

EDUCATION, SUBSIDIARITY AND SOLIDARITY: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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Introduction

The development of education throughout Modernity presents a paradox. To be educated gradually became considered an indisputably good thing, like health. Yet, nothing in the historical emergence and subsequent development of educational systems meant that they were orientated towards the *common good*. Instead, the 'good' that was sought was the promotion of sectional interests, increasingly organised to contest the control of education and thus the definition of instruction. Of course, every group involved in these struggles presented the achievement of its educational ambitions as being for the 'general good', but such self-interested rhetoric says nothing about the *common good*. In relation to the idea of *munus regale*,¹ interest groups placed much less stress upon the first term, *munus*, as free-giving or rendering service, than upon *regale*, (mis)interpreted as the domination of education.

Indeed, the fact that all known educational systems emerged from struggles to control education also meant that the recognition of each contending party as having gifts to contribute was over-shadowed by the *competitive conflict* in which they were engaged. Such conflict made any idea of co-operation, let alone relations of reciprocity, between these contestants a contradiction in terms. Simultaneously, social solidarity was a victim of these struggles for control. Since the interest groups

¹ See Russell Hittinger for an exceptionally clear discussion of the relationship between *munera* and subsidiarity, 'Social Pluralism and Subsidiarity in Catholic Social Doctrine', *Annales theologici* 16 (202), pp. 388-408.

involved (throughout Europe) represented particular sections of the stratification system (whether Estates or Classes) as well as sectional interests (the new industrialists or the various religious denominations etc.), the educational advancement of one was to the detriment of others. *Competitive conflict* is hostile to solidarity because its tendency is to foster social cleavage(s).

In other words, the components and relationships that Donati outlines as constituting 'The Configuration of an action system for the common good',² where *subsidiarity* and *solidarity* are based upon recognition of the *dignity of all human beings* and mutually reinforce one another for the *common good*, were entirely lacking in the interactions resulting in the emergence of State Educational Systems in Europe. The reasons for this are embedded in the *competitive conflict* out of which State Educational Systems emerged, from roughly the end of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth.³ *Competitive conflict* is zero-sum and thus the antithesis of interaction for the common good, which is an emergent benefit for all and thus, in principle, constitutes a win-win situation for all (especially children and the young in this context).

It is important not to see the Catholic Church as a bystander or disinterested observer of the interaction resulting in the emergence of State Educational Systems. Prior to those events it had enjoyed an unopposed monopoly over the provision, control and definition of such formal instruction⁴ as existed in most of Europe, with the Post-Reformation Churches occupying a similar unchallenged position in Protestant countries. In short, the Churches supplied the buildings, the teachers and the texts. Formal education has always been particularly expensive in terms of physical and human resources, which is one important reason why the ecclesiastical position was unassailed for so long – that and the relative indifference of other social groups towards formal education.

² Pierpaolo Donati, 'Prospects: Discovering the relational character of the common good', PASS, XIV Plenary Session 2008, Figure 1, p. 271f.

³ The material and arguments advanced in part 1 of this paper are covered in detail in Margaret S. Archer, *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, Sage, London, 1979.

⁴ In the years preceding 1789 in France there had been criticism from the provincial *parlements* (especially by Rolland and La Chalotais) and the *ancien régime* only became an unambiguous supporter of Catholic-run education once the ultramontaine Jesuits had been expelled (1762) and the more Gallican and modernist Oratorians had become the leading teaching order.

As Hittinger importantly points out, it was precisely the French Revolution, whose educational effects involved confiscating Church schools and prohibiting religious orders and secular clergy from teaching that prompted Catholic social doctrine into being. '[T]he post-1789 church-state crisis is what gave the Church real incentive to develop a body of social doctrine. On this score it is important to understand that the social doctrine did not begin with the industrial revolution and the problems of benighted and dislocated workers. It began with the need to defend the institutions of the Church'.⁵

Precisely because the Church's defence of its right-and-duty to teach was part and parcel of the conflictual interaction leading to the formation and development of State Educational Systems, this is where I will begin in Part I of this paper. A State Educational System is defined as 'a nationwide and differentiated collection of institutions devoted to formal education, whose overall control and supervision is at least partly governmental, and whose component parts and processes are related to one another'.⁶ This definition stresses that both the political and the systemic aspects should be present together for a State System of Education to exist. The appearance of either characteristic alone was not uncommon in European history. I begin here because the emergence of State Educational Systems, at different times in different countries, marks a new boundary between the State and civil society as far as education is concerned. Yet, such State systems were structured in very different ways within Europe – the most important distinction being between those that were centralised and those that were decentralised. The main question examined here is whether centralisation and decentralisation made a significant difference to the role that other parts of civil society could play in education. That is, did the structuring of the new State Educational Systems influence their responsiveness to the principle that later became known as *subsidiarity*? It is equally important to ask if either type of structure was more closely associated than the other with promoting the social *solidarity* that needs to accompany *subsidiarity* if the common good is to be generated in and from education.

Part II moves on to consider much the same issues during 'late' modernity, in other words during the twentieth century and especially its final quarter. Throughout Europe (which increasingly included Central and

⁵ Russell Hittinger, 'The Coherence of the Four Basic Principles of Catholic Social Doctrine – An Interpretation', PASS, XIV Plenary Session 2008, p. 106.

⁶ *Social Origins of Educational Systems, Ibid.*, p. 54.

Eastern Europe), State Educational Systems now operated in the context of representative democracy, which was far from being the case at their origins. Moreover, in the last couple of decades many State systems in Europe and other parts of the world have come to endorse certain forms of 'devolution' at the level of individual educational establishments – schools, colleges and universities. This policy raises exactly the same issues as those examined in connection with centralisation and decentralisation. Does such managerial devolution promote *subsidiarity* and *solidarity* and are they promoted conjointly, as needs to be the case?

Finally, Part III examines the new millennium and asks whether the structural and cultural transformations, whose most obvious effect has been to generate globalisation, are more propitious to education working for the common good? Much of this is sketchy and tentative. Any conviction that it carries is predicated upon the assumption that it is now possible to discern the first signs of modernity being superseded – a prospect with considerable implications for education in relation to the common good.

PART I. THE EMERGENCE OF STATE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

In those countries where State Educational Systems developed endogenously⁷ their consolidation followed one of two basic patterns. Either new political elites used the command they had recently gained over the central State apparatus to *restrict* existing educational provisions and their suppliers and then to *replace* these – through public and no longer private funding – under their own *étatiste* control. This is a politically directed 'top down' process, explicitly designed to serve the State and its (often new) governing elite. However, problems over mobilising the novel but requisite public funding and of marshalling support and minimising opposition usually meant that certain educational concessions had to be made to powerful elements in civil society in order to consolidate the system.

Conversely, where educational discontent with existing provisions lay amongst interest groups with little influence upon government – even to

⁷ Worldwide, these are probably in a minority because of territorial conquest (for example, Napoleon's European conquests) and imperialism, where the external power imposed the domestic model (for example the French in North Africa) or one suited to their version of colonial rule (as throughout the British Empire).

the point of their lacking enfranchisement – a different process led to the emergence of State systems. Basically, it consisted in market competition where independent networks of schools and colleges were *substituted*; ones designed to serve the parties whose requirements were obstructed by the status quo in education and in the hope of undermining the latter if its own network of establishments could prove more popular. However, since such competing networks were usually plural and because the existing suppliers fought back, market competition resulted in deadlock. Such ‘middle up’ *substitution* both invited and allowed State intervention to consolidate a State System of Education through the *incorporation* of these diverse networks, sponsored by different parts of civil society and with divergent definitions of instruction, under a single governmental authority for education.⁸

State Educational Systems originating from *restriction* are invariably *centralised* ones because their predominant characteristics are strong *unification* (tight State control) and principled *systematisation* (such that certain educational institutions lead from one level to another, whilst others are designed as terminal, according to the perceived requirements of the governing elite). Conversely, the other pair of characteristics, common to all emerging State Educational Systems, are weak: *differentiation*, requiring relative autonomy from central control, was kept as low as possible and resulted in limited *specialisation* to provide those particular educational services sought by different parts of civil society.

On the other hand, the reverse characteristics preponderated in State Educational Systems originating from *substitution*. Their relatively strong *differentiation* and *specialisation* resulted from the incorporated networks retaining sufficient control to continue supplying many of the distinctive services for which they had been formed. Correspondingly, *unification* remained weak because governing elites had to work with what was there, as functioning establishments whose practices were defended by their founders and suppliers. *Systematisation* was exceedingly difficult to impose on these chaotic, overlapping and still adversarial networks. In short, these invariably become *decentralised* systems.

⁸ These two paragraphs greatly over-compress the intricacies of the interactions involved. They are treated at length in the 800 pages of *Social Origins of Educational Systems, Ibid.*, which analyses the emergence of four endogenously developed State Educational Systems in France and Russia (centralised) and England and Denmark (decentralised).

The structural differences between centralised and decentralised State Educational Systems are crucially important for explaining many processes in the decades following their consolidation: how public instruction is defined and by whom; which portions of the general population have access to which parts of education; by what means educational change can be introduced; and the patterns of change themselves – local, incremental and slowly additive or central, dramatic and uniform. Despite the fact that the above processes are far from being irrelevant, what will be accentuated in this paper are the implications of centralisation and decentralisation for the four intertwined⁹ principles of Social Doctrine: the *dignity of the human person*, *subsidiarity*, *solidarity* and the promotion of the *common good*.

(i) *Centralised State Educational Systems*

France, after 1789,¹⁰ will be used as the exemplar here because so many other European educational systems owe their origins to the imposition of the *Université impériale* model in the wake of Napoleonic conquests – just as their legal systems still owe much to the *Code Napoléon*. In Hittinger's terms,¹¹ the Imperial University was a particularly 'mean' exemplar of the 'concessionary model' because the very concessions made to civil society were intended to buttress State power and priorities in education.

