

London School of Economics and Political Science

It's A Man's Game:

English Football and Socio-Cultural Change

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Abstract

This thesis sets out to explain the limited representation of English players in Premiership football. As a nation, England appears to be producing an insufficient number of players who are believed capable of playing at the highest level of the game. Available data has suggested that less than 40% of footballers who started Premier League games in recent years are English. Why then are foreign players preferred to their English counterparts? One explanation to this question may be found in the historical development of the English game. As well as being a game, football is a form of cultural expression. From the earliest forms of 'folk football' played in the fourteenth century, a range of social forces have either independently or inter-dependently helped to promote a game largely based upon fitness and physicality. However, during the twentieth century, the football being played in other countries began to improve markedly; football began to shift from a traditional to a technical game. Following the formation of the Premier League in 1992, Premiership clubs began to recruit foreign players in increasing numbers, many of whom possessed the technical ability required to compete at the highest levels of the game. Much of English football, in contrast, has continued to promote a manly and physical game rather than a game based upon the development of technical skills. Unless a greater number of English players acquire a similar level of technical ability then the influx of foreign players is likely to continue.

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Acronyms

FA	Football Association
FIFA	International Federation of Association Football
FL	Football League
PFA	Professional Footballers' Association
PL	Premier League
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations

Chapter 1 Introduction

There is something wrong when a leading football nation struggles for so long to produce players with the technical or tactical sophistication-as opposed to the power and stamina-to emulate the skills of their counterparts in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and beyond

(Oliver Kay, *The Times*, November 19th, 2011).

This thesis is an attempt to explain why so few English players are playing football in the Premier League. According to the *Meltdown* report (2007) published by the Professional Footballers' Association, in the 2006-7 football season, only 38% of players who started Premier League matches were English (2007:20). More recent evidence provided by the Football Association noted that in the football season 2009-10, this figure had fallen to 32% (see Chapter 7). Any meaningful explanation for this development is likely to be multi-factorial rather than mono-causal. Indeed, diverse explanations may not necessarily be incompatible or contradictory. However, an examination of the history of English football has suggested that culture and cultural change may provide a telling explanation.

One reason why so many foreign players are now playing Premiership football is largely due to the technical skills or ability that many of these players possess. English football is not producing the requisite number of players with the necessary skills required by both international clubs and international teams who compete at the elite levels of the game. The domestic game has remained markedly insular and slow to institute change. In contrast, at both club and national level, many foreign teams have shown remarkable progress. This thesis has identified a shift in the development of football from a 'traditional' to a 'technical' game. This transition became particularly apparent during the 1950s following a number of high profile defeats incurred by the national team. English football has been manifestly slow in both the recognition and acceptance of this transition. Indeed, the Football Association has only recently recognised the need to develop far more English players who have the same set of skills as players in other football nations (2010:11).

The institutional development of football and its possible relationship to the broader concerns of socio-economic, political and religious developments is fertile ground for sociological enquiry. Indeed, there would appear to be considerable scope for further research. As Roderick observed: "It is hard to think of a professional sporting practice that has been so mythologized and so little researched by social scientists"(2006: 4).The task at hand is to identify the most important social influences and social relations that have occurred within its development (Horne 1998). Football is an institution and like all institutions it is subject to social change (Messner 1992). However, it is the manner in which this change has been brought about that makes football worthy of sociological investigation. An analysis of the socio-cultural development of the game may provide one possible explanation as to why so few English players are now playing Premiership football.

Players, managers, coaching staff and football supporters alike may have imposed a distinct set of values and beliefs upon the game which they consider to be both appropriate and legitimate. Indeed, this particular value structure may appear to be both 'instinctive' and 'natural.' Once a particular set of beliefs has been internalised, a distinctive form of cultural capital and cultural reproduction may become readily identifiable. These beliefs become both resilient and resistant to change (Bourdieu 1997). Thus a particular style or pattern of play may have been culturally produced and self-contained. This value system that has shaped the style of play may be directly or indirectly related to particular social structures or 'sub-cultures'. In turn, this value structure may limit or constrain individual capacities to a standard that may have been quite different under alternative socio-political and economic circumstances (Mills 1959).As Gruneau remarked: "We tend to say that games and sports are played but the rules, customs, styles and purposes of many of these activities seem almost completely determined by the social and cultural environments that frame them" (1983: 3).

The importance of culture and cultural change to the development of English football has been the focus of numerous related studies. One study of racism and multiculturalism in sport, for example, illustrated the importance of local pride and

cohesion: "What matters above all – regardless of the national origin of the players in the line-up - is that players ‘wear the shirt’ with all its charged symbolism, history and rootedness in a particular place" (Back 2001: 283). A number of authors have also observed the importance of masculinity and the cultural forms of ‘masculine identities’ (e.g. Connell 2005; Roper and Tosh 1991). Competing masculinities have been apparent throughout the historical process. Some of these have been dominant in one particular epoch or era while others have been more marginalised. Equally, the development of sport as an institution from the late nineteenth century onwards has been seen as being as much to do with social class as with gender relationships (Messner 1992).

In an attempt to explain how patterns of social behaviour have arisen, persisted and changed, this thesis endeavours to align empirical research with sociological theory. Just as theories are open to evaluation in terms of the adequacy of the explanations when they are exposed to further empirical investigation, so too is empirical research similarly open to evaluation in terms of its relevance to theory. Theory construction and development have been related to empirical enquiry in an attempt to explain why so few English football players are now playing Premiership football.

The developmental perspective adopted in this research is similar to the one constructed by Dunning and Sheard (1979) in their sociological study of rugby football. The thesis sets out to illustrate that a range of cultural factors - including ‘manliness’, ‘masculinity’, ‘muscular Christianity’ and particular working class attitudes, values and beliefs - have acted either independently, or more likely, interdependently, to direct English football towards a style of football that has continued to emphasise courage, aggression and physicality or a 'manly' game. A number of these behavioural traits are still evident today.

1.1 Research Questions

This thesis is an attempt to explain why there are so few English players playing Premiership football. This principle research question has raised a number of related sub-questions. Firstly, what evidence is there to suggest that the development of English football has largely been based upon physicality and fitness? Secondly, to what extent can a traditional English game be seen to have been challenged and contested by the development of a technical game? Thirdly, what evidence is there to suggest that particular cultural traits which characterised many of the early professional working class football clubs continue to shape the manner in which English football is being played today?

1.2 Historical Perspective

A number of authors have noted the wild and brutal nature of the early forms of fourteenth century 'folk football' (e.g. Green 1953; Marples 1954). These early football games consisted of a number of related games which became inextricably linked to a popular culture that flourished until the inception of the industrial revolution. The manner in which early football contests were played posed a threat to both individual well-being and to the social order (Dunning and Sheard 1979). A succession of edicts and proclamations was issued by monarchs and governments alike in a vain attempt to have these games abolished. Despite such concerted opposition, football in England from the fourteenth century onwards continued to attract widespread appeal (Arlott 1975). The tenacity of popular culture ensured that various forms of 'folk football' survived. Indeed, according to Harvey (2005), 'Shrove-football', which formed part of Shrovetide ceremonies, witnessed a general pattern of growth during the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, urbanisation and industrialisation began to have a marked impact upon the leisure activities of ordinary people. Opposition towards recreational activities was based upon an attempt to regulate and control labour (Delves 1981). The popularity of football, therefore, eventually began to wane (Strutt 1833; Malcolmson 1973).

Football was nevertheless given a new lease of life by the emergence of the English public schools during the early nineteenth century. Indeed, the manner in which early 'folk football' had been played found expression in the type of football practised at these schools. English public school football became "local adaptations of the folk tradition" (Dunning and Sheard 1979: 40). The physicality and aggression that had characterised 'folk football' became reinforced and legitimated by the type of football that these schools began to play. Public school boys at both Charterhouse and Rugby schools, for example, wore iron capped boots to make their 'hacking' more effective (Dunning and Sheard 1979:50). Public school football afforded a clear manifestation of the 'manliness' and physical courage promoted by the English ruling classes. As the nineteenth century progressed, the concept of manliness was to evolve into the notion of 'muscular Christianity' which found expression in the manner in which public school games such as football and rugby were played.

Although public schools may be said to have revitalised football, they did not reinvent the game. Football did not develop in a cultural vacuum. Despite sustained and vigorous attacks, popular culture survived. This culture continued to shape the manner in which the game was to be played at English and Scottish public schools and universities (Delaney 1984). The intense localism and rivalry that had characterised much of traditional English football remained (Delves 1981).

During the late nineteenth century, the industrialised working classes turned to football in increasing numbers (Walvin 1975:50; Mason 1980: 222). However, the tenacity and combative spirit in which the game was to be played by the newly formed industrialised working classes had, in many ways, already been fashioned by the practices associated with both 'folk football' and 'muscular Christianity'. The working classes did indeed bring their own value-system to English football (Holt 1989:173). Nevertheless, a number of traditional values such as 'toughness', stamina, courage, and loyalty were not dissimilar to the values that had characterised English football throughout its developmental process (Maguire 1986:273). In other words, a blueprint as to how the game was to be played had already been formulated. This was to give English football a notable character, continuity and consistency.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the domestic game had been exported to countries throughout the world (Murray 1994). Emerging trade routes, the development of the armed forces and imperial advancement all served to promote football on an international scale. Initially, the manner in which the game was to be played in many of these overseas countries was based upon an English design:

So successful and expanding was the domestic game that it had little need to pay attention to the game abroad...it was simply assumed by the English that the continuing health of their insular game would forever guarantee the superiority which had existed before the war

(Walvin 1975 120-21).

International football was, however, beginning to show notable improvement. The domestic game, however, paid little attention to the improvements that foreign players, foreign coaches and foreign teams began to achieve. As Murray points out: "Britain was divided from the continent by a culture gap deeper than the Channel. The British played a fast physical game, admiring courage and tenacity over artistry and skill, and were scornful of the 'Latin' players' reaction to a heavy shoulder charge" (1994:104). The emergence of Continental football was not considered as posing a threat to the national dominance of the English game.

During the 1950s, however, the orthodox or traditional English game began to be overtly challenged by a more technical game borne out of the advances made by other nations. A succession of high profile defeats incurred by the English team during this period, notably at the hands of the Hungarians, suggested that a 'paradigm shift' had taken place. The traditional manner in which English football had been played was now being contested by a more effective and successful technical form of football. Changes in the domestic game were beginning to be instituted from without rather than from within. International football during this period changed markedly. In particular, foreign players were regarded as being technically superior. These players passed with greater precision and tactically positioned themselves more cleverly (Meisl 1955: 31). In contrast: "British teams were seen as the embodiment of the common national virtues of manliness,

perseverance and strength against the effete (though skilful) showiness of 'continental' teams" (King 2003: 5).

The advent of European competition during the 1950s led a number of English clubs recognising that English football had a lot to learn from the developments that had already taken place in continental football (Walvin 1975:161). Manchester United, Wolverhampton Wanderers, and Tottenham Hotspur, for example, all enjoyed considerable success at a European level during this period. Work with the ball at a number of English clubs was beginning to be introduced into training sessions on a daily basis which, hitherto, had largely been unknown (Matthews 2000). Consequently, English football made significant progress during this period. Once the recognition had been made that football being played in this country had fallen woefully short of the standards being set by other countries during this period, improvements to tactics, training and styles of play developed noticeably. These changes resulted in England winning the World Cup in 1966. That progress and development, however, has failed to continue (Greaves 2004).

The limited progress made by English football led to a number of Premiership clubs signing foreign players in significant numbers. These players possessed the technical skills or technical ability required to compete at the highest levels of the game. Moreover, according to the *Meltdown* (2009) report, the limited number of English players playing Premiership football is having a negative impact upon the ability of the England team to compete at an international level. It may not be in the interests of English players, English clubs or indeed the national team to be playing football in a country that is so reliant upon foreign players. This research is an attempt to understand how this situation arose, why it has persisted and upon what basis it is likely to change.

1.3 A Study of 'English' rather than 'British' Football

There are a number of reasons why this study is specifically concerned with 'English' rather than 'British' football. Most importantly, English football is unique.

The Football Association, for example, was formed in London in 1863. This institution had a major impact upon how football was to be both managed and played. Similarly, following the open recognition of professional football in England by the Football Association in 1885, the Football League was established a little later, in 1888. This was the first competitive League to be formed in the world. England was also the first nation to industrialise and develop modern forms of sport which included both rugby football and association football. The emergence of the English public school system was also to play a unique role in the evolution of both rugby and English football (Dunning and Sheard 1979:40)¹.

1.4 Alternative Explanations

England has never won the European Football Championships (UEFA), a tournament which was established in 1960 and is played every four years. Similarly, no English player has ever been awarded the coveted title of ‘World Player of the Year,’ an accolade which was instituted in 1991 (now known as the FIFA Ballon d’Or). The only major honour England has won is the World Cup competition played at Wembley in 1966. These are perhaps surprising statistics given that football is usually considered to be a game invented by the English (Marples 1954).

Despite the myriad changes that world football has witnessed over the last hundred years or more, the domestic English game, particularly outside the Premier League, may still be considered to be traditional in nature rather than technical in character. English football may be said to be closely associated with the historical development of a particular style of play. The manner in which the game has been played has typically been physical, direct and combative. English players have been expected to

¹ The regulations concerning ‘nationality’ have been set out by FIFA. At the Extraordinary Congress in 2003, Article 15 of the Regulations Governing the Application of the Statutes declared, “Any person holding the nationality of a country is eligible to play for the representative teams of the Association of his country...” Insofar as England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are concerned, these countries are deemed to be part of one national state, namely, the United Kingdom. Any player holding a British passport is eligible to play for the country of his birth, of either of his natural parents, or, the country of birth of any of his grandparents.

be tough, strong, aggressive and tough tackling. Football players in this country have been implored to “get stuck in” and “hit ‘em hard” (Meisl1955:155).

In contrast, there has been a greater emphasis upon the development of technical skills and technical football, both in Europe and elsewhere. As Sir Trevor Brooking, the Technical Director of Football at the Football Association remarked: "For a country of some 60 million people we are not producing the depth of players at the top level with the necessary technical skills now required by the major clubs and international teams" (cited in Green 2009 1X).

In order to address this particular concern, however, a number of issues need to be faced. For example, different football clubs have developed different cultures and have adopted different approaches to the domestic game. There is no unified football philosophy within English football. Indeed, both traditional football and technical football may be considered to be ends in themselves. Both forms of football, in other words, are equally valid. These two contrasting styles of play are continuously being challenged and contested, which leads to preferences and choices being exercised. These contrasting values or ends may be seen to be both irreconcilable and incommensurable. Equally, it would be wrong to suggest that English football can be neatly classified into either the traditional or the technical form. There would appear to be a considerable degree of variance within and between these two ideal types. Nevertheless, a number of Premier League clubs now believe that physicality is by itself inadequate. Players are also required to possess a high level of individual skill or technical ability in order to compete at the highest levels of the game.

In my discussions with executives, football managers, players, coaches and scouts alike, a number of explanations have been advanced in an attempt to explain why so few English players are now playing Premiership football. These explanations have included: money, innate ability, coaching, foreign managers, cheap foreign players, foreign ownership, commercial interests, power and status, climate, work ethic, and the failure of Football Academies to develop ‘home-grown’ players. Indeed, the role of football academies has been discussed extensively in *A Charter for Quality*

(Wilkinson 1997), published by the Football Association. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to consider all these possible explanations. However, during the course of my research three issues in particular were regarded as being of particular importance: money, innate ability and coaching.

There appears to be a widely-held belief within English football that the more money a club has, the more successful that club is likely to be. The reason why so few English players are playing Premiership football has been frequently seen as being directly related to the availability of money. Chelsea and Manchester City football clubs are good illustrations of the point being made. Chelsea F.C. is owned by Russian businessman Roman Abramovich, who, according to *Forbes' 2012 Rich List* is the 68th richest person in the world. Indeed, Chelsea are the reigning European Football Champions 2011-12. Similarly, Manchester City F.C. is owned by another billionaire, Sheikh Mansour, a member of the ruling family of Abu Dhabi. Manchester City F.C. are the reigning Premier League Champions in 2011-12. Indeed, Chelsea on December 26th, 1999 (Meltdown 2007:3) was the first English team to field eleven foreign players. Equally, of the 36 players in the then current Manchester City squad (2011-12), only 12 or 33% were English (First team squad, Manchester City Football Club website).

In an interview I conducted with a former senior official at the Football Association, the influx of foreign players now playing Premiership football was seen to be directly related to money. He remarked: "We are on the way to monopoly conditions whereby the top four clubs in the Premiership monopolise success in terms of major honours, sponsorship and financial rewards which are largely driven by the importation of foreign players". At the elite level, the most expensive transfers have involved foreign rather than English players. The ten most expensive transfers worldwide have included only one English player to date, Andy Carroll, who was transferred from Newcastle United to Liverpool F.C. for £35m in 2011 (WalesOnline.co.uk 2012).

Broadcasting revenue is clearly an important factor in allowing Premiership clubs to finance the purchase of top football players, particularly foreign players. As Martyn Ziegler noted, (*The Daily Telegraph*, May 22nd, 2013), the money earned by the four highest placed Premiership clubs during the 2012-13 football season amounted to £231m. Manchester United, for example, earned £60.8m; Manchester City earned £58.1m; Chelsea earned £55.0m; and Arsenal earned £57.1m. Indeed, the Premier League Champions next season are likely to earn in the region of £100m from broadcasting revenues, while the bottom club can expect to see its share of revenue increase from £39.8m to *circa* £63m. In total, £936m was paid out to Premiership clubs in the form of broadcasting revenues during the 2012-13 season. In contrast, following the formation of the Premier League in 1992-3, the first BskyB television deal with Premier League clubs was worth £300m in total (Green 2009:27).

Broadcasting revenue affords Premiership clubs a significant revenue stream. The most important items of expenditure to a football club are the costs associated with transfer fees and salaries. According to Deloitte (2012), the salaries/turnover ratio for Premiership clubs has consistently represented between 50% and 60% of total expenditure. As Simmonds and Forest observed (2004), a positive correlation was found to exist between the total salary bill and the ability to qualify for European competitions. The significance of broadcasting revenue can also be seen in European football. For example, in Spain both Barcelona and Real Madrid currently earn something like £150m each per season from broadcasting revenue which represents the highest returns in club football (Deloitte 2012).

It is, however, not necessarily money *per se* that would appear to be an explanatory factor. Why, for example, are foreign players likely to be more highly valued than English players? Premiership clubs are likely to sign players on the basis of their ability to perform. As noted earlier, many foreign players are perceived by Premiership clubs to possess the skills required to compete at the highest level of the game. The importation of foreign players into Premiership football is, in many instances, a simple recognition of a higher level of technical ability.

Individual ability or 'quality' is often linked to the idea of 'innate ability'. In the course of my fieldwork, various respondents noted the importance of so-called 'natural ability'. Several individuals involved in football management suggested: 'You have either got what it takes or you ain't'. A football player is often regarded as being 'a natural', or 'gifted' or 'born to play'. While it is extremely difficult to assess how widely accepted the idea of innate ability is within English football, there is some evidence to suggest that this view is sufficiently prevalent to restrict player development. In an interview with the management of one particular Football League club, this idea was forcibly expressed. The chairman remarked: "All great players are born to play ... You cannot teach great players to play the game ... I wish we were lucky enough to have found gifted kids". This idea is discussed more fully in Chapter 8. There is little doubt that some players do have particular qualities that make them special. These abilities may be seen in terms of height, speed, strength or stamina. However, if the best football players, based upon transfer fees, are more likely to be foreign than English, does this suggest that these foreign players are likely to possess more 'innate ability' than English players? This would appear to be very unlikely.

According to Syed (2010), very few football players are 'born' to play the game. Rather, they are more likely to have been 'made'. So why is it that so few Premiership football players are 'made' in England? Syed noted that, during the 1980s, "Silverdale Road, Reading, produced more outstanding table tennis players than the rest of the nation combined" (2010:7). The explanation was to be found, not in terms of an innate ability to play the game but rather in terms of continuous practice and an outstanding coach. Syed, a former international table tennis champion himself, suggested that, in order for an individual to attain a world class level of ability in any particular sport, a minimum of ten years or ten thousand hours of practice, or, one thousand hours of practice per year is required.

Syed observed that the abilities of top international sports people, as well as those of musicians and scholars, may be explained in terms of effort, endeavour and repetitive practice rather than in terms of innate abilities. Indeed, as Syed remarked, to suggest otherwise is corrosive and insidious as individuals are then dissuaded from

improving themselves and their particular profession. Genetic inheritance is not irrelevant but is perhaps misinterpreted. So called 'in-born talent' may be nothing more than the fruits of repetitive practice. In an interview conducted with Syed, Brian McDermott, the Reading Football club manager, described how he came to regard innate abilities in a different way. McDermott remarked in *The Daily Telegraph* (April 23rd 2011): "I read *Bounce*, (the name of the book published by Syed) some of the players and the staff read it. I thought it was terrific ... When you have a bunch of people [both players and staff] who have read about how success is a consequence of hard work, rather than something that automatically emerges from fixed talent, the result is a very powerful one".

Following the European Football Championships in 2012, various explanations were once again offered to explain the relatively poor performance of the England team. Syed offered a particular explanation. He noted: "Forget about the lack of home-grown players in the Barclays' Premier League, the lack of a winter break and other explanations ... The real issue, the cancer that has destroyed successive generations of English footballers, is the long-held assumption that skill cannot be coached". In the same article, Syed referred to a debate regarding how to develop two-footed football players which took place at a Premier League Academy. An academy coach suggested: "Some kids are naturally two-footed and some are not ... coaching has nothing to do with it' (*The Times*, July 2nd 2012).

In 2010, the Football Association produced a report entitled *The Future Game*. This report stated that: "Most expert football players are products of a life-long dedication to self-improvement, accumulating thousands of hours of practising and playing games along the way" (2010:69). Similarly, Sir Stanley Matthews, the former England international, declared:

I had been constantly been working at my game, learning from every match played. My technique of running directly at full backs, body swerving and then veering away was paying dividends ... I learned to pace myself with the ball at my feet ... I was learning to play football with my brain as well as my feet (2000:47).

Whether footballers are considered to possess ‘innate ability’ or not, the importance of coaching is critically important to player development. This point has continuously been referred to in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. Furthermore, as Sir Trevor Brooking noted: ‘The increasing number of young foreign players being signed to academies and Centres of Excellence at professional clubs represents a major challenge to the development of the young English player' (2010 11).

One reason for this development may be the number of competing coaching methods and different football philosophies that exist within English football (see Chapter 8). Indeed, between 1980 and 2010, the Football Association produced various publications that recommended contrasting approaches as to how the game should be played (see Chapter 7). Equally, *Vision* (2008) and *Developing World-Class Coaching and Players* (2009), both published by the Football Association, highlighted the acute shortage of qualified coaches in English football compared to those available in other European countries (see Chapter 7, p.175). As John Peacock, Head of Coaching at the Football Association observed: "An agreed and collective understanding of the fabric of English football is less clear, with most able to allude to desire, work-rate and a competitive edge" (2010:15). One significant difference between how football is coached in this country compared to competing football nations would appear to be due to the absence of a unified football philosophy within English football. Differences in coaching methods and marked disparities in football philosophy are likely to limit player development. (see Chapter 8).

1.5 A Cultural Vacuum

Many of the concerns faced by English football clubs today are remarkably similar to those encountered by the early professional clubs established during the 1880s. Issues included a shortage of ‘home-grown’ players, an influx of ‘foreign’ players (predominantly Scottish), a perceived skill shortage and the inability of the national team to compete at international level (Jackson 1900). During the 1880s, English clubs imported Scottish players in significant numbers (Catton 1900). A number of clubs embarked upon a policy of importation rather than one of player

development (see Chapter 5). After more than a hundred years of English football, parallel issues remain. Indeed, the absence of a co-ordinated approach to player development continued to characterise English football throughout most of the twentieth century (Green 2009).

The *Meltdown* report produced by the Professional Footballers' Association in 2007 noted that the number of foreign players imported into English football has fundamentally impaired the chances of English players being able to play at both Premiership and international levels. An influx of foreign players may bring success to particular football clubs, the report remarked, but this policy was also having a detrimental impact upon the performance of the national team: "Our clubs may be successful but our national team cannot be" (*Meltdown* 2007:5-6). According to the report, the fundamental right of English players to realise their potential, was being denied by the influx of foreign players (*Meltdown*: 2007). The same report noted that English football was "running out of English players" (2007: 4).² However, the right of English players to realise their true potential is perhaps being constrained, not so much by an influx of foreign players *per se*, but rather by the manner in which English football has traditionally been coached and played. The actual number of foreign players now playing Premiership football is a symptom of this development not a cause.

1.6 Chapter Outline

In Chapter 2, I set out to explain the research methods used in this thesis. The chapter is divided into two constituent parts. In the first part of the chapter, works of C. Wright Mills, Max Weber and Thomas Kuhn have been used to link sociological theory with my research methods. I have attempted to demonstrate that English

² A 'home grown' player will be defined as one who, irrespective of his nationality or age, has been registered with a club affiliated to the Football association or the Football Association of Wales for a period, continuous or not, of three entire seasons or 36 months prior to his 21st birthday. Football clubs can supplement this 25 man squad with an unlimited number of players below the age of twenty-one. (Premier League: 2010).

football has witnessed a developmental 'trend', a movement away from a traditional to a technical game. The work of Wright Mills (1959) has been used to help explore and develop this trend. I have similarly used the work of Weber (1947) and his notion of 'ideal types' to help classify both traditional and technical football. The notion of a 'paradigm shift' formulated by Kuhn (1962) has been used to illustrate that the modern game has been moving from a traditional to a technical game.

The second part of Chapter 2 is a description of the qualitative methods used in this research. My field work has utilised in-depth interviews, semi-structured and informal unstructured interviews conducted at national level, at club level and at player level. My archival work was largely undertaken at the Football Association Library. Primary material has included minutes taken from Football Association committee meetings, a review of a number of Football Association publications and reports, journals and FA Year Books. I have also utilised a substantial amount of secondary data which has included biographies of former players, managers and scouts, newspaper reports, football magazines and online publications.

Chapter 3 sets out to illustrate how important both culture and cultural change has been to the development of English football. Culture may be said to frame different ways of seeing the world. It classifies, translates and helps define the world in which people live. In other words, culture may be said to be a design or style of living (Kluckholm 1952). The chapter has highlighted how the antecedents of English football may be traced to the early forms of 'folk games' played in England as early as the fourteenth century (Dunning and Sheard 1979). These games represented a significant stage in the on-going development of a football culture that has continued to shape the national game. Many of these early football matches were frequently wild, *ad hoc* affairs characterised by violence and indiscipline. Early forms of 'folk football' set the benchmark as to how English football was to be played. Despite continued attempts to have the game outlawed, popular culture demonstrated a marked continuity and consistency. The chapter will also illustrate how the early forms of 'folk football' had a notable impact upon the rejuvenation of English football played by the English public schools during the nineteenth century

In Chapter 4, I discuss the concepts of 'manliness' and 'muscular Christianity' and their relationships to how public school football was played. As the industrial and social landscape changed, so, too, did the notion of 'manliness'. As with the concept of masculinity, 'manliness' was adapted to the needs of a new industrial age. Hitherto, 'manliness' had been regarded in terms of integrity, honesty and morality. As the nineteenth century unfolded, however, 'manliness' came to be identified with moral and physical endeavour in an attempt to unify both the Anglican Church and the wider society (Newsome 1961). The concept of manliness evolved into that of 'muscular Christianity'. The public schools and the Anglican Church became a central median for this collective revision. A cult-like emphasis upon games, particularly football, was to develop. Indeed, physical exercise was considered to be a timely remedy to the many social ills that industrialisation had fostered. Games became focused upon individual strength and physical fitness (Newsome 1961).

Two principal exponents of this cultural transition were the Reverend Charles Kingsley and his close associate, Thomas Hughes. Hughes was the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), which recounted a number of tales that gave expression to the physical and muscular nature of men. Kingsley and Hughes fundamentally re-appraised the notion of manliness to incorporate vitality, energy, physicality and muscularity. Fitness and athleticism within many of the newly formed English public schools became an obsession. The English public school was to become a powerful expression of a new form of physical masculinity (Holt 1989). Nevertheless, public school football was not something that was simply 'passed down' from above. Rather, football continued to reflect 'folk-traditions', class subcultures and locality. Popular culture proved to be both tenacious and durable.

As the nineteenth century advanced, football was taken up by large sections of the newly formed working classes. Chapter 5 is an account of this development. English football became the game for the working man. This chapter has utilised a number of publications taken from the Football Association Library to illustrate how the early football teams continued to play the game in a robust and physical manner (e.g. Alcock 1871; Jackson 1900). Indeed, a number of these early football clubs were the

product of 'muscular Christianity' (Russell 1997). Church and chapel teams accounted for something like twenty-five per cent of all football clubs by the 1880s (Mason 1980:26). The workplace, local neighbourhood and public houses were similarly all major sponsors of early English football.

Alongside the march of 'muscular Christianity' and the push towards athleticism, the industrial working classes brought their own distinct attitudes, values and beliefs to Association Football. A number of these values, such as partisanship, an emphasis upon a winning mentality, a disregard for official rules and team work were quite distinct from the values being promoted by the middle class ideology of athleticism (Hargreaves 1986:67). The workplace helped to define and shape the social world of its operatives and fashion a sense of local community and neighbourhood. The working environment became particularly important to an understanding of masculinity, authority, status and control (Joyce 1980). English professional football became an expression of working class cultural identity. Indeed, most of the early English professional football players came from working-class backgrounds (Mason 1980). The game was to become a prominent expression of social class and class consciousness. For the industrial worker, the local football team afforded a form of representation (Hobsbawm 1984).

In this chapter, I have also documented how the continued emphasis upon strength and fitness was exemplified by the training sessions undertaken by early professional football clubs (Meredith 1906). These sessions relied heavily upon weights, ball-punching and sprinting. Very little concern was given to the development of ball skills (Bassett 1906). Much of this early material has been taken from the Football Association Library. This developmental pattern based largely upon physicality continued throughout much of the twentieth century. Sir Stanley Matthews (2000), for example, noted that training sessions in 1934 hardly ever included ball work. Indeed, during the 1930s, a continued emphasis upon athleticism was taken to a new level by one of the most successful English football club managers of all time, Herbert Chapman the manager of Arsenal Football Club (Walvin 1975). The old routine of lapping the football pitch, in attempt to gain fitness, continued to be

regarded as being the best way of preparing to play professional football (Doherty 1947).

In Chapter 6, I examine how the traditional English game began to be eclipsed by a technical game built upon tactical play and an emphasis upon individual skills and ability. English football had shown itself to be indifferent to the developments that had taken place through the expansion of international football (Murray 1994). Pace and aggression had endured within English football. In contrast: "foreign players were 'technically better ... and passed with incomparably greater precision" (Meisl: 1955:58). This point was illustrated by the success of a number of continental football teams that visited Britain post 1945. English football was now being confronted by a more artistic type of play being developed abroad (Walvin 1975).

Following a number of high profile defeats at club and national level, English football began to embrace change. Innovative and tactical improvement was introduced by several English clubs during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The introduction of European football competitions during the 1950s provided the domestic game with clear evidence of the advances that had been made by continental football teams and continental players alike.

The acceptance that English football had fallen behind the standards being set by European football teams provided a stimulus to the English game. This recognition provided a platform for the success of the national team in the 1966 World Cup Final (Greaves 2004). However, this progress and development failed to endure. Physicality and aggression continued to be preferred to individual flair and ability (Fynn and Guest 1989). English football emphasised and rewarded fitness and physique above and beyond the finesse of the 'fancy Dan' (Roderick 2006). The physical ethos of professional football was regarded as being part of the game (Giulianotti 1999). The essentially 'manly character' of the English game appeared to be impervious to change (Cashmore 2002)

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the profiles of football clubs, football managers and players, particularly within elite football, were to change significantly.

The legislative change that allowed foreign players freedom of movement within the European Community was notable in this respect. Both the Treaty of Rome (1978), and The Bosman Ruling (1995) were particularly important. Following the formation of the Premier League in 1992, foreign players arrived in significant numbers. Despite this development, however, much of English football continued to emphasise a direct and physical game. The chapter has included a number of accounts given by managers, players and coaches in support of this contention.

In Chapter 7, I set out to examine a number of recommendations and reports published by the Football Association between 1980 and 2010. These publications give a clear illustration of a marked change in the football philosophy being recommended by the governing body. At the beginning of this period, a direct game based upon a high level of physical fitness was recommended. Towards the end of this period, the Football Association began to recognise that the limited number of English players who were playing Premiership football was having a detrimental impact upon the ability of the national team to compete at international level. One way to address this situation was to raise the standard of the English game. English football had to produce a greater number of players with the technical skills required to compete at the highest levels of the game. In other words, a paradigm shift was required. However, one notable difficulty that may prevent this objective from being realised is the acute shortage of qualified coaches available to English football compared to the number of coaches available on a pan-European basis. The shortage of qualified coaches is highlighted in this chapter.

In Chapter 8, I set out my empirical evidence which may help to explain why so few English players are now playing Premiership football. This chapter includes a number of testimonies given to me by senior executives, club managers, professional players, youth team players, scouts and football supporters. This interview data attempts to provide a broad representation of English football. This data has raised a number of inter-related issues which are also discussed in this chapter.

In Chapter 9, I set out my findings and conclusion which bring together my range of arguments which explain why so few English players are now playing Premiership football. Despite a process of continuous development, English football has remained remarkably consistent. The domestic game has continued to be a largely physical and manly game. At the elite level of football, there is clear evidence to suggest that a traditional English game is now being challenged and opposed by a technical game. The range of skills that many foreign players appear to possess is perhaps one reason why so many of these players are now playing Premiership football.

Chapter 2 Methods

2.1 Introduction

My research methods have been based upon both historical and contemporary analysis. Much of the historical research that has described the development of English football has been taken from secondary sources. However, in an attempt to describe the development of English professional football from the late 19th century onwards, I have used a considerable amount of archival material located particularly in the Football Association Library. This material has provided a significant insight into how early professional football clubs played the game and the training methods these clubs adopted (many of these references are used extensively in Chapter 6).

The contemporary research is presented in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8. In Chapter 7, I have analysed a number of reports and publications that were published by the Football Association between 1980 and 2010. This documentation provided an illustration of both the challenges and shape of contemporary English football. The reports have also provided an illustration of a shift in the football philosophy being recommended by the governing body - a shift from a traditional to a technical game. The second section of my research, presented in Chapter 8, is based upon my field work. In-depth interviews were conducted on three different levels of English football. This research was undertaken at national level, at club level and at player level. The basis of this work is explained and discussed in Section 2.6.

2.2 A Theoretical Framework

In an attempt to explain a perceived shift from a traditional to a technical game I have constructed a theoretical framework to assist in aligning my sociological methods of research with sociological theory. Theory construction and development has been used to assist both historical and contemporary enquiry. My theoretical perspective is largely based upon the work of Wright Mills, Weber and Kuhn. I have attempted to demonstrate how a developmental trend has emerged which has

involved a shift from a traditional to a technical game. This development has not been consistent, singular or unilinear. As Elias insightfully noted: “It is always possible to establish that figuration B had to be preceded by a particular figuration A, although it is not possible to state with equal certainty that figuration A had inevitably to result in figuration B” (1978:163). It is perhaps more meaningful to evaluate this developmental trend in terms of degrees of possibility and probability rather than an inevitability. By definition, a developmental trend is best considered in terms of a constant state of flux, with neither a particular beginning nor a definable end. Nevertheless, the overall direction of English football has been quite distinct. It has largely been being founded upon the qualities of strength, endurance and courage.

Following the improvements being made to the standard of international football during the twentieth century, the English game became challenged and contested by a technical game. This transition became particularly evident during the 1950s. I have utilised the work of Mills and his notion of ‘social trends’ to exemplify this historical development. I have similarly used the work of Weber and his notion of ‘ideal types’ to construct a model of both a traditional and a technical game. The transition from a traditional to a technical game may, in many respects, be considered to represent a ‘paradigm shift’. The work of Kuhn has helped to illustrate this development.

2.3 The Work of C. Wright Mills

For Mills, history and social structure are seen to be interconnected. Different social structures are based on different degrees of integration so any attempt to understand a particular social structure has to take into account different levels of integration. Thus, in order to understand how a particular institution has changed, forms of integration become a framework for analysis or a model for scientific enquiry. Historical analysis for Mills is indistinct from the study of social structure and social integration (Scimecca 1977). This view may be contrasted to that of Parsons (1967), who viewed human behaviour or social structure as accountable in

terms of a general theory. Mills considered the notion of social structure to be characterised by different degrees of integration and unity in relation to different epochs and eras. Thus social change for Mills is evaluated in terms of differing modes and levels of social integration and how these changes relate to changes at the levels of social processes.

For Mills, individual expression and freedom of choice was seen to be instrumental in promoting social change rather than economic production and class struggle. The individual is seen to be located in context or in relation to the particular historical milieu and not merely considered to be a product of any given social structure (Mills 1953). Patterns of behaviour may then be evaluated in terms of the inter-relationship between specific social and historical structures. For Mills, classical social analysis is not only definable but also embedded in tradition. Analysis is based upon historically existing social structures and the manner in which they give rise to human turmoil and discord. Mills also wished to take into account the social psychology related to his models of social structure. He believed that both macro and micro levels of analysis could be combined to offer the best form of social analysis: “The emotions of fear and hatred and love and rage in all their varieties must be understood in close and continual reference to the social biography and the social context in which they are experienced and expressed” (Mills 1959:161). In other words, patterns of behaviour may be evaluated in relation to social biography and the relationship between biography and history within a specific social context. This theoretical perspective has helped to both identify and explain a number of important developments within English football.

Within the social sciences, numerous conceptions have been concerned with social evolution or development or with the transition from one particular epoch or era to another. These have included Max Weber’s concepts of ‘status’ and ‘class’, Auguste Comte’s law of ‘three stages’, denoting the Theological, Metaphysical and Positive stages and also Durkheim’s ‘Mechanical’ and ‘Organic’ systems of solidarity. As Mills observed:

Even those who believe they do not work historically, generally reveal by their use of such terms some notion of historical trends and even a sense of period. It is in terms of this alertness to the shape and dynamics of `the modern period` and to the nature of its crisis, that the social scientist's standard concern with `trends` ought to be understood. We study trends in an attempt to go behind events and to make orderly sense of them (1959:153).

According to Mills, in order to understand the dynamics of social change that are taking place within a contemporary social structure, every effort must be made to identify its longer-term developments. Once this has been achieved, the question then arises: what are the mechanics behind the evolution of these trends and how is the structure of society changing? I have attempted to use and develop this perspective in order to explain some of the more important cultural forces that have shaped English football.

2.4 The Contribution of Max Weber

For Weber, human action is directed by meanings and motives. For a causal relationship to be established, it is necessary to ascertain what has shaped the motives that led to particular actions. Indeed, one important research question that I have attempted to examine in this thesis is how traditional values of masculinity and physicality arose in the English game and to what extent have these value-ends impacted upon the way English football has been played.

While interested in an explanation of subjective actions, Weber wished to relate these actions to the social structure in which the individual belonged. In other words, social action could only be understood in relation to the wider society to which the individual was inextricably linked. Sociology, for Weber, was defined as: "a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects" (1947:8). Action, for Weber, is considered to be social because of the subjective meaning assigned to it by the individual(s) concerned.

Social action then, based upon the anticipated behaviour of others, becomes the basis of socio-political, economic, religious and other types of social institutions. This is the basis of a social structure. Behaviour is patterned as individuals act in accordance with the expectations of others. The individual acts in relation to these expectations. For Weber, sociology is concerned with reducing these institutions to the level of individuals. The unit of his analysis was seen to be the individual person in relation to the social context. Weber noted that sociological research includes both rational and irrational types of action. Such action is formulated upon theoretical concepts founded upon the level of meaning (Gerth and Mills 1948: 55-73).

Gerth and Mills provided one of the very earliest translations of Weber's work into English. Mills frequently worked with Hans Gerth who, like Norbert Elias, was one of Karl Mannheim's assistants in Frankfurt. For Weber, the individual is regarded as being a composition of general characteristics, an actor of definable social roles that have originated and developed from social institutions:

In *all* cases, rational or irrational, sociological analysis both abstracts from reality and at the same time helps us to understand it, in that it shows with what degree of approximation a concrete historical phenomenon can be subsumed under one or more of these concepts... In order to give a precise meaning to these terms, it is necessary for the sociologist to formulate pure ideal types of the corresponding forms of action... Theoretical analysis in the field of sociology is possible only in terms of such pure types (Weber 1947:100).

'Ideal types' are only approximations to or abstractions from 'real' phenomena. Nevertheless, the more precisely these working models are constructed, the more successful are they likely to be in formulating classifications and hypotheses. This was to become the basis of Weber's interpretive sociology. 'Ideal types' are typological, hypothetically abstract constructions used in sociological theory based upon characteristics which relate to the concept being studied. Ideal types do not in themselves correspond to all the constituent parts of the abstract concept under consideration. Rather, they are close approximations to the phenomenon under scrutiny. 'Ideal types' are particularly useful in comparative sociology.

For Weber, unique social and historical circumstances emanate from particular combinations of common factors which lend themselves to quantifiable analysis once they have been segregated. Weber believed that 'ideal values' developed from particular religious ideas. These values have, in turn, become hallmarks of ethical and cultural values. According to Weber, these values arose in conjunction with unique political institutions and early preconditions of embryonic capitalism. Religious beliefs were believed by Weber to have had a profound impact on the early development of capitalism (Weber 1930).

The manner in which English football has developed may also be considered in terms of the wider society or social contexts to which individuals are inextricably linked. Action is given orientation by the behaviour of others and herein is the link to forms of behaviour such as religion. For example, the 'muscular Christianity' of the late nineteenth century provided an end to which individuals could orient their action (see Chapter 4). I have similarly used the concept of 'ideal types' to set out the broad differences between traditional and technical football. A traditional English game has often been considered in terms of a direct form of football founded upon fitness, aggression, courage and strength. In contrast, a technical game is based upon technical skills or technical ability, and is usually associated with possession football rather than direct football. It involves mastery of the ball, close control and movement off the ball. In order to play technical football a player has to develop individual skills (see Chapter 8 p.198).

2.5 Thomas Kuhn

Normal science for Kuhn (1962) is regarded as being an accumulation of previous scientific achievements. These achievements remained 'open ended' to allow various problems to be resolved. Kuhn referred to these achievements as 'paradigms'. The progress of scientific knowledge is based, he argued, upon the successive transition from one paradigm to another. The substitution of one paradigm in place of another may be regarded as a scientific revolution or 'paradigm shift'. As with social trends, paradigms are not linear in progression; rather, paradigms are

continuously challenged by inconsistencies and findings made at a particular time. Kuhn insisted that, in order to comprehend the magnitude of a particular belief or idea, it must be assessed in terms of its historical context. This context helps to explain why a new paradigm can become particularly significant.

