

## ARTICLE

# Public education in Condorcet's work and its vicissitude

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### ABSTRACT

The project aims to address the educational work of Condorcet from two problems. The first is the relationship between the educational principles of the author, such as freedom, secularism, gratuity and universality of teaching. The second is the comparison between his two works: *Cinco Memórias Sobre a Instrução Pública* and *Instrução Pública e Organização do Ensino*, in order to analyze similarities and differences between the two. We seek to compare those works because of the dissonance in the literature on the subject, for while Cahen states that there is no substantial difference between the two works, Albertone highlights that, in a comparison between the two works, the Project seems to have greater social sensitivity than the Memoirs, thus demonstrating a discontinuity between the works.

### KEYWORDS

Condorcet; public education; philosophy of education; history of education; school culture.

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## A INSTRUÇÃO PÚBLICA EM CONDORCET E SUAS VICISSITUDES

### RESUMO

O projeto objetiva abordar a obra educacional de Condorcet a partir de dois problemas. O primeiro é a relação entre os princípios educacionais do autor, como: liberdade, laicidade, gratuidade e universalidade de ensino. O segundo é a comparação entre as suas duas obras: *Cinco Memórias Sobre a Instrução Pública* e *Instrução Pública e Organização do Ensino*, tendo em vista analisar semelhanças e diferenças entre ambas. Buscamos a comparação entre as obras devido à dissonância na literatura sobre o tema, pois, enquanto Cahen afirma que não há qualquer diferença substancial entre as duas obras, Albertone destaca que, em uma comparação entre as duas obras, o Projeto parece ter maior sensibilidade social do que as Memórias, demonstrando, assim, uma descontinuidade entre as obras.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Condorcet; instrução pública; filosofia da educação; história da educação; cultura escolar.

## LA INSTRUCCIÓN PÚBLICA EN CONDORCET Y SUS VICISITUDES

### RESUMEN

El objetivo del proyecto es abordar la obra educativa de Condorcet desde dos problemas. El primero es la relación entre los principios educativos del autor, como: libertad, laicidad, gratuidad y universalidad de la enseñanza. El segundo es la comparación entre sus dos obras: *Cinco Memórias Sobre a Instrução Pública* e *Instrução Pública e Organização do Ensino*, con el fin de analizar las similitudes y diferencias entre ambas. Se busca comparar las obras respecto la disonancia en la literatura sobre el tema, pues, ya que mientras Cahen afirma no haber ninguna diferencia sustancial entre las dos obras, Albertone destaca que, en una comparación entre las dos obras, el Proyecto parece tener una mayor sensibilidade social que las Memorias, demostrando aí una discontinuidad entre las obras.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Condorcet; instrucción pública; filosofía de la educación; historia de la educación; cultura escolar.

## INTRODUCTION

It is possible to say that the right to education came to light, at first, aiming to extend the school to the entire child population. In this regard, school was considered a foundation in the construction of nationality and the idea of homeland. Emblematically, the French Revolution promoted the culmination of such ideals, bequeathing to our time educational projects that clearly interact with state pedagogy, *i.e.* public pedagogy, intended to forge the deepest meaning of citizenship. Condorcet is an author who followed this path. His works are symptomatic of the crisis in the Ancien Régime and the emergence of a new civil order, with a new statute, which sought to be implemented under the banner of democracy.

Our author deserves some considerations. Condorcet lived through two distinct times: the peak of the French Enlightenment, even participating in the Encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert, and the radical part of the French Revolution — the Terror. He was born in Aisne, France, in 1743. From an early age, he took an interest in intellectual life, first as a mathematician, when he published an essay on integral calculus. His writings about math earned him a seat in the *Académie des Sciences*. At the age of 31, due to his closeness to Turgot, he assumed the office of inspector general of the Coin House in Paris; his last great contribution before the Revolution was his analysis of the likelihood of decisions regarding the elections.

After the Revolution, Condorcet became more dedicated to emerging issues of his time, first writing the *Memoirs on Public Instruction* and later participating in the Public Instruction Committee of the Legislative Assembly — decisively contributing to the final report of the committee. Aside from the most pressing matters, Condorcet also devoted himself to one last great work, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, which analyzes the different stages of humanity and how we can notice progress in the history of humankind.

Condorcet's educational work is considered by critics to be one of the best theoretical condensations on state public education at the time of its emergence, becoming a milestone for subsequent national educational projects: "in this sense, [Condorcet's proposal] is a classic work on the development of public education and political pedagogy" (Luzuriaga, 1959, p. 77).

However, this first contact with the author's work, seeking the emergence of modern school education and the comparison with previous school systems conceals some nuances within his own writings.