Whilst all of the revolutionary Assemblies¹² had sought to promote national unity and to replace religious teaching by secular enlightenment, had also envisaged a State monopoly of public instruction (with the exception of Lepellitier's plan), and had endorsed gratuity, female equality and universal enrolment, one key element was the central importance they attached to primary education as a means for enhancing social *solidarity*. This was a joint function of the 'generous' republican conception of citizen-

⁹ It is extremely important, as Roland Minnerath stresses, to see the interconnections between these principles rather than viewing them in isolation. 'Les principes fondamentaux de la doctrine sociale. La question de leur interprétation', PASS, XIV Plenary Session 2008, pp. 45-56.

¹⁰ This very compressed account can be found in extended form in Michalina Vaughan and Margaret S. Archer, *Social Conflict and Educational Change in England and France 1789-1848*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971.

¹¹ Russell Hittinger, 'The Coherence of the Four Basic Principles...', *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

¹² Cf. C. Hippeau, *La Révolution et l'éducation nationale*, Paris, 1883 for a detailed discussion of the educational plans presented to the three Revolutionary Assemblies.

ship and of political awareness that popular support was indispensable to the survival of the new regime.

Successive laws were too short lived to shape a new system, quite apart from the constraints represented by a complete lack of trained lay teachers and an absence of funds with which to carry out *replacement* of the now debarred Church schools. Only under the Empire of Napoleon I did the new State system finally take shape. By then, *étatisme* and its requirements had obliterated any concern for educational egalitarianism, even in order to promote *solidarity* in the interests of political stability.

It is helpful that the Emperor was not reticent about publicly stating his aims and rationale for State education. His own words¹³ can be used to present his outlook towards the spirit of the four key principles of Social Teaching. Of course, these latter had yet to be articulated but they were to owe much to the resistance invoked by Napoleon's view of Church-State relations and its practical embodiment in his *Université impériale*.

As far as the cardinal principle of the *dignity of the human person* was concerned and the role that education could play in realising the potential of each and every one – to which the Revolutionary Assemblies had been far from deaf – Napoleon counter-posed his conviction that 'to instruct is secondary, the main thing to do is to train and to do so according to the pattern which suits the State'.¹⁴ That pattern meant that if the State had no need of mass instruction, the people had no right to it. Consequently, 'no special allocation of funds was ever made in the budget of the Empire for primary education'.¹⁵ Instead, the cost and task were passed back to the Church. Responsibility for this level was restored to the *Frères de la doctrine chrétienne*, provided they swore their oath of allegiance to the Emperor, taught the *Catéchisme impérial* and underwent inspection to ensure that teaching did not exceed literacy and religious instruction. This policy in primary schooling had a double aim: to control the Church in the State and the people in society.

In relation to both *subsidiarity* and *solidarity* the Emperor became gradually convinced that only a State monopoly over education¹⁶ could lead to the integration he sought – between education and State service and between citizenship and nationalism.

¹³ These, as all other translations from French sources, are my own.

¹⁴ L. Liard, *L'Enseignement supérieur en France, 1798-1889*, 2 vols., Paris, 1888, p. 69.

¹⁵ A. Delfau, *Napoléon Ier et l'instruction publique*, Paris, 1902, pp. 40-1.

¹⁶ A. Aulard, *Napoléon Ier et le monopole universitaire*, Paris, 1911, p. 363f.

Teaching is a function of the State, because this is a need of the nation. In consequence, schools should be State establishments and not establishments in the State. They depend on the State and have no resort but it; they exist by it and for it. They hold their right to exist and their very substance from it; they ought to receive from it their task and their rule. Then again, as the State is one, its schools ought to be the same everywhere.¹⁷

Not only was *subsidiarity* explicitly prohibited by the decree of 1808, which forbade any private school without State authorization, but was exacerbated by the central standardisation of national curricula, of qualifications and of teacher training – the latter reinforced by making teachers Civil Servants.

Solidarity was deliberately set aside. The new educational system was intentionally bifurcated into (terminal) primary schooling for the masses, whereas for the bourgeoisie, *lycées* led to the *baccalauréat* and from there into higher education and on to the professions, the military officer corps and the higher reaches of the civil service. Hence, the bourgeoisie became a ‘diploma elite’. In terms of *solidarity* the ephemeral unity of the Third Estate had been riven in two. As Goblot commented, ‘It is not completely true that the bourgeoisie exists only in culture but not in law. The *lycée* made it a legal institution. It even has official certificates, with a ministerial signature ... The *baccalauréat* is the real barrier guaranteed by the State, which is a protection against invasion’.¹⁸

Napoleon’s defence of his State system depended upon the linkage he forged between his definition of State requirements and the general good of society. The efficiency of governmental administration and the stability of civil society could be presented – if only in contrast with the disorder of the revolutionary years – as synonymous with the interests of society. And the *common good*? That was for the State to define, to generate and to arbitrate upon. The one thing it was not, was a good emergent from *human dignity*, *subsidiarity* and *solidarity*,¹⁹ all of which had been categorically nullified during the consolidation of the Imperial University.

Napoleon had declared that ‘Public education is the future and the duration of my work after me’. The structure of this centralised educational system proved durable but, like all social institutions, not everlasting. Since this is not the place for a potted history of education, suffice it to say

¹⁷ Cited in L. Liard, *Ibid.*, II, p. 35.

¹⁸ E. Goblot, *La Barrière et le Niveau*, Paris, 1930, p. 126.

¹⁹ See Pierpaolo Donati, ‘Prospects: Discovering the relational character of the common good’, PASS, XIV Plenary Session 2008, pp. 659-666.

that despite the political turbulence of the 19th century, the possession of central control over instruction proved irresistible to successive regimes and governments. Differences in political support-bases were dealt with by making additional, selective concessions to the relevant sectors of civil society: demands from the burgeoning industrial economy were propitiated by various adaptations to existing schools from the July Monarchy onwards; *liberté de l'enseignement* (conceded under the Loi Falloux in 1850) restored the Church's right to open private Secondary schools – albeit with stringent controls hedging their independence.

However, the endurance of centralization throughout the 19th century simply re-confirmed its 'concessionary' nature. Demands for educational change from civil society were strongly constrained to work through one process of interaction alone if they were to stand any chance of success, namely, 'political manipulation'. This is illustrated in Figure 1 (next page). To obtain any further concession entailed aggregating such demands with entirely different groups in order to put effective pressure on central government. Yet, the aggregation of demands spelt their dilution, if various interest groups were to work together. In turn, dilution meant that, even when 'successful', the changes gained were always insufficiently specific to satisfy the original demands.

There was no alternative. The teaching profession itself (denied the right to become a professional association until 1924) was equally powerless to respond directly to any wishes teachers might have countenanced from local civil society as they were to engage in the 'internal initiation' of pedagogical change in line with their professional values. Similarly, interest groups could not engage in direct 'external transactions' with any part of the State Educational System. Instead, they had to go outside education and find allies with whom to exert joint pressure on the political centre. The alternative resort of the re-buffed, namely to use and to extend the private sector, was of little use to them because it lacked the independence to offer anything significantly different from provisions defined by the State.

In short, the centralized State Educational System typically had vitriolic critics and, at most, tepid supporters from within civil society. This is why it was prone to periodic outbursts of direct action, usually followed by panic legislation and then by administrative clawing-back of the new concessions obtained.²⁰ In conclusion, the 'concessionary' cen-

²⁰ I have analysed the 'May events' of 1968 in these terms. Margaret S. Archer, 'France', in her (Ed.), *Students, University and Society*, London, Heinemann, 1972.

tralised model of education continuously frustrates large sections of civil society and militates against realisation of the key principles of Social Doctrine.

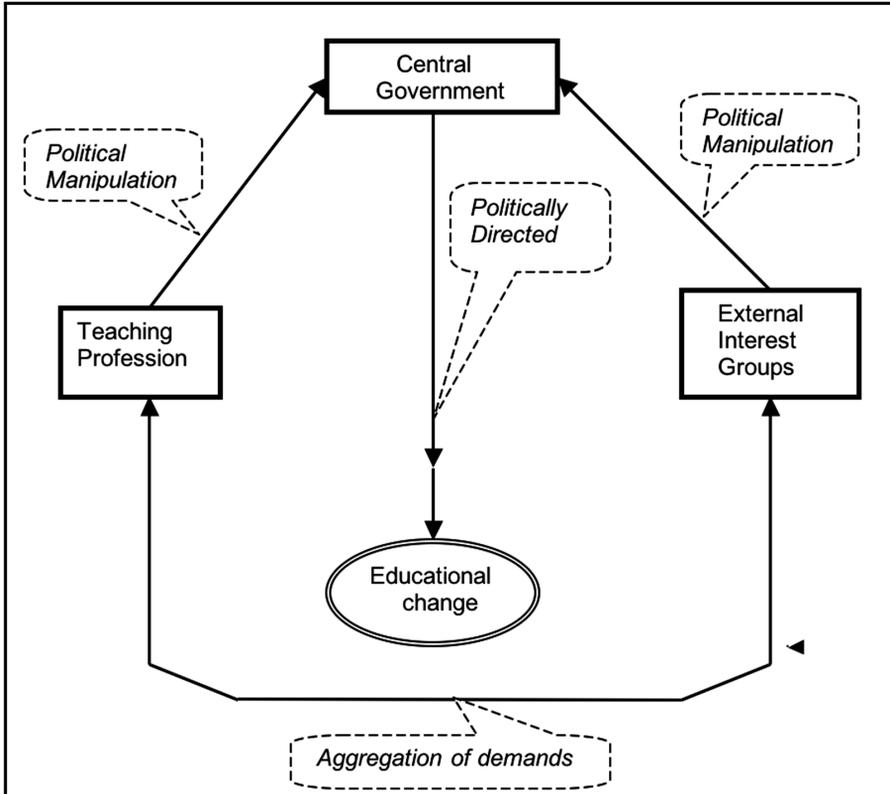


Figure 1. Educational interaction in the Centralised System.