Inconsistencies or anomalies give rise to competing alternatives or 'revolutions' which occasion a new paradigm to be formulated. Insofar as the development of football is concerned, a traditional or a technical game may be evaluated in terms of a particular paradigm which, in turn, is based upon a 'cluster of beliefs' or numerous 'dictates'. For Kuhn, a paradigm is accepted as a theory when it appears to be better than those of its competitors. "The older schools gradually disappear ... but there are always some men who cling to one or another of the older views, and they are simply read out of the profession, which thereafter ignores their work. The new paradigm implies a new and more rigid definition of the field" (Kuhn 1962, pp.17-18). For Kuhn, the acceptance of a particular paradigm is based largely upon results. They are perceived to be more successful than competing alternatives. Anomalies within paradigms give rise to crises, which in turn direct science to pass through periods of revolution.

The evolution of English football may arguably be examined in similar terms. A traditional English style of play, or traditional paradigm, is now being challenged by a technical game or technical paradigm. The 'revolution' or 'paradigm shift' that evolved from the improvements being made within Continental football was illustrated by a number of high profile defeats sustained by the England national team during the 1950s. The elite level of English football has now begun to embrace this transition (see Chapter 8).

According to Kuhn, during the transition from one paradigm to another there is likely to be a significant yet incomplete overlap between the anomalies that can be resolved by both the old and new paradigms. The decisive difference, however, will lie in the manner in which the problem is resolved: "When the transition is complete, the profession will have changed its view of the field, its methods, and its goals" (Kuhn

1962:85). The substitution of one paradigm for another, for Kuhn, has constituted a 'scientific revolution'. The national level of English football and a number of Premiership clubs have indeed changed their views with respect to how the domestic game should now be played.

The use of a paradigm affords some degree of precision in solving problems than would have otherwise been the case. This framework of analysis allows the research question to be fashioned, articulated, shaped and formed. Invariably, 'trends', paradigms and 'ideal types' are descriptive or heuristic tools rather than predictive models. The use of such models has provided a theoretical framework from within which research has been able to proceed.

2.6 Qualitative Research

My fieldwork has utilised in-depth semi-structured interviews, in the context of which a series of questions were asked in general form. Interviews conducted on a semi-structured basis afforded a degree of latitude to ask supplementary questions whenever appropriate. All the interviews were recorded with consent. Incorporated in the appendix are the names and positions of the personnel I interviewed. However, for ethical reasons, I have not included either the names of any of the respondents who were interviewed or the names of the football clubs that agreed to see me in the body of the thesis. All respondents were sent a copy of the interview material for their attention and qualifications were made where necessary.

The use of sociological theory has provided a useful framework within which social phenomena can be understood and interpreted. The fieldwork may be described as interpretivist whereby an attempt has been made to attain an understanding of the football world through both an examination and interpretation of interviewees (Bryman 2001). The fieldwork was undertaken on a piecemeal basis over a three year period between 2009 and 2012.

2.7 Archival Material

A significant amount of the archival material has been obtained from the Football Association Library. This material has included FA minutes, committee meeting reports, technical guides, coaching manuals and year books, reports and coaching manuals. An extensive number of biographical accounts written by former professional players, managers and scouts have also been utilised. This material has helped place the evolution of English football in a sociologically useful historical perspective. Publications written by former Football Association Committee members, such as N.L.Jackson and C.W. Alcock have been particularly useful in this respect.

Secondary data such as newspaper reports, magazines and online articles have also been widely used in this research. This has been a very useful source of information as access to key personnel has proved to be particularly difficult. Numerous professional players and football clubs alike quite simply did not wish to make a contribution to the research project. I was, however, particularly fortunate to have had the continued support of the Football Association throughout. I was provided with a letter of introduction by the governing body which was particularly useful in terms of arranging interviews. Similarly, being awarded a FIFA scholarship to carry out this research equally proved to be invaluable.

2.8 Limitations of the Research

The research has attempted to secure a broad representation of English football. Nevertheless, there are a number of limitations to the research project. Firstly, despite the consistency of the information given by my respondents, the sample size may be considered to be small. Whether or not any of the conclusions would have been different if the sample size had been larger is difficult to say. Nevertheless, a particular characteristic of English football is its diversity, customs and traditions. Thus it is very possible that different respondents or different football

clubs may have given different interpretations to some of the questions that were raised.

Secondly, I constructed 'ideal types' to compare and contrast the perceived differences between a traditional and a technical game. This framework of analysis may prompt a number of issues. For example, how representative are these 'ideal types' of the two types of football that have been identified? Indeed, how useful is it to differentiate the game on this basis? Indeed, some commentators may consider the development of the game more in terms of a continuum rather than in terms of a hierarchy or paradigm shift.

Equally, some form of comparative study undertaken at a foreign football club may have been helpful. This work may have given the thesis a greater degree of focus. In fact, I originally set out to spend some time with a Dutch football club. However, as I discovered with the study of English football, it is insufficient to simply observe how football is being played; rather, football is indeed a form of cultural expression. Therefore, a truly comparative study of Dutch football, for example, would have demanded an analysis of the socio-cultural development of the Netherlands. The amount of time that this would have demanded was not at my disposal.

2.9 Field Work

My field work has incorporated three distinct levels of analysis within the world of professional football; national level, club level and player level. These three levels of analysis are both inter-related and inter-dependent. For example, a particular style of play recommended by the Football Association may be seen to have implications for the manner in which the game has been played at both club and player level (see Chapter 6 and Chapter 7). Equally, numerous former professional players are now employed at institutions such as the Football Association and the Professional Footballers' Association. Similarly, several football managers I interviewed were themselves former professional players. Nevertheless, by setting

out my empirical research on these three different levels of enquiry, I have attempted to build a representative picture of the professional game.

2.10 Research Conducted at the National Level of English Football

The most influential institutional bodies in English professional football are the Football Association, the Premier League, the Football League and the Professional Footballers' Association. These organisations are directly responsible for the management, development and direction of the national game. The support and guidance I received from all these institutions afforded a substantial research platform from which to proceed.

2.11 The Football Association

The Football Association is the governing body of English football. Formed in 1863, it is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the amateur and professional games in England. All England's professional football clubs are members of the Football Association. I conducted five formal in-depth interviews in total although I received continued support from the governing body throughout the period of research. One interview was conducted with a former chairman of the Football Association, one interview was conducted with a national under-19 coach and three interviews were conducted with a player development adviser.

2.12 The Premier League

The Premier League was formed in 1992. It is the organising body responsible for the competition contested by 20 member clubs. It is a private company effectively wholly owned by its constituent members. Each member is a shareholder and each club has one vote in relation to any proposed changes to rules, regulations or contracts. I conducted one in-depth interview each with two representatives of the Premier League who were responsible for Elite Player Development and Communications.

2.13 The Football League

The Football League was established in 1888 by William McGregor, a Scotsman. The League now consists of 72 football clubs, divided into three divisions, each consisting of 24 clubs. These divisions are known as The Championship, League One and League Two. The Football League is also the name of governing body which is responsible not only for the League competition but also for two knock-out competitions, the Football League Cup and the Football League Trophy. I conducted two in-depth interviews with the Head of Player Development.

2.14 The Professional Footballers' Association

The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) was formed in 1907 as the Players' Union. It is, by definition, a trades union for all professional players in England and Wales. Besides being responsible for the everyday affairs of its members, the PFA also hosts a number of designated departments which include education, community, coaching and equalities (equal opportunities within football). I conducted four in-depth interviews at the PFA which included one interview with the Chairman, one interview with a Senior Executive and two interviews with the Head of Coaching. All these personnel were former professional football players.

2.15 Research Conducted at Club level

I interviewed the management at four football clubs; one from each division of English football. These clubs consisted of a Premiership club, a Championship club, a Division One club and a Division Two club. In total I conducted eight in-depth interviews at these four football clubs. One interview was conducted at the Premiership club, four interviews were conducted at the Championship club, one interview was conducted at the Division One club and two interviews were conducted at the Division Two football club. Indeed, I was very fortunate to have being able to spend two days in the company of a very highly regarded football manager at the Division Two club. By conducting research at clubs in each of the

respective divisions of English football, I attempted to develop a broad representation of the domestic game.

The Premiership club has been one of the most successful football clubs since the Premier League was formed in 1992. The club is well known for advocating and developing technical football. The club has a foreign manager and was one of the first Premiership clubs to have fielded eleven foreign players in a Premiership match. In particular, I wished to discover whether or not there was any evidence to suggest that Premiership football was moving from a traditional to a technical game. I also wished to explore whether or not there were any material differences in the abilities of foreign players compared to their English counterparts. Moreover, what differences, if any, existed between the types of football being played in the Premiership compared to the types of football being played in other divisions of English football? If such a differentiation did exist, what was its social basis ?

The Championship club based in South London has a renowned working class subculture (Robson 2000). I wished to discover whether or not specific working class attitudes, values and beliefs that had characterised many of the early professional clubs had continued to shape the manner in which this particular club played football. I also wished to discover the difficulties that youth team players at this club may have faced in their attempt to become professional football players.

The Division One Football Club was selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, the club had just appointed a foreign manager. This manager had, in turn, signed a number of foreign players. I wished to determine why this football club had appointed a foreign manager and why this manager had decided to sign a number of foreign players.

The Division Two Football Club was selected on the basis of the exceptional reputation of the club manager. This person has been involved in professional football as both a player and a coach for something like forty years. The manager had elected to develop a technical style of football in a league that was considered to be

particularly physical. The youth team policy at this club had been founded upon the development of technical ability and technical skills. A number of players at this club had gone on to play football at both Premiership and national level. I wished to find out why this manager had developed this particular style of play. I also wanted to understand just how difficult it was to play this type of football in a league that promoted a largely physical game.

2.16 Research Conducted at Player Level

At the Championship Football Club, I conducted twelve in-depth interviews with youth team players aged between 16 and 18 years of age. I sought to understand the challenges that these players faced in their attempt to play professional football. I wished to consider the attitudes, values and beliefs that these players brought to the football club. I also sought to determine the range of qualities these players considered to be important in order to play professional football. I also wished to discover the requirements that the football club expected these players to fulfil.

2.17 The Fan Base

In an attempt to examine the broader cultural factors that existed at this football club, I elected to interview ten football club supporters. A number of these interviews were carried out on match days, mostly in bars and coffee shops close to the football ground. This was not in any way a representative sample. Nevertheless, these ten interviews have provided some insight into the ways in which football supporters may influence both player recruitment and player development.

2.18 Conclusion

This chapter has set out to explain the research methods used in this thesis. My research has utilised both historical and contemporary analysis. Much of the historical research that has described the development of English football has been based upon secondary material. Primary data located in the Football Association

Library have been used to illustrate the development of English professional football from the late 19th century onwards. This material has provided a significant insight into how early professional footballers not only played the game but how these players were trained.

My contemporary research is located in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8. In Chapter 7, I examine a number of reports and publications published by the Football Association between 1980 and 2010. The reports have given a detailed account of both the challenges and shape of contemporary English football. At national level these reports document a shift from a traditional to a technical game. The second section of my research is based upon in-depth interviews I conducted on three different levels of English football. This research was undertaken at national level, at club level and at player level. This work is presented in Chapter 8.

I have attempted to construct a theoretical framework to align sociological methods of research with sociological theory. The theoretical framework constructed in this thesis has been based upon the work of Mills, Weber and Kuhn in an attempt to examine and explain how modern football has shifted from a traditional to a technical game.

In order to understand how the traditional English game developed, it is necessary to consider, as a starting point, the early forms of the 'folk football' of pre-industrial Britain, even though they were, themselves, stages in an on-going process of development (Dunning and Sheard 1979:19). This analysis is undertaken in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 The Early Development of English Football

We do not know *a priori what* ideas give rise to the various currents into which social life divides, nor whether they exist. It is only after we have traced the currents back to their source that we will know from where they spring Durkheim 1982 [1912:70).

3.1 Introduction

Football may be considered to be a form of cultural expression as well as a game or leisure activity (Gruneau1993). If football is indeed a form of cultural expression then it may be useful to examine the concept of ‘culture’ and the cultural traits that characterised the early forms of ‘folk football’ that date back to the fourteenth century. In this chapter I consider both the early forms of football and the manner in which these games were played. This chapter also sets out to explain how the rise of urbanisation and industrialisation impacted upon the leisure activities of ordinary people. Football was played almost exclusively by the peasantry, apprentices and artisans (Magoun 1938). Despite a rising tide of regulatory constraint, football demonstrated a remarkable degree of continuity and consistency (Harvey 2005). The first task, however, is to consider the importance of both ‘culture’ and cultural traits.

3.2 A ‘Design for Living’

The notion of culture may be viewed as referring to a system rather than a fixed entity. As with the concept of social class, far from having defined boundaries, its parameters may be seen to be in a continual state of flux. Concepts such as culture, civilization and tradition make little sense when viewed as static concepts (Elias 1970). Insofar as aspects of culture are concerned, there is no particular starting point and no particular end. Culture may be regarded as something that is learned and which relates to a particular way of life. This ‘lifestyle’ is based upon acquired ideas, values and beliefs that emerge from a diversity of social milieux. ‘Cultural traits’ or ‘norms’ are invariably transmitted from one generation to another

which furnish a way of living. This design is shared by members of a society in general, or, by members of a specific group of individuals within that society in particular. It shapes and encodes how everyday life is perceived (Kluckhohn 1951:87). According to Herskovits, the notion of 'culture' raises a number of inconsistencies:

Those who would comprehend the essential nature of culture must resolve a series of seeming paradoxes...Culture is universal in man's experience, yet each local or regional manifestation of it is unique. Culture is stable, yet is also dynamic, and manifests continuous and constant change. Culture fills and largely determines the course of our lives, yet rarely intrudes into conscious thought... That no two cultures are the same ...means that each culture has had a unique development (1960:pp306-307).

Culture, then, may be said to impact upon the behavioural patterns evident within any particular society. Equally, specific cultural patterns of behaviour may be distinct to a particular society or sub-culture. Both Montesquieu (1748) and Durkheim (1912) attempted to show that within a seemingly amorphous mass of unintended events there were underlying causes which gave rise to patterns of social behaviour. As Raymond Aron observed: "Montesquieu, exactly like Max Weber, wanted to proceed from the meaningless fact to an intelligible order" (1998:14). This is not to suggest that all history should be considered in terms of underlying causes in a deterministic manner. Rather, it is the manner in which patterns of behaviour have arisen that needs to be explained. The diversity of customs and beliefs particular to a specific society may operate without individuals actually being aware of their existence. As Montesquieu remarked: 'I have first of all considered mankind; and the result of my thoughts has been that amid such an infinite diversity of laws and manners, they were not solely conducted by the caprice of fancy' (1748: xxv). Thus cultural development becomes more clearly defined when the underlying causes are revealed which have determined the general direction of events.

According to Emile Durkheim, cultural forms are said to exist '*sui generis*'; that is, 'culture' is regarded as having its own objective existence. "The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate

system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or common consciousness ... In fact it is independent of the particular conditions in which individuals are placed. They pass on, and it remains” (Durkheim 1912:79). The states of the collective consciousness can be seen to be quite distinct from the states of individual consciousness. One difficulty with this perspective, however, is the possibility of reification. According to Herskovits:

The danger point is reached when we reify similarities in behaviour that only result from the similar conditioning of a group of individuals to their common setting into something that exists outside man, something that is superorganic. This does not mean that we deny the usefulness, for certain anthropological problems, of studying culture *as if* it had an objective existence. But we must not allow the recognition of a methodological need to obscure the fact that we are dealing with a construct - and that, as in all science, we erect these construct's as guides to our thinking and as an aid to analysis (1955:314).

Culture or cultural patterns frame different ways of how the world is perceived. A culture provides people with a way of seeing the world. Each individual culture categorises, translates and defines the world in which people live. Whenever a people learn a particular culture they are to some extent imprisoned by it, invariably without knowing it (Spradley 1979:5). Culture may also be regarded as something that is enacted or practised. Culture may be viewed in part as the ‘product of collective human praxis’ (Willis 1977:4). It is constituted by both experiences and inter-relationships which help to formulate a decision-making process, which in turn influences how choices are fashioned. Culture, then, may be regarded as being a process forged by social change, it is neither homogeneous nor one-dimensional. Evident tensions and ambiguities require some understanding of relations of differential power and conflict. In other words, cultural change has to be seen in terms of societal change (Yeo 1981: X1).

3.3 The Origins of Football

Each culture then has its own peculiarities or identity which shape or encode behaviour in a particular way. The early forms of English football may be seen to

have been fashioned by diverse customs and beliefs. However, the precise ‘cultural origins’ of ‘football’ are not precisely known. This point was succinctly made by one of its earliest commentators, Montagu Shearman, who noted, “The difficulty of finding its actual origin is as great as that of discovering the commencement of athletic contests” (Shearman 1887:246). There is, therefore, unlikely to be a satisfactory answer to this particular question (Magoun 1938:17). Evidence does exist, however, to suggest that a form of football was played in China well before Julius Caesar and the Romans introduced Harpastum (a game bearing some similarity to football) to Britain (Marples 1954). Nevertheless, according to Geoffrey Green, the author of one of the earliest histories of the game, whether the playing of football in the British Isles had its origin in Harpastum or the Greek game of Episkyros remains uncertain (Green 1953:5).

The Greeks had a number of ball games which were taken up by the Romans (Andrews 1871). In particular ‘episkyros’ was a particularly athletic ball game whereby a large number of participants were divided into two competing teams. The Roman game of ‘harpastum’ would appear to have been played along similar lines.

Harpastum and football were generally regarded as in all essentials the same game by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authorities in this country, though none of them expressly states that the Romans brought their game here... Harpastum... was a team game, played on a rectangular field, with a centre-line and two base lines; and the object was to throw the ball so that it eventually dropped behind the enemy’s base-line. The ball was passed from player to player... there seems to have been no kicking. ... players are described as grappling with one another... the more general term *sphaeromachia* - ball-fight – sometimes applied to this game, also bears witness to its violent character (Marples 1954:pp2-3).

The earliest records of English football relate to an account written by William Fitzstephen describing Shrovetide celebrations in 1175. According to Maurice Marples: “This celebrated document gives a vivid and authentic picture of Norman London and among other things of the amusements of Londoners, including a game of ball which has been identified as football” (1954, pp.19-20). Nevertheless, the term ‘football’ did not appear in English literature until the fourteenth century: “The

plain fact remains that football play is not recorded in England until *circa* 1314” (Magoun1938, pp.2-3).

3.4 The Early Forms of ‘Folk Football’

Thus, the precise origins of the game of ‘football’ are indeterminate. Nevertheless, early patterns or social currents within English football can readily be identified:

If one wishes to establish the occurrence of a trend or the `direction` of a social process, it is necessary to have firm knowledge of its `starting point` or `base`. And that, in the case of Rugby and soccer, means the folk games of pre-industrial Britain, even though they were, themselves, stages in an on-going process (Dunning and Sheard 1979:19).

Detailed below are various accounts of these early forms of English football. The term ‘football’ did not relate so much to a particular game as it was used synonymously to refer to a number of games played in various locations throughout the land. There was in effect a ‘family’ of related games (Russell 1997). Although this ‘family’ of games varied from one to another they shared a number of commonalities. The games were invariably wild and violent affairs with personal injury and loss of life being commonplace. These early football games effectively set the benchmark from which English football was to develop and established a blueprint for how the game was to be played.

The Cornish game of `hurling`, for example, was played in two distinct forms (Carew 1953[1602]). Carew observed that in East Cornwall, a throwing game developed. This game was played between fifteen to thirty players on each side. The goals were made from two bushes some eight to ten feet apart and another set “ten or twelve score off”. Victory was secured by, “whoever can catch and carry through his adversary’s goal hath won the game”. This type of game was usually played at weddings whereupon the wedding guests agreed to take on all comers. The second type of ‘hurling’ was bound by fewer rules and regulations, the goals being gentlemen’s houses or towns or villages three or four miles apart with unlimited

number of players and without the “matching of men”. A silver ball was thrown up and the winning team was the one who could catch and carry the ball to the designated place. These games were usually played on holidays and neither team, “pursued by the adverse party”, will leave until, “within all respects he be laid flat on God’s dear earth” (1953[1602]: 75-76). Carew continued:

I cannot well resolve whether I should more commend this game for the manhood and exercise, or condemn it for the boisterousness and harms which it begetteth...when the hurling is ended, you shall see them retiring home as from a pitched battle, with bloody pates, bones broken and out of joint, and such bruises as serve to shorten their days” (1953[1602]:76).

What are particularly notable about these remarks are the references to football being ‘manly’, physical and athletic. These cultural traits were set to become the very basis of ‘muscular Christianity’ promoted by the English public schools during the second half of the nineteenth century. These behavioural traits once again point to a continuity and consistency in terms of how English football was to be played.

The Welsh game of ‘knappan’ was similar in several respects to the Cornish game of ‘hurling’. This early knappan form of ‘folk football’ was a wild and rugged affair with no quarter given and none expected. The games were played according to loosely defined oral rules handed down from one generation to another. No form of referee or mediator took part. There were two types of ‘knappan’ matches: ‘Standing knappans’ were games played on ‘holy days,’ and ‘scratch matches’. Both these games attracted numbers that invariably exceeded 2,000 participants and many of these players rode on horseback. Horsemen invariably played the game with the largest cudgels they could find. ‘Victory’ was secured once a particular team could take no more, and began to bellow “peace”, “peace” (Owen 1906:270-82).

These so called ‘games’ were more directly associated with fighting than with sporting contests (Dunning and Sheard 1979:27). The matches reflected the particularly violent nature of the wider society. The ‘ball’ could be kicked, thrown, hit with a variety of sticks or carried. Games were consistently regarded as being

symbolic of identity formation and localised territorial encounters. The games were undifferentiated in three notable respects. Firstly, some elements of these games developed into particular games such as soccer or rugby. Secondly, there was little in the way of specialised tasks or divisions of labour. Thirdly, there was little to distinguish the role of a player from that of a spectator. These games were played in England from circa 1300 until circa 1900. Throughout the period, forms of 'folk football' continued to be wild, physical and violent. Due to their nature they attracted the ire of the established order. They were condemned as being a danger to both personal safety and public order (Dunning and Sheard 1979:28).

Folk games such as these were often played upon a saint's day or 'Holy Day' and often turned into grudge matches. Shrovetide became a popular time to play these games, which were frequently played at village fetes, fairs or wakes. The earliest surviving mention of 'Shrove Tuesday' football originated from Chester in 1533 (Magoun 1938:101). 'Folk football' games were also played on other festive occasions such as Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter. These games were principally played by ordinary folk, artisans and peasants. Nevertheless, both members of the gentry and the landed aristocracy also participated in these games (Shearman 1887). Games were very physical with personal injury and fatality commonplace. According to Geoffrey Green:

These Shrove Tuesday games were a combination of unarmed combat and all-in wrestling in pursuit of a ball through the streets by an unlimited number of players. Nothing was barred in an effort to attain the ball so it became known as 'mob football' ... In Derby on Shrove Tuesday a match was played between the young men of the Parish of all Saints and those of the Parish of St. Peter ... The match was started in the Market Place on the first stroke of 12 noon and lasted until sundown... by nightfall the town looked as though a real battle had taken place... Hence the term 'local Derby' that has grown into use when signifying the hard fought matches that usually take place between neighbouring sides in modern football (1953:7).

The cultural significance of these early games has been well documented. Malcolmsen, for example, made the following observations:

It has been the custom in most of the parishes and places in the western portions of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, for the inhabitants of Shrove Tuesday in every year to devote the greater part of the day to the manly sport of foot-ball, which has not been confined to the open spaces of the respective towns and villages, but the ball has been pursued by hundreds through the most public thoroughfares, the shops and houses of which were customarily closed, and the windows barricaded with hurdles, to prevent their being broken (1973:36).

Early references to forms of ‘folk football’ consistently describe these games in terms of aggression and physical excess. They were frequently *ad hoc* affairs characterised by violence and indiscipline with neither a referee nor basic rules of play. Many of these contests were effectively savage brawls which became a release for violent behaviour, providing an opportunity for local people to test their strength against their rivals. These ‘battles’ were particularly localised as no national or common standard of play existed. Strutt an early nineteenth century historian described it thus:

Foot-ball is so called because the ball is driven about with the feet instead of the hands...I cannot pretend to determine at what period the game of football originated; it does not however, to the best of my recollection, appear before the reign of Edward 11., and then, in 1349, it was prohibited by a public edict; not, perhaps, from any particular objection to the sport in itself, but because it co-operated, with other favourite amusements, to impede the progress of archery... When the exercise becomes exceeding violent, the players kick each other’s shins without the least ceremony, and some of them are overthrown at the hazard of their limbs...The danger attending this pastime occasioned King James 11 to say, “From this court I debarre all rough and violent exercises, as the foot-ball, meeter for lameing than making able the users thereof (1833: pp.100-1).

The games varied from one to another and from one locality to another, invariably reflecting local customs and local culture. Contests were largely a free for all involving unlimited numbers, while the pitch could feasibly encompass a complete town and its surroundings. These games frequently lasted for a number of hours before victory was declared. Rough horseplay, brawling, physical injury, petty vandalism, and much heavy drinking were commonplace (Yeo 1981:89).As Huizinga noted: “It would sometimes seem as if this period had left behind only the

memory of violence, of covetousness and moral hatred...no other enjoyment but of intemperance, of pride and of cruelty” (1924:22).

These accounts of the early forms of English football have been contested. Harvey, for example, has suggested that football games were regulated and played by less than ten per side, “for at least 300 years.” According to Harvey, the games were in fact regulated by rules, and represent the “true ancestors” of the modern game (Harvey 2005:1). Indeed, football games played with seven people on either side were noted to have taken place in the seventeenth century (Magoun1938:57).

While there may be some uncertainty regarding the extent to which these games were regulated by rules or the exact number of players, the physical nature of these various forms of football games is not in dispute. There are indeed many examples of the violent nature of Shrove football and other traditional football games (Harvey 2005:8). Medieval records have also described football as a particularly wild, formless punting affair played by an indeterminate number of players (Magoun1938:14).

A distinction can, however, be made between the impromptu *ad hoc* game and the more organised festive games that were played on regular occasions. No one particular game, therefore, could be regarded as being typical (Malcolmson 1973). Thus some football games could see anything from five to fifteen players whilst others sported unlimited numbers. Thus the notion of ‘football’ meant different things to different people in different parts of the country. Name was not a guarantee of the identity of the game itself (Dunning and Sheard 1979:23). What is clear, however, is that football games were widespread, very popular and keenly contested.

Physicality and violence were also associated with other sports as well as football during this period. It was not uncommon for various games, even the most passive, to descend into a free-for-all with the odd murder being commonplace (Whymer 1949). Cock-fighting, cudgelling and stone-throwing at both animals and humans

also met with widespread appeal. These ‘pastimes’ were as much of a Shrove Tuesday custom as was football. Violence was a feature of everyday life in the Middle Ages. Numerous sports emphatically reflected this cultural trait. For the male youth, fighting was seen to be “part of the everyday life of the young” (Holt 1989:19). Boxing came to be regarded as a ‘manly pastime’ conferring respect upon its participants. Nevertheless, the most violent practitioners of football games were noted to be the British. This reputation was retained by the British and their colonial cousins throughout the centuries (Murray 1994:3).

From the fourteenth century onwards, references to ‘football’ became more commonplace and a more definitive picture began to emerge. The first likely reference to such a game was captured in 1314 in the edict of Nicholas de Farndone, Mayor of London, which outlawed the game for causing uproar in the city (Magoun 1938). Although such records lack both clarity and detail there can be little doubt that the football played in Medieval England attracted widespread appeal. Part of this appeal was a consequence of football being played over the Shrove Tuesday festivities which were a two-day national holiday. Although, as I noted earlier in the chapter, football was played on a number of festive occasions throughout the year, in terms of kinship and family reunion, these days were very important particularly in the nineteenth century when mill and factory workers only had eight days holiday *per annum* (Delves 1981). The Shrovetide celebration was in many locations the principal football game of the year and in several market towns, including Ashbourne in Derbyshire, the Shrove Tuesday game has survived until the present day (Harvey 2005).

The popularity of football amongst ordinary people continued to flourish. The game became an accepted English institution during the Middle Ages, whilst its popularity was also evident in other countries including Scotland and Wales. The appeal of football in Scotland is particularly noteworthy. As Jackson observed: “Every year on Shrove Tuesday the bachelors and married men drew themselves up by the cross at Scone on opposite sides...In the course of play there was usually some violence between the parties ... all is fair at the ball in Scone” (Jackson 1900:6). Amongst the

ancient and war-like Scots, many early forms of ‘folk football’ included both men and women. Shrove Tuesday games played in Mid-Lothian, for example, were a case in point. Indeed, football in Scotland may have been more popular than it was in England at this time, with every town and village having a football team (Jackson 1900).

3.5 Popular Appeal and Regulatory Constraint

From the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries the name of ‘football’ was to appear in legal records, edicts and court cases alike. The game represented a nucleus of discord and social unrest. The social disquiet that various forms of the game engendered led to a barrage of legislation which attempted to banish it from the land. Between 1314 and 1667 ‘football’ and other popular recreational activities were banned on more than thirty occasions (Dunning and Sheard 1979:20). The continued attempts to suppress the game have been regarded by a number of authors as representing a concerted attempt to constrain or restrict working class culture. The possession of the streets represented a vitally important location in working class life in terms of casual gatherings, communication and earning a living (Delves 1981). A major complaint that persisted throughout the centuries was that football continued to be associated with common people (Murray 1994:5).

While, football remained pre-eminently an activity for ordinary people, to both the propertied class and moralists alike the game was synonymous with violence and the disruption of civil law (Marples 1954). Indeed, the popularity of football was even beginning to have an impact upon the accepted status of archery, a pastime considered to be essential to the defence of the land. In 1349, Edward III prohibited football for this very reason. The Hundred Years War (1338-1453) meant that the demand for English bowmen (archers) was vital to the defence of the realm. This requirement resulted in not only football being banned but a plethora of other sporting activities too. All able bodied men were required to defend the realm (Marples 1954).

Indeed, games such as 'La soule', a traditional ball game which originated in Normandy, were also being outlawed in France during this period for similar reasons (Salter 1912). Nevertheless, despite intensified opposition from monarchs, legislators and laymen alike, football remained a popular sport throughout this period, largely due perhaps to its simplicity and accessibility. To many people, the game afforded relief from the boredom and sterility of the working day, an escape from hardship, social injustice and inequality. Football also continued to provide an opportunity to display both physical and masculine prowess.

Football in England from the fourteenth century onwards continued to attract widespread appeal (Arlott 1975:325-6). The popularity of the game is found in literary references throughout this period. Chaucer, for example, used a football simile in the Knight's Tale, one of his Canterbury Tales:

The stomblen stedes strong, and down goth all. He rolleth under foot as
does a ball (Jackson 1900:12).

Shakespeare also referred to football in several of his plays. For example, in an address to Adriana in a *Comedy of Errors*, Dromio of Ephesus declared:

Am I so round with you, as you with me, that like a football you do spurn
me thus, You spurn me hence, and will spurn me hither, if I last in this
service, you must case me in leather (Jackson 1900:12).

During the Elizabethan Age football games frequently became a social screen or pretence for the gathering of a large body of men, invariably dissidents with rebellious intentions. As Malcolmson observed:

In the Fenland, for example, some of the attempts to resist the various
schemes for enclosure and drainage were initiated and organised under
the guise of a football game (1973: 39).

Evidence from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has suggested that football was deliberately used in an attempt to protect common rights. For example, the game was often used as pretence to entice a crowd to pull down the banks designed to

drain local fens (Marples 1954:26). In this way football further strengthened its appeal to the common man and further compounded both the distrust and dislike of popular football in established circles. The enclosure movement had a detrimental impact upon numerous outdoor activities. Enclosure gave rights to property owners that in turn denied the customary practices of playing various popular sports and pastimes. This trend was to intensify and, by the middle of the nineteenth century, open space for recreational activity had become particularly restricted. Indeed, although the majority of land enclosure had already taken place by 1700, this trend was to continue (Harvey 2005).

Due to the game's increasing popularity, football began to be played by a broader spectrum of people, including members of the upper classes who had themselves been influenced by a game in Italy known as *calcio*. Importantly, there were clear cultural differences emerging between the style of play that characterised *calcio* and the game that was developing in England. *Calcio* was first mentioned at the start of the 15th Century in an anonymous poem which described a game that took place in the Piazza Santo Spirito, Florence. This game was perhaps the most famous. However, the northern cities of Padua, Venice, Pisa and Piedmont also played a similar form of recreational activity (Money 1997:7). *Calcio* was played by the Italian aristocracy from the sixteenth century onwards. It was a game for the select few (Money 1997:11). The game was formal, ceremonial and disciplined. Each team had an appointed captain. Although *calcio* was played in a vigorous manner, elegance and style of play were more important than the actual result of the game (Murray: 1994:3).³

Throughout the Middle Ages football had invariably been played by agricultural workers and artisans on Sundays or Holy Days, as this was the only free time available to them. Puritans lost little time in making Sunday sport a specific target. Nevertheless, a number of prominent people were beginning to promote football on health and educational grounds. One such person was Richard Mulcaster, who

³ According to Money (1997) *calcio* was reinstated in 1930 to commemorate the quarter centenary of the siege of Florence and is now played annually in the Piazza Signorria, Florence.

became a supreme advocate of football during the sixteenth century. He became the first headmaster at Merchant Taylor's School London and later became headmaster at St Paul's another London public school (Marples 1954, pp68-69). Mulcaster regarded football as being particularly important in the promotion of health and physical strength. He also suggested that the game in England should be refereed, a suggestion that was not implemented at the time. Football teams, he maintained, should be made up of smaller numbers and played along similar lines to those of *calcio* (Marples 1954:68-69). A number of these beliefs were to closely resemble some of the ideas associated with the 'muscular Christianity' which came to be promoted by the English public schools during the nineteenth century.

Despite the continued opposition to the game, football was played extensively in Britain during the seventeenth century (Magoun 1938). Indeed, various forms of 'folk football' during this period were played not only by the peasantry but also by members of the higher social strata. In Cornwall, for example, members of the landed classes organised and participated in 'hurling' matches alongside the 'lower orders' (Dunning and Sheard 1979:33).

3.6 Industrialisation, Regulation and Control

As urbanisation developed, football began to face considerable opposition on both moral and religious grounds (Marples 1954). As the eighteenth century progressed, the process of urbanisation and industrialisation began to influence the leisure activities of ordinary people. Opposition towards these activities was based upon an attempt to regulate and control labour (Delves 1981). Leisure activities attracted widespread criticism and hostility for restricting industriousness and prosperity. The industrial worker was expected to march to the beat of industry and asceticism. Restricted recreational activity was perceived as being contrary to economic expansion. Due to the demands being made by trade and commerce various attempts to eliminate long-standing customs such as wakes and football matches were taking place in various parts of the country (Malcolmson 1973:118).

A disciplined labour force was regarded as being critical to economic development. Employers were eager to institute a new form of discipline and authority into their work force. Football was seen as an impediment to economic and social progress and continued to attract opposition from law enforcement agencies, industrial employers and landed interest groups alike. Equally, the game attracted opposition from the church and the middle-classes who sought to oppose recreational sports in the name of industrial and economic progress. Due in part to this body of disapproval, football in the early part of the nineteenth century became less popular. There were two principle reasons why legislative control during the nineteenth century was beginning to have a notable measure of success; firstly, because members of both the aristocracy and landed gentry withdrew their support; and secondly, due to improved methods of social control (Dunning and Sheard 1979:36). Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, labour was becoming more organised and class conscious (Thompson 1968). In such a situation, representatives of the established order continued to invoke forms of repression in an attempt to control the lives of the newly industrialised working class.

Employment was far from secure, while working conditions were invariably hostile and characterised by long, arduous hours enacted in difficult and dangerous conditions. Subjecting the working classes to a demanding work ethic based upon discipline, self-reliance, and deference was not completely new. However, an attempt to achieve some form of cultural supremacy was being made by the formation of a series of associated organisations whose objective was to control the leisure activities of the common man (Hargreaves 1986:21). These bodies were represented by organisations such as the ‘temperance movement’, the Lord’s Day Observance Society, and church and chapel. Industrialisation was leading to the development of new ways to categorise its subjects. Equally, the endless belief that football posed a threat to the social and political order, largely orchestrated by the propertied classes, continued as before.

The popularity of street football was eventually curtailed by the rising tide of legislation which had been introduced to bring order to the towns and cities. This

decline was particularly marked in London during the first half of the nineteenth century. Two notable pieces of legislation were of particular importance in this respect. The new Metropolitan Police Force introduced by Robert Peel in 1829 brought a degree of orderliness to urban society. Equally, The Highway Act of 1835 declared street football to be a criminal act and carried with it a fine of up to 40s (Murray 1994). This form of legislation was having a notable impact upon the popularity of the game. In 1860, for example, aside from the Public Schools and Universities, only two football clubs, the Dingley Dell and Crusaders featured in the sporting newspapers as playing first-class football matches, whilst *The Field* of 1862 scarcely mentioned football at all (Graham 1899). Indeed, as industrialisation advanced, a number of rural traditions, including forms of 'folk football' began to be challenged by a new order. Equally, the impoverished and degrading conditions under which working men were forced to live invariably contributed to the decline in the popularity of folk-games such as football (Dunning and Sheard 1979:35).

Nevertheless, attempts to restrict popular pastimes prompted active resistance. Football remained eminently popular, particularly so in the northern counties of England and in Scotland where it was played in a characteristically physical and aggressive manner. The culture associated with 'folk football' proved to be particularly resilient. Indeed, Shrovetide football witnessed a general pattern of growth during the nineteenth century despite some twenty-five per cent of Shrovetide football games being either 'suppressed' or 'moved' during the period (Harvey 2005). The game remained a pastime for the common man. As Magoun noted:

Until the development of organized athletics in the mid-nineteenth century, football – along with certain other violent games, cudgels for example – remained almost exclusively the property of the peasantry, of apprentices and of artisans. It was long a game of the lower classes, played by gentlemen only on the rarest of occasions (1938:7).

From as early as the fourteenth century onwards there is little evidence to suggest that the manner in which English football was played was to change in any material sense. In 1841, the historian John Graham visited Darwen in Lancashire. He noted

that as soon as they had finished their shift at the local factory or mill, local boys poured into the streets to play football. The Highway Act of 1835 may have made street games illegal but few actually observed this legislation (Dewhurst 2011, pp17-18). Indeed, the traditions of 'folk football' are unlikely to have simply dissolved into the newly emergent industrialised landscape. Studies of children's pastimes, for example, have shown that games have considerable longevity (Opie I & P 1984: ix). Equally, the intense localism and rivalry that had characterised much of traditional English football was another reason why football enjoyed such longevity (Delaney 1984).

English popular culture adapted to both urbanisation and industrialisation. A culture that had been weaned from blood sports did indeed acquire a certain amount of respectability and domesticity. However, a most important theme that has run through the history of English popular culture has been its consistency and continuity. As Golby and Purdue have noted: "It is that ingredient which has confounded the hopes of reformers, of whatever religious or political persuasion" (1984:14-15).

There was also an extraordinary growth in the popularity of football towards the end of the nineteenth century. The speed with which the popularity of the game expanded during this period suggested that football had its own momentum rather than being something that was 'passed down' from 'on high'. This upsurge in popularity was particularly evident in both Liverpool and Manchester. It is unlikely that this momentum could have been evaluated in terms of a 'rational recreational initiative induced from above' (Holt 1988:71-83).

3.7 Conclusion

Football may be considered to be a form of cultural expression as well as a game. While the origins of the game remain obscure, English football developed an inimitable culture. Equally, if one wishes to establish the occurrence of a particular trend then the basis of the modern game may be traced back to the early forms of

‘folk football’ played in England during the fourteenth century and most likely earlier. The cultural traits that characterised the various forms of ‘folk football’ were notable for their aggression and physical excess. Folk-games were, however, diverse in nature and the level of inherent violence varied accordingly. Nevertheless, football became synonymous with aggression and social disorder. There are numerous examples of Shrove and other forms of ‘folk football’ that were particularly wild and violent affairs (Marples 1954). Disruption and social unrest led to a plethora of proscriptive legislation introduced from the fourteenth century onwards. Despite this legislative onslaught, however, football continued to be a popular activity in pre-industrial society. The game remained almost exclusively the property of the peasantry, apprentices and artisans (Magoun 1938).

The process of industrialisation heralded socio-economic measures and restraint that attempted to regulate and control the everyday leisure activities of ordinary individuals. While the popularity of football may have declined in the light of this development, the robust style in which the game was played did not change in any visible way. As I will illustrate in the following chapter, popular culture continued to demonstrate a remarkable resilience and consistency. The might and muscle associated with some traditional forms of ‘folk football’ created a blueprint for how the game was to be played. This style of play was readily taken up by the English public schools during the nineteenth century.

Chapter 4 Manliness and the rise of ‘muscular Christianity’

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I set out to illustrate how the earlier forms of ‘folk football’ impacted upon the manner in which public school football was to be played. At the same time as traditional forms of football were being challenged and contested by a plethora of punitive legislation, the game was set to become revitalised by these schools. This revival was based upon an educational ideology founded upon an athleticism associated with both manliness and ‘muscular Christianity’. As the nineteenth century progressed, manliness evolved into the concept of ‘muscular Christianity’ which emphasised physicality and physical manliness. This medium was readily translated through a cult- like emphasis upon games, notably football. ‘Muscular Christianity’ promoted a combative spirit which found expression in public school football. Nevertheless, while the public schools reshaped and reformed football, they did not remake the game. Popular culture was both tenacious and resolute, its ideologies and beliefs displayed longevity, continuity and consistency that had a notable impact upon how football was taken up by the public schools. Indeed, to be able to understand how far things remained the same is just as important as being aware of the extent to which things may have changed (Holt 1989).

4.2 The Resurgence of Public School Football

During the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the majority of English grammar schools, which had been founded for the education of local boys, had begun to decline. One reason for this failure was due to a classical syllabus which emphasised the teaching of both Latin and Greek. This classical education came to be regarded as being unnecessary for many of the newly-formed occupations. A number of schools such as Winchester, Eton, Westminster, Harrow, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury and Rugby turned into public, as opposed to local, schools by attracting fee paying pupils (Money 1997:29). As the 18th century progressed, an increasing

number of private schools offered a more modern curriculum. Most of these schools became boarding-schools or so-called public schools.

The football played by these public schools during the nineteenth century was an adaptation of the earlier forms of 'folk football' (Dunning and Sheard 1979). Various forms of public school football were initially characterised by a large swathe of players. Charterhouse, for example, played a form of football called 'football in cloisters' which was made up of boys numbering between fifty or sixty, all roughing and kicking in an attempt to capture the ball (Dunning and Sheard 1979:48). In a format very similar to the early forms of 'folk football' both kicking and handling were permitted until about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Public school football mirrored the wild indiscipline that many of these schools portrayed. Indeed, a number of these quintessentially British institutions in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were riotous institutions noted for open rebellion. In 1818, for example, a revolt at Winchester, the oldest English public school, could only be suppressed by "the militia using fixed bayonets" (Dunning and Sheard 1979:45). Disorder among the pupils emanated from a combination of factors including differences in the social class of masters and pupils and conflicting educational objectives. A number of these insurrections became commonplace towards the end of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century (Money 1997:64).

