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EDUCATION AS A VERZUILING PHENOMENON

Public and independent education
in the Netherlands

by

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Introduction

In the summer of 1984 the Vereniging voor Openbaar Onderwijs (Society for Public Education, an organisation of parents), published a study entitled *The New School struggle* (1). Authors of the book analysed the major debates of the last decade concerning education, and concluded that, after a 50-year period of relative stability in the relationship between private and public education, advocates for the private sector again felt the need to defend the right to their education, and in this way polarised and paralysed each debate on education-policy.

They did not forget to mention that the renewed offensive on the part of the confessionals (in the Netherlands, like in most Western European countries, private education is nearly always denominational education) provoked counter attacks from the other side.(2) Their own study contributed to a clarification of the stand taken in various debates by those in favour of public education.

The issue of the school controversy occasionally appears on the front pages of the national newspapers. Many conflicts between adherents of both sectors, however, never reach the national newspapers. Most of the conflicts involved in the new school struggle take place at the local level, where both sides try to maintain control over their elementary schools. Hence we find that on the one hand those involved in education policy making note a revival of the school struggle, while on the other hand the question of the relation between private and public education has a relatively low profile in the general political debate.

The situation is very different in France where in the spring of 1984 the debate on the 'ecole privee' developed from a political issue involving only those in the peak organisations of both the private and the public sector, into an acute political conflict in which those directly involved in private education (parents, teachers) in particular, protested en masse against the government proposal aiming at a stronger integration of the private and the public sector.

Whereas in France we can speak of "la guerre scolaire", in the Netherlands we speak only of a silent school struggle.

How can we explain the fact that the conflict takes such a different form in the Netherlands, compared with France?
Among other factors, the present position of the private sector certainly is a factor that influences the form the school struggle takes.

In the Netherlands the private sector has a much stronger position than it has in France. This is for example made clear by the fact that denominational schools accounted for 64.6% of the pupils in elementary education in 1980 (the figure had been over 70 in the nineteen fifties and nineteen sixties), while in France only about 16% (1984) of the children attended private schools.

Another sign of the strong position of the private sector is that private education has been fully financed by the state for a long time (since 1917), while in France this has been the case only since 1959. The system of financing is also much better administratively secured. Moreover the principle of full financial compensation for private education has equally long been supported by all major political parties. From the moment the principle was introduced it has never been contested.

Most important of all, however, is the position of private denominational education in the overall social structure.(3) In France the debate about private versus public education cuts right across the major social cleavage, the division between right and left. At the political and social level French Catholics have never been organised on the basis of their being-catholic.

The position of denominational education in the Netherlands though is a very different. Here the dividing lines in the education sector, between public and private education in the first place and between Catholic and Protestant education in the second place, run parallel to the dividing lines in many other spheres. Organisation along religious dividing lines was from the beginning of this century the most conspicuous feature of Dutch society, not only because the Confessionals attained such a strong position, and because the division was so rigid, but also because this segmentation affected nearly all spheres of social life. The process resulting in this specific mode of social organisation was called verzuiling.

Contrary to the French situation there was nothing strange about the existence of a private, denominational, education sector next to the public sector. Characteristic of the way social life was organised in the Netherlands was that private (confessional) organisations held the right to provide as much as possible for the needs of their own group, receiving financial assistance by the state. In fact, in the course of the century, with the increase of verzuiling, many executive tasks of the government were relegated to private bodies who were then entitled to full financial compensation by the state in accomplishing these tasks.

Taking this into consideration it does not seem very likely that the (material) right to private education to exist will be denied by anyone. The lack of a serious threat to private education can partly explain why the school issue does not arouse so many emotions among the public as it does in France.

In this paper I will concentrate on the way private education is embedded in this social structure of vertical segmentation which we have

called *verzuiling*, because this seems to be one of the main factors peculiar to the Dutch education system.

Considerable attention will therefore be paid to the development of the *verzuiling* phenomenon in general.

The chapters of which this paper consists are written as a historical and sociological background to my current research on *verzuiling* of the education system. Hence they neither contain results of own research, as this has not been finished yet, nor do they include a kind of research-design. Their main purpose is to review the literature on *verzuiling* and in particular on *verzuiling* of the education system, to develop an insight in the historical and social factors that played a part in the development of the education system, and that may be useful to interpret the results of my own analysis.

I start in chapter one with a discussion of the concept of *verzuiling*, trying to remove the theoretical confusion surrounding the concept.

In chapter two I examine the political situation preceding the development of *verzuiling*. Although *verzuiling* originates in the last decade of the 19th century some of its origins are to be found in the historic processes of nation building, mass mobilisation and the formation of mass political parties in the second half of the last century. The school controversy played an important part in this period, and will be dealt with extensively in this paper.

In chapter three I discuss how the *verzuiling* slowly penetrated all sectors of Dutch society. The *verzuiling* did not only bring together groups of people in highly segregated sub-cultural organisational blocks and social environments, but also provided an important structure through which governmental tasks were increasingly put into effect. One of the clearest examples of both aspects of the *verzuiling* process could be found in the school system.

Secondly I will examine the process of *ontzuiling* (de-pillarization, *Entsäulung*). Although the 1950's saw the first strong opposition to the structure of *verzuiling*, the reverse tendency only gained momentum in the nineteen-sixties. At this point we have to pose such questions as: why did the *ontzuiling* process become dominant in precisely this period? Which factors gave rise to it? Did it affect all sectors of society and if so, did it affect them at the same rate? To what extent did the *ontzuiling* process influence the school system, and how did the *verzuilde* organisations in the education field, both at the local level and the national level, react to this?

I will finish this chapter paper with some concluding notes.

Notes to Introduction

- 1) F. van Schoten and H. Wansink, *De nieuwe schoolstrijd; Knelpunten en conflicten in de hedendaagse onderwijspolitiek*, Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1984.
- 2) The term Confessionals is used to refer to all people belonging to a church.
- 3) I use the terms denominational education and denominational schools to refer to education/schools with a religious identity. There are two main types of denominational schools in the Netherlands: Catholic and Protestant ones. The latter are not usually attached to a specific strand in Protestantism. Only some Orthodox Calvinists, belonging to a particular, very orthodox part of their church, do sometimes found their own schools.

CHAPTER ONE

VERZUILING AS A POLITICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL
CONCEPT

For a considerable period of time Dutch society was verzuild. This is common knowledge not only among Dutch social scientists but also among the public at large. The term has become so frequent in common parlance over the last thirty years that many scholars take the phenomenon for granted, without trying to understand it and without paying attention to its development. Verzuiling is considered to be just a feature peculiar to Dutch society, the concept referring to the strong vertical segmentation along (religious) ideological dividing lines of all sectors of societal life.

Generally the phenomenon is said to have dominated society from 1870 to 1960. During the greater part of this period, up to about 1950, the concept of verzuiling did not exist though. The majority of Dutch people lived their lives within verzuilde social and political structures, and did not recognize this phenomenon as a social construct. Most of them considered it natural to belong to a Catholic trade union or to go to a Protestant school. Among intellectuals though, there existed an earlier awareness of the fact that the verzuiling was a historical (thus changeable) organisation of social and political life, and this awareness became more manifest after World War II when some of the Catholic and Orthodox protestant intellectuals became member of the newly formed social democratic party. However, the academic discussion on the phenomenon that Dutch society was divided into strongly from each other segregated groups, started only in the second half of the 1950's, probably as a result of the Bishop's Charge of 1954, which statedg that Catholics who joined a Socialist labour union risked ex-communication.

The debate was initiated by J.P. Kruyt and J.A.A. van Doorn in the journals *De Sociologische Gids* and *Socialisme en Democratie*.(1)

In the first wave of literature on verzuiling the different contributions often had ideological connotations.(2) Either the author thought verzuiling an outdated inefficient and expensive mode of organising social functions (3), or the author defended verzuiling as an efficient means of integrating individuals into larger social groups, and of integrating these groups into the Dutch nation. The call for a more objective and less

objective and less ideological approach to the study of verzuiling came from Social Democratic scholars, who found themselves in the contradictory position of having to defend verzuiling because of its integrating function, and of being at the same time members of the PvdA, the (Social Democratic) party that since World War II had tried to abolish the structure of verzuiling at the political level, i.e. in the party-system and government. From then on scholars have sought to explain rather than to defend or oppose verzuiling in ideological terms.

Their first publications showed the strong influence of functionalism and structuralism. Verzuiling was defined as a specific structure of society, which served the purpose of providing a system of social control. The sociologist Van Doorn was one of the scholars who took this approach. His definition ran as follows:

'Verzuiling was the process in which various ideologically defined groups present in society, were included in mainly organisational social control systems in which tendencies of organisation to outgrow ideological values and of ideological justification of organisational control were present.'(4)

In the course of the debate on verzuiling several difficulties with this definition became apparent.

Firstly, although many authors considered verzuiling to be a highly specific social phenomenon, existing only in the Netherlands, this specificity did not appear in the definition. The problem lay mainly in the term ideological, because by making use of this general term the peculiarity of the Dutch situation was overlooked, namely that vertical segmentation had taken place along religious dividing-lines. As formulated by Van Doorn, the concept of verzuiling could also refer to the formation of a set of organisations with a particular socio-economic ideology, or one which was based on a nationalistic ideology. Consequently it was theoretically impossible to distinguish between zuilen, i.e. population groups formed on the basis of common religious ideas, and classes, i.e. population groups organised on the basis of a common position in the production process.

A second difficulty arose from the last part of the definition where the social control function of the verzuiling was mentioned. This social control system was simply said to exist, but Van Doorn gave neither an indication of the origin of this control system, nor did he specify for whose benefit it was created. Who were the people having control in this system and which people were being controlled? In other words, who were the agents of the verzuiling? According to Van Doorn the integrative function of the verzuiling explained its existence.

The definitions given by Van Doorn and Kruyt (5) were for some time the starting point for almost every study on verzuiling. In this first period it were mainly sociologists who showed an interest in this area.

A second wave of studies on verzuiling began after 1969. In this year Lijphart published his book 'The politics of accomodation'(6) in which he posed a connection between the existence of segmented pluralism in the Netherlands (7) and a specific type of parliamentary democracy, what he called the consociational democracy. In Lijphart's analysis the segmented

social system was the starting point, the independent variable. The specific mode of decision-making at governmental level was the variable that had to be explained.

Criticism of Lijphart's theory was two-fold. Firstly his explanation of the origin of the consociational democracy was criticised.(8) Secondly Lijphart was criticised for taking *verzuiling* as an a priori. On this point his study did not go beyond description. According to his critics he had taken *verzuiling* as a 'natural' feature of Dutch society. They stressed the need to look for explanations of the origin of the *verzuiling*. The latter criticism was mainly made by left wing political scientists who started to write on the issue of *verzuiling* only at the end of the 1970's. They argued that the *verzuiling* did not simply arise as the result of a strategy of the churches to keep their members completely within their influence (9), or as the result of a strategy of the political parties to be sure of their electorate (10), but as the unplanned outcome of the conflicts between various factions in the elite about the question of how the expanding labour force was going to be incorporated in the modern nation-state.

A fundamental difference between the scholars of this group and the sociologists of the 1950's was that, where the latter defined *verzuiling* as a social structure, the former understood *verzuiling* as the temporary outcome of a historical process in which several forces opposed each other. They were of the opinion that during the entire century tendencies towards both *verzuiling* as well as towards *ontzuiling* existed. Until about 1960 the first tendency in their view was dominant, thereafter *ontzuiling* tendencies became stronger.

This point was most strongly made by Stuurman, who recently published an in-depth study on the origin of *verzuiling* in the Netherlands (11). According to him the origin of *verzuiling* lay in the process of modernisation of the nation-state. The main problem to be faced in this transformation process was the so-called social question, the incorporation of the masses into the national state. Basically this problem fell into three parts. Firstly, changes in the production process required a restructuring of the relation between capital and labour. Secondly, the relation between the sexes, having its central focus in the family, had to be adapted to the rapid socio-economic developments. Thirdly, the state had to become more democratic to maintain its legitimacy. In the struggle over the form these restructuring and modernisation processes were to take there were several opposing forces, among these the Confessional elites, who ultimately emerged victorious.

In the Netherlands the class struggle was partly waged in an indirect way since it was not the ideologies of the Liberal class and the labour movement which opposed each other. Instead of this the opposition of the labour force to the Liberal class took the form of a conflict between the Confessional forces and the anti-Confessional forces. To understand this, one must bear in mind that religious divisions had played an important part in Dutch society for centuries. Apart from the opposition between Catholics and Protestants, differences of interpretation had always persisted within the Dutch Reformed Church, resulting, during the course of the 19th century, in a split between an orthodox group and a latitudinarian group. The orthodox

group became one of the major forces contributing to the origin of verzuiling. In much the same way as it came to dominate the economic and political system, religious ideology influenced the relation between the sexes, i.e. public morality, as well.

Hence the churches, the labour movement and the Liberal bourgeoisie were the protagonists in the restructuring of socio-economic relations, which was necessary because of rapid changes at the economic level. In the period 1900-1920 the confessional ideology became firmly established as the dominant one. Consequently the formation of organisations (political parties, labour unions, schools etc.) took place more and more along religious dividing lines. To obtain a precise understanding of this process one has to examine the concrete developments at the local, regional and national level.

Verzuiling was an overall social process. But how was verzuiling linked to the development of the elementary school system?

Two moments of articulation, which will be more fully discussed in the next chapter, were clear.

The first moment occurred in the school controversy, which played such an important role in the political scene in the second half of the last century. In the struggle for full state recognition of independent schools, (12) some of the cleavages which by the turn of this century were deeply entrenched in Dutch society, developed. It was on precisely this issue that the Orthodox Protestants formed the first mass movement and somewhat later the first political party. By doing so the first verzuilde organisations were created, and this triggered off a process of organisation and counter-organisation which eventually resulted in a thorough segmentation of the whole society. In chapter two, where the developments of this period of first mass political events is examined, the question will be raised whether this issue was so important to the Orthodox Protestant group that it provided them with the possibility of organising a mass movement, or whether it gained such prominence because it was manipulated by political entrepreneurs who saw it as an opportunity to form a modern mass political party and sought a solid base to recruit (part of) these masses.

Secondly the concept of verzuiling had to be discussed to understand better why the education system formed such an important part of this specific socio-political structure. We will see not only that the school system was the sector of society (with the political system) in which verzuiling developed strongest, but also that verzuiling of the school system was essential for transmitting the religious ideologies necessary to ensure the continued existence of the whole structure.(13) But before examining the actual historical process of verzuiling we pay attention to the political and social situation preceding and resulting in its development.