As he lived in an era of intense transformation, we could infer that our author has not escaped unscathed from this whirlwind of events. Despite the interval of no more than two years between the writing of his main educational texts, we underline that, in revolutionary times, this is more than enough time to create and depose secular powers.

This inquiry about Condorcet's consistency in his main pedagogical writings led us to analyze his two main educational works — *Five Memoirs on Public Instruction* and *Report (Rapport) and Draft Decree on the General Organization of Public Instruction* — aiming to establish possible similarities and differences between them and, thus, perceive changes in the author's educational conceptions.

Since *Memoirs* have a more philosophical and in-depth approach, we chose it as the baseline to rebuild the author's educational thought. Next, we focused on analyzing *Rapport* to compare both works.

Before investigating the details of *Memoirs*, we should note that his more specific considerations — for instance, how teachers are chosen for each level of instruction — are grounded on philosophical principles and moral values, as shown in the following excerpt: “I will now outline the plan for a common instruction, as I understand it, and develop the principles that will serve as its basis, as they become necessary to encourage the various provisions of common instruction” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 109). It is not by chance that, to help others grasp the specificities of his educational project, he saves his first memoir to address the social and human value of the French Revolution, the enlightenment that grew stronger in his time, and the fundamental place of education in the development of society.

## FIRST MEMOIR: THE NEED FOR AN INSTRUCTION ORGANIZED BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR

We will use this memoir to discuss two topics: the necessity of instruction organized by the public sector and the importance of limiting the public sector with respect to education.

Condorcet (1993) emphasizes that effective equality among citizens is only possible through public instruction, since legal rights do not provide individuals with the knowledge required to live with autonomy and based on reasoning. Doubtlessly, equal rights are a singular achievement for humans, a symbol of enlightenment. Nevertheless, the author warns us: “Those who do not know how to write and ignore the arithmetic really depend on the more educated person, whom they have to consult repeatedly” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 63).

In this regard, we clarify that, in addition to promoting equality among citizens, public instruction should also take into account individuality in the educational process. Since the author discusses equal rights (as a possibility not in effect) and instruction (as a way of implementing this equality), we are led to think of the latter as a uniform training process. This is absolutely not the case, as it will be divided into several professions, sciences, skills, and individual talents.

Still on equality in the educational system, we believe it is important to clarify an issue in his work: although he defends that public instruction should be a means of ensuring equality among people, this guarantee has limits. First, we have the limitation of the parents' freedom of enrolling their children in schools: the state cannot force them to do it<sup>1</sup> — that would be fixing a problem by creating another.

Another limitation is the social condition of each child. Since school takes up the children's time, socially disadvantaged parents often do not want their children

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1 This does not mean, however, that the state cannot impose rules in the educational system, since, as we will see, all parents have to pay a proportional amount of their income for the maintenance of public instruction.

to attend school, as they are important for the family's subsistence. Condorcet (1993) attempts to solve this problem by arguing that parents would send their children to school when they realized that schooling would provide better living conditions for the family. Nevertheless, we know that this solution is not enough, given that children were usually, in fact, necessary for the family's immediate survival, and parents had no conditions to make such long-term investment. Considering this scenario, Condorcet (1993) defends the offer of scholarships to the best students: if children of disadvantaged families were good students, they would be able to continue their studies supported by the national treasury. Even in this situation, however, parents would still need children to complement their income, thus not ensuring that they would send the child to school. Furthermore, such scholarships are not a solution to inequality provided that, even if some children of poor parents were enrolled in the second level of schooling based on their exceptional skills, several rich children would be enrolled without these same talents, confirming the inequality in access to school. In this context, *Memoirs* shows that more than equality limited by each person's natural aptitudes, we would have equality limited by social status.

Next, Condorcet (1993) contrasts instruction with public education; education would be a means to impose particular and arbitrary values, representing a threat to the subject's freedom, since the political power, despite having not demonstrated the strength of its values, would impose a way of acting, depriving the individual of the freedom of following their beliefs. In the case of instruction, however, given that teachings are presumably based on objective truths, the person, by accepting these truths, would not be in any way forced or violated, as they would just be following their natural path. We should also highlight that public education would hurt parents' rights because only they have the right to guide their children in what is not established.

## SECOND MEMOIR: REFERENCE FOR GRADUATE INSTRUCTION

In his second memoir, Condorcet (1993) divides public instruction into three levels. The first would be responsible for giving children the possibility to take future public positions and develop their independence from others. This level would last four years. The first year would gradually teach reading and writing: from letters to words to sentences to texts. In addition, it would teach stories with lessons for children to develop their moral sense — foundations for their personal development and the welfare of society. In the second year, moral stories would be better explored, and arithmetic rules would be explained. The third year would develop the moral principles of stories so that children could discover them by themselves, without imposing on them a definite meaning. The fourth year would explain moral principles, introduce the declaration of human rights, and teach some agriculture and arts in general.