The football played at public schools was fertile ground for the continuity of early forms of traditional 'folk football'. Pupils at British universities had played football throughout both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, during the eighteenth century, as I noted in Chapter 2, the popularity of the game declined, largely due to increasing legislative opposition. Football during this period was widely considered to be vulgar and not in keeping with the pursuits of a gentlemanly ideal. However, once the English public schools began to promote football during the nineteenth century, the appeal of the game intensified. In that context, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge revived their interest.

The characteristics of a public school education became abundantly clear. According to James Walvin:

Often enough the only virtues which the life at public school with any certainty indicated seem to have been those of the dark ages – courage, ability to bear pain and loyalty to ‘immediate companions’. Social and recreational behaviour reflected the general style of life in the schools and the games played consequently mirrored the hierarchical and physical, and sometimes violent nature of school society in general. Football seemed an ideal game (1975:31).

Much of the physicality and aggression borne out of ‘folk football’ became reinforced and legitimated at many of these schools. There was a continuity and consistency to the manner in which football was to be played.

Over the decades Darwen weavers adapted folk football to the spaces in which they were able to play, and so did boys at Westminster, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Rugby and no doubt many forgotten institutions as well... The truth is that in team numbers, formations and attitudes, rich and poor were very similar (Dewhurst 2012: 20-25).

The agricultural worker and artisan appeared to transfer their ‘football skills’ to the ‘Collegers’ and ‘Oppidans’. Collegers referred to poor scholars, whereas ‘oppidans’ was a term which referred to fee-paying pupils or ‘boarders’. Boys playing football at Charterhouse and Rugby, for example, wore iron-capped boots (‘navvies’) to make their ‘hacking’ more effective. Shins were noted to have turned ‘black and blue’ in the process (Dunning and Sheard 1979:49). The physical nature of Charterhouse football was exemplified in 1820 by a former Charterhouse pupil. According to Tod: “Football was not so elaborately regulated a game as it is now, or quite so savage a game as it is now ... but there were a good many broken shins, for most of the fellows had iron tips to their very strong shoes, and some freely boasted of giving more than they took” (1900:275). There is no evidence to suggest that public school football before 1860 exerted an influence upon how football was being played by the wider society (Harvey 2005:49-50). Nevertheless, the wider society may have had a material impact upon the manner in which public school was played both before and after this date.

Football at these schools was played in an idiosyncratic manner. Rules varied from one school to another and the type of game played was, in some instances, influenced by the availability of space. The determining factor in some instances reflected the size or shape of the playing grounds (Wymer 1949). Indeed, limited space shaped how the game was to be played at several of these schools (Marples 1954; Green 1953). Football at Charterhouse, for example, or ‘football in cloisters’ as it was called, had been played at the school when it was located in London from 1611-1873 (prior to moving to Godalming in 1872). The Cloisters were 70 yards long and 12 feet wide, with a door at each end serving as the goals.⁴

Eton school initially played the ‘wall game’ which was played between collegers and oppidans and involved a particularly wild and intense scrimmage. The ‘wall game’ was eventually prohibited by the school due to excess violence. Dr Keate, the headmaster of Eton from 1827-1836, decided that the game was a risk to personal welfare. (Holt1989:77). Nevertheless, the game continues to be played at Eton today. The other form of football played at Eton at this time, and perhaps more historically significant, was the Eton Field Game. This game was played on a more regular basis than the ‘wall game’, with eleven players on each team who were not allowed to handle the ball. Indeed, the Field Game provided the basis of what was to become the modern game of ‘soccer’.

A notable difference between the types of football played in the wider society and the football played at a number of public schools was the notion of ‘self-rule’. At these schools, the game was adapted and marshalled by the boys themselves which was largely based upon the ‘prefect–fagging’ system⁵. This system of self-rule had developed within the schools and became adopted by Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester (Dunning and Sheard 1979). This

⁴ According to Tod (1900) the cloisters were not part of the Carthusian monastery. They were erected by the Duke of Norfolk in 1571 to form a covered space or walkway that sat between his ducal palace and tennis court. This is where the cloisters football game, distinct to Charterhouse school, was played.

⁵ The prefect- fagging system was a system of authority relations, or ‘self-rule, that developed in the public schools (Dunning & Sheard1979:40).

authority system ensured that public schools became the foundation for the modernising of English football.

As the nineteenth century progressed, public schools in Britain were responsible for the rapid expansion of organised sports, which not only included football but also rugby, cricket and track and field events. A new approach towards games in general started to emerge. The reputation of the game [rugby] for the development of manliness and character received special notice from a number of headmasters (Rev. F. Marshall 1925[1892]:73). ‘Character-building’ principles were to become the foundation of a deliberate educational policy which emphasised how sport could promote positive virtues such as ‘manliness,’ physique and exuberance.

Different sports engendered different responses. For example, Harrow School promoted both football and cricket in the early nineteenth century. The cricket match between Eton and Harrow that was initially played in 1821 became a regular fixture and attracted widespread interest (Newsome 1961). Conversely, while cricket was seen as an acceptable sport at Shrewsbury School by headmaster Samuel Butler, both rowing and football were seen to be too dangerous and were prohibited (Newsome 1961). However, these were very much exceptions to a rapidly expanding ideology of athleticism. This culture quickly spread to both grammar and secondary schools alike (Holt 1989).

As the cult of what came to be known as ‘athleticism’ advanced, playing football at these schools became a mandatory rather than voluntary pastime (Marples 1954). As noted earlier, many of these schools played a type of football that was peculiar to a particular school. Consequently, inter-school games were almost impossible to organise. J.C. Thring and his brother Edward Thring, the headmaster of Uppingham School, both attempted to address this situation by introducing football rules. In 1862, J.C. Thring published the ‘simplest game’, a document that contained ten basic rules of football which would allow for inter-school games to take place (Marples 1954).

In the following year, 1863, the Cambridge Association Game was established, largely based upon the 'simplest game'. In the same year, the Football Association was formed in London. Football rules were modified in relation to several of the Cambridge rules (Gibson and Pickford 1906). The founding principles of the Association Game, including defined boundaries, goal-posts and regulated play may be traced directly to the development of public school football. Thus the public schools were of particular importance to the early development and regulation of football, as were the universities. Cambridge in particular provided many dignitaries that were to become founding members of the Football Association. It is equally worth noting that virtually every popular pastime throughout the Victorian era became regulated by a central authority during this period (Whymer 1949).

4.3 The Tenacity of Popular Culture

The degree to which football was reconstituted by the public schools is, however, difficult to determine. There is a paucity of research that relates to football being played by agricultural workers and the industrial classes throughout much of the nineteenth century (Taylor 1971). Similarly, various authors have argued that pre-industrial culture dissipated during the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, Briggs (1960) and Hobsbawm (1968) both noted that cultural change was particularly evident towards the end of the nineteenth century, which largely reflected the demands of the newly emergent industrial society. These demands were both complex and indirect.

Similarly, industrialisation may equally have provided an impetus to transform football into a modern sport. For example, changes occurred on disparate but interconnected levels of social integration. At the level of society as a whole, a shift in the balance of power between the classes was evident. This led to an increase in the power of the urban middle classes, or a process of *embourgeoisement*. Thus as Maguire suggested: "The power chances of bourgeois groups increased" (1986:267). This process, led in turn, to a quest for control at the 'intermediate' level, which

included the major institutions such as the public schools. It was in that context that the initial stages of modernisation began to take place (Dunning and Sheard 1979).

Public school football was nevertheless likely to have been influenced by particular attitudes, values and beliefs that had been established over the previous centuries, rather than reflecting a master plan or grand design that was simply passed down from above. In many ways, football was particularly localised, reflecting class subcultures, folk-traditions and values that were pertinent to a particular geographical location; games and sports were very much a central part of English society. It is reasonable to assume that the nineteenth century probably drew upon pre-industrial traditions which were reshaped rather than remade (McKibbin 1983). Once again, the consistency inherent within English football is particularly apparent. The pre-industrial traditions that characterised English football during the nineteenth century were more likely to have been reformed rather than replaced by the public schools and universities.

While public schools flourished during the 1860s and 1870s, so too did the establishment of working class football in areas such as Lancashire and the Midlands. The contributions made by the working classes to an urban lifestyle and sporting ethos has been noted by a number of authors: “The sponsorship and patronage of the rich certainly did not imply a submission to their control and values ... the working class, for lack of any alternative, was prepared to accept for as long as necessary, the fact of middle-class sponsorship, but not its ideology” (Cunningham 1980:128).

The masculinity and endeavour promoted and prized in the workplace found expression in the local football team. Urban workers were unlikely to have assumed a passive role in how football was to be played. Rather, despite the rapid growth of industrialisation and the pivotal role public schools played in what Elias (2000), called the ‘civilising’ of English football, the traditional combative formats of ‘folk-football’ remained. Locality, competition and identity appear to have played a particularly important role in the popularity and continuity of the game. From the

seventeenth century onwards sport, by tradition, had always been popular in England. Sporting traditions continued to be extremely popular, despite welfare inadequacies, limited income and the availability of space (Bailey 1978).

The dramatic rise in the popularity of sports towards the end of the nineteenth century derived a considerable amount of impetus from working class participation. Indeed, industrialisation impacted upon this popularity in three notable ways. The industrial revolution generated changes in both work and leisure patterns. In the formative part of the nineteenth century, work expanded at the expense of leisure activities. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, numerous industrialists began to recognise that sport in general and football in particular could play a utilitarian role. This recognition led to numerous works teams being established. Equally, economic growth and innovation led to both an increase in real incomes and in leisure time. These changes led, in turn, to the development of commercialized spectator sport. This transition helped sport to become a readily identifiable industry (Mangan 1988).

The lower echelons of society had a notable influence on the cultural forms of new urban ways of living (Cunningham 1980). Equally, 'football culture' was characterised in terms of a ferocity and cunning. These cultural values and beliefs were pervasive, tenacious and compelling, being passed down from one generation to another (Veblen 1925). The mid-nineteenth century working class culture continued to be characterised by behavioural patterns that promoted and valued hard drinking, gambling and hard sports (Joyce 1980). The popular culture to which football was inextricably linked flourished from the Restoration, i.e. the mid-seventeenth century, to the inception of the 'industrial revolution' during the mid-eighteenth century. Festivals, wakes, and rituals not only survived but were actively sponsored due to the commercial interests of both publicans and fairground entertainers (Hargreaves 1986). These traits formulated a 'bottom up' or creative culture based upon popular recreational activities such as folk music, trade clubs wakes and rituals and the pursuit of popular sports (Arlott 1979). Leisure activities, including football, were central to the lifestyles of ordinary folk. Popular leisure was

both public and gregarious, bound up in local custom and tradition. Popular culture remained in rude health promoting both vitality and longevity.

While the factory system cast a long shadow over many sporting activities, sub-cultures had their own particular longevity and consistency which limited the impact of both repression and reform.

Popular culture under attack proved remarkably resilient; here was vigorous resistance to enforced change, a significant degree of continuity was maintained and innovation went on nevertheless, showing that there was no necessary fit between culture, the mode of production and the new social order...popular sports strongly disapproved of by the improvers...such as ...folk football lived on (Hargreaves 1986:31).

Indeed, many middle-class radicals and Evangelical Whigs were particularly supportive of popular culture as sporting pastimes were considered socially cohesive and unifying (Cunningham 1980). Any attempt to undermine this unity acted both to deny particular pleasures and to promote social discord. This perception was fundamental to the development of both an ideology of athleticism and a revised concept of manliness promoted by the Anglican Church. Sport can be said to have acted to unify, to embody the spirits of Englishness and the Empire which obscured class divisions and differentiated the nation from the 'insignificant foreigner'.

4.4 The Differentiation of Rugby Football and Association Football

The on-going development and modernisation of football was an unintended consequence of the social changes brought about by industrialisation. As I noted in the previous chapter, these changes took place at the societal level, reflecting a change in the balance of power between the social classes in particular. This shift largely occurred through an increase in the power of the urban middle class or bourgeoisie. These changes occurred on distinct but interconnected levels of social integration. The process of *embourgeoisement*, at the intermediate level, led to the struggle for control of major institutions including the public schools. It was in this

context that the incipient modernisation of football began to take place (Dunning and Sheard 1979).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, football became differentiated by two distinct and contrasting styles. These styles were based upon football being played either mainly with the feet or mainly with the hands. For despite each public school developing different methods of play, as I noted earlier, both kicking and handling the ball had been permissible. By 1850, two distinct styles of play had been established. Social class tensions related to status rivalry between various public schools were notable in this respect (Dunning and Sheard (1979).

Schools such as Rugby, Marlborough and Cheltenham had instituted the handling game, whereas older schools such as Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Charterhouse and Shrewsbury promoted football being played with the feet. Moreover, while ‘folk football’ had essentially been a kicking game, rugby football evolved as an attempt to differentiate the game from the type played by the ‘lower orders’- a game considered to be ‘appropriate for gentlemen’. In 1845, Rugby School codified the game by the introduction of written rules for the first time, which meant that it became much easier for the game to be played at other schools. By 1860, rugby football had become established as a principal public school game.

4.5 Manliness in Transition

Of particular importance to the ideology of athleticism were the concepts of ‘manliness’ and ‘muscular Christianity’. These two inter-related concepts were to play an important role in terms of how English football was to be played. Historically, the concept of manliness has been expressed in a number of different ways, with different formats emphasising different connotations. In early modern England, for example, manhood, an earlier notion of manliness, was sometimes referred to as an ‘estate’ (Shepard 2003). Particularly important to the notion of this ‘estate’ was gender differences. No comparable idea of ‘womanhood’ existed and those women who did display ‘manly traits’ were invariably reviled rather than

revered. Age, household status and wider social status were similarly seen to be part of the 'estate' of manhood. Manhood was also defined in terms of a particular phase in the life cycle, notably middle-age. Status was often seen in terms of a self-styled respectability, based upon honesty or decency in contrast to those who were seen to be base or lewd: "Alternative codes of manhood, rooted in values ranging from prodigality, excess, bravado, brawn, transience, and collectivism, were positively claimed by, and became increasingly associated (often negatively) with, the 'meaner' sorts of men" (Shepard 2003:252).

Western concepts of manhood or manliness were, however, more than mere expressions of physicality. Manliness evolved from the advent of Christianity and more specifically from the development of Western agricultural society (Stearns 1990). Western societies developed a clear distinction between male strength and female submissiveness. The distinctive features of the manly tradition evolved *via* a Western type of agricultural society which itself was notably patriarchal. Indeed, within eighteenth century English society 'manliness' was a virtue attainable by both sexes (Hitchcock and Cohen 1999). The concept has also been considered an expression of the degree of success within the male sphere of work, a code of conduct based upon discipline and self-reliance (Sussman 1995). During the 'long eighteenth century', for example, a number of authors concerned with 'conduct literature' noted that 'physical hardships' were considered an essential part of the socialisation process. Much of Victorian education policy proclaimed that it was instructive for boys to accept pain with a 'manly spirit' (Foyster 1999).

As the industrial and social landscape changed, so, too, did the notion of manliness. The role of 'manly' provider or 'breadwinner' for one's family began to carry forth both pride and substance during industrialisation and beyond. To some extent, changing patterns of manliness may be seen in terms of the degree to which men adapted to these changes. Capitalism increasingly legitimated the disparity between a man's labour and his reward (Stearns 1990).

As industrialisation gathered momentum, males became the pivotal figure within the family, largely based upon the responsibility to find work and to provide economic succour. Hitherto, both husband and wife had shared this responsibility but, with industrialisation, this responsibility fell largely upon the male. This newly found responsibility brought forth a greater share of economic power and authority which conferred manliness in a symbolic manner (Stearns 1990). Similarly, this newly-formed authority meant that, for many families, the male also became responsible for discipline. The authoritarian father figure became a feature of both working class and middle class families alike: “Both working-class and middle-class images of manliness shared a common concern with courage, loyalty and, to varying degrees, of Christian ideals” (Maguire 1986:273). Manliness, however, found different degrees of expression in both the workplace and the home. Work invariably came to be regarded as a ‘manly’ or ‘masculine’ activity. Puritan ethics and ideas also influenced the development of European capitalism. Work became dignified and regarded as being an expression of God’s ‘calling’ and salvation (Weber 1930 [1905:219]). Patterns of ‘manly’ behaviour that developed during this period demonstrated a marked resilience to change. Working-class manhood had a particular rigidity and character. Those individuals who failed to meet this standard became alienated from their peers (Stearns 1990).

Manliness was nevertheless subject to differences in interpretation in both Victorian and Edwardian England. There was a variety of competing codes of conduct which reflected the differences and structure of the wider society. These differences also reflected degrees of social tension within and between the social class structures. The newly formed working classes could readily identify with a new form of manliness which they adopted in their own particular way (Maguire 1986). The popular culture of Regency England was predominantly public and gregarious. It was essentially masculine, disorderly and violent. Despite the efforts of reformers, evangelicals and humanitarians alike, the popular culture of the day continued to be unrestrained. Indeed, the ruling classes were particularly aware of these excesses but remained largely tolerant (Golby and Purdue 1984). The Victorian notion of manliness then constituted a variety of forms which included integrity, earnestness and generosity

(Newsome 1961). Fundamental to this concept, however, were the qualities of courage, virtue and patriotism (Vance 1985).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, however, manliness as a concept was to change noticeably. Manliness became associated with 'hardness', stoicism and endeavour. The concept was transformed from the moral earnestness of the evangelicals and Dr Arnold to the respect for might and muscle which characterised the close of the Victorian era (Roper and Tosh 1991). Manliness as a belief or moral code grew rapidly and became commonplace within the 'Anglo-Saxon' world. As a concept or mode of behaviour, manliness was as recognisable in Britain as it was in the United States (Mangan and Walvin 1987).

Manliness was not, therefore, peculiar to the English middle-classes and public schools; the notion of 'manliness' similarly impacted upon the proletariat. This code of conduct gained widespread appeal through various formats such as literature, schoolbooks, charitable institutions and ecclesiastical organisations. Both in Britain and America, manliness became a distinctive moral code which helped to structure the path of everyday life (Mangan and Walvin 1987). Within Victorian society, Christian manliness gained notable momentum. For example, the concept was articulated in the popular literature of both Tennyson and Coleridge. Indeed, much English literature expressed a similar theme. Kipling, in his poem *If* mused:

If you can fill the unforgiving minute,
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth, and everything that's in it
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son

(Gilmore 1990:18).

Coleridge also played a significant role in fashioning the thoughts and ideas of the early Victorian clergy. He defined manliness as a state of maturity and responsibility, a duty to develop intelligence, energy, moral character and Christian faith. Coleridge had a profound influence upon Arnold in terms of his educational ideals. He became, as Newsome observed: "The inspiration that converted unruly boys into Christian

men. 'I act therefore I am' [provided] as good a slogan for the early conception of manliness as we can hope to find" (1961:197).

Importantly, religious debate came increasingly to be divorced from the practical issues represented in everyday life. An uneasy alliance began to develop between church and state. The growth in scepticism and rationalism was beginning to question both aspects of Christianity and the role of the established church. Although differences between the secular and the profane have always been characterised by division and discord, this separation was particularly heightened during the 1850s. As industrialisation and urbanisation advanced, so, too, did the call for religious duty and obligation. Religious discipline began to wane and was to be replaced by a perceptible growth in individuality and self-expression. Accepted assumptions within ecclesiastical circles became challenged by both Darwinism and scientific and technological development. Rapid social change engendered significant cultural transition and the relationship between church, state and progress instituted profound discord and debate.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, manliness as a concept became markedly influenced by the advance of upper and middle class prosperity and the continued rise of the public schools. These schools, as boarding establishments, had to look after their charges for an extensive period of time. This responsibility coincided with greater sexual maturity and increased physical development amongst a rapidly expanding number of middle-class boys. The schools had to cope, for example, with puberty and adolescence. The notion of manliness now provided a physical and moral connotation as well as a foil to the development of male sexuality. Manliness became synonymous with character-formation, a strong body and spirit, earnestness and the purity of heart. Games and football in particular, were seen to be the most powerful means by which sexual behaviour, such as homosexuality and masturbation, could be controlled. Sport was considered to be a means of bodily purification, part of a general trend towards rational recreation as well as practical Christianity (Holt 1989). The concept of manliness evolved into the notion of 'muscular Christianity.'

4.6 The Evolution of ‘muscular Christianity’

The term ‘muscular Christianity’ appeared in the first Oxford English Dictionary published in 1895. According to Kendall: “The term began to enjoy a degree of expression ... in relation to the Kingsley group about 1857” (1947:177). The term was initially coined by T. C. Sanders and first appeared in written form when it was used by James Fitzjames Stephen in the *Edinburgh Review*, in January 1858. Stephen used the term in reference to the ideas of Charles Kingsley in his review of the novel *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, written by Thomas Hughes (Chandos 1984:266).

‘Muscular Christianity’ was, however, not an entirely new phenomenon. Nor was it a philosophy that was created by a particular individual or set of individuals or by a distinct set of circumstances. In fact, the phenomenon emerged before the Victorian era had begun. Many features of school and university life associated with ‘muscular Christianity’ were established and practised before the pursuit of manliness had become so universally acclaimed (Newsome 1961). The private schools or academies of the eighteenth century, amidst a broad syllabus, promoted physical exercise and physical training which included fencing, gymnastics and horse riding. All pupils were seen to participate in ‘sports’ (Hans 1951). In many ways, these eighteenth century private academies established a format which would be mirrored in the public schools of the nineteenth century. Most of these institutions were boarding establishments catering for pupils from an affluent and upper middle class background.

The idea of ‘muscular Christianity’ may in part also be seen to be located in the work of Dr Thomas Arnold, for it was he who promoted the notion of the ‘Christian gentleman’. Arnold was the headmaster at Rugby School between 1828 and 1842. Arnold regarded life as a contest between good and evil and regarded religion as being indispensable to citizenship, social cohesion and an indispensable feature of manliness (Bamford 1975).

Contrary to popular belief, Arnold attributed little value to athleticism or team games either as a means to an end or an end in themselves. This was not to say that Arnold was opposed to sports and games. He was indeed sympathetic to some of the values portrayed by ‘muscular Christianity’ not least of all ‘Christian’ values, without necessarily promoting the athletic ideal. For Arnold, education and religion were synonymous, as both forces directed the individual towards a Christian and moral society. He believed passionately in the power of both education and religion to secure this end. While this ideal has always been associated with ecclesiastical practice, there is strong evidence to suggest that such a principle enjoyed a renaissance during the formative years of the nineteenth century, based largely upon the desire for educational and public school reform. (Newsome1961).

Arnold fervently believed in the dominion of personal willpower and endeavour. As the new century unfolded, a competitive spirit slowly emerged to meet a reinvigorated religious and educational conviction. Likewise, ecclesiastical reform was of paramount importance to Arnold, who wished to promote the religious and the moral, the gentlemanly and intellectual ideal. Only religious and moral knowledge (which for him was Christian knowledge) could both guide and instruct. As Chandos stated: “His successors shifted the balance of the contents of religion to alter its character from his theopathic crusading zeal ... to a kind of sanctified, but discreetly manly, social discipline. In its cruder manifestations, this became known as ‘muscular Christianity’” (1984:266).

Herbert Spencer and his notion of ‘social evolution’, or ‘social Darwinism’, also promoted ‘muscular Christianity’ throughout this period. Spencer suggested that: “Society advances where its fittest members are allowed to assert their fitness with the least hindrance and where the least fitted are not artificially prevented from dying out” (1884:81). For Spencer, progress advanced through a type of natural selection which was itself predicated upon competition. Competition was ‘the law of life’. Hardship was seen to be indispensable to life since the intellect is, by itself, unable to shape human nature. Changes of character for Spencer came from awakening appropriate ‘emotions’ rather than through learning. Spencer referred to football as

‘the re-barbarisation’ of society (Spencer 1902:128-9). Thus, the notion of ‘social Darwinism’ as a conceptual tool may be considered to be as equally valid as the concept of ‘muscular Christianity’ in relation to an understanding of English public schools (Mangan 1981:93-116).

The public schools manifested a range of ideologies including athleticism, patriotism and socially inspired Darwinian agnosticism.⁶ These ideologies were manifestly displayed upon English playing fields. For it was here, in the midst of mock battles, that public school boys developed bravery, physicality and ruthlessness (Holt 1989).⁷ Public school life was tough. This ruggedness was promoted largely by games, which had become a sort of tyranny at the public schools in the late nineteenth century (Worsley 1941). The schools advanced the notions of competition and endeavour a struggle inextricably linked to the ebb and flow of everyday existence.

4.7 The ‘muscular Christianity’ of Thomas Hughes and Charles Kingsley

The notion of manliness became specifically and fundamentally re-appraised by a number of individuals including Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Thomas Wentworth Higginson (Mangan and Walvin 1987). Between the great Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867, both Charles Kingsley and his

⁶ Hofstadter (1955:pp6-10) considered Social Darwinism as being a secular philosophy which embraced hard work, discipline, self-denial and human suffering, a “kind of naturalistic Calvinism” that gave “the force of a natural law to the idea of competitive struggle.” Bannister (1979:4) similarly viewed Social Darwinism in terms of the ability “to describe and explain phenomena in terms of competition and conflict.” For Bannister, ‘Social Darwinism’ impacted upon social thought in two principal ways: firstly, in promoting the idea that nature must be transcended rather than accepted; secondly, to counter both laissez-faire policy and utilitarianism.

⁷ Most accounts of English public school education, as Roper & Tosh (1991) noted, afford little detail to the role played by a mother or nanny in the years that preceded a public school education. The concept of sexual purity and attitudes towards woman may equally have a notable influence upon ideas of manliness.

friend Thomas Hughes adapted an emerging belief that had begun to evolve within the wider society that individual achievement and salvation could be attained through religious service and endeavour (Vance 1985). Although the public schools were not characterised by uniformity, there was in all of these institutions an emphasis upon both discipline and religion orientated towards the pursuit of Christian manliness with an emphasis upon both 'self-reliance' and independence.

A public school education took place in a male preserve, invariably characterised by bullying, intimidation and physical abuse, so the degree of 'Christianity' contained within the ideology of 'muscular Christianity' would appear to be debatable. The ideology built within the schools was secular as well as spiritual and these values were as dispassionate as they were Christian. The emphasis rested upon muscularity rather than morality (Vance 1985). Indeed, the idea of muscularity was evident in all of the novels written by Kingsley (Kendall 1937:106).

Public school values and beliefs were gruelling and challenging rather than necessarily Christian, although many of the teachers were, in fact, clergymen. So while the schools invariably portrayed a veneer of 'Christianity', the reality was somewhat different. Much of the written work published by Thomas Hughes, for example, illustrated a public school life devoid of compassion, godliness or gallantry. Rather, the work celebrated the necessities of mental toughness, the ability to take hard knocks and the need to adjust to secular reality.

Hughes gave expression to the manliness of Christ in the format of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. He insisted upon a relationship being made between a vigorously human Christ and a vigorously humane Christianity which was opposed to ascetic other-worldliness (Vance 1985). By about 1870, Tom Brown had set a new code of conduct for schoolboys. The teaching of Arnold had been supplanted by a manliness which proclaimed the virtues of animal spirits and prowess at games. These attributes came to be regarded as an admirable schoolboy character trait (Newsome 1961). In fact, it was, during the Victorian era that boys' story papers came to be

characterised by aristocratic boy heroes which legitimated their social class position (Boyd 1991).

'Muscular Christianity' was not, however, completely devoid of spirituality. Kingsley and Hughes have been perhaps underestimated in terms of the ethical and spiritual imperatives that their 'muscular Christianity' advanced (Vance 1985). In other words, there was more in 'muscular Christianity' than mere might and muscle. Hughes sought within the pages of Tom Brown's Schooldays to unite the Anglican Church with the lower classes. This attempt at unification, however, was more a kind of reconciliation rather than a realignment of the social order (Mack and Armytage 1952).

Manliness was couched in terms of courage, self-reliance and high spirits but also the pursuit of 'good works', a distinctly Christian virtue. Kingsley similarly emphasised a Christian manliness based not only upon physicality but also upon Christian principles. He sought to promote a new order of clerics who could confront the social ills within the wider society by pragmatism rather than based on a concept of manliness which hitherto had been founded upon other-worldliness. For both Kingsley and Hughes, Christianity and manliness were inextricably linked. The manly hero 'Tom Brown' was characterised as being cordial, gregarious but combative. Courage was to be the foundation of all manliness but only in its basic form. Hughes also sought to express manliness in moralistic terms. He noted that true manliness is as likely to be found in a weak as in a strong body. He similarly noted that a man with a highly-trained and developed body will be more courageous than a weak man. For Hughes, Christ's life on earth was the assertion and example of true manliness (Hughes 1907:12-36).

4.8 'Muscular Christianity' and Public School Football

'Muscular Christianity' promoted a combative, competitive spirit which found expression in public school football. To many observers, 'muscular Christianity' questioned the fundamental principles of religion by devaluing

gentleness and charity. Christianity became associated with pugnacity and aggression, or muscularity without the Christianity. From a moral perspective, then, both Hughes and Kingsley had difficulty in promoting manliness as the definitive Christian virtue. Courage and self-reliance were virtues to be drummed into ‘milk-sops’ irrespective of the amount of pain this may have caused. Hughes was acutely aware that morality associated with his notion of manliness was difficult to sustain. Manliness and Christianity have separate identities and histories, so any attempt towards developing unification would be fraught with difficulties both pragmatically and intellectually (Vance 1985).

Hughes had a noted passion for fist-fights and this fondness for a physical encounter was graphically expressed in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*: “Fighting with fists is the natural and English way for English boys to settle their quarrels ... Learn to box, then, as you learn to play cricket and football ... a proof of the highest courage, if done from true Christian motives ... fight it out; and don't give in while you can stand and see” (Hughes 1878: 286-7).

The prevailing attitudes and beliefs within public schools and universities during the early part of the nineteenth century were distinct from those which evolved during the 1860s and beyond (Chandos 1984). From the 1860s onwards, athleticism as an ideology had a notable impact upon the public schools. This in turn promoted extensive educational and social repercussions. Games played at public schools in many ways reflected the daily life of the pupils; they promoted and sanctified stoicism, character, courage, group loyalty, virtue and manliness (Chandos 1984).

The intense spirituality and other-worldliness of Thomas Arnold came to be replaced by a more rugged self-reliance, willingly embraced by many members of the middle-classes. Manliness, for Kingsley, became synonymous with muscularity and something to which members of the wider society could both relate and identify. Hughes, in turn, held a similar belief but argued that playing games was a perfect vehicle for expressing these qualities (Mason 1980). Games engendered courage, co-operation and patriotism. Hughes wanted to see games being played across the land.

He was particularly aware that a number of the old country sports, including ‘folk football’ were in decline. Unless a substitute for these pastimes could be found that brought forth muscularity and courage, the reputation of England as a nation, he suggested, would be diminished (Hughes 1878).

Two distinct schools of Victorian idealism had emerged. Coleridge and Arnold had advanced purity, truth and love. ‘Manliness’ for Coleridge was expressed in terms of maturity, fortitude, strength of character and pragmatism, while the need to realise one’s potential was also seen by Coleridge to be an elevated ideal (Coleridge 1825). Kingsley and Hughes, by contrast, had advocated courage, spirit and endurance as the physical and masculine properties which would come to represent a ‘muscular Christianity’ (Newsome 1961). As Bailey noted:

Manliness as a Victorian ideal derived in part from Coleridge, who conceived of it as the state of intellectual maturity which marked the passing of childhood. It also carried strong associations of physical courage and endurance in the sense of the old eighteenth-century virtue of ‘bottom’. Kingsley ...combined the two usages and added a dressing of aggressive religiosity (1978:73).

Kingsley’s acclamation of muscular Christianity provided a moral basis for organised games. He argued persuasively that the promotion and preservation of health was a duty. This rhetoric was conveyed in his writings and novels which proved to be so popular that the idea of athleticism attained cult-like status. Athleticism was considered to be virtuous and football gave expression to this quality.

Hely Hutchinson Almond, a former headmaster of Loretto Academy, a private Edinburgh school, provides a good illustration of this developmental process. Hely Hutchinson (better known as Almond) instituted a rigorous athletic regime whereby the participation in games became mandatory. Almond had a fanatical belief in physical exertion and declared: “*Mens sana in corpore sano*” (Marples 1954:124). A healthy mind in a healthy body or the laws of physical wellbeing were regarded as the laws of God. Athleticism began to attain a venerated status with ex-public school

men who promoted this belief in towns and cities across the land where the industrialised poor were deemed to be in need of both exercise and improved physical wellbeing.

Many former public school boys had become intent upon inculcating their belief in athleticism into the lives of the industrial poor. Former public school boys and the so-called 'Gentleman Amateurs' continued to play football for both major universities and 'old boy' football teams. These individuals took football to the provinces. However, 'old boys' who enlisted local workers to play football in the Darwen area, for example, soon discovered that the game was already readily known to them (Dewhurst 2012). Indeed, the manner in which the local workers played football was found to be immensely physical and often involved weaponry (Dewhurst 2012).

The Anglican Church was also anxious to reach the new industrial classes, who, according to the census of 1851, had been particularly indifferent towards organised religion (Newsome 1961). The Church came to regard games and football in particular as an ideal way of combating what they considered to be the urban and moral degeneracy amidst life in the poorer communities. Public school missions were established in an attempt to inculcate the virtues of decency, bravery and manliness into the lives of the industrial and urban poor (Newsome 1961). Physical endeavour was regarded as being critical to the development of a 'manly presence'.

Athleticism would, it was believed, reduce the imbalances between capital and labour and provide a unity to a class-based society. Many of these muscular practitioners were teachers and ministers who regarded sport in general and football in particular as ideally suited to their cause. In part, their commitment was founded upon a social responsibility to assist those who were less fortunate than themselves. The formation of working men's clubs and the Salvation Army were testament to this newly formed missionary zeal. Ministers, curates, school teachers and industrialists alike all helped to promote a popular interest in sports, particularly football.

Kingsley, however, was not a particular advocate of game-playing but rather an advocate of physical activity. Kingsley took exception to being labelled a ‘muscular Christian’ and wrote in 1864: ‘We have heard much of late about ‘Muscular Christianity’... For myself, I do not know what it means... Its first and better meaning may be simply a healthy and manly Christianity; one which does not exalt the feminine virtues to the exclusion of the masculine’ (Martin 1959:220). Hughes, in contrast, believed wholeheartedly in the inherent moral and physical value of games. He developed an ethos of ‘hard knocks’ and hard work and was himself an accomplished sportsman. Kingsley and Hughes helped to unify Godliness and manliness while at the same time the rewards of industrial prosperity provided thousands of middle-class boys with the opportunity to undertake a public school education. This newly found wealth creation further enhanced the development of ‘muscular Christianity’.

4.9 ‘Muscular Christianity’ and Cultural Integration

Other versions of the concept of ‘manliness’ emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century, largely in opposition to the conformity involved in team games. The notion of rugged individual self-reliance can be detected in a lineage that had its roots in the ‘hunting, shooting and fishing’ tradition, which the word ‘sport’ denoted before the rise to dominance of organised team games in the 1840s. This belief resurfaced in the late nineteenth century in the form of the Boy Scout movement and in the following century in the form of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme (Springhall 1987).

The Boys’ Brigade was also instrumental in transmitting the ideals of ‘muscular Christianity’ to the working classes in urban and industrial areas. Formed in late Victorian Glasgow, the Boys’ Brigade was founded upon the premise of promoting Christian manliness and the muscular Christianity of both Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes. To avoid the idea that Christianity may have expressed a set of beliefs based upon effeminacy, succour and support, the notion of Christian manliness was promoted. Insofar as the ethos of the Brigade was concerned, the

definition of manliness was to act like a man and thus to merit one's manhood (Springhall 1987).

During this period, sections of the middle classes came to regard athleticism as an effective instrument for promoting social cohesion, itself fashioned upon a philanthropic premise. Aside from the Boys' Brigade, other missionary institutions such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Sunday Schools, working men's clubs and local political clubs were also established to further this muscular ideal. The urban gentry were to play a key role in this respect in terms of organisational prowess and the provision of a socio-political and ideological impetus. In fact, this policy would have been ineffective without the contribution of various parties such as the clergy, lay preachers and community workers.

Irrespective of the religious or political message, the objectives were to secure class conciliation and to discipline the lower orders into conformity, based upon bourgeois norms of respectability. Sporting activity became critically important to this objective throughout this period (Hargreaves 1986). This strategy then was emphatically based upon working-class involvement in both organised sport and religion.

This process accentuated both discipline and 'manliness.' Football promoted manly sympathies and elevated spirits. Games began to be played on a daily basis with an emphasis upon physical fitness. Team games such as football, which encouraged individual strength and commitment, appeared ideally suited to the task. Moral discipline was taught in both the classroom and upon the playing field. Between *circa* 1860 and 1900, these distinct features of athleticism developed a broad measure of conformity (Mangan 1981). Games became to be regarded as the divine representation of manliness and manly virtue and athleticism rapidly became an accepted part of the curriculum.

Public school headmasters played a central role as representatives of hegemonic authority. These men exerted significant moral leadership. This particular stance was

conveyed in a myriad of ways which included sermons, the physicality with which games were to be played on the playing fields, classroom oratory and the school magazine (Mangan 1986:22). Headmasters were responsible for legitimating a code of moral practice, converting youth to a newly fashioned zeal which attempted to create a unity or shared ideology fashioned upon muscularity. Moreover, as Mangan observed (1986), once the British Empire had become established, the public schools attempted to sustain it. Not only did these men promote imperial patronage but they also ensured that the educational training being promoted was the bedrock of success. This ideology was heavily reliant upon games, notably football. During the 1890's, for example, Harrow endeavoured to cultivate Christian 'gentlemen' and 'patriots'. An emphasis upon vigorous manhood was commonplace as was the emphasis upon courage and high spirits. Fitness was regarded as being imperative for both the imperial soldier and for the imperial scholar (Mangan 1986). The games ethic flourished alongside an unremitting image of England and Empire.

Within this development there was a particular emphasis upon physicality. An author in the *Dublin Review* noted in 1860 that games were intended to cultivate "self-reliance" and "the animal man" rather than necessarily promoting practising Christians (Holt 1989:94). Likewise, within public schools, grammar schools and secondary schools, sport became to represent a moral and ethical code which led to those who participated being seen as better people (Dobbs 1973). Although public school football had become much more ordered, regulated and codified it continued to be a tough and physical game (Walvin 2001).

In the British public schools, sport as an ideology became institutionalised. This phenomenon served the interests of both pupils and staff. Harrow School was particularly close to failure until headmaster Charles Vaughan instituted a new regime of 'manly exercise', whilst the reputation of Eton was mirrored to a considerable extent by the sporting prowess of its boys (Holt 1989). Individual courage, team spirit, discipline and a respect for both fair play and authority were the tenets of the new sporting ethos. However, the public schools and clergy were more like sponsors than missionaries (Cunningham 1980).

With athleticism being encouraged by the establishment, working class involvement in organised sports became almost inevitable. The physicality inherent in both public school and 'folk football' continued as before. Sporting activity was seen as a springboard that prepared the young for the harsh realities of a competitive world. Indeed, mid-Victorian England was characterised by a predisposition towards the requirement of a military force and a state of military preparedness. This led to the respect for, and promotion of, physical education (Bailey 1986). Manliness then found expression in middle class homes, schools and churches alike.

The degree to which this phenomenon gained widespread support at the lower end of the social spectrum was almost certainly mitigated by the incidence of both hardship and poverty (Mangan and Walvin 1987). Nevertheless, as I noted earlier, the Anglican Church was anxious to reach the new industrial classes, who had been particularly indifferent towards organised religion. The Church sponsored the development of numerous working class football teams (Mason 1980). This approach found some degree of success in working class communities which still related to the mores upon which 'folk football' had traditionally been played (Maguire 1986).

In some respects, this middle class preoccupation with athleticism legitimated the more traditional forms of working class manliness. Both the middle classes and working classes had a common concern with courage and ruggedness which allowed the industrialised working class to adopt the emphasis upon physicality on their own terms. Fundamentally, their adherence to more traditional forms of manliness that had promoted strength, courage and endeavour had not changed (Maguire 1986). Furthermore, physicality appeared to be a characteristic of the game irrespective of social class:

The mores which underpinned folk football for example, persisted and found expression in the values underpinning the football participation and spectating of all classes, albeit to varying degrees...the values underpinning the game continued to stress manly physical prowess (Maguire 1986:268).

The call for effective exercise was addressed to all classes alike as the debilities characterised by urban life did not differentiate between rich and poor. These developments were also culturally distinct. Sport and the desire to foster a manly character had a notable impact upon the educational establishment. This emphasis upon games differentiated the education of middle-class British boys from their German or French equivalents (Murray 1994). As Holt remarked: “The Victorian public school was the forcing-house of a new kind of masculinity in which the distinguishing characteristics of the male sex were not intellectual or genital but physical and moral” (1989:89).

Reconstructed and ‘civilised’ sports were now regarded as an instrument to promote cultural integration (Hargreaves 1986). This attempt to ensure that sport would become socially inclusive, which would involve middle class and working class participation alike, may be traced directly to both Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes. Hughes, for example, promoted cricket, gymnastics and boxing classes at the London Working Men’s College. During the mid-Victorian era, organised sports rapidly expanded and laid the groundwork upon which the working classes and their social superiors would participate, as the nineteenth century drew to a close. Above all else, this was a particularly masculine culture. Again, given that athleticism had been promoted by the middle classes, this legitimated working class involvement (Bailey 1978).

Muscular Christianity was also promoted by the expansion of elementary schooling. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, significant advances were made in the provision of physical education, which became part of everyday life (Lawson & Silver 1973). Equally, the Clarendon Commission of 1864 noted that both cricket and football fields were considered not only places of amusement but also places where social qualities and ‘manly virtues’ could be formed (Walvin 1975).

It would be wrong, however, to consider athleticism in isolation from other currents of societal change, which were destined to have a significant impact upon the nascent urban and industrial working class. For example, industrialisation brought forth an

increased division of labour, an emphasis upon productivity and efficiency, increased discipline and conformity. These industrial templates were to have a material impact upon the behavioural patterns of the industrial poor (Briggs 1960).

The belief in muscularity and athleticism continued to flourish as the nineteenth century came to a close. Compulsory organised games continued to grow in stature and were seen to be a perfect foil to perceived idleness or temptation. Indeed, the emergence of athleticism heightened the differentiation that was beginning to take place in the wider society between sporting and non-sporting persons, the accepted and the unaccepted (Sabo and Jansen 1992).

Physical fitness was promoted through both state schools and public schools. A physical training syllabus was introduced by the Board of Education in 1909 (Fishwick 1989). Similarly, educational bodies were established in both Sheffield and Oxford between the wars to co-ordinate school recreational activity. Manly vigorous play in healthy surroundings was considered to be the perfect antidote to limited home and school facilities. Sporting activity made boys fitter and prepared them for industrial life (Fishwick 1989).

