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## HISTORICAL BASE OF EDUCATION IN THE WORLD

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**Abstract:** Durkheim stated that Education is a social fact. This assertion is not surprising for the present, as the study of the historical dimension of education and its different theoretical-methodological approaches circulate widely in the academic field, provide subsidies for the planning of educational actions and public policies in this sector and are frequently disseminated. by the mainstream press. In the study of the historical context in which the slow and progressive constitution of the educational system took place, Durkheim was based on the observation that even in the simplest societies educational actions were instituted to transmit to children and young people their accumulated knowledge, norms, customs, group values and histories. This gives this system a common – social – and essential character. Educational actions must not be understood in isolation from other social attitudes, since, despite the relative autonomy of each social system, they are always parts of a whole with which they are integrated in the pursuit of a common goal.

**Keywords:** Education. historical dimension.

## INTRODUCTION

In ancient Greece, given the supremacy of the state, education aimed to prepare young people for relations with the city-state. Each state has its own characteristics and education systems must adapt to them in order to adequately prepare youth. Hence the conceptions of Plato and Aristotle. Of a uniform education, regulated in its smallest details by the state authority and compulsory for all free men. Plato, in the Republic and in the Laws, shows what extremes education can go to when it goes beyond the essential aspects of life. The citizen-guard of the ideal state has no right to domestic life and family ties. Aristotle does not go into this exaggeration, but considers family education harmful to the child.

The educational system that came closest to this conception was the one adopted by Sparta, where young people were prepared under the direct supervision of the state, in a kind of martial bivouac: boys became warriors, and girls prepared to become mothers. of future warriors. In Athens, there were laws governing the attendance of children of free citizens in schools, and educational establishments were regulated by special legislation.

The instruments of education most in harmony with Greek conception and culture were national music and literary and artistic culture, to develop the spirit of loyalty to the fatherland; and gymnastics for the body. This was individual, and only indirectly aimed at strengthening social ties. As Athenian culture advanced, studies of an intellectual nature assumed greater importance and physical education began to decline. This trend provoked criticism, according to which young people were effeminate due to excess comfort. But a disintegrating force, which Plato and Aristotle futilely opposed, had already compromised the educational system: the rhetoric of the Sophists.

In the democratic city-state, the orator easily became a demagogue, for oratory paved the way for personal ambition, and inducted young people into the schools of the sophists. The increasingly close relations between the Greek states brought civic ideals closer together and brought a more cosmopolitan conception of education. The process was completed with the loss of independence of the city-states, under Macedonian rule.

The University of Athens, for example, was the result of a merger of the private philosophical schools with the state organization for the education of boys. There were other centers of high culture, especially in Alexandria, where the contact of Greek thought with the religions and philosophies of Egypt gave rise to mystical philosophies,

which culminated in Neoplatonism. In Athens, education became empty rhetoric until the university was closed by Justinian in the year 529.

When the Romans conquered Greece, they already encountered a decaying educational system. At the beginning of the republic, Roman education was provided in the family and in social life. The father had unlimited power over his children and was publicly censured when he failed to teach moral, civic, and religious precepts. There were still no schools, but the young man learned to revere the gods, to read and to know the laws of the country.

## THE CHRISTIAN AGE

With the importation of Greek culture, Hellenic literature became the main instrument of education. Grammar schools emerged, later supplemented by rhetoric and philosophy. These offered higher means of culture to those who could not study in Athens and Alexandria. In the empire, schools of rhetoric were organized by the state system. Quintilian's conception of rhetorical culture is shown in the year 95 of the Christian era, in his *Institutio oratoria* (Oratory Institution), the most systematic treatise on education of the ancient world. For him, the orator must be the synthesis of the cultured, wise and honorable man. With the advent of autocracy, which soon descended into the tyranny of empire, rhetoric ceased to represent a preparation for life. The conditions of society no longer allowed for this type of education. Customs were corrupted and paganism was reborn. In these historical circumstances came Christianity, which brought a renewed breath of life.

The general attitude of Christians towards traditional education was evident in the protest against Julian's edict which prohibited them from teaching in public schools. A conflict

arose: while pagan education consisted of an individualistic and proud ethic, Christian education exalted humility as one of the highest virtues and considered pride a mortal sin. For Christianity the supreme state was the loving ecstasy of the mystical contemplation of God. The monastic life came to be seen as a Christian ideal. Such conceptions, followed by several generations, reduced the value of classical culture, which already at the time of Saint Gregory the Great, between 590 and 604, was outdated as a means of education.

The medieval curriculum, on the other hand, comprised, in the secular aspect, the seven liberal arts – the trivium (grammar, dialectic and rhetoric) and the quadrivium (geometry, arithmetic, music and astronomy) and philosophy; and in the dogmatic, the doctrines of the church and the scriptures. Theology had not yet been organized into a philosophical system, and this was the great work of the Middle Ages. The liberal arts represented a legacy of the old Roman education, and their scope was broader than their names in modernity suggest.