(ii) *The Decentralised Educational System*

Sometimes *subsidiarity* is interpreted as being equivalent to decentralization. To confound or conflate the two is a mistake. Although a limitation of central powers is necessary for the actualisation and maintenance of *subsidiarity*, decentralization alone is not co-existent with its realisation. The reason for this is rooted in the need for *subsidiarity* and *solidarity* to be mutual-

ly reinforcing, to work in tandem if they are to promote the *common good*.

On the contrary, decentralization *tout simple* is simply a free market model in education. Bluntly, it may indeed be responsive to the educational demands of the wealthier parts of civil society, but its precise effect in satisfying these is to reduce social *solidarity* by widening the gap between those served by the educational system and poorer groups who lack the resources 'to have a say'. Indeed, as a market model, decentralised education may (and usually does) increase the educational 'wealth' of all over time, whilst maintaining marked social differentials in its distribution.

Using Hittinger's terms, the (protracted) consolidation of England's decentralised State System of Education conforms more closely to his 'power-check' model. However, in the beginning, the main groups involved were rather more concerned with checking one another's progress in the foundation of competitive educational networks – hoping to be able to declare check-mate eventually – than as parts of civil society attempting to limit the power of the State. Only when central government began to intervene seriously in the educational market did all network suppliers seek to repel those political incursions damaging to their particular interests.

Between the Reformation and the late eighteenth century, the Established Church of England continued to run and to develop Cathedral schools, endowed schools, colleges (which had become Oxford and Cambridge Universities), all of which had been confiscated from the Catholic Church. By the start of the nineteenth century both Tory and Whig parties considered themselves as beneficiaries of Anglican education on two counts. The social exclusivity of secondary and higher education complemented that of the two political parties; the production of churchmen was in no way seen as incompatible with the instruction of statesmen. Secondly, growing working class unrest made the contribution of religious instruction to social quietism increasingly valued. Both parties supported the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, which funded elementary schools through voluntary subscription.

Conversely, two groups felt particularly impeded by the Anglicans' acquired right to define instruction and from these came market-based *substitution* – the form taken by *competitive conflict* over education in England. On the one hand, there were the industrial entrepreneurs for whom Anglican education's confirmation of hereditary privilege and whose concentration on classicism and pure mathematics were irrelevant to the spirit of capitalism. On the other, there were the Dissenters (members of the Free

Churches), disbarred on religious grounds from attending many endowed schools and from University graduation because of the Test Acts²¹ and also from entering the teaching profession.

Because there was a significant overlap between these two groups – the entrepreneurs and the Nonconformists – this enabled the British and Foreign School Society to challenge the Anglican control over primary instruction in the marketplace. However, the control of the former by Nonconformists effectively alienated the working class leadership who strongly endorsed secular rationalism. With the latter, we now have the three networks that were to struggle for educational control throughout the nineteenth century – the Established Church, the entrepreneurial-Dissenter alliance and the secularist aristocracy of labour. Given that neither of the latter two groups was enfranchised,²² their use of *substitution* is readily understood.

Relations between the competing parties resulted in the partitioning of elementary instruction amongst those engaged in market competition. Given distrust of State intervention on the part of Anglicans and Dissenters alike, coupled with Tory reluctance to pursue it – no education being viewed as the best instruction for the poorer classes – yet Whig commitment to extending literacy, these stances represented a parallelogram of forces whose outcome was the ‘Voluntary System’ – meaning that schools received government subventions but that such finance was funnelled through the two Voluntary societies.

However, by the mid-nineteenth century, market competition ‘did not produce a surplus of schools and cheap education, as some educational “free-traders” expected, but tended to paralyse the activities of all parties, so that schools were built that could not be maintained and children were educated for such short periods that they could benefit very little from the instruction given’.²³ Increasingly, *competitive conflict* for educational con-

²¹ Finally abolished in 1870, these tested knowledge of the ‘Thirty-Nine Articles’ of the Church of England and thus conformity to the teachings of the Established Church.

²² Most of the former, as property owners or rent-holders gained the vote in 1832. Because of this property qualification most of the (male) Working class did not (until 1866 or even 1884). Their disillusionment at their exclusion in 1832 was a major factor in persuading the Chartist movement to go it alone in the educational struggle, despite their poverty of economic resources, and to found their own Halls of Science and Mechanics Institutes. See M. Tylecote, *The Mechanics’ Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851*, Manchester, 1957.

²³ Eric E. Rich, *The Educational Act, 1870*, London, Longmans, 1970, p. 63.

trol reached deadlock between the promotive networks. To extricate themselves from this stalemate each protagonist sought Political Party support for the advancement, finance and protection of its network. Since all did the same, the unintended consequence – at the end of the century – was their *incorporation* into a State Educational System.

The (Tory) 1902 Act created a single central authority for English Education²⁴ and linked the networks together for the first time to form a system. Undoubtedly, it was the working class definition of instruction that lost out. Given minimal political sponsorship in the absence of a 'labour party', it was virtually eliminated. Compared with the ferocity of elementary school politics, secondary and higher education were settled by give and take between the political elites. The Anglicans maintained their traditional definition of instruction in the independent Public Schools and ancient Universities; middle class technical instruction was accommodated and came under the aegis of the new Local Educational Authorities in 1902, whilst the University extension colleges, serving business and commerce, received their Royal Charters

When the social origins of an educational system are based upon market competition, then 'checks and balances' undoubtedly generate weaker educational powers for the State because of the much lower degrees of *unification* and *systematisation* that are politically possible. However, are the four principles of Social Doctrine better realised in State educational systems such as the English, the Danish and those of the component States of the USA?

When *competitive conflict* takes the form of *substitution*, the active participants funding and fostering any given network are interest groups defending or promoting their particularistic concerns. These interests may be material (the entrepreneurs) or ideal (both the Anglicans and the Non-conformists) but they are specific to the group, despite every attempt being made by them to generalise their ideology or values for purposes of legitimation. Examination of these ideas shows scant recognition of *human dignity* and a greater concern – sometimes mystificatory and manipulative – to use education to generate a compliant workforce or congregation.

Political sponsorship of the networks showed the same motivation. Sectional interests had motivated the struggle over education and the relative political strength of these interest groups determined the prominence of

²⁴ See A.S. Bishop, *The Rise of a Central Authority for English Education*, Cambridge, 1971.

their networks in the resulting State system. In the nineteenth century debate on the motion 'to educate or not to educate the people', concerns about public order were ever-present whilst mention of the *common good* scarcely featured.

In close parallel, the priority given to public order consistently prevailed over any concern for social *solidarity*. The low *systematisation* achieved under the 1902 Act, which did nothing whatsoever to connect the elementary and secondary levels of schooling, effectively meant that they were for different classes, thus still reflecting Disraeli's 'Two Nations'. The furthest the Act went was the loose injunction that 'post-elementary' provisions must be considered by the new Local Educational Authorities in relation to the needs of their areas.

Given the need for *solidarity* and *subsidiarity* to work in reciprocity with one another, it is paradoxical that the structure of a decentralised State Educational System, such as that to emerge in England, should sometimes be viewed as synonymous with strong *subsidiarity*. To view it in this way is to accentuate isolated features at the turn of the twentieth century: that the freedom of instruction (*liberté d'enseignement*) was not in question; that the Churches (plural) could open any educational establishment they wished²⁵ – as could any other body; that there was a large and flourishing independent sector, to which anyone could add; that numerous forms of technical and commercial schooling could flourish; and that entrepreneurial groups could sponsor the majority of Universities in England²⁶ (those receiving their Charters in 1902 and now known as 'the redbricks').

However, each of these instances carries the caveat 'for those who could pay' – either to found them or to attend them. Thus, for example, the largest portion of the independent sector has always been dominated by the Public Schools (which, despite their confusing nomenclature, are entirely private and very expensive). From 1869 their governing body, the Headmasters' Conference, had withdrawn from the nascent State System to ensure that these schools 'should be free from any form of external guidance and control'.²⁷

²⁵ For the uses made of this, see James Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800-1970*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1971.

²⁶ Michael Sanderson, *The Universities and British Industry, 1850-1970*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.

²⁷ Brian Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement, 1870-1920*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1965, p. 103.

Decentralization is not *subsidiarity*. Nevertheless, the *variety* of processes through which educational change can be introduced in a decentralised system (Figure 2): 'Internal Initiation', 'External Transactions' as well as through 'Political Manipulation', clearly makes it more responsive to demands from the social environment than is the case for the centralised system (Figure 1). In the latter, all pressures for change have to be politically adopted, passed up to the central decision-making arena, before, if successful, being passed back down to educational institutions in the form of laws and decrees – that is, as uniform, politically directed changes.

Decentralisation is not equivalent to *subsidiarity*, but it is not a structural barrier to it. In principle, it is structurally propitious, provided that there is sufficient *solidarity* in society for its three processes of educational negotiation to be used for the *common good*. Another way of putting this is that this form of 'system integration' (decentralization) presents no obstacle to *subsidiarity* in education. However, the actualisation of *subsidiarity* also depends upon a high degree of 'social integration', such that the impulses to express *munera* educationally are generous and that the support for *subsidia* is socially generalized.