‘Muscular Christianity’ as an instrument of moral and physical persuasion was readily exemplified by the Scottish athlete Eric Liddell, who was to represent Scotland in the 100 metres at the 1924 Paris Olympics. The race was due to be run on the Sabbath so Liddell decided not to run. In response to the stance taken by Liddell, the Olympic Committee agreed to allow him to change his event from the 100 metres to the 400 metres which was to be held on another day. Liddell won the 400 metres race with a new world record (Vance 1985). In a biography published twenty years later, he was described as possessing: “probably the most illustrious type of muscular Christianity ever known” (Thomas 1945:37).

4.10 Conclusion

During the nineteenth century, football became revitalised by the English public schools. The football played at these institutions involved adaptations of the earlier forms of 'folk football' played during the fourteenth century. Public schools were fertile ground for the continuity and development of the violence and aggression associated with various forms of 'folk football'. The degree to which football was reconstituted by the public schools is, however, difficult to gauge. Popular culture, to which football continued to be inextricably linked, flourished from the Restoration to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. The pre-industrial traditions that characterised the earlier forms of 'folk football' are more likely to have been reformed than simply remade. Although English football had undertaken a process of modernisation, the values that the game was founded upon continued to stress a manly and physical prowess (Maguire 1986).

Athleticism as an ideology nevertheless made a unique contribution to the development of public school football. Of particular importance here was the concept of 'manliness'. In the early Victorian period, 'manliness' had been expressed in terms of integrity, honesty and sincerity or other worldliness. As the nineteenth century progressed, manliness evolved into the concept of 'muscular Christianity' with an emphasis upon courage, might and muscle. Mental toughness, 'hard knocks' and moral courage challenged established values such as earnestness, honesty and altruism. Sport became institutionalised and football games were regarded as being ideally suited to the cause.

Manliness was specifically and fundamentally re-appraised by both Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes. They both considered Christianity and manliness to be inextricably linked. Christian virtue became associated with physical endeavour. Kingsley's acclamation of 'muscular Christianity' provided a moral basis for organised games. The public schools became the medium for this collective representation and development. Football promoted men with a robust and physical

nature, manly tendencies and exuberant spirits. 'Muscular Christianity' promoted a combative and competitive disposition readily expressed in public school football.

Traditional forms of working class manliness had similarly promoted courage, strength and aggression. Popular culture had remained both violent and masculine. The masculinity and endeavour promoted and prized in the workplace found expression in the local football team. Thus, in many respects, a middle class preoccupation with 'muscular Christianity' served to legitimate these cultural traits.

Manliness and muscular Christianity gave a direction, continuity and legitimacy to how football was to be played by the newly emergent industrial working classes who turned to football in significant numbers towards the end of the nineteenth century. The Church and the ethos of athleticism continued to have a material impact upon the development of English football. The following chapter sets out to explain this on-going development. The chapter also includes an attempt to explain how distinctive value structures combined to ensure that the might and muscle associated with English football was to endure.

Chapter 5 Football and the Legacy of Social Class

Modern football is the culmination of a long tradition, so long that a British affection ... for the game is quickly assumed to be inborn. That it appears so is due to attitudes concerning it which were shaped centuries ago (Young 1968: 2).

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to examine the development of working class football. I also set out to explain how traditional working class football continued to evolve. The chapter considers the extent to which the early industrial working classes brought their own distinct attitudes, values and beliefs to Association Football and how the game continued to be influenced by both muscle and manliness. The newly formed industrial working classes, however, were not homogeneous. An array of values and beliefs emerged that reflected both local trades and industry. Different occupational trades may be seen to have led to perceptible differences in lifestyle on a local and regional basis. Most importantly, these differences may have imbued different football clubs with their own particular character and identity that may still be evident today.

Working class football expressed a particular source of masculine identity and a particular set of values and beliefs. Football supporters similarly expected their players to work hard and to be able to stand up to punishing play. The crowd became more interested in witnessing a battle than in seeing skilful players (Holt 1989). Working class men created their own culture based upon traditional values such as aggression and physicality which were notably distinct from the notion of “fair play” encompassed within the ideal of the “Christian gentleman” (Holt 1989:173). A number of these values were quite separate from those being promoted by a middle-class version of ‘muscular Christianity’ and athleticism. For example, partisanship, a winning mentality, disrespect for official rules, monetary reward and an emphasis upon festivity were commonplace (Hargreaves 1986:67).

Many who both watched and played football were predominantly employed in the so called traditional industries such as the textile industry, engineering, mining, shipping and dock work. The manner in which football was played in many respects reflected this development. Physical endeavour or ‘physicality’ became one of the founding tenets of both working class culture and working class football clubs. Football was to become one of the principle sites in modern industrial societies for both the inculcation and representation of traditional masculine identities. The chapter examines how the concept of masculinity developed and the role that this concept played in the development of working class football.

While the working classes brought their own particular value structure to the domestic game, the chapter sets out to demonstrate that the notion of ‘muscular Christianity’ continued to play a particularly important role in the establishment of many early working class football clubs. A number of these clubs expressed themselves in the idiom of “hard work and hard play” (Korr 1978:215). Indeed, as Tony Mason has clearly shown (1980), church, chapel and Sunday school clubs were responsible for the founding of around twenty-five per-cent of all football clubs during the 1880s.

The birth of professional football and the social origins of early professional players are also examined here. The chapter provides a detailed examination of the ‘importation’ of ‘Scotch’ or Scottish players into English professional football. This policy of importation raised a number of particularly important issues that are as relevant to English football today as they were in the late nineteenth century. In particular, there was an inability to produce a required number of English players who were able to play football at the highest levels of the English game. In this respect, English football has remained remarkably unchanged.

5.2 Football and the Working Class

Social class may be evaluated in terms of a composite of general characteristics (Parsons 1947). The idea of a social class may be regarded as being

based upon a collection of definable social roles, which has been shaped by an institutional classification of workers *via* the type of work undertaken. The working environment and its culture have come to be regarded as central to an understanding of community, continuity and cohesion. As C.Wright Mills noted: "A class is a set of people who share similar life choices because of their similar class situations" (1964: 307).

Between 1850 and the outbreak of World War Two, a 'traditional' working class life began to evolve in Great Britain. This period signified a working class delineated by a particular style of life. This was expressed in terms of attitudes, values and beliefs, expectations and deference, recognisable in terms of distinct working practices and segregated housing. Above all, as Hobsbawm observed: "It is the working class of cup-finals, fish-and-chip shops, palais-de-dance and Labour with a capital L. Since the 1950's this class has both contracted and changed...A lot of it is still there" (1984:194). By the end of the nineteenth century, English football had developed into a sport predominantly for the industrial working classes:

It is equally clear that the new pattern of life was more nationally homogeneous than anything before.... outside work, the miner, like most of the rest of the male workers, wore the same clothes from Blyth to Midsummer Norton. The worker identified with his local team against the rest of the world...Yet the pattern of the football culture was the same everywhere. (Hobsbawm 1984:204)

Value structures, living conditions and economic structures all combined to create a defined code of conduct. Some regularity and symmetry marked off in terms of identity, work and leisure patterns may be identified. This symmetry was brought about by the social changes sponsored by industrialisation and urbanisation. During the earlier part of the twentieth century football developed into an extensive working class pastime:

Playing and watching association football became a widespread activity among working people, particularly men and boys. By the end of the period it had become one of those cultural manifestations which not only help sociologists to distinguish one group from another in society but

assist members of the group itself to locate themselves. It had become one of those things which working men did. (Mason 1980:222).

The notion of social classes for E.P. Thompson was regarded as being: "An historical phenomenon, unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both in the raw material of experience and in consciousness" (1968:9-11). However, to suggest that `the working class` was homogeneous would be incorrect. The working classes were internally differentiated. as were the middle and upper classes, not least of all in terms of property, wealth, income, status and levels of skill. Similarly, many football historians have based their analyses of social class upon a `gross` concept of class. More particularly, the dissemination of both rugby and football has been explained in terms of a shift from the `middle` to the `working` classes. This `dichotomic` model fails to take into account, however, either the composition of the ruling or upper classes or the differentiation within the middle classes, thereby rendering social class analysis a static rather than a dynamic concept (Dunning and Sheard 1979).

Many sociologists would appear to be in general agreement that occupation is critical to an understanding of social class and its composition. The working environment made a particularly important contribution to how everyday life was conducted. Indeed, attitudes towards education, leisure time, religion, family and kinship may be better understood in relation to the working environment. This stance does not in any way dispute the validity of class consciousness and class conflict that are characteristically associated with industrialisation, alienation and the factory system. Rather, working class cultural uniformity would appear to have included a complexity and texture that the working environment helped to fashion.

Different industries may be seen to have promoted different work-related experiences. During the second half of the nineteenth century, not only were ideological values central to a particular lifestyle, but so, too, was the world of work. The centrality of working class culture may be seen to have been a reflection of factory life and the neighbourhood (Joyce 1980). This point is illustrated by the textile industry, which, for a number of authors, was the focal point of nineteenth

century industrialisation. This industry was subject to rapid reorganisation throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Resulting economic dislocation led to significant social change within the structure of the family. The change in the production process, particularly from a craft based mode of production to an advanced form of mechanisation, may have had a noticeable influence upon status, power, authority and patterns of masculinity within the home (Smelser 1959).

Most importantly, the force and persuasion of pre-industrial traditions are likely to have been influenced by both local industry and the degree and pace of urban change. Traditions within the newly formed industrial cities were noted to have been weaker than those that prevailed in many of the older industrial towns which had developed from existing socio-economic structures (Walvin 2010). It is equally likely that such disparities may help to explain differences in lifestyles and the extent to which traditions such as early forms of ‘folk football’ survived in some geographical locations and not in others.

Social class may be seen to have contributed to its own history marked off by a distinctive narrative. Class consciousness, as Foster (1974) observed in his study of Oldham, was essentially local and something that grew from within rather than from without. Although different trades may be seen to have manifested different degrees of economic power and deference, authority patterns located within the factory system may be seen to have had their roots in the wider community. The work situation was co-existent with family life and the social relations that existed outside work (Joyce 1980).

The formation of community ties, identities and local pride may help to explain why football became so popular in particular parts of the country. The local football team, which became a potent symbol of working class life, reflected these cultural factors. Differences marked off in terms of occupational trades led to perceptible differences in lifestyle on a local and regional basis. Most importantly, these differences may have helped different football clubs to formulate their own particular character and identity. For example, in a study of life in Blackburn, Seabrook stated:

As the old recount the past, identical memories occur, word-for-word accounts of a way of living which was shared in every detail by those who depended on the mills and weaving-sheds for their existence...The sub-culture was a closed and impermeable system, which penetrated every area of their life, dictated patterns of behaviour, belief and thought....Two thirds of the working population were employed in textiles and life was dominated by the immutable realities of mill, school and chapel (1971:2).

5.3 The Concept of Masculinity

Football for the working classes expressed a distinct source of masculine unity and a particular set of values and beliefs. The domestic game was to become one of the main sites in modern industrial societies for the inculcation and representation of traditional masculine identities (Dunning 1999). How, then, did this 'masculine identity' arise and to what degree did this identity find expression in the manner in which working class football was to be played?

The term, 'masculinity' is of French extraction and first appeared in the English language during 1748 (Fletcher 1995). The critical peculiarity of English masculinity between the mid-seventeenth century and the close of the eighteenth century was expressed in terms of civility and manners and its relationship to the social hierarchy (Fletcher 1995). Indeed, 'masculinity' did not enjoy a notable currency until the later stages of the nineteenth century. Prior to this period, the terms 'manhood' and 'manliness' were used to convey a similar meaning (Roper and Tosh 1991). Both terms, particularly 'manliness', were seen to express notions of moral, cultural and physical aspects of what were seen to be 'manly' characteristics, such as courage and virility. In the same way that masculinity and manliness were regarded as being synonymous, manliness and virtue were also regarded as being inextricably linked.

The notion of masculinity has been evaluated in historically divergent, competing and evolutionary terms (Roper and Tosh 1991). It has often considered to have been part of the fabric upon which social life and cultural representation are based. It is, moreover, a relational construct and is formulated upon the basis of relational power. In a word, the concept of masculinity is socially constructed, as is the notion of

masculine identity which, in turn, is also subject to historical and cross-cultural change (Messner 1992).

Masculinity has also been regarded as an inherently relational concept evaluated in terms of, and contrasted to, 'femininity' (Connell 1995). Nevertheless, while all societies may have gender relations, not all societies have concepts of 'masculinity', and may have to be considered in much broader terms (Tolson 1977). As Gilmore observed:

This recurrent notion that manhood is problematic, a critical threshold that boys must pass through testing, is found at all levels of sociological development ...in all continents and environments... It is found among both warrior peoples and those who have never killed in anger...the question as to what it means 'to be a man' is one which many societies pose but do so 'ubiquitously' rather than universally (1990:.2-10).

The concept has been classified in terms of two principal schools of thought. One approach relates changes in masculinity to the changing structure of social class, whilst the second approach appraises the concept in terms of mind, body and the gendering of social space (Tosh 1999). The latter approach has been exemplified by Dawson who noted: "Masculine identities are lived out in the flesh, but fashioned in the imagination" (1991:118). This perspective highlighted the process in which a particular cultural context becomes internalised and articulated. In so doing, it forms part of the imagery of the self which, in turn, is recognised by others. The extent to which masculinity may be evaluated in terms of 'interiority' as opposed to being culturally specific is difficult to determine. By definition, 'interiority' may not adequately explain how patterns of masculinity have developed, persisted or become subject to change. Indeed, it may be difficult to adjudicate between competing forms of 'interiority' or 'images of the self'.

Masculinity is perhaps better understood in terms of social class and its relationship to both social structure and social change. In this instance, no universal forms of masculinity may be said to exist. As Newburn and Stanko (1994) suggested, the idea of a plurality of masculinities may be more meaningful than a concept of a dominant

form of masculinity. However, this does not necessarily mean that a dominant form of masculinity would be unable to reside alongside competing or alternative forms of the phenomenon.

The emerging industrialised society of Britain in the eighteenth century was largely founded upon trades such as textile, engineering, steel, shipbuilding and dock work. Much of this eighteenth century industriousness was largely male-orientated. A characteristic of the newly forming working class was the notion of 'independence' whereby a man was expected to be able to provide for his dependants. This desire for masculine independence and respectability was not an entirely new phenomenon. What was new, however, was how these behavioural traits became representative of a working class culture.

During the early Victorian period, a diverse number of masculinities existed which were neither regular in character nor static in composition (Sussman 1985). Different types or forms of masculinity co-existed. These various forms operated in tension with one another, with one particular format attaining prominence in one era or epoch, while a different format was elevated in another era. These forms provided for a dynamic and complex social system that was subject to continuous change.

Working class masculinity was both complex and multi-faceted. Historically, for example, masculinity has been associated with various forms of behaviour. Prior to the advent of the industrial revolution, property ownership was considered to be a notable sign of masculinity (Tosh 1999). Industrialisation brought forth a new working class, which was effectively property-less and, in consequence, masculinity became subject to radical change. The established patriarchal practices of the previous century were now being challenged, with fathers establishing authority in different ways while children were also developing a new masculine format. In addition, industrialisation brought forth not only changes in the working environment but also occupational and technological change, which brought further pressures to bear upon traditional approaches to both patriarchy and adolescence. As a new

working class emerged from the process of industrialisation, the need to find an alternative expression of masculinity became readily apparent.

By the late eighteenth century, industrial change challenged not only the economic structure but also particular aspects of patriarchal society. The shift in the working environment away from the home to the factory floor was of critical importance in this respect. The male was seen as being the breadwinner irrespective of his position within society at large. This newly-found status served both to direct and confer masculinity as well as authority. The ability to provide and support a family was the cornerstone of such masculinity.

The relationship between a father and his children was a case in point. Spending far less time at home, the father exercised a smaller amount of discipline and moral guidance over his children. The patriarch had to learn new standards of behaviour. Occupational expansion meant that the likelihood of boys taking up their fathers' trade became reduced. This development further challenged traditional authority relationships. Being able to support a family was considered by the working classes to be a particularly male obligation (Stearns 1990). Industries such as mining, construction engineering and dock work, for example, were particularly reliant upon physical strength; consequently, physical endeavour became an important element of masculinity within the working classes of industrialised Britain. Physical endeavour or 'physicality' became one of the founding tenets of both working class culture and working class football clubs alike. Football was recognition of the male values of 'grit', determination, courage, endurance and loyalty. Working class players were expected to work tirelessly and to take punishment (Rigauer 1981).

As noted earlier in the chapter, the industrialised working classes fashioned an identity and unity founded upon locality, group loyalty or 'street-corner society'. A number of organised sports, including cricket, rugby and football were formed in this way. Sporting activity served to unify local people and local life. Furthermore, those people who attended football matches did so not simply because they wanted to watch a football game. Football reflected a forceful expression of civic pride and

collective identity and provided an opportunity to establish an authority or supremacy over another football team or industrial town or city. Football, in particular, gave the working class an outlet for masculine identity. The game provided the basis for group participation and a physical outlet for aggression. Discussing, watching and playing the game became a very important part of street-gang activities (Humphries 1981). Working class football also had its own value system:

Professional football was about 'maleness' rather than 'manliness.' The working class imbued sport with a masculine value-system of their own which differed markedly from the manly Christian ideal. Football enshrined older forms of toughness and rudeness...it was a celebration of intensely male values...where skill and cunning were valued but hardness, stamina, courage, and loyalty were even more important (Holt 1989: 173).

This emphasis upon aggression may be seen to represent a focal point. In his examination of street gangs, Humphries (1981) noted the importance of territorial supremacy and physical excitement with respect to how masculinity is formulated. The characteristics that formed the basis of these behavioural traits were the development of a rugged independence, the ability of either the individual or the group to outwit or defeat an opponent or opposition and ritualistic displays of physical prowess

Despite the importance of this particular value system, working class Association Football continued to be impacted upon by the force and persuasion of 'muscular Christianity.' As noted earlier, church, chapel and Sunday school clubs accounted for something like twenty-five per cent of all football clubs by the 1880s (Mason 1980). Similarly, one third of the cricket teams in Bolton in 1867 were found to have had connections with religious institutions (Bailey 1978).

The formation of West Ham United F.C. provides a good illustration of how this concept impressed itself upon the development of the game. As noted in the previous chapter, 'muscular Christianity' promoted men with manly sympathies and exuberant spirits. Football engendered physical fitness, and encouraged individual strength and

commitment. The football club was established by a number of workers from the Thames Iron Works, a ship-building firm located in Canning Town. The locality of West Ham was characterised by a myriad of social issues including poverty, crime and a shortage of open spaces (Korr 1978). The principal source of employment for males in the area was factory employment and the docks. The Thames Iron Works Football Club was originally established in 1895 by Arnold F. Hills, an entrepreneur and philanthropist, but changed its name to West Ham United in 1900. According to Korr: "It is difficult to imagine a more complete product of inherited money, position and the ideals of Victorian upper class education than Arnold F. Hills. West Ham United represented both sport and social welfare, with 'Muscular Christianity' finding expression in the idiom of 'hard work and hard play'"(1978: 215).

It is interesting to note that primarily due to this dock-work heritage, a bitter rivalry developed between West Ham United and Millwall Football Club, which is also located in the East End of London. The first game between these two clubs took place in 1899. Like West Ham, Millwall also has a football history located within a traditional working class community. The club was founded in the summer of 1885 by employees of J.T. Morton of Millwall, a jam factory situated on the Isle of Dogs. The team was originally known as Millwall Rovers Football Club. During 1889, the club became known as Millwall Athletic and moved to a ground located on land which belonged to the Millwall Dock Company close to Millwall Dock Station. A number of the original workforce were recruited from Dundee Docks, Scotland. The club colours of blue and white reflected this Scottish heritage (Lindsay 1991). After playing football on The Isle of Dogs for twenty five years, in 1910 Millwall moved into a new ground at Cold Blow Lane, south London. This ground was to become infamously known as *the Den*.

The significance of an occupational culture founded upon dock work has been noted by Hill (1976). The culture surrounding dock work became so pronounced that its constituent members tended to see themselves in terms of their occupation. Despite the advances in technology, docking continued to be a largely physical occupation: "The limitations of the physical infrastructure of the docks and ships preventing

much mechanisation in many cases” (Hill 1976:44). Hill also noted that a key element within the social system of dock-work had been a shared culture amongst all employees. Occupational identification provided a common bond which promoted an identity and continuity. Outside the working environment, dock-workers were more likely to mix with people from their own type of work than with individuals who were employed in other types of industrial activity. According to Hill, Dockers could be firmly placed in the mainstream of the contemporary British working class.

The degree to which the working environment may be seen to have influenced the manner in which particular working class clubs played football is difficult to determine. However, the idea that there was little or no relationship between the workplace and a particular football culture may be equally implausible. As Richard Holt noted:

The plain truth is that we do not know how football was culturally related to work. The game has no agreed ‘essence’; no single uncontested meaning... The best we can do is to suggest a range of insights which may have had an influence on different groups of workers at different times (Holt 1989:165).

Football may in many ways have become an outlet for the masculinity that had been demanded by the workplace, itself an embodiment of male working class values and beliefs. Different trades and different industries may have had an influential role to play in both the development and reinforcement of masculine identities. Much of everyday nineteenth-century life may be seen to have been framed at the level of the familiar, the concrete and the immediate (Joyce 1980).

5.4 The Development of Working Class Football

Lancashire, the home of the textile industry, was to become a focal point in the development of working class football. Organised football was played in this part of the country as early as 1871 (Sutcliffe and Hargreaves 1928). In 1874, the Football Association rules were introduced by Lancashire clubs such as Turton F.C. who became a member of the Football Association in 1876. Bolton Christ Church

football club was also founded in 1874, changing its name to Bolton Wanderers in 1877. In the following year (1878), the Lancashire Football Association was established with 28 member clubs. Many of these Lancashire clubs were to become very successful. In 1883, for example, Blackburn Olympic won the FA Cup and this trophy remained in the North for the best part of the next forty years (Sutcliffe and Hargreaves 1928).

The mass appeal of football has been explained by two principal factors namely: the introduction of the Saturday half working day and the growth in real incomes (Russell 1997). One important step towards football becoming a game taken up by the emergent working classes was the Factory Act of 1847 which prohibited the employment of women and young persons on Saturday afternoons (Marples 1954). Although various groups of industrial workers did not work on Mondays, it was only a question of time before men would also be granted a half-day on Saturday afternoon. In terms of participation, clearly all sports benefited from the Saturday half-day, something that had been fought for by industrial workers for much of the second half of the nineteenth century. Parliamentary legislation granted the textile workers a Saturday 1pm finish in 1874. Likewise, the Lancashire textile industry had a large number of both male and female operatives who enjoyed relative economic stability and an improving standard of living from the 1870s onwards (Marples 1954).

Any suggestion that these factors alone account for the rise of working class football is, however, questionable. Neither economic prosperity nor a half-day on Saturdays may adequately explain the popularity of the emergent sport. Both leisure time and better standard of living have to be seen in the context of urban change. For example, of the twelve football clubs who became the founding members of the Football League in 1888, all had populations in excess of 80,000, except Accrington Stanley and Burnley (Holt 1989). Indeed, sporting participation was still a minority activity. By 1910, the Football Association estimated that there were between 300,000 and 500,000 amateur football players, whereas the male population in England in 1911 between 15 and 39 years of age was around 7.25 million (Vamplew 1988).

Improved transportation was also particularly important to the continued development of popular football (Walvin 2010). The game could not have generated mass appeal without the development of a national railway network, improved literacy levels, an expanding national press or an affordable postal service (Russell 1997). As I noted earlier, a number of institutional forms were similarly responsible for the establishment of early working class football clubs. These included public houses, the local neighbourhood and the factory. Many notable football teams owe their origins to the nineteenth century workplace; for example, Manchester City (1885), Arsenal (1886), Millwall (1885), and West Ham United (1895) all evolved from work-based football teams (Mason 1980).

The earliest clubs had largely been founded by public school old boys of predominantly upper and middle-class origins. As industrialisation advanced, however, the situation changed markedly. Artisans and factory workers in their thousands who found work in industrialised towns throughout the land started to establish football clubs for themselves. Legislative change had afforded the wider populace with an opportunity to participate in various forms of popular entertainment. Playing and watching football represented one such opportunity. During this period, an expansive and sustainable popular football culture developed countrywide. The concept of ‘national games’ (notably football and cricket) began to enter the public psyche for the first time. However, as Marples (1954) succinctly observed, there may have been little else for the urban population to do on Saturday afternoons.

The shift in the socio-economic character of English football can be illustrated by the early history of the FA Cup competition. The competition, established in 1871, was originally contested by clubs who were middle and upper class and amateur in status. The Wanderers, for example, won the competition five times from 1871 to 1878 and were awarded the trophy outright in 1878 following three successive victories. This team was only open to ex-public school boys or to boys who had attended either Oxford or Cambridge University (Marples 1954).

Public school Old Boys' Clubs, such as the Old Etonians and the Old Carthusians came to dominate the competition: "It would have been unthinkable for one who was not a 'gentleman' (as the word was then understood) to represent England either at Association or Rugby football" (Marples 1954:169). Indeed, the early English national team was made up entirely from 'Old Boys' during this period. Fair play was the essence of the 'gentleman' amateur (Holt 1989). Originally, the term amateur referred to 'gentlemen' from both the middle and upper classes who respected not only the rules of the game but also the spirit of the game. The notion of 'amateurs' also referred to someone who was not paid to play the game. Corinthian Casuals Football Club, for example, was established in 1882 in an attempt to bring together the best public school football players for international matches. In the event of a penalty kick being awarded against the team, they would take their goalkeeper off the field of play, as the spirit of 'fair play' would expect the team to accept the consequences of their foul play (Holt 1989).

It is also interesting to note that training was not part of the 'gentlemanly' ideal. Intense training was considered to be poor form: "Practising too much undermined natural grace and talent ... gentlemen were not supposed to toil and sweat for their laurels' (Holt 1989:100). By 1870, working class clubs located in the industrialised Midlands and Northern England became established in increasing numbers. Not having to work on a Saturday afternoon allowed workers in the 'heavier' industries such as the textile industry, engineering, mining, and shipping and dock work time to both watch and play football which became a largely industrial game (Walvin 2010).

In 1882, Blackburn Rovers reached the FA Cup Final only to lose 1-0 to Old Etonians. The success of this northern club was to become indicative of a trend which highlighted the growing number of both teams and players that were essentially working class in origin. In the following year, 1883, Blackburn Olympic defeated Old Etonians 2-0 after extra time. The Blackburn team was made up from working men, and which included: "Three weavers, a spinner, a cotton operative, an iron worker, a picture framer, [and] a master plumber" (Marples 1954:171). The old order had been eclipsed. Following this victory, the FA Cup was to remain in the

North until 1901 when the competition was once again won by a southern team, Tottenham Hotspurs F.C.

As the social origin of the players themselves began to change, so did the social origin of the spectators. For example, 4,000 spectators watched the FA Cup final between Old Etonians and Old Carthusians in 1880. In 1893, 45,000 spectators attended the Cup final between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Everton. Spectators who attended Football League matches were predominantly members of the skilled working and lower-middle classes (Russell 1997). Another milestone was reached when football clubs began to charge spectators to attend football matches. It was *circa* 1870 when football clubs introduced admission charges. Aston Villa introduced an admission charge in 1874 and the days' takings amounted to 5s 3p. In 1904, the same club amassed £14,329 14s 2p from a single game (Marples 1954).

5.5 The Foundation of the Football League

The Football League was founded in 1888 by William McGregor (see Chapter 1). The League was to be comprised of twelve clubs, with six of these clubs, Accrington, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Everton and Preston North End all based in Lancashire. As William McGregor (1906) noted, the game's longevity was likely to be secure since it was difficult to imagine a pastime that could become more popular or indeed more superior. Ultimately, the popularity of football may have been based upon the game's intrinsic appeal. It was a game open to almost everyone with minimum expense.

The Football League was particularly important to the rise of the professional game in two notable respects. Hitherto, it had been commonplace for football fixtures to be called off at a whim. Football games were very poorly organised (Marples 1954). Secondly, largely due to the introduction of a fixture list, the standard of football began to improve. More games meant more practice which in turn led to an improved standard of play. Both factors led to an increased level of commitment. The League readily showed its capacity for raising the standard of professional

football throughout the country. The professional player was beginning to attract large attendances (McGregor 1906). Professional players drew the crowds, and players were paid accordingly. As the newly-created professional clubs became established, the number of professional players escalated dramatically. The Football League numbered 448 registered players by 1891 and, by 1909, there were approximately 6,000 professional football players and approximately 400 clubs (Walvin 1975).

Early professional football players were essentially skilled manual workers who were drawn to the game by a weekly wage which was in excess of their own. Indeed, due to the formation of the Football League and the intensified competition between elite clubs for players, wages began to rise appreciably. Many professional football clubs found it difficult to operate on a commercial basis. Few clubs made an annual profit since the salaries of the playing staff were in excess of the profits being made (Jackson 1900). Despite numerous protestations from the wealthier clubs, during the 1901-2 football season, the Football Association introduced a maximum weekly wage of £4 pounds per week in a vain attempt to address these economic imbalances within the game (Russell 1997).

5.6 The Professional Player

The rapid growth in the popularity of the game ensured that professional football clubs were to appear in almost every town and city throughout the country. As the popularity of the game increased so too did the level of competition. This competitive spirit resulted in football clubs searching for better players irrespective of whether these players were 'home grown' or not:

The first stage of the problem of professionalism in Association Football manifested itself in the crisis surrounding importation... The borrowing of players from other clubs, for important matches, particularly knock-out cup ties, and began to grow... Some particularly sought-after players might appear for several different clubs in the same cup competition during one season (Mason 1980:70).

The practice of bringing football players into a team from other parts of the country stood in stark contrast to the close-knit identity and patriotism which had characterised earlier football teams. Many within the game believed that local clubs should be represented by local lads. As the vast majority of players were from a working class background, many could not afford to lose wages or meet travelling expenses whilst playing football. The payment of expenses and loss of wages were in essence the beginnings of a shift from amateur to professional status. Retaining fees, winning bonus payments and signing-on fees became commonplace. The inexorable march towards professional football in England was propelled forwards by the thousands who wanted to play the game including mechanics, artisans, miners and clerks alike. Indeed, professionalism within a number of sports during the late 19th century, such as football, rugby and cycling, was the feature of a continued growth in commercialism which characterised the leisure sector during this period. Almost every sport was engulfed in an acrimonious debate about the credibility of amateur or professional status (Vamplew1988).

This situation, however, was about to change. Due to the remarkable upsurge in the popularity of the game, players who were limited by a weekly wage with little or no surplus income looked to be reimbursed for various forms of expenses, particularly loss of income and costs of travelling. Players could not meet these additional expenses from their weekly wage, and, accordingly, attempts to conceal payments promoted both hypocrisy and deceit (Jackson 1900). For example, a number of football clubs retained two sets of 'books', with one set of true accounts and another book detailing fabricated accounts that would be presented to the FA if the need were to arise. Similarly, players were frequently paid for their services from gate receipts, prior to the club detailing the gross takings on match day. Local tradesmen were often used by football clubs to 'employ' players. In reality these players had their wages paid by the football clubs themselves (Jackson 1900). A number of these practices had become very well established (Russell 1997); for example, excessive payments had been given for time taken off work (broken-time payments) paying players for 'one-off' or *ad hoc* games and myriad other financial inducements, all of which were implemented to ensure that particular players represented a particular

football club. Indeed, similar illicit activities were occurring in rugby football which ultimately led to the split between Rugby Union and the Northern Union in 1894 (Dunning and Sheard 1979).

Again, the majority of football supporters had little regard for where a player came from, so long as the player had the ability to perform and help the team to be successful. If a football club was to be profitable, then as now, the club had to attract and retain a viable fan base. One means of achieving this objective was to ensure success on the football pitch. Football clubs approved of building on this success via the transfer market. For example, in the 1876-7 football season, two established Scottish players, Peter Andrews and James. J. Lang, both forward players, had played for their country at international level. Both these players became resident in Sheffield. Andrews then played for the Heeley club while Lang played for Sheffield Wednesday. These players are thought to have been the first professional football players in England (Catton 1900). Under FA rules, a player who received payment for loss of wages was considered to be 'a professional player'. In Scotland a 'professional player' was considered to be: "Any player receiving remuneration or consideration of any sort above his actual and necessary hotel and travelling expenses, and more than one day's wage in any week for lost time, shall be considered to be a professional" (Jackson 1900: pp242-3).

The advent of professionalism led to a concern that football teams would lose some of their local identity, a concern that was to be vigorously re-asserted a century or more later. The rise of professionalism ironically promoted the development of a number of amateur leagues. Upper and middle class teams took a distinct dislike to being beaten by predominantly working class football teams and their lowly players. The amateur code was invariably used as an excuse to prevent working-class men from playing football (Holt 1989).

The notion of 'professionalism' was, however, both difficult to define and difficult to quantify. There was much debate as to what the term actually meant. There was, nevertheless, widespread opposition in England to professional football, particularly

from the Football Association. Professionalism, many within football suggested, would lead to corruption and gambling, while the influence of money would lead to a nucleus of wealthy clubs dominating the game. Professionalism was associated with a 'win at all costs' mentality, a morality that was in sharp contrast to an amateur ethos which stressed 'fair play' and the love of the game. Simply to be able to play for the team rather than for individual fame and glory was considered the basis of a young player's aspirations (Alcock 1871). Indeed, the Football Association was so determined to continue with the amateur game that an Amateur Cup was introduced in 1893 (Holt 1989).

However, as skilful players became sought after, payment for their services became inevitable. Amid much acrimony and controversy a number of attempts were made by the Football Association to outlaw these payments. Despite the realisation that many northern clubs were in fact paying football players to play, the governing body chose initially to overlook this development. Amateur teams who were knocked out of the FA Cup by teams who fielded professional players complained bitterly to such an extent that, during the 1880s, the debate surrounding professionalism threatened the very fabric of English football (Murray 1994).

Many former public schoolboys were founding members of the Football Association and were vociferously against the introduction of professionalism. The rise of the professional game was, in many ways, seen to be an expression of the social class structure that existed in the wider society. The battle lines had been drawn by the public schools and their emissaries who were essentially from the higher echelons of society. These parties regarded professional football as a threat not only to sport but also to the socio-political structure of the day.

When Blackburn Rovers reached the FA Cup Final in 1882, their appearance was symptomatic of a growing force of competitive working class football players (Dunning and Sheard 1979). Indeed, during 1884, twenty four northern Clubs, intent upon professional football being recognised, threatened to establish their own league. Inevitably, the FA had little choice but to recognise that the industrial wealth of both

the Midlands and the North was a commercial force that needed to be harnessed. Industrial magnates demonstrated a keen business interest in their local clubs. Businessmen, as today, could see the commercial logic in developing a successful football club.

Nevertheless, as I noted earlier in this chapter, the dichotomy between amateur and professional was neither distinct nor clear cut. Amateur sides had traditionally expected to be paid 'expenses'. The Corinthians reportedly demanded £150 per game by the 1880s (Russell 1997). Much of the discord that professionalism engendered focused upon the rules of the game and how these rules were being interpreted. Disputes covered a plethora of contentious issues which ranged from 'one off' payments for particular teams and players and for providing a player with employment, which would complement his income from football.

The debate surrounding professionalism continued to intensify. A sub-committee formed by the FA met at the Albion Hotel in Manchester on November 12th, 1884, charged with discussing both importation and professionalism. Ultimately, C.W. Alcock, seconded by N.L. Jackson, proposed that it would be expedient to legalise professionalism under strict conditions. Rather than continue to ignore and defy the FA over the issue of professional players, the Lancashire Football Association, in conjunction with Northern and various Midland football clubs, finally persuaded the FA to legalise the employment of professional players in 1885. This decision was taken at a special general meeting held on July 20th 1885, at which professional football was openly acknowledged (Jackson 1900).

Similar developments were taking place within the world of rugby football. Just as English soccer became to represent a game for the common man, rugby football as played in both Lancashire and Yorkshire began to express the values and beliefs of the industrial proletariat. As with Northern-based football clubs, rugby clubs from Yorkshire and Lancashire began to develop players that were superior to their southern counterparts. This superiority was particularly evident at the international level (Dunning and Sheard 1979). These occurrences taking place in Northern

England were resented by the Southern-based rugby establishment who attempted to ensure that ideologically, control would continue to be based within the Rugby Football Union (RFU). At the same time every effort was made to restrict the spread of northern-based professionalism to the South. While the English FA had continued to promote an amateur ethos of 'fair play', the same public school elite who had dominated English football, used its influence within the RFU to attempt to ensure that rugby would continue to be a 'purely amateur' game. These developments saw rugby football 'split' into distinct amateur and professional divisions (Dunning and Sheard 1979).

The passing of the 'gentlemanly ideal' to professional status was inevitably represented in idealistic terms. Indeed, while it was undoubtedly true to say that public school footballers may have been sportsmanlike in terms of their approach to the game, in many respects this was little more than a façade. Amateur football was often both intimidating and aggressive. In 1885, for example, the Corinthians were noted for playing football in a rough, manly and competitive manner (Russell 1996).

5.7 The 'Scotch' Professors'

Several of the most successful English teams during this period had a number of paid football players within their ranks, many of whom were Scottish. Largely due to their noted abilities, numerous Lancashire and Midland clubs began to import Scottish football players in considerable numbers. Scotland also produced a number of exceptional football coaches during this period, in particular, Jackie Robertson and John Madden from Glasgow Celtic and Glasgow Rangers respectively (Murray 1994). Madden was credited with developing the 'Scottish Game' based upon short passing, a style of play which led to Scotland being a leading football nation during the 1870s. During the 1884-5 football season, Bolton Wanderers' had only one player who was a 'home-grown' player together with five from Scotland. Similarly, Burnley Football Club fielded seven Scotsmen while both Preston North End and Blackburn Rovers were equally reliant upon paid imported Scottish players (Jackson

1900). Indeed, the first Liverpool team, which was established in 1892, was made up entirely from Scottish players (Murray1994).

The emphasis upon passing or the “passing-on” game as it was referred to, was very much in the ascendancy. In the early history of Association Football, the game was based upon dribbling. This form of football essentially concentrated on individual skill and an attacking game. In the 1880s, however, this style of play was to change markedly. English football was to wholeheartedly embrace the “passing-on” game (Alcock 1883: 12). By the mid-1880s, the passing game or ‘combination game’ as it became known as was being played by a large number of English clubs.

There would, however, appear to be some dispute as to how this “passing-on” game evolved. A number of authors regard the Queens Park Club, based in Glasgow, to be the forerunners of this type of play (e.g. Alcock 1883; Jackson 1900). Elsewhere, the “passing-on” game is considered to have been an English derivative. As Richard Holt observed: "The careful balance between defence and attack, and the smooth movement between the two that can only be produced by long and short passing between players...were first introduced by the Lancashire teams" (Holt 1989: 162).

Scottish football was historically a popular recreational activity. The first mention of football in Scottish literature was made by King James I in his poem, “Christ’s Kirk on the Green’, written sometime during his reign between 1394-1437 (Beveridge 1900:105) Nevertheless, the game did witness a decline in its popularity largely due to the rising tide of legislative opposition that had also adversely impacted upon the English game. However, once Association Football was introduced into Scotland in the second half of the nineteenth century, the game saw a dramatic revival in its fortunes.

Indeed, ‘muscular Christianity’, which had been at the forefront of the rejuvenation of English football, was particularly important to the evolution of the Scottish game. One of the most historically significant Scottish football clubs, Queen’s Park, was formed by members of the Glasgow Young Men’s Christian Association. Their

Christianity was described as being of the robust and manly type while the kicking was noted to be both vigorous and erratic (Beveridge 1900:187).

Largely due to the growing number of football games that had been organised between English and Scottish teams during this period, Scottish footballers looked for employment in the industrial centres of both Lancashire and Yorkshire (Green 1953). These players were motivated to move south by the prospect of better job opportunities and higher wages. Their football skills were characterised largely by a short passing game and an awareness of football tactics. These qualities were particularly sought after by football clubs in the north of England. Once again, the question of the nationality of football players was considered to have been secondary to the desire for success. These so called 'mercenaries' or 'Scottish professors' were not only paid for their services but were also welcomed and accepted by the local communities for the abilities that they possessed.

Scottish football was given particular impetus by the appearance of the Queen's Park football team in London during 1872. The Scots played a cup match against the Wanderers on March 1st of that year, which ended in a draw. This was the first time a Scottish club had played football in England's capital city. The role of the former vice-president and secretary to The Football Association, C.W. Alcock, was particularly important here. Alcock had endeavoured to promote the growth of football through the Association game (Catton 1900). Aside from the visit of Queen's Park, Alcock duly organised a number of games entitled 'England v Scotland' that took place from the autumn of 1870 onwards. The Scottish team largely consisted of players who were either resident in London or who were of Caledonian descent. The principal Scottish clubs of the day were Queen's Park, Airdrie, Kilmarnock, the Thistle and the Eastern. The so-called 'Scotch Professors' were considered to have been far ahead of their English counterparts particularly in the 'mechanical science' of the game. There was a real enthusiasm about Scottish football and a real identity relating to club football. The Queen's Park players were a good example of this burgeoning wave of tartan fervour. The ability of these players

was notable: "The Queen's Park Club men put the playing of the game at a point many years ahead of their southern rivals" (Gibson and Pickford 1906:50).

The Association game flourished in Scotland. The more established clubs adopted the rules whilst a raft of new clubs became established. Scottish Football attained an unexampled popularity (Jackson 1900:229), which led to the establishment of the Scottish Football Association in 1873. The precipitous growth in the Scottish game is evidenced by the following statistics. In 1875, the Scottish Association numbered 27 football clubs. By 1880, this figure had risen dramatically to 140. Similarly, in September 1875, Edinburgh boasted four football clubs. By 1880 this figure had climbed to 16. Equally, by 1880, the Scottish Association boasted an affiliation of 53 football clubs with 3,000 members. By 1890, there were 230 Scottish football players registered in England (Catton 1900:40). In the following year, the Football League recorded a total number of 448 registered players (Mason 1980:89).

The influx of Scottish players entering English football was seen as doing incalculable injury to the English game. The Association game had effectively become the national sport of Scotland by the early 1880s (Jackson 1900). Indeed, this popularity had been translated into a string of victories against England at international level. By 1882, England had recorded only two victories against Scotland from eleven matches played (Jackson 1900). It was, therefore, perhaps of little surprise that Scottish players became particularly sought after by English clubs. Nevertheless, the damage being done to the development of 'home-grown' talent in England was very evident.

This sentiment was forcibly expressed in an article entitled, 'The Steamy Side of Professionalism' which appeared in *The Athletic News Football Annual* of 1890-91, written by a journalist who wrote under the pseudonym, 'The Tramp'. He noted:

We have now a vast array of Scotch professors spread in every quarter where the game of football is most popular... Whether this process of importation and spoliation has been beneficial or otherwise to football itself is a very open question; certain it is, however,... that the cleverer and more powerful the team the greater the receipts at the gate. Still it

may be argued that the glory thus purchased is dear at the price... the buying up of ready-made talent from another country has practically stifled native effort.