Notes to Chapter one

- 1) J.P. Kruyt, Sociologische beschouwingen over de zuilen en verzuiling, from: Socialisme en Democratie, 12 (1957), p. 11-30.
J.J.A. van Doorn, Verzuiling, een eigentijds systeem van sociale controle, from: De Sociologische Gids, Third vol. (1956), p.41-49.
- 2) J.J. Gielen's 'Pacifiatie en de zuilen', Meppel, 1956 is the most extreme example of this ideologically charged approach.
- 3) For example: S. Miedema, De kosten van de verzuiling, from: Socialisme en Democratie 12 (1957), p. 47-58.
- 4) J.J.A. van Doorn, 1956, p.42.
- 5) See note 1).
- 6) A. Lijphart, The politics of accomodation; pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands, Berkely/Los Angeles, 1968.
- 7) Lijphart used the concept of zuil in an extremely wide sense; it meant hardly more than 'population group'. A. Lijphart, 1968, p. 1: 'Deep religious and class divisions separate distinct, isolated and self-contained population groups.'
- 8) One of his major critics in the same discipline was R. Steiniger, who argued that the origin of the consociational democracy should not be sought in elite-behaviour, but in the situation of 'unclarified majority' in which the party-system found itself; R. Steiniger, Polarisierung und Integration, eine vergleichende Untersuchung der strukturelle Versäulung der Gesellschaft in den Niederlanden und in Österreich, Meisenheim am Glan, 1975.
- 9) This argument is put forward by J.M.G. Thurlings in 'De wankele zuil', 1971.
- 10) This is Steiniger's central hypothesis. R. Steiniger, 1975.
- 11) S. Stuurman, Verzuiling, Kapitalisme en Patiarchaat, Nijmegen, 1983.
- 12) Although I used the term 'private education' in the introduction, since this is the term most commonly found in literature on the relationship between education provided by the state and education provided by private bodies, in casu private bodies with a religious identity, I prefer, when speaking about the Netherlands to make use of the term independent education. Throughout this paper I will speak of independent schools to distinguish between schools founded by private bodies and those whose direct authority is in the hands of national or local government (the so-called public schools). I prefer the term independent school to the term private school because the latter has the connotation of being (partly) paid for by private persons/institutions. The feature of the Dutch education system is that the direct authority of non-public schools falls to private persons while they are fully financed by the national government. To stress this particular arrangement the term independent education will be used throughout the remaining part of this paper.
- 13) So far I have used the Dutch term of verzuiling and I will continue to do so throughout this paper. In the relevant literature both translations into English (pillarization, pillar) as well as translations into German (Versäulung, Säul) were used. I preferred to

retain the Dutch terms for three reasons. Firstly the concepts were developed in the context of Dutch society. Secondly the structure of *verzuiling* was generally said to be more strongly developed in the Netherlands than in any other country. Thirdly, because the Dutch terms were to a certain degree already diffused in scientific literature in the English language. I will, however, translate all quotations from Dutch sources into English, risking possible reduction of meaning and authenticity for the sake of readability.

CHAPTER TWO

NATION-BUILDING, MASS MOBILISATION AND THE

SCHOOL STRUGGLE IN THE LAST CENTURY

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on the school struggle as it took place in the last century, mainly from 1850 onwards, and on the macro-social processes in which the school struggle was embedded.

Initiative to the study of phenomena like nation-building and mass mobilisation at theoretical level have been given by the 'school' of Stein Rokkan. (1) They did some empirical research on Norway as well. Concerning the Netherlands however it was Daalder who published some important articles on the general processes of opposition formation and *verzuiling*. (2)

Verzuiling, as a process in which organisation and religious ideology became more and more interwoven, did not gain momentum before the last decade of the 19th century. Stuurman saw the period 1848-1895 as follows: from 1848 until 1870 there were only very few signs of *verzuiling*, whereas the period 1870-1895 saw some tendencies towards *verzuiling* but only on the part of orthodox Protestants. The political party of the Orthodox Protestants, the *Anti Revolutionaire Partij*, was founded in 1879 and even prior to this from within these circles a mass movement had risen on the issue of independent schools. In the 25 years after 1895 the number of organisations increased enormously within all the major sections of the population: both the Socialists and the Confessionals extended their organisational network, at the political level and in other social domains.

Stuurman refuted the view of many authors that *verzuiling* resulted from a deepening of long existing religious cleavages. The notion of the

existence of a deepening conflict between Catholics and Protestants was explicitly at the base of the emancipation hypothesis.(3)

In his opinion it was not the sharp division between various religious ideologies but the fact that these ideologies appeared useful, although in an adapted form, in a period which required a restructuring of the social structure, which created the *verzuiling*.

Thus the *verzuiling* did not originate out of religious cleavages, but religious cleavages were used in the social transformations resulting from industrialisation, urbanisation and growing mobilization.

Moreover, the notion of deepening ideological/religious cleavages during the 19th century presupposed a linearity in the formation of oppositions which historically did not exist. On the contrary, in this period the dividing lines were fluid, changing with the political issues at stake. Once the processes of mass mobilization, mass organisation and the formation of mass political parties got under way, the potential oppositions were manipulated and used by leaders of political parties and other elites to delineate the group from which to recruit their followers.(4)

Only in this period, starting in the Netherlands at about 1890 if we leave the developments in Orthodox Protestant circles aside, cleavages became fixed, because they now resulted in the creation of organisational networks. In this way the major cleavages existing at that time strongly influenced the structure of the party system which came into being.

Contrary to the Norwegian case analysed by Rokkan in his 1966-article (5), in the Netherlands there were not two distinct waves of mass mobilisation (except for the relatively early founding of the ARP), the first along cultural/territorial lines and the second along the class-division. Here the organisational efforts along religious lines and the organisational efforts along class lines were two sides of the same issue, which was incorporation of the working class into the modern nation-state. The result was a particular party system, in which the confessional parties played a crucial part, because they attracted a large part of the working class voters and held for a long period (1918-1967) a majority position in parliament.

Hence it were not always the oppositions which held the population most deeply divided that determined the boundary lines of the organisational segmentation, but the oppositions which were politically relevant at the time organisational networks developed.

In the following sections I will deal in more detail with the various potential oppositions which existed in the 19th century. It is important to do so since these oppositions were mainly based on different conceptions about the character of the modern nation-state. A fundamental issue in the formation of the modern Dutch nation was the state-church relation, apart from the other issue of the organisation of the working class. The latter question did not become urgent before the end of the century, as industrialisation only really started at that time. But when it came to the fore it soon overshadowed the first issue. The problem of state-church

relations was most explicitly expressed in the struggle over denominational education. When it was recognised in principle that denominational schools had a right to state-subsidization the so-called social question gained more importance and the focus of attention at the political level shifted towards the issues of full suffrage and the organisation of the working class. Since the school struggle formed mainly part of the power struggle between church and state, I will concentrate on the oppositions which were important in that respect, leaving the opposition between Socialist movement and bourgeoisie relatively underexposed as this opposition deepened only after the school struggle had reached its peak.

2.2. Development of oppositions which were of importance in the nation-building process (6)

2.2.1. Catholics versus Protestants

The Dutch nation is thought by many to have always been a typically Protestant nation. Apart from being untrue historically, it sheds little light on the present state of affairs with Catholics constituting one third of the Dutch population.

In the 16th century the majority of the population still adhered to the Catholic religion. The present boundary between predominantly Protestant provinces in the North and the predominantly Catholic southern provinces did not exist at that time. Only the conquest of the southern provinces by Spain resulted finally in a preponderance of the Catholic church in the South, and a dominant position of the Protestant church in the North. This geographical distribution was never absolute though.

The role of the Protestants, however, in the war against Spain (waged throughout a large part of the 16th and 17th century) eventually led to the recognition of the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church as the official religion in each of the seven provinces constituting the Republic. The fact that the provinces in which the Catholic population was concentrated was granted the status of a semi colony strengthened resentment among Catholics.

At the same time the Catholic hierarchy had been dissolved and the Vatican regarded the Netherlands as a missionary territory until 1908. As long as the Republic of the Seven United Provinces existed it was forbidden for Catholics to hold their own church services. Therefore the mainstream of Catholics isolated themselves in the small local circle of co-religionists, where they found refuge against discrimination by other groups. They were, generally speaking, very cautious in their contacts with the outside world. In particular the Catholics living in the religiously heterogeneous areas of the North and the West of the country remained for a long time aware of their suppressed position. This discouraged them from political activities which might have aroused anti-Catholic reactions.

But there existed a more pragmatic tendency as well among the Catholic population. These people belonged, for the most part, to the bourgeois stratum of society. They were in favour of a pragmatic approach to the other population groups. Ideologically this group was more oriented towards the new liberal-democratic conceptions of society.

In the long run the new secular ideologies gained a stronger influence among Catholics than the traditional, orthodox ideas of the isolationists. This opened up the way in the 19th century to a strengthening of Catholic power by means of an alliance with the liberals.

As a result of the revolutionary events and the founding of the Bataafse Republic in 1795, civic equality of all citizens came to be officially recognised. It was proclaimed that 'there cannot and will not be tolerated a privileged or dominant church in the Netherlands'.(7) The Dutch Reformed Church lost its authority with respect to marriage, poor relief and education. Its dominance gave way to an explicit acceptance of the principle of religious diversity. Catholics, Jews and non Calvinist Protestants were no longer formally excluded from administrative functions.

However, social equality of the Catholics was still very far away. To improve their position in society many Catholics saw the democratic ideals of the Liberals as a solution, just as before 1795 they had turned to the Liberal ideology of the Patriots.

In 1848, under the influence of the international revolutionary climate, a temporary political crisis developed. But in the Netherlands it was clearly too early for a democratic, socialist, development. A serious revolutionary threat did not exist there.

Because of the events of 1848 however, the Liberal statesman Thorbecke and his followers were able to carry out major constitutional reforms, for which they received the support of the Liberal Catholics. Taking into account their weak social position and their still weak religious position (the Hierarchy was not yet restored) an alliance with the Liberals seemed to be the best option for the Catholics at that time. Under the new Constitution, churches were free to create their own internal organisation and this allowed for the possibility of re-establishing the Hierarchy. Apart from this, the constitution guaranteed the right of any group in society to organise its own education, and this then seemed the best way for the Catholics to defend themselves against the generally Protestant character of the existing state-schools.

In 1853 the Catholic Hierarchy was indeed re-established, but this did not take place without arousing strong opposition on the part of the Orthodox Protestants and Conservatives, the latter still maintaining a strong position in the state-apparatus, despite the Liberal 'victory' of 1848. But in the years following the April-movement of 1853 (against re-establishment of the Catholic Hierarchy) the Conservative faction was no longer able to retain its strong position, and this meant to the Catholics that the gains of 1848 were no longer seriously threatened.

In the light of the weakening power-position of the Conservatives, however, the significance of the separation of state and church (implied in

the constitutional reforms of 1848) changed. From being initially a protection against the Protestants, the Liberal character of the state became increasingly problematic for the Catholics, because it reduced their own status to that of a private group in society. A break with the political position of the past came in 1868 when the Bishops strongly condemned the neutral character of the education provided by the state. Thus they turned against the Liberals. From then on there existed a true 'catholic party', distinct from the Liberals, and this Catholic party would in the course of the school struggle find its new allies: the Orthodox Protestants. In 1888 both these groups constituted the first coalition-cabinet in Dutch history. But the relation between Catholics and Protestants remained uneasy for a long time, partly because of anti-catholic sentiments among the Orthodox Protestants, partly because of fear on the side of the Catholics of the Orthodox Protestants who had so vehemently opposed re-establishment of the Hierarchy.

Despite the fact that since 1868 they had had a clear position as Catholics in parliament, within Catholic circles there had not been a strongly felt need to form a mass political party. One of the reasons for the absence of a political or social movement (as we will see the role of the Catholics in the school struggle was also relatively restricted) was the strong, hierarchical church organisation, which did not permit many activities by the lay Catholics, either in church matters or in more secular activities.

Another reason was the lack of agreement among the Catholic elite. Despite a swing to the protestant side, which was imposed by the church, Liberal tendencies continued to exist among the Catholics.

Finally political organisation was not so important to the Catholics because they could always be sure of the constituencies in the southern provinces which were homogeneously Catholic. Several attempts to form a true political party led to nothing because of two obstacles to the formation of a Catholic party. On the one hand there was the problem of the relation between party and the Episcopate. This was 'solved' for a short while when the Archbishop of Utrecht forbade the founding of a Catholic political party, following the Papal encyclical letter of 1901. On the other hand there was the question of the relation with the Orthodox Protestants. Should there be narrow cooperation between the two groupings, or a greater distance, even opposition? Because of these and other problems, the first Catholic political party was founded only in 1922.

2.2.2 Orthodox and Latitudinarian Protestants

Since the 17th century the Dutch Reformed Church was the dominant church, but it never got the status of State Church, comparable with the Church of England for example. State and church stood in an uneasy relation to each other in the Netherlands. In the course of this and the following

centuries two different tendencies developed within the Dutch Reformed Church.

On the one hand there were the ruling regents for whom public order and worldly government were much more important than dogmas. They used the Reformed Church as an instrument of power. To do so was possible because they controlled nominations, through which they could restrict the influence of more orthodox calvinists clergy-men.

On the other hand there was a group of Orthodox Calvinists, who disliked the established power position of the church and condemned the fact that the regents increasingly held a rationalistic standpoint on religion. Stuurman reminded us that this movement had its largest following among the lower socio-economic strata, in particular among sections of the rural population.

In the Constitution of 1815 the separation of church and state was one of the basic juridical principles. But the de-facto situation was still different, as for example shown by the Church Order of 1816, stating that the government had ultimate control over the organisation of Church Rule. This was a victory of the Latitudinarians over the adherents of the Orthodox Protestant views. Advancement of christian virtues, maintenance of order and unity, and loyalty to the king and the nation were the contents of their enlightened religion.(8) This could not but evoke counter-reactions from the traditionalists.

The Reveil (1823) was the first opposition movement. It consisted of intellectuals who were against these "enlightened" views on religion and christianity, and against the growing emphasis on reason instead of on confession. They wanted a return to a traditional personal orthodox belief.

A second movement was the Afscheiding- (Secession-)movement of 1834. Contrary to the Reveil movement their followers were mainly found among lower income groups, and this gave the movement a specific cararacter. It was not only an expression of resistence of Orthodox Protestants against Latitudinarian Protestants but at the same time a protest of powerless lower income groups against the powerful bougeoisie.

After 1850 three different strands of orthodoxy developed. The most important of those was represented by A. Kuyper, who was opposed to any weakening of the dogmas. According to Kuyper it was not the national organisation of the Dutch Reformed Church which formed the basis of religion but the small congregations of orthodox believers. Eventually in 1886 following his lead, there was a break with the Dutch Reformed Church and a new church, the Gereformeerde kerken, was established in 1892.(9)

At the basis of this secession there was not only a religious conflict, but also a different view on the relation between state and church. Kuyper neither accepted the Liberal doctrine that religion was a private matter, nor did he accept the notion of the state as an instrument of the church, nor did he accept government control over religious matters.

In his opinion the Liberal state had to be transformed into a state with a positive christian character through defeat of the neutral forces by the Orthodox Calvinists. Only through organisation, which simultaneously brought about isolation and outside action, could the state be won. This conception of the duty of true christians explained why Kuyper was the first

one to be able to mobilize a mass movement, and somewhat later to found the first national mass political party, the Anti Revolutionaire Partij (ARP).

The Dutch Reformed Church remained the largest Protestant church but experienced increasing internal rivalry between latitudinarian and orthodox groups. In the political system this was expressed by the fact that the members of this church never, as a whole, supported a confessional party. After World War II the Social Democratic party (PvdA) always counted among their voters many members of the Dutch Reformed Church.

But Kuyper could not avoid a split within the Orthodox Calvinist grouping either, although this took place only at the political level.