Fundamentally, what we find in twentieth century England is that a society deeply stratified on lines of social class does not possess the requisite degree of social *solidarity* to furnish the sufficient condition for the realisation of *subsidiarity*. On the contrary, to cite the two most important examples, although the primary school teachers sought to devote their *munus* to the development of 'child-centred learning'²⁸ – a model and method structurally available, thanks to the wholly independent Progressive school movement²⁹ – this was undermined as the task of primary schooling was first linked to preparation for selective entry to different types of secondary schools (1944) and later eliminated by the imposition of national 'performance indicators' at primary level (1988). Secondly and similarly, when certain of the Local Educational Authorities used their considerable autonomy to spearhead the movement towards Comprehensive secondary schooling³⁰ – and indeed to win over the Labour Party to adopt the policy nationally (1964) – this too was undermined by various class pressures to restore selectivity and culminated in the steady erosion of the LEAs.

²⁸ R.J.W. Selleck, *English Primary Education and the Progressives, 1914-1939*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.

²⁹ W.A.C. Stewart, *The Educational Innovators*, 2 vols., London, Macmillan, 1968.

³⁰ David Rubinstein and Brian Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969.

In short, the structural enablements of decentralisation, which allowed the processes of 'Internal Initiation' and 'External Transaction' to pioneer radical educational changes, arguably representing nascent *subsidiarity*, also indicates that each time the relevant parties pressed forward towards robust transformations in education, they broke up on the rocks of divergent middle-class interests in defending their privileges against the *common good*. And they were increasingly abetted in this by what became middle-class Political Parties. At the hands of the latter, the *munera* representing free educational giving were repressed and denied institutional expression and the *subsidia* themselves were legally withdrawn.

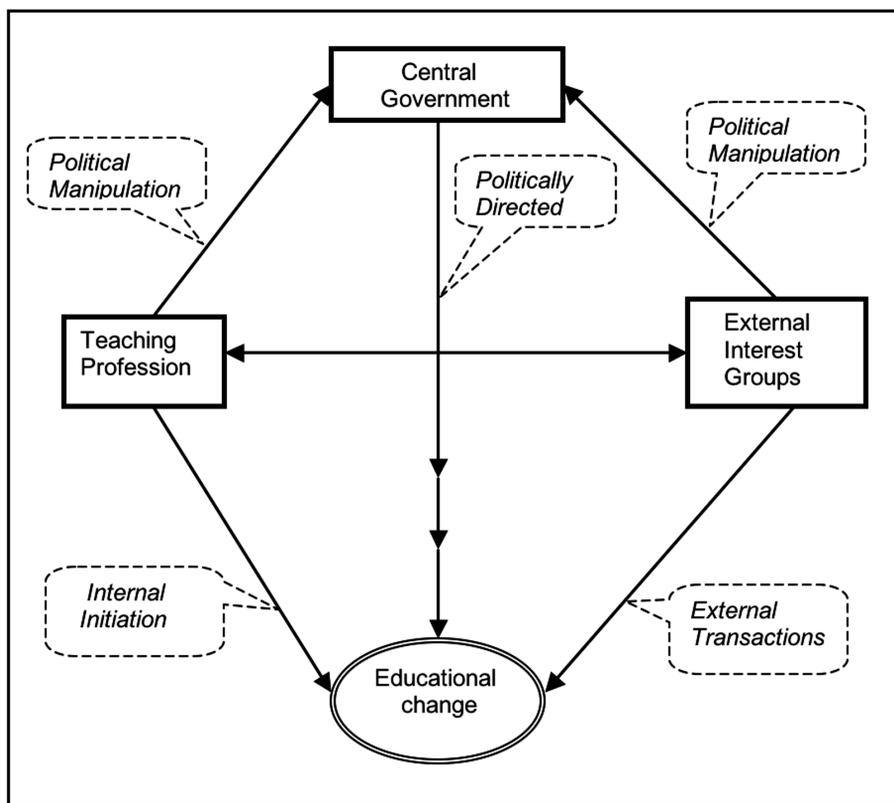


Figure 2. Educational interaction in the Decentralised System

PART II. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS: IN A VICE BETWEEN STATE AND MARKET

As these centralised or decentralised educational systems entered the twentieth century, we can broadly characterise their relations with society's sub-systems as follows. In stark and simplified terms, centralised educational systems remained servants of the State, just as they had been founded, and consistently failed to be sufficiently responsive to Market demands, even whilst seeking to accommodate them. Conversely, decentralised systems, generated from market competition, retained their responsiveness to market forces but, in so doing, consistently frustrated the State in its attempts to use education as an instrument for societal guidance. Such were the major effects of subsequent reforms produced through the different processes for negotiating educational change in these different types of system (as portrayed in Figures 1 and 2) and to be examined more closely in a moment.

Yet as modernity moved towards its climacteric, before the end of the twentieth century, neither of these kinds of State Educational Systems was suited to meeting *simultaneously* the new requirements of central government and of the modernising economy. The attempt to satisfy both is the main story-line of educational changes in the twentieth century. But, we must first explain what made giving *simultaneous satisfaction to the State and to the market* a new imperative for education in Europe.

On the one hand, nearly every State in Western Europe had moved (or was swiftly moving) towards some version of representative democracy based upon universal suffrage. They were consequently under increasing pressure, usually from their equally new Parties of the Left, to rectify the abysmally low state of social *solidarity* and to extend political concern for civil society beyond the maintenance of 'social order'. Thus, democratic governments experienced relentless pressures to reduce the great divide between social classes – viewed as dangerous or iniquitous, depending upon ideological standpoint – by an equalisation of life-chances through enhancing the equality of educational opportunity.

On the other hand, as industrial competition intensified within Europe and Germany took over the lead in the late nineteenth century thanks, it was generally accepted, to its advanced Technical High Schools, crowned by Charlottenburg; as the applications of science to production were stimulated by the two World Wars; and as Fordist production techniques in the United States were adopted as the key to industrial re-construction, these all enhanced the economic role assigned to education in national economic competition. However, for it to play this role well,

many of its protagonists were effectively advocating something close to techno-educational *subsidiarity*.

Thus, at the most macroscopic level, it is being argued that the central problem for educational systems in Europe was how to align these two very specific forms of *solidarity and subsidiarity* within the structures of education inherited from the nineteenth century – ones imperfect for either purpose and undoubtedly even more unsuited to realising the two simultaneously.

'Late' Modernity, reached before the end of the twentieth century, will be briefly reviewed as a period during which the reforms of State Educational Systems operated in zero-sum fashion. The more reform sought to promote *solidarity* (through educational egalitarianism as the third part of the Welfare State + Representative Democracy formula), the less well it served techno-educational or any other form of *subsidiarity*. In short, these two elements, ones that must necessarily stand in a relationship of mutual reinforcement if they are to recognise the *dignity of all* and foster the emergence of the *common good*, in fact stood in precisely the opposite relationship.

For over twenty years, Donati³¹ has analysed the manifestations of this opposition between them as the oscillation between *lib/lab* policies. Politically directed 'lib' changes favoured Market competition, whilst 'lab' egalitarianism favoured the stability of society. I am in full accord with this analysis. Indeed, it was precisely because of this alternation that most European educational systems managed to stagger towards the end of the twentieth century.

However, I would add that the final fling of this approach, in which 'half a loaf of bread' was handed out alternately in 'lib' or 'lab' interests, revealed the generic antinomy between the two, precisely when attempts were made in the last quarter of the century to run *lib + lab* in tandem. At exactly that point, the consequences of their truly zero-sum relationship became apparent – one that could be only partially concealed by making education bigger, longer and still more expensive for all concerned.

Their fundamental antinomy has deeper roots, in the very nature of modernity itself, because based upon the situational logic of *competitive contradictions*, where the dynamics of conflict are unrestrained by the

³¹ This received systematic formulation in *La cittadinanza societaria*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1993. Recently he has defined 'lib/lab' as the symbolic code of late modernity. See Pierpaolo Donati, 'Introduzione', Pierpaolo Donati and Ivo Colozzi (Eds.), *Il paradigma relazionale nelle scienze sociali: le prospettive sociologiche*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2006, p. 38. See also pp. 110-113.

mutual interdependence of groups.³² All competitive situations are 'game like' with their outcomes approximating to the zero-sum formula. That itself explains why more and more are 'mobilised' into active competition.³³ Either a group competes, in the hope of winning, or necessarily loses through non-participation, which allows others to win more easily. Formally, Modernity's 'games' are very similar for all institutions in civil society. Generically, they are about 'having, gaining or retaining a say' in order to obtain or to secure benefits for the contending groups.

For all social groups, the zero-sum nature of outcomes served to place a premium upon strategic thinking of the means-end variety. In turn, instrumental rationality is fundamentally antipathetic to the voluntary creation of common goods through free-giving – which is exactly what *solidarity and subsidiarity* themselves depend upon. Thus, when the benefits of *subsidiarity and solidarity* are sought for self-interested ends and against others, that is, as matters of advancing objective group interests or defending vested interests, we should not be surprised by their mutual antipathy.

2.a. *Lib/Lab antinomies in Centralized State Educational Systems*

'Political manipulation' still being the main process through which educational reform could be introduced in the twentieth century meant that substantive changes in education remained consistently *centripetal* in kind. These formal continuities in educational control and co-ordination (strong *unification and systematization*) continuously generated a problematic relationship between education and civil society. In the centralized system there is a perpetual state of tension between education and its *external environment*, because politically directed educational change produces an endless series of mis-matches in its attempts to meet (irresistible) demands from outside the system because of the inflexibility of the system.

Both of the main pressures for change emanating from civil society – for vocational modernization and for equality of opportunity – required a significant reduction in the two main structural characteristics of the centralized system. On the one hand, to have conceded vocational specialization at all levels in order to modernize the definition of instruction would

³² I do not have the space to enter into this analysis here, which forms part of my current book, *The Reflexive Imperative* (forthcoming).

³³ Margaret S. Archer, *Realist Social Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, Ch. 8.

have entailed a significant reduction in *unification*. On the other hand, to have responded to organised demand for egalitarianism – as expressed by the *école unique* movement in France after the First World War – would have meant just that, the creation of a new single, self-standing school for all, entailing a complete revision of the bifurcation between primary and secondary schooling.