Of note, although Condorcet (1993) stressed that instruction must be confined to what is universal, without entering the realm of individual opinions, he defends the dissemination of moral values. Religious opinions could be left to the discretion of individuals, but not morality, which would act as the foundation for the enlightenment, preventing youth corruption.

Condorcet (1993) does not clarify the requirements to start the second school level. We know it would involve a selection because, while first-level schools would be distributed to each village, there would be only one second-level school in each district. Although social status is one of the reasons for this narrowing, it is not the only one; skills are also considered, which is explained in: “The amount of knowledge that should be provided to each person must be proportional not only to the time they can devote to studies but to the strength of their attention, the extent and duration of their memory, the ease and accuracy of their intelligence” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 76).

Condorcet (1993) underlines the narrowing of schooling over the years and rejects the possibility of its universalization at all levels. Similarly to Talleyrand, he argues that only the first level of instruction should be universal, while the others should reach a small number of people. Nonetheless, this narrowing is not always perceived in his work, as all levels of instruction are funded by the public sector, being therefore free for its recipients, unlike Talleyrand, who defends paid schooling since its most elementary level.

In *Memoirs*, the narrowing cannot be understood as a reflection of the gradualism with which the project intends to be implemented (defending better conditions for the educational system over time), as observed in: “we would be fooling ourselves if we believed that we could reap the fruits of a better-composed education since its first years or make it reach its full potential at the time of its establishment” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 218). We cannot find therein a proposal of universalization of all levels of instruction because the progression refers only to the preparation of parents and the improvement in the quality of books and resources necessary for public instruction. On the other hand, the narrowing in school access is a principle of Condorcet’s educational conception, based on the difference in talents among individuals. According to what Condorcet understood as equal opportunities, the most talented individuals would be promoted from a lower level of schooling to the next.

Condorcet (1993) divides the second school level into two segments — common instruction, which is the continuation of the first level of schooling, and scientific instruction. With respect to common instruction, the course would involve elementary mathematics, natural history, physics, political science, history, geography, metaphysics, logic, and morals. The objective of this common part would be to convey more thoroughly the general knowledge needed for public life.

Scientific instruction is divided into four parts: moral and political sciences, physical sciences, mathematics, and lastly, history, geography, and grammar. He dismisses the systematic treatment of content that would be taught at this second school level. Instead, he discusses the general principles of science teaching. This second level of instruction establishes that the principle for choosing its content should be related to everyday life; thus, math should be taught from the perspective of political arithmetic, trade, and manufacturing. However, we underline that the intent is not to specialize the student, teaching them only the practical uses of such knowledge, but to emphasize the scientific theoretical foundation as well.

Next, Condorcet (1993) addresses the third level of schooling. Each department<sup>2</sup> (which comprised three to nine districts) would have a school, and the disciplines would be the same as those of the second level, with the difference that they would be more comprehensive and have more teachers to explain each part of science.

In this *Memoir*, we also have the defense that all levels of the educational system should be supported by the public sector, even the most advanced ones. The resources would originate from the proportional contribution of families — the rich would pay a higher amount, but it would be proportionally the same as the poor, based on their income. This would be the only way to protect the nation's interests because if the public sector left the family in charge of instruction, the rich would hire the best teachers for their children, while the poor would not have access to quality schooling.

Concerning teachers, the author sees the constitution of teacher corporations or associations as corrupting educational elements. According to him, if we allowed the existence of these associations, teachers would tend to protect themselves, electing only their colleagues and rejecting theories that were particularly distasteful to them, preventing the enhancement of science and humankind. Nevertheless, he defends the existence of companies of scholars (one for each French department). These companies would aim to develop science, methods, theories, and scientific observations; they would have the task of advancing the nation's enlightenment.

Condorcet (1993) argues that these companies would not be corrupted by corporate behavior, even if their members elected their peers, since, if they adopted false theories, the public opinion would scorn them over time, destroying what they cherish most: the recognition of their work.

### THIRD MEMOIR: INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

In the third memoir, Condorcet tackles the subject of adult instruction. This part of schooling would be destined to those who could not follow this path earlier, those who needed help to develop the enlightenment, both adults and young people; the classes would be taught every Sunday.