Moreover, the same article also had some telling remarks to make regarding the financial cost to football clubs for the professional services of these players. A wage of £4 or £5 per week was said to have been commonplace.

Scottish football players were working class in origin and were paid a considerable amount of money to ply their trade south of the border. Inducements ranged from £200 a season and included emoluments such as a refresher of £30, an on the spot payment and £3 per week for the entire calendar year. These payments being made to Scottish players by English clubs were very attractive. As the game in Scotland was largely played by artisans, the wages that were on offer from English clubs proved to be irresistible: "From the earliest days England has been to the working class Scot a sort of El Dorado, where 'siller' (money or a medium of exchange) was plentiful and openings for Caledonian grit and push even more so" (Gibson and Pickford 1905:59).

While it was Englishmen who had first laid down the rules of Association Football, it was in Scotland where the game rapidly developed, particularly in the West of Scotland, the home of the artisan. The governing body of Scottish football at this time was doing its utmost to withstand the move towards the professionalization of the game. The Scottish Football Association attempted to arrest the slide towards professionalism by forbidding players and their clubs from playing football against other professional teams. However, as already noted, there was a general clamour amongst English clubs to sign Scottish players. Many English clubs argued that, without these 'Scottish Professors', their clubs were simply not strong enough to attract sufficient spectators through the gates. As Catton suggested: "To some football remained a sport, to others it became a business. The Scotch players, in their own country, were supposed to be pure amateurs. When they left their native land they evidently left their principles at home"(1900:64).

In its Football Annual of 1891-2, the *Athletic News* featured another prophetic article. It was entitled 'The Cultivation of Home Talent.' In this article 'The Tramp' remarked:

When will the tide set in against the wholesale importation of Scotch players that has been going on for the last half dozen years...? That the introduction of the Scotchman gave an impetus to the game no one who has followed football will gainsay. Attendances were never as large as they are to-day...But even allowing for all this, English talent should not be neglected as it is at present.

By May 1893, members of the Scottish Association felt that they had little choice other than to legalise professionalism. Indeed, as I have already said, by this time many Scottish clubs were already making payments to their players. Scotland, however, was simply unable to retain their best players. Despite the Scottish Football Association prohibiting Scottish clubs and Scottish players from playing against professionals, the Association could not prevent an inevitable and ineluctable trend towards professionalism. The decision taken by the Football Association in 1889 to rescind all restrictive qualifications on professionals was a momentous step in the history of British football. Once this measure was implemented the floodgates opened to the mass importation of players, notably Scottish players, to English football. As Jackson observed: "By permitting unlimited importation, they were actually withdrawing that encouragement to English players to improve their game which in the old days had been one of the chief principles of the Association," (1900:119).

For some time afterwards, the large majority of the best club professionals were 'Scotchmen'. However, as Jackson (1900) noted, this measure had other implications. In particular, competition for the best players intensified. Several Scottish clubs were now able to compete with their English counterparts for the best players. As the market for these players increased, so too, did the transfer fees. Players ensured that they played for the clubs who were prepared to pay the most, while local players had no claim to membership of local teams. It was 'the market' which would determine transfer policy. Concerns regarding 'home-grown talent'

and' 'local identity' were seen to be ancillary issues. In a local derby game between Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday in 1929, for example, only one player on the field was born in Sheffield (Fishwick 1989).

Furthermore, just as Scotland lost many of its finest players to English clubs, so too did Wales. From the early days of 'importation' Wales was also drained of most of its best players by the English professional clubs: "A Welsh International team is now very largely composed of professionals employed in another nation" (Jackson 1900:247). Insofar as Irish football was concerned, the early days was somewhat chequered. The Irish Association was not formed until 1880 and made only limited progress in parts of Ireland other than the North. Indeed, prior to 1921, Ireland in its entirety was part of the United Kingdom. A major obstacle to the growth of Irish football was the fact that the organisational structure and headquarters of Irish football were located in the provinces (Jackson 1900).

The importation of players during this period may be said to have played a significant role in the development of English football. Indeed, the mass 'importation' of Scottish players effectively set a benchmark, whereby the ability to pay was seen to be more important to English clubs than their ability to cultivate their own players. Buying the best players on the transfer market was clearly regarded as preferable to the development of 'home-grown talent.' The wealthier clubs, then as now, dominated the transfer market. A former West Bromwich and England international suggested that in 1906:

There must be an end to the almost insane competition which has been going on for the possession of good men; besides, under unrestricted competition, clubs of moderate strength have been debarred from getting good men. The market has been virtually closed to them. It is not for the good of football that the cream of the players shall be in half a dozen teams. (William Bassett 1906:160-2).

The importation of Scottish players raised all manner of related concerns including, 'identity', local or 'home-grown talent' transfer fees, wages, the financial position of football clubs and the performances of international players and the national team.

Local interest in 'local teams' which had traditionally been characterised by a 'healthy partisanship' had largely disappeared. Local footballers were actively seen to be discouraged (Jackson 1900).

Local English players were being prevented from playing in league teams by imported Scottish players. Indeed, during the inter-war years, Scottish football players continued to be very well represented within English football. Newcastle United, for example, fielded seven Scottish players when they won the English Championship in 1926-7, while Sunderland won the title in 1935-6 with eight Scottish players in their team (Walvin 1975). It is perhaps ironic that at the beginning of the 2008/9 football season, only six Scottish players were listed to play Premiership football (Hughes 2009).

5.8 Conclusion

The working environment has been regarded as being particularly important to the idea of social class. Different industries and different trades generated different work-related experiences. The early industrial working classes were not homogeneous. Moreover, differences in occupational trades and industry led to perceptible differences in lifestyle on both a local and regional basis. Most importantly, these differences may have afforded different football clubs their own particular character and identity. The local football team became a potent symbol of working class culture.

Football was to become a main site for the inclusion and expression of traditional masculine identities. As the industrialisation process advanced primary industries such as mining, construction engineering and dock work became particularly reliant upon physical strength. Physical endeavour became an important element of masculinity within the working classes of industrialised Britain. Physicality became one of the founding precepts of both working class culture and working class football clubs. Equally, the notion of 'muscular Christianity' that equally heralded a belief in

hard knocks and hard work, continued to impress itself upon early professional football clubs.

By the 1870s, working class football clubs in the industrialised Midlands and Northern England became established in increasing numbers. The rapid growth in the popularity of the game engendered a competitive spirit that resulted in football clubs searching for better players. An inexorable path towards professionalism was driven by thousands of artisans and engineers who wanted to play the game. Following the establishment of the Football League in 1888, most English teams were almost exclusively made up of imported players (Jackson 1900). Early English professional clubs embarked upon a policy of 'importation' rather than upon a policy aimed at producing 'home-grown players.' Scottish players were regarded as being much better than their English counterparts in terms of their ability to play (Gibson and Pickford: 1906).

Many English clubs became particularly reliant upon Scottish players. The ability to pay for their services was seen to be more important than the ability to cultivate local talent. The flood of Scottish players was considered to be doing incalculable injury to English football. The opportunity for 'home-grown players' to improve themselves by playing in Football League teams was effectively being thwarted by the numbers of Scottish players playing English football. The policy of importation raised all manner of issues regarding 'identity', 'transfer fees' and the financial position of football clubs. Equally, this policy of importation was also considered to have been responsible for the inability of the national team to be competitive at an international level. A number of these issues were to reassert themselves with remarkable similarity over a century or more later on. The significance of an inherent conflict between the insularity of English football and the improvements being made by other football nations during the twentieth century provides the basis for the following chapter.

Chapter 6 Traditional Values and the Technical Game

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to illustrate how the early professional English clubs continued to place an emphasis on courage, strength and fitness. These clubs played the game with an attacking flair and gusto that was characteristic of the spirit and style of many late nineteenth-century public schools (Holt 1990). As noted in the previous chapter, amateur football was invariably both intimidating and aggressive. The newly-formed industrial working classes continued to play the game in a rugged and physical manner. Early professional clubs demonstrated a scant regard for the development of individual skills; in many instances, training sessions would not include work with the ball at all. This pattern of development was set to become a recurring theme throughout much of the twentieth century.

The domestic game was slow to change and reluctant to recognise the progress being made by other football nations during the early part of the nineteenth century. A number of foreign countries began to free themselves from the shackles of the orthodox English game. The chapter sets out to explain how the traditional English game became challenged and contested by a technical game, pioneered and developed by the football being played by ‘continental’ opposition. The evidence of this trend or ‘paradigm shift’ became particularly apparent during the 1950s.

6.2 Early Training Sessions

English football continued to be a tough and aggressive game. Testimony to the physicality associated with the domestic game may be found in *The Times* editorial column which reported on both the FA Cup Final of 1899 between Sheffield United and Derby County, and the FA Cup Final played in 1907 between The Wednesday and Everton. In both match reports, the style of football that was being played was noted to have been ‘manly’ and physical. The game was played at a fast

pace, tackling was hard, the ball spent a long time in the air and numerous fouls were committed (Mason 1980:240).

The emphasis upon 'manliness' and 'physicality' is instructive. The ethos of 'muscular Christianity' was a notable feature of the training sessions held by early professional football clubs. Players were required to show courage, determination, aggression and endurance (Alcock 1906). This style of play afforded a suitable vehicle for the expression of traditional working class values which continued to emphasize strength and ruggedness. Clubs favoured football players that could make long kicks. Players were expected to be strong and robust rather than being noted for either speed or ball skills. Aggressive tackling and the shoulder charge continued to be the norm. Indeed, it was not uncommon for early professional teams to have trainers who had been ex-boxers or professional athletes (Mason 1980). The importance attached to strength and athleticism can readily be seen in the training techniques deployed by early football clubs. Training sessions: "Will vary from the use of heavy clubs and dumb-bells to twenty minutes` skipping, ball-punching, sprinting, and alternating with an eight or nine mile walk at a brisk pace" (Meredith 1906:10-11). Similarly, the manner in which professional football players were described in early football literature gave a vivid impression of the importance attached to physique and strength.

Detailed below is a selection of accounts that described early professional football players. These players were noted, not for individual skills or abilities, but rather for their physique and strength. For example, Robert Crompton, the Blackburn Rovers full back and England international was described in the following terms:

Physically Bob Crompton is one of the finest examples of the native – born professional player. Standing 5ft 9 inches., and weighing 12st.7lbs., he is splendidly developed, and a fine figure in shirt and knickers... He can charge with effect, however, on occasions, but he is something more than a mere rusher... His kicking is naturally powerful-probably his punts are the biggest things in League football ... Perhaps he balloons the ball rather too much for the perfect back, and when attacking his feeding passes often have too much powder behind them (Spencer 1906: 253).

Similarly, Herbert Smith, the captain of Reading Football Club was described in the following manner by another former professional player:

In watching the figure of Herbert Smith on a football field one is tempted to exclaim, "There stands a man!" As a specimen of English manhood one might search far and wide for his equal. It may be that in these days purely physical qualities are extolled too much, but a fine man, a perfect human animal will always command respect. To watch Smith at play, to see him run, to witness the play of his muscles, makes one feel proud of one's kind. He is a type of perfectly developed manhood (Bloomer 1900:167).

Training sessions demonstrated little in the way of skill development and were usually conducted on familiar lines. For example, a former English international, (un-named) writing in the early twentieth century bemoaned the lack of skills development in training: "There is no running about or dribbling, feinting, passing with the inside or outside of the foot, trapping or heading the ball and placing it with the head like you do with your feet, judging distances etc; indulged in at all" (Mason 1980:109). Football sessions were regarded as being remarkably dull affairs. League football was also considered to be devoid of individual skill. Training sessions were noted to be "old fashioned" and conducted on "stereotyped lines" (Mason 1980:109).

In an article entitled '*The Day's Work*', Mr W.I. Bassett, a former England international who played for West Bromwich Albion for sixteen years, gave a detailed account of the manner in which a professional footballer was trained:

The bulk of the trainers vary in their methods...Monday is often a *dies non*. Many clubs allow the men to do as they like on that day, providing that there is no mid-week engagement. On the Tuesday morning they get to the ground at ten o'clock and the trainer takes them for a good walk into the country. They probably cover five or six miles, and do it at a fair pace....This is the form of training I cordially approve of...plenty of good fresh air...Should the morning not be conducive to pleasant walking, then the trainer orders alternative exercise...One of the greatest full-backs of the day is in the habit of skipping every morning; practically he does little else, and he is always in the pink of condition...It makes for increased agility, it improves the wind...Most of our leading clubs have a well-equipped gymnasium...another player will have a long turn with the Indian clubs, and others will punch the ball for

an hour...Some of our leading pugilists are very fine ball-punchers...Then there is running exercise. Most of the players will run round the ground a few times or many, according to the amount of exercise each are deemed to require. This was the only real training I ever did. Then there is sprinting exercise...The men indulge in short bursts at top speed. But I fancy I hear the reader ask, what about learning to play football? ...Once a week, and once a week only, the men have ball practice...the men simply kick in...My own opinion is that men get nothing like as much actual work with the ball as they need (1906 :110-11).

There was also a noted ideological resistance to players being coached. Individual skills were regarded as being a reflection of innate qualities (this belief in ‘innate ability’ is discussed in Chapter 7). The resistance of professional footballers to coaching was notably expressed by players such as Steve Bloomer, a Derby County and England footballer, who wrote in 1904: “It was hard to impart to others the knowledge which you yourself possessed” (Wagg 1984:12).

6.3 Insularity and International Development

The development of professional football did, however, lead to a general improvement in the standard of play. Features of the professional game, such as positional play, ball control and passing all improved, largely made possible by the time and practice available to the professional player (Green 1953). Nevertheless, English football was slow to acknowledge the improvements being made to the rapidly-developing game being played in other countries.

The popularity of working class football continued to expand during this period. This general appeal was expressed both in terms of increased gate receipts and the increasing number of football clubs that were being established. For example, in 1905-6, only two clubs, Aston Villa and Newcastle recorded average attendances in excess of 20,000. By 1913-14, 15 clubs had achieved this figure (Tabner 1992:69-73). Moreover, between the years 1914-1951, the number of English professional clubs increased from 158 to 427 (Fishwick 1989).

By the end of the nineteenth century, football was being played throughout much of the English-speaking world. Great Britain had become the undisputed home of Association football (Murray 1994). As the international expansion of professional football progressed, very few within English football imagined that foreign players and foreign teams could pose a threat to English superiority or deliver further improvement to how the domestic game was being played (Murray: 1994). Indeed, most continental teams had been established by the British or by Anglophiles. Prior to 1914, football played on the continent was largely in the hands of amateurs and consequently posed little threat to the English game. Nevertheless, the game expanded quickly in the central European countries of Austria, Bohemia and Hungary. Association football outside the United Kingdom was taken up first by Switzerland and then by Denmark. German football developed from trade links to its sea ports and trade centres. Belgian football developed in a similar fashion largely as a reflection of trade and educational links. Although both Germany and France had developed competitive football by the 1920s, it was Italy which was to become a dominant force by the 1930s, developing world class football clubs and a world class national side. Again, the British influence was marked with the first Italian football team having been established in Genoa in 1893. The club became known as the Genoa Cricket and Football Club. The team was made up of both British and Italian players and dominated the early Italian football championships (Murray 1994).

Football was exported by the British to all parts of the Empire: "Wherever British sailors, whether of the naval or mercantile fleets, have gone; a football has been part of the ship's paraphernalia" (Kirkby and Carter 1933:45). Elsewhere in the world, football served to promote and establish colonial societies. Indeed, the rapid growth in the popularity of the game both in this country and abroad led to the establishment of the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) in Paris on May 21st, 1904. The Football Association considered the establishment of this newly-formed international football body in terms of relative "indifference" but agreed to membership in 1905 (Murray 1994:68). Nevertheless, the governing body was to rescind this membership twice during the 1920s. English football represented a world

within a world (Harding 1991). The domestic game continued to be the epitome of insularity:

So successful and expanding was the domestic game that it had little need to pay attention to the game abroad...it was simply assumed by the English that the continuing health of their insular game would forever guarantee the superiority which had existed before the war (Walvin 1975:120-21).

When the Football Association withdrew from FIFA in 1928, they did not re-join until the 1946-7 football season. Accordingly, England did not participate in any of the World Cup campaigns that were played throughout this period. The Football Association became largely opposed to both the idea of foreign players and foreign teams. For example, in January 1931, the governing body introduced a two year residency rule which virtually ensured that foreign players could not play football in this country. The Association Minutes for 1930-31, noted a motion passed by the Rules Revision Committee. It read:

A professional player who is not a British born subject is not eligible to take part in any competition under the jurisdiction of the Association unless he possesses a two years' residential qualification within the jurisdiction of the Association (Rule 30, 19th January 1931).

This rule change was approved on 1st June 1931 at the Annual General Meeting of The Football Association. The domestic game, it was believed, had little to learn from foreign football, and if foreign players were allowed to play here, other football nations might come to the conclusion that there was something wrong with the English game and that the domestic game was incapable of producing 'home-grown' talent.

This intransigence was soon to become readily exposed by the performances of various English clubs who ventured to play friendly games abroad. Sunderland was in fact the first English football club to lose on the continent. They were beaten 2-1 by Wiener AC of Austria in 1909 (Murray 1994). Results from English clubs playing football abroad were distinctly disappointing. For example, following their recent

successes in domestic football, teams like Newcastle United, FA Cup winners in 1932, and Everton, League Champions in the same year, performed quite badly whilst on tour in France. The English newspaper headlines were scathing; *'Our Degrading Football'*, *'How Our Crack Teams Let Down Britain'*, *'Trips Must stop - or be Taken Seriously.'* One football correspondent was prompted to write: "Is British football, the quality of it, so poor, or is it that the players are failing to do British football and themselves full justice?" (Kirby and Carter 1933:67). Not only was there was a clear failure within English football to recognise just how far continental football had developed but there was also a profound reluctance to institute any degree of change. Many continental clubs by this time were no longer playing orthodox or traditional football and had become much more innovative and progressive in terms of how players were being trained and how football was being played.

The insularity of English football was illustrated by the advances being made by the development of the game in France. The French decided to renounce their amateur status and allow professionalism at the end of the 1931-2 football season. Once this policy change had been instituted, many French clubs elected to sign English players and coaches. There was a real demand for their services despite the poor performances from English clubs who had played football on the continent. French football clubs such as Nimes and Lille, for example, were particularly active on the transfer market. However, this unexpected development was of real concern to the English Football Association. The governing body reviewed the matter and cautioned all English players that to play football for a foreign team would probably result in these players being unable to return to play football in England. Similarly, various English clubs looking to sign foreign players were advised by the Ministry of Labour that there was a sufficient body of English football players who could be readily employed. Immigration officials were thereby instructed to reject any requests by foreign players to play their football on English soil (Kirby and Carter 1933).

Ironically, improvements in the standards of football being played in many other countries were in large measure due to British coaches who chose to work abroad. Dutch football benefited enormously from the input of numerous ex-professional English players during this period. Rigorous coaching systems were deployed incorporating both theoretical and technical football skills. In a somewhat unorthodox procedure, the South American republics were reportedly instructing their players to chase chickens, under the tutelage of their own coaches! Given that the birds seldom run in straight lines, players learnt the body swerve enabling them to both beat and avoid opponents (Kirby and Carter 1933). Innovative coaching techniques were introduced in numerous countries throughout the world whilst in England a policy of 'splendid isolation' continued as before. The best English football coaches continued to find work in numerous overseas countries especially in Europe and in North and South America (Kirby and Carter 1933).

Conversely, English clubs continued to emphasise the importance of athleticism. In 1934, Stanley Matthews, the England international who was later to be knighted, was playing football for Stoke City. In his autobiography Matthews remarked:

In 1934, football training was far from the exact science it is today and at most clubs consisted of a few laps of the running track, some exercises, then in for a bath and a Woodbine. Often a ball wouldn't feature at all....As far as First Division teams went, Stoke didn't have the quality in depth of Arsenal or Sunderland but we made up for that with our superior fitness (2000:60).

This emphasis upon physical fitness was taken to a new level by one of the most successful English managers of all time, Herbert Chapman. As the manager of Arsenal F.C., Chapman enjoyed an unprecedented run of success throughout the 1930s, including two First Division titles and an FA Cup victory. Arsenal was the dominant club during this period and went on to win five League titles in total during the 1930s. Much of this achievement was built upon preparedness and physical fitness (Walvin 1975).

Nevertheless, a number of professional players became particularly aware of the need to improve the standard of English football. One player in particular was the Manchester City and Northern Ireland international, Peter Doherty, who was dubbed, 'Peter the Great' by Billy Wright, the former Wolverhampton Wanderers and England captain (Doherty 1947). Doherty was very much a player ahead of his time both on and off the field of play. He believed that players were 'made' rather than 'born' to play the game and always emphasised the need for constant practice. Furthermore, Doherty insisted that too much importance was being placed upon physical fitness; lapping the football field was not considered to be a substitute for ball practice. Doherty was acutely aware that the complete superiority that British football had enjoyed throughout the world was now beginning to be challenged by the improved coaching standards being implemented abroad. He made various telling remarks relating to both coaching and the lack of technical skill development:

Training methods are almost the same as they were twenty years ago. The old monotonous routine of lapping [running around the pitch] and sprinting, with a little ball practice thrown in, is still considered to be the best means of preparing players for a game...the old methods have been passed on like family heirlooms (Doherty1947:118).

As I noted earlier in the chapter, there was a body of opinion within English football that regarded too much ball practice as likely to reduce a player's hunger for the ball. In other words, too much ball work was likely to produce stale players. The response from Doherty to this opinion was typical of the man. He remarked: "It would be difficult to conceive a more stupid or erroneous idea ...every player has something to learn about ball control ... this all important aspect of training receives far too little attention in the weekly routine" (Doherty 1947:19). Doherty recommended that football players should learn to develop a range of football skills, including the ability to play football with both feet. To encourage this particular skill, he suggested that a player should wear a slipper or plimsoll on the strongest foot and a football boot on the weakest foot. Doherty insisted that the professional player should learn how to head the ball, trap the ball, run with the ball and be able to shoot and pass accurately with either foot. These were the skills of the trade. This was the basis upon which technical football was to be played.

Due to a dearth of coaching facilities in Northern Ireland, Doherty also submitted his own coaching scheme to the Irish Football Association. The scheme was based upon the provision of 'soccer centres' which would be situated near to the grounds of Irish Football League Clubs. Boys, irrespective of their ages, could be instructed in the art of soccer by qualified coaches (Premier League Football Academies, introduced by the Football Association in 1997, were based upon the ideas that Doherty had promoted some fifty years earlier). The innovation proposed by Doherty was never implemented due to 'associated costs'. Doherty was nevertheless convinced that organised coaching was the only way forward and that a long - term plan was urgently required.

6.4 The Declining Force of English Football

English football in the early post-war era was no longer the dominant force it had been within the global game. The stereotyped requirements of speed, strength and tough tackling remained the norm. Pace and aggression continued to be demanded while guile and craft found little place in the English game. The importance of a good defence was similarly heralded. Herbert Chapman famously remarked: "If we manage to keep the opponents from scoring we have one point for certain. If we manage to snatch a goal, we have both points" (Meisl 1955: 20). Not surprisingly, the chant in later years at Highbury, the old Arsenal football ground, became 'one-nil to the Arsenal.'

During this period, many English football clubs copied the Arsenal style of play. Consequently, the domestic game continued to stagnate. The paying public similarly expected to see a 'battle' with players fighting for possession and showing courage, strength, stamina and speed. The English game continued to focus upon brawn rather than brain. British players became perplexed by the short precision passing, movement and long dribbles by foreign stars. Commenting upon an England game at Wembley stadium in 1953 against a 'Rest of the World' FIFA X1, Hugo Meisl, the well-known Austrian football coach noted that foreign players were: "Technically better...passed with incomparably greater precision, [and] positioned themselves

much more cleverly" (Meisl 1955:31). The domestic game had lost none of its physicality and manliness, a fact echoed in the popular press. English players were instructed to "get stuck in" and "hit 'em hard", (Meisl 1955:40).

In contrast, many foreign players had been coached in the art of ball skills and the development of individual ability rather than encouraged simply to concentrate upon speed, strength and stamina. These differences in football philosophy are consistent with the views of Eddie Firmani, a former Italian international who played for Charlton Athletic Football Club between 1950 and 1955. Following his time in English football, Firmani then played football for two leading Italian football clubs, Sampdoria and Inter Milan. He then returned to Charlton Athletic in 1967 as club manager. His understanding of English football is noteworthy:

In England the training was hard, very hard, the aim being to instill toughness... In Italy ... we actually trained with the ball as you would in a match... English soccer was a different game. It was about being strong and powerful... getting long balls to the forwards. In Italy we played possession football... we played to feet. In England... when you consider the time that's elapsed, it hasn't changed a hell of a lot (Harris 2003:61).

Following the Second World War, football in Europe was largely referred to as the 'Continental game' rather than as European football. The English football press continued to refer to foreign football clubs as 'continentals' (King 2003:5). During this period, English football was contested and challenged by the developments being made by 'Continental' opposition. Indeed, much of European and South American football had begun to be shaped by what could be described a technical style of play. English football had failed to move with the times, continental opponents were now teaching the old masters how to play football (Murray 1994).

International football had made significant progress. Uruguay, for example, had won the Olympics in both 1924 and 1928, but the performances and abilities of the athletes had passed largely unnoticed (Murray 1994). It was the highly successful Moscow Dynamo side's tour of Britain in 1945 that made English football aware of how far overseas football had progressed. The Soviet team was the first football club

to tour Europe. Largely unknown, the club delivered a number of remarkable performances against British opposition. They defeated Cardiff City 10-1, drew 3-3 with Chelsea, beat Arsenal 4-3, in a team which included Stanley Mathews and Stan Mortensen in a game memorably played in dense fog. In their final game they drew 2-2 with Glasgow Rangers. The Soviet team was acclaimed for their supreme ball control, pace, short passing and sound positional play (Murray 1994:151).

At both club and national levels, English football was beginning to be challenged by a new order. During the inter-war period, England played 107 international matches. It was not until 1929 that England was defeated abroad, losing to Spain in Madrid 4-3. However, these figures may not give an adequate and accurate account of the strength of English football during this period, as the majority of these international games (60) were played against the other 'home nations', i.e. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (Myfootballfacts.com.co.uk 2012).

6.5 The Advent of Technical Football

International football continued to make significant improvements. This was reflected in terms of the standard of play and also in the abilities of international football players. The inaugural World Cup competition was played in Montevideo in 1930, which Uruguay won, beating Argentina 4-2. In fact, Uruguay has often been regarded as being the most outstanding football nation in the history of world football (Murray 1994). England declined to participate in this World Cup for various reasons, not least of all due to apathy and indifference (Murray 1994). It was not until the World Cup tournament of 1950, hosted by Brazil that England decided to become involved. Indeed, the English Football Association had displayed little interest in FIFA until after the Second World War. The Association was invited to re-join FIFA in 1945 and so became eligible to play in the World Cup competition in 1950.

In this competition, the national team was defeated 1-0 by the part-time players from the United States. While many observers at the time suggested that this result was 'a

fluke', the poor showing of the national side throughout the competition served to illustrate a more fundamental weakness; English football was one-dimensional, physical rather than tactical, tenacious rather than technical. According to Murray:

The British played a fast, physical game, admiring courage and tenacity over artistry and skill... The bruising British game was more suitable to soft, muddy pitches than it was to the sun-baked surfaces of warmer climates, but it also reflected the long legacy of football as a 'manly game' (Murray 1994:104).

A short while later, the Hungarian team dealt another damaging blow to English traditionalism and orthodoxy. The national team was comprehensively defeated by the Hungarians 6-3 at Wembley in November 1953 in a game that served to illustrate just how far Continental football had advanced. Stanley Matthews observed:

Hungary was combining two styles – the British all-running cut and thrust and the short passing game of probing infiltration much favoured at the time by the South Americans... a style of football that was as innovative as it was productive... Wembley witnessed football history being made... Long before the final whistle the glory of our footballing past had been laid to rest (Matthews 2000: 312-13).

Hungarian 'technical' football had triumphed over the 'traditional' English game. In a friendly match played in Budapest in the following year, 'The Magyars' once again convincingly defeated England this time 7-1. Results at both club and national level demonstrated just how far Continental football had advanced. The domestic game was now being challenged by a more artistic and individualistic style of play that had been developed abroad. These contrasting styles of play were illustrative of a paradigm shift: a move away from a traditional to a technical game.

Despite these high profile defeats, there was a continued reluctance in English footballing circles to embrace change. There continued to be a misplaced belief in the superiority of the English game. Traditional tactics and training methods continued largely as before. For example, prior to the game between England and Hungary at Wembley in 1953, the English press remained convinced that the old British style of play would win the day (Meisl 1955). As Meisl observed, the

continued reliance upon the need to “tackle ‘em hard” and “get stuck in” have done more to restrict the development of English football than anything else. (1955:155-6).

The popularity and consistency of this style of play was characterised by Nat Lofthouse, the former Bolton Wanderers and England international. Lofthouse is fondly remembered as being the finest centre forward English football has ever produced. He was always known as ‘the Lion of Vienna’, since he scored two goals against Austria in Vienna in May 1952, enabling England to win the game 3-2. The son of a coalman, Lofthouse was to become the embodiment of English football. He retired in 1960, having scored 252 League goals in his career. He was awarded 33 international caps, scoring on 33 occasions for his country. Lofthouse was regarded as being a true legend of the English game. Percy Young described him thus:

There is English football; there are English footballers; and Lofthouse is, perhaps, in our time the most English of them all...not the most skilful of players he proved himself to be at least the most resolute of his generation (Young1961:135-150).

Lofthouse, once a coal-miner himself, had a huge physical presence and this physicality was reflected in his play. The spectators at Burnden Park, the home of Bolton Wanderers Football Club, occasionally saw English football at its best, but invariably the football embodied both native aggression and courage Lofthouse played in a match between Bolton Wanderers and Manchester City, appropriately enough on bonfire night, November 5th 1960. In this game, the tackling was described by Percy Young as of a ferocity that was unknown to the football played in Barcelona. This game was reviewed by *The Guardian* and this review was reprinted by Young, in his book, *Bolton Wanderers* (1961).

Then game was, “[A] blood and thunder match that no one dared to leave early in case he missed the odd murder or sending off...The purists may rage and talk about the lost arts of English football, but the fact remains that the gate was almost double the average for the season so far,” (1961:135).

Once again this football match afforded further testimony to a 'manly' and physical game. Moreover, not only was the play particularly physical but this battling encounter was something that the crowd fully expected to witness.

6.6 European Competition

The inception of European club football competition during the 1950s did much to arrest the insularity that had characterised English football until this period. In 1956, Real Madrid won the inaugural European Cup competition having defeated the French team Stade Reims 4-3 in Paris. The Real Madrid trio of Di Stefano, Gento and Kopa were outstanding forward players. An emphasis upon a different form of football was now readily apparent: "Unbeknown to them at the time, Real served as a catalyst for the European game. With their swaggering, explosive style and predilection for attacking in waves, they set the standard for entertaining football and did so to the highest level. This form of football was 'art form'" (Matthews 2000:474). English football, as Matthews noted, was always industrious, whereas in Spain it was now being played in a different manner. This highly successful style of play prompted various English football club managers to institute changes based to a large extent on the techniques and tactics of top continental coaches. Ball work, for example, was beginning to be introduced on a daily basis into training sessions which, hitherto, had largely been unheard of (Matthews: 2000).

The European challenge was led by Manchester United. This was a pivotal time for English football (Walvin 1975). Indeed, a number of English teams began to compete in European tournaments. Both Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United were particularly successful at the European level of club football during this period. However, much of the traditional style of English football remained: "British teams were seen as the embodiment of the common national virtues of manliness, perseverance and strength against the effete (though skilful) showiness of 'Continental' teams" (King 2003:5). In a match report published in *The Times* in 1962 which featured a European game between Tottenham Hotspur and Benfica, the journalist wrote:

In terms of pure football technique these Portuguese were the greatest artists. But technique is not everything and last night they found themselves in a man's game where spirit and fibre and courage and the last drop of breath counted. (King 2003:5).

The innovative play and tactical improvements that had characterised many successful foreign teams during the 1950s and early 1960s were now being copied by several domestic teams. West Ham United, for example, managed by Ron Greenwood, and Tottenham Hotspur, managed by Bill Nicholson, both developed attractive attacking teams who played football in a manner frequently referred to as 'push and run'. This form of football introduced the importance of attacking football, positional play and movement. Tottenham Hotspur became English champions and FA Cup winners in 1960-61. In 1963, 'the double' winning side went on to become the first British team to win a major European football competition, the European Cup Winner's Cup. A number of English teams became transformed by European football competition. West Ham United, Liverpool and Nottingham Forest, for example, all won major European honours. It would, therefore, be incorrect to suggest that English football had failed to embrace change during this period. Indeed, innovation and European success led to the national team winning the World Cup in 1966. According to Jimmy Greaves the legendary Tottenham and England international:

The progress English football had made following our acceptance in the mid-fifties that our football had fallen behind that of other countries resulted in England winning the World Cup. That progress and development failed to continue apace after the success of 1966 (Greaves 2004: 353-354)

One person responsible for the introduction of innovative play into English football during this period was Sir Walter Winterbottom, who became Director of Coaching at the FA in 1946 and the first man to manage the England national team. He combined both roles until 1962 and became the longest serving England manager. Not only was he instrumental in pioneering modern coaching techniques but he also had a profound effect upon a number of highly regarded football personalities which included Ron Greenwood, Bill Nicholson, Jimmy Hill, Dave Sexton, Don Howe

and Sir Bobby Robson. Winterbottom was confronted by deeply entrenched and embedded attitudes towards the idea of coaching professional players. The domestic game continued to promote physicality and fitness. Lapping the football pitch, body work and weights, had consistently been considered to be the best way to prepare for a football game. As I noted earlier in this chapter, English football had traditionally paid little attention to the development of ball skills or the importance of tactical play. For Winterbottom, this resistance to change was rooted in the very physical and violent origins of the English game. (Morse 2013). Winterbottom similarly remarked, “We were so insular that we wouldn’t believe that other methods could be used for doing things, other ways of playing the game could be better than ours, and that had to change, of course (Morse 2013:12). Ironically, throughout much of the nineteenth century, many English coaches found work abroad because English clubs quite simply did not believe in the merits of coaching.

In 1946, Winterbottom instituted a national coaching scheme which made use of regional schemes organized through the numerous County Football Associations. Coaching qualifications were introduced on two levels: the FA Preliminary Certificate and the advanced coaching level, namely, the FA Certificate and Badge (Morse 2013: 128). Nevertheless, while coaching schemes were generally welcomed in English schools, football remained very much a working class game. Its wider audience proved to be inherently skeptical. “Walter’s intellect was a two edged sword: a very considerable asset in the vision needed to plot the way ahead, but a disadvantage in persuading players, coaches and managers to think more deeply about technical and tactical developments” (Morse 2013: 132). Progress was therefore particularly difficult to achieve. Indeed, throughout his time as England manager, Winterbottom had similarly been shackled by bureaucratic constraints. The national team was chosen by a selection committee which comprised of eight selectors and a chairman (Morse 2013:15). Winterbottom was an innovator and a man ahead of his time. His national coaching scheme made a significant contribution to the development of English football and effectively laid the foundation for the World Cup success in 1966.

It was Sir Alf Ramsey who had won the World Cup for England in 1966 with a succession of powerful team performances. His attitude towards individual ability and flair is, however, noteworthy. Ramsey regarded these types of players as 'crowd pleasers', and inconsistent and unreliable performers. For Ramsey, such players were not 'team players' (Greaves 2004:358). His attitude towards individual flair was certainly one reason why Jimmy Greaves was not included in England's 1966 World Cup winning team:

England's historic success was seen to be the result of players being 'professional' and 'doing a professional job'... there was no place for a player who might want to stamp his own idiosyncratic style on the course of the game. As such an important element of British football was lost. The modernisation of English football had picked up momentum since the late 1950's...by referring to 'a professional job'. Alf unwittingly tolled the death knell for players who were given to fully expressing themselves in the course of the game. In the late sixties and the seventies gifted individuals such as Rodney Marsh, Alan Hudson, Stan Bowles, Tony Currie and Robin Friday (Reading) found themselves branded as mavericks and unprofessional (Greaves 2004:358).

During the 1970s, English international football enjoyed only limited success. England failed to qualify for the World Cup finals in 1974, the European Championships of 1976 and the World Cup Finals held in West Germany in 1978. Thus, during a period when domestic football was dominated by British players, at national level English football remained largely uncompetitive. Don Revie, who managed the national side from 1974-77, epitomised the physicality inherent within English football (Fynn and Guest 1989). Revie's approach to international football was largely built upon the physical style of play adopted by Sir Alf Ramsey.

In contrast, Italian, Dutch and Spanish football was seen to be taking the game to a higher level. Arrigo Sacchi, the coach of AC Milan, described his philosophy of 'technical' football in simplistic terms. Players had to have physical, technical, artistic and cultural qualities (Fynn and Guest 1989). A similar point has been made by Glen Hoddle, the former Tottenham and England international. Hoddle spent several years at Monaco and later became the manager of England. He noted that very few teams in England had the capacity to play anything other than a kick and

rush style of play. The average Englishman, he considered, was a limited player. Conversely, European football was regarded as being technical tactical and skill based (Fynn and Guest 1989). Equally, Hoddle also noted that English football remained both intransigent and insular: "We play this way. We`re England and that's it" (Fynn and Guest 1989: 199).

Between 1961 and 1985, attendances at English football matches continued to fall (Russell 1997). A low point was reached during the 1985-86 football season, with a recorded figure of 16 million spectators. Gates were down by as much as 10 per cent during this period. In 1985, the disastrous European Cup final between Juventus and Liverpool, played at the Heysel Stadium Brussels, saw 39 Juventus fans lose their lives. Several hundred football other fans also suffered serious injuries. Following this tragedy, all English clubs were banned from European football competitions for a period of five years. This exclusion period further exacerbated the difference in the standards of play between English and Continental football clubs. For example, following the poor showing of the English national team in the 1988 European Football Championships, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) produced a technical report in which it was suggested that the England team was "technically" deficient and unable to adapt to the "continental style of play" that confronted them (Fynn and Guest 1989: 203).

In late 1978, largely due to the belief that English football was rapidly losing its public appeal, the Professional Footballers' Association brought considerable pressure to bear upon the British government to provide work permits for foreign players who were regarded as established performers (Harris 2006). Several high profile signings were made during this period, including Ardiles and Villa from Argentina, who both joined Tottenham Hotspur F.C. in 1978. Ardiles commented:

I came into a team that was not the best...the style in general was very direct. It was like all the other English clubs at the time, except Liverpool. It bypassed the midfield. English players were fit, never say die, they ran more than us definitely, but there was still a long-ball mentality. I don't think it was unique in Europe, but even within Europe

you could differentiate these things...In 1978 England was very, very isolated (Harris 2006:125).

The disparity between the abilities of many English players and the Argentinian players had been described by Tottenham supporters as representing: "a meeting of two worlds" (Harris 2006:129). The idea of player development within English football continued to be largely indeterminate. With the notable exception of Manchester United F.C., who had instituted a nationwide youth development policy dating back to the 1930s, very few English football clubs had embarked upon a policy of youth development. The notion of nurturing football talent had lacked a coordinated approach (Green 2009). Players were more likely to have been recruited from local leagues and other football clubs. The decline in the standard of football in the domestic game during this period had been notable (King 2003).

The first coaching manual produced by the Football Association was not published until 1936 (Green 2009). The document was written by committee members rather than including any contribution from professional football coaches. Furthermore, coaching football players had been opposed by some Football Association committee members. A number of quixotic theories had also been forwarded, for example: players were required to bulk up on bully beef and chips prior to kick off (Green 2009).

The Football Association was particularly slow to recognise the need for a coordinated coaching structure and has only recently recognised the need for age-related coaching (The stance of the Football Association with respect to coaching methods is considered in Chapter 7). This lethargy stood in stark contrast to the developments that were taking place in other football nations. This point is clearly illustrated by the disparity in the number of qualified coaches that there are in English football compared to other European football nations (this point is discussed in Chapter 7). Similarly, the emphasis in other European nations has been on the development of community clubs at grassroots level, which has actively encouraged a greater degree of participation (Green 2009).

The continuity and consistency of English football continued to be reflected along the lines of social class. British football has retained an intensely working class character. Players, football managers and spectators have all continued to be drawn from the lower income brackets (Walvin 2010). Indeed, a number of professional football clubs have continued to focus on signing working class players (Hansen 2001). An authoritative study of professional football in Ireland likewise showed that football players have continued to be drawn from a notional working class background (Bourke 2003). The tenacity of working class culture has remained remarkably consistent. As Ellis Cashmore remarked:

English soccer manifests an aggressive, almost virulent conception of masculinity that, it seems, it just can't shrug. Despite the global influences that have affected the way football is run and played since 1992, [formation year of the Premier League] the essential manly character of the English game seems impervious to change. (Cashmore 2002: 122).

English football continued to fall behind the standards being set by both foreign teams and foreign players alike. The marked differences in ability levels between English and foreign players became particularly apparent once foreign players were granted freedom of movement within the European Union. Rather than institute concerted attempts to improve the abilities of 'home-grown players', English football was to embark upon a policy of importation very similar to the one introduced during the late 1880s which resulted in the 'Scotch professors' dominating the domestic game. As in the 1880s, this importation policy was to have very similar consequences for the football being played at both club and national level.

6.7 The Foreign Invasion

Two landmark pieces of legislation were to have a material impact upon the number of foreign players who were to play football for British clubs. These changes related to the 'Treaty of Rome' and the so called 'Bosman Ruling'. Following the implementation of this legislation, domestic players found themselves in competition with footballers from within the European Community and elsewhere. The

implementation of this policy hastened the pace and direction of change within the domestic game. This legislation ultimately led to a shift from a traditional to a technical game being established at the elite level of English football. The liberalisation of labour markets led to a fundamental change in both the supply and demand for football players. Similarly, the importation of foreign players also focused attention upon how the game was being played at both club and national level.

Historically, within the United Kingdom, players could only move from one football club to another with the agreement of both parties. Once an agreement had been reached, a transfer fee could then be arranged. During the 1977-78 season, this procedure came to an end when the European Community introduced a 'freedom of contract' system whereby players who reached the end of their contracts could leave their clubs if they wished to do so. If a transfer fee could not be agreed between the respective parties, then the matter would be decided by a tribunal (Harris 2006).

The European Community stipulated that all respective Football Associations within the European Community must amend their regulations on player movement to coincide with the Treaty of Rome. This meant that there could be no restrictions placed on the number of players from European Union countries who wished to play football for clubs within the European Community. The legislation brought football under the scope of the Rome Treaty and enhanced workers' freedom of movement (Harris 2006). In 1978, this legislation was accepted by the Football League and all foreign players became free to play for British football clubs. The only condition was that no more than two players from outside the European Community could be fielded in one team. This stipulation would over time disappear completely (Harris 2006).