First of all some of the Orthodox Protestants organised a number of rival leagues to the ARP. The main reason for doing so was their dissatisfaction with Kuyper's policy of trying to get as many votes from the Catholic side as possible, as expressed in the notion of the anti-thesis (the doctrine of the anti-thesis was the ideology behind Kuyper's strategy of organised action to defeat the anti-christian forces in society and the state). In the background, however, discontent about the dominant position of the followers of the Gereformeerde Kerken, compared to the members of the Dutch Reformed Church, within the ARP, also played a role.

Secondly the struggle over the extension of the suffrage brought about conflicts, not only within the Orthodox Calvinist party as we will see later. Kuyper was (at that time) strongly in favour of extension of the suffrage. This was not surprising considering the fact that the ARP recruited its voters largely from the lower-middle and lower socio-economic classes, which were still partly excluded from the elections because of the high census. De Savornin Lohman, one of the ARP parliamentarians, was strongly opposed to enlargement of the electorate. The fact that of the 25 parliamentarians who eventually left the ARP 17 belonged to the nobility or the patriciate showed that in this conflict a class-element was clearly present(10).

2.2.3. Liberals versus Conservatives

The first liberal tendencies arose in the course of the 18th century. Just before abolition of the Republic of the Seven United Provinces (1795) there existed a strong democratic opposition (of the so-called Patriots) to the increasingly oligarchical rule in the Republic. At first this tendency seemed to be strengthened by the developments after the French invasion. But after the turn of the century the Democrats lost their position of power and conservative forces became dominant again. The new Kingdom, instituted in 1813, at the end of the French domination, brought about the same oligarchical form of rule as before 1795.

In 1814 a new constitution was passed, which was again adapted in 1815 because of the inclusion of Belgium into the kingdom. This new constitution included, as has been mentioned, many principles which had been valid in the past. The king held almost absolute power, but this formed at least a counter-balance to the particularist oligarchical forces.

The opposition between autocratic rule of the king and the ideal of a more democratic state-form was the major issue of conflict between Conservatives and Liberals.

A second issue at stake was the relation between state and church. The separation of both institutions was indeed formally laid down in the new constitution but in practice the two were still intertwined because the state kept its final say in the organisation of Church Rule. This state regulation of the dominant (Dutch Reformed) church deepened the division between (Protestant) Conservatives on the one hand, who supported the idea of a Dutch nation with a general christian character and Liberals on the other hand, who wanted the state to be strictly neutral. In their vision of a national state there was little room for a dominant (semi-) state church.

Under the influence of the revolutionary events abroad (1848) the constitution underwent important changes in a Liberal direction, which hitherto had seemed to be impossible. As late as 1844 the king had resisted demands by members of the Lower House (among them was Thorbecke, the subsequent Liberal Cabinet-leader) for the introduction of fully-fledged ministerial responsibility and a directly elected Lower House. Refusal to make fundamental constitutional changes was possible because the Liberals were numerically weak and did not possess an organised mass following, neither among the lower class nor among the middle class.

The revolutionary upheavals in France and Germany coincided with a period of economic depression in the Netherlands. These two factors created, for fear of social unrest, a temporary political crisis, which made the King suddenly willing to make major constitutional reforms. (11)

Despite the Liberal character of the new constitution the Liberals did not maintain their position of power after 1848. The events of 1853 brought a continuation of the opposition between Conservatives and Liberals to light. Apparently the (Protestant) Conservatives won a victory over the Liberals by overthrowing the Thorbecke-regime. But this victory was not a lasting one as the Conservatives were not able to offer a real alternative. The Conservative 'party' relied on its position of power from the past, and it did not formulate a coherent political programme to solve the problems which presented themselves in the processes of societal transformations and nation-building. Their conception of the nation as a general Protestant christian nation could not be reconciled with the position of the Catholics and other, non-protestant denominations, it even met increasing resistance by the Orthodox Protestants as well.

The Conservatives also did not understand that, standing on the threshold of a period of great social change, which would bring along with it the political activation of the masses, it was impossible to undo the political results of 1848.

The events of 1856 surrounding the reformation of the Educational Law resulted in the political defeat of the Conservatives. The separation of church and state had been successfully defended (see section 2.3). During the period 1848-1857 the Conservatives became more and more isolated. A political Conservative party did not come into being. The masses of the political centre and right, which in many countries were captured by broad Conservative parties, voted in the Netherlands on a large scale for the confessional parties. Consequently after the elections of 1871 the Conservatives rapidly lost importance.

The Liberals, on the contrary, maintained their strong position in parliament in this period. Until the end of the century they held a majority in the Lower House. After 1917 (upon the introduction of male full-suffrage) their (relative) following declined dramatically.(12) However, during this period the Liberals did not retain their unity. The social question caused the first split in the ranks of the Liberals. A group of progressive Liberals came together, demanding greater state-intervention in the necessary social reforms.

One of the crucial issues for them was the state's education policy. Extension of the suffrage strongly divided the Liberals further, as it did all other political groupings. The proposal of a radical Liberal minister (1894) split the Liberals into radical, moderate and conservative factions. Despite the declining position of the Liberals, according to Stuurman the state was dominated by the Liberals until 1900. This domination was rooted in three factors:

- the strong Liberal position in the economy and in the state,
- the Liberal orientation of the intelligentsia,
- the electoral system, which worked in favour of the Liberals.

But in the struggle for the votes of the labour-force - reaching its peak only after the turn of the century - the Socialists and the Confessional bourgeoisie were the main opponents, the latter being the ultimate winners.

2.2.4. The Socialists versus the non-Socialists

The position of the Socialists will be dealt with only briefly since they did not play a part in the school struggle as it took place between 1848 and 1887. The problem was not yet fully solved in 1887 but it had lost its urgency, and other problems were taking up more attention. Moreover, although the social question was a factor in the school struggle, the working class as a political force at the national level hardly participated in it. Nonetheless we have to pay some attention to the position of the Socialists because they were among the driving forces in initiating the verzuiling process, and because they formed an established part of the political configuration which existed when the school issue was finally solved in 1917 and freedom of education became a reality.

Both the restricted suffrage and the late arrival of industrialization meant that the Socialists became politically active only in the closing decades of the last century. In 1888 the Sociaal Democratische Bond (Social Democratic League) succeeded in having one of its members elected, Domela Nieuwenhuis who was the first Socialist representative in parliament. From the beginning of their political activities the Socialists were disunited on the question of strategy. Was it best for them to form a front organisation, which would organise the working class for direct class struggle, or should they take a more reformist stand, channeling their demands through the parliamentary institutions? When a congress in 1893 decided to take the revolutionary strategy, a group of people left the party, to form a new, Social Democratic party (the Sociaal Democratische Arbeiders Partij). New problems arose for this party: to which groups was it best for them to direct themselves to recruit voters? Were they to take on the role of opposition party or try to get government responsibility? In case they joined the government, with whom would they have formed alliances, the anti-clerical Liberals or the confessional parties that attracted so many working-class voters?

Concerning the last mentioned dilemma it is interesting to note that already in 1902, in order not to alienate workers still voting for the Catholic and Protestant parties, the SDAP stated that it did not oppose in principle the granting of subsidies to independent schools.(13) At the same time, however, the SDAP did not want to ally itself with the Confessionals, because these opposed the public school too much.

The SDAP shared the opinion of the liberals on the matter of suffrage extension. But when the Socialists were offered some positions in a Liberal cabinet in 1913, because neither the Confessionals nor the non-confessional bourgeois parties held a parliamentary majority, they refused for electoral reasons. For a long time opposition from within the party withheld it from participation in government. They did however, take part in the Pacification of 1913-1918, which settled the disputes on the freedom of education, extension of the suffrage and the system of political representation.

The oppositions and their political consequences discussed in these sections can be schematically summarized as follows

Fig. 1 Political cleavages and alignment from 1850 to 1913+

<u>Period</u>	<u>Party-formation</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Alignment</u>
1848	only mass-mobilisation	Catholic Hierarchy	(Cath.) - Lib. Cons.- (Ort. Pr)
			character of the cleavage: cultural/ideological (liberal-anti-liberal)
1868	ARP 1879	School-controversy	Lib. Cath. - Ort. Pr.
			character of the cleavage: cultural/ideological (confessional-non-confessional)
1888	SDAP 1894 CHU 1909	Extension of suffrage	Rad. Lib. - Soc.- Kuyper Ort. Pr. Cons. Lib. - Cath. - Lohman Ort. Pr.
			character of the cleavage: economic (incorporation of the working class in the nation-state)
1913			

Main sources: H. Daalder, 1981 and S. Stuurman, 1983

+ Per period I give only the principal cleavage, which led to the formation of new parties. This is not to say that cleavages of preceding periods no longer played a part. On the contrary, characteristic of the first decade of this century was the coincidence of three problems that had to be solved: the school controversy, the suffrage extension and the social question.

2.3. The school struggle

The struggle over the type of education provided by the state was a struggle between several corporate actors, the state and the churches. As such, this struggle was not unique to the Netherlands, since it took place in many other Western European countries.(14) The result of this power struggle was not identical in those countries, but depended on factors such as the relative strength of the factions in the state-building elite, the presence or absence of a state-church, the religious homogeneity or heterogeneity of a society. Often a side-effect of this struggle was a deepening of cultural/ideological cleavages. The outcome of these struggles in the form of the emerging national school systems, can be divided into three broad types.(15)

In the first type the secular state kept exclusive responsibility for the school system, and the character of the schools was religiously strictly neutral.

The second type could be found in religious homogeneous countries. The schools were managed by the state but the dominant church retained part of its former influence.

Under the third a large variety of solutions adapted by countries which were heterogeneous with regard to religion, were found, ranging from state schools of a general religious character to a system in which neutral state schools existed besides (state-financed) independent schools. The system which evolved in the Netherlands fits into the last category. It had an extremely low threshold for private initiative to found schools.

In the following notes the political developments resulting in this peculiar arrangement will be dealt with. Because of the prior lengthy discussion of the political oppositions in the last century I shall be brief here, focusing on the chief developments concerning the education laws.

The period of French domination brought about, in the general move towards unification, a national school system, and the first national laws on education. The Dutch Reformed Church was then deprived of its hegemonial position. State and church became formally separated, and education was considered to be a national issue, for which the state was made responsible. Education would retain its christian character, but no longer was there room for religious dogmas. Informally however, church influence was still very strong. The fact that education at public schools was still to have a general christian (here: Protestant) character, made it clear that the position of the Liberal faction was still weak and that the Conservative Protestant bourgeoisie was not yet defeated, but on the contrary had strengthened its influence again after 1806.

The new arrangement of the school system was obviously against the interests of the Orthodox Protestants and the Catholics, but in different ways.

The Orthodox Protestants were dissatisfied with it because the religious influence on education was considered too weak. This group, asked

for a more orthodox public school. More precisely it supported the idea to divide public schools according to denomination, hence to create the side by side existence of general Protestant, Orthodox Protestant etc. public schools. The Catholics, still having an inferior position in society, were afraid of education of a "general christian character" because this would most likely turn out to be to their disadvantage. For this reason they were in favour of strictly neutral public schools, and freedom of education.

Thus the school struggle focused on two points: 1) the type of public education, and 2) the freedom to found schools different from the state schools.

It was Thorbecke who made a proposal for constitutional changes concerning education. In his view the independent, denominational schools ought to have had an important position. He wanted to leave the provision of education as much as possible to the free forces in society. State intervention and thus public state schools should only be complementary to what was done by private actors. Despite this conviction however, he had already to give in to the Protestant Conservatives (and this indicated the temporary character of the Liberal power position in 1848). In the final draft of the article on education the phrase was included that the state had to provide for sufficient (ubiquitous) public schools. Ironically, it was just this provision that was later used by adversaries of the independent school to safeguard their right to public education.

It was also stated that the public school should have a neutral character. The term neutral was interpreted to imply 'free of any church doctrine'. It did not mean, in the opinion of the Conservatives, that the education given should not be of a general christian character.

But with these constitutional changes freedom of education was in principle attained, and from then onwards private groups (e.g. the churches) were allowed to found their own schools.

The following table shows to what extent this new possibility was used in the period before the independent schools became fully financed by the state.

Table one: Percentage of children attending public and independent elementary schools in the Netherlands, 1850-1910 (16)

	attending public schools	attending independent schools
1850	77	23
1860	79	21
1870	77	23
1880	75	25
1890	71	29
1900	69	31
1910	62	38

Elaboration of the principles laid down in the Constitution of 1848 in a Elementary Education Act demanded further specification of the supposed neutrality of the public schools. The bill, drawn up by Van Reenen in 1854, was Liberal in the sense that it weakened the general christian character of the public school considerably. In fact this implied that public education would be in accordance with the christian principles and morals in which the Dutch nation was historically grounded.

Idenburg divided the resistance against this bill into two groups, each in turn divided into two sub-groups with their own view on the relation between neutral and confessional, state and independent schools (17):

- a. The Confessional oriented group
 - a.1 The adherents of public schools with a general christian character. Those were what we have called the Protestant Conservatives in our discussion of the political tendencies of this period.
 - a.2 Those who wanted public education to have a positive, orthodox character. This group consisted of Protestants who had expressed their discontent with the changes in the Dutch Reformed Church in the Reveil and the Afscheiding movements. If an orthodox school turned out to be politically not realizable they would opt for a divided public school.
- b. The neutral oriented group
 - b.1 The Liberals striving for a truly neutral school. They opposed the idea of a divided public school, because this meant the assignment of public tasks to private (church-)bodies, which was considered repugnant to constitutional law. This criticism was interesting because in the resulting arrangement (1917) private bodies were indeed assigned those public tasks.
 - b.2 The second group held a strongly individual conception of belief and confession. Van der Bruggen, their representative, was anti-confessional in the sense that he supported a neutral public school. Apart from the public schools the independent schools should in his view be strongly developed.

It may be noticed that Orthodox Protestants are found under both main categories in this scheme.

Van Reenen's proposal aroused a lot of protest on the part of the Orthodox Protestants, and resulted finally in the overthrow of the cabinet.

A new proposal (1857), put forward by the fore-mentioned Van der Bruggen, even reinforced the Liberal principles refusing to envisage any church influence in public education. Public education should be strictly neutral and religious education should be provided by independent denominational schools. This bill was passed though, the Orthodox Protestants and the Catholic representatives from the northern provinces voted against. The proposal to make partial state-subsidization of independent schools possible did not get enough votes though, because the Liberals, who still held a majority in the Lower House thought this a violation of the principle of separation of state and church. For this

reason the 1857- Elementary Education Act was only the beginning of a second wave in the school struggle.

While the Catholics, since the Bishops' Charge on Education of 1868, no longer supported the Liberal standpoint and had switched to the side of the Orthodox Protestants, it was only the latter who turned the school struggle into the most important political issue of the two decades between 1870 and 1890. The Liberal education policy of the 1870's evoked the first mass organisations, and led to the founding of the first true political party in the Netherlands.

Already in 1861 the Vereeniging voor Christelijk Nationaal Schoolonderwijs (Society for Christian National School Education) was founded, which was transformed into the Anti Schoolwet Verbond (Anti School Law League) in 1872. The Anti Schoolwet Verbond was a national organisation, with over 100 local branches soon after 1872. The members were not merely passive followers, but were actively involved. Among Orthodox Protestants there existed already a certain tradition of local activism, stemming from the action undertaken by church members who tried to get more influence on church nominations. This had undoubtedly heightened the rapid expansion of the Anti Schoolwet Verbond.

In the elections of 1874 the league functioned as a modern political party, with a centrally organised nomination and a binding programme.