According to the author, this instruction would help people destroy charlatanism, routine, and delay, for all citizens (not just children) would have the opportunity to learn the principles and laws that govern their country, the ability to judge their actions based on moral principles, the capacity of replacing their outdated practices with more productive actions in their professions, and, lastly, they would know how to care for their own health and that of their children. This active aspect that instruction should promote can be found in:

For Condorcet, instruction should not be admired by people due to a law imposed on them; however, one of its goals is to prepare individuals so they can

<sup>2</sup> At the time, France was divided into 83 departments.

assess and fix the law. A true and free constitution, which would enable all classes of society to enjoy the same rights, cannot survive if part of its citizens does not allow them to know the nature of their limits, forces them to speak about what they do not know, and determines when they cannot judge. (Santos, 2007, p. 12)

Something that should be highlighted in this memoir is that Condorcet gives private institutions the possibility to influence schooling matters, providing books, newspapers, etc. Individuals could even fund institutions, although with the limitation that they would be freely available and could only last while the financier lived.

#### FOURTH MEMOIR: INSTRUCTION RELATED TO PROFESSIONS

In this memoir, Condorcet (1993) addresses the instruction related to professions, which can be divided into two classes: professions that serve individuals (increasing their well-being) and those aimed at a common purpose, serving society in general.

The first class consists of the mechanical and liberal arts. According to the author, there is no need to create specific places to teach these professions; they could be taught at the same sites that provide general instruction. Condorcet (1993) does not specify whether children should reach a certain level of schooling to learn a profession. He only refers to young apprentices. These classes are not part of common instruction, despite both being concurrent; they are so specific that they are intended for people with certain skills: “This significant class of useful people will no longer participate in the distressing spectacle of having true talent, great courage, and indefatigable activity, whilst being miserable due to these qualities” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 233).

Condorcet (1993) places the military art and that of constructions in the field of professions aimed at public welfare, when destined for the common good. Such professions would have their own instruction sites and teachers and could be divided into several levels, as observed in:

Similarly, for the Navy, the first level of instruction will provide the necessary knowledge to those who would be sent out to sea at the end of childhood due to their inclination, lack of taste for work, or lack of fortune. Another instruction site would be placed in harbors to improve these first studies. (Condorcet, 1993, p. 239)

Such is the separation between the instruction for professions and common instruction that a society for the advancement of the arts would emerge — distinct from the society of scholars, this society would investigate the more practical aspects of science.

Here, we can note that the school system would not need to be uniform in its path, since the first and most comprehensive level of schooling is not required (at least Condorcet does not indicate this need) for military occupations, for example.



In fact, when addressing the common instruction for children, Condorcet (1993) uses the term *généralité*, according to the following excerpt: “The first level of common instruction aims to make *la généralité* of inhabitants of a country able to recognize their rights and duties” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 109). As we know, the term can mean both *universality* and *the majority*. Given the arguments provided in the Second Memoir and those related to professions, we believe that the common public educational system in *Memoirs* is targeted at the majority of citizens (at least in the first level of schooling), although not intended to be universal, as there would still be specific schooling for professions, instruction in private institutions, the freedom of parents to decide to enroll their children in school, and the narrowing based on social status and skills.

## FIFTH MEMOIR: SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS

In his last memoir, Condorcet (1993) establishes a final level of instruction: “targeted at those who are called to increase the body of truths by observations or discoveries” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 255), that is, the individuals of science. These facilities would also be destined for teachers who wished to improve their enlightenment. For this level of instruction, there would be an institution in the capital.

The societies of scholars would also teach people, not through classes, but with their discoveries. They would develop a general scientific framework to help brilliant individuals to have access to solved and open problems. While the institution addressed in the preceding paragraph would exist only in the capital, the societies of scholars would be present at least in each department, better distributing the scientific knowledge.

Despite being the last level of schooling, scientific instruction is not designed as a continuation of common instruction. This argument is confirmed not only because scientific instruction is targeted at a very specific class of people (those who wish to increase the number of truths) but because both instructions have different purposes: while common instruction aims at the preparation of citizens, scientific instruction enhances the human species as a whole — not just as members of a political community.

## GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: REPORT OF THE PUBLIC INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE OF THE FRENCH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Condorcet's *Memoirs* and *Rapport* (translated into European Portuguese as *Instrução Pública e Organização do Ensino* — *i.e.*, *Public Instruction and the Organization of Education*) have clear similarities, but also some differences. *Rapport* starts by mentioning the objectives of a general and public instruction: “Provide all individuals of the human species with the means to meet their needs and ensure their well-being” (Condorcet, 1943, p. 5), as well as “have a higher number of people prepare themselves to perform functions necessary to society” (Condorcet, 1943, p. 6). Thus, we note that, as in *Memoirs*, public instruction is important both for the welfare of society and the individual's own fulfillment.

For schooling to become a national reality, the state would have to organize education. Condorcet (1943) rejected the model in effect for centuries in pre-revolutionary France — with no institutional educational unit, leaving it under the Church's control. This model reached a small number of people and did not contribute to the progress of the nation.

