



## Secondary Education in Napoleonic France<sup>1</sup>

O Ensino Secundário na França napoleônica

La Enseñanza Secundaria en la Francia napoleónica

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### Abstract

The contribution aims to elucidate Napoleonic reformism in education, focusing on the genesis of secondary education as the architrave of a modern education system implemented in imperial France and later extended to satellite states. The reforms, implemented between 1802 and 1811, ensured that Napoleonic France had a system of public education managed and controlled by the state, set on a secular conception that incorporated the private and ecclesiastical sectors, with a system prospectively divided into three grades: primary, secondary, and higher, in which the lyceum represented the apex of secondary education and the base of the higher segment.

**Keywords:** Secondary education. Lyceum. Imperial France. Napoleonic reformism.

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## Resumo

A contribuição visa elucidar o reformismo napoleônico no campo da instrução, com foco na gênese do ensino secundário como arquitrave de um sistema educacional moderno implantado na França imperial e posteriormente estendido aos estados satélites. As reformas, implementadas entre 1802 e 1811, garantiram à França napoleônica um sistema de ensino público administrado e controlado pelo Estado, baseado em uma concepção laica que incorporava os setores privado e eclesiástico, com um sistema que se dividia prospectivamente em três graus: primário, secundário e superior, em que o liceu representou o ápice do ensino secundário e a base do segmento superior.

**Palavras-chave:** Ensino secundário. Liceu. França Imperial. Reformismo napoleônico.

## Resumen

El artículo analiza el reformismo napoleónico en el ámbito de la educación, centrándose en el estudio de la génesis de la enseñanza secundaria como arquitrave de un sistema educativo moderno implantado en la Francia imperial y posteriormente extendido a los estados satélites. Las reformas, aplicadas entre 1802 y 1811, hicieron que la Francia napoleónica contara con un sistema de enseñanza pública gestionado y controlado por el Estado, basado en una concepción laica que incorporaba los sectores privado y eclesiástico, con un sistema dividido prospectivamente en tres grados: primario, secundario y superior, en el cual el liceo representaba la cúspide de la enseñanza secundaria y la base del segmento superior.

**Palabras clave:** Enseñanza secundaria. Liceo. Francia imperial. Reformismo napoleónico.

## Premise

Secondary education, as noted by Marie-Madeleine Compère (1995) in a comparative study on the history of European education, seems to be the ghost of historiography, since, not constituting an autonomous area of research like, for example, childhood, literacy, or the university, its definition is even problematic.

Recently, Frijhoff (2009) did not fail to point out that its application in modern times is completely anachronistic: if, on the one hand, “the teaching of colleges, Latin schools, *grammar schools* and *gymnasia* did not constitute the logical continuation of elementary education, of which it often incorporated relatively important elements” (FRIJHOFF, 2009, p. 86, our translation), on the other hand, “in the perception of many contemporaries themselves, the college, or the Latin school, was not considered as a secondary institution, but as part of higher education, of which it represented the preparatory phase, the first stage” (FRIJHOFF, 2009, p. 85, our translation). The anachronism of the concept of “secondary education” for the modern era and its self-evidence for us contemporaries has created a persistent conceptual confusion in the literature concerning the history of educational processes.

Compère (2001), in addressing and historically setting up the problem, identifies the origin of secondary education in the 16<sup>th</sup> century “College of humanities”, drawing, with Savoie (2001), the following conclusions:

The school is not, we think we have shown, just a logical convenience. Its organization, the logic of its development, its government, its very existence had a first-order effect on the entire educational institution. It thus played a fundamental historical role in the structuring of secondary education, of which the advent to schooling is only the distant consequence - it is only from the 1830s that the true expression of secondary education enters administrative practice - of the success of the lyceums created in 1802 and became, not without difficulties and adaptations, the model establishments of the college of humanities, but also of the school itself. The history of secondary education and that of the establishments are therefore intimately linked. This seems to us to be the best argument in favour of historical studies centred on secondary establishments (COMPÈRE, 2001, p. 20, our translation).

There is no doubt that the history of the *Etablissement scolaire* (School establishment) - to which Compère (2001) dedicated an extensive research program that resulted in the monumental repertory on *Les Collèges français (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, in collaboration with Dominique Julia (2001), brought elements and approaches of fundamental importance for the history of education. However, by establishing a symbiotic relationship between the history of secondary education and the history of the colleges, one runs the risk of putting in second place Napoleonic reformism, which seems to be fundamental for the elucidation of the problem of secondary education and, more generally, for a renewed historical analysis of the processes of modernization in Europe.