When the Liberal statesman Kappeyne presented a proposal for a new Education Act, mass agitation on the side of the Orthodox Protestants reached a peak. The proposed act was an attempt to improve the quality of elementary education, a cause of great importance to the liberals.

The fact that in the second half of the 1860's the Dutch economy, after a long period of relative stagnation, returned to a period of growth, brought along with it new possibilities for individual social mobility among the middle classes, for which, however, a certain level of education was required. But the new possibilities for social mobility, stimulated by more and improved education, were only open to the middle classes. Hence education should be in accordance with social class, in the view of the Liberals.

Among the lower class education did not have the same aim of increasing social mobility but of preventing people from being reduced to even worse poverty. Anyhow, both aims made it necessary to improve educational standards. A study by Van Tijn has revealed that in areas which could be labelled as progressive (identified with the help of figures on demographic changes) expenditure on education by provincial and local authorities indeed increased considerably in the period 1862-1905.(18)

The higher qualifications demanded of the public schools in the proposed Education act would be required of the independent schools as well, but the latter could not count on any financial support from the state. Advocates of independent schools pointed out that freedom of education was not fully realized as long as they had to bear the financial burden of the founding and functioning of these schools themselves. They strongly objected to the fact that they contributed to public education by paying taxes while they also had to fully finance the schools of their own preference.

De Kok noticed that in the demand for state-subsidization of independent schools the social question also played a part: if increasingly high quality public education was free, while the independent schools had to do without state-support, the lower classes in particular would become more and more exposed to the influence of the neutral public schools.(19)

The Orthodox Protestant, organised a massive petition movement against the Kappeyne-law. This petition got three times as many signatures as the number of voters then enfranchised. But the school campaign did not achieve its aims.

A. Kuyper was the driving force behind the organisational activities of the Orthodox Protestants. That he was well aware of the importance of organisational skills for a social movement was shown by the fact that he studied the organisational principles of the British Anti Corn Law League to apply them to the Anti Schoolwet Verbond.

More importantly, he realised that, to increase the political impact of the Orthodox Protestants, he had to mobilise what he called 'the people behind the voters', i.e. the people who were not yet enfranchised. And these were numerous among the Orthodox Protestants, as the majority of this group belonged to the lower-middle and lower classes. However, mobilisation alone was not sufficient to exercise a permanent political influence. To reach this Kuyper founded a political party (the ARP, 1879) in the year after the agitation surrounding the Liberal Education Act. In doing so, Kuyper appeared to be a perfect example of a political entrepreneur who knew how to channel the discontent of his potential followers into a lasting political force at national level. Indeed the whole process of mobilisation and organisation fitted into the ideal-typical translation process: from the initial phase of cleavage accentuation (manifestation of the Orthodox Protestants as a distinguishable strand within the Dutch Reformed Church) to the last phase of organisational structuring (the formation of a political party, the founding of a new Church), as formulated by Rokkan.(20) The creation of these mass organisations was the first expression of a new social structure, the *verzuiling*.

However, mass agitation surrounding the school issue can not be explained by referring to organisational factors only. The issue itself had to contain some elements which made it likely to arouse such massive action.

Firstly, mass support for the school struggle demonstrated the growing value attached to education generally. The Liberals became more aware of both the greater possibilities for social mobility resulting from education, and of the disciplining effect of more education for children from the lower classes. Similarly in Orthodox Protestant circles this awareness was growing. Concern about the deprivation of the working class and the growing influence of the socialists ideology among these groups, increased the demand for more and better education, with its resulting 'civilising' effects, in the Orthodox Protestant view. As we have seen, this notion played an important role in their request for state-subsidization of the independent school.

Secondly, the ideological element was relevant. In the political mobilisation of the Orthodox Protestant ideology was an important factor.

Even if proponents of the emancipation hypothesis were wrong in explaining verzuiling in terms of collective feelings of inferiority and suppression, it was true that the ideology of the Orthodox Protestants as discriminated against and suppressed by the Liberals served a purpose. The ideology maintained that they held a backward position because of their religion. The school controversy was an outstanding opportunity for politics and ideology to become intermingled. As a result the school struggle took more and more the form of a freedom struggle.(20)

Mass mobilization among Catholics arose only much later. They supported the petition-movement, but not very actively, for reasons mentioned above. The fact that many of the public schools in the southern provinces were de-facto Catholic, most likely contributed to their low level of activity. Any initiatives concerning the school campaign were in the hands of church leaders, not of its lay church members.

The support of the Catholics was important however, because the cooperation of Catholics and Orthodox Protestants against the Liberals reinforced Kuyper's doctrine of the anti-thesis, in which the non Confessional forces were opposed to the Confessional ones. This only made it easier, when Catholics and Orthodox Calvinists obtained a majority in parliament after an extension of the suffrage, to form the first coalition cabinet in the Netherlands. This cabinet revised the Elementary Education Act of 1857, making it possible for independent schools to get a third of their costs paid by local governments, if they met the legal requirements. Hence the law of 1889 began the transformation of the formal right to freedom of education into a material one.

The next step in this direction was taken in 1905 when subsidies by the national government for independent schools were raised. Considerable differences however, existed between regions and localities. Concerning the period 1860-1875 the provinces North and South Holland had an above average figure for attendance at public schools and this coincided with higher than national average expenditures. On the contrary Limburg and North Brabant had a more than average share of children attending independent schools.(22) In the period 1895-1914 the situation had changed somewhat. The public school had a relatively strong position in the provinces Groningen, Friesland, Overijsel, Drenthe and Zeeland. In Utrecht, South Holland, North Brabant and Limburg the share of public education was less than average.(23)

The school struggle was only really solved in the period 1913-1917. The Liberal cabinet which took office in 1913 was very eager to carry through electoral reforms. The only way to do so seemed to arrange for an exchange: the left's consent to state-subsidization of independent schools could be traded off against the right's consent to electoral reforms. To this end two commissions were formed in which all political parties were represented, to draw up proposals on both issues. By relating the two problems it was possible to find a solution.(24) Finally in 1917 parliament unanimously passed the two bills. From then on independent schools would have right to the same financial assistance from the government as public schools.

The compromise reached, known as the Pacification, introduced to Dutch politics the important principle of proportionality. The principle implied in this case that state-aid was given to education on the basis of proportional treatment of all schools, and that representation in future parliaments would take place according to the proportion of the votes received by each party.(25)

The principle of proportionality functioned as an important device for the allocation of money and authority in a plural society, and as such it contributed enormously to the further development of verzuiling. It is to this process that we now turn.

Notes to chapter two

- 1) See S. Rokkan, Norway: Numerical democracy and corporate pluralism, from: R.A. Dahl (ed), Political Opposition in Western Democracies, New Haven, Yale University press, 1966; S. Rokkan, Citizens, elections, Parties, Oslo/ New York, 1970 S. Rokkan, The growth and structuring of mass politics in Western Europe: Reflections of possible models of explanation, Scandinavian Political Studies, vol, 5, 1970, p.65-85; S. Rokkan. Towards a generalized concept of verzuiling: a preliminary note', Political Studies (1977), p. 563-570; K. Eliassen and L. Svaasand, The formation of mass political organisations: an analytical framework, from: Scandinavian Political Studies 10 (1975). p. 95-121.
- 2) H. Daalder, The Netherlands: opposition in a segmented society, from: R.A. Dahl (ed), Political Oppositions in Western Democracies, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966; H. Daalder, Consociationalism, centre-periphery in the Netherlands, from: P. Torsvik, Mobilization, centre-periphery structures and nation-building, Bergen, 1981.
- 3) The hypothesis was applied to the cases of both the Catholics and the Orthodox Protestants by different authors. It stated that, in the period before the verzuiling, a process of increasing segregation, based on discrimination by other groups, had taken place. In order to emancipate their own group, whether in religious or socio-economic sense, the group had to isolate and segregate itself even more from the rest of the society. In other words, it had to purposefully emphasize their unique identity, and at the same time to reinforce its internal organisation, in order to gain strength, and to fight their discrimination from this position. This process brought with it a deepening of the religious cleavages.
In the same way, socialist authors, who reasoned from the same notion of emancipation, discerned a sharpening ideological dividing line between Confessionals and non Confessionals, and explained from this the increasing organisational efforts on the side of the Socialists.
This hypothesis is put forward by scholars such as J.M.G. Thurlings, De wankele zuil, 1971, and H. Verwey-Jonker, De emancipatie bewegingen, from: A.J.N. den Hollander (ed), Drift en Koers. Een halve eeuw sociale verandering in Nederland, Assen, 1968. See for further comments: S.Stuurman, 1983, p.72-75 and R. Steinger, 1975, p. 230-240. See also annex.
- 4) R. Steiniger, Polarisierung und Integration. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der strukturellen Versäulung der Gesellschaft in der Niederlanden und in Österreich, Meisenheim am Glan, 1975, p.273r.Steiniger called this 'a restructuring of the hierarchy of conflicts', meaning that by highlighting some issues and leaving others in the background, political elites changed oppositions and alignments.
- 5) S. Rokkan, 1966, p. 78-79.
- 6) In this section I rely heavily upon the work of Daalder. H. Daalder, 1960; H. Daalder, 1981.
- 7) S. Stuurman, Verzuiling, Kapitalisme en Patriarchaat, Nijmegen, 1983.p.105.

- 8) S. Stuurman, 1983, p.112.
- 9) In the preceding text I distinguished Latitudinarian Protestants from Orthodox Protestants. With the founding of the Gereformeerde Kerken a distinction within the Orthodox Protestant group was introduced. On the one hand there were the Orthodox Calvinists, belonging to the new church, on the other hand there was the Orthodox group that remained within the Dutch Reformed Church. Hence, after the founding of the Gereformeerde kerken we discern Orthodox Calvinists, Orthodox Dutch Reformed people and Latitudinarian Dutch reformed people. Orthodox Calvinists and Orthodox Dutch Reformed people together will be referred to as Orthodox Protestants.
- 10) R. Reinsma, De invasie der Kerkelijken. De A.R. Tweede kamerleden van 1897 tot 1917, in: Antirevolutionaire Staatskunde, XXXIX, 1969, p.241-265. Quoted by S. Stuurman, 1983. p. 276.
- 11) H.Daalder, 1981, p. 195.
- 12) Figures given by S. Stuurman, 1983, p.259, based on the study of E. van Tijn, The party-structure of Holland, p.579, and on L. Sinner, Wortels van de Nederlandse politiek, Amsterdam,1973.
- 13) H. Daalder, 1966, p.109.
- 14) Characteristic of the Dutch situation was the fact that the struggle between 'state and church' involved more than two corporate actors: in the Netherlands there were two churches, both of considerable numerical strength, but with different positions of power, involved in this struggle.
- 15) H. Knippenberg and H. van der Wusten, The primary school system in the Netherlands 1900-1980, Amsterdam, 1983, p.3.
- 16) Ph.J. Idenburg, Schets van het Nederlandse schoolwezen, Groningen, 1960, p. 112. Daalder who gives the same figures in his 1966 article notes that it should be remembered that catholics and orthodox protestants tended to have larger families than non-religious people over most of the period.
- 17) Ph.J. Idenburg, Schets van het Nederlandse schoolwezen, Groningen, 1960, p.92-93.
- 18) Th. van Tijn, Achtergronden van de ontwikkeling van het lager onderwijs en van de schoolstrijd in Nederland 1862-1905, from: L.Box, J.Dronkers, M.Molenaar and J.de Mulder, Vrijheid van Onderwijs, Nijmegen, 1977.
- 19) J.A. de Kok, Kerken en godsdienst: het uiteengaan van Kerk en School, from: Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol. 12, p. 232.
- 20) S. Rokkan, 1977.p. 564.
- 21) R. Steinger, 1975,p.87.
- 22) J.W.G. Jansing and L. Dasberg, Onderwijs, from: Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol. 12, Haarlem, p. 212.
- 23) J.W.G. Jansing and L. Dasberg, Onderwijs, from: Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, vol. 13, Haarlem, p. 362-363. The figures for Limburg and North Brabant are explained in both periods by a high female attendance of independent schools. The share of boys attending public schools is even higher than the national average in these provinces.
- 24) R. Steiniger, 1975, p. 134-136.
- 25) A. Lijphart. The Politics of Accomodation; Pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands, Berkely/Los Angeles, 1968, p.111.

CHAPTER THREE

VERZUILING AND ONTZUILING TENDENCIES

WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

3.1 Introduction

In the present chapter I will examine more deeply the importance of verzuiling of Dutch society during the present century. As will be demonstrated it is not true that the verzuiling reached its peak in the 1920's and subsequently remained stable until the mid-1960's when suddenly the reverse process set in, which we will call ont-zuiling.

When we examine quantitative data on verzuiling we will see that in most of the social sectors the phenomenon was still on the increase throughout the period 1920-1960, although periods of relative stagnation also occurred. Moreover at the end of this period there was no sudden reversal from verzuiling to ontzuiling. Ontzuiling processes had already started long before. For example, the churches experienced a set-back in the thirties and the political system showed the first cracks immediately after World War II. But for some time these developments were not strong enough to offset the dominant verzuiling tendency. Either they were suppressed again soon after their appearance or their occurrence remained restricted to a relatively small group of people. After 1960, however, a trend towards ontzuiling became unmistakable, and the events of the years 1965-1967 marked an acceleration of the ontzuiling process, making it one of the most prominent, and most discussed features of Dutch society in the past fifteen years.

In this chapter tendencies towards verzuiling and ontzuiling in the social structure will be discussed, to provide a background against which to present developments in the elementary school system in the present century. The chapter will consist of three parts. Firstly I will focus on the growing influence of the verzuiling in society. Secondly the ontzuiling process will be discussed and in the last part the development of the school system will be central. In this last part I will present a first analysis of the verzuiling of the school system at the provincial level made by Knippenberg and Van der Wusten.(1)

3.2. The importance of verzuiling

In chapter one verzuiling was defined as the unforeseen and unplanned outcome of the struggles between various factions of the elite, Socialists and bourgeoisie, Confessionals and non Confessionals, Catholics and Orthodox Protestants, concerning the shaping of the modern nation state. The result of this struggle became clear in the years between 1900 and 1920. From then on the most Dutch people lived and worked largely within the context of confessional organisations and among people adhering to the same religious ideology.

The rest of the population likewise lived in isolation. As they did not want to participate in confessional organisations they were 'forced' to join either organisations of an outspoken Socialists character, or neutral organisations addressing a wider public. Since the Liberals did not really develop an organisational network, people considering themselves as belonging to this group either participated in neutral organisations, or did not join organisations at all.

The extent to which the verzuiling as an organisational structure penetrated society, measured with the help of various indicators, was generally considered to be high. The Netherlands was thought to be a unique case of verzuiling. When Dutch scholars started to look elsewhere for similar phenomena, and to make their own research on verzuiling more widely known, it became possible to look at the verzuiling from a comparative perspective.

Lorwin studied the degree of segmented pluralism in a group of Western European countries (since at the root of this segmented pluralism was 'Weltanschauung' rather than religion we cannot equate his concept with the concept of verzuiling). Not only did the Netherlands belong to the group of countries with a high degree of segmented pluralism, it was also the only country of mixed religion in this group. In Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg the Catholics reached a high degree of organisational activity, but in these countries the Catholic organisations existed beside Liberal and Socialist organisations.(2) Comparison within this group of five spheres of activity in the 1950-1960 period showed that the Netherlands was indeed a country of strong segmented pluralism, and Belgium was the only one to surpass it in this respect.(3)

But let us return to the origin of the verzuiling process in the Netherlands.