In addition, just the content to be transmitted would be enough to require organization. As he continuously points out, instruction must convey the truth and prepare citizens according to nature. If left to individuals, these more noble ideals could be corrupted. Thus, it is actually the content, the truth, that demands a higher organization of instruction.

In *Rapport*, Condorcet (1943) divides public instruction into five levels: primary schools, secondary schools, institutes, lyceums, and the National Society of Arts and Sciences. Similarly to *Memoirs*, these levels of instruction would be free: the gratuitousness

is a means not only for ensuring that the nation will have more citizens able to serve it and that science will have more people capable of contributing to its progress but also for reducing this inequality born of the difference in fortunes, merging the classes that this difference tends to separate. (Condorcet, 1943, p. 52)

In this scenario, gratuitousness is clearly a strategy to ensure universality, that is, to reach everyone. In addition, if instruction were provided through private investments, teachers would cater to either children or parents, preventing the dissemination of the teachers' uncompromising truth.

Moreover, Condorcet (1943) defends educational freedom from the public sector; namely, the government should not determine the content or methods to be taught. This independence would guarantee the incorruptibility of the disinterested search for the truth; if the school answered to the government, we could have the perpetuation of tyranny — the government would prepare subjects.

## PRIMARY INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING FOR PEOPLE TO GUIDE THEMSELVES

This level would prepare citizens to guide themselves in the fullness of their rights, allowing them to run for public positions of low complexity. It would thus ensure the good qualification of both the individual and society.

Of note, since the first level, the content should be taught based on the children's reasoning and intellect, not on an authority that would appeal to their emotions, as evidenced in: "Neither the French Constitution nor even the Declaration of Human Rights shall be presented to any class of citizens as tablets descending from heaven, which they must adore and believe" (Condorcet, 1943, p. 13). The superiority of reason over emotions should be observed even in society, following the enlightenment principle: "It is not because the majority is predominant that it is right, it is because it is right that it should be the majority" (Kintzler, 1984, p. 87).

Another aspect to highlight is the use of textbooks intended to arouse the children's interest: "Put a pleasant and easy instruction, especially a useful instruction, at the reach of the simplest person, and they will make the most of it" (Condorcet, 1943, p. 16). In addition, books also contribute to organizing the content and methods to be taught.

Condorcet (1943) is concerned about the issue of interest in education because, as instruction is not mandatory, but something offered by the state, people have to be interested in it, they have to accept the gift offered. Otherwise, we would have a completely organized yet empty educational system.

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND INSTRUCTION DEPENDENT ON SOCIAL INEQUALITY

To start this level, children would need only to "relinquish more of their work time and devote a higher number of years and some income to their education" (Condorcet, 1943, p. 18). We observe, then, that the effective completion of instruction would rely more on a social factor than on talent: aptitude tests would not select students; their parents, according to economic criteria, would decide whether their children would continue or not.

We should also mention that although the primary instruction from *Rapport* can be associated with the first level of schooling from *Memoirs*, the same is not true for secondary schools. In *Memoirs*, secondary schools were divided into general and scientific instruction; here, however, we only have general instruction.

## INSTITUTES AND LYCEUMS FOR TRAINING CIVIL SERVANTS AND SCHOLARS

Institutes would be the third level of schooling, responsible for covering elements of all human knowledge. Therefore, they would be in charge of preparing citizens to assume more complex public positions, as well as teachers for secondary schools.

Besides the knowledge required for public positions, a wide range of scientific qualifications — such as mechanical arts, military art, and agriculture — would be studied more thoroughly.

Again, the comparison with *Memoirs* can be problematic — although institutes are similar to secondary instruction for covering scientific education more extensively, *Rapport* no longer separates common from scientific instruction; according to what has been said, the latter could be pursued according to the students' skills and interests. Nonetheless, both common and scientific instruction would be connected in the same single and continuous curriculum targeted at all students.

Lyceums would prepare scholars — the most senior representatives of excellence of a population; these institutions would teach sciences more meticulously. This can be noted by how Condorcet (1943) emphasizes the role of lyceums regarding foreigners; if the three previous levels had an instruction aimed at qualifying the French nation, lyceums are devised as an opportunity to improve the French reputation with other countries, as well as spread the ideals of equality and freedom, so dear to the French.

## NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: THE LAST LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION

Finally, in the last level of instruction, we have the National Society of Arts and Sciences, responsible for overseeing the educational facilities and also for applying and disseminating findings useful to people. It would be divided into four main branches: mathematical sciences, moral and political sciences, applied mathematical and physical sciences, and a class that would combine grammar, languages, recreational arts, and erudition.