In fact, in recent years there has been a renewal of studies on Napoleonic politics that begins to be studied with reference to the European context, thus overcoming the French historiographical model<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> For an in-depth historiography, see: Grab (2003).

These studies converge in recognizing the modernization of the state apparatus and the establishment of a new relationship between state and civil society for Napoleonic reformism, an effect that will go beyond the temporal work of its domination:

During the Napoleonic period, Europe made the transition from the *ancient régime* into the modern period. [...] Napoleon was non merely a conqueror and an exploiting dictator. Indeed, it was Napoleon's reform policies that left the greatest impact on the Continent. [...] Napoleon's most successful reform was the creation of the modern central state. [...] The growing power and effectiveness of the State significantly changed the relations between State and civil society. [...] In sum, an understanding of the Napoleonic legacy is essential for the comprehension of nineteenth-century European state and society. (GRAB, 2003, p. 204).

In the context of the current methodological and critical renewal, this paper aims to elucidate Napoleonic reformism in the field of education, focusing on the genesis of secondary education as the architrave of a modern educational system, implemented in imperial France and extended to the satellite states.

### **The revolutionary period**

Before addressing the reformist cores of Napoleonic school policy, it is worth briefly recalling the measures adopted during the revolutionary period, which constituted, in our discussion, the *pars destruens* of the process of modernization of education.

With the measures taken during the Constituent Assembly and the Legislative Decree, the teaching system of the *Ancien Régime* was definitively suppressed, for which it was necessary to start from the ideas expressed and the projects formulated, between 1789 and 1793, to configure a new school organization, which was made necessary due to the fragmentary interventions carried out in the same period. The reform was implemented, during the Convention, essentially through the following legislative texts:

1) The decree of October 30<sup>th</sup> 1793, which established a general organizational principle: free primary education and admission of pupils from the age of six; obligation to establish an elementary school in towns with a population between 400 and 1500 inhabitants; qualification of teachers as salaried civil servants;

2) The decree of December 19<sup>th</sup> 1793, or Bouquier decree, which promoted a “national education plan” based on free, compulsory, and secular primary education, conformed to revolutionary principles by adopting texts approved by the Convention; it also established the principle of freedom of education;

3) The decree of November 17<sup>th</sup> 1794, the so-called Lakanal decree which, having abandoned obligatory schooling, provided for the foundation of elementary school in municipalities with a population greater than 1000 inhabitants and introduced, for the first time, a teaching program: reading, writing, declaration of rights, constitution, elements of French grammar, arithmetic, notions of agriculture, notions of natural history, and recitation of heroic songs;

4) The decree of February 25<sup>th</sup> 1795, which regulated secondary schools with the creation of “central schools” (1 for every 300,000 inhabitants), distributing teaching in the form of courses centered on literature, arts and sciences. At the higher education level, the Convention established “special schools”, independent research and training institutes, such as: the Museum, the Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, the Medical Schools, the School of Oriental Languages and the Public Works;

5) Finally, the law of October 25<sup>th</sup> 1795, or Daunau law, considered the school charter of the Revolution, which was in force during the years of the Directory, which provided for: the establishment of one or more elementary school for each canton and primary education neither compulsory nor free, with teachers paid by the pupils and chosen and supervised by the “jury of education”, appointed by the municipalities and departments; the organization of central schools (at least one for each department, with a well-defined program and cycle of studies). The Daunau law also reorganized higher education, listing the *Écoles* (schools) that comprised the higher degree and founding the *Institut National des sciences and des arts*, with three branches: physical and mathematical sciences; moral and political sciences; literature and finearts<sup>3</sup>.

### **The institution of the Lyceum (1802)**

The Law number 11 Floréal, year X (May 1<sup>st</sup> 1802), usually defined by French historians as *loi sur les lycées* (Law on the Lyceums), appears, as Boudon discusses, “at the origin of a first attempt of complete organization of the educational system in Napoleonic France” (BOUDON 2004, p. 7, our translation)<sup>4</sup>. Made necessary to regulate the confusing overlap of interventions in the public education sector, consequence of the school policy of the revolutionary period, the law entrusted the burden of primary education to the municipalities and divided secondary education between state lyceums and secondary schools financed by municipalities or privately, intervening also in the higher sector with the reinforcement of the so-called “special schools”.