Grammar included the study of literary content and form; dialectics was restricted to formal logic; rhetoric comprised the study of the laws and methods of literary composition in prose and verse. Geometry corresponded to what is modernly understood by geography, natural history and botany. Arithmetic consisted only of the practical calculations required by everyday life. Music was nothing more than a set of rules concerning sacred songs, sound theory, and connections between harmony and numbers. In the field of philosophy, the most popular books were *De consolacione philosophiae* (On the consolation of philosophy) and Aristotle's *Categoriae* and *De interpretatione*.

In the 11th century, after several wars and invasions, Europe had political and social stability. A new translation of Aristotle's

Metaphysics appeared, and in the thirteenth century, versions of his main works, directly from the Greek. Peripatetic philosophy placed itself at the service of theology and provided the scholastic renaissance in the educational sector.

The most representative figures of this period were Abelard and Saint Thomas Aquinas. This, in the *Summa theologica*, systematized the whole doctrine of the church. Human interest turned, above all, to spiritual problems, and ecclesiastical authority in matters of belief became unquestionable. The content of scholastic education was in harmony with the intellectual interests of the time. His greatest contribution was to promote the foundation of universities in Europe. The introduction of studies derived from Greek provided an increasing freedom of teaching.

The instructional scheme was structured so that special studies were based on broad general knowledge. Of the four faculties that made up the university, the arts functioned as a preliminary to theology, law and medicine. Instruction methods were based on reading or commenting on texts and on emulation, through which students trained themselves in the use of the acquired knowledge. This evolution of higher education was accompanied by an increase in the number of elementary schools.

In addition to spiritual teaching, the social system of the time maintained a type of education typical of the feudal class, which consisted of preparing pages and lords in the art of chivalry. Such an education was not opposed to religion, for chivalry was sanctified by the clergy. Its object was to make the youth of the noble class worthy of the admiration of the serfs, just, wise, and prudent in dealing with the affairs of the state.

Since the 11th century, the cities of northern Italy showed greater material and cultural progress than the rest of Europe. The

classical spirit, in fact, had never died. Dante's *Divine Comedy* demonstrated that the scholastic poet was also a scholar of the Latin classics. The great impetus for the return to the classics was given by Petrarca and Boccaccio. The movement, initiated at the University of Florence, soon spread to other countries; but the rich Italian communes remained as centers of irradiation of culture.

The most valuable service rendered by the peninsular humanists was to pave the way for the establishment of a freer intellectual atmosphere. But the spirit of the movement resides in the opposition to authority and the affirmation of individual freedom, which manifested itself in various ways. In Italy, it was reflected in the arts and literature, in which paganism replaced the moral and religious nature. In Germany, it emerged as a reaction against the doctrinal system of the church, and the only way to abolish ecclesiastical abuses. In this sense, Luther's Protestant Reformation was the manifestation of the German Renaissance movement.

## **THE REFORM OF CHRISTIANITY**

When Luther's Religious Reformation divided all of Europe into two opposing camps, most schools and many universities accepted humanist studies rather coldly. The immediate effects of the religious controversy on education were disastrous. In many cases, the secularization of ecclesiastical property absorbed the endowments of schools and caused many of them to disappear. Theological discussions invaded the university and a period of cultural decay and the dissolution of customs followed.

In Catholic countries, the church retained control of education. The suppression of ecclesiastical abuses by the Council of Trent and the energy of the Society of Jesus, founded by Ignatius of Loyola, recovered most of southern Germany for the church. Universities

were run by priests, and scholasticism, purged of exaggeration, was restored. The teaching methods of the Society of Jesus and its classic curriculum, crafted with great skill, gained fame.

The twilight of the 17th century saw a real renaissance of university life at Cambridge, especially through the work of Isaac Newton and the increasing attention devoted to the physical sciences and mathematics, although the number of students remained very small. Also in Germany, a new era for education was inaugurated with the foundation of the universities of Halle, in 1694, and of Göttingen, in 1737, in which the old conception that the function of the university was to transmit complete knowledge was fought, which provided the advent of a new culture attracted numerous students and spread its influence to other German universities.

In Halle, a movement began in favor of the education of the children of the poor. Campaigns of the same style were held in France and England. The results, however, were not rewarding: the broad masses of the people throughout Europe remained estranged from culture.

## **THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

The intellectual movements of the 18th century were markedly aristocratic in character. In France, Voltaire and the Encyclopedists defended the idea that education must be reserved for a restricted group. Such individualistic conceptions did not fail to influence the educated classes. Turned against the artificiality and superficiality of classical education, Jean-Jacques Rousseau called for a return to the things of nature.

His ideas did not represent a simple transitory revolt against the prevailing conventionalism, but the exact expression of a new way of life and a new education, which profoundly influenced Europe. His *Émile*

represented a true declaration of childhood rights. However, his insistence on the efficacy of nature, evidenced in the theory that man is born good and capable of finding happiness if he surrenders to his own instincts, proved to be very one-sided.