Yet, a serious reduction in central control (*unification*) for *subsidiary* modernization would have deprived central government of the powers requisite for egalitarian reform. Conversely, a genuine weakening of the traditional bifurcated principle of *systematization*, in the interests of integrative *solidarity*, would have deprived industrial interests of the very different forms of vocational training sought for workers and managers, which fitted well with bifurcation. Consequently, the reforms needed to realize modernization and egalitarianism were incongruent with one another, reflecting the antimony between realizing increased *subsidiarity* simultaneously with increased *solidarity* in the structural context of a centralised State Educational System. The result was that both modernization and equality of opportunity each received ‘half a loaf of bread’ when centre-right (‘lib’) and centre-left (‘lab’) were in office.

In France, the Imperial University was a heritage that had neglected to provide educational services for the (largely) pre-industrial economy, in preference to privileging State requirements. It had also, through the various regimes up to and including the Third and Fourth Republics, perpetuated a structure sub-divided into two levels, unlinked to one another, fulfilling totally different functions and enrolling very different social strata. Why did the endurance of strong central control (*unification*) militate against reforms producing a satisfactory degree of vocational specialization? The policy of developing modern technical training failed largely because the political centre would cede no authority to local industrialists, enabling them to adjust it to their diverse requirements.

Instead, successive attempts were made at the primary level to introduce more differentiated and specialised courses of vocational or pre-vocational instruction, but only rarely succeeded when these courses broke away from the Ministry of Education altogether. Otherwise, their practical orientation steadily gave way to general education the longer they remained part of the system.

At secondary level, ‘special education’ was the vehicle for introducing higher-level vocational specialization under the Third Republic but, popular as it had been, it soon lost its distinctiveness, disappearing altogether in

1902. A further assault was made on the problem by introducing 'modern studies' as a section of the *baccalauréat*, but these lost their distinctive character between pressures to imitate the prestige branches and to prepare for University entry. An identical sequence was repeated with the creation of the technical *baccalauréat* in 1946.³⁴

As Antoine Prost summed up the situation in 1967, 'French schooling disdains to train the producer. Its rationalism turns into intellectualism'³⁵ Again, in Bourdieu's words, students were treated 'as apprentice professors and not as professional apprentices'.³⁶ This is explained by reluctance to weaken central unified control: teachers and Professors remained civil servants trained by the State and for the State. The diminution of *unification*, necessary to have allowed industrialists any role in public instruction and to have adapted the national curriculum to their specialized, practical and applied needs was held too valuable to *étatisme* to be ceded by any government assuming office. Meanwhile, the economy had not received 'half a loaf', but only a couple of slices of bread.

From early in the twentieth century, demands for educational democratisation bombarded the National Assembly, but produced only grudging and tentative moves towards the fundamental structural change sought – the linking of the primary and secondary sub-systems.

By the start of the Fifth Republic, all that had been introduced was a 'harmonisation' of programmes at the end of the first *degré* and the beginning of the second; the orientation of pupils, at least in principle, to different types of further instruction on the basis of their performance; and the establishment of *classes passerelles* for the transfer later on of those who had taken the wrong route. Thus, there was no audacious structural change and the differentiation of no self-standing institution committed to overthrowing a century and a half of socio-educational discrimination.³⁷

Continued pressures led to the eventual foundation of the *Collèges d'Enseignement Secondaires*. However, this was accomplished by the regrouping of existing components (the final class of primary, the first cycle of secondary and of the old *Collèges*) – elements which resisted reintegration and

³⁴ R.D. Anderson, *Education in France 1848-1870*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975, p. 218.

³⁵ Antoine Prost, *L'Enseignement en France 1800-1967*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1968, p. 340.

³⁶ Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Les Héritiers, les étudiants et la culture*, Paris, Minuit, 1964.

³⁷ Luc Decaunes and M.L. Cavalier, *Réformes et projets de réformes de l'enseignement français de la révolution à nos jours*, Paris, 1962, p. 154f.

often refused to collaborate. Overcoming the bifurcation of primary and secondary instruction needed a separate and forceful institution committed to equality in education, as in the original conception of *école unique*. Instead, the task was given to this weak and warring amalgam of existing elements of the system.

Just as the 'lib' concessions to vocationalism had been miserly, so were the 'lab' concessions to democratisation. The reasons for both were identical: an unwillingness to cede any significant degree of unified, central political control of education or radically to transform the inherited, negative or bifurcated principle of systematisation. In sum, the effects of these politically directed concessions – the results of more than half a century of 'lib/lab' compromises – had done nothing to increase either *subsidiarity* or *solidarity*.

2.b. *Lib/Lab antinomies in Decentralized State Educational Systems*

In a very different manner, the inheritance of a decentralized system with three distinct processes responsible for the negotiation of reform, also served to weaken any strong and coherent response to the same two demands: for equality of educational opportunity and vocational relevance. Here, it was the weakness of *unification and systematization* that was considered responsible: the teaching profession, especially primary school teachers, promoting 'child-centred' instruction, were held to jeopardise standards in *both* academic and vocational branches of secondary schooling; equally, the LEAs, consistently countenancing the proliferation of technical instruction, were considered to vitiate any notion of a national policy for education.

Again and again these burgeoning forms of technical schooling were accommodated by central government by confining them to lower or inferior and generally terminal levels, branches or tracks of instruction. Thus, the price for the accommodation of manifest 'lib' demands was their subordination within national education. This is simply a different way of doling out 'half a loaf'.

Thus, the 1902 settlement, elaborating the decentralised system in England, had officially endorsed the spread of the (terminal) Higher Elementary School and promoted the academic Grammar School at secondary level. However, with the approval of the new LEAs, a range of diverse but practical institutions continued to develop alongside: science schools, technical day schools, pupil-teacher centres, trade schools, vocational schools etc.

The 1918 Act, which confirmed the structural and cultural hegemony of the academic Grammar School, intended to crowd most of these other

developments into 'continuation schools', which would be allowed some practical orientation but would remain firmly elementary. The Depression weakened the thrust of the Act, many of whose provisions were suspended. Yet, despite austerity, a variety of intermediary institutions again proliferated and these central, senior and technical schools represented a real challenge since they enrolled two-thirds as many pupils as the 'official' Grammar Schools before the outbreak of the Second World War. The 1944 Act trained them into line with its policy of selection by ability through now cramming them into the inferior part of the secondary level. Hence, the loss of a strong practical, real or technical definition of instruction in England was the trade-off for having a national policy for education in a system that was weak in *unification*.

Did 'lib' or 'lab' concerns fare better in the post-war period, when the Labour Party was regularly returned to office? It is important to underline that the impetus for a single 'Comprehensive' secondary school came from outside central government and that certain 'progressive' Local Educational Authorities (Leicestershire being the pioneer) had become fully comprehensive before the Labour government endorsed the policy in 1966. When it did so, its weak *unification* once more served to reinforce its weak *systematization*, such that six different organizational models were centrally recommended as being in conformity with comprehensivization. In other words, the question, 'What is an English comprehensive school like?' remained unanswerable.

Although the legislation consolidating the comprehensive policy was the furthest reaching in terms of democratising educational opportunity, it was far from being a radical 'lab' policy, as sociologists of education continued to highlight.³⁸ Not only were there the six different models, but many of these new secondary schools practised intensive 'streaming' of pupils by ability, thus reproducing social selection within them. More generally, the residential quality of catchment areas produced 'good comps' and 'bad comps', with the term 'inner-city comprehensive' becoming one of abuse. Finally, a handful of LEAs simply refused to implement the policy at all.

The period from the end of the war until 1979 is generally regarded as the high water mark of educational democratisation, a 'lab' period in which equality of opportunity in education formed a crucial plank of the welfare society. That seems incontestable. However, it is also important to note that

³⁸ C. Benn and B. Simon, *Half Way There*, London, McGraw-Hill, 1970.

this high tide had also been accompanied by a significant lack of concern for vocational training, work preparation or the regeneration of industry. In other words, 'lib' and 'lab' policies had alternated rather than complemented one another.

In entrenched centralized systems, such as French education, only once – in the aftermath of the May events of 1968 – was the idea of devolution or of reducing *unification* seriously voiced. However, De Gaulle's 'recovery' served to make *unification* appear as indispensable as ever to any effective policy for national education. Conversely, the secular failure to incorporate techno-educational provisions satisfactorily did result in a gradual willingness to recognize that the exceptionally weak *differentiation and specialisation* of institutions within the system would continue to frustrate the economy – and should be allowed to increase to meet 'lib' demands.

In the sixties, this was tackled by the progressive segregation of different cycles within existing levels. A short and a long secondary schooling, each with its own diploma; a division of the *baccalauréat* into numerous sub-sections, related to different occupational outlets and higher educational inlets; at the higher level, the differentiation of *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* again replicated the segregation of short and long alternatives. The long alternative remained University education 'proper', but now itself divided into three cycles, each with specialist options and a specific diploma at the end of it. In brief, the meeting of 'lib' and 'lab' demands was orchestrated by the State, thus serving to augment its power *vis à vis* civil society, whilst the former purported to be serving the latter.

In entrenched de-centralized systems, such as the English one, the same lesson was learned from its very different starting point. Weak *unification and systematization* were increasingly viewed as obstructions to the effective implementation of national educational policy – either 'lab' or 'lib'. The autonomy of Local Educational Authorities to pioneer or to resist, the ability of the teaching profession to pursue its own pedagogical agenda, and the freedom of the private sector to follow its own concerns, all these inherited powers of intermediary bodies were gradually perceived as impediments to State policy and market needs alike. The result was to undermine them in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Those twenty-five years were thus ones of structural convergence, during which centralized systems which were, by definition, strongly unified retained this *unification* in the interests of central political guidance of educational policy. On the other hand, decentralized systems increased their *unification* precisely in order to achieve such State guidance. Conversely, where

differentiation of parts within the system was concerned, decentralized systems sought to weaken them and centralized systems to strengthen them.