Equally important to the transfer of players was the Bosman ruling. In 1990 the footballer Jean-Marc Bosman claimed 'freedom of movement' within the European Union. He wished to leave his club, RFC Liège, and sign for Dunkerque, a French football club. The French football club was unwilling to meet the transfer fee that

Liège had demanded, so Bosman was not allowed to leave. Critically, the transfer fee had to be agreed upon regardless of whether or not the player's contract with his own football club had ended. Bosman argued that players should be allowed to join another club once they were out of contract. Once a player was out of contract, no transfer fee would have to be paid.

Bosman challenged the established system of transfer payments. In 1995, the case was heard at the European Court of Justice. The court found in Bosman's favour. Transfer fees for out-of contract players, where a player was moving between one European country and another, were made illegal. In future, transfer fees would only be applicable to players who were still contracted (Harris 2006). Thus, following the Bosman ruling, players within the European Community were able to move freely between clubs from member states.

It is equally important to note that this ruling also had a marked impact upon players' salaries. In an attempt to limit the possibility of losing a transfer fee from a player or players whose contract may have expired, clubs began to offer longer term contracts. In many instances, players were only prepared to accept long-term contracts if they were offered improved terms and conditions (Symanski and Kupers 1999). In the post-Bosman era, major European football clubs were able to recruit an increasing number of foreign players. The more successful clubs were now able to build large playing squads of the kind considered necessary for allowing these clubs to compete for both domestic and European honours (King 2003).

The five year European ban imposed on English clubs following the Heysel tragedy in 1985 was rescinded during the 1990-91 season. Throughout the rest of the decade, a steady flow of imported players began to play football in the United Kingdom. As the end of the twentieth century approached, the profile of professional football players, football managers and their clubs, particularly within elite football, was to change significantly. Once the Premier League had been established in 1992, foreign players began to arrive in the United Kingdom in significant numbers. This development is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

The financial fortunes of top English clubs also improved markedly throughout the 1990s, largely due to a continuous growth in broadcasting revenues. Television coverage concentrated upon the most successful teams and consequently these clubs attracted larger television revenues (Gratton 2000). This improved revenue stream assisted elite clubs to dominate the transfer market and sign the most desirable players, many of whom were from various countries throughout the world.

It is, however, equally true to say that a number of European football teams also imported a number of foreign players. During the 1950s and 1960s, Real Madrid, for example, signed a number of players from other countries (Walvin 2010). Since this time, European football has similarly become notably cosmopolitan. Nevertheless, at the time of writing only one England international football player, David Beckham, is playing football abroad. Indeed, as the *Meltdown* report (2007) noted, in the 2005/6 football season, English players made 41% of starting appearances for Premier League clubs whereas in Italy - the main power in world football - the comparable figure was 73 % (2007:8). More recent data provided by the Football Association (2009) denoted a similar picture. For example, the number of Spanish nationals playing in La Liga was 68%, in Italy the comparable figure was 70%, while in both France and Germany the figures were 61% and 60% respectively (see Chapter 8). As the authors of the *Meltdown Report* suggested, these European countries have continued to produce generation upon generation of players who possess technical skills. There is little evidence to suggest that the number of foreign players who are now playing Premiership football has peaked. As Jamie Carragher observed: "The way it's going, you'll soon be seeing Premier League scouts hanging around maternity wards in Madrid, Barcelona and Paris waiting for the next prodigy to be delivered by the midwife (2008:97).

6.8 Sport Labour Migration

One important area of research relating to the movement of sporting personnel across both international and cultural barriers is sport labour migration. This area of study embraces both an extensive literature and a variety of approaches. The globalization

of football and labour migration, for example, has been explained in terms of a multifaceted and multidirectional process (Magee and Sugden 2002:422). Labour migration may occur within and between nation states and on an intercontinental basis (Maguire *et al* 2002; Sage 2010). This developmental process applies not only to particular sportsmen and sportswomen but may also include other sports personnel such as coaches, scouts, sports scientists, administrators, managers and officials (Elliott and Maguire 2008).

Sports labour migration is not a new phenomenon. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, for example, football was exported by the British to all parts of the Empire. Early international football fixtures between England and Scotland had a notable impact on player migration (See Chapter 5). Indeed, a number of early football clubs that were established by the British, quite often consisted of a combination of both nationalities and cultures. Equally, as I suggested in Chapter 6, the rapid expansion of the game both here and abroad led to the establishment of FIFA in 1904. The developmental role of FIFA, and, in particular, the establishment of World Cup football in 1930, helped to develop an international market for football players.

The dissemination of football has been structured by the emergence and development of national and international sporting institutions such as FIFA, UEFA, and by international competition and the global expansion of rules and regulations. These developments have given rise to a world-wide network of interdependency characterized by diverse power relations (Maguire 2013). Football has also witnessed a huge increase in both the volume and diversity of transnational media coverage. During the late 1980's, for example, European, Latin American and Asian tournaments could be viewed on UK satellite television, a development that had been largely unknown during the late 1980's (Giulianotti and Robertson 2009). The organization of global sport may be regarded as being indicative of a new form of consumer oriented western capitalism. One effect of this developmental process has been a narrowing in cultural differences (Maguire *et al* .2002). Sports labour

migration, then, may be seen to occur on a number of different levels and for numerous reasons.

Economics, politics, geography, history, language and cultural considerations may all play a role in impacting upon the migration process. There is some evidence to suggest that there are both patterns to the recruitment and retention of athletes, including football players. For example, the North-East of England has traditionally been an area of recruitment for professional football clubs but local players have invariably been forced to move to find employment (Bale 1989:190). Equally, numerous researchers have concluded that the movement of players into the elite level of English football was driven not only by economic factors but also by a desire to compete at the highest level (Elliott and Maguire 2008). Sport labour migration has been a notable feature of sports development in the in the late twentieth century. The movement of football players from one continent to another may be explained in terms of the financial strength of different football leagues that have the capacity to attract a standard of player commensurate with the ability to secure transfer fees and pay the salaries demanded by individual players (Maguire and Bale 1994:2). Football labour migration then may be seen in terms of movement to those football leagues with greater financial resources (Magee and Sugden (2002).

In an attempt to understand the migration of African football players to European clubs, Paul Darby (2000) has noted how in general terms, the movement of football labour in transnational and transcontinental terms, may be viewed as part of the process of globalization. Indeed, the transcontinental migration of footballers from the African continent has witnessed a significant expansion during the late twentieth century. The development of African football may be viewed as being a vestige of European colonization. For example, France is noted to be the most popular destination for African players, a process which reflects a strong colonial heritage.

Drawing upon the work of Andre Gunder Frank, Darby has suggested that African football migration may be evaluated in terms of a dependency paradigm whereby the global capitalist system ensures that industrialized states prosper through continued

Third World under-development. In other words, Western countries dominate the migration pattern of African footballers while at the same time actively participating in the underdevelopment or de-skilling of African football. (Darby 2000: 217-244). Similarly, Portuguese football from the 1950's onwards was transformed by the importation of football players from its colonies (Taylor 2006). Nevertheless, in some instances, European countries have exported rather than imported football players. Prior to 1954, for example, Dutch football was characterized by its amateur status. Consequently, players who wished to earn a living from football were forced to migrate to other countries (Taylor 2006).

It is perhaps equally important to consider both the forces and relations which propel football players to migrate and the conditions which attract these players to other countries. Cultural, historical economic and political factors are all important in this respect. Sports labour migration patterns may be seen to mirror the familiar lines of power and dependency which epitomize other areas of international relations. Thus the transfer of South American professional footballers to wealthy European football clubs may be considered in these terms (Arbena 1994).

The movement of football players from one country to another or from one continent to another may have been facilitated in part by the emergence of a process of cultural globalization. The concept refers to the socio-economic and political interdependencies that shape human behaviour. Global sport, including football, appears to be both reducing the contrasts between societies as well as contributing to the development of new identities. This development has both contributed to the destruction of habitas as well as to the creating of diversity (Maguire *et al* 2002). Globalization is fashioned by the development of economic, political, cultural and technological factors. This process has intensified during the late twentieth century and has been considered in some instances to be irreversible (Giddens 2000). The emergence of both a global capitalist economy and advanced communications are also noted as being particularly important in this respect. Thus sport may be viewed in terms of a global process ((Magee and Sugden 2002).

The notion of globalization is, then, common to a range of perspectives. In some instances, there has been a tendency to consider this term as an established fact rather than a contested concept (Taylor 2006). Indeed, according to John Hargreaves, one difficulty is that there is no unified concerted or coherent theory of globalization (2002 26). Rather, the term should be regarded as being part of a continuum, an extension of the modernization process. “The result is that insufficient attention is paid to endogenous cultural factors, with a resultant failure to explain variations in the capacity of different state-nations and peoples to resist and counteract globalizing processes” (Hargreaves 2002 36). Indeed, even if labour migration, goods, capital and culture are being transformed and unified by the process of globalization it is difficult to identify a global labour market (Taylor 2006). However, as Maguire (2005) has argued, cultural globalization, of which sport is a part, can be considered in terms of universality and unification, interdependency and interconnectedness as well as being a process that is both divisive and disorderly.

6.9 A Player’s Perspective

As the twentieth century came to a close, much of English football continued to emphasise the importance of muscle, aggression and ‘direct play’. Detailed below are a number of accounts given by both domestic and international football players that testify to the continuity and consistency of this style of play.

In a career that lasted for more than twenty-five years, Steve Claridge played for a number of clubs including, Cambridge United, Birmingham, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Leicester City and Millwall. In 1990, Claridge was signed from Aldershot by John Beck, manager of Cambridge United. If football was a hard game, Claridge observed, Beck was intent upon making it harder. An hour before kick-off, Beck insisted that the players should have a cold shower or cold bath (an idea apparently conceived by Beck’s assistant Gary Johnson to overcome a tiring coach journey, this ritual became known as the ‘cold shower shuffle’). Claridge repeatedly clashed with his manager over both this regime and the style of play that Cambridge United was developing:

The style of playing evolved into an ugly, long ball game devoid of any subtlety. The 'football' Cambridge played was 'not for the purist', lots of one-touch, hitting the ball into corners, set pieces, first time crosses. If you disobeyed him you were off, whether it was after twenty minutes...or eighty- five...He brought in statisticians with crazy charts to lecture us about the efficiency of long-ball football and how few passes you needed to score a goal (For an account of this form of 'direct play see Chapter 6). He would also award weekly bonuses of £15 to the player whom he deemed to have played the system best or who kicked the ball furthest... Beck will always say that the club got so far because of his methods: I maintain that it was in spite of them. I believe he stopped us being what we really could have become (Claridge 1997: 111-139).

Roy Keane is a former Republic of Ireland international who represented his country on 67 occasions. He also made 326 appearances for Manchester United and was captain of his club side between 1997 and 2005. In a newspaper article in 2008 Keane declared: "Aggression is what I do. I go to war. You don't contest football matches in a reasonable state of mind" (The Sunday Times, December 12th, 2008).

Likewise, Seamus Coleman, an Everton player, gave an interview to Henry Winter in *The Daily Telegraph*. Coleman attributed his personal success to the experiences gained from playing violent street football on a housing estate in Donegal where he lived:

The games were so competitive. Up the hill was where the other team came from. We were The Killers, they were the All Stars. We were all mates and went to school together but we weren't when the games started. We'd kill each other and there would be fights when the games were going on. They were battles, believe me. I haven't had a whole lot of coaching. I just go for it. I just want to get past my full back. If I don't do it the first time, I'll keep trying until I do (April 23rd, 2011)

In an interview with Rob Draper of *The Mail On Sunday*, Jamie Carragher, the Liverpool and former England international defender, remarked:

I think a lot of other countries see us coming and think we're just going to want to fight. It's the culture really. My son [James, who is 7] is playing now and, the first thing in England is that you want your lad to do is to get stuck in. Whereas a Spanish kid, you want him to be skillful.

I imagine them saying, “Do this, and try this”. Over here, you make sure you put your foot in. It’s difficult to change’ (August 15th, 2010).

These remarks may be compared and contrasted to comments made by Xabi Alonso, the Spanish international and former Liverpool player. In an interview with John Carlin reported in *The Sunday Times*, Alonso noted that the England World Cup failure of 2010 reflected a fundamental weakness in the philosophy within English football. There was too much emphasis upon ‘brawn’ rather than upon ‘brains’. Alonso observed:

The English team had too many players with the same characteristics, players who can run all day long, who invest a huge physical effort, who attack and defend-‘box to box’ as they say in England...The profile of the English player is very physical, very direct. Direct football is great but you have to know how to combine that with ...knowing how to pass and keep the ball, how to change the rhythm of a game as circumstances demand...I remember when I used to go to the Liverpool Academy and ask the kids there what their virtues were as football players and the first answer they’d give would be ‘tackling’. Now, that can never be a virtue...there are other qualities that should be given greater priority at youth level. For me the notion of ‘game intelligence’ is so important...understanding the game, (the ability to associate with other players) that is what is most important (July 4th, 2010).

Pat Nevin, the former Chelsea and Scottish international made a similar observation:

When you arrive in England as a foreign player, the trick is to be able to deal with and adapt to certain cultural changes, not so much in everyday life but more so within football itself. Try explaining to an intelligent foreign player that he really ought to play on with a gaping head-wound à la Terry Butcher(see below), unless he wants to be thought of as a big girl’s blouse (Nevin and Srik 1998:48).

In an interview with *The Guardian* newspaper on August 19th 2011, the same player made the following remarks about the ‘culture’ of English football. According to Nevin:

Our technique was just to go for power and pace and certainly there was a period during the late 80s, early 90s and even through parts of the Premier League where that’s what was produced... Matt le Tissier (who

played for Southampton on over 400 occasions and was capped by England 8 times) How many games did he get for England? He was seen as a lazy player. But he was extraordinarily talented.

This reference to Matt Le Tissier is particularly noteworthy. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, a number of talented English players have consistently been regarded as ‘luxury players’ and ‘crowd-pleasers’ rather than being recognised as possessing true individual or technical ability. As I noted earlier, Alf Ramsey regarded flair and individuality as a luxury. Individual abilities have frequently been considered as compromising team - work rather than being valued in their own right. In some instances, individual brilliance has been frowned upon (Green 2009). Similarly, as the highly-respected late Sir Bobby Robson, the former England team manager noted: "It is crucial that all youngsters are given the technical skills they need to compete rather than the biggest and strongest coming through as they did in the past. We are, after all, looking for footballers, not hammer-throwers" (Robson 1998:60).

Terry Butcher was a former England international football player who was capped on 77 occasions. On September 6th, 1989, England played against Sweden in Stockholm. The national team required one point to qualify for the World Cup finals, which were due to be played in Italy in 1990. Butcher suffered a serious head wound early in the game, which was hastily stitched up and bandaged. Despite being swathed in bandages, Butcher, playing in defence, continued to defend as if his very life depended upon it. He repeatedly headed the ball which reopened the wound. His shirt became heavily stained in blood. Photographs taken of Butcher during this game have become part of football folklore.

Following the exit of the national team from the UEFA Football Championships in 2012, Butcher noted in an article in *The Daily Mirror* that much of English football had been resistant to change:

Unfortunately, in football terms, the English are still guilty of using broadswords and battle axes and remain firmly in the Dark Ages when it comes to subtlety and finesse. English football is one-dimensional and there is a blind reluctance to accept that we simply have no world-class players – just average workhorses who have been consistently over-

hyped in the Premier League, which is totally dominated by excellent foreigners and not by home-grown talent. (*Mirror Sport* (June 30th, 2012)

A similar observation was made by *The Times* football correspondent, Oliver Kay, in the same year. He argued:

Often there seems little point in trying to replicate the Spanish style because English footballers appear to be conditioned to play a different way, cherishing power and aggression over technique. England repeatedly falls short while Spain wins trophies. England barely seems to be playing the same sport. (*The Times*, July 3rd 2012).

The Chief Scout at Liverpool Football Club between 1967 and 1986 was Geoff Twentyman. During this period, Twentyman was acknowledged to be one of the best scouts English football has ever known (Hughes 2009). Twentyman introduced Liverpool to numerous outstanding football players including Alan Hansen, Ian Rush, Kevin Keegan, Ray Clemence and Steve Heighway. Twentyman was not at all impressed with the manner in which English football was being coached. He described coaching in this country as "amateur" and as "killing natural ability" (Hughes 2009: 8).

Gary Ablett enjoyed a successful career playing for a number of football clubs, including Liverpool and Everton. In 2009, he was asked to manage Stockport County in League One. Ablett had been a winner of the FA Cup at Liverpool and Everton, the only player to have done so. As a football manager, he wanted to play the game 'the right way': pass and move. He suggested:

As a team we weren't old enough, strong enough, or physical enough, mentally and emotionally. If someone wanted to batter us and rough us up, then we couldn't stand up to that (Ablett 2012:176).

Similarly, in a clear reference to the tough physical nature of English football, Kyle Walker, the Tottenham Hotspur and England fullback, remarked upon how he would never dive or fall over easily in an attempt to secure a penalty. Walker declared: "I'm

from up north - I'm not going to go down softly" (*The Daily Telegraph*, November 2nd 2012).

Many English clubs have continued to promote the importance of strength and endurance. One particular Football League club insisted that they did not want their young players to stop moving or running or to give up, so these players continued to run until they vomited for fear of being released from their contracts (Green 2009:69). This emphasis upon a traditional work ethic has been highlighted by Gary Neville, the former Manchester United and England international who claimed:

When it comes to grand strategy, the FA has not been blessed with dynamic leadership. There's been a lack of real substance at the top addressing the bigger issues of player and coach production. We've not had a coaching philosophy, and we've needed to eradicate all the damage done through the eighties by the Charles Hughes approach to football. We became obsessed with power and direct football' (2011:259).

Prior to the appointment of Charles Hughes as Technical Director of Football, Allen Wade was in charge of coaching at the Football Association between 1963 and 1982. He was particularly mindful that natural talent could not be relied upon to champion English football and that the way forward was through coaching. Wade, like Sir Walter Winterbottom before him, earnestly believed that a failure to teach the basic principles of football, would lead to failure at any level of the game. For Wade, the core elements of the game were the foundation upon which success was to be attained (Vision: 2008). Hitherto, the importance of coaching had largely been ignored at least in part due to a belief that natural talent or 'innate ability' was all that was required (Wade 1967). Wade believed that ball retention was particularly important. He noted, "The first and most important principle of soccer is that ball possession determines everything." (Wade 1967: 5). This basic principle was regarded as being more effective than 'direct play'. Wade also highlighted the importance of being able to change the tempo of a football game, the importance of tactical play and the importance of running off the ball. Moreover, he was acutely aware of the importance of positional play. The position taken up by any given player would have a direct influence upon the role of the other players. In other

words, Wade emphasised the importance of team work and how the team collectively operated as a system (Wade: 1967).

Wade highlighted the importance of three basic factors which effectively determined a player's performance. These were: Individual ability or technique. Understanding or intelligence. Mental and physical fitness. (Wade 1967: 5) These prerequisites may be considered to have been the basis of a technical form of football that many international teams developed so successfully during the late twentieth century. The Governing body was, however, reticent to introduce wholesale reform. Wade remarked: "They were 70 years old, the councillors... you don't want to have to think about changing everything [at that age]... I could see us slipping behind in the skills league, and the FA didn't care about it" (Conn 1997:128).

7.0 Conclusion

Early English professional clubs continued to play football in a manly and robust manner. Early training sessions paid little attention to either the development of individual skills or ball work. As the twentieth century unfolded, international football expanded significantly. Football was exported by the British across the Empire. Indeed, the developments and improvements in the standard of football in these countries were in large measure due to the many British coaches who decided to work abroad. The English game, in contrast, remained largely insular and conservative. During the inter-war years, little regard was given to the extent to which 'Continental' football had progressed. The English game remained largely one-dimensional, tenacious rather than tactical, physical rather than technical.

During the 1950s, the national team experienced a number of landmark defeats that suggested the traditional English game was now being challenged by a more technical game. The Hungarian team in particular was illustrative of this new style of play. Continental football had witnessed a paradigm shift. English football, in contrast, continued to be a fast physical game characterised by tenacity, courage and

power. Bruising British football continued to reflect the long legacy of a ‘manly’ game (Murray 1994).

The birth of European football competition during the 1950s injected a new dimension into the domestic game. Real Madrid, for example, set new standards by playing a form of artistic football which was both entertaining and successful. Numerous English, such as Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United, began to replicate this artistic and technical approach. Indeed, once English football had accepted that the domestic game had fallen behind the standards being set by other countries during this period, significant progress was made. This recognition led to England winning the World Cup in 1966. However, following this World Cup success, much of this momentum was lost. English football continued to emphasise a direct and physical game at both national and club level.

Once football players were allowed freedom of movement within the European Community foreign players arrived into English football in significant numbers. Lucrative broadcasting revenues allowed the most successful clubs to buy the most desirable, notably foreign players. Despite this policy of importation, however, much of English football was to retain its traditional character.

The commitment to a direct form of football was reinforced by a number of reports published by the Football Association during the 1980s. The domestic game was not considered to be based upon either possession or technique. However, as the influx of foreign players intensified, the Football Association had little choice but to re-evaluate this policy. This importation policy effectively enforced a change to take place at the elite level of English football. The paradigm shift that had already taken place in many foreign countries, fifty or more years ago, was now beginning to shape the domestic game. The number of foreign players that were to play Premiership football was directly responsible for limiting the chances of many English players to play at the elite level of the game. Moreover, the limited representation of English players at Premiership level was also seen to be impacting upon the ability of the national team to compete at an international level. This shift in football philosophy

instituted by the Football Association during this period is considered in the following chapter.

Chapter 7 A Game ‘In Crisis’

7.1 Introduction

Between 1980 and 2010, the Football Association produced a number of reports and coaching manuals that set out some of the challenges being faced by English football. The reports and recommendations published during this period illustrated a fundamental shift in the football philosophy promoted by the governing body. This shift in philosophy was a direct response to two notable developments; the increasing number of foreign players playing Premiership football and degree of competitiveness of the national team at international level.

At the beginning of this period, the Football Association recommended a ‘direct’ form of football. The emphasis continued to be on a traditional game based upon a high level of fitness. However, following the Treaty of Rome (1978), as I discussed in Chapter 6, foreign players began to arrive in this country in significant numbers. Due to this influx of foreign players, only a limited number of English players were able to play at the highest levels of the game. This limited representation was regarded as having a marked impact upon the national team’s ability to compete at an international level.

This chapter is an attempt to demonstrate that the policy changes instituted by the governing body during this period were, in effect, a recognition that a greater number of English players needed to develop the technical skills and technical ability that many foreign players already possessed. The paradigm shift from a traditional to a technical game that had already taken place in many foreign countries was becoming increasingly evident in English football. The Football Association began to realise that the elite level of football was characterised by a technical rather than a traditional style of play. If the national team was to be competitive at international levels then the domestic game had to respond by introducing a similar, if belated, level of change.

A number of related concerns were raised by the *Meltdown Report* (2007) published by the Professional Footballers' Association. In particular, the publication highlighted the nationality of Premier League football players. The report concluded that only 38% of English players started Premier League matches in 2006-07, and that it was the actual number of foreign players now playing Premiership football that was preventing English players from realising their true potential. In this chapter, I will offer an alternative explanation. Namely, that the number of foreign players playing Premiership football is not the cause of why so few English players are able to play Premiership football. Rather, this number is a symptom of a failure to produce a greater number of English players with the technical ability required to play at the highest levels of the game.

7.2 The Football Association: Reports and Recommendations

The reports and recommendations discussed in this section were published by the Football Association between 1980 and 2010. These publications represent the major recommendations made by the governing body during this period and will be considered in turn. The publications were intended to provide guidance, direction and leadership to football clubs, coaches and players alike.

The Football Association Coaching Book of Soccer Tactics and Skills (1980).

This publication was written by Charles Hughes, a former England national amateur coach who became Assistant Director of Coaching at the Football Association in 1964. The publication was produced in conjunction with the production and distribution of fourteen coaching films, a joint undertaking between the Association and the BBC. The films were an attempt to promote both tactics and skills in a comprehensive manner. The report noted: "Events and results in British soccer since 1970 have indicated that we have had more outstanding individual players in the period 1966 – 1970 than we have had since that time" (1980:13). The aim of the joint enterprise between the governing body and the BBC was to develop better football players. Indeed, it is interesting to note that this publication summarily dismissed the

idea that soccer players are 'born' rather than 'made'. While football players were regarded as being born with unequal physical, mental and psychological talents, different abilities could be improved upon by coaching and training. Ability was considered to be derived from: "the practical application of purposeful practice and training" (1980:16).

According to this report, however, the domestic game was not considered to be founded upon the principles of individual technique or technical ability. Rather, English football was regarded as based upon judgement. The report noted:

Technique is the execution of a single performance – a pass, a control, a jump, or a turn. Decisions are involved which means that the performance involves both physical and mental elements. Skill, in soccer terms, is the ability to be in the right place at the right time and to select the correct technique on demand. Skill, therefore, is concerned with making judgments and selections. There are some games which are predominantly games of technique. Soccer is predominantly a game of judgment. How do we reach that conclusion? By a simple analysis of the facts:

In a 90-minute game of soccer the ball is only in play for approximately 60 of those minutes. For the remainder of the time the ball is out of play.

Out of the 60 minutes in which the ball is in play, each team, in an even game, will have possession of the ball for 30 minutes.

During the time in which the ball is in play the ball will be frequently be in flight and outside the playing distance of any one of the 22 players.

An individual player in a team, on average, cannot have possession of the ball for more than two minutes (1980:17).

Thus the game of football was not considered to be a game based upon either possession or technique. Indeed, according to this report, any given player was unlikely to have possession of the ball in the course of the game for longer than two minutes. The domestic game was seen to be based upon the execution of judgement.

A player had to be in the right place at the right time. The English game was direct as the ball spent long periods either out of play or in the air.⁸

This publication both promoted and legitimated a direct or traditional style of play that had characterised much of English football for well over a century.

The Winning Formula (1990).

In 1982, Allen Wade, formerly in charge of coaching at the Football Association, was replaced by Charles Hughes, who became Director of Coaching and Education. Hughes was also placed in charge of youth development and, in 1990 he unveiled a new publication entitled *The Winning Formula*. The book was an analysis of 109 football matches, including World Cup, European Cup and Liverpool F.C. games over a twenty year period. The publication was to become the Football Association's principal training and coaching manual. The work had been inspired by Wing Commander Charles Reep who, during the 1950s, had argued that the majority of goals scored at football games resulted from direct play (1990). Charles Hughes developed this basic principle: "It is a fact, at every level of soccer that approximately 85% of goals...are scored from five consecutive passes or less" (1990: 9).⁹

The publication was not only intended to be the basis for the future development of football in the United Kingdom but it was also intended to make a: "substantial contribution to the game worldwide" (1990:7). Hughes believed that possession football was responsible for a negative and defensive trend in the global game that

⁸ In the 2012 European Football Championships, the two finalists were Spain and Italy. Spain, the current FIFA World Football Champions, defeated Italy 4-0. During these Championships, Spain had an average possession rate of 68.23%, whereas Italy had an average possession rate of 59.8%. England, in contrast, had an average possession rate of 39.99% which was marginally better than Greece who recorded a figure of 38.52%. *The Daily Telegraph* (June 16th, 2012).

⁹ Indeed, Hughes reputedly remarked that, "We are now certain that practically the whole world has got it wrong and, more particularly, Brazil has got it wrong in the method of playing." (Fynn & Guest 1989:199).

dated back to the World Cup Finals of 1954.¹⁰ Charles Hughes regarded attacking play, based upon possession football, as being particularly misguided: “Those who believe in possession play argue that a team without the ball cannot score and therefore a team which keeps the ball for long periods is more likely to score. The overwhelming evidence is that the proponents of possession play are mistaken” (1990:8).

Hughes believed that the longer a team takes to build an attack when in possession of the ball, the more time the opposing team has to mount a defence. Thus possession play was likely to result in numerous goals-less draws. Football success was seen to be a result of “a balance between the extremes of possession play and kick and rush” (1990:8). The more the ball is ‘passed around’, Hughes insisted, the less likely it is that any given team will score. He concluded that when the number of consecutive passes in any given move exceeds five then the chances of creating a scoring opportunity at the end of the move will decrease. He noted: “No more than 3 per cent of goals (less than one goal in thirty) originate from a move involving more than ten passes” (1990:8).

Hughes contended that those involved in world football only had to consider the evidence. He noted: “No-one should expect players, and still less coaches and managers to change their beliefs and methods without persuasion. All that can be asked is that they look at the evidence. If they do this, then they will surely come to the one inevitable conclusion; controlled direct play will give any team at any level of skill the best chance of winning football matches” (1990:9). Direct play was considered to be far preferable to possession football: “The facts are irrefutable and the evidence overwhelming” (1990:10). Furthermore, forward players were advised accordingly: “If there is any doubt about getting the ball through on the ground, an attacker should always select the aerial route... direct play is based on playing the ball forward whenever possible” (1990 :122).

¹⁰ Ironically, as noted in chapter five, during this period the England national team witnessed a succession of high profile defeats. In particular, the national team sustained a notable defeat against the attack minded Hungarians who played a form of possession football that guided them to the World Cup Final of 1954.

The table below published in *The Winning Formula* (1990) represents an analysis of 109 football matches played at various levels of the game. It is an attempt to establish a relationship between goal-scoring moves and the number of consecutive passes made. According to Hughes, the most successful football strategy, both at home and abroad, is based upon direct play. For example, according to the data provided, Argentina scored 21 goals from 5 passes or less whereas the team scored only 2 goals from six passes or more. The report made the following comments with respect to the analysis presented:

In the research, which was undertaken in preparation for this work, hundreds of matches, at all levels, were analysed. We have extracted 109 games from all those analysed. All matches, except for the Liverpool matches, are either World Cup or European Cup matches of Senior, Under 21 or Under 16 level. They also represent all the countries that have either won the World Cup or been runners - up in a World Cup Final over the last 20 years. The six World Cup Final matches, 1966-1986, are included...as a spot check and for comparative purposes (1980: 187).

Table 1: Goal scoring moves – number of consecutive passes

Country	Number of Matches	Total Goals	Goals from Five Passes or less		Goals from Six Passes or more	
			No.	%	No.	%
Argentina	12	23	21	91	2	9
Brazil	10	25	17	68	8	32
England	29	59	55	93	4	7
England U-21	3	8	7	87	1	13
England U-16	4	15	15	100	0	-
Holland	7	10	10	100	0	-
Italy	12	18	15	83	3	17
West Germany	16	24	19	79	5	21
Liverpool	16	20	17	85	3	15
Total	109	202	176	87	26	13
<i>World Cup Final matches 1966-1986</i>						
Twelve teams	6	27	25	92.5	2	7.4

Source: *The Winning Formula*, The Football Association, (1980 187).

This study, however, raises a number of important concerns. Firstly, the dependent variables used in the analysis were goals scored. The above table is based upon an analysis of the number of goals scored from five passes or less and from six passes or more. However, a more useful dependent variable may have been net goals, which resulted in either winning or losing the game, rather than the number of passes completed. Teams may score more goals or have more shots on target from direct play, but they may also concede more goals and thus end up losing the game. Thus direct play may result in more goals being scored or more shots being taken but this form of play may also result in more goals being conceded.

Secondly, the sample is not necessarily representative of either domestic or international football. There is clearly a heavy bias towards England games and one English football club, namely, Liverpool. In fact 48% of the matches analysed involved either England or Liverpool F.C. (1990:187). Thus the sampling method used is not necessarily systematic, so generalisations may be difficult to make. Thirdly, the explanatory variable may also be flawed. For example, goals scored from five passes or less or goals scored from six passes or more does not necessarily constitute possession football. Perhaps a better indicator of possession football is the amount of time a team is in possession of the football rather than the number of passes leading to a goal being scored. In summary, a more useful analysis would have included the proportion of matches won relative to the proportion of time in possession of the football rather than the number of passes completed in the direct build-up of a goal being scored.

Once again, this emphasis upon direct play effectively diverted attention away from the importance of developing basic technical skills and also from the need to develop different playing strategies to meet football teams who set up or played football in different ways. The report also concluded that direct football required a high degree of fitness. Hughes remarked: “Although direct play is the best strategy, it is not all that is required for success. It is certainly not a substitute for physical fitness. Indeed, sustaining direct play through a 90-minute game requires higher levels of fitness than other ways of playing” (1990:9).¹¹

If football clubs at both national and club level wanted to win football matches, both in England and abroad, then players would have to adhere to a direct form of play. This required a particularly higher level of fitness (see Chapter 6). Athleticism and

¹¹ Graham Taylor was very successful in adopting the Hughes ‘long ball’ method of play whilst he was manager of Watford from 1977- 87. Taylor led Watford to the English First Division from the Fourth Division in five years and also reached the FA Cup Final with Watford in 1984. Significantly, while a ‘long ball’ style of play was highly successful at club level, achievement at national level proved to be elusive. Taylor managed the England team between 1990-93, taking the team to the semi-finals of the European Championships in 1992 but failing to qualify for the 1994 World Cup Finals in The United States. The ‘long ball’ ‘game or ‘route one’ football as it is sometimes called, while successful at club level proved to be of limited value at international level.

fitness were considered to have been more important to English football than the development of possession football, which itself is founded upon technical skills.

It is, however, equally true to say that direct play or a 'long ball' game in some instances has been particularly successful. Indeed, two former Republic of Ireland international players, Johnny Giles and Liam Brady, both made their names from being able to play a 'long ball' or perhaps more accurately a 'long pass'. Similarly, the former England captain Johnny Haynes was also noted to have been a master of the 'long ball'. Charles Hughes was equally aware that technical ability was important to any system of play, direct or otherwise. As a Football Association spokesperson responsible for player development I interviewed, tellingly said: "The legacy that Charles left is significant. Charles introduced Centres of Excellence (a forerunner to the Academy system), set up The National School of Excellence (which has produced international players including, Jamie Carragher, Joe Cole, Scott Parker and Michael Owen) and established The National Rehabilitation Centre based at Lilleshall, in 1984".

Nevertheless, as I discussed in Chapter 6, the football philosophy promoted by the Football Association during this period which was based upon 'direct play' or 'route one' football, had an adverse impact on the development of English football at national, club and player level.

Programme for Excellence, Programme of Study (1990).

This was a detailed curriculum guide, largely in diagrammatic form, for use in the Football Association Centres of Excellence which had been established by the governing body in 1984. The publication highlighted the need to select players of outstanding potential and recommended that excellent players received excellent coaching. Effectively, this publication was focused upon developing the very best young players. Efforts needed to concentrate upon the "top 2% of the ability range" (1990:3). Mastering techniques and skills were noted to have been central to the game of football. Similarly, "Mental and Physical Toughness" were also regarded as being instrumental to the development of "Excellent Habits" (1990: 6).

The Blueprint for the Future of Football (1991).

This publication is particularly significant in several respects. Firstly, the report provided a clear recognition of the divisions and discord within English football at national level. Secondly, the report made some telling observations about some of the difficulties faced by English football at 'grass roots level'. Thirdly, the report proposed the formation of the Premier League.

The Football Association has traditionally been recognised and accepted as the game's governing body directly responsible for the development of English football. Historically, however, there had been an uneasy and sometimes conflicting relationship between the governing body and the Football League (1991:29). In many respects, discord has invariably resulted from the different responsibilities these institutions had been charged with. The Football League, for example, has primarily been responsible for its constituent clubs and their financial status, whereas the Football Association has largely been responsible for the development of English football in general.

In an attempt towards reconciliation and unification, the Football League published a document entitled *One Game, One Team, One Voice* (1990). The report proposed a power sharing ideology with a single board being administered by equal representation from both football bodies. The Football Association was dismissive of such a plan and considered the Football League proposal to be an attempt to usurp power and threaten the very position and prominence of the Football Association.

Orchestrated by Chief Executive Graham Kelly and Charles Hughes, the governing body produced its own response to the Football League proposal entitled, *The Blueprint for the Future of Football* which was published in March 1991. The report noted that, over the last 125 years, English football has not developed a clear consensus with respect to the development of excellence: "The Football Association, the Football league and the English Schools' Football Association have developed individual views and practices that apply to the elite footballer and his development' (1991:71). This is an important point, as the national game in general and player

development in particular appears to have been constrained by this internal division and discord.

In many respects, the report may be seen as an attempt by the governing body to reassert its authority and control over English football. As far as the Football Association was concerned, there had been a continuous power struggle between themselves and the Football League which had been to the detriment of both the national game and the development of the Football League: “Historically, the position of the England team, and, therefore, its chances of success, has been undermined through conflict with the Football League, who, effectively have placed the interests of the Football League in advance of the England team” (1991:29).

In a response to these divisions, *Blueprint* proposed the formation of the Premier League. The report noted that, while it may not be the function of the Football Association to manage Premier League football, “It is, however, a stated objective of The Football Association to promote the game of Association Football in every way in which the Association or the Council of the Association shall think proper” (1990:30). The new Premier League was to be made up of 22 football clubs in place of the old League Division One. The Football League, in turn, was reduced from four to three divisions. The Football Association believed that the formation of the Premier League secured two desirable results; firstly, the new League would ensure that the Governing body was established as the ‘The Government of the Game in England.’ Secondly, the objective of establishing the England Team at the apex of the pyramid of playing excellence would also be achieved (1991:30).

Broadcasting rights were bought jointly by the British Sky Broadcasting Group (BskyB) and the BBC. The newly formed twenty-two Premier League clubs essentially divided up the proceeds from broadcasting revenue between them. The creation of the Premier League meant in effect that the financial differences between the larger and smaller clubs were likely to intensify. Equally, this development also dealt a further blow to ‘grass roots football’, as many Premiership clubs could now

afford to buy players rather than having to rely upon youth development programmes.

The report also made some telling remarks about the state and structure of English football. In particular: “There is no agreed National Curriculum for teaching Association Football”. Similarly, no clearly defined strategy was found to exist with respect to the development of ‘grass roots football’ (1991:63). According to the report, the Football Association has not accepted that grass roots football required a support service, and needed to address the question: “What does The Football Association do for its 41,500 clubs?” (1991:65). English football, the report observed, has developed over the past 125 years with no clear agreement on the process that enhances the development of individual excellence. This is indeed a significant point. As I noted in Chapter 8, the various levels of English football have very different views as to how football should be managed, coached and played.

A number of difficulties were also found to exist with the County Football Associations, which number 49 and date back to the formation of the governing body in 1863. These Associations are similarly responsible for the organisation and administration of English football. Numerous difficulties existed here. For example, boys’ football (9-16 year olds) faced a leadership problem with fewer than 5% of coaches/managers being qualified as Preliminary Football Association Coaches. Furthermore, while approximately 1.5m players participate in affiliated football games, corresponding to 45,000 football clubs and *circa* 60,000 football teams, more than 33% of affiliated matches do not have a qualified referee. Organised football matches in the 16-18 year age group, for example, were noted to have virtually disappeared (1991:64).

The report also recognised that numerous people employed in football management, coaching and administration have attained their positions from experience at different levels within the game but do not possess any formal qualifications: “There is no requirement for those working with young players in Football League clubs to be qualified by an external authority” (1991:73).

Football Curriculum Guide (1995).

In conjunction with The Physical Education Association of The United Kingdom, the Football Association produced a *Football Curriculum Guide* for the development of schools football. The major theme of this Curriculum Guide was that the *game* should be central to the lesson (1995). The guide was an attempt to assist in planning football lessons for both boys and girls in both junior and secondary schools rather than being specifically concerned with coaching techniques.

A Charter For Quality (1997).

By the time *A Charter For Quality* was published in 1997, a number of broader issues had been identified by the Football Association as being responsible for constraining the development of English football in a number of ways. In February 1997, Charles Hughes was replaced by Howard Wilkinson as ‘Technical Director’ to the Football Association. His brief was to develop football excellence within English youth football. He had played for both Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday before joining Brighton and Hove Albion F.C. Following his position as manager of Sheffield Wednesday, he went on to manage Leeds United and became the last manager to win the old style Division One Championship. He achieved this success with Leeds United in the football season 1991-92.

The report was an attempt to ensure that young players were placed in an environment which would foster both technical and educational advancement and provide ‘quality experiences’ for players at all levels. Importantly, the report noted: “Levels of quality in all respects need to be raised” (1997:1). All Premiership Football Clubs were to be encouraged to establish a Football Academy, although they were also allowed to operate a Centre of Excellence, if they wished to. Similarly, a Football Academy could also be operated by a Football League club provided that a licence was granted to them by the Football League.

Football academies were to operate at each age level from under 9 years of age to under 21 years of age. Previously, the age limit at Centres of Excellence had been 14

years of age. Moreover, all players had to be registered or contracted. Both the newly formed academies and the centres of excellence had the option of signing a maximum of 40 boys in the age bracket between 9 and 12 years of age. Thirty boys could be signed in the age band between 13 and 14 years of age and 20 boys in the under 15 to under 16 category. In the under 17 to under 21 age bracket, the number was 15 (1997:4.1). What was particularly noteworthy here was the sheer number of boys that both the academies and the centres of excellence could sign. This particular policy change was a graphic illustration of the need and determination to produce a higher standard of English football.

Moreover, the report also stipulated a number of *Technical Requirements* whereby a minimum number of hours of coaching were to be provided for boys which excluded matches. For the 9-11 years, the 12-16 and the 17-21 years, these three different age groups were all to receive coaching for not less than 3 hours, 5 hours and 12 hours per week respectively. Furthermore, the report also stipulated that all staff had to be suitably screened and qualified in relation to the Football Association Technical Control Board. Similarly, in terms of technical staff, a maximum ratio of players to coach of 4:1 was also recommended (199: 4.3- 4.7).

The report represented a determined move towards an integrated approach to player development. It was an attempt to develop the top 1% of the most gifted players principally within Football Academies. There was a clear recognition of the need to develop more English players with the technical ability to play at the highest levels of the game. Although both Academies and Centres of Excellence were initially licensed by the Football Association, they would be monitored not by the governing body but by the Premier League and the Football League. Consequently, the standard and direction of coaching was left very much in the hands of the clubs themselves, although the Football Association did provide coaching guidelines.

Wilkinson also believed that, if young players spent more time with their clubs, they would invariably become better players, and with, this in mind, the Football Association National School of Football was closed. There are currently forty

Football Academies in place and forty-eight Centres of Excellence. The number of players in total that have been signed to these establishments is estimated to be 13,000 players (Lewis Report 2007:5). The emphasis upon 'quality' in the 1997 report was a clear recognition on the part of the governing body that a far greater number of English players needed to develop improved technical skills in order to play at the highest levels of the game. Although the focus in the report was on the top 1% of the most able players, the report noted that English clubs wished to invest more time and money in the development of English players (1997: 2).

A Review into Young Player Development in Professional Football (2007).

In 2006, the Football Association recommended that an Elite Coaching Working Group should be established that would attempt to bring together 'best practice' from the coaches at both Football Academies and Centres of Excellence, and, in so doing, up-date the *Charter for Quality*. However, the chief Executives at the Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League were far from convinced by this proposal and the recommendation was not implemented. Instead, Richard Lewis was commissioned by the Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League to publish *A Review into Young Player Development in Professional Football* which was published in 2007.

