapid and inexorable rise in Catholic education (Prost 1968). What also resulted was an entrenched division between secularists and the Church which was not aided by the sacking from their posts of around 4,000 *instituteurs* (Prost, op. cit.). This would greatly advance the recruitment of Republicans, initially under the banner of non-

political organizations such as the Ligue de L'Enseignement and the Freemasons (Gould, 1999).

Two important changes under the *Loi Falloux* was the abolition of the higher primary schools and the extension of primary schooling for girls. The demise of higher primary schools was a blow for progressiveness in education as these schools were important for *déclassement* (social mobility). The law obliged all communes with populations over 800 to set up separate girls' schools. This usually meant a transfer from a lay mixed school to a girls' school run by nuns, who could benefit from the 'letter of obedience' from their superior which allowed them to teach without having the state's award of the *brevet* (Anderson, op. cit.).

The law by allowing anyone with five years' teaching experience and a baccalauréat to open a private secondary school, gave rise to an expansion of Catholic schools in this sector. This allowed the expansion of the bishop's *petit séminaires*, which were able to develop into full secondary schools, as well as the return of the Jesuits into the secondary arena. These Catholic schools were thus in a position to rival the lycées. Another area of secondary education affected by the law was the Municipal Colleges which because of the political influence of the Catholic Church in local politics saw a decrease in numbers and their replacement by Diocesan Colleges run by the bishops. The success of Catholic schooling was not only due to the work of the Church but also due to the support of the 'notables' either by their favouring by certain municipalities or even due to the pressure exerted on tenant farmers by landowners to send their children to the 'right' school (Prost (op. cit.).

Attempts to modernize Secondary Education

Louis-Napoleon's coup d'état of 1852 gave rise to the Second Empire which during its first decade was authoritarian and conservative. This tendency was reflected in the Ministry of Fortoul, its first education minister. It was a period of a tightening of bureaucracy when 'universitaires' had to take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, and which even saw the imposition of a

mandate that teachers should shave their beards and smarten themselves up! Not surprisingly it was of this period that the well-cited quote from Hippolyte Taine was written, that the Minister of Education could draw out his watch and know that in every *lycée* throughout France students were studying the same passage from Virgil (Taine, p. 181).

The education curriculum in the *lycées* and private colleges continued to be dominated by the classical subjects. Various attempts were made to modernise secondary education during the Second Empire by (i) enhancing the status of the sciences and (ii) by attempts to bridge the gap between primary and secondary levels. Fortoul's authoritarianism, however, aroused hostility among the *universitaires* and his efforts to raise science to the level of the humanities by introducing in 1852 the system of bifurcation met intense opposition by both the Université and the Church. Fortoul's system consisted of a division at upper secondary level leading to two kinds of *baccalauréat* – one emphasizing the classics, the other emphasizing the sciences. The entrenchment of the classics in the *culture générale* and its importance for entry into the liberal professions meant that a classical education was favoured by the bourgeoisie. At the same time, the Catholic schools, while lacking the necessary resources were ideologically opposed to the encroachment of science in the curriculum.

Victor Duruy became Minister of Education in 1863 in a period marked by a shift towards liberalism in Imperial policy. He abolished bifurcation in 1864 on the grounds that a separation between science and literature was an unnatural division. He was, however, acutely aware of the unsuitability of secondary education for a large proportion of the population in a period of growing industrialization. To this end, Duruy introduced *l'enseignement secondaire spécial* by means of a circular in 1863 and by Law on 21 Jun 1865. He followed a long tradition of attempting to bridge the gap between primary and secondary education. The higher primary school introduced by Guizot had been left to vegetate during the Second Empire (until reinstated during the Third Republic). Special courses of two or three years had been introduced within the colleges. Duruy's special education would be very

broad so that each school would be able to cater for the local needs. French, history, modern languages, maths, science, applied sciences, writing, gymnastics, music, drawing and accountancy (in fact most subjects except the Classical languages) were taught over a period of four years, and a fifth was added for those wishing to attend the *École Centrale* or the higher schools of commerce (Mayeur, op. cit.). Duruy succeeded in mustering funds for an *École Normale pour l'Enseignement Secondaire Spéciale* which opened in Cluny in 1866. These attempts at modernizing the curriculum represented a real alternative for the middle class and peasantry for whom a classical education was not relevant and contrasts with the situation in England which failed to do so.

Duruy was unsuccessful, however, in his objective of making primary education free and compulsory, in spite of the Emperor's private (but not public) support for this cause. He failed to convince liberal opinion or overcome the hostility of the peasantry who considered farm labour as a natural apprenticeship (Moody, 1978). The law he introduced in 10 April 1867 was a paltry compromise which gave powers to the communes to increase taxes to support tuition-free schools and compensated teachers by guaranteeing them a fixed minimum salary. He had more success in strengthening the *écoles normales primaires* where students earned a *brevet simple* after two years and a *brevet de capacité* after three years (Moody, *ibid*). It was Duruy's debacle over secondary education for girls which showed that the Church and its influence over public opinion was still a powerful force. In 1867, Duruy's circular to rectors instructed them to encourage the municipal authorities to set up secondary courses for girls. Prior to this, girls had received a limited secondary education in convent schools or in private boarding schools, but they were not allowed to take the *baccalauréat*. The new courses would teach modern subjects (not including Latin) by teachers from the *lycées* or colleges and would be fee paying. The Catholic hierarchy led a ferocious assault on this 'attack against Christian womanhood'. They fulminated against the dangers inherent in the teaching of girls by laymen. The real reason behind this strength of feeling, according to Anderson (op. cit.) lay in the threat posed by the state encroaching in an

area, which the Church saw as belonging exclusively to them. Where the courses were started, they were generally attended by Protestants or by daughters of *universitaires*. They did, in fact, survive Duruy's dismissal until they were gradually replaced by lycées after 1880 (Anderson, op. cit. p. 192).

The development of technical education is another area, which is important as an example of early French interest in developing science and technology in schools. According to Artz (1966) the gradual transfer of technical training across Europe, USA and Japan from an apprenticeship system where one's vocation was learned 'on the job' to one where much of one's technical profession was learned in a school was modelled on the French technical education system. Whilst, as described above, the *Ecoles Primaires Supérieures* and the *Écoles Secondaires Spéciales* included technical subjects in their curriculum, it was the *Écoles des Arts et Métiers* that specialised in technical education. They were established with the distinct purpose of preparing pupils for skilled positions in industry. Emphasis was placed on the integration of theory and practice. Whilst these existed in various forms before and during the Revolution, they were set up under this title by Napoleon 1 in 1803 with schools in Chalons and Angers and a third added later in 1843 in Aix en Provence (Day, 1987; Artz, op. cit.). They were reformed in 1832 when the length of study was set at three years with 100 students to be admitted annually at age 14 and the content was adapted more directly to the growing mechanical industries. The subjects studied were French composition and grammar, mechanics, physics, chemistry, advanced arithmetic, algebra and applied and descriptive geometry, all with practical applications and problems. The 1830s saw a huge rise in the demand for graduates because of advances in industry and technology. The *Ecoles des Arts et Métiers* and their graduates (referred to as 'gadzarts') whose recruitment was from the poorer sections of society were overshadowed by their lofty and higher level *polytechniciens* and *centraliens* who recruited from the bourgeoisie. Although their contribution to industry in the first half of the nineteenth century was immense, their recognition as engineers rather than as skilled foremen was not realized until the more democratic period of the Third Republic. (Day, op. cit.)

Analysis in terms of the explanatory factors

Persistence of Ideology

The French Revolution marks a period par excellence for the development of a revolutionary ideology in France. The educational projects over the course of the revolutionary period became more radical reflecting the evolution of political events. Freedom from the ideological domination of the Catholic Church was an important goal about which there was common agreement, but what to replace it with was to be fought out with ever increasing intensity during the decade. In all revolutionary plans for education there was an emphasis on the right of all citizens to education and a duty on the state to implement it. Thus universality and gratuity at the elementary level was a common requirement. These plans were therefore far in advance of their time and it was not for another hundred years that universal education with equality of access to education became a reality in France.

The ideology which dominated the earlier part of the revolution was liberal and reflected the political phase of the liberal monarchy. The most acclaimed educational plan of that period was that of Condorcet. His educational policy was based on Enlightenment philosophy and on the power of reason and knowledge to improve humanity. For Condorcet, education is important for breaking down inequalities and as a prerequisite for democracy which meant also freedom from indoctrination by either the state or the Catholic Clergy. Equality for Condorcet would come about through universal instruction and the development of reason for all. He also valued liberty over equality perceiving the former as a prerequisite to the latter (Vaughan and Archer, op. cit.).

In the following extract from *The report on the general organisation of public education presented by Condorcet at 'Assemblée nationale législative on behalf of the Comité d'Instruction Publique on 20th and 21st April, 1792*, Condorcet (1883) puts forward his goal for national education and emphasises the relationship between equality and education and how it should establish a real equality among people and bring to reality the political equality which had been proclaimed at the outset of the Revolution.

1. *Considérations Générales*

Offrir à tous les individus de l'espèce humaine les moyens de pourvoir à leurs besoins, d'assurer leur bien-être, de connaître et d'exercer leurs droits; assurer à chacun la facilité de perfectionner son industrie, de se rendre capable des fonctions sociales auxquelles il a droit d'être appelé, de développer toute l'étendue des talents qu'il a reçus de la nature; et par là établir entre les citoyens une égalité de fait, et rendre réelle l'égalité politique reconnue par la loi; tel doit être le premier but d'une instruction nationale; et sous ce point de vue, elle est, pour la puissance publique, un devoir de justice (cited in Allaire and Frank, 1995, p. 25).

In Condorcet's plan (op. cit.) free education would be paramount for bringing about real equality. He proposed that all levels of education should be free of charge as follows:

X. *Gratuité à tous les degrés d'enseignement.*

Dans ces quatre degrés d'instruction, l'enseignement sera totalement gratuit.

L'Acte constitutionnel le prononce pour le premier degré; et le second, qui peut aussi être regardé comme général, ne pourrait cesser d'être gratuite sans établir une inégalité favorable à la classe la plus riche qui paye les contributions à proportions de ses facultés, et ne payerait l'enseignement qu'à raison du nombre d'enfants qu'elle fournirait aux écoles secondaires.

*Quant aux autres degrés, il importe à la prospérité publique de donner aux enfants des classes pauvres, qui sont les plus nombreuses, la possibilité de développer leurs talents; c'est un moyen non seulement d'assurer à la patrie plus de citoyens en état de la servir, aux sciences plus d'hommes capables de contribuer à leur progrès, mais encore de diminuer cette inégalité qui naît de la différence tend à séparer. L'ordre de la nature n'établit dans la société d'autre inégalité que celle de l'instruction et de la richesse; et en étendant l'instruction, vous affaiblirez à la fois les effets de ces deux causes de distinction (cited in Allaire and Frank, *ibid*, p. 34).⁶*

As the revolutionary period advanced, the educational plans became more radical reflecting the evolution of political events. The most revolutionary period ideologically was that which followed the insurrection of 1792 leading to the Proclamation of the Republic in 1793 and lasting until the fall of Robespierre in July 1794. This phase was marked in terms of education by the Lepelletier Plan which was the most radical and egalitarian of all the educational projects calling as it did for compulsory *éducation commune* for all boys and girls between the ages of five and twelve and where all social classes would be mixed.

⁶ All degrees of education to be free of charge.

In these four degrees of instruction, education will be totally free.

The constitution pronounces it so for the first degree; and the second, which can also be regarded as general, cannot cease to be free without establishing an inequality favourable to the richest class which pays its contributions in proportions to its means, and wouldn't pay for education only according to the number of children which it sends to secondary schools.

As for the other degrees, it is important for public prosperity to give to the children of the poor classes, who are the most numerous, the possibility to develop their talents; it's the means not only for ensuring for the fatherland more citizens capable of serving, for science more men capable of contributing to its progress, but also to lessen this inequality which arises from the difference in fortunes, to mix together those whom this difference tends to separate. The order of nature doesn't establish in society any other inequality than that of education and richness; and on extending education, you will weaken at the same time the effects of these two causes of distinction.

In the following extract from Robespierre's speech to the Convention in 29th July 1793 (Robespierre, 1967) when presenting Michel Lepeletier's plan for national education, Robespierre tackles the more pragmatic challenges to the rather idealistic proposals on education and draws attention to the impecunity of the mass of the population which the national education committee's plans were aimed at. He referred to the dependance of the poor on their children's labour.

Mais quant à la class indigène, comment fera-t-elle? Cet enfant pauvre, vous lui offrez bien l'instruction; mais avant, il lui faut du pain. Son père laborieux s'en prive d'un morceau pour le lui donner; mais il faut que l'enfant gagne l'autre. Son temps est enchaîné au travail, car le travail est enchaîné au subsistence. Vainement vous établiriez une loi coercitive contre le père; celui-ci ne saurait se passer journellement du travail d'un enfant qui, à huit, neuf et dix ans, gagne déjà quelque chose. Un petit nombre d'heures par semaine, voilà tout ce qu'il peut sacrifier (ibid p. 11).⁷

The first three articles of the Lepeletier bill for national education decreed as follows:

Tous les enfants seront élevés aux depends de la République, depuis l'âge de cinq ans jusqu' à douze ans pour les garçons et depuis cinq ans jusqu' à onze ans pour les filles.

L'éducation nationale sera égal pour tous; tous recevront même nourriture, même vêtements, même instruction, même soins.

L'éducation nationale étant la dette de la République envers tous, tous les enfants ont droit de la recevoir, et les parents ne pourront se soustraire à l'obligation de les faire jouir de ses avantages (ibid p. 35).⁸

In his speech to the Convention, Robespierre broached the delicate question of payment for this education and pronounced that almost all would fall on

⁷ But as for the poor class, what will it do? This poor child, you offer instruction; but beforehand, he needs bread. His labouring father deprives himself of his morsel to give it to him; but the child needs to earn something. His time is tied to work, because work is tied to subsistence. ...In vain you will establish a coercive law against the father; he won't be able, daily, to do without the work of a child who at eight, nine and ten years, earns already something. A few hours a week, that is all he can sacrifice.

⁸ All children will be educated by the Republic, from the age of five to 12 years for boys and from five to 11 years for girls.

National education will be equal for all; all will receive the same food, clothing, instruction and care.

National education being the debt of the Republic towards all, all children have the right to receive it, and parents will not be able to excuse themselves from the obligation of allowing them to take advantage of it. ((Translation of footnotes 6 and 7 by the author of this thesis.)

the rich and that the poor would be barely touched by this. This would be brought about by a tax.

Par ce mode, suivant lequel je vous proposerai de répartir la charge de ces établissements, presque tout portera sur le riche; la taxe sera presque insensible pour le pauvre. Ainsi, vous atteindrez les avantages de l'impôt progressif que vous désirez d'établir; ainsi, sans convulsion et sans injustice, vous effacerez les énormes disparités de fortune dont l'existence est une calamité publique (ibid, p. 40)⁹.

Another progressive aspect of his speech which is reminiscent of mother and child schemes of the 20th century was his proposal for giving help, encouragement and guidance to mothers with regard to child care which would bring comfort to mothers at childbirth and would greatly decrease infant mortality.

This radical plan represented an experiment in social engineering with the aim of educational equality of outcome which is very modern in its understanding of the correlation between family background and educational achievement. For example, recent evidence has shown that it is not the equalization of school resources such as curriculum, teaching quality or school facilities that have most effect on educational outcomes, but rather the family background characteristics of pupils (see Chapter Three of this thesis). By taking pupils from their parents and educating them all together in state boarding schools would be the optimal way of bringing about absolute equality in education. This extreme solution was justified at the time in a petition to the Convention by Lepelletier's brother, Felix. He argued that, since there would not be an abolition of private property to wipe out the rich as a class, the only way to make them accept equality was through 'education commune'.

You will establish by mandatory common education, a fraternity among citizens and an equality that can only be developed in the age of innocence by institutions for youth, but whose traces last until the winter of old age (from Lettre du citoyen Felix Lepeletier aux membres de la Convention (in Guillaume, J. 1889, cited in Palmer, op.cit. p. 145).

⁹ In the following way I propose to share out the cost of these schools, almost all will fall on the rich; the tax will hardly be noticed by the poor. Thus, you will attain the advantages of a progressive tax which you wish to establish; also without violence or injustice, you will wipe out the enormous disparities of fortune whose existence is a public calamity. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

This idea of 'common education' – 'a public instruction common to all citizens, and free for those parts of instruction indispensable for all men' was stipulated for both boys and girls in the revolutionary plans. It thus anticipated in principle the ideal of the *école unique* which made its appearance in the mid-twentieth century. During the revolution this idea was reinforced by plans for national festivals, by which adults would be brought together for the same purpose of social or national solidarity or fraternité (Palmer, p. 140). Later when Babeuf was organizing his Conspiracy of Equals in 1796 Felix Lepeletier was a member of his secret committee aimed at the overthrow of the Directory. Babeuf lauded the Lepeletier plan demanding an unconditional equalitarianism in education (Palmer, *ibid.*). This occurred at a time when the ideology of popular sovereignty was dominant which in practical terms saw the urban masses, the *sans culottes*, seizing the opportunity to push the government to implement policies such as, a maximum to be placed on prices and property, rationing and requisitioning, which were in their interest.

Napoleon's rise to power during the Revolution and later his *coup d'état* and subsequent self-enthronment as Emperor in 1804 would radically change this egalitarian ideological dominance. However, Bonaparte himself while in exile on St. Helena confided to his British doctor, Barry O' Meara on 3rd March 1817 that:

In fact the Imperial Government was a kind of republic. Called to the head of it by the voice of the nation, my maxim was la carrière ouverte aux talents, without distinction of birth or fortune, and this system of equality is the reason why your oligarchy hates me so much (O'Meara, 1822, in Palmer, 1985, p. 294).

Napoleon's standardised system of secondary education promoted a certain meritocracy and his provision for 6,400 scholarships to secondary schools was more generous than that of his successors. His most important mission was to bring unity to a country rent by civil strife. He sought to accommodate the widest spectrum of opinion whilst repressing extremism on the Left and Right (Palmer, *op. cit.*).

Although the restoration of 1815 represented a return to monarchical absolutism, all the revolution's gains were not lost and Louis XVIII's regime was bound by written charter to accept the Napoleonic Civil Code and have an elected assembly. The regime became more reactionary during Charles X's reign and revolution ensued in 1830 leading to the constitutional monarchy of Louis-Philippe. Political liberalism emphasizing constitutional and parliamentary rule predominated during the July Monarchy of 1830-1848. It took its ideological inspiration from the constitutional phase of the French Revolution and eschewed the absolutism of the Bourbon restoration or of Bonapartism. While in favour of going some way to laying the foundations of liberal democracy it was opposed to the pursuit of universal suffrage or political egalitarianism. The revolutionary experience had shown there was a contradiction between the aims of liberty and equality, and the solidarity of the republicans and liberals opposed to the repression of the restorationists was broken apart after the 1830 revolution. This will be discussed in more details in the next section on social class alliances.

Guizot who brought about the most important legislation in 1833 relating to primary education in France prior to the Ferry Laws of the 1880s with his education act, was careful to avoid language which veered towards on the one hand revolutionary ideology and on the other that of *laissez-faire*.

In his speech in support of his education bill Guizot stated as follows:

Du principe absolu de l'instruction primaire gratuite considérée comme une dette de l'Etat, passons au principe opposé, que compte encore aujourd'hui tant de partisans, celui de l'instruction primaire considérée comme une pure industrie, par conséquent livrée à la seule loi de toute industrie, la libre concurrence, et à la sollicitude naturelle des familles, sans aucune intervention de l'état. Mais ... les lieux où l'instruction primaire serait le plus nécessaire sont précisément ceux qui tente le moins l'industrie, et le besoin le plus sacré demeure sans garantie et sans avenir (Greard, 1874, cited in Allaire and Frank, op. cit. p. 72).¹⁰

¹⁰ From the absolute principle of free primary education considered as a debt of the state, let us pass to the opposite principle, which still today has so many advocates, that of primary education considered as a pure industry, free competition and the natural preoccupation of families, without any intervention from the state. But ... those areas where primary education would be most necessary are precisely those which are least attractive to industry, and the most sacred need remains without guarantee and without a future (translation by the author of this thesis).

While Guizot brought primary education with the education system under central control thus strengthening state education, education was by no means free for all children or secular and the freedom of the religious congregations to establish schools was continued. As well as this, *instruction morale et religieuse* was the first element of education mentioned in the first article of the Law of 1833. The parish priest and ministers from the various governments participated in the committees authorised to oversee primary education. With the *Loi Falloux*, 1850, however, the religious hierarchy was more seriously represented with four Archbishops or bishops numbered among the designated members of the Conseil Supérieur of public instruction as well as three members from private i.e. religious education. The power of the *Université* – the great lay teaching corporation instituted by Napoleon I was weakened and the Church would participate in its governance. This would polarise the universitaires and the Church and this caused the ideal of laïcité to become more entrenched with luminaries such as Edgar Quinet taking up the cause. In the following extract Quinet (1870) portrays the Church as antagonistic to a modern pluralist society as follows:

..pour que la société française subsiste, en dépit des contradictions entre les Eglises diverses, il faut bien qu'il y ait un lieu où les jeunes générations apprennent que, malgré ces différences éclatantes de foi et de dogme, tous les membres de cette société font une seule famille. Or ce lieu de méditation où doivent s'enseigner l'union, la paix, la concorde civile, au milieu des dissentiments inexorables des croyances et des Eglises, c'est l'école laïque (ibid p. 118, cited in Prost, 1969. p. 176).¹¹

A purge of 4,000 instituteurs followed the 1850 Act together with a heavy surveillance of their ranks. The regulations adopted by the departmental councils adopted very rigorous demands in religious matters. The first article of the regulations stated:

Le principal devoir de l'instituteur est de donner aux enfants une éducation religieuse et de graver profondément en leurs âmes le sentiment de leur

¹¹ In order that French society can exist despite the contradictions between the different Churches, it is vital that there's a place where the young generation learn that, despite the glaring differences of faith and dogma, all the members of this society make up one family. Now this place of meditation, where union, peace, civil harmony should be taught, in the midst of inexorable differences of opinion between faiths and Churches, is the lay school. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

*devoirs envers Dieu, envers les parents, envers les autres hommes et envers eux-mêmes (cited in Prost, ibid, p. 178).*¹²

Republicanism was obliged to remain underground or appeared under the guise of civism and many civic societies such as the public library societies, adult education, and most importantly the *Ligue de l'Enseignement* which opened its own secular schools in various cities. It was not until the triumph of the republicans in 1877 and the Ferry Laws in the 1880s that it regained the upper hand.

Thus the revolutionary ideology which came to prominence during the revolutionary period was crucial for laying the basis for secularism (*laïcité*) and equality in education as well as pursuing policies that had the reduction of social equality in education as their objective. It promoted a discourse of egalitarianism in education. This revolutionary ideology became more attenuated under Napoleon when limited meritocratic policies were pursued. Despite the resurgence of reactionary punctuated by liberal regimes when the revolutionary/republican ideology was abated, the continued existence of the *Université* ruled out a return to educational dominance by the Church. The ideology was reinvigorated by the education societies, for example, the *Ligue de L'Enseignement*, who championed secular education and republicanism.

The Alliance of Social Classes

The alliance of progressive classes in the nineteenth century in France had its beginnings in the French Revolution. The Third Estate was the logical focus for such an alliance in opposition to the Catholic Clergy and the aristocracy – the First and Second Estates. Traditionally in a subordinate position with regard to the latter, it wanted to assert itself as the dominant power and subvert the balance of power. The Third Estate comprised the vast majority of the 25 million or so French population in 1789, a majority of whom comprised the peasantry, together with an increasingly dominant

¹² The principal duty of the primary teacher is to give the children a religious education and to engrave deeply in their souls an understanding of their duty towards God, towards their parents, towards other men and towards themselves. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

bourgeoisie, and urban working people. Social classes at that time can only be defined loosely in modern terms, for example the proletariat had not yet emerged as a social grouping. French society was then pre-capitalist and semi-feudal. The social groupings of the Third Estate were further complicated by the presence of radical elements of the aristocracy among the early leaders of the Revolution. However, it can be said that the force which grew in dominance and came to power comprised the people of property and higher professionals who already had come to the fore in the *Ancien Régime* and whose interests lay in bringing about individual freedom from oppression, freedom of religion, freedom to own and defend private property, as well as individual equality before the law for all citizens. This social group, i.e. the burgeoning bourgeoisie, succeeded in forming an alliance with, on the one hand the peasantry through their advancement of agrarian reform, and on the other with the urban working people, referred to as the *sans-culottes*, through taking control of the economy and maintaining a price and wage equilibrium. Through the successive stages there was a changing alignment of political forces which saw during the reign of Robespierre its most radical alliance which went beyond bourgeois interests (Green, 1990; Gramsci. 1971)).

These alliances of progressive classes impacted on education and its most tangible form was with the enactment of the Bouquier law which promoted the creation of universal elementary education. This form of gratuitous education was short-lived, however, and in 1795 the Daunou Law was enacted which provided for primary schools but which was fee paying for those who could do so. This occurred in the later stages of the Revolution and reflected a less radical alignment of political forces.

During the reign of Napoleon, starting with the Consulate and particularly under the First Empire, there was a change in the alliance of progressive social classes. Napoleon, who distrusted the aristocracy, viewed the bourgeoisie as the social class most able to serve the state and most interested in the preservation of social order (Vaughan and Archer, op. cit.).

While Napoleon's education system was strictly organised on the basis of social inequality with a higher and specialized education which was open to an elite, it was also based on a limited meritocracy, and an elementary education stressing the duties of citizenship for the rest of society. The elite who were advantaged by this was bourgeois and this is particularly well encapsulated by the following quotation:

It is not completely true that the bourgeoisie exist only in culture and not in law. The lycée made it a legal institution. It even has official certificates, with a ministerial signature, duly stamped, sealed and hallowed by the administration....The baccalauréat is the real barrier guaranteed by the State, which is a protection against invasion. One can become bourgeois, it is true; but for that it is first imperative to acquire a baccalauréat. When a family rises from the people to the bourgeoisie, it does not do this in a generation. It succeeds when it has managed to give its children secondary education and to make them pass the baccalauréat (E. Goblot, 1930, p. 126, quoted in Vaughan and Archer, p. 187).

Thus, with the baccalauréat at its summit, the lycée galvanised the dominance of the bourgeoisie against the resurgence of the aristocracy (who attended the independent schools) from above, and from the encroachment of the mass of the population, from below.

Following the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, the dominant forces were defined in relation to the Revolution. They included (i) those who wanted the restoration of the Ancien Régime, and (ii) those who were in favour of a liberal bourgeois monarchy, and (iii) those committed to a Republic. The restorationists consisted of those members of the First and Second Estates of the old regime, i.e. the Church and members of the nobility who wanted the return of their privileged position. They wanted to overturn the achievements of the revolution. The liberal monarchists were most dominant from the 1830s until the 1880s, many of whom prospered from the changes brought about by the revolution, but did not want a return to revolutionary activity and wanted to consolidate the dominance of the bourgeoisie. They were most in ascendancy during the July Monarchy and intermittently during the Second Empire and held the balance of power during the greater part of the century. The republicans, instigators of the

revolutions of 1830, 1848, and the Paris Commune of 1871, were in the ascendancy after the establishment of the Third Republic in 1871. While the Church and the restorationists were uncompromisingly on the right, both the liberals and republicans had left and right factions. Hobsbawm (1996) described these in terms of social class as follows:

'... the moderate liberal (or in social terms that of the upper middle classes and liberal aristocracy), the radical-democratic (or, in social terms, that of the lower middle class, part of the new manufacturers, the intellectuals and the discontented gentry) or the socialist (or, in social terms, the 'labouring poor' or the new industrial working classes) (op. cit. p 112).

Following the Bourbon restoration, the Catholic Church and its supporters sought to reassert its authority within a favourable regime which had confirmed with its charter its position as the official religion of France. The landed upper class who was politically legitimist, that is, in favour of Absolutism, was their natural ally. In opposition was an alliance of liberals and republicans. The alliance of progressive classes forged under the repressive regime and with the aims of providing parliamentary and constitutional government and curtailing the Catholic Church politically, proved fragile and broke apart under the new regime. Once in power Guizot and the liberal monarchists resolutely consolidated the dominance of the bourgeoisie against the encroachment of the lower classes. While they succeeded in bringing about liberal reform in many areas, such as in education, and in legislature with elections held every three years, they refused to put in place democratic reform such as extending suffrage. They failed therefore to consolidate the liberal institutions which had been their mandate.

According to Gould (1999) a crucial factor interpreting the success or failure of liberal regimes is the role of religious institutions and their interaction with liberal parties. This had an interesting twist in the French situation. A liberal movement gained support within the Catholic Church in the 1830s. Although crushed by the hierarchy, some of its followers were to occupy important positions within the Church and began to lobby for religious revivalism and freedom of education. Guizot saw an opportunity to increase his power by

appealing to the Church, recognizing its organizational capacity to provide electoral support within an 'elite franchise' (Gould, *ibid*). This was reflected in the evolution of his education policy. Whereas his education bill of 1833 on primary education maintained a dominant role for the state, during the 1840s his policy was one of vacillation towards the Church. This alliance derailed any attempts at democratic reform.

The republicans, always more favourable to the revolutionary tradition allied with left leaning liberals and pushed for universal suffrage and parliamentary reform. Frustration at the failure of their policy led to their mobilisation of mass support leading to the revolution in 1848 and the fall of the regime. Failure was brought about by an alliance between a liberal turned conservative party and an illiberal Catholic Church and its supporters stalemated by Republican and progressive forces (Gould, *ibid*). This same alliance of bourgeois erstwhile liberals and the Church backed the coup of Napoleon III and scuppered attempts at advancing universal primary education, delaying it by forty years. At the same time in opposition, alliances were forged around the theme of anti-clericalism and against the encroachment of the Church in the public domain and these involved the urban and rural middle class, the peasantry and the working class (Gould, *ibid*).

Thus we see that the alliance of the more progressive forces of the middle class, peasantry and working class led to a somewhat more democratic regime. On the other hand, when the bourgeoisie aligned with the Church and the landed upper class this led to a reactionary regime and delayed the advent of universal education. In educational terms the social class alliance during this period dominated by the bourgeoisie facilitated the maintenance of a state controlled education system against encroachment by the aristocracy and provided a limited meritocracy thus producing a certain reduction of social inequality in education. Examples of this would be the attempts to provide an educational curriculum more suited to the needs of middle and working class pupils, such as, the *école primaire supérieure* and the *école secondaire spéciale*. A discourse of egalitarianism was promoted

when a progressive social class alliance which predominated, for example, during the Revolution and in the later stages of the Second Empire. It was not promoted when a more conservative alliance predominated.

The Nature of the State

The French Revolution developed the centralized state which it inherited in embryonic form from the centralized royal bureaucracy which preceded it. It brought the state centre stage in education with the initiation of a secular state controlled system. Overall administration of education was under the control of the Ministry of the Interior. The Imperial University founded by Napoleon in 1806 and 1808 inherited this high degree of centralization and provided the central authority needed to regulate it. The law of 1806 provided that the Imperial University was 'exclusively charged with teaching and education in the whole Empire' (Palmer, op. cit). While private schools continued to operate and even outnumbered state schools, these were subject to strict regulations by the state and to supervision by state officials.

During the Revolution, uniformity and standardization in various spheres had been a common demand going back to the *cahiers de doléances*, from the mundane area of weights and measures to taxation and the civil law. In education, centrality of control was seen as the best means for providing this and hence to bring unity and equity between the regions of France. This also fitted with the Enlightenment idea of reason, and a centralized hierarchical system such as the Imperial University was a quintessential example of administrative rationalism.

The structural changes brought about to the French state and its functioning within society during the Revolution set in train a trend towards meritocracy. The army was an example of this meritocratic trend and Napoleon himself was a notable beneficiary. According to Skocpol, (1979) the abolition of nobility led to the officer corps being recruited from all sections of society and promotions were made on the basis of education, skills and military experience. Also salaries were sufficient to allow the army to become a professional career. The changes in the army were paralleled by those

wrought within the administrative machinery of the state. The large state bureaucracy set up to support state institutions demanded a large army of bureaucrats. Most of these functionaries were recruited through open competition. Even during the Revolution, the administration of, for example, revenue and finances and expenditure were all brought into the state bureaucracy. What emerged, according to Skocpol (ibid) was 'a ladder of salaried civil servants all paid by one central authority and subject to central supervision and control (p. 200). The Empire added to this bureaucracy a system of centrally appointed officials and created at its apex, the Council of State, a body of experts appointed by Napoleon, which remains a powerful institution to this day. This large state bureaucracy which grew five-fold to almost 250,000 needed education training and training for its personnel (Clive H. Church, 1965, in Skocpol, ibid, p. 199). Key to bringing about the recruitment and training of personnel within the public administration was the development of a national system of examinations which was supported by the standardization of curricula within schools throughout the state. The *baccalauréat*, introduced by Napoleon's decree of 1808, was the key component of the examination system, leading to the higher education institutions and the faculties and hence to careers within the professions or the army, or directly to various levels within the public administration.

The *carrière ouverte aux talents* envisaged by Napoleon was for the benefit of the middling ranks of society although these were becoming more broadly defined (Green, op. cit). The search for uniformity and unity led to a concomitant drive for efficiency and rationalization of the state bureaucracy which itself led to a limited meritocracy and promoted a certain social mobility through credentialism, as described above, via the examinations system.

Following the fall of Napoleon and throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into the next, there was a seesawing of power between the state, the Church and the *université* with the state holding the balance of power and depending on the regime veering towards one or the other. Each régime, however, whether conservative, liberal or republican found it in its interests to maintain the centralized bureaucracy bequeathed by Napoleon I.

The centralized education system was recognised as the most efficient means of promoting the hegemony of the state and its ruling class, that is, the bourgeoisie. As well as providing the state with technical experts, it played a major role in promoting a uniform national culture and identity and thereby fostering national unity (Green, op. cit.).