Such convergence – marked towards the end of the twentieth century compared with its absence in 1900 – appealed because it seemed to hold the key to servicing ‘lib’ and ‘lab’ concerns simultaneously, to becoming responsive towards both Market and State. It remains to be seen what implications such convergence held for *subsidiarity and solidarity*.

2.c. Central control, ‘lib + lab’ and the zenith of educational competitiveness

Another of the terms with which *subsidiarity* is often confounded is ‘devolution’. In the last two decades of the twentieth century much educational play was made of it – in Europe as in other parts of the world³⁹ – in the form of increased ‘parental choice’, a perennially popular ‘lib’ theme. Much did need to be made of it politically in order to deflect attention from the unprecedented incursion of central control in all aspects of education. In England, the form of this political ‘straightjacket’ for every level and type of instruction also meant that independent school providers of many kinds could be welcomed on board, without fear of their disrupting the central guidance of educational policy. Thus, for example, Catholic schools (indeed, Faith schools in general) could be *incorporated* without a qualm.⁴⁰ Their gradual incorporation in France, under ‘contracts of association’ in the sixties contrasts tellingly with Sarkozy’s recent hints about throwing the door wider if not wide open. This further ‘lib’ concession has also muddied the waters. Enduring Catholic interest in the protection of their institutions (see p. 378) was served by this ‘advancement’ and only recently has the legal threat (in Britain) that these must include a ‘quota’ of non-Catholic children brought home the terms of this deal. Catholic schools are there, not on sufferance as in the past, but to increase the diversity of parental choice for all – the truly modern ‘lib’ policy.

On the ‘lab’ front, politically directed changes fundamentally embraced Ulrich Beck’s contention that social class had now become a ‘zombie cate-

³⁹ Geoff Whitty, Sally Power and David Halpin, *Devolution and Choice in Education: The School, the State and the Market*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 1998. The countries covered are Australia, England and Wales, New Zealand, Sweden and the United States.

⁴⁰ Anglican, Catholic and Jewish schools educated some 23% of pupils in the late eighties.

gory'.⁴¹ Indeed, with Anthony Giddens⁴² as mentor, it was this that enabled the old Labour Party to become New Labour under Tony Blair. However, even 'old Labour' and its finest spokesman in the sociology of education, acknowledged that traditional 'lab' policies, stressing equality of access, had to be updated. 'In 1900 the vast majority of Britons were educational proletarians ... By the end of the century millions of children of manual workers had risen into non-manual jobs and many thousands had become the graduate children of butchers, bakers and candle-stick makers, following professional careers'.⁴³ What then was New Labour going to offer them in the nineties? The answer was competitive excellence, high standards, and qualifications which could be upgraded through life-long learning. The terms in which this was couched in Ministry papers are even more revealing: *Excellence for Everyone* (1995), *Excellence in Schools* (1997), *Qualifying for Success* (1997), and *Learning to Succeed* (1999).

If the above titles did not differ significantly from those issued by the Conservatives during their 17 years in office (1979-96), this is not surprising. Most of Europe was now fully given over to political 'centrism', appearing earlier in some countries than in others. In this connection, Maurice Duverger had presciently analysed 'The Eternal Morass: French Centrism',⁴⁴ which he refused to attribute to the electoral system or multi-party politics. The swing back and forth from centre-right to centre-left governments (or governing coalitions between parts of both) was undoubtedly general, and its educational implications were common ones. If it was hard to distinguish their distinctive policies, that did nothing to preclude their combined onslaught on education – now no longer a pillar of the welfare society and increasingly a prop for the global market economy.⁴⁵

It is the emphasis placed upon 'Choice and Diversity'⁴⁶ that convinced some that the 'lib' reforms taking place represented a genuine devolution of powers to the grass roots level – to parents, their children and the individual school they attended. To accept this is an acceptance of the governmen-

⁴¹ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, [1986] London, Sage, 1992.

⁴² Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way*, Cambridge, Polity, 1998.

⁴³ A.H. Halsey, *Social Trends*, 30, 2000, p. 17.

⁴⁴ Maurice Duverger, 'The Eternal Morass: French Centrism', in Mattei Dogan and Richard Rose (Eds.), *European Politics*, London, Macmillan, 1971.

⁴⁵ Sally Tomlinson, *Education in a post-welfare society*, Buckingham, Open University Press, 2001, p. 166.

⁴⁶ The title of a White Paper produced for the Conservative Government in 1992.

tal rhetoric in which it was presented. Tony Blair's clarion-call, 'standards, not structures', helped to deflect attention away from the radical structural changes introduced. Perhaps imperturbability was an understandable reaction in countries with a long history of a centralized State Educational System. In them, there was mainly a growing diversity of provisions to attract attention, whilst central powers were established custom and practice. Even in such countries, 'devolution' (more properly, State controlled differentiation and diversification) being entirely concessionary, had nothing in common with *subsidiarity*.

However, in what had historically been a decentralised system, the arrogation of new educational powers to the State in England was shocking in its speed, thoroughness and systematic nature. The number of Educational Acts (previously rare) increased to almost one a year under the Tories (1988-96) and the Secretary of State for Education gained over a thousand new powers in the same period. This entirely novel accumulation of educational powers at the centre had clear objectives. 'While individual freedom, market choice and power for consumers rather than "producers" of education were extolled, the central state took tighter control of finance, curriculum and examinations, teachers' practice and training. Part of what became a continuing agenda was to remove power from institutions and groups, which were bases for dissent, criticism or independent advice'.⁴⁷

In fact, they were more than this. The two main institutions and groups targeted by this spate of legislation were exactly those which had promoted a nascent *subsidiarity* from the emergence of the English State Educational System onwards: the Local Educational Authorities and the teaching profession. That was the reason for pausing so long in Part II over 'External Transactions' and 'Internal Initiation'.

Through 'External Transactions', LEAs in different areas had been able to sponsor a variety of technical schools in partnership with local users and to give financial support to almost exactly what was sought, without dilution. Furthermore, they had won over the Labour Party to the audaciously democratic policy of national comprehensivization, through successfully piloting local schemes with parental backing. In short, they had been forces for both *subsidiarity and solidarity*. Now, it made no difference which Party was in office; almost every year saw a statutory diminution in LEA powers and responsibilities.

⁴⁷ Sally Tomlinson, *Education in a post-welfare society, Ibid.*, p. 35.

Equally, the teaching profession, despite its protracted struggle to gain this status,⁴⁸ had used 'Internal Initiation' to introduce a wealth of pedagogical innovations: child-centred methods, activity-based learning, group-work, project-based assessment, open classrooms etc. Most of these were now anathematised as the causes for 'low standards'. In the interest of 'high standards', the English system acquired for the first time a National Curriculum, programmes of study, attainment targets for each subject, and Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. Teachers suddenly became the most alienated group in the educational 'enterprise'. Although their protests (and problems of recruitment) achieved a slight modification of SATs in 1993, New Labour took over the baton and minutely prescribed its 'Literacy hour' in defence of the standards that teachers were supposedly not producing.

Performance on the new National Curriculum became the main plank of both the 'lab' appeal to 'high standards for all' and the 'lib' appeal to 'parental choice'. In 1992, National Curriculum test results appeared publicly and these 'League Tables' were published in national newspapers, as they have been every year since, ranking schools of every kind, complete with the naming and shaming of 'failing schools'. Since financial management had been devolved to the level of the individual school, praise or blame, repute or disrepute for their results could be considered the responsibility of the particular Head (now a heavy managerial role) and the school's staff. Neither the fact that they had very little scope for manoeuvre, given the detailed nature of central curricular prescriptions and fierce inspection, nor the fact that so many studies showed that school attainment reflected the social composition of the pupil body, diminished the fact that parents were induced to follow the League Tables when making their choice of schools.

Thus, '[a]s many of the responsibilities adopted by the state in the post Second World War period begin to be devolved to a marketized version of civil society, consumer rights increasingly come to prevail over citizen rights'.⁴⁹ Marketization of schooling had turned parents into the educational bargain-hunters of Rational Choice Theory, whose main concern was to become better off in terms of educational 'utiles' by gaining a place in the

⁴⁸ Margaret S. Archer, *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, *Ibid.*, pp. 718-738.

⁴⁹ Geoff Whitty, Sally Power and David Halpin, *Devolution and Choice in Education*, *Ibid.*, p. 46.

highest ranked schools. Such educational consumerism was diametrically opposed to parental *solidarity* and sedulously served to undermine it. Under New Labour's legislation (1997/8), there were now 13 (statutorily) different types of school⁵⁰ to choose between, thanks to the welcome given to both traditional religious establishments and specialised schools, partly financed by private (mainly business) sponsors.

Solidarity between parents was fragmented as they became individualistic 'shoppers' for personal educational advantage. As competitive clients for entry to 'the best' schools, the desire to seek the best for their children was perverted into a divisive and sometimes dishonest instrumental rationality, whose strategies were entirely self-interested. Thus, Parish Priests often reported an influx of regular attenders at Mass amongst those with three year old children, ones whose devotions plummeted once the child had been admitted to a Catholic school. Today, whilst writing this section, I picked up the local newspaper because of its headline: 'PARENTS CHEAT TO WIN SCHOOL PLACES'. The story recounts twenty detected cases of Coventry parents lying about their addresses 'in an attempt to get places at some of the city's most popular state schools...The figures highlight a problem throughout the city and Warwickshire where parents in catchment areas with poorly regarded schools are desperate to get their children into top performing schools'.⁵¹

What these central governmental interventions have done is not only to undermine both *subsidiarity and solidarity*, in the ways just described, and not only to substitute for the *common good*, a definition of the 'general good' (of Britain in a global society) furnished by the political centre, they have done more radical damage. In effect, they have paralysed 'free-giving' – the source of energy initiating and sustaining all other components necessary to the *common good*.⁵² The straightjacket of central control has cut the roots of 'free-giving' both motivationally and organizationally.