The *Lewis Report*, as it came to be known as, noted that there was a need for these three football authorities to adopt a co-ordinated approach to young player development. The report emphasised two requirements in particular. Firstly, a player-focused approach, with the interests of the player regarded as paramount. This recommendation was very similar to the stance taken by *The Charter For Quality* (1997). Secondly, there was an emphasis upon the standard of coaching, particularly age-related coaching: "It is all too easy in football, and indeed so many other sports, to be trapped in the 'culture of the team'" (2007:32). The report also noted that a young player (defined as being 8-18 years of age) must be schooled in all the necessary skills in his formative years. These skills were said to be not only physical but also technical: "Young players must be able to pass, control, kick and shoot correctly, as well as learning how to improve speed, stamina, flexibility, agility and

balance” (2007:5). Particularly noteworthy in the report was the importance placed upon player development: “If football in England wishes to be the very best in the world, it must be the best at young player development...there can be no room for compromise” (2007:6).

The publication also drew attention to the influx of foreign players into English football. The report noted that for more than a century, English clubs had recruited players from countries within the United Kingdom. However, the issue today was the number of ‘overseas’ players, recruited not only to play first team football but also recruited to join Football Academies and Centres of Excellence (2007:10). The Report stressed the importance of developing ‘local players’, whereby local football fans could more readily identify with local players and the benefits this brought to the local community. There were, of course, significant financial rewards associated with the development of successful ‘home-grown players’.

During this period, there had been various calls from FIFA and UEFA alike for the introduction of quotas to restrict the number of foreign players who played football in other European countries. However, due to legislation permitting freedom of movement within the European Community, any restriction imposed upon the movement of foreign players by these organisations would almost certainly fail. The report made a similar observation and suggested that a response to this issue should be a positive rather than a negative one. Most importantly, the *Lewis Report* noted that the solution to the influx of foreign players who were now playing English football was not to be found in the restriction of the movement of foreign players but rather it was to be found in raising the standard of the English game. As the report noted:

The system of coaching and player development should be so enhanced that there is an increasing stream of better young players qualified to play for England-players who have been better coached from a very young age, and who have the technical, physical and mental skills to succeed at the very highest international level (2007:11).

The emphasis was upon technical development. If the standard of English football improved then there would, in all probabilities, be a likely reduction in the number of foreign players being signed by English clubs. Once again, there is a clear inference here to the insufficient number of English players with the technical skills and technical abilities possessed by many foreign players.

Other recommendations contained within the report outlined the need to improve skill development within the five to eleven year olds age range rather than being particularly concerned with match results. The report also recommended a core national coaching syllabus to assist in the development of young players and coaching standards (2007:11). The report also made some incisive remarks about coaching qualifications: “The issue of coaching qualifications is a particularly thorny one in football with an accepted practice of an eighteen month dispensation for former players and unqualified coaches to seek the necessary qualifications to work at a particular level” (2007:14). This concession was meant to be a temporary measure as part of the implementation of the *Charter For Quality*. In response to these concerns, the *Lewis Report* recommended that this concession should be removed and that coaches should be qualified from ‘day one’. Equally, the monitoring and licensing of Academies and Excellence Centres, it was argued, should be carried out by the clubs’ respective leagues. Quality control should be the responsibility of a single external body, with all the support staff possessing appropriate qualifications; Academies and Centres of Excellence should be evaluated annually against agreed ‘key performance indicators’. Any proposed policy recommendations would be dependent upon representatives having knowledge of technical football.

The committee responsible for implementing the findings of the *Lewis Report*, The Professional Game Youth Development Group (PDYDG), was disbanded in 2009 amid much rancour and confusion. The recommendations made in the report were not implemented. Most importantly, the *Lewis Report* recognised the need to develop a greater number of English players who were able to master the basic skills of the

game. These players needed, amongst other things, to be able to pass, control, kick and shoot correctly (2007:5).

A need to develop these basic skills had been highlighted by a number of former players including Peter Doherty (1947). As I noted in the previous chapter, player development had not changed in any significant way throughout much of the 20th century. Once again, the *Lewis Report* provided clear evidence that the standard of the English game had remained largely unchanged.

Vision (2008).

There was, nevertheless, an increasing recognition within the Football Association that radical change was now required. In particular, a number of the concerns highlighted by the *Lewis Report* (2007) needed to be addressed. In 2008, the governing body published a document entitled *Vision*. The basis of this publication was a strategic plan structured to improve player performance. The aim of the report was to develop an integrated approach to both a coaching and a player development strategy across professional and at grassroots levels in an attempt to improve the standard of the English game (2008:34).

Specifically, the aim was to radically improve the quality of football coaching in this country. The report recommended that qualified coaches should target the age-appropriate levels of 5-11, 12-16 and 17-21. Better coaching, the report contended, would deliver better players. The critical age group for coaching purposes was identified as being the 5-11 year olds, during which time-frame skills develop and are nurtured. Significantly, the report noted that such changes can only be realised courtesy of a change in culture. Skill levels throughout the whole of football will have to be raised in order to achieve these goals, not simply at the elite level but at ‘grassroots’ level, too (2008:60).

These changes could only be realised, the report suggested, through a change in football culture. In other words, what was required was a shift in emphasis from a traditional English game towards the development of a technical game based upon

the development of individual skills and technical ability; a paradigm shift was required.

The National Game Strategy (2008).

The importance of having a greater number of more qualified coaches was recognised in *The National Game Strategy*, a document published by the Football Association in 2008. This report was compiled upon the basis of consultation with some 37,000 individuals associated with the grassroots level of football. A number of key recommendations were made which included having qualified coaches for all junior teams. These coaches would become certified by the Football Association and qualified to develop players with an improved technical ability. The time spent coaching football players, the document noted, should be increased, particularly at an early age.

Developing World-Class Coaches and Players (2009).

This proposition is readily supported when the number of qualified English coaches is compared to those available in other European countries. In the table below, the top three coaching badges, standardised by UEFA, are documented. These coaching badges or qualifications are: UEFA B, UEFA A and the Pro License, the latter being the highest qualification.

Table 2: UEFA Qualified Coaches

Year 2008

UEFA B

Country	Number of Qualified Coaches
England	1,759
France	15,000
Germany	28,400
Italy	27,340
Spain	9,135

UEFA A

Country	Number of Qualified Coaches
England	895
France	2,400
Germany	5,500
Italy	1,298
Spain	12,720

PRO Level

Country	Number of Qualified Coaches
England	115
France	188
Germany	1070
Italy	512
Spain	2140

Source: *Developing World-Class Coaches and Players*, the Football Association (2009 9).

These comparative figures clearly demonstrate that there is a fundamental shortage of qualified coaches in English football. Technical improvement and technical skills are more likely to be developed in line with the number of qualified coaches available in any particular country. As John Peacock, Head of Coaching at the Football Association noted, mandatory coaching requirements have been in place in Brazil since the 1970s, while in Italy, the most successful European football nation, coaches have had to be qualified since 1958 (2009 :9). Furthermore, something like seven million people regularly play football in England with 125,000 football teams being represented in 1,700 football leagues throughout the country (2009:16). As is implied by Table Two, large numbers of these representatives were not trained or coached by qualified coaches. The importance of having an increased number of qualified coaches would appear to be of paramount importance if English football is to produce a greater number of players that are capable of playing at the elite level of football.

The Future Game (2010).

In 2010, the Football Association published a document entitled *The Future Game*. This publication was a technical guide for the development of young players. The publication also included an outline which related to the philosophy of English football and the manner in which the domestic game should be coached and played. The report considered how young players could be developed to meet the future challenges within the game. This advisory document, sent out to all Premiership and Football League clubs, may be said to have had two principal objectives, namely; to create players with excellent technical ability and decision-making capabilities; and to produce an increased number of both qualified and innovative coaches who were capable of teaching these requisite skills.

The report noted that: “Football should be played with an efficient, economical, measured, possession based approach” (2010:26).The differences in the football philosophy recommended in this report compared to those endorsed by Charles Hughes in 1980 is significant. Critically, *The Future Game*, emphasised the need “To produce English players for our national side who have the same technical ability as

players in other major football nations” (2010:11). In many ways, *The Future Game* is a response to the inherent failings within English football to produce the technical skills required to play at the elite level of the game. It is a very purposeful attempt to address these deficiencies. In this publication, Sir Trevor Brooking observed:

The admiration and appreciation of talented foreign coaches and players will always continue in this country. However the decreasing number of home-grown players and coaches at the highest level must be addressed as a key concern. The increasing number of young foreign players being signed to Academies and Centres of Excellences represents a major challenge to the development of the young English player. Although it is appreciated that the recruitment of talented players exist in a global market, it is imperative for the future of the England team that we develop home-grown players who match-up to the foreign talent currently being recruited into the English game (2010 :11).

The Football Association believed that the amount of time or the actual number of hours that coaches and football clubs spend with their players in elite football is significantly below the levels of practice time recorded in other sports. If English football is to produce a greater number of technically excellent players then the amount of time spent developing individual skills has to be increased (2010:13). In the same publication, John Peacock, the Head of Coaching at the Football Association, noted that the governing body is largely regarded as having an advisory role. There is no remit in place to determine how the game should be approached: “It is not the responsibility of the Football Association to determine how English football should be played” (2010:15).

In other football countries, however, such as Spain and Holland, there is a basic football philosophy in place. This is an agreed and clearly-defined approach to the game which is accepted by both the respective Football Associations and the football clubs alike. For example, a game based upon passing and support is fundamental to Dutch and Spanish football, whilst the attainment of individual skills is inextricably linked to the football promoted in South American countries such as Brazil. John Peacock remarked:

Looking at other high-performing countries at international level, there is a clear philosophy or vision on how the game should be taught...For example, the 'DNA' of Dutch and Spanish football is clearly defined by their respective Associations...In the top South American countries of Brazil and Argentina there is a focus on playing the 'beautiful game' by mastering individual techniques. An agreed and collective understanding of the fabric of English football is less clear, with most able to allude to desire, work-rate and a competitive edge (2010:15).

According to Peacock, the extent to which English football at national level has fallen behind the standards being set by other football nations is significant. If the performances of the England under 21 players, the under 19s, the under 18s and the under 17 age groups are compared to the performances of other European nations on a like-for-like basis then the results are telling: "During the last 16 years, below senior level, England have only managed to win a major tournament (UEFA U 18's final, in 1993) once...This gives England a finals tally of 5 over the period, compared with near rivals Spain (20), Italy (14) and France (11)" (2010 :5).

Numerous commentators have suggested that the standard of English football may be improved upon through a greater number of qualified coaches combined with an increased amount of practice time made available to young players. However, if this objective is to be realised, much will depend upon whether or not an agreed or shared football philosophy can actually be attained. For it is by no means certain that all football coaches will promote a type of football that reflects the values and beliefs now being promoted by the Football Association, namely, a philosophy that is based upon both the development of individual skills and technical ability.

The report similarly remarked that football is likely to get even more technical. Dick Bate, the Elite Coaching Manager at the governing body remarked: "It is highly likely that the game in the future will be even quicker, more technical and tactical, and the demands on our younger players will be elevated" (2010:21). A major difficulty with this point of view is that Premiership football is markedly different to the football being played in the lower divisions of the Football League (see Chapter 8).

The measured possession-based technical football recommended by *The Future Game* (2010) was in sharp contrast to the direct form of football promoted by Charles Hughes in *The Coaching Book of Soccer Tactics And Skills* published by the Football Association in 1980. The Football Association had recognised that it was imperative for a greater number of home-grown players to develop the same technical abilities possessed by foreign players who were being recruited to play English football in significant numbers. These concerns were crystallised in 2007 by a major publication produced by the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) entitled *Meltdown*.

7.3 The Meltdown Report

The *Meltdown Report* (2007) was written by Chris Lightbown, in collaboration with Gordon Taylor, the Chairman of the PFA. This report presented a graphic illustration of the decline in 'home-grown' players and the relentless growth in the number of foreign players playing Premiership football. The report noted that in the 2006-07 football season, 498 players started Premier League matches. Of these, 191 or 38% were English. The percentage of English players who started Premiership games in 2006-07 compared to when the Premier League was formed in the 1992-93 football season had fallen by 47%. The report added: "Last season [2005-06] 41% of the starting appearances in the Premier League were made by English players. In Italy - the country which *is* the main power in world football – the comparable figure was 73%. We are barely a power in our own land, let alone a world power" (2007:8). The principal reason why England failed to qualify for the European Football Championship in 2008, the report suggested, was because "English football is running out of English players" (2007:4). Indeed, according to recent data provided by the Football Association, the percentage of English players playing Premiership football in 2009 has fallen to 32% (see Chapter 8).

The reason why the English team has failed to beat other European countries such as Germany and Italy, the report concluded, was because of the systems that exist in those countries. These countries have developed a continuous supply of good

players. By any objective measure, English football was found to be significantly behind many other countries with respect to player development. English football has not built an equivalent to these other competing systems of player development. Blaming the England manager for accumulated defeats sustained by the national team, the report noted, was pointless.

Importantly, the authors of *Meltdown* noted that the degree of success that English clubs had enjoyed in European football competitions was a reflection of the abilities of foreign players. Moreover, these players had curtailed any realistic expectations of success for the England team. While the importation of foreign players had brought success to club football, the report remarked, this policy would inhibit success at national level. A smaller number of English players playing Premiership football is likely to mean that a smaller number of players capable of playing for the national team. The report concluded:

The price of an unrestricted flow of foreign players into England has been the loss of a generation of English players. ... We are a decade away from being a third world footballing nation. A decade from *Meltdown*... As things stand, it is becoming pointless for a talented English boy to take up football in the hope of playing at the top level in his own country... What is at stake is not just the future of the England team but the fundamental right of English players to rise as far as their talent will take them. That right is now denied” (2007: 6-7).

Indeed, the inability of English football to produce ‘home-grown players’ capable of playing at the highest levels of the game has been highlighted by the number of Academy players now playing Premiership football. In the football season 2006-7, only eight English Academy players made debuts in the Premier League. To date, only 120 English players from the Academies have made debuts in the Premier League. In the same period, 617 overseas players made their debuts at that level (2007:11).

The report also noted that foreign players had brought training methods and lifestyle ideas to English football that were considered to have been more advanced than those already in place. Critically, the issue was not considered to have been the

Premier League or a foreign player per se. Rather, the issue was regarded as being one of balance. Foreign players had been imported into English football in such numbers that the process had decimated the chances of home-grown players reaching the Premier League (2007:13).

Foreign players are undoubtedly restricting the chances of many English players from playing at the elite level of English football. However, a more fundamental concern is perhaps not the actual number of foreign players in Premiership football, but rather, the reason why these players were initially purchased. A number of Premiership clubs are purchasing foreign players in the belief that these players have the ability to compete at the highest levels of the game. There would appear to be too few English players with the requisite skills to play in the Premiership. The number of foreign players playing Premiership football is a consequence of this development, not a causal factor.

The *Meltdown Report* also noted that expenditure on youth development in the Premier League is approximately £40m per *annum*. To date, almost £400m has been spent by Premiership clubs on youth development. According to the report, this high level of expenditure is not producing the anticipated results. English players are being denied the opportunity to play Premiership football by Premiership clubs who repeatedly buy older, readymade players. The report cited Crewe Alexandra and Manchester United as examples of football clubs who continue to produce high-quality football players. Both these football clubs have a reputation for producing 'home-grown players' with technical ability. Why then do other English football clubs, the report considered, find it so difficult to emulate this success? (2007:18).

One answer to this rhetorical question may be found within the *Meltdown* report itself. An experienced Premier League Academy Manager suggested:

I'd love to employ a continental coach. I'm sure it's the best thing I could do for my kids and they'd be up for it. My young lads watch Italian and Spanish football on TV and are fascinated by it. But if our lads started playing out from the back and interchanging positions the way

any continental coach would want, they'd be smashed around the pitch and lose by a hatful of goals every week (2007 14-15).

Herein is one of the difficulties in attempting to introduce technical football and technical skills into English football. The football culture in this country has continued to promote and reward fitness and physicality rather than finesse. The former Italian international and Chelsea player manager, Gianluca Vialli, was the manager of Chelsea F.C. during the 1999-2000 football season. As I noted earlier in the chapter, he was the first manager of a Premiership side (but not the last) to field a complete team made up of foreign players. In the *Meltdown Report* Vialli remarked that money and the level of investment within Premiership football created its own momentum amid intense pressure to achieve immediate results. Consequently, many managers turn to proven foreign players rather than taking a risk in playing young and perhaps un-proven domestic players. According to Vialli, the most expedient way to address this imbalance would be to increase the supply of talented English players (2007:3).

Vialli also noted that there are clear differences between Italian and English youth team football. Italian youngsters receive far more technical training, which produces players who are much more adaptable. This technical ability is perhaps a reflection of highly-qualified football coaches graduating from the Coverciano institute set up in Italy during the 1960s. These measures ensure that the Italian football academies are staffed with highly-qualified football coaches. Both France and Holland have produced more technical football players for similar reasons (*Meltdown* 2007: 3). The lack of a unified football philosophy within English football was again noted by Vialli to be a limiting factor:

In Italy, we're fortunate in that while Serie B and B and C are obviously of inferior quality to Serie A [The equivalent to the Premier League] the style of football, in terms of both tactics and training techniques, is very similar. As a result, many clubs are happy to send their youngsters to the lower divisions, knowing that, more often than not, they'll come back as better players (2007 :3).

This is clearly not the case with English football as the style of play, tactics and training methods are very different in the lower leagues (see Chapter 8). The Championship Division for example, was described by Vialli as being: “A thrilling competition but one playing very different football from the Premier League and as such, not an ideal breeding ground for top-flight players” (2007:3). Indeed, one reason why there is such a difference in the type of football being played in the Premiership compared to the football being played in other divisions of English football is quite simply due to the high concentration of foreign players who are now playing Premiership football.

7.4 Conclusion

Between 1980 and 2010, the football philosophy promoted by the Football Association changed markedly. The early policy recommendations promoted by Charles Hughes actively encouraged a traditional form of football based upon direct play. This style of football demanded a high level of physical fitness. Football was considered to be a game based upon judgement rather than a game based upon technique. The consequences that this policy had for English football at both club and national levels were noted in Chapter 6 (e.g. Claridge 1997; Neville 2011).

European legislation passed in the 1997-98 football season, notably the Treaty of Rome, allowed freedom of movement for football players within the European Community. As the arrival of ‘overseas’ players increased, the Football Association increasingly became aware of the need to develop more English players with the same technical skills and technical abilities that many of these players clearly possessed. By the time *The Future Game* had been published in 2010, the governing body had clearly recognised that international football was no longer a traditional but a technical game. If the national team was to compete at international level then there was a clear need to develop a greater number of English players who possessed an increased level of technical ability.

A major difficulty in this respect, however, was found to be the limited number of qualified coaches available within English football. There are marked differences in the number of qualified coaches that exist between one European country and another. This is clearly an important issue with respect to player development. As I noted earlier in this chapter, the ‘Pro License’ is the top coaching badge standardised by UEFA. The number of coaches in England that hold this qualification is 115, whereas in Spain the number is 2,140 (2009).

Furthermore, in contrast to a number of other football nations, the Dutch and the Spanish, for example, English football does not have a clearly defined and shared football philosophy; there is not an agreed or collective understanding as to what the fabric of English football actually represents. Thus different coaches are likely to have different ideas as to how the game should be played. The English game, nevertheless, has continued to be characterised in terms of desire, work-rate and a competitive edge.

The *Meltdown Report* (2007) concluded that the influx of foreign players was having a detrimental impact on English football at both club and national levels. The report noted that it was the sheer number of foreign players that was responsible for denying the “right” of English players to realise their “true potential” (2007 7). However, this ‘right’ has been compromised not by the numbers of foreign players *per se* but rather by the manner in which English football has traditionally been coached and played. As the authors of the *Lewis Report* (2007) remarked, the system of coaching and player development in this country has to ensure that an increasing number of English players have the technical as well as the physical skills to succeed at the highest levels of the game. Unless the standard of the English game is raised then the influx of foreign players is likely to continue. This observation was in many ways remarkably similar to the opinions vented made by various football commentators such as Peter Doherty over fifty years ago. Since this time, the standard of much of English football may be said to be little changed. The complexities involved in attempting to raise the standards of the domestic game are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 8 In The Field

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I set out to bring together the interview material collected at three distinct levels of English football, namely, at national level, at club level and at player level (see Chapter 2). At national level, I interviewed senior representatives at the Football Association, the Professional Footballers' Association, the Premier League and the Football League. These institutions are responsible for how English football at the highest levels is organised, managed and controlled. At club level, I interviewed the management at one club within each of the respective divisions of English football. Most of the interviewees were former professional players themselves. At player level, I conducted a series of structured in depth-interviews with players aged 16-18 who played youth team football for a Championship football club.

The use of in-depth interviews allowed me to develop a detailed understanding of some of the most important issues faced by English football. A number of these concerns are clearly interdependent and interrelated. My primary objective was to understand the limited representation of English players now playing Premiership football. A number of other questions were also presented. For example, were the qualities required to play Premiership football markedly different from those required to play in the other divisions of English football? Was there any evidence to suggest that there had been a shift from a 'traditional' to a 'technical' game? Did traditional working class values continue to influence the manner in which English football was being played at the Championship club? These inter-related questions are now addressed accordingly.

8.2 The Availability of Foreign Players

The *Meltdown Report* (2007) noted that only 38% of English players made starting appearances in the Premier league during the 2006-2007 football season.

Since the publication of this report, the number of overseas players who are now playing Premiership football has continued to increase. A former Chairman of the Football Association remarked:

In 2001, 47% of Premiership players were English. Our figures (2009) indicate that it is now 32%. The number of players from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Wales has remained at about 10% in total in each season. If you look at the number of Spanish nationals playing in La Liga (The Spain equivalent of the Premier League) it is 68% whereas the comparable figure for Italy is 70%. In France it is 61% and for Germany, a little less than 60%. Many Premiership clubs believe that foreign players are cheaper and have required technical skills.

The willingness of Premiership clubs to sign foreign players increased significantly following two landmark pieces of legislation, namely, the Treaty of Rome (1978) and the Bosman Ruling (1995). The former allowed foreign players to move freely between member states of the EEC, while the latter abolished transfer fees for out-of-contract players transferred between one European country and another. Transfer fees would only be applicable to players who were still contracted (see Chapter 6). Equally, although FIFA had sought to introduce a quota system to combat the migration of foreign players' playing football in other countries, the Treaty of Rome precluded this development. In fact, following this legislation, players have been imported into English football from all parts of the world.

Lucrative broadcasting revenues provided a financial platform which allowed Premiership clubs to sign both foreign and domestic players. The financial fortunes of English clubs improved markedly throughout the 1990s, due to both incremental broadcasting and sponsorship deals (see Chapter 6). Moreover, these income streams benefited the most successful teams. This development helped to bolster the financial position of a number of elite Premiership clubs. These clubs invariably dominating the transfer market and signed the most desirable players. Many of the players that were signed were foreign players. As a Football Association National Coach observed:

Prior to the establishment of the Premier League in 1992, the bulk of the players in the Football League were British. The Bosman ruling changed the economic ethos of the game giving players the freedom to move. Foreign managers wanted to bring in foreign players whom they knew and knew also of their ability to play. This has led to a situation today whereby there are only 30% plus English players playing football in the Premier League.

It is also likely that various foreign managers may wish to sign players from their own country. As noted in Chapter 1, in a Champions League game (2009) the former Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez, a Spaniard, fielded more Spanish players than their Spanish opponents Real Madrid. Nevertheless, what would appear to be particularly important here was an ability to perform. In other words, these players possessed the requisite technical skills to compete at the elite level of the game.

8.3 Perceived Differences in the Abilities of English and Foreign Players

As I noted in Chapter 7, some members of the Football Association believed that it was imperative for the future of the England team to ensure that ‘home-grown players’ had the same technical abilities as the foreign players who were currently being recruited into the English game (2010). One question to be considered, therefore, is to what extent is it true to say that foreign players are more likely to possess a greater degree of individual or technical ability than English players.

A National Coach remarked:

In some instances they [foreign players] clearly do have more ability...
But you need to look at the type of football a particular country plays.
You have to take into account the culture of that country. In Spain you have more time to develop technical ability because in Spain players are not put under pressure as they are in this country ...in England we play at a faster tempo.

This testimony raises a number of questions. Firstly, noted here is a reference to the tempo of the English game compared to the speed at which the game is played in other countries, notably Spain. The more time a player has on the ball, it is argued,

the more likely it is that a player will be able to develop a greater degree of technical ability. Thus, if players in Spain have more time on the ball they are likely to develop 'touch' or technical skills. Conversely, in English football, players are seen to have less time on the ball and hence less time to develop these abilities.

However, why should the English game be played at a faster pace than the football being played in other countries? One explanation to this question is that English football has continued to promote a direct game based upon a limited number of passes (see Chapter 7). The tempo at which the English game is being played is in many ways a reflection of this direct form of football. Thus the development of individual skills is in many ways being restricted by this traditional style of play. Conversely, in countries such as Spain, the emphasis is upon possession of the ball rather than upon direct play. The pace at which the game is being played is likely to be slower.

In my interview with the management at an English Premiership club I attempted to develop this discussion regarding both pace and ability. What was, I asked, the most notable differences between English and foreign players? The representative of the Premiership club suggested:

Take Fàbregas for example, [The Spanish international]. In Spain he never stopped playing with the ball and this is something you rarely find in England this concentration on ball skills. The emphasis still tends to be on fitness, pace and physique and aggression on winning rather than upon skill development.

The Chairman of a Division One football club made a similar observation. He noted:

British players...do play at a higher level of intensity. They tend to be rigid in their approach to the game. The foreign players we have elicit a different approach to football; [they are] more flexible in their attitude towards the game. This is one reason why we appointed a foreign manager. We want to retain the ball more, and develop a passing game. ...Other cultures do appear to be able to develop better skills. Here, the criteria tend to emphasize height, strength and pace.

I raised the issue of differences in ability levels with a senior Professional Footballers' Association representative (PFA), who noted:

The general perception would be that [Foreign players] have a greater degree of technical ability than English players. If you were to ask all the managers rather than just to ask me, their perfect world would be to combine the tenacity of the English with the skill set that many foreign players possess which can be a product of your environment.

However, the belief that foreign players possess more technical ability than English players is not a view that is universally accepted within English football. There may be other considerations that determine whether or not foreign players are preferred to their English counterparts. For example, a manager at a Division Two Football Club suggested:

One reason why so many foreign players are signed by Premiership clubs is because they possess strength and power. They also tend to be cheaper than English players who, relatively speaking, usually cost a lot of money.

This testimony raised two very important points. Firstly, as I have discussed in more detail later in this chapter, not all Premiership clubs play in the same manner. For example, not all Premiership clubs play 'technical' football. There are several clubs within this division of English football that continue to play football in a traditional manner. Equally, if not all Premiership clubs play football in the same way, then it would follow that not all Premiership clubs require technical players. A number of clubs would perhaps prefer to sign players with 'strength and power' since they continue to play a traditional English game. These clubs may be either unwilling or indeed unable to afford to purchase players with proven technical ability.

A spokesman responsible for player development at the Football League noted that it was the sheer number of foreign players that was responsible for limiting the development of English players, and it was not the case that English players had less technical ability than foreign players. He remarked:

I do not believe that foreign players have greater technical ability than English players... the sheer number of these foreign players entering English football severely restricts the opportunities for 'home grown' players particularly within Premiership football...the number of foreign players playing League football is also rising. As of August 19th, 2010, the current foreign (non UK) Football League contract players were 310.Irish players (Eire) are included as foreign. The chances of making the grade [to Premiership Level] are reduced accordingly.

According to this perspective, the reason why so few English players are playing Premiership football has little to do with levels of ability. Rather, English players do not have the opportunity to play Premiership football because of the number of foreign players now playing for Premiership clubs. It is this lack of opportunity, rather than actual ability levels that is seen to be important. This explanation is very similar to a conclusion expressed in the *Meltdown* report which noted that foreign players had been imported into English football in an "unbalanced rush" (2007:11-13). According to the report, the influx of foreign players was effectively blocking the pathway of young English players from playing Premiership football. Once again, the suggestion that it is the actual number of foreign players that is limiting the chances of English players from playing Premiership football is not necessarily correct. The actual number of foreign players now playing Premiership football is not necessarily the real issue. The number is a consequence of a shortage of English players who have the required skills to play Premiership football rather than being considered to be a causal factor.

8.4 Different Styles of Play

One factor that may inhibit English players from playing Premiership football is the differences in the style of football played by a number of Premiership clubs compared to the style of the game being played in other divisions of English football. Was there a greater emphasis being placed upon technical skills and technical ability at the highest level of the game? A Premiership club manager responded by saying:

Today, players in the Premier League have to possess technical qualities to be able to play at the highest level. This type of football is different to

the manner in which the game is played in the lower divisions and of course this in itself impedes the likelihood of lower division players making it in the Premier League... You cannot participate in the Champions league if you are not playing technical football. However, not all clubs within the Premiership look to develop the same level of technical ability.

How different, then, is Premiership football compared with the football played in the other divisions of English football? A PFA spokesman made the following observations:

That is a good question and there is a strong feeling that so many top youngsters, the cream of talent who do not make it in the Premier League, would get fixed up lower down the leagues. But what we found is that they were not getting fixed up lower down because it was almost like taking orchids out of the greenhouse :they were not physically and mentally up to it. There is a strong feeling that the lower down you go it is not as skillful... that the lower down you go there is a tendency to try to compensate with physicality.

Another PFA representative and former professional player himself noted that Premiership football clubs tended to concentrate upon retention and possession of the ball. This technical style of play demanded technical skills. This was in sharp contrast to the football being played in the lower divisions of English football. He noted:

The lowest level clubs will play percentages; they will chase the game down, put the ball in the corners because the players are not good enough to keep the ball in the right areas. The higher up the divisions you go it is built into them to keep the ball.

In the lower divisions of English football, then physicality was seen to compensate for a lack of technical ability. Where these differences in the styles of play within the various divisions of English football particularly marked? A Premier League spokesman responsible for player development contended:

Yes...there is a greater emphasis upon fitness and physicality. [Outside the Premiership]Not only does the game become more physical but there is a difference between the Leagues as well. If you spoke to referees they

would tell you that they have to adopt a different mentality when they are in charge of games in different Leagues... There is a different approach to the game by the players, a different mentality- so the game is different from League to League in the way it is approached.

The manager of a Premiership club suggested that players had to possess specific qualities in order to be able to play Premiership football. At the elite level of football, a player is required to possess technical ability:

Three major qualities: Number one, technique, Number two , intelligence, Number three, physical qualities. Without technique it is impossible to play, without intelligence you cannot implement and demonstrate this technique. Physical fitness and being tough will only take you so far and not to the highest levels of the game. Our scouts would be looking for these qualities.

At a Championship club, in contrast, management in charge of youth team development highlighted the importance of a different set of requirements:

A major problem facing an eighteen year old apprentice who is trying to break into the first team is the need for physical strength and physical stature. If you look at the Football League then you tend to find that the lower on down the divisions you go the more physical the football tends to become. In the lower divisions, managers look to work rate to compensate for an absence of technical ability. With the average tenure of a Football League manager also being so short, 1.4 years, there is a real pressure to win football matches. As often as not, work rate and physical fitness, are considered to be very much part of a winning mentality.

The management at a Division One football club informed me that they had recently signed a foreign manager. According to the Chairman of this football club, the appointment was, in part, an attempt to move away from the 'route one' or direct form of football that characterised the style of play of many of the football clubs in this division of the Football League. The club had also signed a number of foreign players in an attempt to bring 'technical' football to the club. The Chairman explained:

We do not want to play a type of ‘route one’ [Direct] football that a number of teams [In this Division] tend to play. Roberto [The First Team manager] has ‘game intelligence’ and is without doubt the best signing I have made. British players play with a heightened level of intensity which is largely maintained throughout the game. Foreign players do not play at the same level of intensity and are far less physical... Although the game has changed over the last twenty years you still need to be an athlete...In this League, these qualities are more important than technique.

It is interesting to note that the decision to sign a foreign manager at this Division One football club was in many ways very similar to the reasons why the Football Association had decided to sign the Italian Fabio Capello as the England team manager. As I note later on in this chapter, the Football Association signed Capello in an attempt to move away from a traditional English game and embrace a technical game. In both instances a paradigm shift was regarded as being essential.

At a Division Two Football Club, I was similarly told by the club manager that the football played in the lower divisions of English football was effectively based upon fitness and power. Once again, if players did not possess this athleticism, they were unlikely to survive. The football club manager observed:

It is easier to introduce skill than to develop players physically because we have little or no control over their physical development. There are obviously some things we can do regarding physique, diet and so forth, but it is nothing compared to what nature is going to do... I am actually looking for a big striker that can put himself about. If he can do this, then he doesn’t need great technique.

In modern day English football, continued references are made by players, managers and coaches alike to a ‘traditional English player’ or to a ‘traditional English game’. Representatives of English football similarly speak about ‘a technical player’ or about ‘a technical game’. The manager of a Division Two Football Club whom I interviewed is both a highly-regarded manager and a revered football coach. He has consistently produced players that have gone on to play football for Premiership football clubs. I asked this club manager to provide a working definition of both ‘traditional’ and ‘technical’ forms of football. He noted:

The game is definitely changing, even in the lower Leagues ... 'Route one' football, long ball football' or 'direct football' that characterized the traditional English game, that era has gone. I remember a fellow called Reep, Charles Reep who came out with all these wonderful statistics on playing direct football with few passes and all of a sudden my manager at Sutton United, who was also an FA coach and had done all the courses, was telling us to 'whack it up the front'. I played at Wembley in the Amateur Cup Final against North Shields in 1969. All I did was to hoof it as far up the field as I could. That's all I did.

'Technical ability' for me is the ability of the player to be able to get the ball to do what the player wants to do with the ball. Has the player got a good first touch, has he got a trick? In other words, can the player beat people or avoid losing the ball. So has he got the footwork to do that? Added to that, can the player demonstrate that he has mastered other technical skills such as striking the ball, passing the ball and heading the ball? These are the sort of skills that a 'technical player' possesses.

Most importantly, technical ability was seen to be acquired through 'hard work' and 'coaching'. It was acquired through a greater emphasis being placed upon the development of ball skills. Player development was regarded as being critically important in this respect. Despite the need for physicality, all the youth team players at this particular club learned to play with both feet from the age of seven. The need for physical fitness was important; however, to be a complete player you needed to possess both physical and technical skills.

Nevertheless, not everyone within professional football considered technical ability something that is acquired (see Chapter 1). The chairman of a Division One Football Club noted:

The most important qualities for me in a football player are ambition and the determination to succeed. I am a great believer in 'innate abilities'. Players are born to greatness; this quality is in the genes.

This observation was in sharp contrast to the opinions held by management at a Premiership club who considered hard work and coaching to be far more important than 'innate abilities'. The club manager explained:

I would say that 98% of all players have to work at their ability and very few are 'born' to greatness. The more you practice the better the player you are likely to be. Pelé, for example, trained all day long and developed a wonderful heading ability that was the result of continuous practice with crosses provided by Rivelino. The result of this was seen in the 1970 World Cup Final [which Brazil won].

In general terms, management and coaches at the Premiership level placed a far greater emphasis upon technical ability. Conversely, there was much more importance attached to fitness and physicality in the lower divisions of English football. These perceptible differences had a notable impact upon player development and recruitment policy.

8.5 Differences in Coaching Philosophy

The findings outlined above suggest that coaching plays a pivotal role as far as ability levels are concerned (see Chapter 7). Did the apparent shortage of qualified coaches available within English football have a marked impact upon player development? A Premiership manager remarked:

Absolutely correct. This shortage [of coaches] has a real impact upon the number of players who make it in Premiership football. The fewer top qualified coaches we have the fewer quality players are produced.

Similarly, different coaches also have different ideas with respect to how the game should be played. A PFA representative responsible for player development put it this way:

What you have is this massive disparity between coaches at different clubs that may only be several miles apart. One doing a brilliant job and producing a high quality product, one doing a crap job and producing a crap product, because their philosophies are different and their education is different and their budget is different. All these factors are huge factors in the quality of what you actually produce

Different coaches then clearly have different ideas as to how the game should be played. These disparities became very evident from the interviews I conducted with

youth team players at a Championship Club. Each player was found to have his own individualistic needs and difficulties. There appeared to be a need to ensure that a particular player was wedded with the right coach at a particular level in the developmental process. For example, different players who played in different positions had different skill sets and different learning curves. Was one coach sufficient to teach all these respective skills irrespective of either age or position being played? One under - 18 youth team player argued:

From when we are young we are taught to be direct and physical and to play up to the front. When I got to [this club] it was the same really, they told you to be direct. I learnt to check my runs bend my runs and to think about positions by watching other players do it. So I think that coaching needs to be more in depth ... I would like to see us work on technique, work on receiving the ball...bring others into play base a training session around a particular position...I'm not trying to say how the session should be done: I'm saying how the session could be done.

The manner in which different coaching philosophies impacted upon player development was evident from the interviews I conducted with other youth team players. These differences in coaching techniques were apparent not only between clubs but perhaps surprisingly within the same club. Another youth team player suggested:

As a nine year old I was told to kick it long; then as an under - fourteen we were told to pass the ball... Then in the under - 15 season all that went out of the window because we had a new coach and his ideas were completely different about positional play and what was expected...For me, if you had one style of play throughout the club and throughout the country, then it would be better for everyone at clubs and for the country and everyone will know how to play and what is expected of them.

8.6 A Diversified Football Philosophy

The idea of having 'one style of play' in a country at club and national level raises some very important issues. As I noted in Chapter 7, the Football Association has now attempted to move English football away from a traditional game towards a technical game. One senior executive of the governing body declared:

Physicality and the long ball game has been part of English football for centuries. It is a very masculine sport. In my opinion, there has been some corrosion culturally in the game over a long period of time...the game in England had been degraded.

Was this 'cultural corrosion' responsible for the decision taken by the Football Association to appoint Fabio Capello as manager of the England national team in 2008? The senior executive explained:

Yes, we wanted to get away from what had gone before. What we were looking for was a 'paradigm shift' in terms of both attitudes towards how the game should be played and also in terms of the technical skills required to compete on the international stage.

The Football Association recognised the need to produce a greater number of English players with the same technical ability possessed by many foreign players (see Chapter 7). The standard of English football needed to be raised if the national team was to be competitive at international level. Foreign countries had continued to produce players who were capable of playing football at the highest levels of the game. The appointment of Capello was an attempt to bring a technical game to English football.

During the 1980s, the Football Association had emphasised a football philosophy based upon a direct or traditional style of play. This form of football had been promoted by Charles Hughes, who in turn, had developed the ideas formerly associated with Wing Commander Charles Reep. As I noted earlier, this direct form of football had had a notable impact upon both national and club football. A senior PFA spokesman argued:

Charles Hughes came along... and studied statistics and saw that more goals were scored from long balls [rather than from possession]. Graham Taylor [a former England manager] followed that pattern and, coming from the lower divisions, he had a great deal of success [at club level]... but when it got to the very highest level, the very best players said 'thanks a lot', got the ball, kept the ball and

in the end the team playing the long ball and giving the ball away was dead on its feet.

The Football Association became increasingly aware of the technical skills being developed by foreign players and foreign teams. In the late 1980s, the governing body asked Wiel Coever, a Dutchman who was based in Holland, to attend a football conference at the National Football Academy based at Lilleshall. Wiel Coever was a highly respected football coach. He started his own football academy in an attempt to cultivate technical skills. In an interview I conducted with the manager at a Division Two Football Club, Wiel Coever was considered to have been instrumental in assisting many well-known players develop technical ability:

Many great players benefited from his methods... When he came to Lilleshall over twenty years ago I spent all day working with [his] techniques. He brought along two or three kids to help with the demonstrations. At the end of the day I actually felt that my right foot belonged to me... Our coaches who now take charge of kids under the age of 11 are given the Coever CD on developing skills and players have to learn specific skills such as screening the ball and being able to play with both feet... I took this pioneering work on board. Hughes then employed Coever to work at Lilleshall. ..The football being played abroad is more technical than traditional and English football has now begun to recognise this change. I remember Coever saying that the kids were good but they needed to be taught technical skills at a much earlier age... If these kids have not got these skills at 11 or 12 they ain't going to get them.

There is, however, no what one might call common 'football philosophy' within the domestic game. As I noted earlier in this chapter, this lack of unity can cause notable difficulties with respect to player development.

As a national coach explained:

If you selected ten different clubs randomly, including the Premier League and the other divisions within the Football League, you will find ten different ways of playing football. If you go to Holland [all] clubs will be playing the same way, there is a common philosophy of how the game should be played. In England you have different philosophies or

different cultures perhaps... Until us, England can have a philosophy a shared DNA, we will have issues.

A similar observation was made by a Premier League spokesman who suggested:

I think that in every division there are clubs that elect to play in a certain way and in a certain style...there are also a number of clubs in the lower divisions that don't simply apply a physical approach. Brighton and Exeter both play a passing game. But I don't try to pretend that Division Two is the Premier league. You have some of the best players in the world playing in the Premier league so it is going to be a different environment...

This view was also expressed by a spokesman from the Football League:

The type of play may well differ from club to club or from manager to manager. Some managers do not have a philosophy of player development and neither do some clubs... The style of play, the philosophy and approach to the game is very much up to the club and manager alike. Here we do not have a clearly defined football philosophy, a unifying ethos if you like. Within Dutch football there existed the idea of 'total football' essentially a player being able to play in any other position. English football is very much open to interpretation.

The management at the Championship Club made a similar observation:

You go to any club in the country and a given club will look to play in a particular style and recruit players who will fit in with this type of play. I think that your supporters demand a certain type of player and a certain style of play

The Division Two Football Club manager was aware of this difficulty and the impact this may have on player development. To prevent any such inconsistencies or confusion, this football club adopted a unified approach:

Yes, I can see how this can happen and we make sure we avoid it! The most important way we avoid it is that most of our coaches who work here used to play for us. Therefore, they know the type of football we expect from them and so what they have to concentrate upon is how to coach... Their philosophy will be the only one they have learned ...If you

look at Manchester United there is a unified philosophy and that seems to work pretty well!

Again, the existence of distinct and diverse football cultures illustrates these disparities. A former professional player and PFA representative remarked:

I think it depends culturally both club by club and the actual country itself. When I played at Blackburn, you had to give a hundred per cent... That was the working class culture of hard working aggressive values, the culture of the north...I went to sign for Queens Park Rangers [London] and the fans were brought up on the football of Stan Bowles and for them it was all about a nice flick here and a nice flick there. [This] was far more important than a hard working player.

If different clubs have different ideas as to how football should be played, then equally, it is very likely that these differences will manifest themselves in terms of the expectations of football supporters. What role then did the crowd play in this developmental process? A PFA spokesman and former player observed:

There was a need to satisfy the crowd...because as a player you want to please the crowd. It is important for you as a player.