The lyceum, which replaced the central schools of the revolutionary period, although it evoked in its name the plan formulated by Condorcet in 1791, did not represent a break with the *Ancien Régime*, but a recovery of its legacy: this historiographical thesis, even in the apparent paradox of its formulation, in the strabism between the “old” and the “new” regime, is today a fixed point of French historiography resulting from the studies carried out by Compère (1985) and Savoie (2001)<sup>5</sup>: “The lyceum is the return, for the general education of future elites, to the school establishment in the full sense of the term (our translation)”, and its prototype rooted in the old Jesuit college of the 16th century. According to Savoie (2001), the change should not be traced in the proposed syllabus, but in the establishment itself “which implies a pedagogical orientation and a model of school life” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 41, our translation), according to the tradition of the Jesuit colleges, suitable to form “a set structured

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<sup>3</sup> For a historical reconstruction of events concerning French education, teaching and educational institutions, see the classic and fundamental works of: Chevallier, Groperrin, Maillot (1968-1971); Godechot (1968); Gontard (1984); Mayeur (1979, 1981); Gerbod (1968); Fouret, Ozouf (1977); Aulard (1911). As regards the revolutionary period alone, the literature is quite extensive, favored by the resumption of studies on the occasion of the bicentenary of the Revolution; a precise historical balance has been presented by Julia (1990); Belhoste (1992).

<sup>4</sup> The work brings together the Proceedings of the Colloquium held on November 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 2002, organized by the *Institut Napoléon et la Bibliothèque Marmottan à l'occasion du bicentenaire des lycées*. The conference organized by Boudon was part of the celebrations of the bicentenary of the law of the year X. An account of the studies and interventions promoted on the occasion of the commemorative event is offered by Marchand (2006).

<sup>5</sup> In particular, the work of Compère (1985); we also highlight the contribution of Savoie (2001) and Compère, Savoie (2001), pp. 101-130.

in classes whose succession forms a defined curriculum and offers a variety of services associated with teaching (supervision, repetition of lessons and supervision of written work, courses and auxiliary activities)” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 41, our translation).

The boarding school, therefore, constituted the pedagogical formula of lyceum in which the boarding school was the main educational objective, although the institute was also open to external students who could enjoy part of the courses.

Among the reasons that led to the resurgence of the Jesuit collegiate model, remodelled by Napoleon according to the discipline of modern military schools, French historiography has identified the failure of the central schools instituted in 1795 and organized, in the same year, by the Daunau Law, which provided for the presence of at least one central school in each department, with a syllabus, extended over three cycles, with a specific scientific vocation<sup>6</sup>.

In the general project, the central schools constituted the intermediate passage between primary and higher education, but, the excessive cultural gap between primary and central schools, the difficulty in recruiting a qualified teaching staff, the fixing of the scientific syllabus - felt by the new bourgeois class unqualified in relation to humanistic culture - the mistrust of families towards a completely secular institution, contributed to its failure, despite its attested presence in about a hundred units (JULIA, 1987), determining the success of private schools, secular or ecclesiastical, boarding schools, which provided more traditional training and teaching, based on Christian education and classical culture.

Outside the direct management of the state, the first attempt to organize a “secondary sector” led to widespread disorder caused by competition from public and private training institutes in disparate courses, which the law of May 1, 1802 put an end to:

While the 1795 regulations left the issue of competition completely aside, those of 1802 aim to put this competition into a system with state establishments to control it, transform it, and ultimately put it at the service of public instruction (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 43).

Being able to rely on administrative centralization, with the Ministry of the Interior on which public education depended, and with a departmental hierarchical organization, instituted in the year VII (1800), placed under the control of prefects and subprefects, the law, establishing secondary schools laid the founding guidelines for the second degree of public education, which was deficient in the revolutionary school system, to the detriment of municipalities or private schools; the lyceums represented the third degree:

Which is roughly that of the old central schools and the special schools at the higher level. In fact, high schools recruit students who are still young and of a comparable academic level to those in secondary schools. What determines their superiority is the level of their upper classes (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 43, our translation).

