

Foreword

The idea of a dossier of the *Revista Vária História* organized around the theme of Intellectual and Political History originated from two fundamental motives. On the one hand, to broaden the horizon of references and consequently the understanding of those interested in the study of the political cultures of history; on the other, to emphasize the contribution of intellectual history — in its different approaches and perspectives — for the analysis of political phenomena, thereby allowing a greater exploration of the various relations/interactions between cultural and political life. Along with the interests mentioned above, this dossier, like others of the *Vária História*, aims at assuring a space for historiographical debates and the opportunity for new ideas.

On the trail of the concept of Human Rights, their emergence and status in the inner world of modern politics, Lynn Hunt's article, "The Novel and the Origins of Human Rights: the Intersection of History, Psychology and Literature," proposes at the same time a creative reflection on the limits of intellectual history and the advantages of enlarging its analytical scope. Along this line, the author undertakes an archeology of the language of human rights, without disregarding the philosophical discourses and political disputes for rights that had as their background the American and French Revolutions of 1776 and 1789, respectively, to then, through a reading of the epistolary novels of the eighteenth century, find the fundamentals of human rights in the growing autonomy of the individual and the notion of "imagined empathy." The psychological and emotional effects provoked by this genre, like the mastery of the self, would thus keep one of the secrets of the resonance of human rights.

In "History, Events and Narrative: Incidents and Daily Culture," Robert Darnton, in his reading of John Brewer's book, *A Sentimental Murder: Love and Madness in the Eighteenth Century*, problematizes, with his usual originality, the emergence of a new history of incidents, which arose from the interest of historians in minor facts but is not for that reason any less present in the life of ordinary people — as with crimes of murder, atrocities, and scandals, among others that are the delight of the sensationalist press — as well as for their public repercussions and forms of appropriation

and divulgation in the media. By critically following Brewer's analysis, with its various turns around a crime of passion in eighteenth century London, and its developments, versions, and sentimental manipulations, Darnton recovers the potential for analyzing incidents of daily life through the forms of their communication in the media, which is very suggestive for thinking about the various debates of ideas and which, in his view, may lead historians to search for and find other answers in the past.

By means of other paths, Christophe Prochasson's article, "*Emoções e Política: Primeiras Aproximações*" [Emotions and Politics: First Approximations], also leads us to feelings, particularly their role in political life. Through the perspective of a political history that regards affective, symbolic, and other dimensions, made possible among others by the analysis of political cultures, and after a rich historiographical excursion through the new forms of approaching the politician in history, the author takes the political thought of Tocqueville as an exemplary case in favor of a history of political emotions. The collective emotions forging political links between individuals, the force of passions determining the political order alongside the more legitimate rational interests, the emotional charges intervening in political behavior and forms of action are themes that make up the provocative reading the author makes of *Democracy in America* and *Memories of 1848*.

For his part, Elías Palti, in the article "History of Ideas and History of Political Languages: on the Discussion about the 'Pueblo' and 'Pueblo' Concepts," returns to the theme of the concept of the nation in Hispanic America, taking as a reference the discourse of independence and the use, within it, of different forms of the word "people," whether in the singular or plural, as the key to thinking about the alteration of political languages. Theoretically sympathetic to scholars of political terminologies and concepts, and in clear opposition to the old tradition of the history of ideas, the author establishes a frank, consistent dialogue with a historiography that, on analyzing the conception of a resigned nation in Latin American political discourse during the period of emancipation, ends up by defining a key to reading based on antinomies, such as liberalism/traditionalism, tradition/modern, informed by the ideological content of the discourses.

On the horizon of political-intellectual history in Hispanic América, Maria Helena Capelato, in her article "*Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos: Political Ideas in a Cultural Review*," traces the construction and utilization of an ideal of *hispanidad* in the course of a period of culture created to circulate in the Spanish language countries, during the Americanist policy defined by the Spanish government after the Second World War. A meeting place for intellectuals and political men emerging from Franco's hosts, sympathetic to nationalism, the periodical, as the author shows, included a multiple and contradictory set of discourses. It is just this aspect that

the article will emphasize, guided by a search for the relation between text and context and for cultural paratexts, which, in the referred to publication, shape the patterns of the interaction of ideas with a socio-political dynamic marked by the emergence of the Cold War and the disputes for power within the Franco regime.

The First World War as the background for a history of intellectuals and their political positions is the theme of Yael Dagan's article, "Civilized, Barbarians and Europeans: Three Intellectuals Faced the Enemy -1914-1925," in which the author follows the writings and personal conflicts of three important French intellectuals, namely André Gide, Jean Schlumberger and Jacques Rivière, on the patriotic mobilization during the First World War and in the immediate postwar period, up to 1925, a period that qualifies the passage from war to peace. Studying the representations of "national enemy" as a strong element in the collective representations of the period, and tracked down in a meticulous research on the writings of these men, especially their texts in the *La Nouvelle Revue Française* (*La NRF*,) and their personal correspondence, the author lays bare the mechanisms of mobilization and cultural demobilization in which these writers were engaged beyond their experiences with the war.

The theme of commitment, as the main way to define the figure of the intellectual and its counterpart, the silence of the intellectuals, is the argument of the article "The French 'cultural' intellectual: from the 'Dreyfus affair' to Nowadays," by Helenice Rodrigues. From the notion of the intellectual, tracing its origin in the end of the nineteenth century in France — a time when this social category makes its appearance through its political action in the public sphere — passing through various conceptions, forms and crisis of commitment of the French intellectuals throughout the contemporary history of the twentieth century, and arriving at the example of a model of representation of the intellectual in the 1980s, the author reiterates the urgency of the critical function of intellectuals. In the analysis of the force, in the committed discourse, of terms like truth, moral values, critical consciousness, freedom; in the contrast between the committed intellectual and the expert, a living portrait of French intellectual culture is here traced.

With such wealth and diversity, it is hoped that the organization of this Dossier has fulfilled its objectives.

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