



**THE POLITICS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM
IN FRANCE, 1918-1940**

JOHN E. TALBOTT

The effort in France to democratize the educational system, particularly in the secondary schools, and to reform the traditional educational structure laid down by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century and completed by Napoleon and other reformers in the nineteenth century is described. The full background of political and social history in France between the two major wars of the twentieth century is considered, for no educational system can be understood in isolation from the society that creates it. The benevolently authoritarian political style of the Fifth Republic, for example, differs enormously from the ineffectual conduct of parliamentary politics under the Third Republic, and these conditions have impinged in quite different and drastic ways on the process of educational reform.

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