In the restructuring process taking place in the 1870-1920 period religious ideologies played a crucial role. These referred to an ideal social order, and included elements concerning both morality and the relation between capital and labour. Of course the religious ideologies had to be adapted, but ultimately they became the dominant ideology of the newly transformed society. This was expressed in the greater organisational strength of the Confessionals.

Following this line of thought it is not surprising that Stuurman in his historical analysis attributed a central role to the rise of

confessional working class organisations and the development of the party-system.

Crucial to the success of the elite-factions favouring confessional working class organisations was the period 1903-1914 when these organisations made considerable progress, and the socialist unions lost their strong ascendancy which had survived till 1903. The failure of the great strikes of 1903 marked a reversal of the balance of power. During these events the confessional organisations were able to strengthen their foothold, and they were able to maintain their position until the 1960's. In the period 1910-1920 membership of the labour-unions increased considerably, but at a much faster rate for Catholic and Protestant unions than for the Socialist ones.

For a long period the share of the work force organised in confessional trade unions oscillated between 40 and 50%. Perhaps this was not a high percentage of verzuiling compared to other social sectors, but considering the fact that it concerned organisations defending the interests of a population group which cuts right across both zuilen, it was quite high. Only in 1955 did the share cross the 50%-line, not long before ontzuiling tendencies became apparent.

Table one. Number of workers organised in confessional trade unions as share of the total number of workers organised, 1910-1965 (4)

1910	29%	1946	40%
1920	41%	1950	45%
1925	41%	1955	53%
1930	42%	1960	55%
1935	46%	1965	34%
1940	46%		

At the political level, as we have seen in chapter two, the party system had developed by taking up newly enfranchised voters. This had resulted in a set of political parties, each aiming to recruit voters from a specific ideologically or economically defined sector of the population. in the period 1900-1970 the system became fully established and as it then existed it set the trend for the political scene for the following 50 years.

Table two. Number of seats in the Lower House 1918-1963(5)

	lib.	cath.	ARP	CHU	SDAP/PvdA	others	total
1918	15	30	13	7	22	13	100
1922	15	32	16	11	22	13	100
1948	8	32	13	9	27	11	100
1952	9	30	12	9	30	10	100
1956	9	33	10	8	34	6	100
1959	19	49	14	12	48	8	150
1963	16	50	13	13	43	15	150

From the developments in the socio-economic and political realms it can be concluded that the *verzuiling* was firmly established by 1920. The same was true for the school system. By 1920 some 45% of the children of the appropriate age-group attended independent, denominational schools and the Education Act of 1920, elaborating the principles of financial equality of public and independent schools laid down in the constitution of 1917 caused their share to grow even faster after that date.

Table three. Percentage of children attending public and independent elementary schools in the period from 1910 to 1960 (6)

	attending public schools	attending independent schools
1910	62	38
1920	55	45
1930	38	62
1940	30	70
1950	27	73
1960	27	73

Verzuiling developed earliest in the education system, to be followed somewhat later by the build-up of confessional parties and labour unions. Several authors mentioned the press as another sector that became divided along (religious) ideological lines.(7)

Once the *verzuiling* became entrenched in the party system, the socio-economic organisations and the school system, it gained a momentum of its own.

The segmentation along religious lines which subsequently took place in almost every sphere of activity can not be explained by the same factors

that contributed to the origin of the phenomenon. The verzuiling developed its own logic, not reducible to the conscious strategy of one agent or group of agents. When the principles of segregation and isolation had become dominant in certain spheres of activity it was natural to pursue them in other sectors as well, whether or not the activity itself had an inherent connection with the confessional ideology. For example, if one sent one's children to a Catholic school because they were taught the Catholic dogmas and educated according to Catholic values, it seemed to be natural to let them join a youth organisation of Catholic denomination as well. And from there it was only a short step to the Catholic soccer-club.

Even if verzuiling arose from the partly coordinated strategies of social, political and religious elites to restructure social relations it should not be overlooked that the churches developed an autonomous interest in it once it existed. The segmentation of social activities along religious dividing lines provided the churches with an effective means to control their members. Segregation of the own group from the rest of society had two consequences, both of which strengthened the hold of the churches over their followers.

Firstly, segregation of their own group from the others implied that the socialization of its members remained in the hands of the 'right' people. Socialization should be taken here in the widest sense, meaning all mechanisms to pass on the values, norms, attitudes and behaviour considered to be appropriate to other individuals or sub-groups.

Secondly, segregation meant isolation from other groups and in this way contact with people or behaviour deviating from what it should be according to the standards developed in the own group, could be avoided. Both consequences often made it unnecessary to enforce verzuiling from above. When confessional organisations were founded, people joined them not because they were forced to do so, but as a result of the way the ideology of verzuiling functioned itself.

As already indicated above, the various spheres of activity did not have the same relevance for the continuation of the verzuiling. Some played a more important part in dispersing and strengthening the religious ideology than others, depending on the extent to which their secular function lent itself to this.

Thurlings expressed this schematically by a series of concentric circles, from the centre to the outside representing organisations in sectors of declining importance concerning the transmission of ideology within the zuilen. (8) His hypothesis was that the activities having a more inner position were the first ones to become verzuild. To prove this he pointed to the fact that the educational system showed quite early signs of verzuiling. Another hypothesis concerning the differences between spheres of activity is that those which are most centrally located in the diagram will experience a stronger verzuiling than those at the outside. This idea is in general confirmed by the material presented in the following pages.

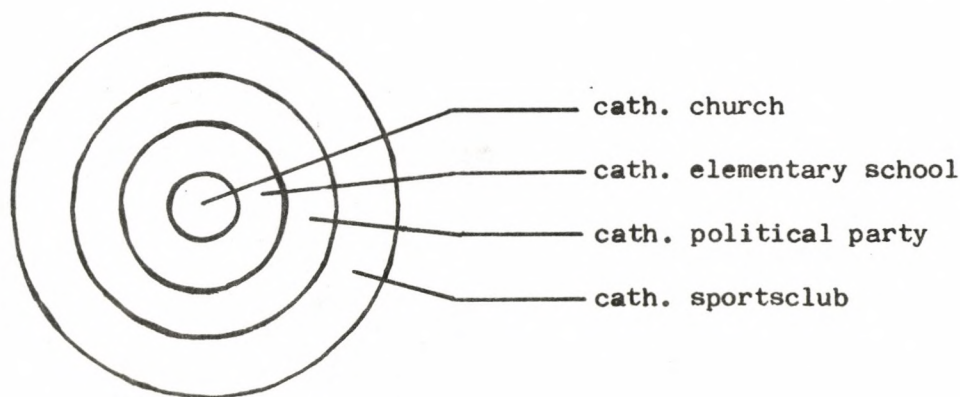


Figure one. Spheres of activity of declining importance in transmitting the religious ideology.

The education system performs a crucial role in this organisational structure as it is the chief socialising institution, apart from the private institution of the family.

Apart from providing children with cognitive knowledge and skills, educational systems are at the same time used to transmit cultural/ideological values from generation to generation and as such they are major stabilizing factors in societies. If we keep this in mind it is immediately clear why it is of such great relevance for various groups/institutions to have control over the school system. The longer the period children spend at school, and the more functions the school performs, the greater the influence of the controlling institution.

This explains largely why in the past, before national education systems were formed, churches showed an interest in performing educational tasks and why the struggle between state and church focused so strongly on education. When the modern nation state developed it needed a national unitary education system, not controlled by a (semi-)state church or a rival religious group. Such a unitary education system was to serve as a central nation-building institution. As we have seen in chapter two the churches did not easily give up their hold on education.

However, in every Western European country the growing influence of the state on the elementary school system diminished the differences between schools with respect to the curriculum, that is, the cognitive knowledge and skills that were taught. When diversity in the school system continued to exist the wish of groups with ideologies different from the dominant one to transmit their own values, has been an important factor causing this variety.

Verzuiling did not occur only at the organisational level which was usually attributed a central position in verzuiling studies. It was more than mere participating in a specific group of organisations based on a religious ideology. It was a way of thinking, influencing people's entire

way of life as well. We can not say that the ideology by definition preceded the organisational activities or vice versa. Both elements were two sides of the same coin, and for a long time they mutually reinforced each other. Until now empirical research by sociologists has not paid much attention to ideological processes, and to questions regarding the elements of the verzuijing ideology, the forces which contribute to its formulation and the way the ideology of verzuijing functions at individual level. Stuurman's study is the only possible exception.

Not surprisingly most scholars dealt with the structural (organisational) aspects of the verzuijing, since this phenomenon had an overwhelming influence on the structuring of political and social life in the Netherlands. Moreover, the structural characteristic was the more tangible (hence more easy measurable) aspect of the verzuijing.

Kruyt and Goddijn were the first to develop instruments to give the discussion on structural verzuijing a quantitative base. They developed some indices which made it possible to compare the degree of verzuijing between sectors or for the same sector in different countries. (9)

The first index they developed was the 'degree of organisational verzuijing'. This was the share of the total number of organisations in a particular sector which was verzuild (= based on a religious ideology). Hence it expressed the relation between organisations which were verzuild and organisations which were not.

Table four. Share of the confessional organisations in seven spheres of activity, 1956 (10)

	catholic	protestant
social work	23.4	32.3
education	35.8	43.2
youth organisations	20.5	49.6
sports	17.2	7.1
health care	14.6	26.2
cultural organisations	23.9	11.9
labour unions	20.0	17.7

The organisational verzuijing was somewhat stronger in protestant circles than among catholics. The notion of the concentric circles was clearly illustrated: organisational verzuijing was highest in the sectors of education, social work and youth organisations, in which the socialising aspect played such an important part.

Kruyt and Goddijn gave a second table on the organisational verzuijing for the 1914-1956 period, this time adding all spheres of activity. Again I present the table here in summarized form.

Table five. Organisational verzuiling concerning eight spheres of activity for five different years.(11)

	catholic	protestant
1914	13.7	25.1
1925	14.8	26.0
1932	17.3	26.1
1939	18.2	26.6
1956	21.5	26.8

This table demonstrates that at no point in time did the majority of the national organisations belong to the zuilen. The majority was either of a general character or based on an ideology different to the Catholic and Protestant ones. The Protestant zuil was somewhat stronger than the Catholic one during this period but the Catholics continuously increased their share, experiencing the fastest growth in the 1925-1932 period.

A second index of verzuiling was the density index ('vullingsgraad')(12). Kruyt and Goddijn understood by this the percentage of people of a certain denomination engaged in a certain activity, which joined an organisation in this sphere of activity that was based on their confessional ideology (13).

The following table gives the density index for several spheres of activity.

Table six. Density index in various spheres of activity(14)

Relative figures on choice for a confessional organisation/institution	Catholic	Orthodox calvinists (15)	Dutch Reformed
1) Parental choice of elementary school (1957)	90 %	90 %	
2) Participation in farmers organisations (1953)	95 %	90 %	
3) Participation in labour union (1953)	90 %	90 %	
4) Lower House election (1959)	84.3 %	95 %	32 %
5) Reading daily newspapers (1955)	79 %	58 %	9 %
6) Active membership of -only confessional organisation	71 %	73 %	36 %
-confessional and non confessional organisations	77 %	80 %	43 %

Among Catholics as well as among Orthodox Calvinists loyalty to organisations and institutions of their respective denomination was still very high during the 1950's, the Catholics being slightly more attached to their own newspapers, while the Orthodox Calvinists voted very strongly for their own parties.

Members of the Dutch Reformed Church, however, tended less to join their own organisations (in fact they had less of such organisations. The Dutch Reformed Church scored much lower with regard to the degree of organisational verzuiling than the other two denominations) (16).

With the help of the density index we are also better able to understand the verzuiling in the party system. In table two it has been shown that the share each party held remained more or less constant throughout a large part of this century. However, we have not yet focused attention on the relation between party following and the share of the voters belonging to a particular church. Andeweg made an attempt in this direction with his Index of Political Orthodoxy, which is equivalent to the density-index.(17) To avoid difficulties caused by the existence of several Protestant strands Andeweg combined all Protestant voters on the one hand, and all Protestant parties on the other.

Table seven. Political Orthodoxy index by denomination, 1948-1963 (18)

Election year	Catholics+	Protestants++
1948	83.3	52.6
1952	80.4	51.6
1956	81.	49.0
1959	79.6	47.5
1963	78.5	48.7

+) Based on KVP vote; in 1948 and 1952 KVP and KNP vote.

++) Protestant = Dutch Reformed + several Reformed Churches.

Based on ARP + CHU + SGP + GPV vote, except in 1948 (no GPV)

Figures for both groups are somewhat on the decline in this period, but still considerable. In particular figures for the Catholics are higher than that for Catholics in any other country for which these indices have been calculated. (19) Figures for the Protestant group are much lower because of the Latitudinarian Dutch Reformed voters (20).

Orthodox Dutch Reformed voters cast their votes overwhelmingly for the Orthodox Protestant parties (ARP+CHU). Latitudinarian Dutch Reformed voters however, more often choose non-confessional parties (PvdA+ VVD). The majority of the Orthodox Calvinist voters preferred Orthodox Protestant parties (even among the group of non-regular church attenders 63% choose the ARP).

A third index Kruyt and Goddijn used to map the phenomenon of verzuiling quantitatively is the relation between the quotum that is verzuild and the general quotum. The first quotum presented the share of the organised individuals which participated in (joined, cast their votes for) verzuilde organisations/institutions/parties. Together, the quota add up to 100%, as the unorganised are not included. (21)

In table one, where the quotum that was verzuild in the labour union-sector, and table three, where both quota for the attendance of elementary schools were given, this index was already applied.

3.3 The period of ontzuiling

The first signs of ontzuiling could be noticed in the 1920's when the social and economic crisis caused an acceleration of secularization in several regions. Before that date secularization had been increasing only slowly. After 1920 the phenomenon spread quite rapidly, so much so that it

became defined as a serious problem by the churches and it got the attention of scholars as well.

In this period, however, increasing secularization did not yet find expression in a decline in the structural *verzuiling*. On the contrary, the network of *verzuilde* organisations continued to become more dense. This was illustrated in table 5 of the present chapter. We could say that in this period both tendencies, towards *verzuiling* and towards *ontzuiling*, were at work. But the latter one was still too weak to influence the social structure, its occurrence was apparently too fragmented and scattered.

The war years created a new situation which caused the *verzuiling* to be discredited. In the resistance movement opposition against a return to the social and economic order of the pre-war years was growing and as soon as the war had ended an attempt to restructure the political and socio-economic relations was made. In the first place the *Eenheids Vak Centrale* (Unitary Trade Union Federation) was founded in 1945. Although it was not explicitly created to break through the *verzuiling* of the organised labour movement, and was from the beginning communist-influenced, for some time it formed a real threat in particular to the catholic trade union federation.

Because the Catholic elite in the southern, already liberated part of the country had not yet reestablished its position and the infrastructure of Catholic organisations, many Catholic labourers joined the EVC, which saw a sharp increase in its membership in 1945-1946. But in the years following the EVC was increasingly isolated, because of its communist ideology, but most likely also because of competition for members with the traditional trade union federations.