We can thus observe that, despite not being a proper school level with regular courses, the National Society would provide indirect instruction since, by developing the sciences and supervising educational facilities, it would decide which teaching content and methodology to adopt.

## COMPARISON BETWEEN *MEMOIRS* AND *RAPPORT*

Before further comparing *Memoirs* and *Rapport*, we would like to reconstruct, in general lines, the main analyses on the subject by Condorcet's reviewers. These analyses can be divided into two main perspectives: the first arguing that both works present such continuity and similarity that they should not be examined separately (position defended by Cahen), while the second states that, despite the numerous similarities between the texts, they have considerable differences that deserve special investigation (thesis defended by Albertone and Vial).

Cahen (1904) defends that both of Condorcet's works retain the same thought, as shown in: "The Committee previously accepted, in general lines, the system presented in *Memoirs*" (Cahen, 1904, p. 371), "on all essential points, general lines, and even important details for future organization, his thinking remained intact, and the draft decree submitted to the Committee is the personal work of the author of *Memoirs*" (Cahen, 1904, p. 373), and "the similarity between both documents seems even more evident if we examine them in detail" (Cahen, 1904, p. 371). Although Cahen (1904) admits the existence of some differences at specific points — number of lyceums and the change in the division of secondary instruction from two parts to only one —, they are considered "little significant changes".

On the other hand, Albertone (1984), despite acknowledging the considerable similarities in Condorcet's work, understands that this attitude might sometimes lead to misinterpretation because, when we look at just one of his writings, whether *Memoirs* or the *Draft*, we would not notice changes and the possible evolution in Condorcet's thought and in public schooling itself. She supports her position with some examples, although not exhaustively.

Compared to *Memoirs*, the *Draft* demonstrates a more compact political formulation and a more acute sensitivity as to collectivity. Despite the persistence of an individualistic perspective since the first sentences, Condorcet's report targets the citizens as a single body, referring to social needs, general welfare, and human advancement. As a member of the Public Instruction Committee,

born of the revolutionary process, he was more aware of the national political responsibility. (Albertone, 1984, p. 134)

Therefore, we observe that, in *Memoirs*, Condorcet advocated a more individualistic view of instruction and society, while in *Rapport*, he began to worry about general welfare and national political responsibility.

According to Albertone (1984), this difference could not be justified only by Condorcet's epistemological or psychological change but by the unfolding history:

Despite being contemporary and grounded in the same spirit, both works denote two distinct and particular moments of his reflection and provide substantial evidence of the evolution driven by his thinking. Taken by revolutionary enthusiasm, *Memoirs* were based on the prospect of demolishing the structures of the Ancien Régime. Even though they drafted a new and exalted reality, *Memoirs* still echoed the battle cry of the Enlightenment against the old world, in which Condorcet had been taught and against which he had fought. In turn, the *Draft* showed an awareness of dealing with an established revolutionary reality, not without a prescient intuition of its possible future excesses. (Albertone, 1984, p. 134)

*Memoirs*, written still under the foundations of the *Ancien Régime* (the Constitution had not been created yet), despite criticizing it, shared a revolutionary ideal dominated by the banner of the Enlightenment. In contrast, the *Draft*, written under the novelty of the republican movement, eventually absorbed the ideals of the republic under construction in those times of revolution.

Vial (1970), in turn, focuses his analysis on *Rapport* when addressing Condorcet's pedagogical thinking, as seen in the following excerpt: "In this presentation, we will follow the *Rapport* and the *Draft Decree*. That is because, by being forced to propose a set of practical measures to be voted by the Legislature, Condorcet shaped his thought into a more concrete form" (Vial, 1970, p. 67).

However, he openly states that, despite this pedagogical option, the two works have differences:

It is, above all, in *Memoirs* and in the *Draft* that we will seek Condorcet's true thought. In *Rapport*, read in the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Public Instruction Committee on April 20 and 21, 1792, Condorcet had to express the views of the Committee, which, at least in some details, differed from his own (Vial, 1970, p. 20).

Nevertheless, we should underline that despite acknowledging the differences between the works, Vial (1970) does not regard them as abundant, as seen when he mentions "at least in some details."

Given the divergent interpretations regarding the evolution of Condorcet's pedagogical thinking, we will analyze the main differences we could identify in each work, searching for evidence of their similarities and distinctions.

We agree that, in general lines, the two texts have the same educational project: an instruction toward equality, which should be accessible to all, secular, etc. According to the considerations above, this point is accepted by all reviewers: neither work demonstrates a radical change in Condorcet's thinking; therefore, we decided to focus on the diverging aspects we believe exist between them.

