

CONDORCET AND MODERNITY

The Marquis de Condorcet was one of the few Enlightenment ideologists to witness the French Revolution and participate as an elected politician at the centre of events during France's transition from monarchy to republic. His impact on French history, and on the subsequent development of social scientific thought, has been immense. *Condorcet and Modernity* explores aspects of his social and political thought from 1774, the year of Louis XVI's accession, to 1794, and in particular the interaction between Condorcet's political theory, legislative pragmatism and public policy proposals. David Williams's focus is on selected essays and treatises and specific projects and legislative proposals relating to rights and constitutional reform, the civil order, voting procedures, ecclesiastical powers and privileges, the judiciary and the law, economics and the grain trade, the abolition of the slave trade, women's rights, monarchical government, revolution and republicanism.

Professor Williams examines the complex links between Condorcet as the visionary ideologist and Condorcet as the pragmatic legislator, and between Condorcet's concept of modernity, the application of 'social arithmetic' to government policies, and the management of change. Texts that have hitherto received relatively little attention in this context are examined in the light of a particular notion of human rights, and strategies for the implementation of those rights. Based on an extensive array of both printed and manuscript sources, this major contribution to Enlightenment studies is the first full treatment of Condorcet's politics to appear in English for a generation.

DAVID WILLIAMS is Emeritus Professor of French in the University of Sheffield. A leading scholar of Enlightenment France, in 1999 he was made Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French government.

Cambridge University Press
0521841399 - Condorcet and Modernity
David Williams
Frontmatter
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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2004

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Adobe Garamond 11/12.5 pt. *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloging in publication data

Williams, David, 1938–

Condorcet and modernity / by David Williams.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 84139 9

1. Condorcet, Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Caritat, marquis de, 1743–1794 – Contributions
 in political science. I. Title.

JC179.C66W55 2004

320.01 – dc22 2004045117

ISBN 0 521 84139 9

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For thirty years hardly a day has passed when
I have not thought about political science
(Réponse à l'adresse aux provinces, 1790)

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Acknowledgements

Little progress would have been made in the preparation of this monograph without the help, expert advice and strong encouragement of the many distinguished Condorcet specialists and other *dix-huitiémistes* I have consulted. In particular, I wish to record my thanks to Professor Haydn Mason (Emeritus Professor of French, University of Bristol) and Professor Iain McLean (Nuffield College, University of Oxford) who both gave generously of their time to read through the typescript, and offer me many valuable suggestions for improvement. My thanks also go to Mme Anne-Marie Chouillet who graciously accorded me full access to the invaluable inventory of Condorcet manuscripts held at the Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France which she is currently preparing for publication in collaboration with M. Pierre Crépel and others. I am also indebted to Dr Simon Davies who thoughtfully drew my attention to manuscript material relating to Condorcet's English contacts.

I acknowledge with gratitude the help and co-operation of Mme Annie Chassagne at the Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France with regard to the photographic reproduction of certain manuscripts. I am equally indebted to archival staff at the Bibliothèque Nationale Richelieu, the Bibliothèque Nationale Tolbiac, the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, the Archives de l'Académie des Sciences and the Archives Nationales.

Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6 and the Conclusion contain material to be found in the following articles: 'Condorcet and natural rights', *SVEC* 296 (1992), ed. G. J. Mallinson (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation), pp. 103–21; 'Progress and the empirical tradition in Condorcet', *Bulletin de la Société Américaine de Philosophie de Langue Française* 4 (1992), ed. C. Michael (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University), 67–77; 'Condorcet and the politics of black servitude', in J. Dolamore (ed.), *Making Connections. Essays in French Culture and Society in Honour of Philip Thody* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1998), pp. 67–80; 'Condorcet and the natural origins of justice and the law', in G. Lamoine (ed.), *Nature, Droit, Justice. Actes du Colloque des Sociétés Britannique et*

Acknowledgements

Française du Dix-huitième Siècle (6–9 septembre 1990) (Toulouse: Publications de l'Université de Toulouse, 1991), pp. 233–42; 'Man in transit: the human odyssey in Condorcet's *Esquisse*', in J. Renwick (ed.), *L'Invitation au Voyage. Studies in Honour of Peter France* (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 2000), pp. 273–82. I wish to thank the editors of the relevant publications for kindly giving me permission to draw on this work already in print.

My heartfelt thanks also go the Arts and Humanities Research Board and to the British Academy for the generous grants awarded to me to enable me to undertake archival work in Paris over a prolonged period. I also acknowledge with gratitude the support I have received from the University of Sheffield.

Finally, nothing would have been possible without the support, understanding and infinite patience of my wife Colette.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my step-father, Charles Verdun Rattle.

References and abbreviations

Unless otherwise stated, reference to Condorcet's works (volume number and pages in roman separated by a colon) is to the *Œuvres complètes de Condorcet*, ed. A. Condorcet O'Connor and F. Arago, 12 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1847–9; repr. Stuttgart: F. Frommann Verlag, 1968).

A	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal
AN	Archives Nationales
BIF	Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France
BN(R)	Bibliothèque Nationale Richelieu
BN(T)	Bibliothèque Nationale Tolbiac
D	<i>Voltaire's Correspondence and Related Documents</i> , definitive edition edited by Theodore Besterman (The Voltaire Foundation, 1968–76)
SVEC	<i>Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century</i>

All quotations from Condorcet's works, including manuscript sources, have been translated into modern English. An English translation of titles of Condorcet's works forming the subject of more detailed commentary in Chapters 2–10 and the Conclusion has also been given on first reference.