Of greater importance were changes at the political level. The post war developments had been preceded by an event in 1939. In this year the Social Democrats joined the government for the first time in their history. By this act the SDAP renounced its isolation, and became an eligible partner in subsequent cabinet-formations.

According to Steiniger the main consequence of this sudden change was that the SDAP gave up its former strategy, and tried to obtain more votes by accepting government-responsibility rather than by retaining its dogmatic rigidity. During the war years the idea was developed to abolish the old party system and to create a new centre-party, in which people belonging to different denominations and Socialists would cooperate on the basis of a new ideology of personalistic socialism. But as early as 1944 the Bishops in the liberated part of the Netherlands declared that as soon as possible the Catholic organisations should be reestablished. Thus a complete renewal of the party system was suppressed. But minor changes occurred. The new Social Democratic party, the *Partij van de Arbeid*, continued its new policy after the war. It was no longer founded on an ideology, but on a political programme. This opened the party to confessional voters, which meant a real threat to the confessional parties. In fact it formed a direct attack on the *verzuiling* of the party system. Likewise the Catholic party, the KVP, presented itself as a programme party, but this trend was soon reversed, again under pressure of the catholic church.

Thus the major gains of the years immediately after World War II were on the one hand a departure from the system in which parties recruited voters more on identification than on the political matter itself. On the other hand the new attitude of the Social Democrats made possible the establishment of a long lasting cooperation between the five largest political parties at government-level. Lijphart defined this cooperation as a new type of democratic government, the consociational democracy.(22)

The rest of the political system remained as it was. In the first post war election political positions were reestablished, each party obtaining more or less the same share of the votes as before the war. All major parties were able to maintain their share until the mid-sixties when they were suddenly confronted by a sharp decline of their following and the advance of some new smaller parties, which are best labelled as anti-establishment parties. The share of the three confessional parties in particular showed a dramatic decrease. In 1966 they no longer got the majority of the votes, the first time this had happened since 1917.

Table eight. Results of parliamentary elections, 1963- 1977 (23)

Party	1963	1967	1971	1972	1977
ARP	8.7	9.9	8.6	8.8	-
CHU	8.6	8.1	6.3	4.8	-
KVP	31.9	26.5	21.9	17.7	-
Total CDA	49.2	44.5	36.8	31.3	31.9
PvdA	28.0	23.5	24.7	27.3	33.8
VVD	10.3	10.7	10.4	14.4	17.9
Total traditional parties	87.5	78.7	71.9	73.0	83.6
Total other parties	12.5	21.3	28.1	27.1	16.4

Andeweg has tried to explain these sudden changes in party preference by testing a series of hypotheses, which tried to relate the changes in voting behaviour to (changes in) the religious characteristics of the electorate, with post industrial change, with the rejuvenation of the electorate, and with the political and social events of the 1965-1967 period. For none of his hypotheses, however, did he find convincing evidence. Only the religious factor seemed to have some explanatory value.

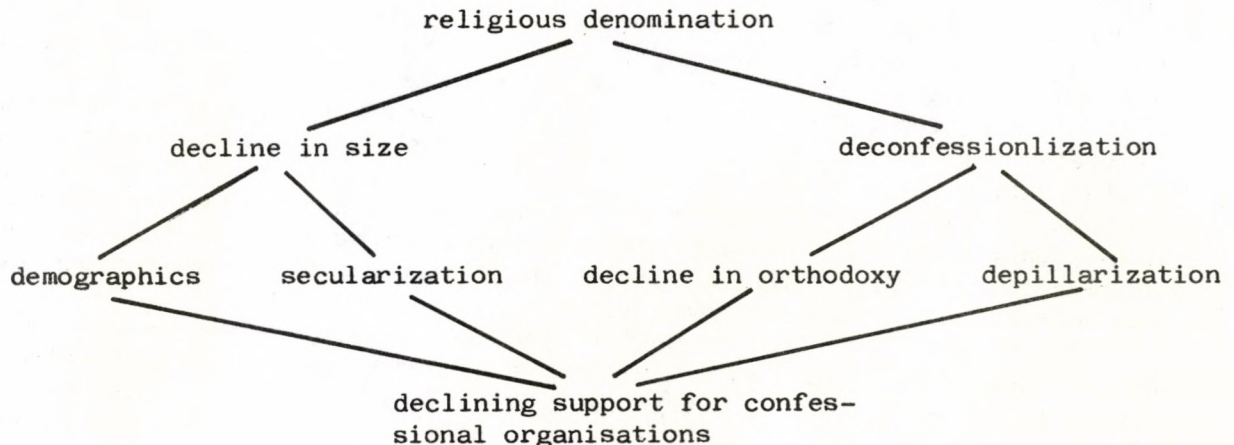
His general conclusion was that losses by the religious parties were related to an erosion of orthodoxy rather than church defection on a large scale.(24)

In looking for causes to explain the deteriorating strength of the religious parties Andeweg made a useful distinction between different processes which might have contributed to it and which throughout the literature were loosely labelled as depillarization, deconfessionalization, secularization etc.

To clarify the confusion about the definitions of these concepts he made a schematic presentation of their relations.(25)

In my opinion this diagram lends itself to a more extensive application as to explanation of the processes resulting in the decline of confessional voting. Likewise it seemed valuable in explaining the general decrease in support for confessional organisations/institutions. For this reason I altered it slightly, substituting the outcome 'electoral losses of religious political parties' for 'declining support for confessional organisations.'

Figure two. Putative causes of the declining support for confessional organisations



After: Andeweg, 1981, p.41.

Secularization means here church defection, i.e. the decision to no longer consider oneself a Catholic or a Protestant. Deconfessionalization indicated a decrease in loyalty to the religious parties on the part of voters who continued to consider themselves Catholics or Protestants, that is, while they retained a religious identification they no longer translated this into a decision to vote for a religious party. Thus defined, deconfessionalisation encompassed two processes: a decline in confessional

attachment or religious orthodoxy, and a weakening of the relation between persisting confessional attachment and a vote for one of the confessional parties (or in my schema: the membership of a confessional organisation). The latter is called depillarization.

Before turning to a discussion of the factors which may have caused these mechanisms to work, attention will be given to other ontzuiling phenomena. (I use the Dutch term ontzuiling here to describe in general the declining support for confessional organisations, by whatever mechanism this may be caused - secularization, decline in orthodoxy or depillarization.)

At the political level the decline in the number of votes for the confessional parties seemed irreversible. This induced them to merge in 1977. The new Christian Democratic party (CDA) succeeded in bringing the decline of the number of confessional votes to a halt in the first election after its founding. Still its very existence can be considered as an expression of ongoing ontzuiling. As Steiniger commented, the new party could no longer recruit its voters on the basis of a religious principle. This principle had now to be transformed into a concrete political programme.(26)

In other sectors too ontzuiling tendencies were present. For the labour union federations an important event was the abolition of the prohibition by the Bishops to join a Socialist labour union in the beginning of the 1960's. This paved the way for a federation between the Socialists and the Catholic national labour organisations. The Protestant labour unions preferred to continue their activities as separate organisations.

In the sphere of the press the structural ontzuiling started relatively early, but other factors apart from a decline in orthodoxy or depillarization here played a part as well. Particularly in this sector the need was felt to carry through rationalizations and expansions, in order to remain competitive. As a consequence of fusions taking place in this sector, the ideological character of one of the fusing partner organisations was often lost (usually the confessional one).

For the non profit sector (social work, health care, youth organisations etc.) Van Wersch found a varied pattern of organisational ontzuiling (leaving the educational system aside for the moment). In clinical healthcare the structural ontzuiling was still weak. In the sphere of institutions for family-help on the contrary a strong ontzuiling could be noticed between 1968 and 1977.(27) Although data for other types of institutions in the healthcare and welfare work-sector were sparse the overall impression was that a strong ontzuiling tendency was present.

Van Wersch continued his analysis by breaking down the concept of verzuiling down into two sub-concepts: the structural verzuiling and what he called, the verzuiling preference. The latter was defined as the extent to which individuals or groups value the confessional foundation of the institutions which services they used or in which they were employed. The same distinction could of course be made for the ontzuiling. Van Wersch formulated the hypothesis that the structural ontzuiling lagged behind the

decline of the verzuiling preference. This idea was confirmed by the little material that existed concerning the preference of consumers and employees to make use of/join an organisation of confessional denomination.

As regards consumers, several other reasons for their making use of a certain confessional organisation were mentioned, the specialized functions and professional qualifications of a particular institution being among the ones most frequently mentioned. As regards the employees of a confessional organisation, the ideological motivations seemed to have fallen into the background, in favour of emphasis on professional aspirations.

But why did the structural verzuiling continue to dominate in some sectors despite a decline in the verzuiling preference, in orthodoxy and despite the disappearance of confessional organisations as a consequence of rationalizations?

Van Wersch made an interesting suggestion when he stated that the decision to abandon the confessional identity was often not so much in the hands of the consumers as in those of the governing body of an institution. In most cases these were not very willing to give up the religious identity of the institution. Both clauses in the regulations stating that members of the governing body had to subscribe to the religious fundamentals and undemocratic procedures to recruit members to the governing body (many times members were appointed, not elected) were features of governing bodies in the non profit sector which enabled them to pursue such a policy. Therefore demands for further democratization of these institutions would most likely bring about a further decline of the structural verzuiling.

But which factors, in case a declining support for confessional organisations did exist, explained the underlying tendencies towards deconfessionalization and secularization? In the literature two hypotheses, not necessarily mutually exclusive, were put forward.

The first focused on the changes within the churches themselves, in particular within the Catholic church. This was the so-called internal crisis hypothesis.

The second one emphasised changes in the wider social context, pointing at the influence of such processes as urbanisation and industrialisation on deconfessionalisation and secularization.

In the first hypothesis the movement was supposed to have gone from the centre to the edge, in the second case from the edge to the centre, thus from the ordinary church members to the clergy. For this reason the latter hypothesis was called the erosion hypothesis. Thurlings and Simons both supported the first hypothesis.(28) They concentrated their analyses on the events within the Catholic church, which was understandable in view of the fact that changes were fastest there and that the erosion of the Catholic zuil had been the strongest.

The internal crisis hypothesis focused on the changes taking place among church leaders at the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties. In the decade between 1955 and 1965 the Catholic church in the Netherlands was transformed from one of the most traditional church

provinces to one of the most progressive. In 1954 for example the Bishops were still forbidding labourers to join socialist labour unions under penalty of ex-communication. At the same time however, it was already impossible to forbid membership of the Social Democratic party, as this would have alienated Catholic intellectuals who formed a separate Catholic working group within the Social Democratic party.

The Bishop's Charge of 1954 marked the end of an era. After this date changes followed one after another in quick succession. In a report of 1957 the so-called identification debate was opened, that is, a discussion on the meaning and necessity of Catholic organisations outside the Catholic church. More and more the *verzuiling* came under attack from within the church itself. The Second Vatican Council encouraged discussion on the new theology, and the circle of critical theologians and bishops grew.

The debates on the Catholic dogmas, morals and identity soon resulted in a sharp opposition of conservative and progressive Catholics, and led from 1963 onwards to more and more conflicts between the Dutch church province and the Vatican. In 1970 Rome started its counter-offensive with the nomination of an extremely conservative bishop in one of the most progressive urban dioceses. This policy was continued in the subsequent decade, causing the Dutch bishops to formulate their standpoint more carefully, and to lose their international pioneering role in the Catholic church.

The developments described originated from within the clergy, but rapidly found their way to the ordinary church members. In Simons' view the Catholic *zuil*, being once used as an effective instrument to pass on the traditional norms, values and attitudes, contributed to the spread of new ideas, in this way simultaneously contributing to its own liquidation. He called this 'the reverse functioning of the *zuil*': The opposite functioning of the same socio-cultural mechanisms in various cultural-historical contexts.(29) Growing latitudinarism, doubts about the meaning of the Catholic identity, and a reduced acceptance of authoritarian relations all added to a crumbling of the Catholic *zuil*.

Crucial points in this explanation the questions why this sudden change of opinion among the church leaders took place, and why at that specific moment? How was it possible that a church province which hitherto had been one of the most docile suddenly turned into the most rebellious?

For an explanation Thurlings turned his attention to the emancipation hypothesis (30). By the beginning of the 1950's the emancipation of the Catholics as a previously discriminated group had been completed. Their new position enabled them to develop a certain openness, and to commence a critical evaluation of the own principles, as they no longer were threatened. The internal debate which subsequently developed resulted in a crisis, and strong erosion of the Catholic *zuil*.

Van Heek, sociologist, criticised Thurlings' analysis for omitting the context of the changes in the Catholic Church.(31) In his opinion it was the contradiction between the rigid attitude of the Catholic Church, for example expressed by the Bishop's Charge of 1954, and the development of the 'permissive society' on the other hand, which made conflict unavoidable. Thus the disorganisation of the Catholic church was the consequence of an

opposite movement: the church maintaining its dogmatism in its struggle for a majority position, the outside world developing in the direction of 'the end of ideology', of less stringent morality and of the abolition of authoritarian rule.

The outcome of the sharp conflict between conservatives and progressives was a weakening of the position of the conservatives, and a consequent erosion of organisational networks.

Van Heek's explanation is not very satisfying if we take the time of the two opposite processes into account.

Still, inclusion of external factors in the explanation of the declining position of the Catholic Church seems justified. Neither changes in the thinking of the church leaders nor the wider societal developments would by themselves have been able to bring about a weakening of the position of the Catholic Church. Moreover erosion of the Catholic organisations outside the church did not arise only from changes within the church. External factors also influenced the declining support for Catholic organisations (erosion-hypothesis). A few of them have already been mentioned, such as the necessity to rationalize and expand many welfare institutions, the increased geographical mobility, which brought people of different groups in greater contact with each other, the spread of mass communication means, which confronted people more and more with the opinions of different groups than that to which they belonged themselves, urbanization, polarization of socio-economic relations etc.

3.4. Verzuiling and ontzuiling of the education system - concluding notes

In the preceding sections on tendencies towards verzuiling and ontzuiling we have made only scant reference to the educational system. In the next pages, however, we will concentrate on this. Data on the verzuiling of the educational system will be presented and possible explanations of the relatively weak ontzuiling within the educational system will be discussed. Where available and useful, data will be given at provincial level, the smallest spatial unit for which comparative research on developments of the educational system has been undertaken so far.

Table one of chapter two has shown that during the 19th century the number of independent schools had been growing, though only very slowly. By 1880, when the struggle for equal subsidies reached its peak, a quarter of the pupils attended independent schools. This is a considerable share if one bears in mind that these schools had to be completely financed by the parents. After 1889, when the first coalition cabinet of Catholics and Protestants succeeded in passing a law which stated that the local governments would, under certain conditions make a contribution to the expenses of independent schools, this situation hardly improved.

One of the preconditions was that these independent schools would then have to be open to children of all religions, and this of course ran counter to the ideas behind the struggle for independent schools.

Through subsequent changes of the Education Law partial subsidization of independent schools was made possible. In 1905 the subsidization possibilities were again considerably improved. The independent sector entered a period of rapid growth. Meanwhile in 1900 elementary education had been made compulsory. Although at the end of the century a high attendance level existed, schooling was certainly not universal. From the growth rate of pupils in the first decades of this century it may be concluded that compulsory education did have an impact on enrolment.(32)

In 1917 the equal subsidization of public and independent schools was laid down by constitutional law. From then onwards the proportionality principle would 'rule' the educational system. In the allocation of the necessarily scarce financial resources at the governments's disposal the rule of proportionality found its most important application. Concerning the education system it implied that all schools, independent as well as public, would receive government funds in proportion to the number of pupils enrolled.