The first differences can be found as early as in the first paragraphs of both texts — while in *Memoirs* he wrote: “Public instruction is a social duty to citizens” (Condorcet, 1993, p. 61), and individuals should only be concerned with their rights; in the *Rapport*, instruction should increase both the rights and duties of citizens, as evidenced in: “Provide all individuals of the human species with the means to meet their needs, ensure their well-being, know and exercise their rights, understand and carry out their duties” (Condorcet, 1989, p. 8).

This concern with duties seems to be linked to the deepest sense of community defended by Condorcet in his work, as seen in: “Compared to *Memoirs*, the *Rapport* shows a more compact political formulation and a more comprehensive sensitivity toward the collectivity” (Albertone, 1984, p. 134).

The difference between the excerpts reveals the change in tone with which Condorcet begins to defend the achievement of society, individuals, and the nation. If in *Memoirs* individuality was a constant point of concern, in *Rapport*, he is also focused on the community or collectivity. Instruction should not just inform citizens about the rights they could enjoy under the law, but also urge them about their duties to the community.

While *Memoirs* puts a significant emphasis on moral sensitivity regarding humans and animals, these contents should still be addressed by and for individuals; community, either that universally of people or that of the nation, was not considered an important center of instruction.

We can also note this weight on the community because, although Condorcet stressed the enlightenment of individuals in *Memoirs*, not only for universal evolution but also for the development of society, he only uses the term *national instruction* in the *Draft*. Even though he had been highlighting the importance of the state in schooling since *Memoirs*, this state was merely an abstract entity (an instance of power) — he hardly used expressions such as the French nation, the French state, etc. We believe that Condorcet definitively brings instruction closer to a political task of the national state with the condensation of his educational project in the *national instruction* formula.

Another important factor of his growing concern with collectivity is the role that the House of Representatives assumes in his second work. While he does not emphasize the precise role it would have in his educational system, Condorcet defends that this body should have a great influence, representing the public sector, as he declares that the House should hold the largest political power in educational matters.

The universalization of instruction becomes clearer only in *Rapport*:

In this scenario, instruction should be universal, that is, provided to all citizens. It should be shared as equally as possible considering the necessary funding

limitations, the population distribution over the territory, and the lower or larger time that children can devote to it. (Condorcet, 1943, p. 5)

It is only in this work that we see the term *universelle* being employed (having a greater association with totality); as was said earlier, the term *généralité* was the most used in *Memoirs*. This word change alone does not justify the defense of a transformation in Condorcet's thought. It is important to verify whether the profile of people that education should encompass also changed.

The first difference we can note is the expansion of common instruction; while in *Memoirs*, only the first level was intended as truly universal, in the *Draft*, this desire extends to the second level, as stated in the following excerpt: "This level of instruction (secondary) may also, under certain circumstances, be seen as universal, or rather as necessary to establish an absolute equality in universal education" (Condorcet, 1989, p. 11).

As we saw in *Memoirs*, the first level of instruction had the task of preparing the majority of citizens; it should teach them to be independent in their daily lives, as well as train them for the most important public professions. However, since this first level of instruction lasted only four years, *Rapport* argues that this period would be insufficient for the tasks it proposes to accomplish. Thus, his solution was to double the length and contents of this general level of instruction — extending it for another four years (creating another level of instruction).

A testimony to this change is the transfer of the division between common and scientific instruction, which in *Memoirs* occurred in the second school level, to the institutes (third level in *Draft*). In addition, *Draft* increases the levels of instruction: from four (first, second, third, and Society of Scholars or Society for the advancement of the arts) to five (primary, secondary, institutes, lyceums, and National Society).

*Rapport* highlighted the distinction between levels of instruction destined for general schooling and higher levels, which allowed for narrowing; the difference is that, in *Memoirs*, we would start seeing this narrowing after four years of study, while in *Rapport*, it would happen only after eight years of schooling. We thus conclude that the inclusion of a level in his project was not unreasonable; rather, it aimed to expand the citizens' common instruction.

Considering this extension of common instruction, we noted an ambiguity in Condorcet's educational work. In *Memoirs*, instruction underwent constant narrowing at each new level of schooling, preventing its universalization; in *Rapport*, Condorcet indicates that, although not universal, given the parents' freedom and the possibility of private education, it should continue to deepen and extend itself as to public and content. Although we literally continue to see a division between general and specific instruction in his work, when we compare the evolution of his thought between both texts, we have a growing pursuit for the universalization of schooling, given his concern with expanding common instruction.

However, we should underline that, as stated in the *Rapport* analysis, the selection for secondary schools was still based on the economic struggle

of parents in unfavorable conditions who would have to relinquish the help of their children (Lopes, 2008). Nonetheless, this issue is not enough to invalidate the attempt at universalization, evidenced by the defense of an eight-year common instruction.