It remains to be seen whether this centralized system deemed meritocratic, promoted social mobility. This issue is of crucial importance to this thesis which is concerned with how educational equality was promoted. In order to evaluate this it is important to assess social distribution in secondary education during this period up to 1870. As the secondary school was the chief mechanism for promotion of social mobility it is of crucial importance to assess what proportion of children among the popular classes were attending it. Scholars are indebted to the work of Victor Duruy who organized a large survey of public secondary schools in 1864 which provides a wealth of data in this regard. Based on his analysis of this data, Harrigan (1980) argues that the assumption among many twentieth century commentators that the French education system was elitist is largely untested. His analysis reveals that secondary education reached a wider section of society than was commonly believed and that close to half were from the lower middle class including sons of peasants, shopkeepers, and lower-level civil servants (see Table 1 below). The level of participation of the peasantry was relatively high and compares favourably with progressive models such as Denmark and Norway, with a similarly high proportion of peasantry in the population (Wiborg, 2009). Working class participation although low, approximated to two per cent and Harrigan notes that this would be three per cent if those designated as industrial were assumed to contain a percentage of unskilled workers (see Table 3 below). Harrigan (1980) strongly challenges the assertion by Zeldin (1973) that peasants' sons didn't attend secondary schools until after World War I. He asserts that:

Between 1860 and 1865, sons of agriculteurs and cultivateurs composed about one-eighth of the graduates of public secondary schools surveyed (one-ninth of those from the classical program) and probably an even greater share of the students in Catholic secondary schools. Not only did

they enter, they graduated from public secondary schools in numbers equal to those from the homes of well-to-do business men. If the French peasantry often resisted the industrialization, urbanization, secularism, and liberalism of the nineteenth century, many peasants welcomed another phenomenon of the century – public secondary education (op. cit. p. 15).

Table 3: Distribution of Occupations of fathers of Secondary School Students (percentages) (From: Harrigan, op. cit., p.14)

Professionals	18.6
Law	6.4
High	8.5
Minor	3.8
Landowner	17.0
Business leaders	13.1
Commercial	9.7
Industrial/Managerial	3.4
Civil Service	11.3
High	3.6
Middle/Low	7.8
Peasant farmers	12.3
Petit-bourgeois	27.7
White collar	2.7
Shopkeeper	14.3
Artisan	6.1
Workers	1.9
Noncommissioned military	1.3
Other	1.4
Total cases	12,603

Note: In this table and those with similar groupings, the sum of percentages for subgroups may differ from the percentage for the main group by one or two tenths of a percentage point. This is due to rounding off of decimals.

These figures should not blind us to the fact that the upper classes predominated and were overrepresented in these schools. The liberal professions sent six times as many of their children than their proportion of the population implied (Harrigan, *op. cit.*). On the other hand the census figures allows us to see how agriculture was underrepresented, with 50 per cent in the population but with 13 per cent minimum and 27 per cent maximum representation in secondary schools. It reveals the Civil servants with one per cent in the population and 11.8 per cent in these schools. Commerce was also highly represented with 3.8 per cent in the census compared to 24.4 per cent in secondary schools (Harrigan, *ibid.*). It should also be borne in mind that only a tiny percentage of the population, 5-6 percent of the male school-age population attended secondary school and of these only about half graduated in the 1860s (Harrigan, *ibid.*). Ringer (1979) puts the attendance at 2.2 per cent and includes boys and girls. The *petits seminaires* were excluded in the official statistics although these were secondary schools and were three to five times more numerous than lycées. Thus the proportion of the age cohort attending secondary schools was higher than the figures suggest.

By the end of the Second Empire, the French state presided over a centralized public education system encompassing a network of primary schools throughout the country, a system of secondary schools with a vocational sector, and higher professional schools and faculties. It controlled recruitment to the army and liberal professions through its public examinations system and thus maintained control over all schools, private and public within the state.

It appears from analysis of the data for this period that the French centralized state which introduced a centralised system of education was instrumental in promoting credentialism, an equalization of standards and curricula throughout the country and a limited form of meritocracy during this period and in this way it was conducive to a limited reduction of social inequality in education.

Chapter Five

The Development of Education in England from 1789 to 1870

At the same time as the French Revolution was bursting onto the political stage in France, equally cataclysmic events were taking place in England, but this time in the arena of economics. The industrial revolution was to be as great a turning point in England as the Revolution in France.

Foreign trade had grown spectacularly following the navigation Acts of 1651 and 1660 which subordinated the colonies to Parliament and made trade to the colonies the monopoly of English shipping. At the end of the 18th century foreign trade was three times greater than at the beginning. A large proportion of this came from the slave trade which was believed to be the most profitable of all branches of English commerce and this along with the 'organized looting' of India led to large flows of capital into the country (Hill, 1967). Capital investment in industry also came from Dutch investors (after the defeat of the Dutch in the trade wars, 1652-74), landowners and from families of small producers who ploughed their profits back into industry (Hill, *op.cit*, Fraser, 1973) and this was facilitated by an efficient banking system. Increased demand for food caused by the great population increase in the 1780s and 1790s led to an agrarian revolution contemporaneous with industrialisation resulting in a vast increase in agricultural production. Above all it was the steam engine supplying power and bringing about the mechanisation of production which created a new world (Fraser, 1973).

The system of colonial strength and commercial power was overtaken in the nineteenth century by modern industry – the new source of power. This led to a major change in British strategy and policy from colonial and commercial imperialism to a new imperialism based on free trade (Gamble, 1981). Thus, at the time of the French revolution, England led the world in trade and commerce and was becoming the dominant maritime and industrial power, a position she held until the end of the 19th century. Yet this commercially dynamic country with its burgeoning towns displaying new forms of urban

commercial and social life was very late in developing a national education system.

In the latter half of the 18th century, training in science and technology was taking place in the factories under the aegis of the radical industrial reformers such as Matthew Boulton who perfected the steam engine. These radicals were non-conformists who, following the Act of Uniformity 1660 and the Test Acts of 1665 were excluded from the Universities and Grammar Schools. Many of them, for example, Joseph Priestley, taught in dissenting academies. The most famous of these academies were in Warrington, Manchester, Daventry and later in Hackney. At the same time groups of radicals formed societies, the most famous of which was the Lunar Society in Birmingham which comprised luminaries such as Matthew Boulton, James Watt, Samuel Galton, manufacturer and chemist, Joseph Priestley, scientist, Unitarian minister and educationalist, Erasmus Darwin, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Thomas Day and Josiah Wedgwood. This group moved on from engagement with science and technology to wider social, political and educational questions (Simon, 1960). These academies and centres of self-education were of the utmost value to early industrialization and its success in England.

Despite this significant success, literacy rates fell especially in the industrial areas (Sanderson, 1983). This is challenged by West (1975a) whose refutation is based on the percentage capable of signing the marriage register – around 60% in 1850 (Carpentier (2001, pp. 37-42). Carpentier argues, however, that the level of literacy reached a plateau by the second half of the eighteenth century. According to Green (1991) the success of early industrialization did not create an incentive for educational development as (i) the country did not need to catch-up economically, (ii) the auto-didacticism of many of the early engineers and inventors, so successful initially, led to a certain complacency which supported a reliance on the empirical and *ad hoc* methods of scientific and technical learning, and (iii) the reliance on child labour in creating profits for industrialists and in providing the crucial additional wage for working class parents created hostility on the

part of the manufacturing middle class to extension of working class education.

Thus unlike in France where passionate debate took place about the establishment of a new form of education for a new society where education was a right, no such revolutionary discussion took place in political circles England. It was considered that the economy would be better served by investing directly in industry than from any benefits from pumping money into educating the masses who were better employed by servicing the labour-intensive industries (Sanderson, op. cit.).

The radicals of the societies and academies referred to above were initially sympathetic to the French Revolution in 1789 and wrote pamphlets in support of it, later refuting Burke's famous denunciation, as Thomas Payne, whose *Rights of Man* appeared in 1791, had also done. Priestley was himself invited to join the revolutionary Convention in Paris. At the same time they were campaigning for reform in parliament. Repression quickly followed with members arrested for sedition and treason, academies closed and Priestley and Payne fled to America. The political reaction to the French Revolution marked the end of this phase of social development which had given rise to the spirit of scientific and free enquiry (Simon, op. cit.).

The Whig and Tory parties dominated politics at the time. These were seen by the middle class as aristocratic factions who retained power by denying the franchise to the majority of the people and who ruled in the interests of the landowner class. The Radical movement, representing middle-class interests spearheaded Parliamentary reform during the first part of the 19th century culminating in the Reform Act of 1832 which extended the franchise and in the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. The demand for educational reform was an important aspect of this movement (Simon, op. cit.). James Mill and Jeremy Bentham were two major spokesmen for this movement. Their theories were mainly responsible for bringing education into the mainstream of political life. Mill's ideas developed a theory of universal suffrage and with it that of universal education as a means of uniting the

mass of the people against the aristocratic oligarchy and in favour of a society governed by those most qualified to do so in the interests of all, i.e. the middle class. Mill launched a sharp ideological attack on the traditional educational institutions, e.g. the endowed grammar and 'public' schools and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. These were closely linked to the Anglican Church and the aristocracy and the education given there, based uniquely on the classics with occasionally modern languages and gentlemanly pursuits, was irrelevant to middle-class life. Mill also put forward an alternative policy for the establishment by the middle-class of its own institutions free from ancient statutes and clerical authority.

The Church and State in Education

Some reference to the situation with regard to the relationship between religion and the state in England and its importance for education is appropriate at this point. Relations between the church and state differed greatly in France and England; whilst there was continual power struggle between these in the former, there was unity in the latter after Henry VIII had broken with Rome and proclaimed himself Head of the Church of England in the 16th century. Things were, however, more complex than this, since the reformed church was not a monolithic institution, as the Catholic Church was, but instead was split into various denominations. These denominations approximated very roughly to the different social classes since the Restoration, when the Puritan aristocracy and gentry reverted to the Church of England. Using the slightly crude metaphor of Harold Perkin's (1969) sandwich, Anglicans (and in some areas such as rural Lancashire, Roman Catholics) were at the top and bottom and Dissenters in the middle, for example, the Quaker bankers and ironmasters, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist merchant clothiers and traders of the 18th century. Not all Dissenters, however, were capitalists nor capitalists Dissenters for it included many yeomen farmers and ordinary textile workers and excluded, for example, many London merchants and bankers, and Liverpool slave-traders (Perkin, op. cit.). Those who were dependent on the landowner elite for employment, tenancies or patronage could not afford the luxury of dissent. To these sects were added the Methodists after Wesley's separation from

the Church of England in 1784. This mainly appealed to working-men who were becoming independent of landlord and employer (Perkin, op. cit.). Although the Radical leaders such as James Mill and Bentham were agnostics, the dissenters were drawn to many of the ideals of utilitarianism, such as, industry, hard work and thrift, because of their similarity to Puritan values. They worked together to reinforce the moral superiority of the middle class.

Whilst the system of education under the *Université* set up by Napoleon in 1806, which controlled all schools in France, particularly the secondary lycées and colleges and the institutions of higher education, was secular and centralised under the state, the secondary schools and the two universities in England were controlled by the Church of England. A licence to teach had also to be obtained from the bishop. Roman Catholics and non-conformists were not able to attend these institutions. The Church of England was also dominant in most of the elementary charity schools under the auspices of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge until 1811, and after that by the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Church of England.

Rather than attempting to wrest control over education from the ruling elite of church and state, the dissenting sector undertook a strategy of substitution and they set about establishing their own schools (Archer, op. cit.). The Dissenting Academies were famous examples of this strategy (see above) but they were at a higher level and aimed at the middle class and for those who were debarred from Oxford and Cambridge. The Methodists, with their democratic organisation of local preachers and lay administrators, were in favour of encouraging popular education and were foremost in developing the Sunday school movement in the late 18th century. Although their efforts were mainly condescendingly philanthropic, they paved the way for the voluntary movement in the early part of the 19th century (Barnard, 1947).

The catalyst for the setting up of the foremost voluntary associations was the introduction of the monitorial system which was a method to provide popular

education on a large scale and which fitted with the ideas of political economy of the time. This system was introduced, on the one hand, by Andrew Bell, a Church of England clergyman, who experimented with this method while a missionary in Madras, and by Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, who opened a private school in Southwark. Quakers became involved in Lancaster's school and its numbers grew to 800. Donations also poured into it. These rival monitorial schools gave rise to a long enduring controversy that lasted throughout the 19th century and was reinforced by the formation of the two voluntary societies, one pertaining to the established church, the National Society (referred to earlier) and the other, pertaining to the Dissenters, the Royal Lancastrian Association, founded in 1810 and renamed in 1814 as the British and Foreign School Society. It was supported by radical Whigs such as Brougham, Whitbread, and James Mill and its methods spread to the continent and the colonies – hence the word 'foreign' in the title. Its elementary schools were open to children of any denomination (Barnard, op. cit.). The National Society's schools had to give pupils instruction in the liturgy and catechism of the Church of England. This cleavage between the two religious societies has been hailed as a reason for the delay in establishing a national system of elementary education. This, however, was just a symptom of this delay because this differentiated and voluntary form of schooling fitted very well into the ethos of English society and its liberal values whereby a centralised system under state control would be anathema to it.

Primary education and the struggle for universal education

In France universal elementary education had been posited as a fundamental right of all sections of the population during the French Revolution, and while this had not been achieved until the 1880s, successive governments, with the exception perhaps of Napoleon Bonaparte who focused primarily on secondary education, had taken steps, albeit tentatively, towards this goal. In England the cause was much more protracted.

Up to the 1830s several unsuccessful attempts to initiate state intervention in support of elementary education were made by successive Radical Whigs

starting with Samuel Whitbread's Parochial Schools' Bill in 1807. It was thrown out on the following bases: (i) cost, (ii) the undermining of the Anglican Church's monopoly in education, and (iii) that education would cause discontent among the 'lower classes'. This parliamentary lobbying in favour of elementary education gave rise to reports published in 1816 and 1818 which indicated a growing desire for education throughout the country. A picture of poverty-stricken London emerged with descriptions (reminiscent of those of Dickens written 20 years later) with stories of children only able to come to school when it was their turn to wear the family suit (Maclure, 1969). Henry Brougham's Parish Schools' Bill of 1820 called for schools to be partly maintained through the rates and partly through wealthy parents' fees. This Bill was opposed by the various denominations and met the same fate as its predecessor. Roebuck's Bill of 1833 was more ambitious than its forerunners and approximated to providing universal and compulsory schooling funded by the state and controlled by elected district committees. This, naturally, clashed with the dominant ideology of the minimal state and liberalism. It was given the death sentence by Peel who, encapsulating the English ethos of the time, argued that in a country, such as England, proud of its freedom, education ought to be left free from state control (Hansard, July 30th, 1833, col. 169, in Green, *ibid*, p. 263). The result was not entirely negative, however, for that year the government made its first grant of £20,000 for the erection of schoolhouses. It was renewed and increased each following year and amounted to £836,920 in 1859 (Barnard, *op. cit.*).

It is of interest here to compare this liberal ideology at the heart of government policy in England which equated freedom with lack of state support for elementary education while the poor people were deprived of it, and the situation in France in 1830 when, following the Loi Guizot every commune in France was required by government to set up a primary school and which set up a primary education system under state control in keeping with an ideology which saw popular education as a duty and responsibility of the state. State intervention in English education was opposed, however, not only by the Anglican-Tory alliance, but also by the non-conformists and middle class Liberals with the exception of Utilitarian Radicals such as

Bentham and Mill. The enlightenment ideas championing an education free from religious indoctrination had been expounded by Tom Paine, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill and Robert Owen. It was the working-class organisations who took up afresh the campaign for a publicly provided system of secular education, for example, the London Working Men's Association, the Lancashire Public School Association under the leadership of Richard Cobden, William Newton, the first independent Labour candidate for parliament, the Miners Association of Great Britain and Ireland, and of course the Chartists, such as William Lovett, Ernest Jones and Julian Harney. It was, however, on the issue of state education that Chartism, at the height of its political struggle, became divided. William Lovett, earlier suspicious of government intervention in education, by the 1840s was campaigning for a national system of non-sectarian schools, financed by the state, but under the control of local committees, which would be elected by universal suffrage. Fergus O' Connor was opposed to this and referred to Lovett's approach as "Knowledge Chartism" causing the latter to drop out of the mainstream Chartist movement.

At the same time Robert Owen's organisation, The Universal Society of Rational Religionists, spearheaded the socialist educational and propaganda activities of the early 1840s. It established Halls of Science, which spread particularly throughout the North. The Manchester Hall was the most important of these where lectures on scientific, economic and political subjects were given, concerts and parties organised, evening classes for instruction in 'the three Rs', a Sunday school providing scientific education and a day school with over 100 pupils (Simon, op. cit.). The Owenite socialist movement declined in the mid-1840s and became submerged in the secularist movement which spread during the latter half of the century. The working class self-education movement continued, therefore, to develop independently from the efforts of middle class reform.

A factory commission was set up and its report in 1833 represented an important turning point in social policy. It forbade the employment of children under nine, children between nine and thirteen were limited to an eight-hour

day, and young persons under eighteen were restricted to a twelve-hour day. Most importantly it specified that two hours a day were to be set aside for education and four factory inspectors were designated to enforce the Act (Fraser, op. cit. p. 21). Fraser (op. cit.) explains how it was possible to regard Althorp's Act as an exception to and a confirmation of *laissez-faire*. It acknowledged the right of the state to intervene to protect exploited sections of the community, i.e. children, who unlike adults were not 'free agents'. Thus the exception proved the rule.

Secondary Education

Throughout the Nineteenth century there was no public system of secondary education in England, a situation which was totally at variance with the situation in France where a system was established under Napoleon in 1806. Secondary education took place in independent schools which were financed by endowments and fees in (i) endowed grammar schools or (ii) private schools. The endowed school was a very ancient institution founded mainly by bishops or churchmen or wealthy benefactors. Many of these schools preceded the Reformation and these were refounded thereafter. The most prestigious of these, Eton, founded by Henry VI in 1440 and Winchester by William of Wykeham in 1382 were set up as boarding schools and had direct links to Oxford and Cambridge. The other schools which make up the nine ancient public schools originated as endowed grammar schools and were set up as non fee-paying schools for the education of local boys. These schools, for example, Rugby, Harrow and Shrewsbury, developed from modest beginnings into boarding schools of renown, drawing pupils from across the country. These also included Westminster and Kings College, Canterbury, originally cathedral schools, as well as Charterhouse and Merchant Taylors' and St. Paul's which were day schools. As well as these there were hundreds of endowed grammar schools dotted around the country which at the time of the Taunton Commission numbered close to 800 (Barnard, op. cit.). During the eighteenth century many of these schools stagnated and had very few scholars, yet the headmaster and his assistant continued to draw their stipends, even in extreme cases where no teaching was done.

The Report of Brougham's Charity Commissioners who toured the country for two decades after 1818, uncovered many such examples of laxity and corruption. While the classical curriculum was unsuitable for large swathes of the population, resulting in huge depletion in school numbers, headmasters continued to refuse to allow more modern subjects to be taught. Conflict between schools trustees, representing commercial interests and the headmasters, exploiting their position of privilege and maintaining their legitimacy to do so based on tradition, reveals the tensions between the needs of the middle class for an education relevant to their interests and the reluctance of the dominant church and squirarchy to relinquish their vested interests. However, there are many cases of schools finding ways of getting around the out-dated statutes.

Private Secondary Schools

As well as the public and endowed grammar schools there were thousands of secondary schools of varying kinds set up by private individuals. The curriculum in these schools was not confined to the classics and as many of these catered for children of merchants and business people, they provided, in many cases, schooling which was more relevant to the needs of this sector. As outlined earlier, the radical Utilitarians campaigned against the traditional educational institutions and Bentham's work on education provided detailed plans for secondary schooling based on the principles of utilitarianism to provide for the kind of scientific and technical education, which the upcoming middle class needed.

There were schools set up by the different religious denominations, for example, Quakers, Methodists, Presbyterian as well as Jewish, and Roman Catholic who had been excluded from the endowed schools since the 1660s. There were also private schools, apart from endowed schools, set up for Church of England pupils. The most important were boarding schools. The children of the lower middle class tended to go to the lesser boarding schools or day schools which varied greatly in quality (Simon, op. cit.). Due to lack of capital these institutions were not very secure and lacked in resources. Birching was often the main form of discipline used.

As the endowed public and grammar schools catered almost exclusively for boys, the girls of the upper and middle class who were not educated at home by governesses attended private schools. They were taught in reading and writing and in the domestic arts as well as accomplishments such as, French, Italian, painting and embroidery, singing and instrumental music (Barnard, op cit.). The first training college for women was set up with the foundation of Queen's College in Harley Street, London in 1848.

The proprietary schools were a new form of private school set up with proper funding to provide an education to equal that of the public schools but at a much more moderate fee and with a more useful curriculum. They were set up by groups of like-minded people, be they Church of England, or nonconformist or secular and who established a joint stock company. They later gained the status of charitable foundations. The first of these was the Liverpool Institute established in 1825. They multiplied rapidly after this both in and near London and in the provinces (Simon, *ibid.*). During this period, the new proprietary schools were seen as a threat to the older, even the public schools. The fact that the latter survived owes a great deal to the pedagogical reforms brought about by two head masters, Samuel Butler at Shrewsbury between 1798 and 1839, and Thomas Arnold of Rugby from 1827 to 1842. Another reason, unrelated to curriculum and pedagogy, was that the collapse of the new schools had more to do with the development of the railways and the changing social and political scene. From the mid-1840s, the middle class turned to the boarding schools and away from the day proprietary schools which had previously embodied their educational aspirations (Simon, *op cit.*). The repeal of the Test Act in 1828 and Reform Act of 1832 were important factors. The latter resulted in middle class representation in the House of Commons. These elected representatives tended to be largely unqualified and lacking in the polished accomplishments of their upper class colleagues in the Cabinet and therefore looked to the Public Schools to acquire a gentlemanly education (Simon, *ibid.*).

Rather than becoming more democratic during this period up to 1870 secondary schools were becoming more socially stratified. The endowed schools had been set up to provide free education for the poor of the locality, but over the years the presence of local boys was perceived as lowering standards. Also over the centuries abuses such as nepotism became common and schools increasingly found ways of charging fees which became inflated when they became subject to market forces. Reforming headmasters insisted on Latin as a prerequisite for entry leading to the spread of preparatory schools with similarly prohibitive fees. Fees also became inflated when schools gained prestige. The Clarendon Commissioners Report (1864)(see in next section) helped this trend by suggesting the sweeping away of obsolete requirements and the opening up of schools to competitive examination. The Clarendon Commission secured according to Simon (ibid) an efficient and entirely segregated system of education for the governing class – one that has no parallel in any other country.

Secondary School Reform

The 1850s and 1860s proved to be a time of fundamental reform of the educational institutions. A Royal Commission of inquiry into the state of Oxford and Cambridge Universities led to the Oxford University Act of 1854 and the Cambridge University act of 1856. The reform of the civil service leading to the introduction of a system of competitive entry impacted on the secondary schools leading to more competition between them and necessitating higher educational standards. A Royal Commission under Lord Clarendon was set up in 1861 to inquire into the nine public schools. Their report in 1864 advocated reform of the governing bodies and the remodeling of the curriculum on the lines of the German classical secondary school, the Gymnasium. The commissioners noted that natural sciences were practically excluded from the education of the higher classes in England (Board of Education, 1938, p. 28). Whilst the classics and religious instruction would remain paramount, English, mathematics, French or German and instruction in natural science and music or drawing would be included. Boys should also acquire some geography, English, history

including modern history and English grammar (Board of Education, *ibid*, p, 29). Although the Clarendon Report voiced some criticisms of the public schools, as noted by Aldrich (1996) it expressed its confidence in these nine establishments in glowing terms referring to them as having been 'the chief nurseries of our statesmen' and that 'they have had perhaps the largest share in moulding the character of the English gentleman'.

A further Royal Commission under Lord Taunton was set up in 1864 to look at the 800 endowed Grammar schools and 122 proprietary schools as well as an estimated 10,000 private schools. They presented their report in 1868. The commissioners reported that in general the distribution of secondary schools throughout the country was inadequate (Board of Education, *ibid*, p. 30). They deemed the endowed grammar school as 'unsatisfactory' and 'chaotic'. The proprietary and private schools were extremely diverse and were divided according to social class with a corresponding inequality of standards. In the Taunton Report, the endowed schools were reclassified. Those where Latin and Greek were not taught (nearly 2,200) were termed 'non-classical schools' and the remaining 705 'Grammar Schools'. Most of the former were said to be 'for the education of the labouring classes only' (Maclure, *op. cit.*). The Commission recommended a tripartite scheme for secondary schools divided according to their social background with first grade schools with leaving ages of 18-19, second grade schools to 16, and third grade schools to 14. Proposals for having local school boards were rejected as well as those for having a Normal School on French lines for training secondary school teachers preferring a system based on registration and school examinations (Maclure, *ibid*).

The Endowed Schools Act of 1869 only enforced some of the proposals. A middle class, fee paying and academic grammar school of the first grade type was created. No provision was made for schooling of the popular classes whose only recourse was to attend the new Board Schools after 1870. At this stage the 'public schools' had consolidated and the Headmasters' Conference was set up in 1869 initially comprising the non-Clarendon Schools (Roach, 1986).

Elementary Education

The setting up of a public system of education in England, as referred to previously, was a slow and tortuous process extending in a piece-meal fashion throughout the nineteenth century. A Committee of Council for Education was set up in 1839 and an Education Department was created for its administration in 1856. This Department set up the Newcastle Commission to inquire into the state of popular education. Its report of 1861 was the first comprehensive survey into elementary education in England. The report mainly took the form of statistics based on inquiries made by the Commission and on estimates of doubtful value (Maclure, op. cit.).

The only recommendation of the commission adopted by the Government in 1862 was payment by results, referred to as the Revised Code. Payment by results is perhaps the most blatant example of the economic principles of *laissez-faire* as applied to education. The Revised Code had the anticipated effect of being cheap. The education grant decreased from 813,441 in 1861 to 636,806 in 1865. There was also a rise in average attendance. It also had negative effects, particularly in causing undue pressure and anxiety about results in both children and teachers. The belief in formal examinations as a way of selecting on the basis of merit was strong during the 1850s and 1860s. They were seen as the ideal solution to the problem of how to recruit on grounds other than patronage or birth (Stobart, 2008). Open competition was gradually introduced in the Civil Service from 1855 onwards. This had a bearing on the policy towards popular education, for it was felt that if minor Civil Service appointments, e.g. postmen, were open to competition, then people would be more inclined to keep their children at school in the hope of securing a post through examination (Barnard, op. cit.). The reform bill of 1867 gave the vote to householders who paid rates and thus to those lower middle and working class people not qualified under the 1832 Reform Act.

The Elementary Act of 1870 was introduced two years after the liberals came to power. The Act represented a compromise with voluntarism and Forster introduced the bill with the proposal:

... to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of the parents, and welcoming as much as we rightly can the co-operation and aid of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours (Murphy, 1972).

Most importantly, the Act legislated for the setting up of elected school boards and divided the country into school districts which were the municipal boroughs or civil parishes. The Education Department would assess whether any areas were in need of schools, and in such a case allowed the voluntary societies a period of one year to seek to fill the gap. If they were not forthcoming, a school board would be set up and would have powers to establish and maintain elementary schools with rate aid, in addition to Government grant and school fees (Barnard, *ibid*). While education was not free in these schools, the school board could remit the fees of poor children, but for a renewable period not exceeding six months.

As regards religious instruction, the school boards could decide whether or not to provide this, but if introduced it should be free of any denominational bias. The bill also provided for inspection of public schools to be obligatory and undenominational. As regards compulsory attendance school boards were empowered to frame byelaws for this purpose from children between the ages of five and twelve. This was not a legal requirement, however, and school boards were not obliged to do this. Although the education act represented a compromise in leaving room for voluntarism, school fees and endowments, it did lay the foundations for setting up a national system and was an important milestone on the way to universal elementary education and which would no longer be seen as a gift but as a right. The working class could at least exercise some control over the schooling of their children and some of them were elected to the new school boards (Simon, *op. cit.*).

The result was a dual system whereby the state had taken responsibility for the provision of education without creating an integrated system. The

voluntary sector was actually strengthened by the Act with 14,000 schools in this sector by 1881 compared to 3,692 public board schools and with attendance double that for board schools. This dominance continued into the following century with 14,000 in voluntary schools compared to 6,000 in board schools (Mulhall, Dictionary of statistics, 1884, p. 111).

Analysis in terms of the explanatory factors

Persistence of liberal ideology

After 1688 the Whig gentry, who were in the ascendancy, laid the foundations of centuries of liberal capitalism when the ethos was hostile to central state intervention (Gamble, 1981). Any state initiatives in education served only to shore up the privileges of the Anglican Church (Green, 1990). The monopoly of the established Church over education was underpinned by a religious ideology which emphasised its educational mission as well as the link between birth and higher education. This monopoly was guaranteed by the state as exemplified by the legal constraints of the Test Acts which debarred Dissenters and consequently a large proportion of the industrial middle class from secondary and higher education (Vaughan and Archer, op. cit). Up to the mid-nineteenth century English secondary education catered mostly to the landowning class, preparing future clergymen, lawyers, doctors and secondary teachers (most often clergymen). In contrast, French education, while catering for these professions also served the needs of growing bureaucracies and was therefore more geared towards technological progress and development (Ringer, 1979).

Attempts to initiate state-sponsored elementary education had little success up to the 1830s. Samuel Whitbread's Parochial Schools' Bill of 1807 was rejected on the basis of cost, its possible undermining of the Anglican Church's monopoly, and because it would cause discontent among the 'lower classes'. Mr Davies-Giddy's much quoted contribution to the debate gives a flavour of the predominant attitude of landowners at this time.

However specious in theory the project might be of giving education to the labouring class of the poor, it would be prejudicial to their morals and happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of

making them good servants in agriculture and other laborious employments to which their rank in society had destined them; (D. Giddy, Speech in Parliament, in Cobbet's Parliamentary Papers, 13 July 1807, p. 798, in Green, 1990, p. 262).

One notable difference between debates about popular education in France and England is that in the former, this was seen as a right and a responsibility of government and the state and in the latter it was perceived as a Christian and moral obligation and based on charity. The debate and discourse which takes place in England consequently is often based on appeals to altruistic tendencies as they portray the plight of the destitute poor. Maclure (op. cit.) states that large and weighty volumes which contain the answers of clergymen, lawyers, public benefactors and educational enthusiasts provide a bewilderingly rich source of background material about poverty and destitution.

Thus the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis in 20 June, 1816 reported that:

[We] have found reason to conclude, that a very large number of poor children are wholly without the means of Instruction, although their parents appear to be generally very desirous of obtaining that advantage for them.

Your Committee have also observed with much satisfaction, the highly beneficial effects produced upon all those parts of the Population which, assisted in whole or in part by various Charitable Institutions, have enjoyed the benefits of Education.

Your Committee have not had time this Session fully to report their Opinion upon the different branches of their Inquiry, but they feel persuaded that the greatest advantages would result to this Country from Parliament taking proper measures, in concurrence with the prevailing disposition in the Community, for supplying the deficiency of the means of Instruction which exists at present and for extending this blessing to the Poor of all descriptions (British Parliamentary Papers, 1816, cited in Maclure, 1973, pp. 18-19).

The evidence given by Reverend William Gurney, Rector of Saint Clement Danes is of note:

...But there are a great many mendicants in our parish, owing to the extreme poverty of the neighbourhood, and the more children they have, the more success they meet with in begging, and they keep them in that way; ...we tried the experiment in several instances, by giving clothes to some of the most ragged, in order to bring them decent to school; they

appeared for one Sunday or two, and then disappeared, and the clothes disappeared also (House of Commons, 1969, pp. 14-15).

There is also the evidence of Mr Francis Baisler:

Was it the parish to St. Giles which you visited? – The left-hand side of Long Acre, along Drury Lane.

How many uneducated? – 497.

... Were those of the lower order, generally speaking, uneducated altogether? – The greater part of them.

Did they seem anxious for it generally? – Extremely so; the general inquiry was, what time they might get their children to school.

What nation were they chiefly, of the families you visited? – A good many Irish.

Did you find any difference in the Irish, as to their education? – Yes.

What was it? – There were generally more in their families uneducated than the others.

Did you find any difference in their anxiety to be educated? – Very little, they were generally as desirous of having their children educated as the others. ...

When you speak of children, to what age do you refer? – from five to ten; after that time they generally send them out to do something; and do not keep them at home.

You saw a great deal of misery and filth? – Yes very great (ibid. p. 8).

Thus the Report of Brougham's committee in very respectful terms made the following suggestions for parish schools to be set up at the expense of industry or by the rates.

In humbly suggesting what is fit to be done for promoting universal education, Your Committee do not hesitate to state, that different plans are advisable, adapted to the opposite circumstances of the town and country districts. Wherever the efforts of individuals can support the requisite number of schools, it would be unnecessary and injurious to interpose any parliamentary assistance. But Your Committee have clearly ascertained, that in many places private subscriptions could be raised to meet the yearly expenses of a School, while the original cost of the undertaking, occasioned chiefly by the erection and purchase of the schoolhouse, prevents it from being attempted.

Your Committee conceive, that a sum of money might be well employed in supplying this first want, leaving the charity of individuals to furnish the annual provision requisite for continuing the school, and possibly for repaying the advance. ...

In the numerous districts where no aid from private exertions can be expected, and where the poor are manifestly without adequate means of instruction, Your Committee are persuaded, that nothing can supply the deficiency but the adoption, under certain material modifications of the Parish school system, so usefully established in the Northern part of the island, ever since the latter part of the seventeenth century ...

...It appears further to Your Committee, that it may be fair and expedient to assist the parishes where no schoolhouses are erected, with the means of providing them, so as only to throw upon the inhabitants the burthen of paying the schoolmaster's salary, which ought certainly not to exceed twenty-four pounds a year (cited in Maclure, 1973, pp. 20-21).