Several authors have pointed to the fact that this rule, while solving the politically sensitive problem of allocation of money among the ideological blocks, introduced a certain rigidity in policy-making: many political issues were transformed into a purely administrative matter, for example the decisions about the founding and closure of elementary schools (for secondary schools and institutions of higher education the situation was somewhat different).(33)

After 1920, when the constitutional changes were elaborated in the 1920 Educational Law, the independent schools started a take-over manoeuvre, pushing the public sector increasingly into the defence. The following tables will show how this process took place. They are taken from an article by Knippenberg and Van der Wusten whose analysis I will follow.

The most interesting thing to consider is the distribution of pupils over the different sectors given the proportions of denominational groups in the relevant age groups. In general terms, no Catholic children went to Protestant schools and vice versa, whereas both Catholic and Protestant children could be found in public elementary schools. Table 9 shows the distribution of pupils and the composition of age groups at two crucial moments.

In 1920 the revised Educational Law had just been passed. The year 1970 marked the beginning of a new era because at that date the sharp decline of the birth-rate, which started in 1964, was going to be felt in the primary education system. With the decline in the number of children of school going age, a second wave of competition for pupils between schools of different denominations began. However, apart from the demographic factor there were other factors putting the system under strain. The ontzuiling tendencies contributed to this as well. The effects of both processes only became apparent in the course of the 1970-1980 period.

The overall evolution is clear from table 9. The share of the public elementary schools had been almost halved in the 1920-1970 period while the share of the Catholic sector had practically doubled and the share of the Protestant sector had been considerably increased, in 1970 being equal to the share of the public sector. At the same time the proportion of children from families without religious affiliation had increased at about the same rate. This was the result of ongoing secularization, which raised the percentage of the secular section of the population from 5.0 in 1909 to 23.6 in 1971.(34)

Table 9 can be interpreted as follows. When financial equality was established most pupils were enrolled in public elementary schools, but the independent sector at that stage already made up a sizeable part of the schools.

By 1920 nearly all Orthodox Calvinist families were sending their children to their own independent schools. The Catholic population too had started to build up its school system, but by 1920 only just over half of the Catholic school children were attending this type of schools. Such a small proportion is not surprising if one bears in mind that in the southern, homogeneously Catholic provinces, many public schools were de facto Catholic, lessening the need for independent Catholic schools.

In the same year a minority, probably not more than a third, of the Dutch Reformed children went to independent schools, the rest being educated in public schools where they formed about 50% of the pupils. Half a century later the public sector had further declined because all Catholic children went to their own schools and also because the Protestant sector had increased its share, primarily by attracting a larger part of the Dutch Reformed children. Thus, contrary to what we have found in the preceding section on *verzuiling* in other social sectors, in the education system, the Dutch Reformed population belonged almost entirely to the Protestant *zuil*.

The public elementary schools were now far more homogeneous, the majority of the children coming from families without religious affiliation.

In the next table Knippenberg and Van der Wusten gave the changes per province in the proportionate shares of the different sectors for the years preceding 1920 and the 1920-1928 period.

The years before 1920 showed a strong national trend in the decrease of the share of pupils in the public sector. The Protestant and Catholic sectors were on the increase in most provinces. These processes displayed regional variations, but not as strong as in the subsequent period. In the years 1920-1928 both the decline of the public sector as well as the growth of the Protestant and Catholic sectors accelerated. Moreover these developments showed a much stronger regional variation. The decrease of the public sector share was particularly large in two eastern provinces (Overijssel, Gelderland) and the three southern ones (Zeeland, North Brabant, Limburg). In four of these this was due to the growth of the catholic share, only in Zeeland was it the Protestant sector which profitted from this decline.

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TABLE NINE. NATIONAL SHARES OF PUPILS AND AGE GROUPS, 1920 AND 1970 APPROX. (35)

	no religion	other religion	Dutch Reformed	Reformed++	Catholic	TOTAL
1920 age group	8	7	41	8	36	100
	public	other indep.		Protestant	Catholic	
pupils	55	2		22	21	100

	no religion	other religion	Dutch Reformed	Reformed++	Catholic	TOTAL
1970 age group	23	8	23	7	40	100
	public	other indep.		Protestant	Catholic	
pupils	28	2		28	42	

Source: H. Knippenberg and H. van der Wusten, 1984.

++ The name Reformed refers to what I have called Orthodox Calvinist people.

TABLE TEN . % CHANGES IN THE SHARE OF PUPILS FOR DIFFERENT SECTORS PER PROVINCE 1912-1928 (36)

	public sector		Protestant		Catholic		other independent	
	1912-1920	1920-1928	1912-1920	1920-1928	1912-1920	1920-1928	1912-1920	1920-1928
Groningen	-6	-6	+6	+5	0	+1	0	0
Friesland	-6	-7	+6	+5	+1	+2	-1	0
Drenthe	-7	-8	+7	+6	0	+2	0	0
Overijssel	-7	-19	+5	+8	+3	+11	-1	0
Gelderland	-6	-16	+2	+6	+2	+12	+2	-2
Utrecht	-6	-10	-2	+7	+5	+5	+3	-2
N-Holland	-5	-8	0	+3	+4	+4	+1	+1
S-Holland	-4	-10	+1	+6	+1	+4	+2	0
Zeeland	-9	-17	+4	+9	+4	+8	+1	0
N-Brabant	-9	-21	0	+1	+9	+19	0	+1
Limburg	-6	-19	+1	+3	+5	+16	0	0
Netherlands	-6	-13	+2	+5	+3	+9	+1	-1

Source: Knippenberg and h. van der Wusten, 1984

Finally in table 11 regression equations for 1920 and 1970 are given for three educational sectors, with the denominational distribution as independent variable. The analysis takes into account the 11 provinces.

In 1920 the share per province of the pupils in the public sector could be explained for roughly 60% by the number of children of school going age from families without religious affiliation or with a Dutch Reformed background. In the province of Utrecht the public sector had lost far more than its share, whereas two of the more peripheral provinces had gained in 1920 far more than their expected share of pupils in the public elementary school. These relatively strong positive and negative deviations have been caused by regional differences in the mobilization of the Catholic and Protestant population sectors for the purpose of establishing their own schools. The Protestant sector was relatively well predicted by the proportion of Orthodox Calvinist children, the Catholic sector was even better indicated by the proportion of Catholic children. As a complement to the extreme decrease of the public sector share in the province of Utrecht, both the Protestant and the Catholic sector were overrepresented here in 1920 compared to their predicted values and it was the outlying provinces of Groningen and Limburg that were underrepresented here. North Brabant showed a high positive residual, a trend already established in the sixties. This trend was largely explained by the fact that girls in particular attended schools run by the Catholic Church.

Table eleven. Regressions of age groups on pupil shares per province for 1920 and 1970 (37)

<u>Public sector</u>	x = no religion + Dutch Reformed	
1920	y = 0.4 x + 36.65	r = 0.773
	largest residuals:	+ Limburg, Drente - Utrecht
1970	y = 0.82x - 7.59	r = 0.948
	largest residuals	+ Groningen - Utrecht
<u>Protestant</u>	x = Orthodox protestant	
1920	y = 1.41 x + 7.36	r = 0.874
	largest residuals:	+ Utrecht, Gelderland - Groningen, Limburg
1970	y = 1.95x + 13.16	r = 0.811
	largest residuals	+ Utrecht, Gelderland, South Holland - North Brabant, Limburg
<u>Catholic</u>	x = Catholic	
1920	y = 0.6x - 0.42	r = 0.975
	largest residuals:	+ North Brabant, Utrecht, North Holland - Limburg
1970	y = 1.01x - 2.3	r = 0.991
	largest residual:	+ Overijssel

The picture arising from the tables 10 and 11 does not immediately confirm Daalder's hypothesis on regional variations in the beginning of the verzuiling. (38) His idea was that in areas of a mainly latitudinarian and increasingly secular orientation (parts of Friesland, Groningen, Drenthe and North Holland, a few areas in Gelderland and Overijssel) and in areas of a mixed religious character (predominantly in the West, but also in Utrecht, Gelderland and parts of Friesland) the verzuiling took place at an earlier date than in other regions.

For the educational sector this seems true as far as the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland, North Holland and North Brabant are concerned (these showed positive residuals for the prediction of the proportion of Orthodox

Calvinist and Catholic pupils). The other regions mentioned in the hypothesis did not deviate substantially from the national trend.

Knippenberg and Van der Wusten argued that a centre-periphery dimension could be of use for the interpretation of the regional pattern of progress in the independent sector and the complementary retreat of the public sector. The idea was that those in favour of the independent schools were first heard in the more central part of the country as a consequence of propagandist strategies or on account of the fact that these regions would more easily be reached by mobilization efforts from a national centre.

Both ideas however, need further examination. Firstly it is necessary to analyse the quantitative developments in both sectors of the school system of this period for smaller spatial units to be able to distinguish trends for different regions within provinces, since provincial data apparently give too general a picture. Secondly the hypothetical regionalisation put forward by Daalder needs refinement if it is to be matched with the results of the first analysis. Thirdly it has to be examined whether national organisations, supposedly having their headquarters in the centre provinces, supported local initiatives to establish schools.

In 1970 the public elementary school had considerably declined in importance but the proportion of non religious and Dutch Reformed people in the population predicted the share of the public sector far better than in 1920. Moreover the public elementary school had become the domain of a much more uniform population as regards its ideological background. Prediction of the Protestant sector by the Orthodox Calvinist age group had somewhat decreased, apparently because this sector attracted pupils from other small (Orthodox) Protestant population sectors. Prediction of the Catholic sector share by the Catholic children of school going age was still very strong.

Both sectors, the Protestant and the Catholic one, were able to maintain their share until the 1970's. Relevant declines in the size of these denominational groups due to secularization did not take place. On the contrary, the Catholic population group increased by some 5.0 points between 1920 and 1970 because of demographic factors.(39)

Other factors, such as changes in settlement patterns, segmental mobilization and depillarization did not erode the share of the Catholic and Protestant sectors either. Secularization only brought about changes within the group attending the public school, consequently it did not affect the distribution over the three sectors.

Unfortunately Knippenberg and Van der Wusten were unable to include the 1970-1980 period in their analysis, This was mainly due to the fact that no census has been held since 1971, hence the distribution of the population (and the different age groups within the population) over the various denominations was not known.

However, the general impression given in the literature was that the school system was the last bastion of the *verzuiling*. Even if the *zuilen* were being eroded on all sides from the mid 1960's onwards, in the school system this was only notable in the course of the 1970-1980 decade, and even then this tendency was only very weak. The public sector experienced a 4%

growth in these years, the Catholic sector lost 5%.(40) The Protestant zuij, where the ontzuiling started later and developed much slower, has been able to maintain its position up to now.

Van Wersch gave some figures (not for pupils but for schools) which illustrate this.

Table twelve. Share of elementary schools according to sector, 1957 and 1977 (41)

	confessional			non confessional		total
	cath.	prot.	total	public	independent	
1957	36.4	28.9	65.3	32.7	2.0	34.7
1977	32.3	31.1	63.4	34.2	2.4	36.6

In the first instance an explanation for this deviating pattern (compared to other social sectors) seems to be found in Thurling's idea that the ontzuiling had (just as the verzuiling process in the past) a differential character, that is, some sectors would experience an ontzuiling-process at an earlier stage than others, depending on the importance of their function in keeping the system stable. Just as the education system was one of the first sectors where organisation along religious dividing lines took place, because of its importance in the transmission of values, it was the last sector to be influenced by the ontzuiling trend. The education sector was apparently the only sector where the organisational verzuiling still had a certain logic. But when we examined the difference between the real organisational verzuiling and the verzuiling preference, relevant discrepancies came to the fore. A few studies have demonstrated that, in comparison with other sectors, the verzuiling preference was strongest with regard to (elementary education) but that signs of a decline existed even in this sector. Although many parents belonging to a church still show a strong preference for denominational schools as shown in table 13, this percentage had decreased by 15 points in the 1966-1975 period. The greatest change occurred between 1966 and 1977, a period of many rapid changes in Dutch society (see for example the changes in the party system, section 3.3)

Table thirteen. Opinion of those belonging to a denomination, on the relation between religion and enrolment of one's children in a specific type of elementary school(42)

	1966	1977	1975
public school	17.2	14.7	14.8
confessional school	76.1	60.4	61
does not matter	5.3	24.1	21.8
don't know	1.1	0.9	2.4
	N =819	N =1593	N =1112

Hence around 1970 there was a considerable difference between the actual verzuiling behaviour of parents belonging to a church (nearly all of them sent their children to denominational schools) and their verzuiling preference. This implied that major changes in the direction of ontzuiling of the elementary school system are most likely still to come. These changes however, if they are to occur, will not be the same for the different denominations. Research among Catholic and Protestant parents has pointed to substantial differences of preferences: catholic parents tending much more to prefer public or interconfessional schools for their children, while among the protestant group the verzuiling preference is still rather strong.

What could possibly be the reasons for the persistence of the organisational verzuiling in the education sector? In the preceding section we mentioned a few of the factors contributing to the maintenance of the organisational verzuiling which might also have applied to the school system.

Firstly there was the fact that the elementary school provided the most important instrument for an institutionalized religious socialisation, apart from the churches themselves. The figures given in table 13 showed a decreasing verzuiling preference but they should be interpreted with caution. Research has proved that some parents who expressed the wish not to send their children to a school of Catholic identity still did so because they valued religious education in general. For lack of an alternative school of non-exclusive Catholic character, for example an ecumenical school, they opted for a Catholic or Protestant school.(43)

But it was not only the parents who valued this religious socialising aspect, the churches too continued to show their interest in denominational education. Even in 1977 the Dutch Bishops expressed in an open letter their wish to maintain catholic schools. Hence the strong organisational verzuiling in the education system may have resulted from tendencies which made the denominational school still acceptable.

A second factor was that, unlike some other non profit sectors, in the education system, at least at elementary school level, it has not been necessary to expand units. In the secondary school system however, diversification of the curriculum has made larger units necessary, and consequently many schools had to merge. In some cases this brought along with it an abandonment of the specifically Catholic or Protestant character of the school.

Another point was that an elementary school provided a service with a very low threshold-value, which could always be met in a period of demographic expansion. Hence there was no need for mergers which might endanger their identity. However, since the decline in the birth-rate reached the elementary school system the situation changed. This occurred particularly in rural areas. Because of a shortage of pupils more and more schools had either to close down or to merge with another school nearby. This trend caused considerable changes in the share of the different sectors.

Thirdly it was possible that in this period many schools were Catholic or Protestant in name only, and in reality had a neutral character.

In this case neither the teaching personnel nor the parents attached too much value to the denominational character of the school.

Van Wersch noticed this phenomenon in other areas of the non profit sector, but in these government policy concerning subsidies to private organisations too, played a role. Private organisations were obliged to offer their services to everyone regardless of denominational preference if they wanted to be considered for state-aid. This rule did not apply to the educational system. Schoolboards of independent schools had the right to refuse pupils on the ground of this ideological/religious orientation. But with a shrinking market it was not very likely that schools would restrict their potential 'clientele'. On the contrary, just like many other non profit institutions, they had to try in every possible way to attract consumers, in order to survive. In particular in the bigger cities this led to the denominational side of a school sometimes being deliberately pushed into the background to attract more children of moslem migrant workers.