Associated with the desire for universalization, we have the goal of education completion since the expansion of common instruction occurs not by suppressing but by adding a level of schooling. This means that *Rapport* shows concern for increasing the length of education and, consequently, for deepening the knowledge imparted in national instruction facilities; the concern for completion is found at: “Our first care must lie in making education not only as equal and as universal but also as *complete* as circumstances allow” (Condorcet, 1943, p. 7, italics added).

Another aspect to highlight is that *Rapport* brings a greater organization of the educational system. While in *Memoirs* we had independent facilities for certain functions (the most significant case involving public professions such as the Navy), in *Rapport*, we see a centralized educational system comprising a wide range of schooling aspects: from the individual’s initial studies to the highest levels of human education, including professions and sciences.

The independent institutions that prepared part of society, like the Navy, civil construction, etc., would ultimately give rise to institutes, which would then be responsible for any professional training of citizens: all and any citizen training would be mediated by common public instruction. In addition, the student could only start a professional specialization after concluding the most basic levels of schooling — primary and secondary school. This change reflects his concern with the premature specialization of students, which he manifested since *Memoirs*:

The more divided the mechanical professions, the more exposed the people would be to acquiring this stupidity that is natural to individuals limited to a small number of ideas of a certain genre. Instruction is the only remedy for this evil, which can be as dangerous in a nation as the laws that have been established for equality. Indeed, if this stupidity extends beyond purely personal rights, the fate of the nation, then, partly depends on people incapable of being governed by their reason and of having a will of their own. (Condorcet, 1993, p. 78)

Another point to consider is that *Memoirs* divided, from secondary school onward, common and scientific instruction, with the latter determined according to the children’s skills and interests (scientific programs would not have any association with common instruction and could be repeated based on the student’s interest). On the other hand, *Rapport* had common and scientific instruction interwoven in the same curriculum. This change doubtlessly leads to less educational freedom but also to greater instruction unity and organization.

We have also noted a change related to private education — Condorcet’s Third Memoir describes the possibility of individuals collaborating with books and



donations or even founding institutions; while in *Rapport*, he does not mention this option.

In *Memoirs*, the national instruction system was accompanied by private institutions that protected the citizens' freedom; these institutions, however, abstained from the duty to provide schooling at the level of the revolutionary project: the entire division between general and specific, professional and scientific, secular and religious instruction would find therein its limits.

Nevertheless, when Condorcet addresses educational freedom in the *Rapport*, he covers only the freedom related to the political sphere of public instruction. Given that the author does not mention the importance of private schooling, we conclude that these institutions became irrelevant. According to Condorcet, the scientificity of instruction and the non-interference of the state in educational matters would lead to true educational freedom. We do not know for sure the reason for such change, but we believe it reflects the growing need for centralization and nationalization of instruction.

The exclusion of private institutions from *Rapport* consequently decreases parents' freedom, since they would have to accept public instruction without other schooling possibilities. Of note, he does not forbid nor condemns such facilities, much less determines that parents are required to enroll their children in public institutions. At the same time, we see a more emphatic defense of (national) public instruction as the only teaching method suitable for the Republic.

With respect to the role of the National Society, it would not directly interfere in all levels of instruction, only in lyceums. However, since lyceums train teachers for institutes, which, in turn, prepare primary and secondary schools, we can infer that the faculty and school guidelines would come from the National Society, as it would be ultimately in charge of teacher training and the elaboration of the curriculum.

We should also stress that the *Draft* does not separate the two societies: one of scholars (responsible for the scientific theoretical foundation) and another for the advancement of the arts (responsible for the practical uses of new scientific discoveries); the National Society would solely oversee both professional and scientific development — showing once more the growing centralization of public instruction.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The current project proposed to analyze the relationship between Condorcet's two main educational works. As we have seen, although both texts show great similarities, they also have significant differences. In *Rapport*, public instruction becomes more rigid and organized, causing the school course to be more homogeneous and centralized. Besides, we have a greater focus on the universalization and completion of schooling, with the extension of common instruction for another four years. Concerning educational freedom, Condorcet preserved the independence of instruction from the public sector but eliminated the possibility of private institutions.

Be that as it may, Condorcet is an author who clearly exposes the relevance of public, secular, and free instruction to the agenda of contemporary politics. This theme relates to an inheritance of the Enlightenment, bringing an example of a revolutionary construction and showing the historical debt in countries like Brazil, which is still in the process of universalizing all levels of its elementary education. In this regard, thinking of Condorcet and his two educational works is a civic duty and a pedagogical hope. It is a legacy to new generations that translates into a nod for the construction of a public world where the political sphere would reverse its priorities to consider the main sectors of the population. Only then will we have a true and effective democracy. Education follows the pursuit of this goal.

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