

Foreword

This issue of *Varia Historia* was organized along the line of research of the post-graduate history department of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) called "Science and Culture in History." The purpose of this line of research is to do the "theory and history of science" and to do so in its own multi-layered way, remaining attentive to the issues and discussions of the theory and methodology of history and historiography. The "history of history," which binds these three aspects — the theoretical, methodological, and historiographical — is the original tool of every historian. It is the "history of history" that reconstructs and problematizes experience already consolidated and examines the horizon of possible investigations. On its studies depend the depth and innovating force of the historical research of the present. This issue furnishes a dossier in this area of the "history of history," in the fields of theory of history and historiography, offering three interesting articles on present possibilities and the limits of historical science.

The article "Contemporary Historiography — an Essay on Comparative Typology," by Estevão de Rezende Martins (UNB), argues that historiography constitutes a decisive factor for historical culture. Its meaning is to furnish the "environment" in which the rational human agent develops his own temporal identity, within the social context in which his self-determining praxis operates. Combining the sense of time and of the past in the traditional, exemplary, critical, and genetic forms of historiography, according to the Jörn Rüsen's thought, the author develops his essay on the typology of historiography.

The article "In Search of a Concept of Historiography — Elements for a Discussion," by Jurandir Malerba, currently Visiting Professor at the Center of Brazilian Studies of Oxford University, starts from some verifiable definitions in recent Brazilian criticism, attempting to contribute to the construction of an operational concept of historiography. Based on the old characterization of past-reality-history and present-knowledge-history, he tries to suggest the potentialities of historiography as an object of the knowledge of human societies.

The article "The Logical Specificity of History," by José Carlos Reis

(UFMG), discusses the impasses and gaps of historical knowledge and considers the ways of the “normological model” and the “comprehensive model” for the possible overcoming of these epistemological dilemmas.

Four additional articles form the present volume. In “The Construction of Brazil: Projects of Integration of Portuguese America,” Cláudia Maria das Graças Chaves analyzes the improvement of the paths and roads and the opening of navigable canals in Minas Gerais, in the context of the illustrated reforms undertaken after the coming of the royal family to Brazil. From the study of the law-suit in which the woman who was the ex-owner of the black slave, Francisco, sought to judicially revoke his enfranchisement previously conceded by her, Marcus J. de Carvalho, in “From Slave to Famous Gunner of the Confederation of Ecuador: the Case of the African Francisco, 1824-1828,” analyzes the vicissitudes of domestic slavery and the strategies used by the slaves in Recife to construct their own notions of liberty. Finally, in the article “Identity and Architecture in Latin America: the Transnational and the Transcultural as Strategies of the Baroque and of the 21st Century,” Carlos Antônio Leite Brandão studies the conquest of Brazilian territory by the Portuguese and the way that Baroque architecture was the constituent element for the construction of Latin-American society, showing the artificial character of that identity. By comparison, he discusses the character of modern and postmodern Baroque architecture — transnational and transcultural — which makes it able to confront the challenges of globalization in the 21st century.

The article that closes this issue of *Varia Historia* is “Complementarity and Reconciliation,” by Yoav Ben-Dov, member of the Cohn Institute of the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas of the University of Tel-Aviv, Israel, author of the work *Invitation to Physics*, published in Brazil by Jorge Zahar Editor. The author sketches along general lines the idea of “complementarity” first proposed by Niels Bohr as a response to the conceptual problems of quantum mechanics, but later extended by him to other domains, both in and out of science. In these applications, the idea of “complementarity” allows the acceptance of different sets of beliefs and principles that contradict one another but that have intrinsic value within their own set. In particular, this approach can help solve the conflict between the scientific perspective and human aspirations.

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