

Foreword

Following the editorial format introduced in Number 25, when *Varia Historia* began to be organized according to the lines of research in the Postgraduate Program in History of the UFMG, we offer the present issue whose coordinators are part of the line denominated "History and Political Cultures."

Accordingly, a dossier including some of the papers presented by the members of this line of research at the Colloquium "History and Political Cultures," which took place in November, 2001, opens this issue of *Varia Historia*. The event gathered historians from this and other institutions for the purpose of undertaking joint discussions around this research field, which has become provoking and innovative. In fact, a vivid contrast is noted between the wealth of possibilities opened up by the study of political cultures, which reveals a wide range of inquiries to be made into political phenomena, and the relative scarcity of reflections on the reach — and occasional limitations — of work in this category.

In the dossier, we publish seven of the papers presented at the Colloquium, a small but significant sample of the discussions held. In the first article, Professor Eliana Regina de Freitas Dutra weighs the definitions and the history of the concept of political culture, and at the same time makes an inventory of the main historiographical tendencies which, starting from a dialogue with other social sciences, have been dedicated to this field of research and analysis. Professor Carla Maria Junho Anastasia offers some reflections on political violence and the rebellions in the Portuguese America of the eighteenth century and analyzes how, under the impact of the promulgation of the *Lei da Boa Razão*, which implied the diminishing of the customary rights internalized by the vassals of the crown, new forms of collective action were created.

The article by Professor Kátia Gerab Baggio focuses on an important political phenomenon for the understanding of contemporary Latin America, nationalist political culture. She privileges the cases of Mexico, Cuba, and Porto Rico, attempting to show the national representations constructed in these countries, respecting the nuances and peculiarities of each situation. In her article, Professor Angela de Castro Gomes takes up

the debate involving the categories of populism and laborism, offering an interesting guide to analysis. Her proposal is to think of populism as a political myth, a part of the Brazilian social imaginary, and face laborism as a political tradition belonging to the field of socio-political thought. To understand the "*queremismo*," or the movement that took a significant contingent of the masses to the streets in 1945, demanding that Vargas remain in power, is the hub of the article by Professor Jorge Ferreira. From an analysis of the beliefs and values of those workers, the author tries to explain the reasons for the persistent popularity of the dictator who paradoxically saw the regime he had built turn to dust.

The theme of Professor João Trajano Sento-Sé is "*brizolismo*," a pre-dominant political force in Rio de Janeiro in the 1980s and 1990s. The central argument of the article is to explain the popularity of the southern leader Brizola in Rio de Janeiro, which was related the ability of *brizolismo* to mobilize certain aspects of the political culture of Rio. Professor José Antonio Dabdab Trabulsi, whose article closes the dossier, attempts to analyze the views constructed by European historiography of the nineteenth century about the ancient Greek city, showing how these readings were informed by the influence of contemporary political cultures like republicanism, conservatism, and socialism.

This issue contains four additional articles. Professor Marcelo Cândido da Silva's article is centered on the analysis of the work of a medieval author, Gregório de Tours, historian of the Frankish kingdom. The hypothesis sustained is that beyond its moralizing and religious content the text can be used as a source for understanding Merovingian political history. The theme of Professor Berenice Cavalcanti's article is the political and intellectual work of Afonso Arinos. Submitted to the author's analysis, the writings of the ex-senator reveal a refined intellectual, joining a notable modern side to a solid classical formation. Professor João Roberto Martins Filho offers us a confrontation between the memoirs of military men and left political militants active in the conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s. From the contrast between these statements, the author argues the persistence of the theme of torture as the basis of discord between the left and the military. Closing the issue is the article of Eduardo Flores Clair and Alba López Mijares, which reveals a little known aspect of the mining societies of New Spain in the eighteenth century: the family and domestic daily life of those social groups in which intimate feelings and secrets, as well as violence, flourish.

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