

FOREWORD

DOSSIER: ANCIENT HISTORY BETWEEN LOCAL AND GLOBAL: INTEGRATION, CONFLICT, AND USES OF THE PAST

DOSSIÊ: A HISTÓRIA ANTIGA ENTRE O LOCAL E O GLOBAL: INTEGRAÇÃO, CONFLITO E USOS DO PASSADO

Ancient History: Different Perspectives

História Antiga: Diferentes Perspectivas

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This dossier is the result of a call for papers made by the editors of the Brazilian Journal of History (*Revista Brasileira de História*), operationalised through a network much more extensive than immediately visible. Thus, we would like to thank our colleagues coordinating the Brazilian Network for Ancient History of the Brazilian National Association of History (GTHA-Anpuh), Alex Degan, PhD and Fábio Morales, PhD, both from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), who contributed for the success of this initiative alongside Dominique Santos, PhD, from Universidade de Blumenau (Furb), also a member of the National Coordination of GTHA-Anpuh and one of the editors of this dossier. This acknowledgement is extended to the community of Brazilian Historians of Antiquity, for their vigorous dissemination of this dossier both in Brazil and abroad. There are several laboratories and research groups spread throughout the country devoted to Ancient History,¹

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with robust international networks that functioned as the solid basis that allowed studies on Antiquity to be conducted in Brazil, as well as their reception and growing consolidation. We now reach the point where a dossier like this could be made in the *Revista Brasileira de História*. This broad network represented by the various regular actions of the GTHA-Anpuh,² allowed the dossier, even if published at the end of the year and with a relatively short term, to be successfully received. From the beginning, the contribution of the *Revista Brasileira de História* team, notably the editor, Valdeci Lopes de Araujo, PhD (Ufop), and the secretary, Marcus Vinicius Correia Biaggi, PhD (Anpuh), were both diligent, welcoming, and indispensable. The Historians of Antiquity on the Editorial Board of *Revista Brasileira de História*, Helena Papa, PhD (Unimontes) and Katia Pozzer, PhD (UFRGS), were very present, supporting our work at several opportunities. We express our gratitude to all of them!

We received fifteen excellent contributions from both Brazilian and foreign authors. At this point in the process, the work of the referees who not only appraised but also qualified each proposal with the utmost rigour and criteria deserves our most effusive acknowledgements. This was no simple task: there were fifteen highly qualified proposals, and we could only publish nine of them, due to the journal's rules. In total, we worked with 36 referees based in Brazil and abroad to build a framework that allowed the careful choice of the articles presented here. This selection is illustrative, although not exhaustive, of the diversity of research projects carried out by our community of Historians of Antiquity. Despite such diversity, there is a unity that reflects the proposed axis for the dossier since its initial call, which was expressed in the following terms:

The unfolding of the various globalisation processes throughout history and the conflicts they generated stimulate the debate about the relationship between local dynamics and their effects or interconnections in the global sphere. This agenda is especially important today, as globalisation highlights the violence involved in different processes of social, political, economic, and cultural exclusion. The importance of these issues is made clear when we consider that research in this area has led to the very redefinition of ancient history as a field, as shown by works such as *The corrupting Sea* (Horden; Purcell, 2000) and *História Antiga/Ancient History* (Guarinello, 2013). Various theoretical approaches such as those connected to the so-called processes of Hellenisation, Romanisation, Christianisation, or Mediterraneanisation, and the criticisms of their limits (as expressed mainly in the postcolonial and decolonial approaches), reveal the diversity of studies that have been produced and debated in the field. This thematic

issue aims to bring together papers that contribute to such discussions mainly in two ways: by making a balance of the debate so far or by pointing out future possibilities for research in Ancient History.

Research on Antiquity produced in the sphere of the Brazilian Network for Ancient History (GTHA/Anpuh) is not limited to research on ancient societies. Reception studies are central in the production of GTHA's members, e.g., the traditions and representations based on Antiquity for contemporary consumption. This includes intellectual, academic, and cultural traditions, expressed in diverse ways, such as operas, TV series, games, popular, or journalistic narratives. Over time, different societies have referred to Antiquity in a variety of means, producing national discourses and identities. As a result, the study of Antiquity cannot be completed without a systematic and in-depth analysis of the uses of the past, both in Antiquity (e.g., Vergil and Aeneas) and in the contemporary world, as shown by François Hartog, in France, Francisco Murari and Pedro Paulo Funari, in Brazil, and José Antônio Dabdab Trabulsi in his Franco-Brazilian production.