In terms of motivation, the two main parties involved at ground level – teachers and parents – are structurally discouraged from acknowledging and promoting the *human dignity* of each (potential) pupil. At the point of

⁵⁰ Sally Tomlinson, *Education in a post-welfare society*, *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁵¹ *Warwickshire Telegraph*, March 25th, 2008, p. 1.

⁵² Pierpaolo Donati, 'Giving and Social Relations: the Culture of Free Giving and its Differentiation Today', *International Review of Sociology*, 13:2, 2003.

admission, teachers are constrained to consider children not as bearers of a *munus in potentia* but only under the guise of their potential contribution to the future ranking of the school. Similarly, parents are induced to commodify their children into objects for placement, involving strategic parental exertions but not ones where the first consideration is the well-being and needs of the unique child in question.

In parallel, what could parents do organizationally to make matters otherwise? Some optimism has attached to the enablements embedded in the official promotion of diversity and the development of Charter Schools in the USA. In California these involve contracts stipulating active parental participation in the school.⁵³ However, a number of school prospectuses reveal parental 'participation' being defined in terms of direct debit financial contributions.⁵⁴

In short, if we return to Donati's basic diagram of the components and the relationships between them that are required to realise the *common good*, we find them all to be even more lacking around the world in the period of 'late' modernity than often in the past, particularly in decentralized State Educational Systems. Caught in a vice between the State and the Market, with parents and teachers condemned to the roles of customers and managers, does education have the autonomy to do anything or are other parts of civil society able to do anything to re-direct education? I believe the answer to be negative to both questions. However, *grosso modo*, this vice in which education finds itself derived from politically directed changes intended to align State Educational Systems adaptively to the new challenges of global society.

Conversely, if we view globalisation as the effect of underlying structural processes and their generative mechanisms, rather than as the (primary) cause of anything, it is possible to see 'late' modernity as an important but passing phase in social morphogenesis. In other words, it is part of a process which will supersede itself – and with it comes the possibility of a truly 'New Deal' for education.

⁵³ M.C. Dianda and R.G. Corwin, *Vision and Reality: a First Year Look at California's Charter Schools*, Los Alamitos, CA: Southwest Regional Laboratory, 1994.

⁵⁴ For example, the Palisades school in Los Angeles has a ranked nomenclature for parents as financiers, according to the amount they contract to donate regularly.

PART III. MORPHOGENESIS UNBOUND⁵⁵ AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION

All social formations are only relatively durable. What prolonged them in the past was morphostasis, that is, processes of negative feedback in both the structural and cultural domains, whose simultaneity maintained the status quo. Morphostasis dominated in early societies; that is what made them 'traditional'. The successive stages of Modernity were ones in which negative, restorative feedback loops intertwined with positive and deviation amplifying feedback processes. This meant that social transformation was slow, partial and hesitating because 'old' vested interests resisted change and 'new' ones had time to consolidate themselves. What is, as yet, unprecedented and un-conceptualised is a world of untrammelled morphogenesis.

This has not yet arrived and nor has modernity reached its last gasp. Nevertheless, structure, culture and agency have begun to be governed by positive feedback and are less and less restrained by the simultaneous circulation of negative and restorative feedback loops that was characteristic of modernity.

Vertiginously, the generative mechanism of morphogenesis – for variety to stimulate yet greater variety – has begun to engage and to manifest its tendential effects, of which globalisation and global connectivity are amongst the first instances. Of equal importance is the fact that whilst Modernity generated a 'situational logic of *competition*' for action (because of the resistance, re-creation and reproduction of vested interests), action in Morphogenetic society follows a much looser 'situational logic of *opportunity*' (an inducement to innovate and produce further variety through synthesis, syncretism and synergy).

We are in a transitional phase, but there are already sufficient substantive manifestations of morphogenetic changes in the structural, cultural and agential domains for this transformation to be more than pure speculation. Thus, it is possible to consider the implications of the unbinding of morphogenesis for education in the near future, without remaining entirely hypothetical.

In these last few pages, I would like to put together two considerations and then briefly to discuss their implications for one another. The first con-

⁵⁵ A term first coined by Walter Buckley, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1967. Morphogenesis refers 'to those processes which tend to elaborate or change a system's given form, structure or state' (p. 58). It is contrasted to Morphostasis which refers to those processes in a complex system that tend to preserve the above unchanged.

sideration concerns the very different effects produced by the new 'situational logic of opportunity' compared with the zero-sum outcomes and conditional influences of Modernity's 'situational logic of competition'. The fundamental novelty about the 'logic of opportunity' is that for the first time since the earliest societies, the relationship between Ego and Alter (who are not necessarily individual persons) is not governed by *cui bono* or by their conjoint ability to benefit in some way by out-doing (beating, exploiting or coercing) third parties. Both or all parties can become beneficiaries by pooling and sharing resources. This is reinforced by the fact that the main resource in question is knowledge, whose value is not reduced by it being shared.

The second consideration is that all the educational struggles examined in this paper – competitions about gaining, maintaining and exercising educational control – were predicated upon formal education having expensive physical and human resource requirements. Indeed, these have become even greater in during 'late' modernity⁵⁶ as university education has been extended to approximately 40% of the age cohort in Europe. Because of this, the main value of a first degree, in most developed countries, is to avoid the penalty of not having one. In turn, the demand for further post-graduate degrees becomes inflated.⁵⁷ Hence, the universities, competing in terms of State imposed performance indicators (of research as well as teaching) and corporately raiding the global market for registration fees, continue to increase dramatically in numbers and to decline in quality. Such is the pay-off for all those competitive exertions on the part of parents to get their children into the best schools earlier on!

If these two considerations are put together, it becomes possible to conceive of an alternative future for education, one which reduces the academic obesity of young people, bids to escape State control and confronts Market forces with a process outside the cash nexus. In concrete terms, we can begin to contemplate some 'de-institutionalisation of education'. Another way of putting this is that in its global cyber version, 'de-schooling', as it used to be known, has become a real possibility – although that does not make it desirable at all stages of the educational process. However, it is already in train. What is of particular interest is its potential for helping to actualise the four key principles of Social Doctrine in the area of education.

⁵⁶ This is not registered in many national budgets because costs have been passed to parent/student consumers and to a variety of sponsors in civil society.

⁵⁷ See Margaret S. Archer (Ed.), *The Sociology of Educational Expansion: Take-off, Growth and Inflation in Educational Systems*, London, Sage, 1982.

What follows is a quick sketch of the relationships between each of these, based equally upon my current study of young people's reflexivity in relation to employment and Donati's formalisation of 'the solidarity-subsidiarity relation in its various articulations'.⁵⁸

Relational Subsidiarity

Free-giving is not only the 'starter-motor' of reciprocal relations it is also needed to fuel their continuation – rather than their degenerating into exchange relationships, as in one interpretation of Marcel Mauss' original analysis of the gift.⁵⁹ Other than *caritas*, secular versions of altruism (usually distorting it into delayed self-interest to advantage one's 'inclusive kin'⁶⁰) show that the social sciences have been at a loss about what could turn people into free-givers.

The 'situational logic of opportunity' appears to provide a new sociological perspective on free-giving. Let me illustrate this in relation to 'intellectual property'. Amongst multi-national companies, the 'Assurance game' may continue to be played with industrial patents, which enable the innovator to be the sole beneficiary for a set number of years and buy enough time for the company to come up with another profit-maker – but it generalises very badly beyond industry proper. The antics of the music 'industry' to assure musical performance rights through law are defeated daily by the 'playground pirates'.

More pertinently, many writers, academics, performers and 'geeks' in general have motives which are contrary to placing restrictions upon their 'intellectual property'. Like most academic colleagues, when Eastern Europe produced 'unauthorised' versions of my works in the bad old days, my reaction was not that of a (futile) contumacious litigant. On the contrary, since we do not write for profit, we delight in free diffusion. Now we have greater opportunities of the latter. The motives are not necessarily entirely altruistic, but the actions are tantamount to free-giving and their consequences are beneficial.

⁵⁸ Pierpaolo Donati, 'Prospects: Discovering the Relational Character of the common good', *Ibid.*, Figure 3, p. 677.

⁵⁹ Alan D. Schrift (Ed.), *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, London, Routledge, 1997.

⁶⁰ Roger Trigg, *The Shaping of Man: Philosophical Aspects of Sociobiology*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1982.

'Peer to peer' givers on the Internet are better exemplars because their relations entail both the diffusion *and* the infusion of new ideas. This is a key example of reciprocity, since there are neither controls nor guarantees of direct or indirect, short-term or long term exchanges – let alone of exchange relationships – being established. Continued inter-change cannot be enforced; its continuation is voluntary and based upon interest in one another's ideas and mutual respect for each other as their source. It recognises the dignity of alterity because it acknowledges the intrinsic value of the *munus* that the other has freely supplied. Certainly, this is not synonymous with full recognition of the dignity of a *human person*, but secular society is not going to be moved by the argument of divine filiation. Nevertheless, the *intrinsic* value accorded to the Other greatly surpasses the exchange value assigned to social relations in Modernity.⁶¹

Vertical Subsidiarity

How do the practices just described relate to the *common good*? In educational terms, the answer might simply be by means of the hand-cranked \$100 laptop and the non-profit organization aiming to supply one to every child on the planet.⁶² Between the two lie other requirements, some of which will be examined in a moment. However, in terms of direct vertical links, there are many who will freely write programmes of instruction in literacy, numeracy and any other topic in any language. There are e-books and enough authors who are ashamed to collect \$5 for someone xeroxing their articles in Nairobi. There is Wikipedia, which is our own students' first resort today, and if we find some of its entries could be improved upon, the invitation is there.⁶³ Already the educational costs are spiralling downwards; we simply do not need a library per campus or a per capita textbook allocation per school child. This is vertical subsidiarity coming into play.