Fourthly the power of the school boards needs mention. As Van Wersch noticed, the decision to maintain or abandon the religious identity of a school was often in the hands of the members of these boards. These members did not easily give up the religious identity of the school, if only, for procedural reasons, they did not belong to the most progressive part of those concerned with the school.(44) There are good reasons to assume that the verzuiling preference was much stronger among members of schoolboards than among parents. The strong position of the denominational education sector will at least be partly defined by the power politics of the schoolboards and their peak-organisations.

Concluding notes

Verzuiling of the education system is still very strong, stronger than in any other sector of society. That Catholic and Protestant parents are very much attached to their own schools is not surprising, since a large part of socialisation takes place in the formal education system. Despite the fact that nearly all these parents send their children to schools of their denomination, we have noticed some signs of a possible future reversal of the structural verzuiling in the education system.

Most significant in this respect was a survey undertaken by the Social Cultural Planning Agency (45) demonstrating that since 1966 the share of the denominational education for their children to public education, declined considerably.

Hence when we consider the structural verzuiling and the verzuiling preference at the same time, we get contradictory impressions.

One of the explanations given in the literature (46) for these divergent trends is that the survey of the Social and Cultural Planning Agency gave evidence of verbal attitudes only, and that it was not certain, that those parents saying that they did not attach to much importance to confessional education would actually send their children to a public school if asked to do so.

This line of reasoning would imply that the interest catholic and Protestant parents have in denominational education is still high, despite the figures on the verzuiling preference. More probably however, is that we have to interpret the results of this survey as a declining interest in denominational education.

Other parts of the literature (47) suggest that the high structural verzuiling of the school system does not result so much from a still high collective demand by the parents for denominational education as well from the continuous action on the side of the schoolboards of independent schools, confessional education interest organisations and Catholic and Protestant policy makers to keep the situation as it is, opposing trends towards secularization and deconfessionalisation that account for the declining support for denominational schools.

Both on local and national government levels these agents have connections with politicians and administrators belonging to the confessional parties, who support them in this attempt. It seems that the school controversy in the Netherlands is largely a struggle to maintain existing positions of power and to maintain the status quo between independent and public education.

The question can then be raised whether the defense of independent schools is undertaken from fear of erosion of denominational education or whether the juridical form of independent schools is at stake (48). Clearly, the juridical base of independent schools puts the schoolboards in a powerful position as compared with those directly involved in the school, the parents the teachers, and the head of the school. Schoolboards of independent schools are able to refuse any potential members who are not strictly in favour of denominational education and independent education in general. They are also in the position to define to what extent teachers and parents are allowed to participate in formulating the day-to-day and long-term policies of the school (49).

Some of the evidence supporting this argument can be found in the fact that schoolboards of independent schools often try to enroll as many children as possible, regardless of their religious affiliation. In particular, in the older quarters of the large towns, inhabited by many migrant workers from Marocco and Turkey and immigrants from Suriname, the religious orientation of the school is often suppressed, so as not to scare away these potential pupils. This is not to say that for those having positions of control in the independent sector, the religious identity of the school does not matter, only that other motives also play a role in the defence of the independent school.

In the introduction of this paper the issue was raised of the different ways in which concern about independent/private education is expressed in France and the Netherlands. It is clear that with regard to the Netherlands we can not simply say that a decline in the verzuiling preference, thus in the interest in private education, among parents is the reason that they do not belong to those most involved in the politics around the relation between private and independent education.

On the contrary, analysis of the historical development towards freedom of education, of the central position of denominational education in the overall structure of *verzuiling* and the little extent to which it is affected by *ontzuiling* processes, make clear that the existence of independent education is not questioned by any group in Dutch society. This might very well explain why the debate on the school system arouses much less emotions among the public (both those in favour of independent education and those in favour of public education) than it does in France. Parents do in some cases resist closure of independent schools whenever it is a school attended by their own children, but rarerly this protest arises from the situation that it is no longer possible to provide them with independent education.

Other situations in which mobilisation of parents does take place are found in the southern, until recently overwhelmingly Catholic, provinces. Here the share of secular and Protestant (due to geographical mobility) population is growing and these inhabitants exert an increasing strong demand for own public and Protestant schools. Particularly when it concerns public schools parents do not seldomly face a sharp political conflict, often stretching out over a considerable number of years against the Catholic dominated municipal administrations.

The new schoolstruggle, resulting from growing secularization and demographic changes, does not give rise to mass mobilization because the right to independent/private education (and to the material preconditions for private education to exist) is deeply rooted in Dutch society since the beginning of this century. In general we can conclude that whereas 'la guerre scolaire' in France is a struggle waged by the consumers of education, 'de stille schoolstrijd' (50) in the Netherlands is mainly a struggle of the suppliers of denominational education.

Notes to chapter three

- 1) H. Knippenberg and H. van der Wusten, The primary schoolsystem in the Netherlands 1900-1980, Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 1984/3.
- 2) Val R. Lorwin, Segmented pluralism; ideological cleavages and political cohesion in the smaller European Democracies, from: Comparative Politics, Jan. 1971, p.148.
- 3) Val R. Lorwin, 1971, p.155.
- 4) Following S.Stuurman, Verzuiling, Kapitalisme en Patriarchaat, Nijmegen 1983, p.59 and p.183.
- 5) G.Geissman, Politieke Struktur und Regierungssystem in der Niederlanden, Bd 4, Kölner Schriften zur Politischen Wissenschaft, Frankfurt am Main-Bonn, 1964.
- 6) H.Daalder, The Netherlands: opposition in a segmented society, from: R.A.Dahl, Political oppositions in Western Democracies, New Haven, p. 425. Daalder does not specify the type of schools included in his table. A comparison with the data given by Idenburg makes clear that Daalder's table does concern elementary education only.
- 7) The Liberal Catholic faction of the 1840's started its own newspaper De Tijd in 1845. In the same period another, more radical, group of Catholics existed around De Stemmen. J.M.G. Thurlings. De wankele zuil, 1978, p. 26-27.
- 8) J.M.G. Thurlings, 1978, p.9.
- 9) J.P. Kruyt and W. Goddijn, Verzuiling en ontzuiling als sociologisch proces, from: A.J.N. den Hollander e.a. (ed.), Drift en koers. Een halve eeuw sociale verandering in Nederland, Assen, 1968. As the indices Kruyt and Goddijn developed and the tables they presented have already been discussed at several places they will be summarized here and only briefly commented on. See for prior discussion for example R. Steiniger, Polarisierung und Integration. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung nach der strukturelle Versäulung in der Niederlanden und in Österreich, Meisenheim am Glan, 1975, p. 109-122.
- 10) This adaptation of Kruyt's table is given by R.Steiniger, 1975, p.115-119. Kruyt presented figures according to denomination and non confessional ideology, distinguishing four Protestant strands and a number of other ideological groups. A disadvantage of these detailed distinctions was that they did not say what was understood by verzuiling, namely that it was organisation on the basis of the Catholic or Protestant ideology. Therefore figures on the four Protestant orientations were added, while the information on other churches/ideological groups was omitted. The data reflected the 1956-situation, thus the period in which the verzuiling reached its culmination, and they only concerned national (peak-) organisations.
- 11) Adaptation of the table given by Kruyt and Goddijn. J.P. Kruyt and W.Goddijn, Verzuiling en ontzuiling als sociologisch proces, from: A.J.N. den Hollander (ed.), Drift en Koers. Een halve eeuw sociale verandering in Nederland. Assen, 1968.p. 244-245.

The eighth sphere of activity is the press. This sphere of activity is omitted in table four because there are only few national press organisations.

- 12) J.P. Kruyt and W. Goddijn, 1968, p. 241.
I follow the translation of the term 'vullingsgraad' given by Andeweg. R. Andeweg, Dutch voters adrift, on explanations of electoral change (1963-1977). Leiden 1982, p.48
- 13) R.Steiniger, 1975. p.119. Steiniger slightly altered this definition, taking it to be the percentage of organised people of a certain denomination which joined an organisation of the same denomination (in a certain sphere of activity). In other words, he excluded the people who did not join any organisation in this sphere of activity at all. In commenting on this alteration he noticed that concerning the activity 'parental choice of elementary school' (see table six) it did not make a difference which definition was used, for all parents with children of schoolgoing age belong to the group of 'organised' since elementary education was made compulsory.
- 14) Table given by Kruyt and Goddijn, adapted by Steiniger. R. Steiniger, 1975, p. 120 (partly).
- 15) Steiniger referred to the Gereformeerde Kerken as 'reformed'. However, I use my own translation, calling members of the Gereformeerde Kerken 'Orthodox Calvinists'. See also chapter two, note 10.
- 16) This is explained by the fact that the Dutch Reformed Church consisted of two clearly distinguishable groups, a latitudinarian and an orthodox one.
- 17) Since during these years compulsory voting still existed there was a negligible discrepancy between the eligible electorate of a denomination and the number of valid votes cast by people of this denomination. So in this case Steiniger's and Kruyt's definitions are the same
- 18) I only present part of Andeweg's table, i.e. data for the 1948-1963 period. R. Andeweg, 1981. p.50.
- 19) H. Bakvis, Catholic power in the Netherlands, Montreal, 1981, p. 2-5.
- 20) The very different position of the two Dutch Reformed groups is shown in a table by S.M. Lipset, Political man; The social bases of politics, Garder City-New York, 1960, p.245.
- 21) J.P. Kruyt and W. Goddijn, 1968. p. 243.
- 22) He worked out this idea n 'The politics of accomodation' Los Angelos/Berkeley, 1968.
- 23) R. Andeweg, 1981. p. 18
- 24) R.Andeweg, Dutch voters adrift, Leiden, 1982, p.196.
- 25) R.Andeweg, 1982, p.41.
- 26) R.Steiniger, 1975, p.130-131.
- 27) P.van Wersch, 1979, p.38-39.
- 28) J.M.G. Thurlings, De ontzuiling in Nederland, in het bijzonder van het Nederlands katholicisme, from: De Sociologische Gids, 1979/6, and E. Simons, De wonderbaarlijke verzuiling; de ongewenste gevolgen van een rooms kultuurgoed, from: Intermediair, 19/8/1983, p.21-23.
- 29) E.Simons, 1983, p. 23.
- 30) See for discussion of this hypothesis chapter 3, note 3.

- 31) F.van Heek, Van hoogkapitalisme naar verzorgingsstaat, 1973, p.250-253. See for Thurlings answer to Van Heek: J.M.G. Thurlings, De wankele zuil, second edition, 1978, p.218-225
- 32) See H. Knippenberg and H. van der Wusten, 1984, table two.
- 33) A. Lijphart, The politics of Accomodation, pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands, Berkeley/Los Angelos, 1968, p. 127-128; M. Santema, het 33) schoolrichtingenvraagstuk 1, from: Intermediair 26/10/73, p.33.
- 34) R.Andeweg, 1981, p. 42-47.
- 35) H. Knippenberg and H.H. van der Wusten, 1984, table 1. For the sources of these figures and the definitional problems met see p.11-12.
- 36) H. Knippenberg and H.H. van der Wusten, 1984, table 3.
- 37) H. Knippenberg and H.H. van der Wusten, 1984, table 4.
- 38) H. Daalder, 1981, p. 228-231.
- 39) R.Andeweg, 1981, p.42.
- 40) H. Knippenberg and H. van der Wusten, 1984, p. 18.
- 41) P.van Wersch, 1979, p.38.
- 42) P.van Wersch, 1979, p.47.
- 43) J.J.A. van Kemenade, De katholieken en hun onderwijs. Een sociologisch onderzoek naar de betekenis van katholiek onderwijs onder ouders en docenten, Nijmegen 1968, p.145.
- 44) For example in the catholic sector only those who want to subscribe to all aims of the catholic school and are willing to take the Bishop's policy concerning religious education into account, can be members of a schoolboard. J.M.G. Leune, Besluitvorming in het onderwijsbestel, from: J.A. van Kemenade, Onderwijs, bestel en beleid, 1981, p. 416.
- 45) Sociaal en Cultureel Planburo, Sociaal Cultureel Rapport 1976, Rijswijk, 1977.
- 46) See among others J.A. van Kemenade, De katholieken en hun onderwijs. Een sociologisch onderzoek naar de betekenis van katholiek onderwijs onder ouders en docenten, Nijmegen, 1968.
- 47) P.van Wersch, 1979, p.51-53.
- 48) F. van Schoten and H. Wansink, De nieuwe schoolstrijd. Knelpunten en conflicten in de hedendaagse onderwijspolitiek, Utrecht/Antwerpen, 1984.
- 49) F. van Schoten and H. Wansink, 1984, p.
- 50) De stille schoolstrijd = the silent school struggle

List of abbreviations

ARP	Anti Revolutionaire Partij (Orthodox Calvinists)
CDA	Christen Democratisch Appel (merger of former ARP, CHU and KVP, founded in 1977)
CHU	Christelijk Historische Unie (Orthodox Dutch Reformed)
EVC	Eenheids Vak Centrale (communist oriented labour union federation existing just after W.O.II.)
GPV	Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond (Orthodox Calvinists)
KNP	Katholieke Nationale Partij (Catholics)
KVP	Katholieke Volks Partij (Catholics)
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid (Social Democrats, after W.O. II.)
SDAP	Sociaal Democratische Arbeiders Partij (Social Democrats before W.O.II.)
SGP	Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (Orthodox Calvinists)
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (Liberals)

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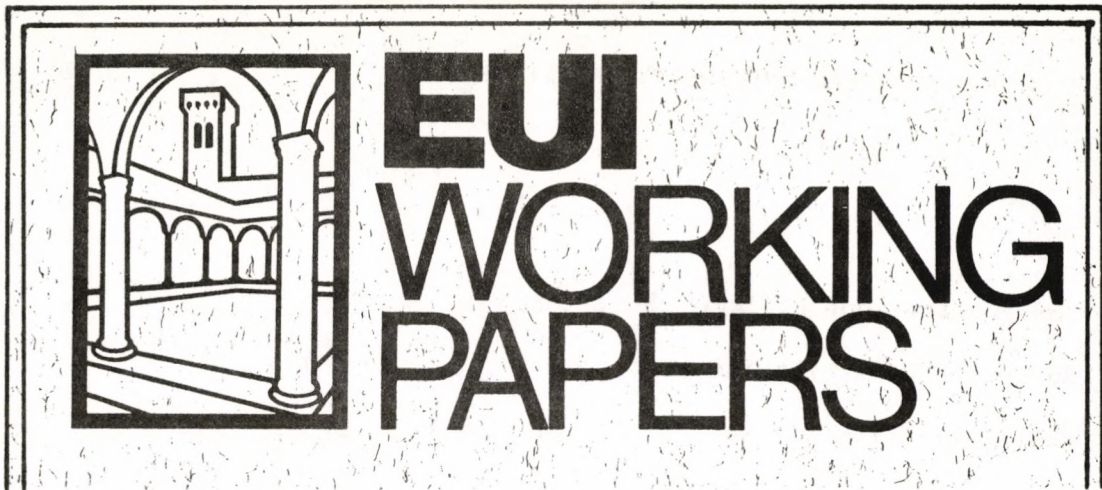
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