This relationship between secondary school and lyceum requires some explanatory details<sup>7</sup>: a portion of the lyceum places were reserved for students financed with grants and recruited from among the sons of soldiers and officers, one third, and from among the best high school students, two thirds, who entered the upper classes by selections, in order to “spark

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<sup>6</sup> The three cycles were thus constituted: from 12 to 14 years: languages, design, natural history; from 14 to 16 years: sciences; from 16 to 18 years: letters, general grammar, history, legislation (GONTARD, 1984).

<sup>7</sup> A detailed reconstruction of the law is contained in: Gontard (1984).

emulation among the directors of the high schools and encourage them to agree to the efforts necessary to update them and bring them into conformity,” with the aim of the law’s drafters to “make the high schools the satellites of the Lyceums” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 43, our translation). This network system presupposed a limited presence of lyceums (no longer provided, like the central schools, in a departmental division, but only where courts of appeal were present) flanked by a conspicuous presence of secondary schools: the first aimed at training an elite, the others called to provide education limited to the training of intermediate ruling classes.

Between 1802 and 1806, the implementing rules for the pedagogical and administrative organization of lyceums and secondary schools were promulgated to give a definitive aspect to the two types of establishment (GONTARD, 1984).

As far as the lyceums were concerned, the decree of October 27<sup>th</sup> 1802, established the division of personnel and salary salaries; the decree of December 10<sup>th</sup> 1802, regulated the pedagogical organization: the key teachings were identified in Latin and mathematics; all the others were organized around them, dispensed with from the initial sixthclass, up to the first.

The Latin course was entrusted to three teachers who taught two classes a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. In the sixth grade Latin and the first elements of calculus were taught; in the fifth, Latin and the four arithmetic operations; in the fourth, complementary teaching was given to geography and, in the remaining classes, history. Similarly, the math course was entrusted to three teachers: in the sixth, the teaching of mathematics and the first notions of natural history; in the fifth, the elements of the sphere; in the fourth, physics and in the last three classes, respectively, astronomy, chemistry and mineralogy.

At the end of the six classes, it was possible to access the two higher courses, spread over two years and, respectively, entrusted to a teacher in literature: to learn Latin and French and “fine literatures”; and in science: to learn transcendental mathematics (differential calculus and general principles of physics). In addition to these teachings, there were also classes in calligraphy, drawing, gymnastics, dance and music taught by teachers in the presence of a chaplain.

The organization was of a military type: the students were divided into groups of 25, led by a sergeant and four corporals chosen from among the best students.

The decree of June 10<sup>th</sup> 1803 organized the administration and internal life of the lyceum. The administration was entrusted to two councils and three administrators: the first, headed by the prefect, controlled the financial management; the second, that is the board of administration, was chaired by the rector, who was also the director of the lyceum. In addition, the old figure of the inspector, called to supervise the students’ behaviour and progress, and the teachers subject to him, were introduced. Financial management was assigned to the lawyer responsible to the board of directors.

The teaching staff was also regulated, and finally the internal life of the establishment was regulated: the daily schedule of activities for the boarders, the school calendar, penalties and rewards.

The curriculum of the secondary schools, already established by the law of May 1<sup>st</sup> 1802, was limited to “the Latin and French language, the first principles of geography, history and mathematics”<sup>8</sup>. Separated into private or municipal high schools, both were under the supervision of the prefect. With the decree *19 vendémiaire year XII*, precise rules were given for their control, for the designation of teachers and the director, and the internal life of the boarding school was regulated according to the rules already established for the lyceum, but with a less military approach.

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<sup>8</sup> Law of May 1<sup>st</sup> 1802, Title IV, our translation.

Between 1802 and 1805, 29 lyceums were established. There were 370 municipal secondary schools and 377 private schools, many of which were ecclesiastical, especially minor seminaries, authorized after the signing of the Concordat (CHEVALLIER, GROSERRIN, MAILLET, 1968-1971): apparently the secondary sector definitely took off. In reality, there were numerous administrative, pedagogical, and disciplinary difficulties in the lyceums, but above all, as Gontard (1984, p. 78, our translation) pointed out, “the essential obstacles experienced by the lyceums at their birth were of a psychological and political order”: martial discipline led many heads of families to believe that future soldiers would be trained, and there were numerous complaints of non-religiousness and moral laxity of the staff employed by those who barely tolerated the new training institute. At the same time, the success of the secondary schools highlighted two major problems: the inability to give homogeneity to the various institutions, many of which ended up being little more than elementary school; the emergence of the numerous seminaries which, as subordinates, assumed the role of protagonists in training, with the risk of distorting public education (GONTARD, 1984).