⁶¹ It may be objected that cyber-interchange of the 'Facebook' variety is both degrading and prone to dishonesty, which is often the case, but no epoch or practice is proof against voluntary self-debasement; the best we can do is to protect against its coercive and exploitative social imposition.

⁶² Nicholas Negroponce, 'The \$100 Laptop', in Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, Edmond Malinvaud and Pierre Léna (Eds.), *Globalization and Education*, Berlin, de Gruyter, 2007.

⁶³ Granted, my inept attempts failed to reveal who manages Wikipedia, just as the Elders of the Internet remain faceless and their means of appointment opaque, but a bored 13 year old in Manila could probably help out.

Already, to work with the Internet is not co-action, as in early societies, nor is it interaction, as in modernity, it is transaction with the global database, which collects and redistributes knowledge through usage.

Of course, simply to reduce educational costs and to increase access is only one element in reconstructing education. Yet, the cost-barrier hugely privileged the educational hegemony of the State in the past. Nevertheless, there remain the two perennial problems. How to prevent socio-economic differences in pupils' family backgrounds from being reproduced through education, thus perpetuating socially divisive inequalities? How to deal with the fact that the school, college or university should be more than a combination of an educational production line and a childcare-cum-recreational facility? This is where both the lateral and horizontal aspects of *subsidiarity and solidarity* are essential. Nevertheless, the change towards Morphogenetic society makes its own contributions to both of them.

Lateral Subsidiarity

Let us take the problem of 'reproduction' first. What the accelerating tendency of variety to generate further variety in knowledge means is that parental background increasingly possesses no corpus of *cultural capital* whose durable value can be transmitted to their children, as opposed to cultural transmission *tout simple*. Parental culture is rapidly ceasing to be a capital good, negotiable on the job market and counting as a significant element in the patrimony of offspring. *Les Héritiers* are being impoverished by more than death duties. Culture is still their inheritance but is swiftly becoming an internal good – valued at the estimate of its recipients, like the family crystal and silver – rather than an external good with a high value on the open market.

Consequently, strategies for ensuring the inter-generational transmission of cultural capital start to peter out, partly because such 'capital' has been devalued almost overnight and partly because rapidly diminishing calculability makes old forms of strategic action increasingly inapplicable. Those middle class and higher class parents who stuck to past routines, which had served their own parents well, of 'buying advantage' through private schooling began to face offspring who felt they had had an albatross tied round their necks. Confronting the incongruity between their background and their foreground, an increasing number of Public School leavers began to blur their accents, abuse their past participles, make out they had never met Latin etc., in subjective recognition of the 'contextual incongruity' in which they were now placed.

Of course it will be objected that such an education still gains a disproportionate number of entrants to the oldest Universities in England, but some of the sharpest Public School leavers have no desire to go there and, in any case, both establishments are now besieged by egalitarian-cum-meritocratic pressures which somewhat undercut their social point.⁶⁴ Equally, it will be objected that their graduates still have preferential access to careers in the Civil Service, in diplomacy and in the traditional professions. But that is quite compatible with the fact that by the end of the twentieth century some of the kids from privileged backgrounds began to discount these openings. The fast learners had got the message: the Stock Exchange wanted the 'barrow-boy' mentality on the floor. Effectively, their possession of old-style cultural 'capital' was a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* new openings and opportunities, although it retains lingering value for the more traditional occupational outlets.

In a very different way, working class parents found themselves in much the same position of literally having nothing of market value to reproduce among their children. With the rapid decline of manufacturing and frequent joblessness, their previous ability to recommend high wages and to 'speak for' their sons also disappeared. With the computerisation of secretarial, reception and much work in retail, mothers found their daughters already more proficient in keyboard skills than they were themselves. With involuntary redundancies, make-shift jobs and frequent visits to the Job Centre, there are less and less remnants of working class culture to be reproduced – especially the old attractions of a lasting group of convivial workmates – and decreasing incentives towards reproductive practices in employment among both parents and offspring. The latter, in any case, are now mostly 'at College', for varying amounts of time, but long enough for many to come to think that courses such as IT, Design and Media Studies present a blue beyond of opportunity. Meanwhile, many of their parents retreat into a non-directive goodwill towards their children's futures, usually expressed as: 'We'll support them whatever they want to do'.

In other words, the very notion of *transferable cultural capital* is being outdated by morphogenesis and simultaneously all those intricate manoeuvres of substituting between different kinds of capital are becoming obsolete. However, this growing contribution of social morphogenesis to overcoming the biggest problem of social discrimination in twentieth century

⁶⁴ The government has recently established an 'Office of Fair Access' for universities.

education is both partial and negative. It is partial because there are both older and newer forms of poverty which still impact seriously upon equality of educational opportunity and outcome – thus reducing social integration. It is negative because even if the influence of socio-economic background – which subtracted massively from social solidarity – were to be removed entirely, this does not mean that solidarity would spring back into being, as if it were a natural force which had been dammed-up.

On the contrary, developed societies suffer from a huge deficit in sources of solidarity. This, in turn, undermines 'lateral subsidiarity' and, in consequence, weakens the support available to 'horizontal' agencies seeking to actualise subsidiary establishments for schooling in the 'Third sector'. Indeed, some of the forms of 'associational engagement' that have succeeded the now moribund forms of geo-local community – and in particular virtual communities, which are very real – tend to direct their energies upwards, towards vertical sources of subsidiarity by enriching the resources available (in principle, to all) within the world's cyber-'bank'. This is good in itself, but it rarely contributes to the solidary support required by novel forms of schooling which, by definition are geographically localised.

What is much more positive is that educated young people (at least) are starting to become 'associationally engaged' with localized (or glocalized) endeavours: voluntary work, restoration of public amenities, ecological initiatives, inner-city regeneration projects and, importantly, in mentoring and auxiliary work in schools. In short, the deficit in social solidarity is actively being reduced by our recent cohorts of undergraduates.

Horizontal Subsidiarity

This leads to the second question, namely that real alternative schools are really needed in determinate locations and as more than nodal points for information-transfer. De-schooling can only go so far and I venture that it can go furthest at the higher levels. After all, the e-university only goes one step further than the Open University in England, which works by distance-learning and has played a major role in the voluntary re-skilling of teachers, without reference to the national curriculum. Its Summer Schools satisfy, at least partially, the relational requirements of learning – especially for mature students with family responsibilities – which prevent the degree from becoming merely a certificate in having absorbed so many videos and displayed mastery with e-resources. Equal-

ly, the 'Education in Europe' initiative⁶⁵ was popular in the participating schools, but its purpose and function was the furtherance of European understanding, rather than supplying alternative education.

Quite apart from parents being accustomed to outsourcing education and needing to outsource in the growing number of dual career families (and in the professional interests of women), children also need schools. Since having only one child is already the norm in some European countries, where else are these children to gain companionship and social skills?

Who is to teach them is probably the least of the problems, given the alienation of many of the teaching profession from State education and their collective tendency to avoid privileged forms of Private education.⁶⁶ But how is the responsibility, shared by teachers and parents, to be generated for creating an environment in which the potentials of children can be better realized than when sandwiched between State directives and market requirements?

Contracts of 'support + participation' are all very well, but the pre-contractual rules of contract are needed to breath life into what otherwise can degenerate into 'minimalist participants'. Such alternative schools cannot thrive on 'minimalism'. Indeed, they need to be very robust because they can easily slide in one of two directions: into becoming 'just another' private school of privilege in the educational Market or into colonization by the State. These tendencies within the 'Third sector' have been thoroughly registered and discussed in Italy.⁶⁷ They have attracted less attention in Britain, and it is salutary that the Government now has its own Ministry of the Third Sector, which promotes contracts of association that are almost the obverse of subsidiarity.

Conclusion

In his paper on 'Prospects', Donati signals the underlying need for all manifestations of *subsidiarity* (in conjunction with the necessary *solidarity*)

⁶⁵ Directed by Alberto Martinelli, Dean of Milan University, it interviewed a group of academics from different European countries and then encouraged Secondary School pupils to e-mail their questions.

⁶⁶ For an illustrative vignette of such a teacher, see 'Bernadette', in Margaret S. Archer, *Making our Way through the World*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 133-141.

⁶⁷ Pierpaolo Donati and Ivo Colozzi (Eds.), *Il privato sociale che emerge: realtà e dilemmi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2004.

to be nourished by ‘a new “relational anthropology of civil society”, that is from a new way to practise human reflexivity in civil relations’.⁶⁸ Here, my current research on modes of reflexivity shows this not to be an empty exhortation.

As the Morphogenetic society gathers momentum, it appears that it fosters a Meta-reflexivity amongst young, educated people – which is as socially critical as it is self-critical – revealing a profound disassociation from Party politics and an equally strong aversion to personal occupational association with the corporate Market. The preference of young Meta-reflexives is for employment in the Third Sector; to escape the *étatisme* that now seriously infects the social services and traditional professions and to avoid the consumerism, eco-indifference and competitiveness that they see as integral to corporations in the global market.⁶⁹ Thus, they pin their hopes upon developing civil relations within civil society. What they want, above all, from their future work is ‘to make a difference’ and, as some add, ‘even if only to the life of one person’.

It is premature to do more than venture the congruity and complementarity between Meta-reflexivity and an orientation towards civil society that would show associational solidarity with the nascent institutions constitutive of subsidiary. Yet if such a reflexive orientation towards civil society does not become more general, it is hard to see how education can be reconstructed in this new millennium.

⁶⁸ Prospects, *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶⁹ Margaret S. Archer, *Making our Way through the World*, *Ibid.*, Chs 6 and 7.