Roebuck's Bill of 1834 was much more ambitious than its predecessors, in 1807 and 1820, proposing universal and compulsory education maintained by the state. The rejection of this was largely based on its non-compliance with the dominant liberal ideology. The Lord chancellor, Lord Brougham and Vaux's evidence exemplifies the official position:

Do you consider that the aid or interference of the Legislature is required for promoting general education in this country?

I am of the opinion that much good may be done by judicious assistance; but legislative interference is in many respects to be either altogether avoided or very cautiously employed because it may produce mischievous effects.

Do you think that a system of primary education, established by law would be beneficial?

I think that it is wholly inapplicable to the present conditions of the country and the actual state of education. Those who recommend it in on account of its successful adoption on the Continent, do not reflect upon the funds which it would require, and upon the exertions already made in this country by individual beneficence. In 1818, there were half a million of children taught at day schools supported by voluntary contributions; and if I may trust the accuracy of returns which I received in 1828 from nearly 500 parishes taken at random all over the country, that number had more than doubled. It is probable that day schools for 1,200,000 at the least are now supported without endowment, and endowed schools are established for above 170,000, making, in all, schools capable of educating nearly 1,400,000 children. But if the State were to interfere, and obliged every parish to support a school or schools sufficient for educating all children, two consequences would inevitably follow; the greater part of the funds now raised voluntarily for this purpose would be withdrawn, and the State or the rate-payers in each parish would have to provide schools for 2,000,000 of children, because the interference would be quite useless, unless it supplied the whole defect, which is the difference between schools for one-tenth, the present amount, and schools for one-seventh, the amount required to educate the whole people.

Do you consider that a compulsory education would be justified, either on principles of public utility or expediency? I am decidedly of opinion that it is justifiable upon neither; but, above all, I should regard anything of the kind as utterly destructive of the end it has in view. ...They who have argued in favour of such a scheme from the example of a military

government like that of Prussia, have betrayed, in my opinion, great ignorance of the nature of Englishmen. ... (pp. 220-5, quoted in Maclure, op. cit. pp. 39-40).

This principled opposition to compulsory education was still expressed with similar conviction three decades later as evidence during the comprehensive inquiry as evidenced in the report of the Commissioners into the State of Popular Education in England which led to the Newcastle Report of 1861.

... Any universal compulsory system appears to us neither attainable nor desirable. In Prussia, indeed, and in many parts of Germany, the attendance can scarcely be termed compulsory. Though the attendance is required by law, it is a law which entirely expresses the convictions and wishes of the people. But we also found that the results of this system, as seen in Prussia, do not appear to be so much superior to those which have been already attained amongst ourselves by voluntary efforts, as to make us desire an alteration which would be opposed to the feelings and, in some respects, to the principles of this country (from Chapter 6, p. 300, cited in Maclure, ibid, pp 74-75).

The ideological challenge by the middle class was based on their economic position in society and the ownership of property and encapsulated in Adam Smith's philosophy of political economy. The Utilitarians, with James Mill as their principal ideologue, linked the ideas of political economy with a radical theory of education. They envisaged a rational secular and scientific education for all. Profoundly convinced by the power of reason, Mill was certain it was only necessary to put the facts of political economy before the working class for them to understand that their interests lay in giving support to the institution of property and the middle class generally. He believed that the differences that exist between one class and another are wholly owing to education. This, as Vaughan and Archer (op. cit.) succinctly indicate, could lead in two different directions.

Two different conclusions could be derived from this postulate: either a single educational system reflecting the basic equality of ability and contributing to social equality, or a plurality of institutions corresponding to the division of labour in society and perpetuating a social hierarchy without necessarily confirming the existing one. Mill chooses the latter (op. cit. p. 73).

Like Smith, Mill regarded the division of labour with its attendant social hierarchy as indispensable to the general welfare. For Mill, despite his belief that all classes should gain an equal degree of 'intelligence', held that this was not possible in practice. Because the capitalist system which the Utilitarians extolled required a large proportion of humanity to labour, it followed that a higher degree of 'intelligence be acquired by those not required to labour'. This was the contradiction at the heart of Mill's theory of education (Simon, op. cit.).

In summary, the ideology of the landed upper class was conservative and opposed to enlightened instruction for the working class and resolutely opposed attempts to do so up to the 1830s. However, it was the liberal ideology and the doctrine of laissez-faire and the minimal state which predominated during the period up to the 1870s and this favoured an education divided firmly on social class lines with the aim of preventing social conflict. Both ideologies coalesced in their opposition to state intervention with all parties for example, voluntary associations, Dissent, Tories and Whigs in agreement over this. It appears, therefore, that a dominant liberal ideology did not promote a discourse of egalitarianism in England during the period and neither was it conducive to reducing social inequality in education.

Alliance of Social Classes

The settlement at the end of the seventeenth century in England brought increased liberties, safeguarded rights and increased opportunities for civil society. As Gamble (op. cit) points out, these liberties 'tended to unify different sections of property owners by making all forms of property commensurable. This made the constant widening of the social bloc much easier to accomplish (p. 71). The conservative alliance between landowning upper class and the merchant and industrial middle classes, however, was straining at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was exemplified in the campaign for universal suffrage spearheaded by the Radical Whigs and the Utilitarians who expected to unite the mass of the people behind the middle class for the destruction of aristocratic oligarchy. There was also the campaign for universal education which marked another

cleavage with the ascendancy class who opposed it. The middle class was in favour of popular schooling, however, not as a means of enlightenment or of social advancement for the working class as it was envisaged for the middle class, but as a means of securing their acquiescence to a subordinate role and of producing a more productive and willing class of workers (Green, 1990). While James Mill put forward theories for universal education, his egalitarian rhetoric masked his real aspirations for a class-based form of education.

The industrial middle class was engaged in a fight on two fronts. On the one hand, they fought to oust the aristocracy from power to clear the road for the development of a capitalist order, and for this they needed intensive political agitation to get the support of the mass of the people. On the other hand, they had to suppress the development of an independent working class movement which threatened capitalism itself. Herein lay the deep contradiction at the heart of the utilitarian radicals' philosophy based on the greatest happiness of the greatest number. If this were to be brought about through capitalist expansion, this necessarily depended, following Marx's analysis, on the exploitation of the working class. For a time after the increased franchise of 1832 and 1846, the middle class continued to vote for the aristocracy in elections thus maintaining the political leadership of that class and this represented a delegation of power from the former to the latter (Anderson, 1964). The middle class abandoned any republican ideals and, seduced by the cultural panoply of titles and pageantry of the upper class ascendancy, sought to assimilate themselves with that class (Gamble, *op. cit.*). (The pantomime of the opening of parliament with the tomfool pageantry of Black Rod is an annual reminder of the assimilation of these social classes – an event which both baffles and compels the onlooker from any other nationality.) This assimilation was achieved most importantly by means of the new public schools which were designed to socialize the parvenu middle class into the ways of the 'gentleman' (Anderson, *op. cit.*).

For the working class who were excluded from the franchise, the Reform Bill of 1832 was a huge disappointment. This marked a divergence between

them and the middle class. The promises of the Utilitarian radicals appeared hollow. Their championing of working-class education was a necessary means to the emancipation of capital and therefore of the middle class, and not of the working-class itself (Simon, op. cit.). The capitalists, in particular the factory owners, did nothing to help the cause of universal education with their system which depended on profit through child labour. This led to the increased isolation of the working class and an increased consciousness of its separate identity.

The assimilation of the enfranchised middle class to the upper landowner class is reflected in the education system particularly in secondary education. As has been shown earlier, recruitment to secondary schooling became more socially stratified as the century progressed. This was epitomized by the hijacking of schools' endowments by abolishing of free school places, charging increasingly exorbitant fees and by making school entry selective. Instead of attending day schools as had hitherto been the case, the commercial middle class and those who could afford to, wishing to distinguish themselves from the 'lower classes', began to flock to the more prestigious boarding schools. The failure of the government to implement the more progressive proposals of the Taunton Report such as financial support for schools and its complete failure to provide a form of secondary education for the working class, exemplifies the abandonment of the latter by the ascendant middle class. The working class were edged out of the grammar schools and their only recourse was the elementary and later the higher grade schools provided by the School Boards after the 1870 Education Act. This will be considered further in the section on the state.

The analysis of the data from the period 1789-1870 suggests that the alliance of the landed and upper middle classes was not conducive to the promotion of social equality in education and promoted a form of education which was socially stratified.

The Nature of the State

In France, following the Revolution, education was seen as crucial for securing the legitimacy of the French state and for uniting the French people around its republican ideals. The position of the British state was different. According to Green (1990) the British state was characterised by early centralisation of state power under the Tudors and by the stability of its institutions and ruling groups. Education, therefore, was not so crucial for fostering patriotism and national identity. The unity of interests between parliament, landowners, trade and the financial institutions had favoured the maintenance of a minimalist state as most beneficial to the liberation of economic forces and the free interplay of the market. The early and arguably major part of the 19th century was dominated by the philosophy of *laissez-faire* in government and economics, and this was transferred to education. This did not mean that England was immune to the process of reform throughout Europe or to the rationalist and secularist thought of the enlightenment. Whilst on the continent educational reforms meant the creation of national systems through state intervention, in England it meant educational expansion without system (Green, *ibid*). The unwritten constitution inherited from the eighteenth century created a state that was most suitable for an early industrialisation leading to the triumph of liberal capitalism. This early advantage led, however, to later weaknesses as Gamble (*op. cit.*) argues:

The permissive orientation of the state to the market order, the tradition of suspicion towards the government and its initiatives, have constantly hampered the development of an interventionist state in the last hundred years (p. 74-5)

As has been shown, in France the opposite was the case, with the state taking responsibility for education from the revolutionary period onwards. It is interesting to take a snapshot of the situation at the time of Roebuck's Bill of 1833 (see above) when the Government opposed any form of state control in education and compare it with the same period in France. In France the Loi Guizot in the same year was a major piece of legislation which established a national primary system (see pp.95-96). In contrast, in England a paltry grant was given for boosting private subscription and this

was paid exclusively to two private educational charities, the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society, to help them build schools. These schools built with government aid were subject to limited inspection. This contrasts to the double-layered inspectorate in France which reported annually and which provided important and reliable statistical evidence on school enrolment. Indeed, the issue of inspection of elementary schools in England, that is voluntary schools, involved lengthy controversy with the Church of England resulting in the Concordat with the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1840 when the Church was given the right to approve the inspectors appointed, which meant in effect that the latter were clerics. The same principle was extended to Roman Catholics and non-conformists so that several sets of denominational inspectors worked side by side with lay inspectors (Maclure, *op. cit.*).

Expansion in education occurred during the nineteenth century up to 1870 but it did so in an unsystematic way and this was due to the antipathy to state intervention by the various parties concerned. The sharp population increase during this period must also be taken into account and therefore the increase in numbers in schooling represented in real terms a lowering of the rate of school attendance (Carpentier, *op. cit.*). Even from the 1840s onwards when it became clear that voluntarism was not adequate to provide the educational skills required for a modern society, the government was reluctant to respond with a comprehensive plan that would establish a national system of education. In order to evaluate whether the liberal state succeeded in promoting social mobility through education, it is necessary to look at the proportion of children from the popular classes who were attending secondary school, as I have done in the case of France. Unfortunately no national survey comparable to that of Victor Duruy's in France is available for this period in England. As a result the data is sketchy and fragmented.

The only systematic evidence on a national scale for English secondary enrolments come from the Robbins Report (1963) which includes some statistics for 1870. These give an estimate of two per cent for 14 year olds and one per cent for 17 year olds attending secondary school (Ringer, *op*

cit.). Ringer gives a comparative mean secondary enrolment for France as 2.4 per cent and a similar figure for Germany. Thus according to Ringer, the statistics show that English education at that time was practically as inclusive as in France. However, it can probably be accepted that like for like is not being compared here and that the standard of secondary schools in England did not compare with that of France. According to Matthew Arnold, there were a few excellent Public Schools but below that level there was nothing to compare with the state secondary schools of France and Germany. The lack of system and co-ordination permitted great variation in curricula and standards in secondary schools in England. Many secondary schools including both grammar and private schools taught no more than the elementary subjects, whilst others taught classics to a few boys while the majority received a limited education (Roach, op. cit.). This variation did not occur in France where the curriculum was standardized. When the *écoles secondaires spéciales* were introduced in the 1860s they provided an extensive range of subjects apart from the classics. A modern secondary school of this type was not established until the twentieth century in England (McCullough, 1998).

According to Bamford's (1967) analysis of social recruitment to eight leading public schools in the period 1800-50, 38.1 per cent were from the gentry, 12.2 from titled persons, 12.0 from the clergy and 5.2 from professional parents. The rest were unknown or insignificant. Of these according to Ringer (op. cit.) about three per cent came from trades and farmers and less than one per cent from the lower classes. Thus over half the attendees were from the upper class. Bishop and Wilkinson (1967, in Sanderson, 1991) found that businessmen's sons' attendance rose in Winchester from 2.9 per cent in the 1830s and 1840s to 7.4 in the 1850s and 1860s. This increase in the numbers coming from business matched an increasing trend for boys going on to choose business and industry as a career and, for example, Bamford (op. cit.) found that the proportion of boys choosing these careers from Harrow and Eton rose from 5.9 per cent in the 1840s to 10.6 per cent in the 1870s. Also, public schoolboys came to dominate certain business professions with 10 per cent of bankers coming from public schools between

1800-1820 rising to 62 per cent by 1861-1880 (Bamford op. cit. in Sanderson, op. cit.). Ringer also reports a decline in the representation of middle and lower classes in these schools of seven per cent and two per cent respectively between 1801 and 1850. This fits with what has been shown earlier, that social stratification increased in secondary schooling through the deliberate edging out of those with free school places from the endowed grammar schools and the opening of these institutions to market forces.

The statistics on social recruitment to the Public Schools compare negatively with Harrigan's figures for French secondary schools where the lower middle class represented about 50 per cent of the total enrolment, whereas this category represented about three per cent in English Public Schools.

Thus it appears that the liberal state did not promote an egalitarian discourse in relation to education and promoted an education that was socially stratified and not conducive to the reduction of social equality in education.

Conclusion to Chapters Four and Five

These chapters have traced a period of important changes in relation to educational development in France and England. It showed great contrast between both countries in relation to this. France saw an intense period of state formation during the French Revolution which brought the state centre stage in education. Napoleon I consolidated this by introducing structures for political and educational administration. The Revolution left an ideological legacy while Napoleon's legacy was administrative and these, despite major changes of regime which ensued, have left a major impact on the country ever since.

In England on the other hand, unlike in France, education was not seen as important for nation building during this period. At the end of the eighteenth century it led the world in trade, commerce and as an industrial power. This success depended on labour intensive industries rather than on education and training for the mass of the people. A crucial explanation for the lack of state intervention was the dominance of the liberal ideology during this period.

The historical data during the period up to 1870 has been analysed in terms of the explanatory factors: 1. persistence of ideology, 2. alliance of social classes, 3. the nature of the state. These factors have been tested to see how they contributed to the difference between France and England in relation to social equality in education.

In France the revolutionary ideology with its discourse of egalitarianism developed during the Revolution. This was of major importance to the values of republicanism and in laying the foundations for a secular state-controlled education based on equality of opportunity. This represented the first experiment with democracy in education. The democratic principles did not survive under Napoleon whose centralized system, nevertheless, facilitated a certain meritocracy through the secondary education system which survived

to the end of the period under review. In England, on the other hand, a liberal ideology dominated during this period which was seen as instrumental for the economic supremacy it had achieved and was openly hostile to state involvement in education. Liberal philosophy was based on a hierarchical concept of society and on social stratification and consequently education was similarly divided on the basis of social class. The lack of state involvement in education led to the delay of universal elementary education that was free and compulsory until the early twentieth century.

These divergent ideologies, revolutionary in France and liberal in England had their material basis in the alliance of social classes during this period in both countries. The alignment of political forces during the Revolution in France was progressive and pushed beyond bourgeois interests to implement policies in the interest of the popular masses. This alliance changed under Napoleon who consolidated the position of the bourgeoisie and against the encroachment of the aristocracy. As the century progressed education in France, and typified by the lycée system initiated under Napoleon, was solidly middle class and promoted the bourgeois culture of a more unified middle class (Anderson, *op. cit.*) than was the case in England. The curriculum of secondary schools reflected more or less the interests of this class and various attempts were made to make it less reliant on the classics and more geared towards modern society.

Political stability was maintained in England by the alliance of landed upper class and the professional and increasingly the industrial middle class and this contrasted with the French situation where there was antagonism between them. The English landed class maintained dominance in government and parliament for a large part of this period but they increasingly governed on behalf of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie whose interests they shared. The secondary education exemplifies the hegemony of the conservative class alliance. As the middle class gained in political power they flocked to the 'public schools' which had been the preserve of the landed class. As Chapter Five has shown, as the century

progressed, English secondary schools became more socially stratified as well as more open to market forces.

The administrative structure for a centralized state and education in France set up under Napoleon I endured throughout the period. This meant that education was regulated in a systematic and coordinated way and was standardised throughout the country. Although primary education was slower to develop than secondary, as soon as the Loi Guizot legislated for a primary school in every commune, school attendance increased rapidly, with only 312 out of 38,419 communes without schools in 1876 and 75 per cent of children between six and 13 years of age attending school over the seven years (Grew and Harrigan). Matthew Arnold (1868) noted that while primary attendance was not complete in France, there were no pockets of schoolless areas as existed in Britain, such as, Manchester where, according to Arnold, 22,000 children were free to roam the streets. In England the percentage attending school between six and 13 years over the complete term didn't reach 70% until 1895 with about 50 per cent attending in 1870 (Ellis, 1973).¹³ Statistics were difficult to compile in England because a large proportion of children attended uninspected schools which was due to the lack of state regulation.

The central state in France needed trained people for its administration and thus secondary education with the baccalauréat at its summit was the gateway to careers within its ever expanding bureaucracy, the army, and the université and thus created a meritocracy for those who could avail of it. The statistics have shown that around 50 per cent of those enrolled in secondary education were from the lower middle class and peasantry. In England where statistics were only available for the public schools at this time, only 3 per cent came from 'trades and farmers' (Ringer, op. cit.). The liberal state facilitated an elite secondary education in England where there was great differentiation in standards between schools. It became more socially

¹³ Please note that data on elementary enrolment for France and England are outlined on pp. 163 and 196.

stratified as the century advanced with the edging out of working class children.

Having tested the historical data from the end of the eighteenth century to 1870 through the explanatory factors, it is suggested that in France a persistence of revolutionary/republican ideology, an alliance of progressive social classes and a centralized state as well as a combination of these factors contributed to a discourse of egalitarianism and a limited reduction of social inequality in education. In England, on the other hand, it is suggested that a persistence of liberal ideology, an alliance of conservative social classes and a liberal state as well as a combination of these factors did not contribute to a discourse of egalitarianism and was more conducive to an education divided on social class lines.

Chapter 6

France: The Third Republic 1870 – 1939

Overview

The Third Republic was born out of the fall of the Second Empire following military defeat by the Prussians in 1870. For this reason some historians say it happened by accident but lasted longer than any of the previous post-revolutionary regimes (Gildea, 1996). Yet this belies a more complex reality, for the birth of the Third Republic accompanied the violent suppression of the Paris Commune and this secured its foundations (Dell, 2007). The early period was one of compromise and the republic was governed by men who had a weak attachment to republican principles. Yet for all its weaknesses and compromises the Republic saw democratic institutions taking root and the 1870s saw a new republican order breaking through. In this way it differed from the other major European powers where democratizing tendencies were blunted or absorbed (Nord, 1995). In England the radicals agitated for universal suffrage but this was realised in the habitual piecemeal fashion with full universal manhood suffrage not achieved until 1918 whereas in France it was introduced in 1848, curtailed in 1850 and reintroduced in 1851.¹⁴

This was of crucial importance, as the popular vote had the power to change what had been a country dominated by the old elite of notables to one which was more amenable to popular needs and the return of a republican majority in 1876 was decisive. In England the landed class dominated government until the early twentieth century and beyond and the mystique of aristocracy was to conserve its cultural hegemony (Anderson, op. cit.). In France, on the other hand, the monarchy and all its paraphernalia were banished and its governments were composed not of noblemen or landed gentry but of

¹⁴ Whilst France was precocious in introducing universal suffrage for men it was very conservative in providing the same rights for women which were introduced in 1955 much later than Britain (1918 for women over 30 and 1922 for adult women) and many other European democracies.]

bourgeois and the terms were set by new democratic elites not the old ones (Nord, op. cit.).

This victory for democracy won a hundred years after the Revolution, succeeded in re-establishing the Republican tradition inherited from that earlier experience. There were three strands to the republican tradition at this time. The first strand was liberal and favoured maintaining parliamentary institutions. The key figure among these was Thiers, who disliked universal suffrage and was prepared to compromise with royalists. He became the first Prime Minister of the Republic. This strand represented the right wing of Republicanism. The second strand was that of the Radical Republicans for whom Gambetta was a key figure. He believed firmly in universal suffrage and universal education and was prominent in the defence of the country against the Prussians. This strand represented the centre/centre left. The third strand incorporated a mixture of insurrectionary Blanquists and Jacobins who along with members of the First Workers International participated in the Paris Commune when they formed an insurrectionary government in Paris (Gildea, 1996). They called for the establishment of a workers republic in March 1871 when the government had defected to Versailles but were brutally suppressed by forces loyal to Thiers. They represented the left wing of republicanism which was expanding thanks to the growing strength of the socialists and communists. Following an attempted 'coup' in 1876 by the government composed of right wing republicans, monarchists and Bonapartists to dissolve the democratically elected Chamber of Deputies with a republican majority, the principle of republican legitimacy was introduced. This meant that a government could only rule which had the support of a majority of republicans in the Chamber (Gildea, *ibid*).

Once the republicans were confident of their majority, they set themselves the immense task of unifying a country split in one way between republicans, liberals and monarchists and, undercutting this, by another schism between clericals and anti-clericalists. The 'school question' which divided clerical and anti-clerical factions epitomised the question of the legitimacy of the

republic and which was fought over by left and right for the first 30 years of its existence. For that reason, it is claimed, issues relating to labour and women's rights were relegated and at this time even women's leaders tended to put the defence of the anti-clerical Republic first (Gildea, *ibid*).

The Belle Epoque 1871-1914

Culture and ideology

In order that democratic institutions could flourish it was paramount that French citizens could be counted on to vote for those representatives who could best serve their interests. Furthermore, they needed to be imbued with the ideals of republicanism. It was also necessary to fill the moral and emotional void left by the Church. For these reasons the republicans needed to succeed in the area of culture and ideology.

A republican culture and ideology which had been articulated from the time of the Second Empire when republicanism was driven underground was revitalised and reformulated during this period. The following quotation from Nord (1995) brings out the persistence of the ideals of the Revolution.

Republicans invited the nation to participate in a range of activities that encouraged beliefs and habits supportive of a democratic public life. The idea was to shape a particular kind of citizen: a conscientious human being who revered the philosophes and the revolutionaries of 1789, who valued liberty, laicity and the riches afforded by literacy and a vital associational life. With such citizens, elections might be won and democratic institutions made to work, but the citizens had to come first (*op. cit.*, p. 191).

The most powerful republican rituals and symbols, so redolent of the Revolution, were institutionalised during the Third Republic: the Marseillaise was definitively proclaimed France's national anthem in 1879, the *quatorze juillet* its national holiday in 1880, and during the 1880s the motto "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was inscribed by law on all public buildings (Nord, *ibid*).

The school was seen as the most important tool for inculcating republican norms and values. These new and reformed educational institutions were set up to bring about this transformation.

- The *École Normale* would train the teachers charged with dissemination of the republican secular values.
- The *École Primaire* would mould the citizens for participation in the new society.
- The *École Primaire Supérieure* would form the ‘non-commissioned officers of democracy’ who would secure the hegemony of republicanism.

The effects of this ideological campaign on education policy will be addressed later in the chapter.

Social Classes and Political Alliances

A republican majority in parliament was crucial for maintaining ‘republican legitimacy’ and the struggle for this was particularly fraught during the early decades of this regime. For this the republicans depended on the support of the peasantry who by force of numbers represented the largest social class and held the balance of power electorally. In 1901, out of a total population in France of 39 million, 23 million (60%) lived in rural areas of under 2,000 inhabitants with 16 million working in agriculture (Gildea, op. cit.). If you count those living in areas of under 5,000 inhabitants the proportion of the population living in rural areas rises to 70% (Gould, 1999). The republicans maintained their dominance by focusing on the anti-clerical sentiments of the peasantry. According to Gould, the church had been a substantial landholder in France and as a result there was much animosity to the Church and more land than elsewhere in Europe was expropriated from the Catholic Church than elsewhere in Europe and sold during the Revolution of 1789.

Workers’ support for the democratic ideals of the Republic was not in doubt and they pushed for economic reform in advance of other social classes (Gould, op cit.) However, their support for the republicans in government was much more ambivalent. After all the birth of the Third Republic came about after the crushing of the Paris Commune in which its leaders participated and were killed, wounded or exiled. The industrial workers represented 33% of the total active population in 1911 and therefore their

electoral power was important (Gildea, op. cit., pp. 26-29). The government proceeded to introduce industrial reforms and while these prior to World War 1 were modest, they were not inconsiderable: trade union organisation and the right to strike was legalized in 1884 followed by limited arbitration rights and the ten hour-day in 1904, medical care provision increased incrementally with half a million receiving it by 1914, a pension scheme was introduced in 1910 with pensionable age reduced from 65 to 60 in 1912, and in 1913 social assistance was provided to the poor. Luebbert (1991) argues that the integration of the workers within the Republic was real and had less to do with the material benefits of social reform in France (where workers were less well compensated materially than in Britain) than with another kind of well-being. The appeal of the Republic for workers and particularly their leaders was to do with the legitimacy it gave to their aspirations and the promise of what could be gained through class struggle and political alliances.

It was Jean Jaurès more than any other socialist leader who through his social republicanism championed the formation of political alliances (with radical republicans) for the benefit of workers and promoted taking on all responsibilities including that of taking cabinet seats. Not all socialists agreed with the primacy of republican defence, particularly Jules Guesde, leader of the Marxist Parti Ouvrière Française. Their clash over cabinet participation came to a head at a meeting in Amsterdam of the Socialist International in 1904 which condemned any accommodation with bourgeois reformism. Jaurès remained, nevertheless, with the united socialist party of the Section Française de L'International Ouvrière (SFIO) and thus managed to strengthen and unify it and shape its policies. His brand of humanist socialism which fused socialism with republicanism brought to it a large portion of the intelligentsia. As well as this his struggle for pacifism and to prevent war led to co-operation with syndicalists. All of this led to an increase in socialist deputies to 104 in the elections of 1914 when it became the second largest party in that year which tragically saw his assassination by a militarist.

The Third Republic up to World War I was ruled by bourgeois political leaders supported by the petit-bourgeoisie and farmers and to a lesser extent by workers. Radical republicans for the most part governed during this period with occasional socialist alliances. These alliances were cemented by the policy of anti-clericalism. As we have seen, some important industrial reforms resulted from these alliances. Workers' aspirations, however, were disappointed until the Popular Front period (see below). According to Derfler (1966) the combination of middle and farming classes retarded social legislation and the drive towards social democracy was largely frustrated at the beginning of the twentieth century. Yet this alliance of petit-bourgeoisie and peasantry was conducive to implementing educational legislation to bring about universal primary education and the reduction of social inequality in education. I will be addressing how these alliances had an influence on educational reform in the next section.

The Institution of the Republican School: Free, compulsory and laïque

Primary schooling in France had seen an unrelenting increase since the Guizot Laws of 1833 with three-quarters of the population registered in schools by 1876. The unschooled quarter belonged for the most part to the rural parts of the country, mainly to the left of a diagonal line running from Saint-Malo in Brittany to Geneva which marked off the worst areas for primary education.

The 1880s were characterised by intense educational fervour and legislation in this area (Mayeur, op. cit.). Most importantly it is associated with the setting up of the 'free, secular and compulsory' Republican school. The name of Jules Ferry is most associated with the laws of the 1880s, while that of Paul Bert was also important in their formulation. The school laws coincided with the Freycinet Plan which was launched in the late 1870s to boost the sagging French economy by pouring funds into it. It brought roads and railways to the most remote parts of the country and made improvements to rivers, canals and port installations. Similarly it involved massive school building to these same areas. Nine billion francs were invested into this enterprise. The effects were cultural and political as well as

economical and as a result the republican vote from the peasantry solidified (Weber, 1976). For so long the school had been seen as both inaccessible and useless. This now began to change. A huge obstacle had been to do with the fact that so many people did not speak French. By the 1880s the huge effort to eradicate patois from the schools was having the desired effect and inspectors' reports from the more backward departments and communes showed that French had taken over in the schools. The school also broke the dependency of the peasantry on the Catholic Church, for so long an integral part of their lives. The example of Weber's peasant who found that the teacher was more useful than the priest because he taught how to read, add and subtract and gave advice about taxes, farming and even fertilizer, is illuminating (Weber, *ibid*).

Equality of access to education for all children was without doubt the objective, but what was unique in the French primary education laws compared to elsewhere in Europe was their emphasis on secular education. This, of course, was linked to the overarching policy of anti-clericalism and against the negative influence of the church in politics and education. An earlier bill for compulsory education in 1872 during Thiers government was defeated by a rival project from the clericalists led by Monseigneur Dupanloup (who in 1868 had led a ferocious attack against Duruy's proposed law for the public secondary education of girls) calling for freedom of education. Thus when the republicans set about introducing the bill for educational reform in the more positive 1880s, Ferry foresaw that certain parts of the bill would be contentious, and risked being defeated. He therefore broke it up into different bills.

As anticipated, the ideological debate in the two houses – the Chamber and Senate – was fierce. Ferry's defence of secularisation of public education, which was anathema to the Catholic party, was based on the freedom of conscience principle (and here he resembles Condorcet). He also argued that his secularism was anti-clerical rather than anti-religious. His struggle was against the political power of the Church and its ability to destabilise the state. In this way, this struggle was a continuation of that of the revolution of

1789, which had taken away the political organisation of the Church and its role as a major player in the affairs of the state and education. The ideological campaign had prepared the way for this change to a secular education. Also the social class alliances, as we have seen earlier, were in favour of universal primary education free from church influence. Crucially since the principle of republican legitimacy, the republicans had the upper hand politically and the school laws were voted in their favour.

According to Lelièvre (1990) the education of girls was of the highest priority. For this reason the first school law of August 1879 passed was to make it obligatory to have a training college (Ecole Normale) for females in each department as well as for males. This quotation from Ferry's speech at the Salle Molière in 1870 gives a flavour of his strong feelings in this regard.

Celui qui tient la femme, celui-là tient tout, d'abord parce qu'il tient l'enfant, ensuite parce qu'il tient le mari ... C'est pour cela que l'Eglise veut retenir la femme, et c'est aussi pour cela qu'il faut que la démocratie la lui enlève .. sous peine de mort (Lelièvre, op. cit. p. 92).¹⁵

The *École Normales Supérieure* was opened at Fontenay for young women in 1880 and at Saint-Cloud for young men in 1882, for the training of *École Normale* teachers. The stakes were indeed high because in 1877 only 36% of girls attended public lay schools compared to 76% of boys, while 56% of girls attended religious schools both public and private which is why education of girls in lay schools was paramount.

The earlier law of 1881 also helped towards this goal. This related to teaching qualifications and abolished the privilege of the 'letter of obedience'. After this law all teachers were obliged to have the *Brevet de Capacité* within three years, except in exceptional circumstances. This was important for at that time there were 37,000 nuns who were primary teachers of whom only

¹⁵ Those who influence the woman, have the key to it all, firstly because they influence the child, then because they influence the husband. That's why the Church wants to have control over the woman, and that is why it's necessary that democracy takes her away from it, under pain of death. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

15% were qualified. It was also important for the Republicans to bring female teachers into the corporative fold. The decline of public and private schools of the religious orders for girls, however, was very slow. As soon as a religious public school was replaced by a lay one, another private school was opened in its stead. In 1900, these schools were still teaching over a million children. State lycées and colleges for girls were instituted in 1880 resulting in a huge rise in enrolment from 13,000 in 1885 to 42,000 in 1920, as well as the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud in 1879 for training its female teachers.

The law passed on 28 March 1882 decreed that primary schooling would be 'free, obligatory and lay': it abolished the teaching of religious instruction in schools and stipulated that in primary education 'moral and civic education' would replace 'moral and religious education'. It further decreed that one day, apart from Sunday, would be free to allow parents, if they wished, to provide religious instruction for their children. Ferry also imposed neutrality upon the teachers in relation to religion; otherwise teachers were expected to be partisans of republicanism (Mayeur, op. cit.). The primary school laws were completed by the Loi Goblet in 1886. It named various institutions to include, alongside the primary elementary school, the *école maternelle*, the *école primaire supérieure* and the *cours complémentaires*, which were an extension of two or more years to the elementary school and schools of manual apprenticeship. The school laws went some considerable way to removing the Church's influence over public education; the separation of the Church and the State made it complete. The elections of 1902 brought the radical 'Bloc des Gauches' into power under Combes. The radicals represented a Left or centre Left tendency among republicans and during this period they formed a coalition government with parliamentary socialists, such as Jean Jaurès. Once again, it was anti-clericalism that cemented their union and Combes wanted to remove the influence of the Church in politics and education for good. He called for a rigorous application of the laws of

laïcité including the removal of all religious emblems, such as the crucifix from schools and legislated for the closing down of all public religious schools within five years. In 1905 the French-Vatican Concordat of 1801 was abrogated bringing about the definitive separation of Church and state.