The teaching of Ancient History at many levels has also been a relevant theme for our reflection on the field. The Brazilian Network for Ancient History (GTHA/Anpuh) has had this agenda at the centre of the debate since its foundation (Silva, 2001). More recently, this issue received a strong incentive with the debate on the place of history in Brazilian primary and secondary education that followed the creation of a national set of standards for learning by the Brazilian government. This process also took place in other countries. In this context, studies examining contemporary uses of the past, especially with relation to Antiquity, have gained greater prominence, influencing outreach activities developed in Brazilian universities and leading to an increased interest in the field. This development is shown both by the growth of papers presented in our national history congresses, and by the increase in publications in our specialised journals.³

To sum up, as the title expresses, this thematic issue will focus on current debates about Ancient History, considering the dilemmas and conflicts created by globalisation and their effects, whether positive or negative. Above all, it is about bringing up and compiling discussions between the present and ancient worlds (in their diversities), whose combination allows us to enlarge our view and make the very field of history more plural.

The articles published in this dossier represent different perspectives on the primary debate suggested by the editors. Félix Jácome Neto, for instance,

analyses the works of Benjamin Isaac (2004) and Susan Lape (2010) to debate racism, ethnocentrism, and cultural prejudices. Highlighting certain conceptual and argumentative flaws in these two works, Jácome Neto questions the thesis of a supposed continuity between ancient and modern racism. According to him, ethnic relations in Ancient Greece are better explained as non-hereditary forms of cultural prejudice rather than as racism, which has a specific history related to European colonisation and slave trade in modern times, with its ruptures and permanences.

The study of receptions of Antiquity and the uses of the past are established fields of specialisation in the area of Ancient History in Brazil. Glaydson José da Silva, Pedro Paulo Funari and Renata Senna Garraffoni remind us, however, that the reuses of pasts in subsequent contexts were already a practice in Antiquity itself. Horace's phrase (*epist.*, II, 1, 156-7) 'Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes / Intulit agresti Latio' (Conquered Greece took captive her ferocious conqueror and introduced the arts to rustic Latium) is just one among many examples. Such practices continued with Christianity, the Renaissance etc. Thus, there is much to be explored from this perspective. To understand this, the authors present an analysis of this dynamic in the studies of Ancient History and distinct definitions, approaches and dissociations between forms of reception and uses of the past. The article also sheds light on one case study regarding the city of Curitiba, Southern Brazil, as an example of the long-term presence of Greek and Roman culture in Brazilian history.

These temporal layers are explored and deepened in two articles, the one written by Camila Ferreira Paulino da Silva and Leni Ribeiro Leite, and another by Anderson Zalewski Vargas. In the first case, some uses of the past in the past itself have been addressed. The authors discuss how Horace took on the Greek and Roman rhetoric and poetry traditions to establish his own social role in Roman society, within a context of widening of boundaries and fabrication of a new political regime, the Augustan Principate. That is, how the poet used rhetorical strategies to fabricate, reinvent, update, redefine, and rewrite the past, using it as a tool to strengthen his side in the power struggle in Rome. In Vargas' article, however, the dynamics between Antiquity and Contemporaneity are addressed. He analyses how classical rhetoric resources were used to persuade the readers of the newspaper *Correio da Liberdade*, published in the city of Porto Alegre in 1831. This reception of Antiquity is analysed considering mainly the peculiar appropriation of the Athenian tyranny of Peisistratos in an article about the Brazilian political regime of that time, revealing a part of this chain of reception.

In 'A Woman's Speech', Marta Mega de Andrade investigates women's political action in ancient Greek history, especially in the polis. Assuming the issue as a contemporary one, she analyses tragedies, comedies, and funerary epigrams dedicated to women at the end of the 5th and early 4th century BC, in Athens. She reflects on the persistence of female requests that fall short of political rights, validated by the community and by the dimension of 'common life', even if the 'voices' are not amenable to identification by female authorship. This dimension of everyday life is taken as a space/time for political action, and there it allows us to perceive this *logos gunaikos*, a 'woman's speech'.