Kant rebelled against such ideas: for him, the essential element of education was coercion, which, through the formation of habits, prepared the young to receive as principles of conduct the laws imposed from outside. According to Kant, the supreme guide of life is the law of duty, which is always opposed to the impulses of inclination.

The French Revolution was the second phase of the movement initiated with the Reformation. He reaffirmed the preponderance of natural rights, from which the right of every child to be adequately prepared for life derives. The recognition of this right resulted in the creation of an education system, which is a fundamental feature of the history of education in most countries in the 19th century.

The Swiss educator Johan H. Pestalozzi was the first to advocate the generalization of instruction, and Prussia the first nation to put such ideas into practice. In France and the United Kingdom, it was only in the last two decades of the 19th century that the state showed interest in the education of the poor.

The public education system was imposed in almost all of Western Europe and the United States, and also extended to women, who until then were excluded from educational programs. Among the causes of such changes was the conviction that, with the increasing distribution of political power, the state had the right to demand a minimum of knowledge from every citizen.

It was not until the 20th century that a Marxist doctrine for education was elaborated. The greatest figure in Marxist pedagogy was the Soviet Anton Semenovitch Makarenko,



who created the “community schools”. Other thinkers with a Marxist orientation, such as the Frenchman Louis Althusser, analyzed the role of the traditional school which, by inculcating in the student the system of values of the dominant social classes, would be responsible for the perpetuation of social inequalities.

In the Soviet Union, after Stalin’s death in 1953, changes in official policy affected the school. The central idea became the strengthening of ties between school and life, at all levels. It revived the idea of polytechnic education, but in the sense of preparing secondary students for specialized work in industry and agriculture. This orientation, which was in force during the period of Nikita Khrushchev’s government, was replaced by a policy of universalization of secondary education, with emphasis on the creation of technical secondary schools. However, the quantitative gains of this policy did not correspond to the improvement of teaching quality.

In China, from the communist revolution until the death of Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) in 1976, education had as its keynote ideological indoctrination in all fields and levels, which by law occupied ten percent of the school curriculum. . The new government shifted the emphasis to modernization, the main banner of the post-Mao regime. The entire educational effort began to be directed towards the “four modernizations” (industry, agriculture, national defense and science and technology).

For the Brazilian Paulo Freire, the objective of education must be the liberation of the oppressed, which would give them the means to transform the social reality around them through “conscientization” (critical knowledge of the world). In the period 1958-1964 in Brazil and after 1964 in Chile, Paulo Freire put into practice, with good results, his

method of teaching adult literacy.

The effectiveness and validity of the method are based on the fact that it starts from the reality of the literacy student, from his universe, from the pragmatic value of things and facts of his daily life, from his existential situations. It obeys methodological and linguistic norms, but goes beyond them, by challenging the man or woman who become literate to appropriate the written code with a view to its politicization. Paulo Freire’s work can be seen not only as a literacy method, but as a process of awareness, as it takes into account the political nature of education.

In 1965, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) began to use the term “continuing education” to designate continuing education, designed to cover the entire cycle of human existence. It differs from the traditional concept of education, given that it has always been understood as a process of social and cultural integration to take place during part of life, that is, during the course of childhood and adolescence.

Permanent education is therefore a new concept, a trend in contemporary education, and not a special branch of education. It appears alongside others that complement it, offering means of realization, such as extracurricular or parallel education. This encompasses all unsystematic forms of education, such as: street education, family education, group education, etc. It thus affects the whole of society.

Young people can expand their cultural and professional training with special programs developed by the teaching centers. Adult training can range from literacy needs to professional refresher courses. Continuing adult education tends to rely on the development of self-learning systems and training methods for training or recycling professionals who must adapt to the changes

in a society subjected to constant scientific and technological advances.

The economic resources available to each country have a decisive influence on the effectiveness of their education systems. The study of economics applied to education is essential to determine both the possibilities of carrying out educational programs and the appropriate procedures for obtaining greater use of available resources, so that it is possible to safely establish educational goals and priorities.

### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is incumbent upon education authorities to experiment with new training plans in order to obtain better results in educational programmes; study the geographical distribution and use of school facilities; and predict the future needs of the education sector, taking into account socio-economic development.

The study of Education as a social process, both in terms of the activities of individuals and of institutions, constitutes the objective of the sociology of education. The relationship

between teachers and students and between students and the characteristics of the different communities that work in Education (family, school, youth groups, etc.) are some of the social aspects of Education. The media, parties and other organizations in society, with their different ideologies and conceptions about social progress, exert an equally important influence on Education.

The French sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu stands out among the great contemporary thinkers, having in his works several analyzes that privilege education and teaching systems. Constituting itself in central object whose examination allows to evidence mechanisms of the social knowledge.

The sociology of education configures its particular object when it constitutes itself as a science of the relations between cultural reproduction and social reproduction, that is, at the moment in which it strives to establish the contribution that the education system offers with a view to reproducing the structure of power relations and symbolic relations between classes. (BOURDIEU, 1987, p. 295).

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