Effects of the Education Legislation

As a result of the republican school laws the ideal of universal primary education was achieved. The goal of bringing the republican message to all corners of the country was also achieved bringing about a uniformity of language and culture as well as a national identity. How had these laws contributed to reducing social inequality in education? The answer to this is both positive and negative. It achieved the basic stage of development towards educational equality by providing for all children to receive an elementary education from six to thirteen years of age. As well as this it provided secular education which allowed children to receive enlightened education untrammelled by religion and which would fit them to participate in a democratic society. It left in place, however, a structure whereby the republican school was in fact the school of the people and the *lycée* system hermetically sealed for the children of the bourgeoisie. The struggle for its replacement by a common school for all is dealt with later in this chapter.

The Interwar Period 1918-1940

The following provides an account of the background and political situation in the aftermath of World War 1 before moving on to the struggle for equality of educational opportunity.

The policy of anti-clericalism succeeded in uniting various social classes. In particular it brought together the rural and urban middle classes and the peasantry. As has been shown in the previous section, it was instrumental in gaining majority support for radical educational reform. Up to World War 1 it mobilised the urban working class to a certain extent; after this it was insufficient. During the war the bulk of the population rallied to the defence of the Republic. There was an all-party government in which the socialists

held ministerial portfolios. For the first two years there was little industrial conflict and strikes were insignificant. The unexpected long duration and the sheer brutality of the war brought about a fundamental change of attitude. The casualties were higher in France in relative terms than in any of the other countries involved in the war. By the end of the war there were 1,400,000 French soldiers killed compared with 745,000 British (10.5% of active population compared to 5.1%). There were three million wounded compared to 1,600,000 British. This tragic outcome was most likely to embitter attitudes to the elites who had propelled them into war and the French working class in particular became radicalised (Gallie, 1983). The Jauresian pre-war doctrine of peaceful transition to socialism held little credence among those who felt resentful of their government who instead of supporting their legitimate demands for industrial reform colluded with the *patrons* in repressing them. Radicalism hardened within the SFIO and the upshot was that a majority of socialists renounced democratic politics for revolutionary communism and formed the French Communist Party in 1920 at the Congress of Tours. (The Russian October Revolution also had an important effect on the radicalisation of the labour movement.) However, Léon Blum, a disciple of Jaurès, remained with the minority, rebuilt the party to the extent that in 1924, he formed a coalition government of the Left, the *Cartel des Gauches* (Derfler, 1966).

Luebbert (1991) argues that, compared to the pre-war period, class relations were more polarised in France in the interwar period and that this, combined with the lack of divisions among the middle classes, inhibited interclass alliances. Given the minority position of the working class, it could only achieve power through an alliance with a non-socialist party, and according to Luebbert (*ibid*) there would be little opportunity for this. Luebbert correctly blames the lack of coherence and disciplined organisation of the trade unions for the failure of the successive waves of strike action that dominated this period. Contrary to Luebbert's argument, however, the polarisation of class relations, did not rule out political alliances in France and the *Cartel des Gauches* of 1924 was one of a number of radical/socialist alliances which saw left-wing victories notably in 1932 and 1936. Luebbert downplays the

ability of the socialist party under Léon Blum to achieve alliances with radicals under conditions which did not compromise their ideological principles. This was achieved through qualified alliances at election time. At the same time Blum outlined principled preconditions for participating in cabinet which would be met when socialists held the majority in parliament and when they could dictate advanced social and industrial reform. In 1936 they achieved all of this.

Crucially Luebbert is incorrect in overstressing the similarities between France and Britain in terms of political economies and between the French Socialist Party and the British Labour Party. The latter was non-revolutionary in ideology while at the same time espousing parliamentary democracy to achieve its goals. French socialists had a dangerous rival in the Communist Party which had seceded from its ranks and feared being upstaged by them and this had a radicalising effect which was not the case in Britain. (Whilst there was also a growing involvement of workers in the Communist Party in Britain, this never represented the mass organisation that it did in France.) These ideological differences affected education policy and are exemplified by the fact that a comprehensive type of school was not part of the official Labour Party's programme until after World War II (Wiborg, 2009) whereas the école unique was part of the policy of radicals and socialists since the 1920s. (It is fair to say, however, that there was support for multilateral schools by a minority in Labour in the 1930s but this never came to fruition. See page 186, for a discussion on multilateral schools.) Furthermore, Luebbert conflates liberalism and republicanism and fails to distinguish between their distinct ideologies. In particular he fails to recognise republican ideology and its power to unify progressive forces in their defence of democratic institutions.

The Movement for L'Ecole Unique

The 20th century inherited from the previous century its educational structures and these were heavily resistant to change. They juxtaposed two systems, primary and secondary, complete in themselves, for the primary had its secondary level with the Enseignement Primaire Supérieur (EPS) and

the Cours Complémentaires (CC) and the secondary had its primary – les classes élémentaires. This situation was not unique to France as this parallel structure existed in all European societies at the time yet a common school emerged in different ways and at different speeds in each country. As well as this structural distinction, there also existed one at the pedagogical level which also masked the social function of each system (Prost, 1968).

The social consequences of this hermetic educational structure were clear: the secondary school was reserved for the bourgeoisie, the primary school for the ordinary people. The former needed to distinguish themselves from the latter and the barriers imposed at entry to secondary school was an indispensable aspect of this. As much as the financial barrier was prohibitive for much of the lower middle and working classes, more important still was that of the classical education dispensed in the secondary schools. It was the classical languages of Latin and Greek that provided the distinctiveness they needed. The classical humanities were lauded for their importance for the cultivation of logic, reason, morality and a multitude of virtues, in short for the cultivation of an intellectual elite. This form of reasoning cloaked the real reason for this pedagogical distinction because, as succinctly affirmed by Goblet, (1930) *'Le bourgeois a besoin d'une instruction qui demeure inaccessible au peuple, qui lui soit fermée, qui soit la barrière.'*¹⁶

It was this social and pedagogical barrier and the mind set that supported it which was to block the institution of l'école unique for another 50 years.

The injustice of this situation and its social wastage inspired a movement for common or comprehensive type schooling in the post-war period. It led to various projects in which two models became predominant. On the one hand there were those in favour of an extended primary school and on the other hand those in favour of a middle school to which all children would have access at the end of primary school. It was the latter model which won out eventually following intense rivalry and debate between primary teachers on the one hand and secondary teachers on the other. Yet a middle school

¹⁶ The bourgeoisie needs an education which remains inaccessible to the people, which are closed to them, which acts as the barrier. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

already existed in France, this was the *École Primaire Supérieure*. However, as described above, this school was separated for socio-economic reasons from the secondary school which was the preserve of the *bourgeoisie*.

The notion of an intermediate school for the 'classes moyennes' had existed since the time of Guizot and the *Ecole Primaire Supérieure* had been launched in 1833 with this in mind. This institution was revitalised by the republicans and was included in the Loi Goblet of 1886. Lelièvre (op. cit.) argues that the republicans found distinct political-ideological possibilities in the creation of the E.P.S. He quotes the Minister of Education at the time, René Goblet, in the ministerial newspaper, *Le Progrès de la Somme*, 14 Octobre 1878.

On se représente souvent les E.P.S. comme des écoles d'apprentissages formant d'habiles ouvriers and contremaîtres ... mais le but que poursuit cet enseignement est bien plus élevé, bien moins spécial. Il formera des citoyens. ..Ce n'est pas de l'école des contremaîtres que l'élève d'École primaire supérieure sort, mais de l'école des sous-officiers de la démocratie (cited in Lelièvre, op. cit. p. 112).¹⁷

What the republicans needed was a *corps* of republican elite to shore up their hegemony. The upcoming middle classes (*petite bourgeoisie* and farmers) would be the most appropriate to assume this role. The E.P.S. would provide them with the required education. The other part of the republicans' strategy was to guard secondary education as the preserve of the bourgeoisie. This preference for the E.P.S. at the start of the twentieth century fitted with their ideas of social mobility by stages. The concept of a social elite had widened over the second half of the nineteenth century to encompass the upcoming classes and filtering through to the workers – the notion of elite workers was also dear to the hearts of the republicans. This notion of stage mobility was sanctioned by various certificates for which the E.P.S. was an important conduit. It only received those students furnished with the *Certificat d'Études Primaires*. It provided three years of general

¹⁷ The E.P.S. are often represented as apprenticeship schools for training skilful workers and foremen. ... but the goal of this education is higher and less specialised. It will form citizens. ... The pupils of Higher Primary Schools will not graduate from a school for foremen, but from a school for non-commissioned officers of democracy. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

education (although there were also specialised sections) including a preparatory year, usually taken in the *Cours Complementaires* – extra classes at the end of primary school – which were annexed to the primary school. It prepared pupils for the Brevet Supérieur which could lead to other institutions, with 7-8% entering the *Ecoles Normales* where they might aspire to finish their teaching career, or even in *the École Normale Supérieure* of Saint-Cloud or Fontenay (Prost, 1969).

According to Prost (ibid) of the 61,868 pupils who attended the E.P.S. between 1889-1899, 17% came from agriculture, 30% from industry, 23% from commerce, and 17% from administrative positions such as the railways and the post office. As for the graduate employment: 11% went into agriculture, 29% industry, 20% commerce, 11% diverse administrative posts and 8% to professional schools. These figures show a very slight social mobility even stability. But it did allow children of the lower classes to continue their studies and to gain employment in the civil service, in industry, commerce and education. It allowed many to bypass the secondary schools and go into teacher training. In many ways the E.P.S. took the place of the lycées spéciales (see earlier section on Duruy) which had been turned into lycées modernes with their own *Baccalaureat Moderne*. By 1922 there was little difference between their curriculum of that of the first cycle of the modern section in the lycées and collèges and this inspired the attempts at reform in the interwar period (Prost, ibid). Between 1929 and 1939 the E.P.S. saw an increase in numbers from 76,000 to 105,000 whilst the Cours Complementaires (C.C.) doubled their numbers from 61,000 to 124,000. These schools were more popular at this time than secondary schools because they were better adapted to people's needs and provided a more practical education leading to a more secure if more limited career pathway (Prost, op. cit.)

The demand for common education was initiated in 1909. Ferdinand Buisson, himself one of the founders of the republican school and, mindful of the inconsistency of this example of educational inequality with Republican beliefs, put forward, unsuccessfully, a bill in support of l'école unique (Prost,

1992; Barreau, Garcia, Legrand (1998). The first serious attack on the traditional system was launched at the end of World War I. This came from a group of professors and teachers known as *Les Compagnons* with the publication of articles in April 1918 and later a publication entitled *l'Université Nouvelle*. These educationists, former combatants, wished to extend the fraternity formed among the trenches beyond the war and held that the sons of fathers who had fought together should be schooled together. They launched an appeal for democratic education. The model of the *l'école unique* they put forward would extend compulsory education to 14 years and would educate children from all sections of society together up to that age.

At their conference in Strasbourg in 1920, the Radical Party committed themselves to support for *l'école unique* which the historian, Thibaudet, described as an ideological platform to bring life back to their ranks. It was also endorsed by the Socialists in the same year. Therefore the advent of the *Cartel des Gauches* in 1922-24 with the radicals supported by the Socialists in power, represented a real opportunity to push for common schooling. Paul Lapie, Director of Primary Education, articulated a second model of the *école unique* in the *Revue Pédagogique* (Février 1922). He proposed the amalgamation of the first cycle of secondary education with the EPS and other vocational schools.

The issue of *les classes élémentaires* which charged fees and schooled children of the bourgeoisie, needed first of all to be resolved. Decrees in 1925 and 1926 stipulated identical conditions of recruitment and nomination for teachers of the *classes élémentaires* of the *lycées* and the *instituteurs* in primary schools, as well as an identical curriculum in both areas. The reformists of the Cartel set up a Comité d'études pour l' école unique and drafted a reform project. The general federation of the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) modified this project and had it adopted by the CGT congress in 1931 (Prost, op. cit.). Another reform in 1924 was that the curriculum in secondary schools for girls, which up to then did not prepare for the *baccalauréat*, became identical to that for boys.

The first experiment of mixing pupils from EPS and secondary schools took place in 1925 when around 150 schools to which were annexed an EPS brought pupils together for certain subjects. In July 1926 the first *école unique* was formed at Saint-Amand-des-Eaux where children at the end of primary school came together for certain subjects and then divided up into secondary, higher primary and technical sections. This had little success but it led to an important reform which brought about free secondary education. First of all for those schools attached to an *École Primaire Supérieure* (which never paid fees) in 1928 and in 1930 this was extended to all secondary schools. An entry examination was established and thus the financial barrier to secondary education was abolished in favour of one based on merit.

These attempts towards creating a common lower secondary school failed according to Prost (1968) for reasons of demography, pedagogy and administration. Falling birth rates after the war favoured the amalgamation of classes but rising birth rates at the end of the 1920s went against this. The different sections amalgamated had different administrative structures with a different inspectorate which needed new structures. Importantly, ideological reasons played a role in its failure. While the Left, apart from the Communists, were solidly in favour of *l'école unique*, on the Right the clerical party opposed it. They claimed that it would put an end to private education, *l'enseignement libre* which was already in difficulty. They considered it a Marxist project. As well as this the creation of the Cercle Fustel de Coulanges by a group of university teachers close to the ultra-right Action Française in 1927, led to propaganda in its publications fulminating against *laïcité*, *démocratie* and *l'école unique*. As well as this, although the campaign for *l'école unique* was important as a rallying point and for bringing the Cartel to power, it became subordinate to disputes over economic policy and got buried (Talbot, 1969, in Archer, op.cit.). It had to wait until the 'Popular Front' with socialists in power for further governmental action to be taken in its favour.

The Front Populaire up to the declaration of war

It is not fitting to outline the educational developments of this period without first of all providing an account of the extraordinary political and social events of this dramatic period which in its aftermath achieved a certain mythical status among the Left. The period of the popular Front represented the most revolutionary period of the Third Republic when the republican and revolutionary ideology came together bringing about a certain unity between republican leaders and the people. The Front was a coalition of anti-fascist forces including the Socialist Party (SFIO), Communist Party and radical republicans. These left wing groups were deeply divided at the time but the crisis precipitated by the rioting of various right wing groups led to a pact between them. This pact was widened to include radicals and hence to a coalition of anti-fascist forces committed to defending the Republic. The influence of intellectuals was important. The first alliance came about in March 1934 through the intervention of intellectuals such as Paul Rivet, an anthropologist and member of the SFIO, Paul Lang, a communist, and the philosopher Emile Chartier, pen-named Alain, with links to the Radical Party. Their contact with leaders of their respective parties helped negotiate the beginnings of the Popular Front (Sowerwine, 2001). The Front was secured when the Radical Party agreed to participate with the other parties on the left in a series of national celebrations on 14 July 1935.

The victory of the Left in the elections represented an historic opportunity for the working class and their leaders to achieve the progressive industrial legislation which had eluded them for so long. They showed their support for the Socialist government under Blum by their demonstrations as well as by a series of sit-in strikes. These events represented workers solidarity when they were emboldened by a belief in the great changes about to take place. They were following in the tradition of the revolutionary *journées* of the sans-culottes but without their attendant violence. These were depicted in the left-wing press as taking place in an atmosphere of conviviality and festivity (Dell, 2007). Blum lost no time in responding to these events and called a meeting

at his residence at Hôtel Matignon where he secured important and historic agreements. These reforms included: paid holidays, a 12% wage increase, collective bargaining, extension of industrial arbitration procedures and the forty-hour week, all of which represented a major victory.

Educational Reform

The impetus for reform in the industrial sector was reflected at this time in education. In 1936 Jean Zay, Minister of National Education under Blum, set about a plan for educational reform. He secured via Parliament the extension of obligatory education to 14 years. He changed the age for the *certificat d'études* at the end of primary school to 11 years. The classes *élémentaires* would be free of charge and open to all. His decree of June 1937 and *arrêté* of April 1938 announced the co-ordination of curriculum of the first cycle of secondary school and the four years of E.P.S. so that it would be possible to go from one section to another. The other aspect of his plan was the introduction of a *classe d'orientation* during which pupils would study all subjects in common before going into their different sections – classical, modern or technical. By 1939 when the tragedy of war and eventual defeat of France by Germany occurred, this phase was still one of experimentation but it had opened the way for the creation of a social ladder through education for all children of the Republic.

Analysis of the explanatory Factors:

Persistence of revolutionary/republican Ideology

As has been outlined in this thesis, the revolutionary ideology took root during the Jacobin phase of the Revolution supplanting that of liberalism. Both traditions coalesced within the ideology of republicanism and are manifested in political terms by parliamentary democracy and direct democracy. The revolutionary republican ideology persisted during the Third Republic and for the first time since the Revolution a discourse of egalitarianism and secularism came to the fore. It was during the intense debates surrounding the setting up of the 'free, secular and compulsory' Republican School that this came to the fore. Jules Ferry nailed his

egalitarian credentials and his passion for education to the mast in his speech on educational equality in the Salle Molière in 1870 when he stated:

Le siècle dernier et le commencement de celui-ci ont anéanti les privilèges de la propriété, les privilèges et la distinction des classes; l'oeuvre de notre temps n'est pas assurément plus difficile ... c'est une oeuvre pacifique, c'est une oeuvre généreuse, et je la défines ainsi: faire disparaître la dernière, la plus redoutable des inégalités qui viennent de la naissance, l'inégalité d'éducation (cited in Prost, 1968, p.14).¹⁸

The republicans reconstituted the revolutionary concept of education as a public service bringing together the right of children to be educated and to provide equality of access for them all. From this followed the duty of the state to provide for this. The Act of 16 June 1881 established free education in primary, higher primary and maternity schools.

Article Premier

Il ne sera plus perçu de retribution scolaire dans les écoles publiques, ni dans les salles d'asile publiques.

Le prix de pension dans les écoles normales est supprimé (Recueil des lois et actes de l'Instruction Publique, NO. 22, 1882, cited in Allaire et Frank, op. cit. p. 98).¹⁹

It was on the issue of laïcité that the most enflamed debate took place and the question of whether religion should be taught at school. In response to a proposition that it be optional, Ferry argued for the freedom of conscience of the teachers and their independence from the Church. He affirmed the principle of the secularisation of public education.

Nos institutions sont fondées sur le principe de la secularisation de 'Etat, et des services publics. L'Instruction publique, qui est le premier des services publics, doit tôt et tard être depuis 1789 et le gouvernement, et les institutions et les lois (Sénat, 10/6/81, JO. P. 809) cited in Prost, op. cit., p.194).²⁰

¹⁸ The last century and the beginning of this one annihilated the privileges of property, the privileges and distinctions of class; the work of our time is assuredly not more difficult ... it's a pacific work, it's a generous work, and I define it thus: to make the last, the most redoubtable of inequalities which originates from birth disappear, the inequality of education. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

¹⁹ School fees will no longer be charged in public schools nor in public nursery schools. Fees for boarding and for training colleges are forbidden (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

²⁰ Our institutions are founded on the principle of the secularisation of the state and public service. Public education, which is the first of the public services ought to have been since 1789 as well as the government, and the institutions and the laws. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

For Ferry national unity should be founded on the principles of 1789.

Il importe à la sécurité de l'avenir que la surintendance des écoles et la déclaration des doctrines qui s'y enseignent n'appartiennent aux prélats qui ont déclaré que la Révolution française est un déicide, qui ont proclamé comme l'éminent prélat que j'ai l'honneur d'avoir devant moi l'a fait à Nantes devant le tombeau de la Moricière, que les principes de 89 sont la négation du péché originel. (Chambre de Députés 23/12/80, Journal Officiel, 1880, p.12793).²¹

The Law of 28 March 1882 established compulsory as well as lay education which were provided for in the following articles.

Article 2

Les écoles primaires publiques vaqueront un jour par semaine, outre le dimanche, afin de permettre aux parents de faire donner, s'ils le désirent, à leurs enfants, l'instruction religieuse en dehors des édifices scolaires.

Article 3

Sont abrogés les dispositions des articles 18 et 44 de la loi du 15 mars 1850, en ce qu'elles donnent aux ministres des cultes un droit d'inspection, de surveillance et de direction dans les écoles primaires publiques et privées et dans les salles d'asiles, ainsi que le paragraphe 2 de l'article 31 de la même loi, qui donne aux consistoires le droit de présentation pour les instituteurs aux cultes non catholiques.

Article 4

L'instruction primaire est obligatoire pour les enfants des deux sexes âgés de six ans à treize ans révolus; elle peut être donnée soit dans les établissements d'instruction primaire ou secondaire, soit dans les écoles publiques ou libres, soit dans les familles, par le père de famille lui-même ou par toute personne qu'il aura choisie (Journal Officiel, 1882, cited in Allaire et Frank, op. cit. p. 100).²²

Whilst loyalty to the patrie as to the nation-state was uppermost in the values inculcated by the republican school, there remained the problem of how

²¹ It is important for the security of the future that the superintenance of schools and the declaration of doctrines which are taught there do not belong to the prelates who have declared that the French Revolution is a deicide, as the eminent prelate that I have the honour to have before me declared in Nantes in front of the tomb of La Moricière, that the principles of '89 are the negation of original sin. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

²² Article 2 :Public primary schools will close one day a week, outside of Sunday, to permit parents to give their children, if they so desire , religious instruction outside of school premises.

Article 3: Articles 18 and 44 of the law of 15th March 1850 are abrogated, which give religious ministers a right of inspection, of surveillance and of management of public and private primary schools and nursery schools, as also paragraph 2 of article 31 of the same law, which gives the consistory similar rights for teachers from non-Catholic religions. (Translation by author of this thesis.)

Article 4: Primary instruction is obligatory for children of both sexes aged between six and thirteen years of ages; it may be given either in the primary or secondary schools, or in the public or free schools, or in the family, by the father himself or by any person whom he will choose. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

people were affected by this. There was also the issue of the collective life and how individuals had a feeling of belongingness in society (Zeldin, 1980). Emile Durkheim believed that the ideals of fraternity and solidarity which the Revolution had stood for had not been achieved in practice. An eminent sociologist, Durkheim also dedicated his time to educational issues and in 1902-3 he lectured on the science of education at the Sorbonne. His lectures were published as *Éducation Morale* (1925) and greatly influenced educational policy and practice during the Third Republic. For Durkheim the role of the school for bridging the gap between the individual and the state is paramount and for reviving the collective spirit.

It is precisely at this point that the role of the school can be considerable. It is the means, perhaps the only one, by which we can leave this vicious circle. The school is a real group, of which the child is naturally and necessarily a part. It is a group other than the family. Its principle function is not, as in the case of the family, that of emotional release and the sharing of affections. Every form of intellectual activity finds scope in it, in embryonic form. Consequently, we have through the school the means of training the child in a collective life different from home life. We can give him habits that, once developed, will survive beyond school years and demand the satisfaction that is their due. We have here a unique and irreplaceable opportunity to take hold of the child at a time when the gaps in our social organisation have not yet been able to alter his nature profoundly, or to arouse in him feelings that make him partially rebellious to common life. This is virgin territory in which we can sow seeds that, once taken root will grow by themselves (Durkheim, 1961, pp. 235-6).

Here we find a theme which originated in the Revolution and persisted in various political speeches and texts since then. For the revolutionaries such as Lépelletier and Robespierre, the mixing together of children from different social backgrounds would develop a sense of equality to last until their old age. Similarly the *Compagnons* spoke of the equality forged in the trenches that should be replicated on the school benches. With Durkheim the analysis and method is outlined in detail about the role of the school in developing the other ideal of the Revolution, that of *fraternité* or social solidarity.

In the new century, following the judicial separation of the Church and the state and particularly following the sentiment of national unity brought about

by World War I, the issue of anti-clericalism became displaced and the issue of universalisation of primary schooling gave way to that of equality of access to secondary education. The group of educationalists and former combatants, *Les Compagnons* (see page 149), laid down the gauntlet in their appeal for a democratic education.

*Nous voulons un enseignement démocratique. La vraie démocratie, c'est la société qui a pour règle générale que les hommes ne vivent pas comme s'ils étaient de diverses origines, mais où chacun collabore, dans la mesure de ses forces et de ses aptitudes à assurer les tâches communes, où la seule hiérarchie est celle du mérite et de l'utilité. ...L'école unique, c'est l'école pour tous, l'école qui ouvre à tous ceux qui en sont dignes l'accès de l'enseignement secondaire.*²³
(*Les Compagnons*, Tome 1, 1919, 2e édition, in Barreau, Garcia, Legrand (1998, pp. 70-71).

Amalgamation and breaking down of barriers between primary education and secondary became le 'mot d'ordre'. Paul Lapie, Director of Primary Education in the Cartel des Gauches government proposed the amalgamation of the first cycle of secondary with the E.P.S. and other vocational schools.

²³ What we want is a democratic education. ...True democracy is where society takes it as a general rule that men do not live as though they have different origins, but where each one collaborates, according to his strength and aptitudes in taking responsibility for the common tasks, where the only hierarchy is that of merit and utility. ...the Ecole unique is the school for all, the school which is open to all who are worthy of secondary education.

Prenez le premier cycle d'un établissement secondaire et les différentes sections d'une école professionnelle (primaire supérieure ou pratique; au lieu de vous borner à la juxtaposer, brassez et amalgamez ces différents éléments et vous aurez l'établissement que nous cherchons à définir. (Lapie (1922, p. 89, in Garcia, 1994, p.59).²⁴

Paul Lapie challenged the separation of the two types of school:

Pour des jeunes gens de même âge et de même niveau intellectuel, nous avons maintenant plusieurs types d'enseignement: l'enseignement secondaire et l'enseignement primaire supérieur, par exemple, sont deux espèces d'enseignement "moyen". Pourquoi sont-ils distincts? Est-ce que pour des raisons d'ordre pédagogique? On peut en trouver pour justifier après coup la distinction. Mais la vérité c'est que l'enseignement primaire, en se développant, a créé un enseignement moyen, qui par sa gratuité, s'adresse aux plus pauvres, tandis que l'enseignement secondaire, demeurant onéreux, est réservé aux plus riches (Lapie, 1922, cited in Barreau, Garcia et Legrand, op. cit., p. 74).²⁵

Paul Lapie's proposal was therefore to amalgamate the EP and the first four years of the secondary into one common school. This was opposed by those minority of partisans of the traditional lycée for whom the 'slow impregnation of culture' was of prime importance (Barreau, Garcia, Legrand, op. cit.). They sought to emphasise the distinctiveness between the different educational tracks and the continuation of the status quo. For these partisans the slow accession to the *culture générale* is of prime importance and only secondary education could fulfil this ideal. One notable exposition of this position was put forward by Jean Delvolvé:

²⁴ Take the first cycle of a secondary establishment and the different sections of a vocational school (higher primary or practical); instead of juxtaposing these, join and amalgamate these different elements and you will have the establishment we are searching to define.

²⁵ For young people of the same age and intellectual level, we now have several types of education: secondary education and higher primary education, for example, are two types of 'middle' education. Why are they different? Is it for pedagogical reasons? Some reasons could be found to justify a distinction. However the truth is that primary education, through its development, has created a middle type education, which by not charging fees, is addressed to the poorest, whereas secondary education, as it charges fees, is reserved for the richest.

Le seul type d'enseignement existant que réponde passablement à une telle fin, c'est le type secondaire, pris dans sa forme la plus pure, la plus désintéressée. L'idée démocratique d'Education intégrale suppose donc en premier lieu le maintien de la forme pédagogique réalisée dans l'enseignement secondaire française et son développement intensif dans le sens de sa vertu propre;En second lieu, elle suppose l'extension progressive du bénéfice de ce type d'enseignement à la masse entière de la population, c'est à dire, un très vaste cours et de direction très continue (Delvolvé, 1928, pp. 409-419, cited in Barreau, Garcia et Legrand, p. 89).²⁶

Although *l'école unique* would in principle allow all pupils access to secondary level, mass education was not envisaged at this stage. Therefore when fees were abolished between 1928 and 1933, the issue of selection became urgent. An entrance examination was therefore established by a decree on September 1933.

With Jean Zay's reform project of 1937 was introduced the additional concepts of 'orientation' and 'tronc commun' both of which have remained important elements of the French *collège unique* down to the present day. Zay was adamant that selection would be postponed beyond the 6^{ième} class. His decree of 21 Mai 1937 was presented with the following extract from his exposé:

²⁶ The only type of existing education which responds to such an end is the secondary type, taken in its purest, the most disinterested type. The democratic idea of integral education supposes therefore in the first place the maintenance of a form of pedagogy realised in French secondary education and its intensive development in the sense of its own virtue: ...In the second place, it supposes the progressive extension of the benefit of this type of education to the whole mass of the population, that is, one that is very vast and continuous.

Le projet que nous soumettons à vos délibérations unifié tout d'abord l'enseignement primaire élémentaire public en transformant les classes élémentaires des lycées et collèges en écoles publiques et en instituant pour les études primaires élémentaires une sanction unique: le certificat d'études primaires élémentaires.

L'admission dans l'enseignement du second degré a fait l'objet de vives controverses. Mais le corps enseignement a exprimé unanimement le désir de ne voir admettre dans l'enseignement du second degré que les élèves aptes à suivre avec profit cet enseignement. C'est pourquoi nous vous proposons de rendre obligatoire la possession du certificat d'études élémentaires et d'exiger ainsi de la part des futures élèves de nos lycées, collèges, écoles primaires supérieurs et techniques un minimum de connaissances et d'aptitudes.

A cet âge cependant, les enfants ont des goûts et des aptitudes encore peu marquées: une orientation prémature risquerait d'être préjudiciable à beaucoup d'entre eux. Ainsi la première du second degré sera-t-elle une année d'orientation commune à tous les élèves à quelque une enseignement qu'ils se destinent. Après un an d'observation, les maitres de cette classe formuleront un avis qui, certes, n'engagera pas les familles, mais qui, du moins, les renseignera en même temps que sur les carrières et les débouchés, sur les aptitudes des enfants et sur la nature des études pour lesquelles ils paraissent le mieux doués (Decaunes, 1962, cited in Allaire and Frank, op. cit. p. 130).²⁷

I have here provided a snapshot of the period from 1870 to 1939 by providing an analysis of the literature and official documentation that relate to educational aims and policy. This has the aim of showing how the revolutionary ideology with its emphasis on equality and secularism has

²⁷ The plan we are submitting for your unified deliberation first of all primary elementary public education while transforming the elementary classes of the lycées and colleges into public schools and by instituting one sole examination for primary elementary study: the certificate of primary elementary studies.The admission into second level education has been the subject of great controversy. But the teaching body has unanimously expressed the desire that those pupils admitted into second level education are only those capable of profiting from this education. That is why we propose the requirement of the Certificate of Elementary Studies and in that way require from all future pupils of our lycées, colleges, higher primary and technical schools, a minimum of knowledge and aptitude. ... At this age, however, children's tastes and aptitudes are not very developed: a premature orientation would risk being prejudicial to many of them. Thus the first year will be an orientation year common to all pupils, regardless of the education for which they are destined. After a year of observation, the teachers of this class will formulate an opinion, which, certainly, will not commit the families, but which, at least, will at the same time inform them about their careers and work outlets, on the aptitudes of the children and on the nature of the study for which they have most talent. Three pathways are open to the pupils after the orientation year: a classical section, a modern section or a technical section. (Translation by the author of this thesis.)

persisted within this literature and its importance as a factor to explain why the reduction of social inequality in education as well as a discourse of egalitarianism was more prominent in France than in England during this period. Despite or perhaps because of its contested nature, this ideology helped to push for a form of schooling which was universal and to break down the social class divisions in education. This was partially achieved through the attainment of universal secular primary education and in the plan for the Ecole Unique set up under the Popular Front Government which set up the first example of common schooling in secondary education.

Social Class Alliances during the Third Republic

The Third Republic was governed for the most part by Radical Republicans supported by Socialists punctuated by periods of centre right administrations. These regimes broadly appealed to the petite-bourgeoisie and farmers and to a lesser extent to the working class. At an early stage the principle of republican legitimacy was secured (see page 135) thereby excluding the Catholic party, royalists and reactionaries from government and consequently any attempts at a return to power of the upper class and aristocracy. This was important as it prevented any Tory style governments such as presided in England from taking power. The centre-Left consensus was beneficial to the farmers and rural working-class by modernising and bringing progress to the countryside, providing free compulsory schooling, providing opportunities for social mobility as well as secular education to fit their children for democratic society. The working class also benefitted e.g. from industrial reform and medical care provision, an old-age pension scheme and social insurance for the poor as well, of course, as free primary education. This consensus, however, belied deep divisions at the heart of the Third Republic born out of the violent repression of the Paris Commune, 1871. The notions of legitimacy and rights of the combatants derived from their sacrifice at that time led to resentment among the working-class at their repression and banishment and the rift remained unhealed and without amnesty for decades.

How were these divided allegiances managed and how did a working-class committed to class struggle become reconciled to the Republic, even as far as to defend it? The Jauresian brand of socialism from 1905 onwards which adapted Marxist socialism to the French traditions of democratic republicanism played an important role in achieving this. Blum's delicate balancing act of holding together a multi-factioned Socialist Party under the constant threat of being outflanked by an ideologically rigid Communist Party was of major importance in this regard in the inter-war period. Jauresian socialism as Lichtheim (op. cit.) points out, closed the gap between the labour movement and the intelligensia and resulted in socialism competing with and eventually usurping radicalism as the dominant ideology in the educational establishment. This conversion to socialism by the majority of the teaching profession – from *instituteurs* to *universitaires* evolved over decades from the Dreyfus affair to the pacifism of pre-1914 and again after that war and was consolidated with the anti-fascism of the 1930s and the World War II resistance movement. This was crucial because of the importance of the *Université* as a political force in France. As will be seen in Chapter 7, the Labour Party in Britain also incorporated the intellectual Left into its ranks but unlike Labour the French socialists remained committed to Marxism, the class struggle and the revolution.

During the Interwar period, the SFIO was becoming a broad representative party with a wide spread of electoral support both geographically and among the progressive social classes encompassing working-class, teachers, lower middle and professional classes. In 1932 the largest increase came from employees making up 18% of the newly elected socialists. By 1936 there were 36 teachers, 50 liberal professions, 23 employees and 16 workers who were elected. A mere 5% were from agriculture. When the social backgrounds of these deputies are considered, their more democratic origins become clear. From this perspective 36% were from a working-class background in 1924 with 28% in 1936. Only eight were from the liberal professionals and four from teaching backgrounds. Conversely and in sharp contrast to their occupations 20% were from agricultural backgrounds in 1924 and the proportions remained unchanged in 1936 (Judt, 1986). This

pattern of change clearly reflected the upward mobility of socialist deputies during this period. Thus during the period of the Popular Front, half the socialist deputies came from working-class and agricultural backgrounds.