A first solution was attempted by revising, starting in 1805, the disciplinary regime of the lyceums and solving the problems related to recruitment, but it did not escape Napoleon and his closest collaborators, including the director of public education. Fourcroy, father of the law of May 1, 1802, the weak point of the educational regime: being absolutely acephalous. In the reform implemented, higher education, with its many special and autonomous schools, was almost independent of the secondary sector, constituting a mere fourth grade of education. As far as it was concerned, the secondary sector, although conceived at two distinct and interconnected levels - secondary school and lyceum - without a point to direct it, remained unworkable, falling, among other things, into the old competitive regime between public and private within it, into the never overcome dichotomous opposition between the lay and the ecclesiastical. Fourcroy pointed out in his report to the emperor of March 1806, possible escape from the impasse by making: “study in the lyceums necessary for various spheres of society, as formerly in the universities, to attain the priesthood, the licenses of law and medicine, public education, and perhaps the first places of administration” (DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, 1806, s/p). For this, Fourcroy warned, it was essential to re-establish a diploma like that of the old *maîtrise ès-arts*: “We will thus restore what once existed at the University”<sup>9</sup>. The foundations were thus laid for the later and complete organization of the public education system.

### ***L'Université impériale: modern system of public education***

The model of the ancient universities of the *Ancien Régime* was the historical and legitimate reference for the implementation of an educational reform aimed at creating a modern and functional public education system, capable of closing the reformist circle of the Napoleonic period.

The public education system was redefined with the law of May 10<sup>th</sup> 1806, which, in the first of its three articles, established the *Université impériale* (Imperial University), conceived as a corporate community of associates: “A body will be formed, under the name of *Université impériale*, charged exclusively with teaching and public education throughout the Empire” (SAVOIE, 2001)<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Report presented to His Majesty by the Counselor of State, Director General of Public Instruction, attached to the *Exposé de la Situation de l'Empire* (1806).

<sup>10</sup> Savoie points out that: “The *Université impériale* essentially assumes the institutional framework of the ancient universities, and in particular of the ancient University of Paris, and applies it to the entire imperial territory. The best way to grasp the idea of this transposition is to recall the corporate origin of the university



The new Napoleonic educational system was therefore conceived on two pillars: the corporation of the old university of Paris and the hierarchical structuring model of the Jesuit congregation. Napoleon himself observed:

There would be one teaching corps if all the principals, inspectors, teachers of the Empire had one or more of the same leaders as the Jesuits had a general, provincials, etc., if there were in the teaching career a progressive order that kept the emulation going and showed, in the different periods of life, a nourishment and a goal of hope [...] Everyone felt the importance of the Jesuits, we will soon feel the importance of the teaching career (*Correspondance de Napoléon*, Tome X, 15 février 1805, our translation).

In this organic set of mutual interdependence between the two supporting structures, the hegemony of the State would place itself as the sole approver of teaching and the respective academic qualifications recovered from the old universities and divided into three progressive degrees: baccalaureate, diploma and graduation.

In practice, the *Université impériale* (instituted by the law of 1806 and organized by the decrees of 1808), consisted of a system of public education founded on two essential assumptions: the state prerogative of teaching and the exclusivity of degrees. The first assured by the aggregation of each educational institution to the *Université impériale*: “No school, no educational establishment, can be formed outside the *Université impériale* and without the authorization of its head”<sup>11</sup>; the second guaranteed by the reconstituted university faculties.

The two assumptions developed the possibility of recreating the faculty: “No one can open a school born to teach publicly without being a member of the *Université impériale* and graduating from one of its faculties”<sup>12</sup>. The decree of March 17<sup>th</sup> 1808 reformed the school orders, stating in article 5 that:

- The faculties, dedicated to teaching the sciences and being the only ones that granting the corresponding academic degrees;
- The lyceums, which taught ancient languages, history, rhetoric, logic, and the elements of mathematics and physics;
- The colleges, conceived as the redefinition of municipal high schools by decree 1802, in which “elements of ancient languages and first principles of history and science” (our translation) were taught;
- The institutes or private schools in which “the teaching is similar to that of the colleges” (our translation);
- The boarding schools, also private schools, but “dedicated to less intense studies than those in the institutions” (our translation);
- elementary school, where “one learns to read, write and the first notions of calculus” (our translation).