Another PFA spokesman responsible for player development noted:

I have worked at [a particular London club] for a long time within player development. [The club] has a reputation based upon hardness and aggression and spectator violence. It has a thread running through it whereby the crowd expects the team to play in a particular manner, a particular style of play. It follows that in order to do this the team needs a certain type of player to perform this role on the pitch. Invariable, players need to be tough, strong, aggressive tough tackling and the like. A working class club expects the team to come out and perform in a physical manner which acts as a form of release for the supporters and which satisfies their needs for a competitive encounter where they can involve themselves in a spectacle of physical combat in a competitive cauldron of aggression and courage. If that team came out and dropped off deep and played from the back or played counter attack football the crowd would go wild they just would not put up with it.

These cultural traits were not regarded as being specific to this particular football club but appeared to be vigorously endorsed by a number of clubs. The PFA spokesman continued:

This description I have given you is not only historically how things have been but it is how things are right now. No, this club is not an isolated case.

In an attempt to examine this hypothesis further, I interviewed a number of supporters at this particular football club. One of the most notable players to have played for the club was Teddy Sheringham. The player went on to play for both Manchester United and England. Sheringham was a product of the academy system. He was, in other words, ‘a home-grown player.’ Management and fans alike were clearly unhappy with the manner in which he played the game. Sheringham appeared to be flash; he was ostentatious and regarded by the fans as a real ‘show pony’. This type of player merited little value or respect at this particular football club. One supporter, I interviewed declared:

The fans want to see their values on the pitch. The abuse Teddy Sheringham got and he got a lot, changed him from a player who relied on just skill to a player who played with heart. He might have believed he was giving his best but to us we felt different...if you are booed every week, how’s that going to make you feel? He went away at the end of the season, got fitter, bulked and when he came back he was like a different player. He started to get stuck in. He went from twenty people watching him play youth football to twenty thousand shouting ‘you wanker’ you ‘aint doing it.’ No wonder he changed!¹²

¹² In his autobiography, Teddy Sheringham (1998: 57-65) had this to say:

“I was a flash kid in those days, a real show boater with a repertoire of all the flicks and touches. I still wasn’t interested in scoring boring goals-they had to come from benders into the top corners...When they come off, they looked great, but the trouble was they didn’t come off very often...the manager used to say to me ‘Just get on to it and don’t worry about the flashy stuff...I’m ashamed to say that I thought I knew best...I had the skill and I was going to use it.... I had a hard time with the fans for a while...And it would have been easy to buckle. In my time at the club I saw a few pretty good youngsters who faded away because they couldn’t take the stick from the crowd. If you could survive it, you could survive anything. I survived, and came out of it a stronger, more resilient player.”

Thus the expectations of the crowd may have a notable impact upon both player development and the type of football played. Being 'tough' and 'aggressive' was considered to be an expression of a particular kind of masculinity that the fan base expected from its players. A PFA representative described this situation in the following terms:

There is an underlying cultural force at work here. If you went down to Hackney Marshes, for example, or down to Battersea Park on any Saturday morning you would hear comments such as 'get stuck in', 'hit 'em hard', basically a trench mentality. You will find this sort of mentality is endemic in English grass roots football there is no doubt about it. ...it's about dominating your opponents physically which you are not going to see in France, Spain or Belgium but you are going to see this in English football. This sort of masculinity is something which we do not seem to be able to shake off: it seems to be part of our culture our heritage. They want the players to tackle, to be aggressive, to 'get stuck in', and to be hard and competitive... so this all leads through to the guy who is in charge of player development.

Player development may, then, be constrained by both a particular club culture and heritage. If players are simply expected to be tough and to 'get stuck in,' then the likelihood of these players realising their true potential may be limited. Most importantly, it is technical ability rather than physicality that is now required to play at the elite level of football.

8.7 Contemporary English Football and Working Class Culture

In Chapter 5, I noted how the emergence of working class football became associated with a particular type of 'masculine' identity characterised by being 'tough' 'hard' and 'courageous'. Football for the working classes portrayed a distinct source of masculine cohesion marked off by a set of particular masculine values and beliefs. Football became to reflect a number of these traditional values. What evidence was there to suggest that this value system still exists in English football today? Did these values continue to find expression in the manner in which football in England was being played? A Premiership manager put it this way:

Absolutely, English football has always been a working class game. We do not get many players from Eton here! Working class kids are still attracted to the game for the money, the fame and the celebrity status it brings. They tend to be tough and physical. Many have absolutely no interest in academic qualifications or a career or profession outside the game and for those who fail to make the grade it can be a real blow.

This is a very important point, as the human cost associated with failure to make the grade is rarely discussed. I asked a number of youth team players at a Championship club what they would do if they failed to make the grade. The comments made were very pertinent:

I haven't thought about that, not really worked that out.

I have not thought about it really...I would like to coach maybe or teach PE.

No idea really but I would want to be in football or sport in some way

The importance of particular working class values was noted by a former player at the Championship club where he was now responsible for youth development. He observed:

Fans [at this club] want to see players who are committed, who would run through a brick wall, die for their club. They want to see a wholehearted player. I played for [this club] for four years, so I have a good idea as to what the fans want to see... The club is seen to be a club for the working class and the fans. The paying public like to see a brand of football that is committed, honest, played with conviction and with courage. Each club will have a different syllabus a different style and different expectations.

What evidence was there to suggest that a particular working class subculture shaped the attitudes, values and beliefs that these players brought to the football club?

One youth team player remarked:

Where I live there are a lot of distractions. It's a lot harder to keep your head straight, if you know what I mean... There are local gangs, criminals different sorts of people...so my mates are always asking me to join them, hang around and they end up in trouble so I try to stay in and do my own thing but it is hard, hard to do that...

Another youth team player stated:

Yeah! There is one kid I know well at [this football club] who is a really good player but he ended up getting into trouble with the law and that was the end.

The important point to note here is that player development may be influenced by issues which exist both inside and outside the football club. For some players, external issues may be just as important as those related to either coaching or management. A PFA representative observed:

The club's culture determines the type of player the club develops to service the needs of the spectator and the crowd. In other words, the crowd or the supporters effectively have expectations of a particular type of player that plays for [this] football club. In contrast, go to Arsenal and so for example, go to West Ham. The supporters are expecting a level of football performance which is very different to what you would expect to see at [this club]. So therefore, the talent I need to bring through at [the club], the player I bring through youth development will be entirely different to those being brought through at these other clubs.

A person responsible for recruitment at the same football club observed:

This football club is a South London club for local South London players. The club policy is to recruit from the locality. Many of our kids are from single-parent homes, many are black kids... These kids want to make it they are tough and determined... I recruit players to do a job for the club... working class kids do the job for the club. The club policy is to look for players from the locality... The fans are looking for work rate. They want to see the players earn their money and 'put a shift in'. The vast majority of 'em are from a working class background. You have to battle for the ball and really get stuck in at (this football club)... The modern game has got quicker and quicker so physical fitness is really important.

Management at a Division Two Football Club similarly explained:

Football generally is still a working class game... We live in a different part of the country. [Cheshire] so I would say most of our kids around here are middle class. Some of the Manchester boys might get mixed up in a gang culture but we don't have many players from Liverpool which has a particularly tough reputation... What I found when I was at (another London club) you would get a number of boys who just wanted to be 'Jack the Lad' and mess about. That was the culture to mess about, act tough; these were working class kids

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, I conducted twelve structured in-depth interviews with youth team players aged 16-18 at this football club (See Chapter 2). I asked these players what qualities they thought they needed to possess in order to be able to play professional football. The majority of these responses considered fitness and physicality more important than technical ability and technical skills.

My aim is to play for (this Club) first and then my aim is to be a top player in the Premier League. Technical ability is very important but if you are not physically strong enough you cannot play football, so I think that physicality is really important.

You definitely need to be fit; the game is getting quicker and quicker so you need to be fit and strong.

I am physically fit, I am strong and fast. My technical ability is not great but it's something I am working on.

I would say 'equal' because you cannot play without fitness but without technical ability you are limited.

Strength, pace, fitness and ability... Physical fitness and strength are more important than technical ability.

I would say tempo, the pace is much quicker and also the players are much fitter.

Physical fitness would be ranked one and technical ability ranked two, you have to be strong and fit to play

One youth team player remarked:

On the estate, the only way to survive is to 'act tough' and show your mates you aint scared of nothin'. I play football in the same way, I go for the 50-50 balls, go in for everthin'. I want to show that I have got what it takes.

Football offered working class youth an avenue of escape, a chance to overcome any notion of insignificance or failure. The local sub-culture in many respects reflected its parent culture which continued to place a high value upon masculinity, independence, physical strength and aggression. The chance to play professional football offered these players an opportunity to forge a new identity and shape their own particular fate.

I similarly asked a number of football supporters at the club what sort of qualities they expected their players to possess:

The values of the club are as strong today as they were in 1888, working class values, rivalry between other Dockers and their clubs such as Portsmouth and West Ham is still there. I would say 90% of the fans [at this club] are from a working class background and even those in the boxes, such as Alben & Son the funeral people in Bermondsey; they are millionaires now but they are still working class people who support the club. [This club] is a working man's club with working class players with working man's attitudes. The players need to get stuck in, be strong in the tackle, and let em know we mean business!

Another fan remarked:

Its commitment, its determination. The fans [expect a player] to give a hundred per cent; that's all they ask for...Courage, determination - the will to win!

Another fan noted:

Although many of me mates have moved out of the area [because] they couldn't afford the housin,' they still come back to the club no matter what. [The club] is in the blood, the old working class mentality no matter where they live...players need to show grit, courage and fight!

The masculine value system founded upon courage, stamina, hard work, honour and loyalty that shaped the early forms of working class football is still evident at this particular football club today. This value structure has continued to emphasise a traditional game and places little value on the technical forms of football being played at the elite levels of the game.

8.8 Conclusion

Much of English football, particularly outside the Premiership, has continued to emphasise pace, fitness and aggression rather than the development of technical abilities. A number of Premiership clubs have signed foreign players, in the belief that these players are likely to possess the technical skills now required to compete at the highest levels of the game.

There are marked differences in the style of football played by many Premiership clubs compared to the type of football being played in the lower divisions of English football. Many lower League clubs place an emphasis upon physicality which acts to compensate for a lack of technical ability. This differentiation has restricted many English players from being able to realise their true potential. The lack of technical ability is likely to further restrict the chances of being able to play Premiership football. The limited number of qualified coaches and a divergent coaching philosophy are also likely to inhibit the prospects of English players from playing Premiership football.

In an attempt to develop an increased level of technical ability at the national level of English football, the Football Association has attempted to institute a paradigm shift, a movement from a traditional to a technical game. The appointment of Fabio Capello was testimony to this objective. The Football Association recognised that a greater number of English players needed the technical skills possessed by many foreign players if the national team was to compete successfully at an international level. One difficulty with an attempt to introduce a 'top down approach' is the

cultural diversity found to exist within English football. There is, in effect, no unified football philosophy within the domestic game.

English football has traditionally been considered to be a game for the working man. Working class football has been associated with a particular 'masculine' identity marked off in terms of being 'tough', 'hard', 'aggressive' and 'courageous.' These particular values attitudes and beliefs continue to exert an important influence upon English football. Players continue to emphasise the importance of strength, pace, physicality and fitness above and beyond the need to develop technical ability and technical skills. The crowd also plays an important role in this respect. Supporters expect their own particular values and beliefs to be expressed on the football pitch. This is likely to have important consequences for both the manner in which the game is being played and also in terms of both player development and recruitment policy.

Chapter 9 Discussion

9.1 Introduction

This thesis is a sociological enquiry into the structure and development of English football. In the introduction, I suggested that any worthwhile explanation as to why so few English players are now playing Premiership football would be multi-factorial rather than mono-causal. There are a range of possible explanations that may help to explain why English football players have a limited representation in Premier League football.

As I noted in the Introduction, the availability of money has been instrumental in bringing foreign players into the Premiership. Indeed, as various commentators have remarked, the more money a particular club has, the more successful that club is likely to be. For example, as Simmonds and Forest observed (2004), there is evidence to suggest that a positive correlation exists between salaries and the ability to qualify for European football competitions. The availability of broadcasting revenue is clearly an important factor in enabling Premiership clubs to sign foreign players and indeed to pay competitive salaries. The amount of broadcasting revenue available to Premiership clubs during the 2012-13 was £936m. In 1992-93, the year in which the Premier League was established, this figure was £300m.

Similarly, as I discussed in Chapter 8, despite the advances made to coaching in this country, there is evidence to suggest that a continued belief in 'innate abilities' may restrict player development. Some football managers and football coaches continue to believe in the idea of players 'being gifted'. Great players are often regarded as being 'born to play'. These players, it was argued, could not be coached or trained. However, as Syed (2010) has argued, so-called 'in-born talent' or innate abilities may be nothing more than the result of endeavour or competitive practice, a reflection of hard work. The idea of 'innate ability' is, in many respects, both

corrosive and insidious, as players are dissuaded from the belief that they can improve themselves through their own efforts.

There is also a body of opinion within the domestic game that seeks to explain the limited representation of English players in Premiership football in terms of the actual numbers of foreign players who are being imported into English football. This debate is discussed at some length in Chapter 7. The *Meltdown Report* (2007), published by the PFA, noted how the number of overseas players has increased in 14 of the 15 years since the 1992-93 football season, when the Premier League was established. “Older ready-made foreign players are blocking young English player’s paths into the Premier League...the issue is balance: we have brought in foreign players in an unbalanced rush that has decimated the chances of home-grown players reaching the Premier League (2007 10-12). By definition, the greater the number of foreign players playing Premiership football the less the likelihood is that young English players will be able to hone their abilities at the elite level of the game.

Another important area of research which has evaluated the movement of professional football players across international barriers is sports labour migration. This area of research, discussed in Chapter 6, has helped to explain migration in terms of economics, politics, geography and history. A number of authors have successfully identified patterns of recruitment and retention in terms of not only economic considerations but also in terms of the process of globalization or the socio-economic, cultural and political interdependencies that have forged human behaviour. For example, migration towards the elite level of English football may be explained in terms of a desire to play at the highest levels of the game. (Elliot and Maguire 2008). Equally, the importation of African football players into European football has been explained in terms of a heritage of European colonization (Darby 2000).

My central proposition has been to argue that Premiership clubs have signed a number of foreign players, in the belief that these players possess the technical skills required to play at the highest levels of the game. I have also suggested that there appears to be an insufficient number of English players who possess the same skill set. One explanation for the limited representation of English players who are now playing Premiership football may be found in the manner in which the domestic game has traditionally been coached and played. Historically, English football has largely concentrated upon fitness and physicality rather than the development of individual skills or technical ability.

This proposition has raised a number of related research questions. For example, how did an emphasis upon physicality and muscularity arise? To what extent did these value-ends determine the way the game was being played? Equally, what evidence is there to suggest that the traditional English game is now being challenged and contested by a technical game? Similarly, to what extent have particular attitudes, values and beliefs that characterised early working class football clubs continued to shape the manner in which English football is now being played?

I have addressed these various research questions by attempting to explain how particular patterns of social behaviour have arisen, persisted and changed. In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I set out to illustrate how a developmental trend, founded upon physicality and fitness, formed the basis of a traditional English game. As the twentieth century advanced, however, this style of play became confronted and opposed by a technical game that had developed in many foreign countries during this period. These developments are discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. This paradigm shift led to an increasing demand for foreign players who had the technical skills to compete at the elite level of English football.

I have used primary and secondary historical evidence, contemporary reports and in-depth interviews to investigate the role that value-ends such as masculinity and physicality have played in English football. I have equally demonstrated how a range of social forces has either independently or inter-dependently helped to fashion a

similarity and consistency in the manner in which the domestic game has been played. Having discovered the significance of these particular values and beliefs it has become possible to explain why contemporary Premiership football is so heavily dominated by foreign players. I have also drawn attention to how some of the conflicts or tensions that exist within contemporary English football may be resolved.

9.2 Summary of Key Findings

- English football has continued to be a largely physical or manly game.
- There are an insufficient number of English players with the technical skills required to play Premiership football.
- The elite level of English football has witnessed a paradigm shift from a traditional to a technical game.
- Particular attitudes, values and beliefs that shaped the early professional working class football clubs are still apparent today.
- There is no unified approach to how English football should be played.

Each of these major findings is discussed in turn. Collectively, these findings serve to illustrate why so few English players are now playing Premiership football. This thesis has also raised a number of important theoretical implications which help place the above findings in a broader sociological context. These inferences are considered and explained below.

9.3 Theoretical Implications

My thesis has not attempted to justify either traditional or technical football. As I noted in the introduction, both forms of football are equally valid. Both forms of

football, it may be argued, are ends in themselves. Much of English football, as I have demonstrated throughout this thesis, has been founded upon diversity, local character, tradition and custom. In many respects the domestic game has continued to benefit from this colour and diversity. The sustainability of English football may lie not so much in terms of how the game is being played, but rather in terms of how the game is followed by its fans.

Nevertheless, choices between competing alternatives have to be made. At the elite levels of English football, a traditional muscular English game has been increasingly contested by a different form of football founded upon the development of technical skills and technical ability. Unless a greater number of English players are allowed to develop a set of skills that can match the technical skills being developed in other football nations, then the influx of foreign players is likely to continue.

A major difficulty here is that freedom of choice is only one factor. The condition upon which this choice is being exercised is another. In other words, if English players do not possess the technical skills or individual ability that allows them to play at the highest levels of the game, then these players, by definition, are not in a position to exercise a choice between these two alternative styles of football. Indeed, if player development continues to focus upon fitness and physicality rather than the development of technical ability then many English players will simply be unable to realise their true potential. They will not be able to exercise a degree of choice as to how football is to be played. Ultimately, these players will be denied the opportunity of being able to play at the highest levels of the game.

It is also important to recognise here that the issue under discussion is not necessarily one of traditional or technical football, a question of one style or another. Invariably, football players and football teams are formulated to win football matches. Therefore, it is more than likely that, in some instances, a combination of both styles of play will be involved. However, it is equally important to recognise that physicality and fitness are by themselves unlikely to be sufficient at the elite levels of the game; technical skills are required to compete at this level of football. Thus, if

more English players and English teams are to compete at this level of the game then some form of paradigm shift will be required in the lower divisions of English football.

Such a paradigm shift may be difficult to achieve. As I noted in Chapter 2, the manner in which English football has been played may be evaluated in terms of the inter-relationship between specific social and historical structures. Indeed, real importance has to be given to social biography and the relationship between biography and history in a particular social context. The hallmark of English popular culture has been its continuity and consistency. It has proven to be remarkably resilient. It is this tenacity and longevity which may confound any hopes of achieving change at either club or national level. Much of English football continues to favour power and aggression rather than technique.

9.4 A Manly Game

The history of English football has been inter-woven with various but not discordant social forces which have either independently or, more likely, inter-dependently combined to ensure that domestic football has continued to be a manly and physical game. In order to understand why so few English players are now playing Premiership football, it is essential to identify the longer term trends or signposts that have shaped events. If this can be achieved, then the development of English football will become more clearly understood. This thesis has identified not only the extent to which the domestic game has changed but, equally, how much of English football has remained remarkably consistent.

The significance of 'folk football'

A pattern of uniformity, continuity and consistency may be traced to the development of the early forms of 'folk football' that was played in England at least as early as the fourteenth century. The many early references to 'folk football' repeatedly denoted this family of games in terms of aggression and physical excess. Often they appeared to be nothing short of savage brawls which reflected the violent nature of wider society. Physicality and violence were similarly inherent within other sports during this period. Although folk games varied amongst themselves and from one locality to another, brawling and physical violence were commonplace. The violence and excess associated with the early forms of 'folk football' were reflected in the growth in legislation from the fourteenth century onwards which attempted to have football banished from the land.

During the Elizabethan Age football lost none of its ancient vigour and ferocity. It remained a rough and wild game often played by great crowds of virile young men. Whether these men were of the upper or lower classes was almost irrelevant, as irrespective of social class, no quarter was given and none was expected. In 1602, Carew wrote his acclaimed account of 'hurling', a game considered to be close to the Italian game of *calcio*. This early form of 'folk football' was described in terms of its manhood, physicality and athleticism. These cultural traits were to be the founding tenets of 'muscular Christianity'.

As urbanisation and industrialisation gathered momentum during the eighteenth century, leisure activities such as football began to attract widespread opposition. Popular pastimes were considered to restrain industry and prosperity. Nevertheless, attempts to constrain popular pursuits such as football met with active resistance. The culture associated with 'folk football' proved to be remarkably resilient. One reason for this longevity was the intense rivalry that football games created in numerous geographical locations throughout the country. The point I am making here is that English popular culture, in which football played an important part, was able to adapt to both urbanisation and industrialisation. This adaptation characterised the process of development.

The development of Public school football

At the same time that traditional forms of football were being challenged by a new industrial order, the game became revitalised in and by the English public schools. In Chapter 4, I noted that the football played at these schools was an adaptation of the earlier forms of the 'folk' tradition. A number of these schools were riotous institutions noted for open rebellion. These schools provided fertile ground for the early forms of 'folk football' to flourish. Most importantly, the early forms of 'folk football' set a benchmark for the manner in which English public school football was to be played. Public school football reflected the cultural traits that had been formed during previous centuries.

The game became part of a colourful tapestry of class subcultures, wakes, festivals, fairs and 'folk' traditions, a representation of local rivalry and local identity with one village literally 'battling it out' against another. There was no grand design or master plan: the game simply drew upon pre-industrial traditions. Popular culture based upon festivals such as wakes and rituals, with which football was inextricably linked, continued to flourish from the Restoration to the advent of the industrial revolution. English Football was reshaped and reformed by the public schools but not remade by them.

Manliness and 'muscular Christianity'

Equally important to the development of English football was the concept of manliness. In Chapter 4, I noted how, during the Victorian era, the notion of manliness consisted of a variety of forms. In the early Victorian period, for example, manliness was depicted in terms of integrity, earnestness and generosity. During the second half of the nineteenth century, however, manliness as a concept was to change markedly; it began to be associated with hardness, stoicism and endeavour. The notion of 'Christian manliness' became synonymous with a strong body and strength of character. This combative and competitive spirit found expression in public school football. English playing fields witnessed games characterised by bravery, physicality and ruthlessness.

Most importantly, middle class and working class men alike shared a common concern for courage, loyalty and, to a certain extent, Christian ideals. A revised concept of manliness promoted by Kingsley and Hughes related Christian virtue to both moral and physical endeavour. Kingsley's acclamation of muscular Christianity provided a moral basis for organised games. From the 1860's onwards, athleticism as an ideology had a notable impact upon public schools and attained a cult-like status. This revised form of manliness was something which the newly formed working classes could both identify with and adopt in their own particular way. Their adherence to more traditional forms of manliness had not materially changed.

The ethos of athleticism was not bound by the particularities of social class. Between 1860 and 1900, the qualities of individual strength, physical fitness, courage and commitment attained a broad measure of conformity. The importance of physical fitness and athleticism was promoted through public schools and state schools alike. These ideals gave direction and legitimacy to how football was to be played by the emergent industrialised classes, who took up the game in significant numbers as the nineteenth century came to a close.

Working class football

There was, then, a perceptible link between the early forms of 'folk football', the notion of manliness, 'muscular Christianity' and the rise of working class football. In Chapter 5, I noted how important church, chapel and Sunday schools were to the development of working class football clubs during this period. The working classes, nevertheless, brought their own particular set of values to Association Football. Tenets such as toughness, stamina and courage were notable in this respect. Working class football conveyed a distinct source of masculine unity and identity, although working class life was by no means homogenous. Particular towns and cities had their own identities and traditions, forged by the force and persuasion of urban and industrial change.

Working class football continued to be a tough physical game consistent with the qualities promoted by both 'folk football' and 'muscular Christianity'. As I

illustrated in Chapter 6, training sessions held by the early professional working class football teams concentrated upon fitness rather than the development of ball skills. It was muscles and muscularity that were prized by the early professional football clubs, rather than individual or technical skills. Numerous descriptions of footballers in the popular press and football journals of the period testify to the importance of fitness and direct play.

As the twentieth century developed, these qualities were still being promoted and proclaimed. Football clubs concentrated upon physical exercise and quite often, the use of a ball in training sessions was not to feature at all. Following World War Two, the old training methods continued to be passed from one generation to the next. Speed, strength, and tough tackling continued to be the norm. English players were instructed to ‘get stuck in’ and ‘hit ‘em hard’ whereby the virtues of manliness, moral fibre, courage and spirit continued to be acclaimed.

Contemporary Football and the ‘Manly Game’

The emphasis upon a direct and physical game continued to be evident at the national level of English football. As I illustrated in Chapter 7, in 1990 the Football Association contended that football games were won by a limited number of passes being made rather than in a game based upon possession football. This form of direct play, moreover, was said to require a high degree of physical fitness rather than individual technique.

Not only did this particular football philosophy impact upon how the game was played at national level but this emphasis upon the traditional game continued to be influential at club level. Much of English football continued to accentuate power and aggression rather than the development of individual ability or technical skills. This philosophy was consistent with remarks made by a number of professional footballers. The profile of the English player was considered to be very direct and very physical, you were expected to be combative, to be aggressive and to show fight and determination.

During the course of my fieldwork, a number of former players who were now responsible for player development remarked how masculinity was an endemic part of the game, part of the English culture and heritage. Similarly, a senior representative of the Football Association remarked how physicality and the long ball game had characterised the history of English football. There was almost universal agreement from the fieldwork I conducted that the lower you descended through the respective divisions of the Football League, the more physical the game tended to become.

The management at a Premiership football club observed how the English game had continued to emphasise fitness and physique rather than skill development. Again, this view was shared by someone responsible for youth development at a Championship club who noted that, as often as not, work rate and physical fitness are considered to be very much part of a winning mentality. At a Division One Football Club, management remarked how ‘route one’ or direct football was characteristic of the type of game being played in this division of the Football League. At a Division Two football club, the importance attached to fitness and power was similarly expressed. The club manager was looking for strong players who could “put themselves about”. If players had this physicality they did not necessarily need great technique.

The English game was described as being fast or ‘high tempo’. This high level of intensity ensured that player development focused upon physical attributes such as build, height, stamina, speed and strength. A person responsible for player recruitment at a Championship club noted how its players had to be “tough and determined”. They were expected to “do a job for the club” and “put a shift in”. The modern game had become quicker and quicker, and so physical fitness was very important. Indeed, the importance attached to physicality is compounded by the fact that the average tenure of a manager in the Football League is 1.4 years. Football, particularly in the lower divisions of the Football League, was found to be a results-driven business. Many club managers are simply not given the time to focus upon

player development, technical skills and technical ability. It is much easier and quicker to develop improved levels of physical fitness than improved levels of skill.

The importance attached to physicality was evident from the interviews I conducted at player level. The majority of youth team players at a Championship football club regarded fitness and strength as being more important than individual skills or technical ability. If these youth team players were going to make the grade at this particular football club, then they were more likely to need qualities based upon power and strength than individual technique. Again, these players were expected to play the game at a fast pace. 'High tempo' was found to be the way in which youth team football was being both coached and played. If player development is centred upon pace and aggression, then the prospect of many of these players being able to play at Premiership level appear to be very unlikely. Most importantly, it is not that these players are incapable of playing at the highest levels of the game. Rather, it is because many of them, particularly outside the Premiership, are more likely to have been trained to develop physical rather than technical skills.

9.5 Premiership Football and Requisite Skills

The most important quality required to play Premiership football was found to be technical ability. This ability was also essential if English clubs were to be competitive in the Champions League. Physical strength and fitness would only take a player so far. Players required different qualities to play football in different divisions of English football. In general terms, the lower divisions of the Football League were found to be particularly physical. This differentiation was found to restrict the likelihood of lower League players from being able to play in the Premier League.

Indeed, this process was also found to work in reverse. Premiership players who, for whatever reason, had to find another football club at some point in their career, found it extremely difficult to play in the lower divisions of the English game. This was due to the differences in the manner in which the game was being played and also

because Premiership players had a different skill set. In the lower divisions of English football, it was not technical abilities that were required but largely physical qualities. Again, many Premiership clubs now require their players to possess the technical skills that will assist them in being able to compete at the highest levels of the game. If more English players are to play Premiership football, then a far greater number of players will need to develop technical abilities as well as physicality and fitness.

The limited number of English players who were now playing Premiership football was reported to have had a marked impact upon the competitiveness of the national team. This limited representation meant that the national team manager had fewer players to select from. Equally, the experience that English players had of playing in major European tournaments was similarly reduced. Insofar as the Football Association is concerned, it is now imperative that a greater number of 'home-grown players' possessed the same technical abilities developed by players in other football nations

Foreign players were regarded as being technically better than their English counterparts. One Premiership manager noted, for example, how foreign players concentrated upon the development of ball skills whereas English players tended to concentrate upon fitness, pace and physique. There was a general perception that foreign players possessed a greater degree of technical ability than English players. Indeed, the Chairman of one football club noted how: "other cultures appeared to be able to develop better skills". English football has continued to emphasise power and aggression rather than technique. Selection has invariably revolved around strength, height and pace.

English football has been markedly slow to develop a co-ordinated approach to player development. Indeed, the importation of 'foreign talent' is not new to English football. Scottish players were being imported into English football during the 1880s for similar reasons. Early professional English clubs embarked upon a policy of 'importation' rather than upon a policy aimed at developing 'home-grown players.'

Indeed, the majority of players registered to play League football in England during the late 19th century were, in fact, Scottish. These players were regarded as being much more advanced than their English counterparts, especially in the ‘mechanical science’ of the game. During this period, the Scottish national team were very successful in their games against England. Then, as now, there was considerable concern that the competitiveness of the national team was being compromised by the influx of ‘foreign players’. The purchase of ready-made talent from another country effectively stifled native talent. Local talent was being discouraged and the policy of importation was seen to be doing incalculable injury to English football at both club and national level. In more than one hundred and twenty years of English football, many of the problems that presented themselves during the 1880s were similar to some of the issues that exist today. In many respects, English football has remained remarkably consistent.

9.6 A Paradigm Shift

As the twentieth century advanced, the traditional English game became increasingly contested by a technical game borne out of the improvements being made by many foreign football players and foreign football teams alike. The domestic game had been slow to recognise and accept the importance of these changes. A paradigm shift had taken place in the manner in which many foreign countries were now playing football.

Historically, the attitude at national level towards the improvements taking place in continental football was one of indifference. Ironically, many continental teams had been established by the British or by Anglophiles during the early part of the twentieth century. The Football Association was opposed to the idea of foreign players playing English football, as this would have implied that there may have been something wrong with the domestic game. The domestic game, it was believed, had little to learn from ‘Johnnie Foreigner’. Immigration officials were instructed to decline any applications made by foreign players to play football on English soil. Indeed, in 1931 the Football Association instituted a two year residential

qualification which effectively ensured that foreign players could not play football in this country.

In a number of countries, far more rigorous coaching systems were being developed which incorporated both theoretical and technical football skills alike. By contrast, the training methods promoted in English football continued to emphasise physical fitness rather than ball skills. World class players such as Peter Doherty, the former Manchester City F.C. player, had called for 'soccer centres' to be established to instruct specific soccer skills. He insisted that English football should concentrate upon the development of basic soccer skills. Doherty argued that a long term plan to develop organised coaching was urgently required but this was never established. Foreign players became technically better and passed with far greater precision than their English counterparts. The aim of English football was to instil toughness, to be strong and powerful and to deliver long balls to the forwards. The game was tenacious rather than technical, physical rather than tactical.

This insularity and unwillingness to change has had notable consequences. In Chapter 6, I demonstrated how, during the 1950s, a 'paradigm shift' had effectively taken place in terms of how football was being played by numerous competing football nations. The traditional English game was now being challenged by forms of innovation implemented by many foreign nations. This transition was readily exemplified in 1953 when the English national team was comprehensively defeated by the Hungarians 6-3 at Wembley. The game came to represent something more than a football match; Wembley witnessed football history being made. The Hungarians gave a performance that highlighted the inadequacies of the traditional English game.

In response to the inception of European club football competition during the 1950s, numerous English clubs began to implement a number of changes based primarily upon the techniques favoured by top continental coaches and players. Indeed, the changes that these clubs instituted in terms of both the style of play and the development of technical skills, laid the foundation for the national team to deliver

the World Cup in 1966. However, this impetus was effectively lost by a succession of England team managers who persisted in the pursuit of a largely physical style of play. In contrast, numerous European countries including the Dutch, the Spanish, the Italians and the Germans raised the standard of football to a new level.

Following the Treaty of Rome (1978) and the Bosman Ruling (1995), foreign players began to arrive to English football in increasing numbers. In Chapter 7, I noted that, between 1980 and 2010, the Football Association published a number of reports and recommendations that had a marked impact upon the direction and development of English football. At the beginning of this period, these publications recommended a direct game based upon a limited number of passes and a high degree of fitness. Towards the end of this period, the Football Association markedly changed its stance from a traditional to the development of a technical game. This change in policy was a direct result of the impact foreign players and foreign teams was having upon the domestic game.

In 1980, the governing body published *The Football Association Coaching Book of Soccer Tactics and Skills*. The domestic game was not considered to be built upon individual technique or technical ability. The report concluded that some games are based upon technique, whereas soccer was considered to be a game based primarily upon judgement. In 1990, the Football Association produced *The Winning Formula*. This publication recommended a traditional English game based upon a limited number of passes, a form of football referred to as direct play. The report suggested that direct play gave any team, home or abroad, at any level of skill, the best possible chance of winning football matches. The report was critical of possession football. It noted that, when the number of consecutive passes exceeded five, the chances of scoring a goal at the end of the move decrease. The report noted how direct play necessitated a high degree of physical fitness.

By 2010, the Football Association had clearly recognised that English football faced a real crisis. Not only was there a limited number of English players who were playing Premiership football, but this limited representation was also having a

marked impact upon the ability of the national team to compete at international level. The report concluded that English football had to produce English players for the national side who possessed the same technical ability as players in other major football nations. The Football Association recommended a range of measures that attempted to raise the standard of English football. Possession based play, rather than direct play, was now being recommended. Indeed, the appointment of the Italian Fabio Capello as England team manager was a clear illustration of this change in football philosophy. The governing body identified the need to develop a far greater number of English players who possessed the individual or technical skills required to compete at international level. A paradigm shift had effectively been identified and encouraged.

9.7 The Longevity of Working Class Football

Despite the many changes that English football had witnessed, particularly at Premiership level, the manner in which much of English football has been played had remained remarkably unchanged. At the Championship club, for example, football was still considered to be a manly and physical game. The research undertaken at this particular club was an attempt to ascertain whether or not the cultural traits that characterised many of the early working class football clubs could still be identified at this club today. The early industrialised working classes had imbued football with their own particular value-system where toughness, stamina, physical prowess, courage and loyalty were found to be particularly important. In other words, did these traditional working class values continue to shape the manner in which football at this Championship club was being played?

The importance of these values was particularly evident at youth team level. Youth Team Management had definite ideas about the type of player that the club needed either to develop or recruit. The club had a clear working class identity. This was a South London club for local South London players and spectators. The recruitment policy was based upon signing working class players from the locality who could be relied upon to “put a shift in”. Players were expected to give “one hundred per cent”.

They were expected to be tough tackling, strong and aggressive. They needed to give their all for the football club and to show both courage and determination. Players were expected to be courageous and to tackle opponents with strength and vigour. The majority of these players were from working class backgrounds. Football was played at a 'high tempo', and players were expected to battle for the ball. The modern game was considered to have become a lot quicker, which meant that physical fitness was particularly important.

Not surprisingly, in their quest to play professional football, the majority of youth team players regarded fitness and strength as more important than the development of technical skills or technical ability. Again, the majority of these players were very aware that they needed to demonstrate grit, courage and determination. Their approach to the game reflected their approach to everyday life: they had to be tough in order to survive. The traditions at this football club were found to be inter-generational. This consistency and continuity had a notable impact not only upon the manner in which football was being coached and played, but also in terms of the approach the club undertook towards both player recruitment and player development.

A number of supporters, I interviewed, at this football club possessed a similar set of expectations and beliefs. What fans were looking for first and foremost was work-rate rather than individual technique or ability. The crowd wanted to see the players earn their money as they themselves had to. The type of football that the supporters at this football club expected to see reflected traditional working class values such as honesty, commitment, conviction, courage and loyalty. The crowd wished to see a competitive encounter, a spectacle based upon combat and physical aggression. Supporters had clear expectations of the type of player they wanted to 'wear the shirt'. They were not interested in the 'fancy Dan' that sported an Alice band or hair gel. Players were expected to 'die for the shirt', to show commitment and determination. Supporters did not want or expect to see possession-based or counter attack football. This is something they would not put up with and indeed had not paid

to watch. Indeed, the values of the club were noted to be as strong today as they had been in 1885 when the club was founded.

Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which these particular values and beliefs are in any way representative of English football, it is equally true to say that the culture of this football club cannot be considered to be an isolated case; this value structure was representative of other football clubs as well. Football was still considered to be a working-class game. A form of working-class masculinity was considered to be part of the heritage of English football, a tough and physical game for the working classes. Physical strength continued to be highly prized. Football offered many working class lads an escape route, a chance to overcome social and economic deprivation. For the vast majority of youth team players at the Championship club, professional football was all that mattered. To play for the local club gave these players an identity, status and esteem that was clearly absent from the everyday life outside the football club.

9.8 The Absence of a Unified Approach to English Football

There is no general agreement as to how English football should be played. The role of the Football Association has traditionally been advisory. It is not the responsibility of the governing body to decide the manner in which the professional game should be played. Many other countries, in contrast, do have a clear football philosophy. The Football played in both the Netherlands and Spain, for example, may be said to represent an advanced form of technical football. In contrast, the fabric of English football has been built upon work rate and aggression. It is, however, important to note that any defining vision or unified football philosophy identified in other competing nations is based upon a style which has been cultivated at youth level upwards. It is a football philosophy that is bottom up rather than top down. Thus if the Football Association wishes to instil the virtues of technical football into the English game then this change will have to be effected at ‘grass-roots level’ as well as at the elite levels of the game.

There is a considerable amount of diversity in terms of how managers, coaches and players approach the domestic game. Different clubs in each division of the Football League have different ways of playing the game. In many respects, this differentiation may reflect differences in the levels of coaching ability and local character, tradition and custom that still exert a powerful influence within the domestic game. The type of football being played may differ from one manager to another and from one club to another. The emphasis in much of English football has tended to be on results. The manner in which English football is being played is very much open to interpretation.

The style of play or football philosophy is largely determined by the football club and manager alike. As noted earlier, in Holland most football clubs play in a similar way. English football does not have a clearly defined or unified ethos. Moreover, as I concluded in the previous section, differences in the manner in which the game is being played will to a large extent be a reflection of local culture and the demands made by supporters who insist upon a certain type of play and a certain type of player. Unless or until there is a unified football philosophy within English football then there will almost certainly be issues with respect to style of play and player development.

Differences in approach as to how the game was being played were found to exist not only between different clubs but also within the same club at different levels of development. This was very evident from the research I conducted with youth team players at the Championship club. One player, for example, remarked upon how as a nine year old he had been told to 'kick it long', whereas as a fourteen year old he had been told to play possession football. Then, as a fifteen year old, a new coach arrived at the club with a completely different set of ideas and expectations. Without a more co-ordinated approach, player development will continue to be inhibited.

If a more unified football philosophy is to be introduced into English football, then the number of qualified coaches in this country will have to be substantially increased. The shortage of qualified coaches was found to be particularly important

with respect to the number of English players who are able to play Premiership football. The fewer top qualified coaches there are, the fewer 'quality' players will be produced. There is a considerable disparity in the numbers of qualified coaches available to English football compared to the numbers available in other European countries. For example, in 2008, England possessed 115 coaches who possessed the highest standard of coaching badge, the Pro Licence. The comparable figure for France was 118, for Germany 1070, for Italy 512 and for Spain 2,140.

The interviews I conducted at the Division Two football club clearly demonstrate how an agreed football philosophy can have a positive impact upon player development. Despite being in the lowest division of the Football League, club management insisted upon developing players with a high level of individual skill. At the age of seven, for example, players were taught to play with both feet. Management at this football club has been highly successful in developing the skills that are now required by many Premiership clubs. This football club provided a clear illustration of how players who are playing football in the lowest division of English football can benefit from a unified football philosophy. The manager at this football club decided to concentrate upon the development of technical skills based upon a system of player development designed by Weil Coever, a highly respected football coach located in the Netherlands.

The research I conducted at both the Division Two football club and the Premiership club confirmed that both these clubs have been very successful with respect to player development. Whether or not this success is specifically due to the abilities of the respective managers is difficult to say. However, both these clubs concentrate on the development of technical football and individual skills. Both managers clearly recognise that the modern game has changed. It is reasonable to suggest that there is no reason why other football clubs in the other divisions of the Football League cannot emulate their success.

9.9 Conclusion

A principal reason for why there are only a limited number of English players now playing Premiership football is that English football has remained a largely physical and manly game. The domestic game in England has consistently placed a greater emphasis upon masculinity and muscularity rather than upon the development of individual or technical ability. The values, attitudes and beliefs that this type of football have been founded upon have been shown to be remarkably consistent and resilient. Consequently, there is now an insufficient number of English players who are able to play at the elite level of the game. Most importantly, this limitation is a reflection of how English football has been coached and played. It has little to do with capabilities or any willingness or desire of English players to succeed. Neither is this limited representation due to the number of foreign players who are now playing Premiership football; this is a consequence rather than a causal factor.

A number of Premiership clubs now promote a technical rather than a traditional English game. Indeed, this paradigm shift is evident at both club and national levels. This style of play places an emphasis upon individual skills as well as physical fitness. Many foreign players have been imported into Premiership football in the belief that these players have the technical ability to compete at the highest levels of the game. The type of football being played by many Premiership clubs is markedly different from the type of football being played in the lower divisions of the Football League. This paradigm shift is restricting the likelihood of lower league players from being able to play Premiership football. Indeed, despite the myriad changes that have taken place over more than a hundred years of professional football, much of the domestic game has remained remarkably unchanged. Many of the cultural traits that characterised the early professional football clubs are still evident today. The emphasis upon masculinity and physicality, power and aggression, continue to influence the manner in which the game is being played. These cultural constraints continue to have a material impact upon 'home grown talent' and player development.

In contrast to other football nations, there is no unified football philosophy within English football. Whether or not this cultural diversity may be considered to be beneficial depends very much upon the objectives being set at either club or national level. As I noted earlier in this chapter, both traditional and technical forms of football are ends in themselves, both are equally valid. Nevertheless, choices have to be made. If more English players are to realise their true potential then the standard of the English game will have to be raised. Until this condition is realised then the influx of foreign players now playing Premiership football is likely to continue.

9.10 Further Research Areas

The limited prospects of many English players being able to play at the highest levels of the game have raised a number of other important issues. For example, there would appear to be very limited or restricted player mobility between lower league football clubs and Premiership clubs. English players are more likely to be transferred between clubs in the same divisions of English football rather than from one division to another. Not only does this suggest an abject waste of potential but it also may be an important factor in explaining why so many English clubs are now going into administration. Historically, top English clubs recruited players from the lower divisions of the English game. Today this income stream generated from the transfer market has virtually disappeared. At the elite level of English football, the transfer market is dominated by foreign players. For many lower league clubs the emphasis is upon results and survival rather than player development or technical ability. Much more research into this area of study is urgently required.

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