How did the alliances between radicals and socialists and the continuing growth of the Left impact on reducing social inequality in education during this period? The consensus among Republicans and the broad social class constituency that supported them in the 1880s favoured universal primary education which led to free secular education for all. The support of radicals, socialists and trade unions representing a broad socio-economic milieu supported more equal access to secondary education and a radical transformation of the parallel system. This resulted in free secondary education from 1930 and the raising of the school-leaving age to 14. The education policy of the Popular Front under the education Ministry of Jean Zay reflecting the alliance of progressive social classes resulted in the plan for secondary common schooling for all children by amalgamating the first four years of the secondary school with the EPS.

This discussion of the importance of the explanatory factor of the alliance of progressive social classes suggests that the reduction of educational inequality during the Third Republic depended on a constellation of socio-economic groupings whose interests lay in promoting educational and social mobility and in the espousal of social equality in education by the political parties that represented them. A key mechanism for the formation of social class alliances was the ever-expanding influence of left-wing parties particularly of the unified Socialist Party.

The Nature of the State during the Third Republic

Despite the conflictual politics between left and right, clericals and anti-clericals, the French state can be said to have remained in a certain way above politics as the 'expression of the general will' and a guarantor of liberties (i.e. assembly, association and speech) and of a formal equality (Knapp and Wright, 2006). The history of revolution in France from the time

of the Revolution and incorporating the Left shows support for a central authority embodied in the state. This in fact goes beyond the Revolution to the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment who defended the national authority against the ultramontanism of the Catholic Church. Thus the French Left, including socialists and communists, in keeping with the tradition of the Revolution, recognized the importance of the state as guarantor of the inalienable rights of its citizens rather than a source of oppression. It was seen as embodying the sovereignty of the people who could confer legitimacy through universal suffrage or withdraw it when the need arose (Judt, op. cit.). This was of particular relevance during the Third Republic when the Republic itself was under threat. More than at any other period, the Third Republic sustained the umbilical link between the state and the school in the common birth of republic and public education because it relied on the school, which it created, for its legitimacy and for transmitting its values. In this way it forged the state as nation with the people united around its cultural values.

The French state during the Third Republic maintained the centralised characteristics inherited from the Revolution and Napoleon, and even going back to the Ancien Régime (de Toqueville, op. cit.). The overarching state through its departmental administrative arm was able to reach into all corners of the *hexagone*. While the Revolution had initiated state responsibility for education, the Third Republic, having removed the political and educational influence of the Catholic Church during the 1880s, assumed full responsibility in this regard. Enormous sums of money were spent on school buildings and the five-year report in 1901-02 put the total for this whole operation at 1 billion francs (Lévasseur, 1907). The Third Republic's success in systematising and centralizing the public service of primary education was largely due to the centralised nature of the state. It was important for carrying out primary education laws in a coherent and systematic way so that the essential reforms took place throughout the whole country in a short space of time. This contrasts with the situation in England where primary education reform took place in a piecemeal way and over a few decades. In

France this coherence was also due to the consensus across political parties for the reform.

The French state embodied the universal values of the Republic – of liberté, fraternité and égalité and of laïcité. Thus the movement for L'école unique was directly in consonance with these ideals of the state in contrast to the parallel system of education for different social classes it wanted to replace which went against it. However the republic was at that time under threat from its enemies on the Right who vehemently opposed the policy in favour of l'école unique. The situation was much more protracted than in the case of universal primary education. Education Minister, Jean Zay's reform Bill was left unread in Parliament and anticipating that legislative attempts to bring about common schooling at lower secondary level would only produce a stale-mate in parliament. He followed the administrative route instead. By turning to the state institution of the Conseil Supérieure de la Fonction Publique, he gained authorisation for his reform and in 1937, through decree he was able to bring about his reform. This was an example of intervention of the state on behalf of social equality in education.

This chapter has focused for the most part on the degree to which the centralised state in France had an impact on educational policy and educational structure. It is important also to analyse comparatively the impact on educational outcomes in terms of social equality in education.

Grew and Harrigan (1991) presented a quantitative analysis of the growth of primary schooling in France during the 19th century based on data from the national Statistique de l'Enseignement and the Statistique Générale de la France for population and economic data. They presented a picture of steady increase in enrolment throughout the century which contrasts with the impression commonly given by commentators. Grew and Harrigan's figures (see Table 4 below) are similar to those of Lévasseur (1897) for France over the period up to 1895).

Table 4: Number of students enrolled in primary and higher primary schools
Grew and Harrigan op. cit., Table E. 1, p. 262

Date	Students	Annual Compound Growth Rate	Students per 10,000 population
1829	1,357,934	—	417
1829a	1,556,340	—	478
1832	1,937,582	8.0%	596
1833	1,654,328	-	508
1833a	1,987,101	3.0%	610
1837	2,690,035	8.0%	752
1840	2,896,934	2.5%	864
1843	3,164,297	3.0%	924
1847	3,530,135	3.0%	997
1850	3,321,423	-2.0%	967
1861	4,286,641	2.0%	1,147
1863	4,336,368	1.0%	1,160
1865	4,436,470	1.0%	1,165
1866	4,515,967	2.0%	1,186
1872	4,722,754	1.0%	1,303
1875	4,809,728	1.0%	1,303
1876-77b	4,716,935	-2.00	1,303
	4,918,890	1.0%	1,281
1881-2	5,341,211	2.0%	1,418
1883-84	5,468,681	1.0%	1,430
1886-87	5,526,365	1.0%	1,446
1891	5,471,402	0.0%	1,427
1896	5,427,211	0.0%	1,388
1901	5,433,302	0.0%	1,395
1906	5,451,094	0.0%	1,389

a: These figures are adjusted to compensate for the absence of girls schools in the censuses of 1829 and 1833. The inquiries of 1832 and 1833 included girls schools as well as boys, as do all subsequent ones.

b: The first figure for 1876-77 is from the Statistique of 1876-77 and is used in computing the 1876-77 growth rate. The second figure comes from the reports of the rectors of academies in 1876-77.

In order to provide a picture of progressive enrolment throughout the century, Grew and Harrigan used the benchmarks of 50%, 75% and 100% enrolment. A department would achieve a 50% enrolment if all children between 6 and 13 years attended school for three and a half years, or half of the children attended for seven years. These are composite figures and the reality was somewhere in between. The first benchmark of 50% was achieved by all *départments* by 1876. To achieve 75% a *department* would need to have all school age children enrolled for over five years, or three-quarters of them for seven years. This benchmark of 75% was achieved by all *départments* by 1881. The equivalent of 100% enrolment was reached in the same year by 93% of *départments*. Grew and Harrigan also add that 'By 1881 98% of

France's departments had the equivalent of everyone between five and fifteen years in school for at least six years (table E.9) (ibid, p. 59)'.

Lévasseur (1889), renowned for his statistical rigour puts these figures into perspective. From his statistics of the French population by age group based on the census of 1881, the number of children between the ages of 6 and 13 were 4,583,000 (figures given in 1000s). However the number of children registered in primary schools for 1880-81 were 5,019,363 (Levasseur 1897, p. 91) – the data for this year is missing in Grew and Harrigan's figures. This shows more than 100%. The reason for the extra students could be explained by children over school-age attending and this is to be expected as the EPS students are included. If we take the total number of children between 6 and 14 years according to the census of 1881 there are 5,213,000 – which equates to approximately 96.1%. While these figures include some children between 12 and 15, at the same time it does not include those who received instruction at home, nor in schools for apprentices, petits séminaires, military schools, nor the junior classes of the lycée (where according to Grew and Harrigan, op. cit. p. 84, there were 71,000 students under 13 in 1886). When one considers all this data a very powerful case is to be made that before the Ferry Laws in 1882 made primary schooling compulsory there was close to 100% of children between 6 and 13 in some form of schooling.

The duration of the school year was another aspect of growth. While enrolment at school increased steadily throughout the century there was concern among educators about attendance throughout the school year which did not increase at the same rate. While the six-month school year was common early on in the century, the 11-month year became the norm as the century progressed (Grew and Harrigan, op. cit.). Poor attendance particularly during the summer and harvest period was a feature, which many commentators referred to often as endemic to the system. By 1881, before the Ferry laws, nearly all departments achieved around 70% summer attendance by school age children and by 1906 not quite half the departments had achieved the equivalent of 100% summer attendance. Grew and Harrigan (ibid) believe that much of the historical emphasis on

resistance to schooling by parents may have been due to a misunderstanding about summer attendance and taking it as a representation of attendance in general. The picture overall was at variance with that given by commentators:

As Grew and Harrigan (op, cit.) point out:

The fact remains that the picture emerging from these structured statistics contrasts with a common impression that schooling in France was for a long time inadequate, progressed slowly and late, and had to overcome great local resistance. Ironically, that dark picture comes primarily from the inspectors themselves, the very men who gathered these statistics, and from the way historians have used their reports (p 14).

The intervention of the state on behalf of public education was one example of republican equality which formed part of an expanding range of public services accessible to all French citizens on an equal basis. This was possible because the French state had a sufficiently developed organisational apparatus capable of implementing educational reforms in a relatively short space of time. This is in complete contrast to the situation in England as will be seen in the next chapter. In this way, it is suggested, the centralized state was an important factor in the reduction of educational inequality during the Third Republic.

Chapter 7

England: 1870 – 1939

Overview

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, thanks to its expansionist policy over centuries, Britain had control over more colonies than any other state and had world supremacy in naval power, trade and industry. In opting for free trade in 1846, it allowed cheap food and products to be at the disposal of its rapidly expanding population and a growing market for its products. Its growing assets overseas led to it becoming the leading financial and trading centre. It abandoned its agriculture and self-sufficiency by eschewing protection and focusing on exploitation of the world economy on which its survival came increasingly to depend. By the 1880s, however, its supremacy was challenged by other growing industrial powers, particularly the U.S. and Germany and to a lesser extent, France. By the end of World War I it was clear that it had lost its capacity for maintaining sole responsibility for a liberal world economy and that the U.S. was increasingly assuming this role (Gamble, op. cit.).

During the late Victorian period, England enjoyed the benefits of a liberal monarchy with an independent parliament and legislature. Unlike in France, however, successive governments were reluctant to introduce universal male suffrage until 1918. At the beginning of this period parliament represented one in three adult men, and this was increased to 60% in 1884. The country had neither endured war nor revolution as had been the case in France; the period was one of political continuity and stability. Massive industrialisation, however, had brought social dislocation and the country suffered from many social problems especially in health, education and housing.

The Liberal Party dominated politics during the early period. It was made up of three strands: the Whigs which drew support from the propertied classes and some aristocratic families which traditionally had supported parliamentary reform; the radicals which supported social legislation and pressed for universal suffrage; and the non-conformists who called for the

abolition of the privileges of the Anglican Church and favoured non-denominational education. These strands were united in a common belief in the values of liberal institutions, liberal economy and low taxation to bring prosperity and wellbeing to all. The Liberals's rival was the Conservative party, which emerged out of the Tory Party in 1834 and came to dominate politics between 1886 and 1905. While they also supported the values of the liberal economy, they were traditionally more opposed to reform than the Liberals and represented the interests of the farmers, landed gentry and the Anglican Church.

After World War 1 this political configuration underwent a great change when the Labour Party came into its own and became an important parliamentary contender. The working class movement had been much slower to organise itself politically in England than on the continent. In France, the *Parti Ouvrière*, was set up in 1876 whereas the first labour party was set up as the Labour Representative Council in 1900 and adopted the name of the Labour Party in 1906. Unlike its French counterpart, it was not Marxist and it did not declare itself socialist until 1918 (Pugh, 1999). Politically, it grew out of the Liberal Party and its first members of parliament, Keir Hardie and Ramsey MacDonald, elected under the labour banner in 1900 had been refused nomination by the Liberals. On the other hand, unlike in France, the trade union movement was crucial to its organisation (and the party came to the fore in Parliament as a measure to combat the anti-trade union Taff Vale legal judgment of 1901 which decided in favour of employers compensation for trade union disputes).

Although Labour continued to increase its members in Parliament during the Edwardian period, it did so by means of a pact with the Liberals who continued to dominate and won seats only where there was no Liberal opponent. This was to change after the war and the election of 1918 gave Labour 22% of the votes, but more importantly left it as the largest opposition party (Pugh, op. cit.). This change was due to several factors, the war itself being of overarching significance. The Reform Bill of 1918 which enfranchised all adult males and gave the vote to women over thirty brought

working class representation to a new level. The new Labour constitution, which introduced the nationalisation of public resources as a legitimate objective, highlighted the independence of Labour from Liberalism and gave it a new lease of life. It went on to form a government in 1924 and again in 1929, before the financial crisis of the Depression brought about its collapse and its replacement by a National Government which lasted until 1940 which increasingly presided over a policy of appeasement towards Hitler and the overwhelming threat within Europe of Nazism.

Dominant Ideology

The liberal ideology, allied to the principle of *laissez-faire*, continued to dominate the late nineteenth century in Britain. This concept, as Peden (1985) points out, links the liberal ideas of Smith, Bentham, Mill and Ricardo (which were explored in Chapter 4) with those of Marshall in the latter part of the century and with political policy. It brings together various strands of opinion opposed to state intervention. Although there was a whole raft of legislation in the second half of the nineteenth century to do with child and female labour, social insurance, public health and, most importantly for this thesis, elementary education which demonstrated state intervention, this did not mean that *laissez-faire* did not dominate government policy. Rather, these interventions represented the limits of *laissez-faire* and were intended particularly during the Victorian era, as a last resort whereas self-help by individuals or local communities was to be preferred (Peden, op.cit.). This liberal policy was inseparable from the economic policy of free trade which promoted the free exchange of products and labour in an open and competitive economy. It became less and less feasible for Britain to abandon free trade as the country became more and more enmeshed in world trade but this came at the expense of the domestic economy (Pugh, op. cit.).

Liberal principles were transmitted through the writing of the period which celebrated the virtues of self-sufficiency and were epitomised by the work of Samuel Smiles whose publications *Self-Help* (1859), *Character* (1871), *Thrift* (1875) and *Duty* (1880) extolled these virtues. The general culture had the

effect of promoting a certain hostility to state intervention among the working-class who preferred to benefit from self-help strategies such as using Friendly Societies to save and gain interest on their earnings.

However, by the 1880s with a downturn in the economy and when poverty and unemployment became a matter of concern for the educated middle classes, laissez-faire appeared palpably insufficient for dealing with social problems. By 1910 the taxation of the rich had yielded increased state resources and the government introduced important social welfare reform, for example, old age pensions for poor people over 70, medical services for children and the provision of school meals in state schools, maternity benefits and health and employment insurance (Pugh, op. cit.). Motivation for state intervention through social welfare was also to do with concern about ability to fight (thousands of volunteers for the Boer war had to be rejected because of poor physique) and ability to compete internationally and there was concern about other countries, such as Germany's superiority in technical instruction.

One feature of the new welfare benefits was the lack of stigma attached to them compared to earlier assistance, for example, those who received assistance from the poor law authorities automatically lost their right to vote which remained the rule until 1918 when universal manhood suffrage was achieved. This, Pugh (op. cit.) points out, showed the degree to which Edwardian social reform represented a challenge to traditional thinking and practice and therefore to the dominant ideology. It was also related to 'social control', a concept which applies to social policy designed to make the working class contented with their lot and is manifested largely through education, the media and organised sport and used by the dominant class to maintain its hegemony.

Nevertheless, according to Peden (op. cit.), '*Laissez-faire* attitudes inhibited government from providing finance or from undermining self-help' (.p.12). He points out that following the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, only a minority of local authorities chose to provide free meals and that as late as

1939-40 the evacuation of children from inner-city areas was to reveal 'shockingly poor standards of health and physique'.

It was the enfranchising of the working class more than anything that nailed the coffin of laissez-faire as it became obvious that they would demand intervention by government for greater welfare (Hobsbawm, 1968, 1999).

The 1880s, according to Gamble (op. cit.) was the start of a hundred years decline when it was becoming apparent that the entrepreneurial culture along with the skill and drive of the industrial middle class was in decline. There was a tendency among the prosperous middle class to emulate the upper class with many moving to purchase land and occupy a country seat and pursue a career in politics. One expression of this change was the expansion of the public schools as the upper middle classes wished their sons to be educated as young gentlemen. This was to have a large impact on the general attitude to education particularly at secondary level and would effect education legislation well into the first half of the twentieth century. One notable example of this came with the Regulations for Secondary Schools 1904 issued after the 1902 Education Act which ensured that the new L.E.A. secondary schools would closely follow the curriculum and tradition of the old public schools. This had the effect of maintaining an elitist form of secondary education during the first half of the twentieth century.

Social Class Alliances prior to World War 1

The cultural shift just referred to above was reflected in politics by a movement away from Whig and liberal dominance in politics towards the Conservatives who dominated between 1886 and 1905 despite the extension of the vote to millions of working-class voters. The surprising rallying of a certain portion of the working class to the traditional landed party was related, according to some historians, to the traditional deferential attitude of the English to their social superiors and their traditional adherence to conservative causes. The Conservatives appealed to both working and middle class voters by their defence of the Union with Ireland, the monarchy, private property, and the Empire combined with low taxation and a policy of non-intervention (Pugh, op. cit.). The Conservatives harnessed this support

through their National Union of Conservative Associations which established a separate organisation, the Primrose League (1883) as a means of organising mass support and ran popular entertainment, such as, fêtes, teas, excursions and sports, a range of activities which have come to epitomise the English life style. It had a membership of one million by 1890 (Pugh, *ibid*).

It was the Liberals, however, who prior to World War 1 gained the advantage in the contest for working-class votes and held power between 1906 and 1915. Their relationship with organised labour was mediated by the non-conformist churches particularly the Methodists who had a large working-class membership and were foremost in supporting popular education (see pp. 114-115 of this thesis). In many communities, as Hodge (*op. cit.*) points out, the local preacher was often the local secretary of the trade union. The trajectory from preacher to Liberal politician is exemplified by Arthur Henderson who also completed the transition from Liberal party to founding member of Labour.

It was the decision of the TUC in 1899 that was the main impetus for the creation of a party to represent the working class independent of the Liberals. This led to the setting up of the Labour Representative Committee in 1900 which along with the TUC was supported by the Independent Labour Party, the Fabians and the Social Democratic Federation (SDF). These three organisations comprised distinct sets of beliefs all of which have continued to influence the policies of the Labour Party. The ILP based their ideas on ethical Christian brotherhood and ethical socialist ideas. Their founding members Keir Hardie and Ramsay Macdonald were to exert a major influence on Labour politics. It bore the influence of non-conformism and traditional radicalism (Pugh, *op. cit.*). The Fabians, were a non-revolutionary socialist society which under the influence of its main ideologue, Sidney Webb, advocated economic efficiency and the nationalisation of industry. The trade union representatives were most interested in securing better working conditions for their members. All three organisations therefore showed no affinity for Marxism and had previous links with the Liberals. The

other organisation, the SDF, on the other hand was Marxist and revolutionary in character but its influence had waned by the end of the century. Its belief that the working class's conditions would not be improved by education and welfare but by revolution was at odds with labour's reformist politics.

The working-class tended to support lib-labism until post-World War I when the Liberals were almost destroyed. Thirty Labour deputies were elected to a Parliament in 1906 thanks to their pact with the Liberals. Another 24 trade unionists were elected as lib-lab candidates on a Liberal ticket (Luebbert, op. cit.). The electoral alliance continued in the 1910 elections where Labour were able to share in the Liberal vote. The electoral alliance with the Liberals, however, had an inhibiting effect on its political agenda. According to Luebbert (1991) the formation of the Labour Party impeded the impulse of older labour traditions which favoured a cohesive class-oriented workers' movement. Because the Liberals could offer the trade unionists and Labour a constituency for their political agenda and could accommodate working-class demands for reform this class conscious impulse was diluted. As a consequence, a substantial part of the working-class accepted a liberal political economy and secured the continuity of institutions in the interwar period (Luebbert, op. cit.).

Whilst there are similarities between the French Socialist and Labour parties situation *vis-à-vis* their electoral coalitions with liberal parties, the Socialists, were not in a subordinate position to the Radicals before the war as Labour were to the Liberals and the leading position of Jaurès in the Bloc des Gauches government exemplifies this. Another difference, as pointed out by Luebbert, was that the Socialist Party (SFIO) was formed in 1905 in a way that was the reverse of the situation in Britain where the Marxist Guesdists made the withdrawal from government cabinet a condition of their merging with the SFIO. I disagree, however, with Luebbert's assertion that this dissimilarity was not significant. It meant that Socialists could pursue their policies in the *Assemblée* independently from those of the Radicals. The other difference was that the Socialists had the capacity to reach beyond wage labourism and this was crucial (Hodge, op. cit.).

The Nature of the State

The state in nineteenth century Britain held a minimal role. In politics this meant, as we have seen in Chapter 5, that the principle of laissez-faire held sway which was in keeping with the classical liberal economy whose objective was to create and maintain the best conditions for capitalism. By the 1880s, however, government intervention became more and more a necessity in order for the country to remain competitive. Between 1830 and 1880 while government expenditure per head of population trebled in Europe, in Britain it remained stable. Despite the 'Great Depression' of the 1880s no real change in policy came about until the advent of war in the 1890s and the government was forced to provide funding to businesses involved in the war effort. The minimal state could no longer be sustained at a time when the highly centralised German state was showing increasing superiority in military, industrial and economic areas.

Education was seen as the prime area that called for intervention and the setting up of a central authority for national education was seen by many as imperative. However, although by the end of the Victorian era government had come to play an increasingly important role in education, this objective had yet to be achieved and education came to be controlled at local rather than at central level. The development of educational policy and its implications for social equality will be outlined in the next section.

Educational policy in the period up to World War 1

By the 1880s education in England, far from having a coherent system appeared to be an educational 'muddle' (Webb, 1901) which contrasted with the coherent and systematic way the Republicans in France coordinated education. The system was controlled by an Education Department whose sole responsibility was the administration of grants for elementary education. There was also a Science and Art Department which administered grants and scholarships for science and art. There was also the Charity Commission which administered grants and gifts to endowed and charitable

schools. In 1899 these three departments were united in the Board of Education.

A first step in the direction of equality of access to education had been initiated after the 1870 Act. Compulsory education was legislated for with Mundella's Act in 1886 which compelled the school boards to enforce compulsion in all schools for children between the ages of five and ten. School leaving age was subsequently raised to 11 in 1893 and 12 in 1899. Elementary education was not completely free until as late as the Fisher Act in 1918 although it was virtually free since 1891 when a fee-grant of ten shillings per head was introduced (Barnard, 1947).

These reforms towards basic equality of opportunity were slower and more piecemeal than in France and this was much influenced by liberal ideology which still held sway albeit in diluted form since the mid nineteenth century. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards it became clear that voluntarism was inadequate to provide the skills necessary for a modern society and to face the challenge from continental industry and of incorporating new scientific techniques in native industry which were becoming outmoded. The state, however, showed extreme reluctance to displace voluntary institutions or even to supplement them until forced to do so. The Conservatives favoured the 1870 Act because they saw it as a stop gap that allowed a breathing space for voluntary schools. However the new elementary schools with funding from central and local rates became better equipped and maintained with better qualified teachers than their voluntary rivals (Eaglesham, 1967). Democratically elected school boards were created to run these schools and by 1902 there were almost 2,500 of these. This caused resentment among the voluntary bodies and the Conservatives. Another cause for resentment was the setting up of various forms of post-elementary schools by the School Boards buoyed on by funding which was ostensibly for maintaining elementary schools. Higher tops were set up attached to elementary schools and where there was sufficient demand higher grade schools were for students who had finished elementary education. Because of their innovative curriculum which offered academic,

technical and commercial subjects at a low fee these schools were highly attractive to lower middle and working class children. There were also evening Continuation Schools which offered science and technical courses on a flexible basis for youth who had started working. There were also pupil-teacher centres for training elementary school teachers from fourteen to eighteen year olds (Robinson, 2002). These encroached upon and often outshone not only the voluntary elementary schools but even the second and third rate grammar schools as well. According to Simon (in Muller et al, 1987) the board schools offered an 'alternative system' which threatened the traditional hegemony of the public and grammar schools and universities. In this way they represented an important development towards educational equality as they provided a cheap form of secondary education which was more in keeping with the economic and social needs of the population. These various 'alternative' schools became a contentious political issue in the first years of the twentieth century when the Conservatives were in power.

The Education Act of 1902 was a major step to bring administrative order to the situation. The Bill preceding the act was extremely contentious and was debated amid fierce opposition from liberals, non-conformists and school boards. In order to secure its passage through parliament it had to appeal to all sections of the Conservative party including those elements who feared the growth of popular democracy. This was the period when the British Empire was at its height and the Conservatives had a clear majority at the time appealing as was shown earlier to working class as well as middle class voters. The strategy of putting the Church Schools on the rates, according to Simon (1977) consolidated the Anglican Church, Conservatives and Right wing elements and ensured its passage through parliament. The Conservatives had three main objectives in the implementation of this act:

- To bring central organisation to the education 'muddle';
- To destroy the School Boards.
- To shore up support for the voluntary sector;

School boards were replaced by Local Education Authorities who were the multi-purpose local authorities in the main who would be responsible for the

provision of elementary, secondary and technical education in their areas. The voluntary schools would be maintained and funded through the rates and therefore by the LEAs who would control secular education in these schools. The managers of voluntary schools would run the schools and appoint the teachers. Thus the dual system of voluntary and state schools was left virtually intact by this legislation. The 1902 Act had the effect of curtailing elementary education at its higher level. Morant, the civil servant who was architect of the Act was determined to make a clear distinction between elementary and secondary education. For him, according to Eaglesham (op. cit.) the secondary school was paramount and the public school was to be the prototype and under him the Board of Education was hostile to any expansion of higher elementary education. However, the higher grade schools were replaced by Higher Elementary Schools which would prepare children over fourteen years for occupations in which 'scientific methods have to be employed'. They were not popular with LEAs and by 1904 only 29 had been established. In 1905 the period of attendance was reduced to three years. The Board of education set out the Regulations for Secondary Schools in 1904. These ensured through the reinforcement of Latin and the humanities and a curtailment of technical and vocational subjects that the new secondary schools maintained by the L.E.A.s would follow closely the traditional pattern of the public and grammar schools (Maclure, op. cit., Eaglesham, op. cit.).

Although the 1902 Act brought a well-needed co-ordination to English education and extended public education to secondary level, it had a negative impact on the struggle for social equality in education. Its negative outcomes are as follows:

- It destroyed the Higher Grade Schools and pupil centres and other 'alternative' post-elementary schools and prevented a unique opportunity to provide a middle type of school between elementary and secondary levels and break with the parallel system of education segregated on social class lines.

- It retained the dual system of state and voluntary/Church schools in the maintained sector which had a negative effect on the progressive development of the state sector, particularly by delaying many reforms in the years to come. (Here we have a direct contrast with the French situation where voluntary schools were abolished in the public sector and where reforms were enacted in a co-ordinated and consistent manner throughout the system.)
- It reinforced the separation of primary from secondary education with only a minority of working class children who gained a scholarship at eleven years who could have access to secondary schools.

As Simon (*ibid*) points out, the 1902 Act was a product of the political, economic and social circumstances of the time. There was a rapid renewal, however, in the political arena when the 1906 elections swept the Liberals to a landslide victory which they held for another 10 years. There is a link here to the contentious education Bill for the mass political activity against it united the opposition forces and strengthened adherence to the Liberals (Simon, *ibid*). While the liberals had won the elections after a campaign which highlighted educational reforms, the Board of Education continued with its conservative administration under Morant. The Report of the Consultative Committee on Higher Elementary Education, 1906, confirmed all the Left's worst fears about its outlook and according to Simon (1965), 'This document is unusual in that it is a completely frank statement of a class outlook in education of the mind more usual in an earlier age before the extension of the franchise (p. 264)'.

Its main focus was on bringing out the structural and qualitative differences between the Higher Elementary and secondary schools. It pronounced that 'the two types of schools prepare for different walks of life – the one for the lower ranks of industry and commerce, the other for the higher ranks and for the liberal professions, (Board of Education 1906, p. 23, cited in Simon, *ibid*, p. 266). As regards the Higher Elementary curriculum whilst this should have a general rather than a vocational education, it should have a restricted

range of subjects and should exclude a foreign language except in exceptional circumstances.

It is interesting to compare and contrast at this point the Higher Elementary Schools in England with the *Ecoles Primaires Supérieures* in France. In many ways these schools have many similarities – both catered for more able pupils at the end of elementary education between the ages of 12 and 16. There is, however, a very important difference of vision between both schools and between that of the republicans in France and that of an English liberal parliament with a conservative administration at that time. As has been shown in the first part of this chapter, the EPS in France were geared towards the aspirational lower middle and working classes which provided clear pathways to further education or to clerical employment in the civil service or in industry and commerce. The vision in England for the HE schools was that they would lead directly to wage earning. The curriculum was an extended one in France which normally included a foreign language compared with that in England which was narrow and normally excluded languages apart from English. In France the *EPS* gradually took on the guise of a middle school whose curriculum would allow it to fuse eventually with the *Lycée Moderne*. In England the Higher Elementary was left to wither on the vine and this widened the gap between elementary and secondary education. The effect of the report was that the HE schools lost favour with the L.E.A.s and the National Union of Teachers objected to their conception seeing them as discriminating against the working class.

The Labour movement and especially the Trade Union Movement became vociferous in its opposition to the Board's policies. It called for free secondary education for all and the provision of maintenance grants. The TUC was also in favour of secular education and proposed a Bill in 1906 in favour of these demands. It was not progressed in parliament and was replaced by a Liberal Bill, which was also rejected. A vote on an amendment in favour of secular education was defeated by a large majority. The Labour Party was split on this issue due to opposition from the Roman Catholics members who were opposed to it (Barker, p. 21).

The Liberals introduced Free School Places Regulations in 1907 whereby it was a condition of any school receiving a grant under the secondary regulations that it offered 25 per cent of its places, to elementary school leavers who had passed the relevant tests. After this reform the Labour Party switched its interest from higher elementary to secondary schooling (Barker, 1972). By 1914 the number of children attending grant maintained secondary schools was 187,000 (Simon, 1965) and of every 1,000 pupils aged 10-11, only 56 would transfer from elementary to secondary school (Simon, op. cit.).

Interwar Period 1918-1939

Introduction

Mass participation in the war has been seen by historians to have long-term positive outcomes and led to ideas of social reconstruction after the war. Lloyd George led a Conservative dominated national government to the polls in 1921 with the slogan of homes fit for heroes and won a decisive victory of 54% of the votes. However, unemployment rose in Britain to two million or 17% in the same year. It would never drop any lower than 10% during the inter war period (Pugh, op. cit.) Labour gained 22% and became the largest party of opposition leaving the liberals a spent force in politics. Its constitution of 1918 had marked its commitment to democratic socialism. This was highlighted in the Clause IV call for the common ownership of the means of production. It also allowed individual membership by subscription as well as the existing method of block affiliation. Both of these changes appeared to show a movement away from trade unionist hegemony but in exchange for the unions acceptance for the symbolic commitment to socialism and a mechanism for the recruitment of middle-class membership, the constitution enshrined Labour's commitment to allowing the unions to use the block vote in the election of the Labour executive (Hodge, op. cit.).

The Fall and Rise of Liberal Political Economy

As a price for his premiership Lloyd George managed to force the Conservatives to bring in reforms and before the war ended in 1918 a Bill to extend the vote to all men over 21 and to women over 30 was passed. Further social reforms included the Education Act which raised the school-leaving age to fourteen and the Maternity and Child Welfare Act which required local authorities to establish clinics and appoint health visitors, and the 1919 Housing Act, which initiated house-building by local authorities with the aid of state subsidies. The government pledged to build 500,000 houses within three years. His premiership on the other hand, perpetuated the division within the Liberals and led to almost 20 years of uninterrupted conservative rule (Pugh, op. cit.).

The crisis of wartime helped accelerate state intervention in the economy and government expenditure rose to 60% in 1917 compared with 7% in 1913. This was financed mainly by raising loans and by higher taxation with income tax rising to four times the pre-war level by 1918. It appeared that the policy of *laissez-faire* had been abandoned. However, the reality of the national debt which had risen to £8,000 million, along with payment for pension and increasing unemployment proved too much and social reform had to be halted. By 1923 only half the number of houses promised had been built. Education was another victim of the economy drive with drastic cuts proposed in this area hitting teachers' wages and continuation schooling. Therefore in so far as a change away from liberal political economy after the war is concerned, this was a short-lived phenomenon. The mass mobilisation of men and resources during the war called for extraordinary measures and led to plans for the reconstruction of society. However, the needs of the people did not, according to Peden (op. cit.) prevent the return of economic orthodoxy at the expense of social reform programmes after the war. A good example of the prioritising of monetary policy before welfare was the return to the Gold Standard which had been replaced by bank note currency during the war. This decision, taken in 1925 by the Conservatives, was attributed by Keynes in his pamphlet, *The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill* (1925, p. 212f) to the Chancellor's submission to the dictates of classical economics. It was also attributed to

the self-interest of the City financiers who thought it would raise the prestige of the City in world financial circles. Either way it denoted a return to traditional liberal economy and ideology. It also completed the process of recovering monetary policy from the hands of politicians.