Excluded from the *Université impériale* and its direct control were the *College de France*, the Museum, the special schools (Polytechnique, Navale, Art et Métiers, the *Accademia militare de Saint-Cur*), and the seminaries (GONTARD, 1984).

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institution. The origin of the University of Paris is the association of Parisian professors, who, at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, organized themselves, won the support of the king, that of the pope, and a number of privileges, among which, in particular, the right to give themselves regulations, officers, and their own jurisdiction, all with the aim of protecting their members and controlling the teaching labour market within the limits of their jurisdiction” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 45-46, our translation).

<sup>11</sup> Decree 17<sup>th</sup> March 1808, Title I, art. 2, our translation.

<sup>12</sup> Decree 17<sup>th</sup> March 1808, Title II, art. 3, our translation. A degree in Letters and Sciences was required as a condition of access to the profession, ensuring, on the one hand, state dominance over teaching and, on the other, the birth as a teacher as a professional and employee of the state.

The *Université Impériale* as a state institution incorporating public and private schools of all types and levels, and capable of constituting a *corps enseignant* (teaching staff) by an “academic degree” formation, necessarily needed a powerful administrative organization, which was foreseen to be divided into three orders: central, academic and provincial administration (CHEVALLIER, GROSPERRIN, MAILLET, 1984).

As for the central administration, three high officials were placed at the top of the *Université impériale*: the *grand maître*, with administrative and disciplinary functions, appointed the staff, granted the scholarships, approved the authorizations for the opening of new institutes, approved the degrees and sanctions imposed; the registrar, with administrative functions, and the treasurer responsible for financial matters. The *grand maître* presided over the University Council, composed of thirty members, with administrative, disciplinary, and pedagogical functions, and responsible, among other things, of the elaboration of regulations, disciplinary matters, and didactic matters, such as the choice of texts to be adopted. The central administration was completed by the corps of inspectors general, appointed directly by the *grand maître*, responsible for the inspections of the faculties, lyceums, and colleges. In the academic administration (consisting of 27 academies corresponding to the courses), the rector was placed at the head, president of the ten-member academic council, called upon to examine the tasks of the lyceums and colleges and to deal with disputes concerning the schools and academies. Academic inspectors were also established who, in addition to controlling the colleges, ensured inspections of colleges, institutes, boarding houses, and elementary school. The prefectural administration was given additional control and, if necessary, subprefects could be delegated by the mayor to supervise colleges, lyceums, pensioners and institutes.

In the reactivation of the old faculties of “Studio generale”: medicine, law, theology, letters and sciences, alongside the preserved special schools, the higher segment was formed, expressly intended for the training of intermediate ruling classes of the state and society: military personnel in the academy and the polytechnic schools; technicians in the engineering schools; administrative, financial and legal personnel in the faculty of law; teachers and middle managers in the faculties of literature and sciences; professionals in the faculties of medicine and law and ecclesiastical intermediate ruling in the faculty of theology (CHEVALLIER, GROSPERRIN, MAILLET, 1968-1971).

Napoleon was firmly convinced that the *raison d'être* of higher education should be professional utility<sup>13</sup>. The qualification therefore presented itself as the most adequate instrument to guarantee the birth of an “aristocracy of the intellect” that would ensure political and social stability and would be able to ensure the very existence of the administrative state, since it was the only one capable of guaranteeing entry into careers and professions through a control over the skills that would temporarily become a strong point of the University.

Necessarily, the new university regime imposed a radical shift in the balance of power between lyceum and secondary schools that did not result in a break with the 1802 project: “What is changing [...] is the relationship of the State with the private establishments” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 48, our translation), finally placed in a complementary regime with the public institutions, in an education system managed, controlled and supervised by the State itself. From the educational point of view, a completely remodelled syllabus was returned to the humanistic tradition established by the Jesuits, and the scenario given in 1802, which foresaw for lyceum a path focused on Latin and mathematics, was abandoned: the new high school course included two years of grammar, two years of humanities, one of rhetoric, and

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<sup>13</sup> On this argument see: Liard, 1888. The author negatively evaluated the Napoleonic approach, oriented to conceive the colleges as specialized services and not as research institutes, a judgment generally accepted by later historiography.

one of mathematics and physics<sup>14</sup>; from this same extension of studies, it was easy to establish, by decree of October 15<sup>th</sup> 1811, a hierarchy among establishments, establishing for colleges and institutes, teachings that reached the humanities classes, and, for boarding schools, even grammar classes<sup>15</sup>.