Material culture is key to many themes in Ancient History. Considering this, Gilberto da Silva Francisco, Haiganuch Sarian and Fábio Vergara Cerqueira presented a case study of a Panathenaic amphora in red figures attributed to the Nikoxenos Painter, known in historiography as the 'Mississippi amphora 1977.3.115'. From that, they argue that an archaeology of the image should be understood at some point between classical iconography and material culture. To this end, the authors address the concepts of support and context, two essential elements in the archaeological treatment of images, approaching a theoretical debate on this methodology. Thinking of a globalised Mediterranean, the authors conclude that integration did not standardise the relationship between specific groups and the material universe around them. Thus, one should not assume a natural Attic meaning to images produced in Attica. On the contrary, an image must be considered within a complex framework involving materials, circulation, and reception.

These complex relationships between local and global are also subjects of analysis by the Austrian scholar Raimund Karl, from the Bangor University. The author reminds us about works of Classical authors, such as Polybius, Caesar, Strabo and others on the population known as the 'Celts'; but while addressing these groups, one should also take Archeology into consideration, as it gives us not only different readings but a more in-depth comprehension about these historical actors of Antiquity. Classical historical sources and Archeology do not establish a simple complementary relationship; instead, they allow one to ask diverse and relatively autonomous questions. Based on his project on the archaeological site of Meillionydd, in the Llŷn Peninsula, Wales, Karl problematizes the differences, integrations, and conflicts between the various 'Celtic' societies in Europe and their neighbours, as well as the use of the historical construct 'Celtic', both in the most distant and most recent pasts.

Horacio Miguel Hernán Zapata is worried about the assumption that it would not be interesting for Latin Americans to study Eastern Ancient History.

As the theme would not respond to ‘national interests’, it would not be necessary to be addressed in our context. Replying to this type of ‘provocation’, the author points out three reasons why this is not the case. He argues that Eastern Ancient History is fundamental for us because it works as a kind of ‘laboratory’ that help us to think about a whole set of social-cultural differences related to other models of social experiences under a historical perspective. To think about this diversity of ways in which human experience can materialise throughout history is essential to understand our contemporaneity.

An example of what is said by Zapata is presented by Jorge Elices Ocón, who addresses ancient monuments in Islamic contexts in his article. The author suggests that complex arguments are hidden behind the radical and destructive character of the DAESH discourse, from which they aim to build a new historical narrative related to Archaeology, monuments, and museums. The group appropriates ideas of the Western and colonialist discourse and reinvents the past, not only hiding the reality of the trafficking of antiquities but also destroying other perceptions of the monuments elaborated by local communities from their memories and traditions.

As one can notice, since Eurípedes Simões de Paula – one of the co-founders of the Brazilian National Association of History and one of its first presidents –, taught the first lectures in Ancient History in a Brazilian university, the field has not only grown but also changed and reinvented itself. The debates related to Ancient History are now inseparable from Brazilian Historiography, and it has collaborated to the community of professional historians that discuss the main social, economic and cultural themes of the present time. Ultimately, we should consider what Benedetto Croce has once said ‘Ogni storia vera, è storia contemporanea’ (Croce, 1912), and similarly what has also been pointed out by Lucien Febvre ‘L’histoire est fille de son temps’ (Febvre, 1942, p. 2). In a world more and more ‘glocal’, debating these interconnected realities is crucial, thus avoiding what Nigerian writer Chimamanda Adichie has called ‘the dangers of a single story’ (Adichie, 2009). This dossier suggests some directions. Have a good reading!

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NOTES

- ¹ For detailed information on the research groups to which we refer to, cf. the (new!) GTHA website: <https://www.gtantiga.com/laboratorios-e-grupos-de-pesquisa>. Access on: May 11, 2020.
- ² The GTHA holds, among other actions, a biannual National Meeting and regularly participates in the National Symposium on History with the promotion of Thematic Symposia. In addition, GTHA maintains a fanpage on Facebook and accounts on other social networks. For details, cf. <https://www.gtantiga.com/>. Access on: May 11, 2020.
- ³ Silva; Oliveira, 2017. For the complete Dossier, www.revistas.usp.br/marenostrum/issue/view/10208. Access on: May 11, 2020.