Labour's strategy in 1918 of expanding its electoral appeal, drawing in support from well beyond its traditional working class constituency, and which together with the diminishing fortunes of the Liberals, caused a decisive shift to Labour leading to the formation of its first government in 1924 with 33% of the vote. The minority administration lasted nine months before the return of the Conservatives. By this time with the Liberals marginalized, Labour became the only realistic alternative to the Conservatives. As referred to above, the Conservative government presided over a return to the Gold Standard which resulted in a focus on balancing the budget and all parties agreed to controlling, in effect, cutting public expenditure (Peden). This led to a policy of wage reduction thus precipitating a general strike in 1926. The Parliamentary Labour Party's exclusion from consultations between the Government and the Trade Unions during the short-lived but crucial strike was according to Hodge, (op. cit.) symptomatic of Labour's corporative origins which proved to be a liability during the interwar period while in Government and in opposition. The other aspect of this was its lack of ideological motivation which also proved a liability during its next term in office between 1929 and 1931. The aftermath of the general Strike was negative in the introduction of punitive legislation e.g. The Trades Dispute Act which impeded sympathetic strikes and collection of the political levy by unions which was a blow to Labour. On the other hand this brought unity to both political and industrial wings of the Labour movement leading to Labour Party's victory in 1929.

Yet Labour's victory came at the worst possible time coinciding as it did with the worst crisis of capitalism with the Wall Street crash of 1929 for which it was ill prepared. Its lack of ideological motivation left it impotent within the dominant orthodoxy of liberalism and the Gold Standard. Although unemployment rose from 1.1 million in June 1929 and had reached 2.5

million in October 1930, MacDonald and his Chancellor, Snowden, were unwilling to intervene. The Cabinet split over the proposal to reduce unemployment benefit. The Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown a remarkable disregard to trade union opinion over the issue which was potentially disastrous (Hodge, op. cit.). A National government was formed by MacDonald who was promptly expelled from the Labour Party. During its term of office the government showed a betrayal of both its unionist origins and its socialist aspirations. This was exemplified by its attack on working class living standards, by its lack of solidarity towards France by 'correcting an over-accommodating diplomacy' towards France and rejecting a plan for European economic union. Its leadership showed a lack of European solidarity ultimately by participating in a government whose policy was one of growing appeasement to Hitler (See Hodge, op. cit. p. 89). MacDonald continued as Prime Minister within the National government until 1936 when he was succeeded by Baldwin and in 1937 by Chamberlain. Labour's lack of commitment to social reform during this period was reflected in educational policy as will be outlined in the next section.

The Inter-War Period of Educational Development

Up to the advent of war in 1916, the Labour Party parliamentary party had proved to be followers of the Liberals rather than leaders in relation to ambitions for educational reform. Its educational policy was tied to the gradual improvement of educational services along the lines of Liberal reforms. The war itself had curtailed many of the Liberal reforms due to the war effort. There was hope for a major reconstruction of society after the war for which education would play an important role. There was a dichotomy, however, between resolutions and speeches at Labour conferences and 'a widespread conservatism when it came to actual legislative proposals' (Barker, op. cit. p. 29.)

The Fisher Act of 1918 has been hailed as a major piece of Liberal social legislation with Labour playing a largely neutral role in its inception. It made schooling compulsory until fourteen while providing for part-time education for working children until sixteen. It also made requirements for the L.E.A.s

to draw up schemes for the development of education for adolescent children in elementary schools. This showed a progression towards a co-ordination of the work of higher elementary education with that of secondary schools (Barker, *ibid*).

However, while the 1918 Act was a crucial piece of legislation which abolished any exemptions to free and compulsory schooling until 14, and had potential for enabling legislation for increasing educational provision for all, its implementation depended upon political will and the commitment of substantial financial and human resources and popular support (Gordon, Aldrich and Dean, 1991). During the interwar period dominated by Conservative education policy, the first two of these conditions were hardly forthcoming in an economic climate where reducing the National debt and balancing the budget were the focus of government policy. In 1921 a committee chaired by Eric Geddes to review expenditure for 1922-23 recommended a cut of £18 million from an education budget of £50 million (Gordon, Aldrich and Dean, *ibid*). A reduction in state-provided education was recommended instead of the expansion envisaged by the Fisher Act. Although the 'Geddes Axe' was toned down it was clear that there would be restrictions on any attempts at structural changes in favour of extended secondary schooling. This Act in effect accomplished little to promote social equality in education more than a finalizing of the nineteenth century agenda of universal access to elementary education and raising the school-leaving age to 14.

Labour's inclusion in its new constitution of the famous Clause IV about the public ownership of the means of production showed its independence from the Liberal vision for society. This declaration of being socialist, however, as commented on by R. H. Tawney, didn't mean that it was socialist. Tawney produced a document for Labour which was a bold expression of socialist educational intentions entitled *Secondary Education for All*. It contained a proposal for the reversal of the 1902 Act.

The Labour Party is convinced that the only policy which is at once educationally sound and suited to a democratic community is one under which primary education and secondary education are organised as two stages in a single continuous process; secondary education being the education of the adolescent and primary education being education preparatory thereto (Tawney, 1922, p.7).

Yet Labour's policy for education didn't go beyond calling for the abolition of fees in secondary schools and the raising of the school age to 16 with adequate maintenance grants and encapsulated by the slogan 'Secondary education for all', none of which was achieved until post-World War II (Jones, 2003). According to Jones (1983) Tawney's proposals fell well short of comprehensive education and the development of the human resources of the community required selective education.

During their first period in office between 1925 and 1926 arrangements were furthered for extending the number of free secondary places to 40 per cent and for extending the school age beyond 14. There was a lack of coherence in their policy with divisions on the issue of selection. There were those who wanted to pursue secondary education for all on a selective basis i.e. an improved ladder of opportunity, while others wanted to develop elementary education for the whole 11-16 age group, while a third group called for a more egalitarian view of education based on common schools (Lawton, 2005). The views of the latter group in favour of common or multilateral schools came to the fore in the period after 1931 when Labour Party policy became more radicalised after the expulsion of MacDonald. Labour policy towards multilateral schooling was extremely complex and this will be developed later in this chapter.

The Hadow Report, *The Education of the Adolescent*, published in 1926, has been hailed as highly radical in subverting existing preconceptions about the nature of secondary education and in outlining a distinct form of working-class secondary education with a broad and humane curriculum (McCulloch, 1998). Originally set up under the Conservatives to provide an alternative to Labour's 'Secondary education for all', the committee sat during Labour's administration and included Tawney, who, paradoxically, was chief architect

of the latter agenda (Lawton, op.cit.). The Report endorsed the view that separate systems of elementary and secondary schooling were no longer desirable and that there should be a continuous process of primary (the term 'elementary' should be abolished) and secondary stages dividing at 11 plus. The school leaving age should be raised to 15 to allow all children at least four years of secondary education. The principle of secondary education for all was endorsed but might be in different school types i.e. 'Grammar Schools', or Modern Schools' or 'Senior Classes'. Whilst the report contained some progressive aspects, McCulloch (op. cit.) points to its fundamentally conservative outlook 'solidly based on existing divisions of social class' whereby 'ordinary' or 'average' working-class children should not aspire to the academic curriculum of the established secondary schools but one to which they were by nature and background more suited. According to McCulloch (ibid) 'it was this class based characteristic that could most readily be exploited and sustained' (p. 37). There ensued a plethora of different interpretations to the report, most importantly between that of Labour and the Conservatives. Labour, again in opposition, readily accepted Hadow's recommendations and called for the reorganization of post-primary education as advocated in the report, together with the raising of the school leaving age. The Conservatives claimed to accept in principle its recommendations but rejected outright raising the school leaving age. The Board's President, Eustace Percy (in keeping with the utilitarian doctrine) preferred to spend the limited resources on an able minority (Lawton, op. cit.).

The dismissal by the Board of Education of the Hadow policy caused resistance which focused attention on a multilateral type of alternative. This was put forward by a number of teachers' associations including the National Association of Labour Teachers and the National Union of Teachers, who called for children over eleven to transfer to non-selective secondary schools with departments of different types that would be equal in status (see pp. 188-189 for discussion of this initiative). Tawney argued in the *Manchester Guardian*, October 1928, against the dilution of the Hadow policy and against the view that the post-primary schools proposed were a cheap substitute for

secondary schools and 'central' or senior schools attended by the mass of working-class children (Simon, 1974, p. 141).

The report was incomplete and the whole question of reorganization would have to be taken up by the Spens Committee which presented its interim report in 1938. It endorsed the continuation of the tripartite system of secondary education in separate grammar, technical and modern schools and rejected multilateral schools. It viewed the raising of the school leaving age to 16 as 'inevitable' if not immediately practicable. Its recommendation for separate secondary schooling on the basis of dubious if detailed psychological testing was subsequently discredited as unscientific and culturally discriminatory and was to mislead later educational debates such as Norwood thus perpetuating a socially divisive structure well into the second half of the 20th century (Lawton, op.cit.). The Spens Report (1938) proposed 15% of secondary school age group as an acceptable level from public elementary schools to transfer to Grammar Schools. Here again, Labour in its acceptance of the report (as later the Norwood Report) betrayed its origins and its social constitution and lost its opportunity for pursuing a programme based on socialist ideals.

Labour was betrayed more by its leadership than by the party as a whole. Particularly under MacDonald, it had felt the need for political expediency (Barker, op. cit) and to prove itself the legitimate heir to Liberalism. Rather than setting out a principled and unifying stand on policy while in government, it focused on the attainment of short-term gains which were inimical to the demands of not only its left wing elements such as the teaching associations or the more militant unions, but by members of its own cabinet. This was exemplified by the Labour Cabinet's agreement to raise the school-leaving age to 15 in 1931. But the Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords. This defeat caused the resignation of Trevelyan, then President of the Board of Education. According to Barker (op. cit.) Trevelyan had succeeded in wresting an increased Exchequer grant for new buildings for three years. He was unsuccessful in pursuing maintenance allowances which were restricted to 14-15 years olds and subject to strict means testing.

His remaining option was to focus on raising the school leaving age. Although it was hampered by the Anglican and Roman Catholics amendment that delayed this until public funds for voluntary schools be provided for by legislation, and subsequently rejected by the House of Lords, according to Barker (op. cit.), Trevelyan identified the Prime Minister as its major opponent.

He [Trevelyan] had for several months been virtually convinced that he could achieve nothing of value in a government of which MacDonal was head, and he had come increasingly to believe the Prime Minister was not just hostile to the raising of the leaving age, but generally incapable of exercising the political initiative which he felt to be necessary before the Government could pursue his conception of a socialist programme (p. 63).

The last section has put forward a critique of the Labour Party for its lack of commitment to furthering egalitarianism in education and for the absence of a revolutionary or socialist alternative to the educational *status quo*. It would be negligent, however, to portray official Labour Party policy as being solely representative of the Left in education at that time. As Jones (1983) indicates, there were sustained efforts made after World War I up to the mid-1930s and led by the Communist Party to develop a socialist critique of state education. The Teachers' Labour League, initially inside Labour, is one notable example. It was affiliated to the Educational Workers International, itself linked to the Communist Third International. Whilst its sponsors were drawn from the respectable Labour intelligentsia, such as Tawney, it was heavily influenced by Communist and educational movements from outside Labour such as the Plebs League, which favoured the development of independent working class education and which was based in the most militant sections of the working class: miners, railway workers, dockers and engineers (Jones, *ibid*). The latter were involved in developing a working-class minority capable of developing working-class consciousness. Its critique of state education was in sharp contrast to Labour's education policy and a split occurred leading to its expulsion from the Labour Party in 1927 when it was superseded by the National Association of Labour Teachers (N.A.L.T.). The TLL survived despite suffering a sharp setback (Jones, *ibid*).

The N.A.L.T. went on to promote the setting up of common schools. In its pamphlet, *Education: a Policy* it proposed that all public education should be organised in this way and that only by having all children attend the same type of school could equality be achieved. The opportunity for raising the issue of common schooling or as it was commonly called, multilateral or multiple bias schools came about in 1933 when the Board of Education Consultative Committee started its inquiry into secondary education. One of the issues examined by the committee was the merits or otherwise of these schools. The TUC at this time, showed enthusiasm for the proposal for multilateral schools. It was also supported by London County Council in 1935 when Labour secured a victory in the local elections, and whose education sub-committee proposed including non-selective multiple-bias schools in London. This never came to fruition, however, and multilateral schooling came to be viewed by Labour as additional to grammar and central schools rather than replacing these. What Labour and the Fabians favoured was a variety of schools including multilateral but with the grammar school at its apex (Barker, *ibid*).

Thus, despite a Left-wing revival during the 1930s, the spirit of traditional pragmatism prevailed when even the raising of the school-leaving age was considered a luxury. When the Board of Education's report i.e. the Spens Report appeared in 1938, it rejected multilateral schools except as an interesting experiment confined mainly to rural parts of Wales. Whilst it examined ways of bringing them about, Labour policy did not commit itself to multilateral schools until 1951 (Barker, *ibid*).

Analysis of the Explanatory Factors

Persistence of liberal ideology between 1870-1939

In the case of England, as has been argued in this chapter the liberal ideology, allied to the principle of *laissez-faire* was dominant in the late 19th century and well into the following one, albeit in a more diluted form from the 1880s onwards. At the same time colonialism which had fallen out of favour early in the century, resurged with vehemence at its end. Intense

competition from the other industrialising countries, which had concentrated mainly on markets, became more territorial and there was a scramble for control of territories not yet under colonial rule particularly in Africa. As argued by Gamble (op. cit.) 'free trade and imperialism were reconciled in a new aggressive policy'. A strange mixed ideology of free trade liberalism, imperialism and militarism co-existed in the early part of the twentieth century. Castle (1996) in her deconstruction of colonial discourse in children's literature claims that the expansion from the 1880s onwards gave rise to the need for the empire to justify its subordination of other peoples and that the drive for expansion necessitated a larger constituency than heretofore for the dissemination of patriotic propaganda. Public education was therefore an important agency for providing this role.

This free trade imperialist ideology coincided with Conservative rule. They retained electoral dominance partly by appealing to the newly enfranchised working-class through their policy of popular imperialism, cheap food and defence of the Monarchy. This ideology helped to consolidate a hierarchical class structure - including educational structure – and a certain acquiescence to it with its veneration for the Monarchy, Anglican Church, aristocracy and the City. However, the imperialist adventures at the turn of the century proved to be a futile attempt at propping up a declining industrial and world power. Its disavowal made it all the more committed to free trade and the institutions of the liberal world order with London as the financial and commercial centre of the world economy (Gamble, op. cit.).

However the liberal orthodoxy with its emphasis on market forces was patently insufficient to cope with the various problems at the beginning of the twentieth century. Foremost among these was the stark poverty fuelled by unemployment which industrialisation had failed to stem. State intervention to provide social welfare became a necessity and was called for not only on humanitarian grounds but also to provide robust recruits to serve the imperialist expansion. Edwardian reforms brought many welfare benefits albeit in limited form, such as health clinics, school meals, unemployment insurance and old age pensions. The crisis of war saw a huge increase in

government expenditure with a corresponding rise in income tax and borrowing. The aftermath of war, however, was one of massive debt with unemployment increasing to 17% by 1921 and this brought about a reversion to monetary orthodoxy epitomised by the return to the Gold Standard in 1925.

What influence did this liberal ideology, punctuated by periods of increasing state interventionism, have on education in the period between 1870 and 1939 and with what impact on social inequality in education? The urgent need for educational expansion which could not be accommodated by voluntarism led to education legislation in favour providing elementary education for all children. The first major legislation was the Elementary Education Act, 1870. The objective was not to provide universal education but, as Forster proclaimed in his speech of introduction to the Bill in the House of Commons in his introduction to the Act:

... Our object is to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of the parents, and welcoming as much as we rightly can the co-operation and aid of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours (cited in Maclure, op. cit. p. 100).

The adherence to liberalism was manifested by the maintenance of the voluntary authorities and their schools. Nor would elementary education be either free or compulsory as proclaimed by Forster:

...I have said that there will be compulsory provision where it is wanted – if and where proved to be wanted, but not otherwise (ibid, p. 101).

.....

...The school boards are to provide the education. Who are to pay for it? In the first place, shall we give up the school fees? I know that some earnest friends of education would do that. I at once say that the Government are not prepared to do it. If we did so the sacrifice would be enormous. Why should we relieve the parent from all payments for the education of his child? We come in and help the parents in all possible ways; but, generally speaking, the enormous majority of them are able, and will continue to be able, to pay these fees. Nevertheless, we do take two powers. We give the school board power to establish special free schools under special circumstances which chiefly apply to large towns, where, from the exceeding poverty of the district, or for other

very special reasons, they prove to the satisfaction of the government that such a school is needed, and ought to be established. ... We also empower the school board to give free tickets to parents who they think really cannot afford to pay for the education of their children; and we take care that those free tickets shall have no stigma of pauperism attached to them (ibid pp 102-3)..

Universalism at elementary level was introduced very slowly with education not entirely free at this level until 1918. Unlike in France, a centralised public system was not introduced and voluntarist/religious schools financed by local taxes continued to play an important role which slowed down the introduction of reform during the first half of the twentieth century.

The Education Act of 1902 was a major step in bringing order to the administrative muddle. It reflected Conservative policy during the imperialist period and demolished the democratic School Boards and consequently a unique opportunity of providing an alternative to classical secondary schools which their Higher Grade schools represented. The Conservatives were committed to defending voluntary education and these would be supported like state schools by the rates. Balfour, the Conservative Prime Minister was emphatic about this in his introduction to the Bill in the House of Commons:

There is yet a third point on which I wish to say a word or two. It relates to the deplorable starvation of voluntary schools ... The fact ... remains that after all their great efforts on the part of the voluntary subscriber and after all the aid given from the National Exchequer, the voluntary schools are in many cases not adequately equipped and not as well fitted as they should be to carry out the great part which they are inevitably destined to play in our system of national education.... At this moment the number of voluntary schools is over 14,000 as compared with about 5,700 Board schools and ... while the Board Schools educate 2,600,000 odd, the voluntary schools educate 3,000,000 (Maclure, ibid, pp. 151-2).

Despite the increase in government expenditure in favour of social reform directly following World War 1, in its aftermath, education soon suffered a similar fate to welfare benefit in being the victim of massive cuts. There was no coherent movement in favour of common secondary schooling such as there was in France for *l'école unique*. The Spens Report published in 1938 recommended the development of secondary education in separate

grammar, technical and modern schools whilst endorsing the validity and usefulness of intelligible tests. As Derek Gillard (2007) points out in his introductory notes to the online version of the Report, it still argued for a divided and elitist system and the only difference to the 19th century was that these divisions were no longer openly based on class, but were based on notions of intelligence and aptitude.

.....We are of opinion that the schools which are directly covered by our reference [i.e. the grammar schools] should retain a special character and must retain a special importance.

Before reaching the conclusion that these schools must remain a separate type of school, we considered carefully the possibility of multilateral schools. The policy of substituting such multilateral schools for Grammar Schools, for Modern (Senior) Schools, and, to some extent, for Junior Technical Schools, has recently been advocated and has received considerable support. It is a policy which is very attractive: it would secure in the first place the close association, to their mutual advantage, of pupils of more varied ability, and with more varied interests and objectives, than are normally found in a school of any one type. Further, pupils could be transferred from an academic to a less academic curriculum without change of school. But in spite of these advantages we have reluctantly decided that we could not advocate as a general policy the substitution of such multilateral schools for separate schools of the existing types (Board of Education, 1938, pp. xix-xx).

Labour's demands for increased educational opportunity for working-class education and raising the school-leaving age despite their two short periods in government achieved little and appeared hollow by the end of this period. Labour's official lack of political support for any form of common schooling showed its weakness in relation to socialist ideology and was in marked contrast to the Socialist Party in France.

It appears, therefore, that the dominant ideology of liberalism allied with a reactionary imperialism during the period between 1870 and the outbreak of war in 1939 had a detrimental effect on the reduction of social inequality in education.

Social Class Alliance in England between 1870 and 1939

Social class alliances during this period in many ways maintained their conservative 19th century origins. In the early period the landed class still maintained their dominant position within both houses of parliament, in Government, in the civil service, the army and local government. Yet it was the capitalist middle class, many of whom were buying up country seats and educating their sons to be gentlemen, who were taking command firstly by 'remote control' and increasingly through election to parliament and within government. However, extension of the franchise during the 1880s to 60% of men and universal suffrage to all males and women over 30 in 1918 resulted in Conservative rule for 20 years and a conservative dominated national coalition, despite the emergence of the largest working class force in Europe. Whilst there was an explosion of trade union membership in both Britain and France during and immediately after the war, Britain had three times more members than France - with 6.5 million compared to 2 million in 1920 (Luebbert, *op. cit.*). This owed much to the slower rate of industrialisation in France and the prevalence of smaller firms. While in France, workers faced more intransigent employers than in England, they frequently were aided through the intervention of the state. This was not the case in England where unions understood, after the experience of the first Labour government, they would not have a reliable political ally. This had much to do with the origins of Labour and its non-revolutionary foundations which resulted in a weak commitment to socialism. This ideological weakness was manifested most acutely during the second Labour government when MacDonald capitulated to the City and broke with the TUC. Therefore, although a working-class of large proportions was organising itself in England, in the absence of a powerful political ally it would not succeed in its aims which were against the interests of a capitalist middle class. Similarly a weak Labour party was unable to achieve effective political power against the political force of this social class.

What impact did this alliance of conservative classes, unrestrained by working-class organisations, have on educational policy in England during this period and with what outcome for the reduction of social inequality in education? The struggle for universal primary education had been a very

lengthy one similar to that of universal suffrage in England and was not fully completed until the 1918 Act. The struggle for equality of access to secondary education was more protracted and complicated. The abolition of School Boards in 1902 with its many elected working-class officers was a huge blow to the ideal of equality of access to secondary education. The Education Act in that year had the effect of maintaining a parallel system of secondary education segregated along social class lines. Unlike in France where the policy of common schooling had the commitment of Radicals and Socialists in the interwar period, this was not the case in England where the Labour party did not officially endorse this until 1951 (Barker, op. cit.). Instead a tripartite system of grammar, vocational and modern schools was endorsed by the Conservatives and the Labour Party which maintained a strict separation along social class lines. Only a minority of the ablest working-class children would have access to the academic curriculum of the grammar schools. At the same time the elite public schools which only the wealthiest could attend, were allowed to continue untrammelled by any governmental legislation.

It appears therefore that the alliance of conservative social classes, notwithstanding a strengthening Labour Party, was not conducive to reducing social inequality in education but, on the contrary, was instrumental in maintaining and reinforcing inequality in education.

The Nature of the State between 1870 and 1939

As has been argued in this chapter, a liberal ideology held sway during the 19th century and in line with this a minimal state was maintained. By the late Victorian period, however, the reality of a decline in British dominance internationally and competition from an increasingly ascendant Germany and the U.S. as well as intermittent periods of economic depression, the orthodoxy of *laissez-faire* came under increasing pressure. Rising unemployment in the 1880s along with increased enfranchisement of the working-class proved to be paramount. The intervention of the state became a necessity on the one hand for alleviating poverty and social injustice and

on the other for social control. The Liberal government led the way by introducing welfare reforms in health, pensions, industry and education which benefitted the working-class. After World War 1 came a policy of reconstruction which led to a massive increase in government investment. Yet it was liberalism that gained the upper hand and orthodoxy was reinstated before long with its corresponding deference to the market order.

The ambivalent attitude to state intervention was nowhere more apparent than in education. The state's initial attempts to provide public elementary education were patchy and aimed at filling in the educational gaps which voluntarism could not provide. Instead of displacing private voluntary schools (mainly church schools) it continued to promote and support them. At the beginning of the 20th century education in England was an administrative 'muddle' until the 1902 Education Act brought about a co-ordination of the system and created the Local Education Authorities. In this way responsibility for education was provided at local rather than at central level. At the same time the voluntary schools were to be funded by the rates. The policy here was to maintain the dual system of voluntary and state schools. This was to have a negative effect on the introduction of progressive legislation as exemplified by the churches objection to raising the school leaving age to 15 in 1931.

Another factor relating to the uncoordinated nature of public education in England was to do with the state's administrative infrastructure which, compared to that of France, was largely undeveloped – a direct result of the minimal state orthodoxy. As a result the enforcing of policy such as compulsory schooling, abolition of fees, free-school meals etc was left up to the local authorities and did not take place in a systematic way. It also meant that progressive reform was delayed or did not take place. Thus, while the role of the state between 1870 and 1930 was steadily increasing there is evidence of a reluctance to allow the state to intervene in a systematic way throughout the country in education. A centralised state system such as existed in France did not emerge. As a result many school reforms which would have contributed to the reduction of inequality in education were

delayed or introduced in an unsystematic way. This indicates that the nature of the state in England during this period was not conducive to the reduction of social inequality in education.

Social Equality in terms of Educational Outcomes

Thus far in this chapter there has been a focus on the impact of the state in terms of educational policy and structure. It is important to analyse the statistics to see what impact the liberal state in England had on educational outcomes.

Elementary School Statistics

Enrolment of children in aided elementary schools rose steadily after the 1870 act: while there were 1,500,000 children on the registers of inspected schools in 1870, which represented about 50% of school age children) this had risen to 2,218, 598 which represented approximately 73.98% of those who should have been enrolled. There followed an annual percentage increase in attendance up to 1900, when there were 5,705,675 representing 87.78% of school-age population. According to Ellis (1973) 'educational legislation had failed to account for 12.88% of the children of school age, of whom a proportion would be at public and private schools' (p. 315).

It is important also now to make a comparative analysis of the educational outcomes for both countries. The statistics reveal that enrolment of school-age children in England was slower than in France where, for example, 96-100% enrolment was achieved on average by 1881 (see Table 4, p. 163 above), whereas this was at 80% in England by 1885. The higher enrolment ratio in France is also indicated in Table 6 below.

Table 5: (From: Ellis, 1973, p. 315) ²⁸

England: Elementary Schools

Date	Children on the Registers	Children in Average Daily Attendance
1870	1,500,000 (50%)	-
1873	2,218,598 (73.95%)	1,482,480 (49.42%)
1880	3,895,824 (77.92%)	2,750,916 (55.02%)
1885	4,412,148 (80.22%)	3,371,325 (61.1%)
1890	4,804,149 (81.61%)	3,717,919 (63.2%)
1895	5,299,469 (87.12%)	4,325,030 (71.13%)
1900	5,705,675 (87.78%)	4,687,646 (72.12%)

Table 6: (from Grew and Harrigan, op, cit., p. 268, Table E.8).

France: Percentage of Children aged Six to Thirteen enrolled in Primary Schools

Date	Mean	Departmental Minimum	Coefficient of Variance
1863*	77.0	-	-
1881	97.8	64.4	10%
1886	101.0	70.8	8%
1891	98.3	67.9	7%
1896	96.4	65.6	7%
1901	99.9	84.2	5%

*An archival document (F17/5160) for 1863 listed the school-age population (six to thirteen year olds) as 4,018,449; the enrolment of that age group as 3,093,652; the number of students who were older than thirteen as 519,092; the number of students who were younger than six as 741,160.

These data showing slower enrolment of elementary school children in England than in France differs from some other comparisons between these two countries which show the reverse to be the case. This was particularly the case for those estimates that used the proportion of children to total population as a measure of enrolment rates. For example, Mulhall (1994, cited in Green, 1990, p. 14) gave comparative estimates for the percentage rate of schoolchildren to total population in England and France as follows:

²⁸ The percentages have been compiled by Ellis (op.cit.) from the official statistics in the following reports: Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales, Report, 1888, 52–3. Committee of Council on Education, Reports, 1873/1874–1898/1899; Board of Education, Reports, 1899–1901.

	1830	1850	1881
England	7	8	15
France	6	9	13

These data, however, have little meaning without taking into account the corresponding figures for school-age children, as has been done in my data above. There had been a sharp decline in France's population in the 19th century and particularly after the 1860s. Lévasseur's (1889, p. 313) data show that whereas in 1866 the French population had been 38,192 (in 1000s) that this had decreased to 36,102 (in 1000s) in 1872 and 37,405 (in 1000s) in 1881. The large decrease is explained by Lévasseur as due to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and the war with Prussia, as well as poverty. On the other hand, the population had quadrupled in England between 1801 and 1901. Lévasseur's data (*ibid*, p. 318) show the populations of France and England as 32.4 and 24.4 millions in 1830, and 38.5 and 37.8 millions in 1881 respectively. Also the ratio of school age children in England was higher as a proportion of the total population than was the case in France which had the oldest population among 15 European countries and the U.S. and England the youngest. According to Mulhall (*op. cit.* p. 3) the average age in England was 27.1 and in France it was 32.2.

Ringer (*op. cit.*) considers the relative merits of France and England in terms of social mobility and provides some statistics on secondary education in both countries. When considering these figures it is important to bear in mind the important demographical differences between both countries.

The figures for comparison between the French and English enrolments in secondary schools (see Table 7 below) appear to show higher levels of attendance in England than in France. These results are surprising given that English secondary schools during the 19th century were the most aristocratic in Europe (Ringer, 1979).

Table 7: Comparison between enrolment in secondary schools in France and England and Wales (from Ringer, *ibid.*).

Secondary enrolment in France 1936 (<i>ibid</i> , p. 145) Percentage of age group (11-17)		Secondary Enrolment in England and Wales 1936-38 (<i>ibid</i> , p. 143)	
Private Lycées	3.3	% In attendance at any school: 14 Years	38
Public Lycées	3.9		
Higher Primary	2.3	% In attendance at any school: 17 years	4
Vocational/Technical	1.4		
Cours Complémentaires	3.4		
Baccalauréats	3.9		
Total	18.2		

These figures are challenging as they don't compare like with like. Also, the English figures (based on the Robbins Report 1963) are for a one age-year cohort only, i.e. 14 or 17, whereas for France, the figures represent the mean enrolment between ages 11 and 17. Also the 4 per cent figure for 17 year-olds in England shows a huge drop-out level between 14 and 17 year olds. This figure is close to the level of the *baccalauréat* award in France, 3.9. However, as the *baccalauréat* is an award rather than a year age it may be inferred that French students presenting for this could be twice as many as those awarded the degree – due to the high degree of failure (Harrigan, *op. cit.*). Thus this would imply that percentage of those at age 17 in French lycées would be rather more numerous than the 3.9 per cent of the age group successful in the *baccalauréat*. Thus it could be inferred that the proportion of 17 years olds in secondary schools are rather more numerous than in schools in England and Wales, perhaps even twice as much.

The high proportion of 14 year olds in secondary schooling in England compared to France can be best explained by the difference between these institutions. As Ringer (1979) explains it, instead of the segmented and tracked institutions in France i.e. Lycée, upper primary etc., in England they were graduated along academic and social lines on a continuum with the ancient Public schools at the top of the pyramid. Grammar schools were of

varying types and had a huge drop out rate between 14 and 17 as the figures above show. In fact the Statistics of the Board of Education Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education (1939) sheds some light and explains the anomaly of the difference between size of the cohorts in France and England (See Table 8 below).

These showed that the total number of pupils between the ages of 11 and 17 on the registers of certain types of schools, including Elementary, Grammar, pupil teacher and Junior Technical schools, was 2,290,729 out of a total child population for this age group on 31 March 1937 of 4,107,000. However of those registered 1,785,253 were from Elementary schools. Thus the number at post-elementary schools was 505,476, which as a percentage of the estimated total child population of this age range is 12% (approx.). The total number of pupils at age 17 in these schools is 51,845 in March 1936. Of these 2,393 are in elementary schools. This shows that whilst there were 18.2% in post-elementary schools in France (see Table 4) above, there were 12% in England.

The different rates of access to university in both countries would bear out the higher rates of attendance at the upper level of secondary schooling in France compared to England and Wales. According to Ringer (*op. cit.*), the proportion of the age group enrolled in universities in France in the 1920s and 1930s was double that in England with 4% compared to 2% of the age group respectively. (This difference was comparable in 1960 with 10% and 5.5% respectively.) Another difference was in the proportion of women students which was higher in French universities with 27% in 1936 compared to 23% in England. This difference was greatly increased by 1960 with women students in France at 40% in 1961 compared to 25% in England in 1960 (*ibid*, pp. 230-231) .

Table 8**Number of pupils between the ages of 11 and 17 on the registers of certain types of school, with the corresponding population***

Age	31 March 1937						Total 31 March 1936	Estimated total child population of these age groups 31 March 1937
	Elementary	Grant-aided secondary	Junior technical etc	Pupil-teachers in centres	Rural pupil-teachers	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10-11	566,964	12,165				579,129	595,609	613,000
11-12	552,388	44,536				596,924	604,878	629,000
12-13	522,304	80,154*	1,135			603,593	624,949	641,000
13-14	530,122	83,902	4,886			618,910	632,957	658,000
14-15	158,303	79,390	11,401		26	249,120	267,923	681,000
15-16	19,743	73,333	9,037		71	102,184	108,177	728,000
16-17	2,393	47,718	2,972	12	90	53,185	51,845	770,000
Total (11-17)	1,785,253	409,033	29,431	12	187	2,223,916	2,290,729	4,107,000

*It should be noted that in Wales the numbers of children admitted at the age of 12 to Secondary Schools slightly exceed the numbers of those admitted at the age of 11.

*From: Board of Education Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education (Spens Report) 1939, p. 88.

The reclassification of the higher primary and vocational schools after 1936, according to Ringer (1979) 'led to a genuine enlargement of the French secondary system'. He also stated that 'the structural reforms after 1936 were in part responsible for the almost threefold increase in *baccalauréats* per age group from 3.9% to 11.2 in 1962 (p. 146).' Yet this same year showed a large expansion of students at age 17 to 15% in England (although this percentage difference must be attenuated by the difference – as shown above – between the award of a *baccalauréat* and attendance at age 17).

Another factor to consider here is the matter of fees. Whilst in France all secondary education was free since 1930 whereas this was not the case in England and Wales until 1945. According to Lindsay (1926, in Maclure, 1970), 9.5% of elementary school-leavers went on to secondary schools and of these one third had free places and two-thirds paid fees.

The comparison between the levels of access to primary level education between France and England based on statistical data shows that there was still a difference between both countries in relation to enrolment. The comparison between the level of access to secondary education in both countries also shows France to have a higher percentage in second level schooling than in England although the difference between them was narrowing.