Having established the degree of bachelor of letters as a necessary qualification to be able to attain any academic degree in the faculties<sup>16</sup> with a decree of October 17, 1808 the preparation for the bachelor of letters exam was transferred from the faculties to the lyceum: “To be received as bachelor in the college of letters, it will be necessary to be sixteen years old, answer about everything that is taught in the upper classes of the lyceums. It will also be necessary to present a certificate from the teachers of a lyceum indicated by the director and proving attendance for two years” (PIOBETTA, 1937, p. 24, our translation). Lyceum in the new system assumed a hegemonic position, strengthened in its key role by the measures of 1811, the third and last phase of Napoleonic school legislation: the provisions implemented with the 193 articles of the decree of November 15<sup>th</sup> 1811, described by French historiography as draconian measures, designed to strengthen the definitive right reserved to the state over education after the proliferation of confessional educational institutions, especially minor seminaries, that escaped state control. In its content, the decree announced the creation, between 1812 and 1813, of 100 lyceums on the imperial territory. In addition:

For secular schools, a distinction is made between institutions or boarding schools located in cities with such establishments. Institutions of the first category will teach up to (and including) humanities classes, while boarding schools will stop at the level of grammar classes (plus some elements of arithmetic and geometry) (art. 16). Institutions in competition with a lyceum or school may only teach the first elements (reading, writing) (art. 15). Boarding schools in the same location may only have boarders over the age of nine, as long as schools and colleges cannot accommodate them (CHEVALLIER, GROSPERRIN, MAILLET, 1968-1971, p. 53, our translation).

In addition, minor seminaries were also regulated, placing them under the direct control of the University (article 15), limiting their presence to one for each department, and prohibiting them in the field (articles 27-29)<sup>17</sup>.

These provisions, despite the pragmatism that motivated them (in particular, the

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<sup>14</sup> The lyceum, reorganized with three regulations, edited on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1809, concerning teaching, discipline and financial management respectively, was remodelled by structuring the curriculum with the predominance of humanistic teaching, extended over six years, taught in annual “classes” that assumed the traditional name: “The studies began with two years of grammar where we taught French, Latin and, in the second year, Greek [...], sacred history, mythology. In the two years of humanities, initiation to geometry and algebra were added to the literary classes; in rhetoric one learned trigonometry and surveying at the same time. The teaching was crowned by the two special classes in mathematics and philosophy. [...]. In all these points, we were close to the colleges of the *Ancien Régime*. Finally, it was planned to open elementary school classes for pupils who could not follow grammar classes and only knew how to read, write, count” (GONTARD, 1984, p. 88, our translation). The discipline remained anchored to the previous provisions: the military training of students and, at the same time, religious teaching. Finally, it regulates the management of the economy with new salary scales for employees and student fees.

<sup>15</sup> The measures adopted with the decree of October 15<sup>th</sup> 1811 fell into the third and final phase of Napoleonic scholastic legislation, which we will examine briefly.

<sup>16</sup> Decree March 17<sup>th</sup> 1808, Title III

<sup>17</sup> In addition to these measures, pensioners and municipal institutions were obliged to send their students over the age of ten to lyceums or colleges to attend their courses (art.22): a provision, as Savoie points out, already present in the 1806 projects, and “in conformity with the old university practice” (SAVOIE, 2001, p. 49).

proliferation of ecclesiastical institutes), were fully in line with the basic project established as of 1806: to create a system of public education framed within a secular conception, capable of making the public sector including the private and ecclesiastical ones, in which lyceum had to assume the role of top of the secondary segment and base of the higher segment.

The reform process initiated in 1802 and completed in 1811 guaranteed imperial France a public education system, managed and controlled by the state, with a system prospectively divided into three grades (primary, secondary and higher), aimed at professional training anchored to the title of study through the mechanism of academic degrees (licentiate and baccalaureate).

After the reform implemented in France, in the empire's satellite states, public education commissions were created starting in 1809, in charge of formulating reform plans for an adaptation of the French model to the various territorial realities: Giuseppe Bonaparte established it in Spain, Luigi Bonaparte in Holland, Gioacchino Murat in Naples, and similar measures also appeared in the Duchy of Warsaw<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> The adaptation of the French educational model to the different territorial realities will be the subject of analysis in a further contribution.

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