Conclusion to Chapters 6 and 7

These chapters have traced the development of burgeoning educational systems in France and England. They cover the period of the Third Republic in France and the late Victorian period on to the declaration of War in 1939 in England.

In France this marked a period which saw for the first time, the successful installation and consolidation of the democratic Republican state. In this way it brought to fruition what the Revolution had attempted to create, and officially embedded in its institutions the principles of *liberté, égalité and fraternité*. Its crowning glory in the area of education was the institution of the Republican School which was free, compulsory and uniquely, in comparison to other European systems, secular primary education. This school had a special mission to unite a divided and regionally diverse nation around the values and principles of republicanism and thus ensure the cohesion of its citizens. In England the early period saw the more tentative steps of the state on its circuitous itinerary towards the organisation of education and its eventual coordination in 1902. As Crook (2006) observes, 'The State progressively relieved charities and parishes of financial responsibility for maintaining schools and emerged as the senior partner, alongside local authorities and sometimes churches, exercising control over the schools (p. 40). In this way it left in place a dual system of voluntary and state-maintained systems. Instead of a unified system that was in place in France, a diversified system was in place in England.

In both countries the ideal of universal access to primary education attained by the beginning of the 20th century was superseded by that of universal access to secondary education. This frontier would involve a protracted struggle which was not achieved by the end of the period being reviewed here. The contrast between the itineraries taken toward this goal is marked by the distinctiveness of the discourse in relation to it. In France the *cause célèbre* of the interwar period was *l'école unique* whereas in England the important debates were around 'secondary education for all'. There is a philosophical distinction at the heart of these different debates for the *école*

unique concept is related to the ideal of social equality in education whereas 'secondary education for all' is more to do with equity and fairness. The French ideal is based on the idea of all children starting on a level playing field and attending a common school. In England, the ideal was for different types of secondary education which would be 'equal but different'. The former would involve a mixing of different social classes in the same institution, the latter a division of schooling along social class lines.

Whereas in France, as has been shown, a republican/revolutionary ideology was embedded in the state institutions with the school as an important vehicle for its diffusion, in England the liberal ethos still predominated although this came under attack particularly during the interwar period when state intervention became more and more a necessity in the face of growing poverty, unemployment and a declining economy. As Gamble (op.cit.) argues, 'it was the permissive orientation of the state to the market order and the tradition of suspicion towards the government and its initiatives, which, while not preventing the policies of an interventionist state has hampered its development'.

The distinction between the working-class organisations in both countries was important, particularly for the impact of their policies on educational equality. The Socialist Party, formed out of revolutionary Marxist organisations and, after 1920, rivalled by a rigidly doctrinaire Communist Party, was bound ideologically to bring social equality to the fore, not least in its educational policy. This was manifested in their espousal of the *école unique* throughout the 1920s and 30s. They were supported in this by both the trade unions and the Radical republicans. Alternatively, it has been shown that the Labour Party's origins were neither revolutionary nor Marxist, and were more compromised in relation to its Liberal ally, and after 1918 when Liberalism was virtually defunct, in relation to the Conservatives, who dominated for much of the interwar period. This ideological difference was reflected in their policy towards education. Compared to the Socialists and Radicals' position of support for common non-selective secondary schools in France, Labour was ambivalent towards them. Instead it pursued a policy of

increasing the number of scholarships to secondary schools from 25% to 40%. These scholarships became a prime target for Conservative cuts. They succeeded, nevertheless, in extending the scholarship scheme to 50% in 1939. Therefore Labour's policy was more to do with educational meritocracy than educational equality with the emphasis on the equalising of educational opportunity on the basis of talent. It was only the most intelligent working-class children who could attend secondary schools. This fitted with a liberal and conservative ethos of utilitarianism, of providing educational resources to those most capable of utilising them.

Chapter 8

A Comparison of the Findings from the analysis of the Explanatory Factors

This thesis has undertaken a comparative historical analysis of social equality in education in France and England and has sought to explain the variation between how both countries have promoted or limited social equality in education and to explain why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education. It found that a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education, and the aim of this chapter is to provide a systematic comparison of the explanatory factors behind this striking difference over the historical period 1789 to 1939.

The Persistence of Ideology

The centrality of a revolutionary ideology to the maintenance of a discourse of egalitarianism has been repeatedly confirmed in the substantive historical chapters. It has also been suggested that the persistence of a revolutionary ideology has been conducive to a certain reduction of social equality in education. This has been borne out in the historical analysis in relation to France. Alternatively, in the case of England, the analysis suggests that a revolutionary ideology has been absent with a resultant absence of a discourse of egalitarianism in educational policy and this has been less conducive to a reduction of social inequality in education.

The persistence of ideology is of importance here as is the variation between contrasting ideologies in France and England. As outlined in Chapter 1, the comparative method is used here to bring out the contrasting trajectories in the evolution of state education in France and England with the purpose of, on the one hand, to interpret the divergence between both countries in relation to social equality in education and on the other to explain it. Therefore it is not only the presence or absence of the explanatory factor of a revolutionary ideology leading to a certain outcome that is of importance here, but also the existence of contrasting factors which account for the

variation in outcomes. In order to satisfy the twin purposes of contrast and causality it was necessary therefore to trace the persistence of the revolutionary/republican ideology in France and the liberal ideology in England and to indicate how the presence of the former in France and its absence in England during the historical period under review explained the variation in outcomes in both countries.

The historical analysis clearly suggests a contrast between the ideologies of both countries which has persisted between 1789 and 1939. This is represented by a revolutionary/republican ideology in France and a liberal ideology in England. Because of these contrasting ideologies the historical analysis should explain the variation in how both countries have gone about the reduction of social inequality. Crucially, it was important not only that the variation was present in both countries but that it persisted during the historical period covered in this thesis. This persistence was confirmed by the strength of the individual ideologies and the mythologies they gave rise to – on the one hand the French myth of the Revolution and the myth of English liberties on the other. These ideologies were elaborated on and developed in ways which supported the legitimation of dominant social classes and political power and the articulation of these to the state. In this way it was clear that the factor of persistence of ideology interacted in various ways with that of the other explanatory factors here i.e. social class alliances and the nature of the state.

Persistence of Ideology in France and England 1789/1870

Ideology as it is understood to mean in this thesis corresponds to a way of viewing the world, a framework of thought used in society to give meaning and order to the social and political world in which we live. It subscribes to the Marxist view that a dominant ideology can become hegemonic and become part of society's superstructure. In this way two of the explanatory factors used in this thesis: persistence of ideology and alliance of social classes are linked.

The French Revolution was a cataclysmic force which brought about major social, political, cultural and economic changes in France. It is understandable therefore that a revolutionary ideology originated in this period as a result. It was not a completely *'tabula rasa'* position that was taken by the revolutionaries as they inherited much from 18th century philosophy particularly the Enlightenment and many of the Revolution's leaders were inspired by Enlightenment ideas. A major contribution of the Enlightenment to the revolutionary ideology was in its legacy of laying the basis for thought on secular rather than on religious foundations and in the creation of secular institutions for its dissemination (Hamilton, 1992). Rousseau's philosophy was of importance and was at the heart of the revolutionary ideology of popular sovereignty. These ideas of secularism and equality were transposed into the revolutionary plans for education. Condorcet's plan is a prime example in that it placed emphasis on critical reason for its ability to lead humanity to knowledge and equality. Fundamental to this was a belief in the educability of all. In this way a discourse of egalitarianism and *laïcité* became uppermost in educational debate during this period. It is this discourse which the historical analysis has shown to have persisted.

The revolutionary ideology gave prominence to the idea of the state as having responsibility for administration and funding of education. It was Napoleon who developed a unified and centralized education system under the control of the state. His régime represented an authoritarian attempt at reunification of the opposing revolutionary and reactionary forces. He had maintained the principles of 1789 by preventing the reassertion of aristocratic and church privilege. His legacy for education was monumental in creating an educational administrative structure divided into regional academies which has persisted to this day as have the *lycées*, the secondary schools which were established to develop an educational elite to supply the state with technical and administrative experts. The *Université* he established was important for the maintenance of public education during the Restoration and the period of the July Monarchy (1830-1848) and the Second Empire (1851-

1870) which through its corporate position was a power area against the resurgent power of the church.

A social revolution such as that which took place in France did not occur in England. Instead a revolution of a different kind was taking place where industrialization was changing the face of the country and where England led the world as an industrial and maritime power. It was the ideology of liberalism that came to the fore in the 18th century and was foremost in this supremacy. It had political and economic variants. Politically it had ousted absolutism in the previous century, and was centred on an independent parliament with a liberal monarchy while at the same time eschewing universal manhood suffrage or egalitarianism. Its economic variant was more powerfully wedded to the country's position as industrial and maritime superpower. It was based on the political economic philosophy of Adam Smith which saw human and economic progress as consisting of individuals pursuing their own interests in free competition with others in an open market untrammelled by the interference of the state. This economic philosophy would perforce benefit the ascendant capitalist class in their struggle for free trade in the first half of the 19th century and against the protectionist landowning class. Free trade took on an international dimension with the continuing growth of the banking, insurance and financial services which the liberal political economy with its emphasis on the world market expresses (Gamble, op. cit). Thus the ideology of *laissez-faire* prevailed in a market economy with a minimal state which would undertake only those activities to maintain a policy of sound finance and maintain the conditions for free and expanding markets as well as defence and social order. By the middle of the 19th century this ideology of liberal economy had become orthodoxy for British governments (Gamble, op. cit.).

As a result of this education was not seen as an affair of government and no serious attempt was made to initiate public education until 1870 either at elementary or secondary level. This was completely at odds with the French situation at the end of the 18th century when the Revolution brought the state centre-stage in education and left behind the legacy of education as a right

for all and a vehicle for social equalization. The liberal ideology instead propagated the ideas of self-help and voluntarism. This was evidenced in the manner in which the dissenting sector rather than wresting power from the ruling elite of the Anglican Church and the state undertook a strategy of substitution as they set about establishing their own schools (Archer, op. cit.).

The manner in which the ideology of the early French revolutionaries changed from the original liberal ideals of political equality and freedom to the more extreme ideals of pure democracy promoted during the Convention period and its subsequent manifestation as republicanism, is of importance here. The fact that the original revolutionary ideology became more attenuated fits with Thelen's (2003) path dependent explanation of how ideologies become transformed to fit changing political and socio-economic conditions. The revolutionary/republican ideology had a certain eclectic quality in that it brought together ideas as diverse as for example, egalitarianism, secularism, anticlericalism, universal suffrage, citizenship, private property rights, anti-big capitalism, compulsory secular education, radical liberalism. It permeated the subordinate classes and was conducive therefore to the formation of social movements and associations during the regimes between 1815-1870 when republicanism was in abeyance and mostly illegal. When these regimes were forced to liberalise as in the 1860s under the Second Empire, these movements were able to transform themselves into political parties of opposition.

The ideology was kept alive within civil society which had developed during the July Monarchy. Many social movements grew in opposition to the Second Empire promoting an alternative culture disseminating democratic ideas. Anti-clericalism was a unifying theme for many middle-class associations, such as, Masonic Lodges, Protestant lay organisations, and most importantly the *Ligue de l'enseignement* which opposed the church's authority in education and campaigned for secular education and many of whose members were Republicans and were elected to parliament.

It was important for its pervasiveness and its power as a cohesive force for allying classes which might otherwise have been antagonistic or at least neutral to each other. It was this same cohesiveness which helped support republicanism in its first faltering steps during the Third Republic especially during the first twenty years when the survival of its democratic institutions were under threat. The all-encompassing aspect of the ideology is to be seen in its espousal by such divergent figures as the Right of centre republican, Ferry to the communist leader, Thorez. The ideology was also contested as is highlighted by its espousal by the Marxist and Communist organizations on the left who saw themselves as the real inheritors of the revolutionary ideology which the bourgeoisie had abandoned. Yet contested as a heritage or shared, it brought together an amalgam of progressive forces in the pursuit of social equality and under the banner of anti-fascism, for which the Popular Front was a notable example.

If anti-clericalism was an important unifying aspect of the ideology, free compulsory secular education was its positive manifestation. Universal secular education was campaigned for in both the revolutions of 1848 and 1870 and teachers were prominent as leaders of the opposition. Universal education was also the tool necessary for hegemonising the republican ideology and this was used to its utmost throughout the Third Republic.

The persistence of liberal ideology in England has also been shown to fit with Thelen's (op. cit.) path dependent explanation whereby liberalism has been transformed to fit with changing political and socio-economic conditions. The ideology, similarly to the French example, had qualities of eclecticism which allowed it to encompass a plethora of diverse ideas such as, Puritanism, voluntarism, individualism, self-help, utilitarianism, *laissez-faire*, social liberalism, liberal imperialism, capitalism, globalization, free trade, open markets, colonialism, radicalism and anti-statism. The varying aspects of the ideology were brought to the fore commensurate with the changing political and international landscape and in response very often to threats from competing powers. For example, an imperialist jingoism came to the fore towards the end of the 19th century when there was a drive for control of the

world economy. This contrasted with the earlier orthodoxy of free trade with markets open to international trade and opposed to closed trade routes based on colonial markets.

Liberalism did not only mean freedom as expressed through the economy but was expressed by political and civil liberties against the arbitrary power of the state. It focused on the expansion of civil society and a certain freedom of religious belief exemplified by the protestant and dissenting denominations. This gave rise to a myth of English liberties encapsulated by the Whig interpretation of history (Gamble, *op. cit.*) which stands in contrast to the French myth of the Revolution. It is this libertarianist aspect which had the power to penetrate to the subordinate classes and become hegemonised. However, this ideology was unashamedly that of the dominant classes. Originally it was the ideology of the agrarian elite which in England was represented by the commercialized landowners who following the enclosure laws were able to rely on market mechanisms for labour supply (Rueschmeyer et al, 1994) and who interpenetrated the financial world and dominated government and parliament. This ideology was eminently suitable for the needs of the industrializing bourgeoisie, as has been shown earlier, and became refined and expanded from Adam Smith's political economy philosophy by Ricardo and combined with the utilitarianism of Mill and Bentham which promoted the middle class as most suitable for governance. By the end of the 19th century, however, the liberal orthodoxy and the minimal state was proving inadequate to deal with the needs of an ever-growing and increasingly enfranchised population. The expansion of suffrage to the working-class during this period meant that government needed to take into account the needs of this constituency.

What significance does the persistence of ideology have for social equality in education in both countries? Ideological persistence, it has been argued, has been pervasive to the extent of reaching a certain hegemony in both countries. Since education is a most appropriate tool that can be used to promote or stabilize social mobility or for social engineering, it follows that ideology will influence educational policy.

In the case of France, the Revolution destroyed the political power of the Catholic Church and the aristocracy and thus paved the way for democracy (Barrington Moore, op cit.) and left behind a revolutionary ideology. Whilst the ideals of universalism, equality and secularism had to be fought over subsequently, the Revolution left a potent and persistent ideology which ensured that egalitarianism and secularism would be prominent in educational discourse. The legacy of this ideology has had major consequences for social equality in education in France. The values of equality and *laïcité* originated then as evidenced by the many plans for education put forward during that period. Whilst varying in their differing levels of egalitarianism they all had common themes of opposition to church control of education, a movement away from classical subjects and towards the scientific disciplines, an emphasis on the teaching of republican principles and citizenship and a belief in the fundamental right of all citizens to receive an elementary education to equip them with the basic skills for life. The most extreme example of egalitarianism was evidenced by the scheme for common boarding schools (*Maisons d'Égalité*) for all children between the ages of five and twelve. This was adopted by law at the height of the most revolutionary period and was trialled for a very brief period anticipating in a rudimentary way the *école unique* and attempted to initiate an equality of experience in which the school could compensate for deficiencies in family life and, at the same time, the richer pupils would share the same classroom as their less fortunate peers. The concept of universalism within education originated during the period and preceded its development in other European countries.

The revolutionary ideology persisted, albeit in a tamed and republicanized version, and was revitalized during the Third Republic, when its most potent symbols were institutionalized. The expansion of this ideology played an important role in preparing hearts and minds for winning the parliamentary battle to legislate for free secular schooling in the 1880s. The Republican School during this period was instrumental in disseminating republican values. Religious ideology in schools was replaced by a republican secular

doctrine as exemplified in Ferdinand Buisson's publication, *The Lay Faith*, which became orthodoxy for all primary school teachers whose role it was to propagate this doctrine. The *école primaire supérieure* was also important for ideological dissemination and for preparing its students to become citizens of the Republic capable of participating in democracy. It also allowed children from the peasantry and lower middle classes to gain entrance to teacher training in the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*. In this way the circle was complete for propagating republican values from primary to tertiary level. Subsequently, ideology played an important role in facilitating campaigns in favour of universal common schooling at secondary level. The cause of *l'école unique* became a rallying point for radical republicans during the 1920s when they needed an ideological platform to increase their support and to compete with the socialists. These campaigns led to various attempts to merge classes of the E.P.S. with the lower classes of the secondary schools and although this reform was only trialled during this period, it laid the groundwork for it being established a few years later. As well as this, free secondary schooling was established in 1930 which was important for the reduction of social equality in education.

In the case of England where the landed aristocracy, along with the Anglican Church continued to hold the balance of power, universal manhood suffrage was not achieved until 1918. Consequently universalism and equality did not enter political or educational discourse until the early part of the 20th century. The liberal ideology with its doctrine of laissez-faire and the minimal state meant that voluntarist and religious and benevolent organizations were the sole providers of education until 1870 with the result that public education that was free and compulsory was introduced very gradually and unsystematically and educational policy in favour of common secondary schooling was non-existent during the historical period under review here.

The liberal ideology had major consequences for social equality in education in England. According to liberal doctrine education should not have a single overarching system but rather a plurality of institutions commensurate with the social divisions in society and in keeping with a social hierarchy. The

outcome of various working class campaigns for public education in the 1830s and 1840s, for example, those of the Chartists and Robert Owen, was that there were alternative educational institutions for the working class which ironically, fitted with the liberal ideal of diversification and indicates the power, however unintentional, of liberal hegemony.

Education was seen as necessary for social control and for quelling social unrest. It became clear that voluntarism was not sufficient to provide this service nor to cope with the urgent need for educational expansion to accommodate the huge increase in the population. The Education Act of 1870 was a compromise which allowed the public school boards to co-exist alongside the voluntary sector. The pervasiveness of the myth of liberalism with its emphasis on freedom and diversity meant that there was opposition amongst the interested parties – Whigs, Tories, Anglicans and non-denominationalists – to state intervention in education with the result that compulsory and free education was not legislated for until 1886 and 1918 respectively. It was not until the Education Act of 1902 that a central system of education was set up. In keeping with liberalism, the main responsibility for schools would be provided locally rather than centrally by the Local Education Authorities. Furthermore, the Act provided for the funding of the voluntary sector through the rates. This had the effect of strengthening church schools and therefore the influence of religious forces in education.

The liberal ideal favoured the maintenance of the classics and the humanities in secondary education. The Regulations for Secondary Schools in 1904 ensured that these subjects would be reinforced and the technical and vocational subjects would be curtailed in the secondary schools maintained by the LEAs which would follow the pattern of the public schools. Both the 1902 and the 1904 regulations ensured that the separation between primary and secondary education was reinforced. The higher primary schools were allowed to wither away and this meant there was no possibility of merging these with lower secondary schools as occurred in France and consequently this was detrimental to the cause of common secondary education. Even when the Labour party came to prominence in the 1920s, there was no

radical departure from liberal values in its educational policy. Whilst Labour campaigned for equality of opportunity for working class children their advocacy of secondary education for all did not aspire to common schooling for all.²⁹

This suggests that the liberal ideology was conducive to maintaining education that was divided on social class lines and not conducive to reducing social equality in education.

Social Class Alliances

The social context in which educational systems operate is unequal and this is related to the social class structure of society. Any study of the reduction of social inequality therefore must make the role of social class a central category of the analysis. As Rueschmeyer et al (op.cit.) argue, social class has been a powerful explanatory tool in social science analysis for more than two hundred years. This is not to deny that other factors such as race, ethnicity and gender are also valid as factors relating to social inequality. These may serve to deepen class divisions or to cut across them. However, as has been already indicated, it is not within the scope of this thesis to include them specifically in the analysis and they will be subsumed under the larger category of social class.

As Rueschmeyer et al (ibid) point out, those who have most to gain from democracy will be its most reliable promoters and defenders and those who have most to lose will resist it and attempt to roll it back when the opportunity arises. In an analysis of social inequality, which exists in democratic as well as non-democratic states, a similar argument can be made and therefore it will be the subordinate classes, principally the working class, who will be most prominent in the struggle to reduce educational inequality and the dominant classes who will be most prominent in resisting it. However,

²⁹ Although as shown earlier multilateral schooling was supported by the TUC and London County Council in the mid-1930s, it was only seen as *additional to* Grammar and Central schools.

although the organized working-class were most prominent in this struggle, they were too small a force to do so on their own and therefore alliances with other social classes with similar or overlapping interests were necessary.

The nature of these alliances is of crucial importance here and the difference between the social class alliances formed in France and in England are important as explanatory factors as to why the reduction of social inequality in education was promoted more in France during the period between 1789 and 1939 and more resisted in England. Whilst the composition of these alliances changed during the period under review, the centrality of progressive social classes to the reduction of social inequality in education, as was the case in France, has been confirmed throughout the thesis, as is its relevance to a discourse of egalitarianism. Alternatively the alliance of conservative social classes which occurred in England over this historical period has not been conducive to the reduction of social inequality in education, and even less to the prominence of a discourse of egalitarianism.

The *bourgeoisie* came to prominence during the French Revolution and became the leading hegemonic class through Jacobinism, their most revolutionary manifestation. They achieved this through allying with the popular urban masses (the *sans-culottes*) as well as with the peasantry through agrarian reform. They were forced, particularly by the *sans-culottes* to go beyond the reformist demands of the early revolutionaries. The urban masses also pushed for free secular education and this was foremost in most of the educational plans discussed during this period. The violent class struggle during the Revolution brought about a situation of stale-mate which was broken by a form of Caesarism³⁰. Although Napoleon's regime was authoritarian he prevented the reassertion of the aristocracy and used the state to consolidate the gains of the *bourgeoisie*. In England there was a period of reaction to the French Revolution when sympathisers such as Thomas Paine were forced into exile and progressive academies which had given rise to a spirit of scientific and free enquiry were closed down. It

³⁰ This refers to the intervention by a Caesar-like figure, such as Napoleon, as a solution to a potentially catastrophic equilibrium of forces.

delayed development towards a more scientific and socially more relevant form of education which was being pursued in France in the revolutionary Central schools, *Grandes Ecoles* and later the Napoleonic *lycées*.

In England the landed aristocracy dominated politically through the Whig and Tory parties and the Anglican Church dominated the educational institutions for the early decades of the nineteenth century. The rising industrial middle class campaigned against the traditional oligarchy of landed aristocracy and Anglican Church gaining success economically with the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and politically with the First Reform Act of 1832 which gave suffrage rights to the middle class. This campaign against the aristocracy in favour of universal suffrage and universal elementary education led to a brief alliance with the working class. However, with the achievement of its foremost aims of a more liberal and *laissez-faire* capitalism, the interests of the middle class became inimical with those of the working class. Instead of using the increased suffrage rights in 1832 and 1846 to bring about change to achieve political power and universal education, this middle class - as long as their interests were being served - continued to vote for the landed class thus maintaining the political leadership of that class. As the industrial middle class became more powerful economically this alliance came to work in their favour as they became co-opted into the upper class who governed on their behalf. As their assimilation to the upper class increased, the agricultural sector declined in relation to it, and a fusion of landed, commercial and industrial capital interests took place giving rise to a powerful governing class. This left the working class isolated in their struggle to achieve universal suffrage and education. This struggle was spearheaded by the Chartists and culminated in the forcible repression of the movement. This defeat left the working class without any politically organized leadership for another half century. Thus as earlier research has shown, a strong hegemony of conservative forces was important for the gradual and stable nature of suffrage extension in keeping the substantive demands of the lower classes off the immediate political agenda in Victorian England (Rueschmeyer et al, op. cit. p. 274).

The assimilation of the industrial and professional middle classes to the upper class was reflected educationally in their colonization of the new public schools where they learned how to participate in government at home and in the Empire. This impeded the development of an education suitable for the middle classes. Instead of tailoring the curriculum to be more in keeping with the needs of the middle classes, the classical curriculum remained intact throughout the Victorian period. As Ringer (op. cit) stated:

In place of the curriculum and social segmentation of Germany and France, the English secondary system knew only gradations of academic and social standing on a continuum that was dominated by the Ancient Nine. The traditional learning of gentlemen and clergymen was transmitted downward along this continuum to a middle class in need to social grace (p 210).

In contrast, as shown above, the *bourgeoisie* in France inherited a more revolutionary legacy and were politically antagonistic to the landed aristocracy. However, due to their intermediate position, the role of the *bourgeoisie*, as recognized by Rueschmeyer et al (op. cit), is an ambiguous one which can vary according to their interests at a particular point in time. The July Monarchy had a liberal government whereby a balance of power was achieved by the *bourgeoisie*, the aristocracy i.e. the Orléanists and the Church. Thus, similarly to the upper middle class in England, the *bourgeoisie* turned their backs on the working and lower middle classes breaking their previous alliance with them. A resurgence of republican forces within a context of growing industrialisation, however, led to the Second and, following twenty years of the Second Empire, the Third Republic. The former which brought together the working class, teachers, *petite-bourgeoisie*, artisans and farmers initiated male universal suffrage and plans for universal education. The more successful Third Republic also comprised a union of progressive social classes of urban and rural middle classes, *petite-bourgeoisie*, farmers and workers which united under the banner of anti-clericalism and against the aristocracy and the Church.

This broad progressive alliance of social classes was propitious for the development of a secular universal primary education which was an

important step towards reducing social inequality in education. Yet this progressive alliance would have achieved little further progress towards the goal of educational equality without pressure from the political organization of the working class. Furthermore, the difference between the political leadership of the latter in France and in England is key to understanding why the reduction of social inequality in education by means of common schooling became a realistic goal in France and why this goal had a more distant focus in England where education still remained solidly divided along social class lines. In France the unified Socialist party which succeeded in bringing together the various Left-wing factions including Marxists, syndicalists and revolutionary republicans, was central to campaigning for comprehensive economic, social political and educational change in keeping with the aims of socialism. In England, the Labour party whose main antecedents originated on the one hand from Liberalism and on the other as the political wing of the trade union movement, had more limited political aims and was more narrowly sectarian in its pursuit of reform. Despite its electoral victories in 1924 and 1929, the policies it pursued for education were less than radical. Instead of campaigning for a common form of secondary schooling it opted instead for the tripartite model which was based inevitably on social class lines. In contrast to this, the French socialist party along with the radical republicans put forward policies in favour of common schooling (*l'école unique*) and when they were in power set up various initiatives to achieve this.

Thus, to summarise: the historical chapters have provided ample evidence that the particular configuration of social class alliances in France and England has had a major impact on social equality in education. This suggests that the progressive social class alliance throughout the period in France has led to a certain reduction of social inequality in education in the following ways.

During the French Revolution the popular classes exerted pressure on the revolutionary political elite to establish universal education common to all and free from dogma and Church influence. This resulted in the Bouquier Law of

1793 which legislated for free and compulsory elementary education. With the setting up of the Central Schools 1795, there was also provision for continuity between primary and secondary education. These schools laid emphasis on science and technology and at the same time combined cultural and vocational elements similar to comprehensive schooling of the 20th century (Palmer, op. cit.). Although these initiatives were short-lived they laid the foundations for a model of education organized with the aim of reducing social inequality in education. It also left a legacy of secular and state education which was developed under Napoleon, who set up the administrative framework for state-controlled education. The Lycées which replaced the Central schools were set up to educate a middle class social elite for an ever expanding public administration and the army. The *baccalauréat* was the qualification which was required for entry to careers in these areas as well as to the university faculties and the *grandes écoles*. There was a process of open competition for mobility within the army and the public services which was introduced at the beginning of the 19th century which was much earlier than in England where it wasn't introduced until 1855.

Political conflict between the aristocracy and the republican/liberal alliance was mirrored in education by the conflict between the *Université* – the centre of state-controlled education as well as its teachers - and the Catholic education party, with the government maintaining the balance of power between the two. Under the July Monarchy a bourgeois liberal government gave concessions to the Church allowing them more leeway to expand its primary and secondary schools. Similarly an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the Church led to the coup of Louis Napoleon, thereby negating the introduction of universal primary education and delaying it for almost four decades. Nevertheless a state-controlled education system was maintained, which led to major education initiatives, for example, Loi Guizot (1833) which compelled all communes to set up a primary school, every major town to set up a higher primary school and every department to set up an *école normale* to train primary teachers. These three types of institutions provided education for the popular classes and the progression between

them allowed for a certain social mobility. The establishment of the secondary *l'enseignement spéciale* in 1865 established a broad, non-classical modern curriculum and provided an education which was more suited to the needs of the middle and skilled working classes. As well as this by the end of the Second Empire around two thirds of the school-age population received free elementary education.

The resurgence of republicanism, as described above, through an alliance of progressive social classes unified under the umbrella of anti-clericalism, successfully established secular and compulsory education which was free for pre-primary (*L'école maternelle*), *l'école primaire*, *l'école primaire supérieure* and at *l'école normale* level. Secondary school education was free of charge by 1930 which predated those in similar schools in England by fifteen years. During the inter-war period, the campaign for common schooling at secondary level gained momentum and was supported by a progressive social alliance politically represented by socialists, radicals, communists and trade unionists. This was played out against a background of immense parliamentary struggle and discussion. Complete comprehensive type of secondary education was not achieved, however, until 1975. Yet a major step in this direction was taken in 1937 when classes of the *EPS* were amalgamated with the first cycle of secondary education.

In England a different constellation of social class alliances was prominent and in contrast to France was conservative. The dramatic events in France, which caused a complete reversal of power relations during the Revolution, did not occur in England and no attempt to change the educational structure to one based on egalitarianism occurred. On the contrary there was a conservative backlash against educational innovation at this time and the traditional dominance of aristocratic Whig and Tory parties allied to the Anglican Church continued. This oligarchy was opposed, however, by the growing and economically powerful industrial middle class, as described above. Although this alliance of middle class and dissenters pressed for universal education along with universal suffrage, and supported by the working class in doing so, after achieving suffrage for themselves, their

efforts towards universal education lessened considerably. Instead they set up their own schools and founded in 1810 the Royal Lancastrian Association, later changing its title to the British and Foreign Society, which was in direct opposition to the Anglican National Society. Distrust of state intervention led to the expansion of this voluntary sector. Disillusioned by the betrayal of the middle class, and with weak political capacity to press for public schooling and with universal suffrage not in sight for the foreseeable future, the working class began to organise their own secular institutions i.e. elementary schools, halls of science and adult education centres. Despite a huge expansion, the autonomous and differentiated voluntary sector could not provide adequately for a population that had quadrupled between 1801 and 1901.

As a result of growing political influence of the English entrepreneurial class in mid-19th century a large number of these sent their children to the public and more prestigious endowed secondary schools in the hope of gaining cultural acceptability and to join the upper class and gentry in parliament and the Civil Service higher echelons. Social stratification in secondary schools therefore increased. At the same time working class pupils got edged out of grammar schools due to the curricular barrier of the classics and exorbitant fees. Even the higher grade schools of the Schools Boards, an attractive alternative for the latter, were eradicated. New secondary schools were established with a curriculum modeled on the public schools. Thus no middle type of schooling existed and the gap widened between elementary and secondary schooling.

The dominance of the Conservatives at the turn of the century with support from the upper middle and middle classes and an alliance with the Anglican Church secured retrogressive educational reforms, i.e. the Education Act of 1902; Regulations for secondary schools in 1904. It was again the dominance of the Conservatives in the two decades after World War I supported by a conservative social class alliance of the upper and upper middle classes together with the religious denominations – Anglican and Roman Catholic – which impeded attempts by Labour to introduce progressive educational reforms. These included the raising of the school-

leaving age to 16 years and accompanying maintenance grants; the increase from 25% to 50 % of free places in secondary schools; and the abolition of secondary school fees. Labour did not campaign for common secondary schooling similar to the *école unique* in France. Instead the government regained its parsimony and reduced its expenditure to education. This had the result that educational inequality increased and the gap between educational resources available for the wealthy and those less fortunate widened.

The evidence suggests therefore that the conservative social alliance was detrimental to the reduction of social inequality in education in England during the historical period under review and the progressive social class alliance (during most of this period) in France was conducive to a discourse of egalitarianism and to a certain reduction of social inequality in education. .

The Nature of the State

The centrality of the nature of the state as an explanatory factor and the importance of the distinctiveness between its centralized form in France and its liberal form in England to the variation in how both countries differ with regard to the reduction of social equality in education has been confirmed in the substantive historical chapters.

The centralized state machinery which the French revolutionaries inherited was a legacy from the absolutist state of the Ancien Régime (de Toqueville, op. cit.). It is arguable that absolutism by removing power from the local nobility to the centre had advanced the differentiation of the state and society (Rueschmeyer et al, op. cit.). The Jacobins created the republican state and by instituting the National Assembly and universal male suffrage and by restructuring administrative rule throughout the country, laid the foundations for the modern bureaucratic and democratic state. They brought the state centre stage in education and their plans for public education laid the foundations for universal education based on social equality. In England, parliamentary government and the institutions of civil liberties were established much earlier than in France but this did not include universal

suffrage which was very gradually introduced between 1832 and 1918. The Houses of Parliament, government, the administration and the army were dominated by the landed upper class until the end of the nineteenth century. Therefore, differentiation between the state and the dominant classes was not achieved until much later than in France.

The area which manifests this difference is the recruitment to the military and to the top echelons of the civil service. In France the Revolution created a meritocratic structure within the army which was developed under Napoleon, whereby the abolition of the aristocracy led to the recruitment of the officer corps from all sections of society. This was paralleled within the state administration whereby recruitment in most departments was by means of educational qualifications and the *baccalauréat* was set up as the mechanism for achieving this. In England, where the landed upper class and nobility retained its monopoly of the army and where advancement could be bought, recruitment was by patronage until much later. A similar situation existed within the Civil Service where open recruitment by competitive examination didn't occur until 1855.

The most important institutions which form part of the state's powers are the law courts and the school and these have the function of raising the population to a particular cultural and moral level. Whilst the court plays a repressive and negative role, the school plays a positive educational one. Schools are crucial to disseminating the ideology which is essential to the formation and hegemony of the state by winning hearts and minds to the particular cultural and social forms which are also in the interests of the dominant class or class alliance who hold the monopoly of power (Green, op. cit.).

The historical chapters have shown that the nature of the state is an important factor in relation to social equality in education. It has shown that the centralized state in France has been a significant factor in the reduction of social inequality in education, for example, in the formulation of educational policies to support it. The Revolution marked the beginning of

the assumption of responsibility by the state in education which was seen in that period as a fundamental right of the citizen and saw the initiation of a state controlled education system in embryonic form. Napoleon developed a framework for the administration of education within a highly unified and centralized system. He merged the various educational institutions into one corporate body under the overall control of the state. Uniformity was introduced so that an identical curriculum was enforced in all schools and all examinations such as the *baccalauréat* were certified by the state.

The revolutionaries had seen uniformity and centralisation as essential for ensuring that *instruction* based on the revolutionary principles of equality and laïcité would be extended to all corners of the country. It was also essential for guarding against the resurgence of the aristocracy and the Catholic Church. Whilst the Church gained some success in achieving independence for its schools particularly with the Loi Falloux in 1850, it was always hampered by the controls imposed by the centralized framework of the state administration (Archer, op.cit.). The centralized state administration following the Revolution grew five-fold and needed education and training for its personnel. The standardized curriculum in the schools as well as the national system of examinations facilitated this training. It was also the mechanism necessary so that open competition for careers in the public service and the army was possible. In this way a form of meritocracy through credentialism and an equalisation of standards throughout the country was promoted from the early part of the 19th century which is totally at variance with the situation in England where education lacked uniformity or systematisation.

Although secondary education was principally aimed at the production of a bourgeois elite, analysis has revealed that during the 1860s (see page 105 above), close to 50% of those attending came from the lower middle classes, including sons of peasants, shopkeepers and lower-level civil servants (Harrigan, op. cit.). This proportion is much higher than was the case for English schools of a similar kind which were dominated greatly by sons of the aristocracy and gentry during the same period.

The Third Republic was able to take full advantage of the centralized education administration to achieve full control over the system and to provide a type of education commensurate with Republic principles. Thus it used its political power to pour enormous sums of money to provide the buildings and infrastructure necessary for an expanded public education service. Its centralized administration facilitated the introduction of free, compulsory and secular schooling in a systematic way in the 1880s. In this way it succeeded in bringing to fruition what had been initiated during the Revolution of 1789-99. However, the parallel systems of primary and secondary education which juxtaposed an elementary education for the majority of the population with a secondary education for the bourgeois elite was not commensurate with republican principles of equality. A movement for *l'école unique* campaigned for common schooling to bring about equality of access for all to secondary education and continuity between first and second level education from early on in the 20th century. This led to various attempts to bring this about which only reached the experimental stages. There was much opposition to reform in this area especially by representatives of the Catholic Church in parliament. Thus the Socialist Education Minister, Jean Zay, gained authorization for his reform to bring about a merging of the *Ecole Primaire Supérieure* and the lower secondary classes by calling on the *Conseil Supérieure de la Fonction Publique*, which is part of the state administration. This showed the importance of having a developed organizational apparatus which could implement educational reforms efficiently.

All of this evidence implies therefore, that the centralized nature of French education has been conducive to a discourse of egalitarianism and a certain reduction of social equality in education.

The historical chapters suggest that the liberal state in England and its persistence throughout the period between 1780 and 1939 has been a significant factor in maintaining stability in relation to social inequality in education. During this period an ideology of liberalism and laissez-faire

predominated albeit in a more attenuated form in the latter half-century. This coincided with a minimal state opposed to intervention in education. As a result educational expansion during the 19th century occurred with little support from the state. Instead it was the voluntary societies which took responsibility for education. Two societies, the Anglican National Society and the Dissenters British and Foreign Society were the most prominent of these. Expansion took place in an unsystematic manner and therefore uniformity and standardization did not occur. As a result of the slow process of state intervention, schools had to exist on a paltry grant from a parsimonious government which only went to the two major voluntary societies; children continued to work long hours in factories and mines receiving little or no education; and schools remained largely free of state inspection for most of the century.

By the time the state managed to set up an education department, the voluntary system was already well established at elementary and secondary levels. As a result of the lack of central direction in education there was weak control over enrolment and attendance at school. Weak and contradictory legislation between factory acts and the Elementary Education Act (1876) permitted employers to give half-time employment to young children (Ellis, *op.cit.*). Because of conflicting loyalties among the main political parties there was reluctance on the part of succeeding governments to restrict the voluntary agencies. Even when competition from the other major industrializing countries put pressure on the government to act, the 1870 Education Act only aimed at filling the gaps voluntarism couldn't reach. Compulsion and gratuity were introduced gradually and free elementary education was not completely established until 1918. Therefore, as a result of liberal state policies, universal education was introduced much later than in France and other European countries which was detrimental to social equality in education.

At secondary level the lack of a centrally controlled state system meant that there was a huge variation in the standard of schools. Some schools taught only elementary subjects whilst others taught classics to a minority of their

pupils, whilst the public and more prestigious endowed schools maintained a strictly classical curriculum. The statistics on social recruitment to the latter shows only 3% of the intake were from lower middle classes which compares very negatively with their representation in French secondary schools. The lack of standardization of curricula and qualifications meant that mobility on the basis of merit was not introduced until 1855, when competitive examinations were introduced in the Civil Service. But even then there was no uniformity between curricula or examinations which varied from place to place and between different types of schools. This lack of integration only served to reinforce the differentiation between schools which was divided along social class lines.

The 1902 Education Act brought administrative order to the education 'muddle' and introduced state education at secondary level almost a century later than France. Whilst it brought well-needed unification to the situation it was detrimental to social equality in that it destroyed the higher grade schools which served as middle schools for the working and lower middle classes. It reinforced separation between elementary and secondary education by setting up new state grammar schools with their curriculum modeled on the public schools. The Act, whilst it achieved administrative unification, it left behind a legacy of a divided education system which to this day reflects social class divisions: it strengthened the voluntary system by providing them with funding through the rates thereby maintaining the dual system of state and voluntary religious schools; and it left intact the independent public schools which tower over the state sector in terms of quality and prestige.

Despite policies of social reform in the Interwar period initiated firstly by the Liberals and latterly by the Labour Party, which included continuity between primary and secondary schooling and 'secondary education for all', these left intact the divisions between different types of schools at secondary level. The notion of common schooling was anathema to the various educational interests and despite support for it in various quarters (as shown earlier) it was only adopted by Labour as official policy in the 1950s. Instead it opted

for the tripartite system as recommended by the Spens Report (1938). This was in keeping with the ethos of diversity and freedom at the heart of liberalism. It also served to perpetuate a system of education divided on social class lines.

Therefore, by the outbreak of war in 1939, the historical evidence suggests that whilst attempts were made by the state in France to introduce a common form of secondary schooling, in England a form of secondary schooling divided on tripartite lines was established. Therefore it has demonstrated that the liberal nature of the state in England has been instrumental in maintaining social inequality in education.

Chapter 9: Conclusion and Reflections

It is important at this concluding stage of the thesis to reiterate the main question posed in Chapter 1 concerning the way in which socio-political ideologies in France and England have impacted on social equality in education and why a discourse of egalitarianism is stronger in French than in English education. As well as this, the thesis sets out to explain through comparative historical analysis the variation in how both countries have gone about reducing social inequality in education.

The conceptual framework elaborated in Chapter 2 put forward three hypotheses including three factors to explain this variation. Chapter 3 put forward a definition of social equality within this framework for the analysis of the empirical findings in the historical chapters 4-7. These hypotheses were tested in the four comparative historical chapters and Chapter 8 has demonstrated that, in general, the conceptual framework and the hypotheses outlined have been confirmed.

In summary therefore, it has been suggested that in France a revolutionary/republican ideology which persisted and was embedded at the heart of the educational system has been conducive to promoting a discourse of egalitarianism and to a lesser extent to the reduction of social inequality in education. This ideology has been advantageous to the interests of the particular social class alliances which have dominated in France in the period under review. These alliances have, for the most part, been progressive and, this thesis suggests, conducive to promoting a discourse of egalitarianism and to a lesser extent to reducing social inequality in education. The centralized nature of state education in France has been acknowledged by republicans, socialists and communists as being most favourable to supporting social equality in education and this thesis suggests that it has been conducive to promoting a discourse of

egalitarianism and to a lesser extent to reducing social inequality in education.

On the other hand, a liberal ideology has persisted in England in the period under review and is also embedded in the educational system. The historical evidence suggests that this has not been conducive to promoting a discourse of egalitarianism in education and has been favourable to maintaining social inequality in education. This ideology has also been most advantageous to the interests of a social class alliance which has dominated in England during the period under review. This alliance has been conducive to maintaining the status quo and has not been conducive to reducing social inequality in education. The historical evidence has further suggested that the liberal state has not been conducive to reducing social inequality nor to promoting a discourse of egalitarianism in education.

The main hypotheses in relation to the significance of a revolutionary/republican ideology, a progressive social class alliance and a centralised state for the promotion of a discourse of egalitarianism in France and the absence of these factors to its non-promotion in England has been maintained. In addition, the significance of these factors in relation to the promotion of educational policies to promote social equality in France has also been upheld, as is the significance of their absence to their non-promotion in England. In relation to educational outcomes, the quality of data available differed greatly between France and England during the period 1789-1939 and there was a paucity of reliable data in England during the 19th century which hampered somewhat the comparison. Nevertheless, the statistics revealed that up to the mid-1880s, the enrolment of school-age children in England was slow compared to France. Similarly the statistics on social recruitment to secondary schooling in the period between 1789-1870 showed France with a far greater representation of non-dominant classes attending full secondary schooling, particularly the lower middle classes and peasantry with 50% of the total enrolment in French full secondary schools compared to 4% at English Public Schools. In relation to the second half of

the period under review, 1870-1939, there still appeared to be a larger cohort of pupils in secondary education in France than in England.

Thus the explanatory factors have been upheld by the historical evidence suggesting a stronger discourse of egalitarianism in France than in England, and a stronger commitment to reducing social inequality in education by the former than the latter. If there were to be any modification of the original hypotheses outlined, it would be that the gap between both countries in terms of equality of educational outcomes in the early 20th century was becoming narrower.

The choice of using the contrast of contexts and the macro-causal methods to present a comparative historical analysis has facilitated the presentation of a rich and detailed account of two contrasting trajectories. It also has provided through a configuration of variables, an explanation of why the cases here, France and England, have approached social equality in education in two different ways. This explanation is not generalisable, however, beyond the two cases examined here. The research carried out here could be extended and strengthened by the addition of more cases, for example, on the one hand, countries similar to France which present positive examples of the explanatory factors and on the other hand, those which similarly to England present negative examples of these factors. This extension of the number of cases would either produce a stronger explanation, a refutation or a theoretical refinement of the original hypotheses. This study, nonetheless, has shown variations between France and England in relation to three factors i.e. social class alliances, dominant ideologies and state formation that have been overlooked in larger studies, for example, Luebbert (op. cit.).

It is important before concluding to stress the importance of the persistence of dominant ideology which has been a major factor here in explaining the variation between both countries in relation to egalitarian discourse and to a lesser extent the reduction of social inequality in education. It is also of interest to consider whether this is still valid in the early part of the 21st

century. This recent period has seen a major shift in educational policy and discourse in favour of decentralisation, competition and educational choice which has given rise to educational reform in most leading economies, including France and England over the last half century. Therefore, the research carried out here could also optimally be further developed by extending the time-period to the present and by testing the hypotheses through comparative historical analysis against contemporary history. In this way it is hoped that the findings of this thesis will fulfil its ambition of adding to the accumulation of knowledge in the area of comparative historical analysis and specifically in regard to the reduction of social inequality in education.

Reflections

The theoretically informed hypotheses put forward in the Methodology and extended in Chapter 2 have been tested in this thesis for the period 1789-1939. I consider this as the optimum time-period for demonstrating the variation between both countries in relation to social equality in education. I believe that the major changes in the social political and educational arenas since then justify a separate work of scholarly research. To extend the time-period up to the present would be too long not least because of the major changes that occurred following World War II. This timescale was appropriate to provide for an in-depth analysis in terms of the explanatory factors. Incorporating a further 75 years would have resulted in a more superficial analysis, given the word-length conditions of the thesis and a less scholarly work. World War II represented a major dislocation for both countries and for that reason was a natural cut-off point.

The definition of social inequality in education in this thesis focuses on the link between social class in general and inequality and does not consider other inequalities such as race, ethnicity and gender within the comparative analysis although it is acknowledged that there are important inequalities that relate to these factors. In the case of gender inequality, the thesis makes reference to the inadequacy of schooling for girls in the 19th century and to the development of schooling in this area when it occurred as well to the

training of female teachers. There is no attempt, however, to provide a comparative analysis between France and England in this regard. I consider that, given the breadth of literature in the area of gender inequality and the complexity of the issues involved, that the topic of gender is outside the scope of this thesis.

The limitation of making the historical cut-off point in 1939 is that it does not provide scope for exploring how these different historical legacies have impacted on education in the more recent period. It is of interest, therefore, to consider in this concluding section whether the variation between both countries, demonstrated during the period outlined in this thesis, has persisted over the past 74 years. In the thesis I have argued that the explanatory factors i.e. persistence of ideology, social class alliances and the nature of the state can explain the variation between how France and England have gone about reducing social equality in education. These factors have been tested against the historical data in the period between 1789 and 1939. Since 1939 dramatic changes have occurred to alter the balance of power in a world shrunk through globalization and where western dominance has been greatly reduced and rivaled by other powers such as China, India and other countries in Asia, South America and South Africa. These changes have resulted in intensifying competition between countries which has impacted hugely on education. I consider, nevertheless, that my explanatory factors, because of their appropriateness for long term historical processes, continue to be salient in the intervening period in explaining the variation between both countries in relation to social equality in education.

These factors have undergone important changes over the last 75 years in the light of these issues just outlined. As I have suggested earlier in the thesis, ideologies have chameleon-like properties which adjust in a subtle way to the changing political and economic climate. In the case of the state, its nature can undergo change, for example, become more or less 'statist' in France or 'liberal' in England. Similarly, social class alliances have shifted and may be investigated in terms of changes in political parties and their voting constituencies which are important factors in politics in the post-war period. However, as argued in the thesis, I consider that these macro-social

factors will persist although in a changed manner and maintain their explanatory power.

In the remainder of this Reflections section, I will discuss how my theory may be applied to the period after 1939 to the present focusing in particular on comprehensive education. Two key flashpoints in the ensuing period are of interest here: (i) the post-World War II period when equality of educational opportunity became central to the educational discourse in Western countries and was mainly pursued through integrating education systems into comprehensive systems, and, (ii) the period after 1980 and up to the present when globalising forces and international agencies exerted pressure on national education systems to conform to transnational models of education resulting in increasing erosion of comprehensive education. In seeking to understand and explain the educational changes in both countries I will be taking into account their relation to the broader political economy.

Implementation of Comprehensive Education

After liberation in 1945 following World War II, democratization in education became an important aspect of education policy. In France, the first serious attempt at breaking the parallel post-primary system came with the Langevin-Wallon Commission report in 1947 which proposed open access to secondary schools for all and the institution of a common school at secondary level. Various structural reforms followed in 1959, 1963 and culminating in the Haby reforms of 1975 which launched the *collège unique*. This process resulted in a unified and fully integrated system where primary education was the first phase leading on to the *collège* and then to the *lycée*. Compulsory education provided an undifferentiated curriculum identical for all students, streaming or setting on ability was banned and students would attend their local school. Thus the implementation of comprehensivisation brought the education system more into line with its republican values of equality.

In England, as in France and other developed countries, the goal of universal elementary education was superseded by that of universal access to secondary education. The 1944 Education Act introduced free secondary

education divided into grammar, technical and secondary modern schools. This tripartite system based on selection at eleven, with the grammar schools creaming off the ablest pupils, served to perpetuate the social divisions in society. In the 1960s, a changed political climate led a reluctant Conservative government and its tentative Labour successor to initiate plans for the reorganisation of education on comprehensive lines (Gordon et al, 1991). This reorganisation would appear to have occurred in accordance with liberal values. Rather than launching the comprehensive reforms in a uniform and systematic way throughout the country, as had happened in France, the Local Education authorities in 1965 were requested by means of a government circular, to draw up their own plans for comprehensive schooling. As a result a unified secondary system was never fully achieved and while comprehensivisation gathered pace in the 1970s, the comprehensive schools co-existed alongside the older selective grammar schools and the declining secondary modern schools. However, and this is the most exceptional aspect of English education, alongside these schools and towering over them in terms of power, prestige and resources, the independent private schools were allowed continue to exist. These now include not only the ancient nine 'public schools' but an increasing number, grown to 2,300 private schools, whose fees run into billions and who educate currently 7% of the population. These schools are entirely independent of the state and its curriculum. The maintenance of these dual bastions was to protect middle class interests - in both its upper and intermediate levels - against the encroachment of the lower classes (McCulloch, 2006). Private schooling also plays an important role in French education and since the Debré law of 1959 a majority of private schools are substantially funded by the state and while they maintain their particular character follow the same curriculum as other schools. They are otherwise funded by tuition fees which are not onerous. An attempt to bring these schools entirely within the public service in 1983-84 led to street demonstrations and the resignation of the education minister, Savary. These schools represent an opportunity for parents who want an alternative to the public school for their children and they don't want to lose this.

It appears therefore, that comprehensive education in France and England was implemented in entirely different ways and with different effects. In France, comprehensive education (*l'école unique*) was introduced in a systematic and uniform way which was not the case in England. It is of interest here to consider in what ways the factors used throughout this thesis, i.e. persistence of ideology, socio-political and class alliances and the nature of the state, are of benefit in understanding why France's model of comprehensive education was more consolidated than that of England. Following World War II, the prevailing discourse of democratisation in Europe paved the way for policies in favour of universalism in the public services as the mechanism for bringing about social equality. This resulted in the provision of universalistic public services in welfare, health, housing and education to provide a bulwark for the population from the unjust exigencies of the market. In France these policies represented in many ways a continuity with those pursued by the 'Popular Front' prior to the war. The significant role of Communists and Left-wing organisations in France during the war ensured that the Left had an influence in politics either in the form of a number of ministerial roles in the Fourth Republic or providing a powerful opposition to Gaullist politics during the late 1950s to the 1970s. De Gaulle himself was in favour of democratization at the lower level of secondary education and showed considerable efficiency in bringing this about in the interests of national cohesion and increasing economic growth (Prost, 1992). Therefore a consensus existed in France for further comprehensive reforms resulting in 1975 in a single model of unstreamed schooling at lower secondary level (*collège unique*).

In England with the liberation and in a climate of cohesion and solidarity forged during the war, the Labour Party institutionalised the Welfare State with ever-increasing public services in welfare and most enduringly the National Health Service. These represented a contrast to the conservative policies pursued prior to the war when liberalism continued to prevail. Labour was also instrumental in initiating the organization of lower secondary education on comprehensive lines yet the reforms were implemented, as has been outlined above, less whole heartedly than was the case in France.

This had much to do with Labour's non-revolutionary origins and a weaker ideological commitment to egalitarianism. A further consideration here is the strength of opposition forces and what they stood for. In England a strong Conservative Right opposition existed that was opposed to comprehensivisation of education. This opposition would become more hostile in the 1980s and lead to the ousting of Labour for another 18 years and a cutting back of many of its reforms, as outlined below. In France, on the other hand, opposition on the Left was augmented by a student movement opposed to corporate capitalism and demanding further democratization in education culminating in the events of May '68. Thus in terms of the relevance of the explanatory factors to the variation in the implementation of comprehensive education, the following could be argued. In France there was an ideological continuity in the discourse of egalitarianism as well as a socio-political alliance on the Left and a strong centralized state which were favourable preconditions for a consolidated implementation of comprehensive education. In England, conversely, the prevailing discourse of egalitarianism represented a certain ideological discontinuity with what had gone before, and this together with a strong socio-political conservative alliance on the Right and a less centralized state were preconditions for a weaker implementation of comprehensive education.

Erosion of Comprehensive Education since the 1980s

In the 1980s both France and England were challenged by pressures from international agencies such as the European Union, OECD and the World Bank to conform to transnational models of education unfavourable to comprehensive education. The contrast in the reaction of both countries to these pressures is striking. Multiple factors in society at large, from the oil crisis of the 1970s onwards had led to disenchantment with the policy of central planning in the face of globalisation. In France this formed the background to a challenging of the monopoly of the central state in educational administration. Yet reform as introduced by the government brought about changes which allowed it to continue with its overall control of education. New policy initiatives undertaken in France since the 1980s

appeared to represent a relaxation of the system's tightly centralised structure. There was a certain devolution of responsibility to local government, that is, the communes, departments and regions for primary, *collège* and *lycée* level respectively. Yet most competencies were to remain with the state or its local services regarding budget, curriculum and recruitment and conditions of service for teachers. The devolution of responsibility to local government for primary, *collège* and *lycée* level coincided with *déconcentration* which involved a strengthening of the 26 Académies (the local services of the Ministry). *Déconcentration* would seek to ensure consistency across the system while *dévolution* would permit a certain adaptation to local conditions (Green et al, 1999). One important reason why decentralization only occurred to a very limited degree was because of opposition from the strong Left-leaning teacher unions (Dobbins, 2014). The marketisation of education was not an objective of the French reforms. League tables of school results in the obligatory sector were not produced and free parental choice of school was not embraced in the French system as in England.

In contrast, the reforms of the 1980s were conducted in a considerably more thoroughgoing fashion in England. There the comprehensive system, only partially implemented, was particularly vulnerable to the backlash which began as early as the 1970s and attacked the very concept of equality of opportunity. The initiative passed into the hands of Right wing critics and the ephemeral discourse of 'social justice' and 'equality' gave way to one about 'standards' and 'quality'. In the 1980s the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher, embraced vigorously neo-liberal theories and implemented reform which was tantamount to a dismantling of its public education, particularly at secondary level. By a series of reforms, the most significant of which was the Education Reform Act in 1988, the education system was completely transformed by instituting the following: free choice of school for parents; introduction of an educational quasi-market by making schools competitive and financed on the basis of school numbers; publication of school league tables which facilitated the marketisation process; creation of a national evaluation system; the introduction of local management for schools and a

weakening of the power of the local education authorities; creation of new types of schools; and differentiation of the curriculum. These neo-liberal policies represented a rolling back of the reforms of comprehensivisation undertaken a quarter century earlier. The comprehensive school with its ethos of educating all children together, irrespective of ability, social background, religion or ethnicity became the object of denigration by media and political leaders. The emphasis on equality of opportunity had given way to an emphasis on standards, efficiency and choice.

Following almost two decades of conservative rule, New Labour won a landslide electoral victory in 1997. However, Blair's continuity with policies of increasing the scope of the private sector in public services and furthering the exposure of education to market forces dispelled hopes of any redressing of the balance in favour of comprehensive education. At the same time, redistributive educational policies were also implemented, for example, more funding to disadvantaged local authorities and the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to those aged 16 and over continuing in education. Reforms were also implemented to make education more responsive to an intensely competitive environment partly due to globalisation and to achieve a highly skilled workforce in keeping with the 'knowledge economy' as outlined by the EU's Council in Lisbon in 2000. The policies overall led to a further erosion of comprehensive education and paved the way for the Conservative /Liberal Democrat coalition government since 2010 to radically accelerate the process.

Through a steady accretion of new policies overlaying older ones (Ball, 2013) through the governments of Thatcher, Major, Blair, Brown and Cameron, the dismantling of the comprehensive school and the denigration of its founding principles has relentlessly progressed. Over and above the examples of differentiation within and between comprehensive schools through the mechanism of parental choice, the multiplication of alternative types of schools at lower secondary level represents the most recent example of this. A plethora of school types now exists apart from the comprehensive school such as: grammar schools; voluntary aided or controlled schools (mostly religious and faith schools); foundation schools; community schools; city

technology schools; specialist schools; academies; studio schools; and university training schools (Mortimore, 2013). This differentiation among schools creates a fragmented system and corresponds well with the competitive values of the market and the neo-liberal model of education. The most radical of recent reforms in England has been the introduction of Academies and Free Schools.

The academies programme was introduced under New Labour with the aim of tackling underperforming schools at primary and post-primary level. These have been publicly funded and independent of local authorities and with the 'freedom to shape their own destiny in the interests of parents and children' (DFES 2005, p. 240. White Paper). They were run by sponsors including philanthropic individuals, companies e.g. HSBC, charities, religious groups and some universities. According to Ball (op. cit.) 'they were intended to blur welfare state demarcations between state and market, public and private, government and business and, ... to introduce and validate new agents and new voices within policy itself' (p. 209). The Coalition has run with and radicalized the academies programme with the ambition that academy status should be the norm for all state schools. This would be accomplished by 'converting' underperforming schools to academy status outside the framework of the local authorities without the need for sponsors. Free Schools, the Coalition's Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove's, variation on a familiar theme, were introduced in 2010 within a rhetoric of performance, choice and competition. On the one hand parents and community groups may set up these schools, on the other hand chains of schools may be run by corporate business groups with the latter model more prevalent than the former.

France, on the other hand, has implemented educational reform in a manner which appears more consistent with its republican traditions and dominant ideology with its emphasis on egalitarianism. Recent research is showing, however, that the French system is deviating more and more from this. It appears that reform, has been introduced little by little and often unofficially. Its *carte scolaire* policy, for example, has been gradually eroded with various *assouplissements* occurring year on year. Schools are often organized in such

a way as to provide the framework to increase the school choice effects by allowing ability streaming by unofficial means to occur. Mons (2007) concludes that France has avoided the pitfalls of an extreme neo-liberal policy with its effects of a deepening social inequality in education. Yet it has higher levels of social inequality than ought to be produced by a republican model which for so long has stuck rigidly to the principle of equality of treatment. Nevertheless a unified system of education at compulsory level has remained in place with the *college unique* representing at face value a non-selective mixed ability education with a common curriculum at compulsory level and a quasi-centralised system. The *college unique* remains the single middle school within the public system for children between 11 and 16 (the end of compulsory schooling). Therein can be shown an example of a major variation which still exists between French and English education at compulsory level.

Another aspect of French education that continues to stand out in contrast to that of England is *laïcité*, the French variant of secularism which is a fundamental tenet of the revolutionary/republican ideology. *Laïcité* was an important aspect of the French Revolution's plans for public education and a tool in its struggle to break the power and control of the Catholic Church over schooling. The Ferry Law of 1882 abolished religious education from schools and the Law of 1902 separating the Church and state in France made the removal of any influence of the Church or religion in public schools complete (as outlined in Chapter 4) including the removal of all religious emblems. *Laïcité* today is linked to equality of opportunity whereby all pupils are educated on a level footing, regardless of social class, race, ethnicity, gender or religion and any display of religious difference contravenes this principle. *Laïcité* continues to command the support of a majority in France. The presentation of a secularism charter (*Charte de la Laïcité*) in September 2011, which all French public schools are required to display, indicates that there has been no dilution of this principle in recent years nor for the foreseeable future. In England the situation is in direct contrast to this where the Church of England is the Established Church with the Queen at its head and religious education is an important subject within the National

Curriculum. Cultural pluralism rather than secularism is emphasized with the aim in the area of religion of celebrating diversity. The Blair government post-1997 affirmed its commitment to increasing single faith schools as part of its policy of encouraging schools to develop 'a distinctive character and mission'. Prior to this most state religiously affiliated schools were Church of England or Roman Catholic as well as a few Jewish schools. Since then numbers of minority faith i.e. Muslim, Sikh, Jewish as well as Greek Orthodox and Seventh-day Adventist have been admitted to the state sector. It is the major Christian denominations, for example, the Church of England, which have mainly benefitted with huge increases in this sector. The latter's schools are often over-subscribed and have been accused of 'creaming off' pupils from the most advantaged backgrounds thus contributing to divisiveness and inequality rather than inclusiveness which the pluralist policy proclaims. Most recently the academies and Free Schools policy provides a further opportunity for state funded faith schools to be expanded.

Can this striking contrast between both countries' implementation of reform in the more recent decades be explained by the explanatory factors used throughout this thesis? Both countries have been exposed to similar pressures from globalization and from global organizations to conform to transnational models of education. Yet there is a discrepancy between how England and France have responded to these pressures. England has gone much further and deeper with its reform programme. It is not difficult to find similarities between the discourse surrounding neo-liberalism and the values that it espouses and those of 19th century liberalism with its focus on voluntarism, diversity and competition. In France it may be argued that the Republican values of equality and solidarity are still sufficiently embedded within the system to stem the flow of neo-liberalism which is inimical to these. The various parties, varying between Socialists on the Left and republican parties on the Right have been in power over the last few decades and have attempted to introduce various reforms to bring the public arena more into alignment with the neo-liberal orthodoxy. These have met with mixed success and have fallen foul of organized social movements. One notable

example of this was the campaign in opposition to the *Contrat Première Embauché* (CPE). This was spearheaded mainly by higher and secondary education students. They were opposed to attempts to deregulate youth employment making it easier to hire and fire young employees and to implement academic/vocational tracking at 14 in schools. They succeeded in mobilising one and a half million demonstrators including students and workers in March 2006. In April the government withdrew the law (Jones, 2010). Jones (ibid) draws a comparison between this situation of mobilized opposition to government reform in a sustained manner and with successful albeit limited outcomes to the low-level sporadic opposition to neo-liberal reform in England. This contestation is doubtless driven by an engrained ideology of resistance with notable examples in May '68, the Commune of 1871, and the revolutions in 1848 and 1830, and this legacy can be traced back to the French Revolution. In 2010 Stéphane Hessel, former Resistance leader and concentration camp survivor in his tract *Indignez-Vous* called on his compatriots to show their indignation by taking non-violent action against government attacks on social welfare and against the 'dictatorship of financial markets' in the spirit of the programme of social rights, drawn up by the council of the resistance in 1944 (Hessel, 2010). The reinstatement of republicanism is also echoed by Eric Ferrand, Assistant Mayor of Paris in 2007. In his *Quelle école pour la République?* he propounds his ambition of re-establishing the values of equality and solidarity at the heart of the French educational project. He proposes to defend the connection between the school and the Republic through affirming the shared educational project around the values of *laïcité*. For him republicanism is a state of permanent revolution with *laïcité* at the heart of the combat.

It is clear that radical changes have taken place within both education systems since 1939, which have continued relentlessly up to the present time. Mass immigration has been a continuing phenomenon in both countries and the forces of globalization, have brought intense competition between countries with increased pressure on national education systems to provide higher skilled workforces. Yet there is still great variation in how both countries have responded to these pressures. In terms of my explanatory

factors the following could be argued. The response in France has been in line with its dominant republican/revolutionary ideology as may be evidenced by its continuing emphasis on equality of treatment in education and its continuing support for secular education. Various socio-political alliances on the Left have provided a strong resistance to Government attempts to erode welfare and public services including comprehensive education. As well, the centralized state has been less receptive to implementing market-led reforms which would lead to more decentralization and deregulation as suggested by its maintenance of a quasi-centralised education system. On the other hand, values such as individualism, competitiveness and flexibility fit more with an increasingly consumerist society and resonate more with the liberal ideology dominant in England than that of republicanism in France. Even the learner-centred pedagogy, much valued in English education is consistent with individualism (Hartley, 1997) whereas the French emphasis on bringing all students to a common level and the transmission of common citizenship values would appear to be out-of-step with this. Socio-political elites in power in England, from Conservatives to New Labour to the Coalition have all embarked whole-heartedly on pursuing neo-liberal policies which are ever more ruthlessly eroding comprehensivisation in education. In terms of alliances on the Left, these have been considerably weaker in resisting these reforms than has been the case in France.

In seeking to explain the variety of ways in which countries respond to globalization, it is important to view this through the lens of the past and in terms of long-term historical processes. Any attempts to explain the current reversal and erosion of comprehensive education in England by concentrating on the last 60 years can only lead to error, for example, by considering the neo-liberal phenomenon as an aberration of what had gone before. However, an explanation of the current period through an analysis of the last 200 years is more likely to lead to the conclusion that a policy of egalitarianism which prevailed in the 1960s was a temporary phenomenon and would be reversed in the long run. Social and path dependent processes take a very long time to unfold and for this reason this thesis has sought to explain the variation between France and England through the

refraction of a very long period. It has enabled me to identify the most important factors and has facilitated a consistent argument throughout this thesis. This has enabled me to suggest in this final section that these factors are still relevant when it comes to explaining the variation in how comprehensive education was implemented in France and England and how it has been eroded to a further degree in England than in France.

From this brief review of education in France and England over the past 75 years, it appears that the histories of these two countries continue to exert an influence on their respective education systems. Both countries have had to make important concessions to the forces of globalization and I would suggest that their responses to these pressures have been in keeping with their dominant ideologies – republicanism in France and liberalism in England. I would also suggest that this implies that the hypothesis put forward in this thesis, that the dominant ideologies in both France and England have persisted, would be upheld and the factors of the nature of the state and socio-political alliances continue to play a role in this variation. This, however, needs to be tested through comparative historical analysis against the historical data of the period.

It is my hope that this thesis will contribute to building new theoretical perspectives in the area of comparative historical analysis and that it will add to scholarly collaboration and lead to knowledge accumulation in this area. Apart from these academic considerations I feel that this original research is important for educational policy. As has been suggested in this thesis, national ideology has a major influence on policy. Ideology is largely invisible and it is important that it is made more transparent in terms of how it impacts on education. If taken for granted educational values such as individual and school choice, diversity and freedom of schooling are militating against the reduction of social inequality, it is important that this is flagged up. It is also important to bring educational equality back into the mainstream discourse.

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