

**TENSIONS, CHOICES AND EXPECTATIONS: POLITICAL IDEAS AND THEIR
HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL TRAJECTORIES**

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HISTÓRICO E SOCIAL A PARTIR DE TRAJETÓRIAS INDIVIDUAIS**

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HISTÓRICO Y SOCIAL A PARTIR DE TRAYECTORIAS INDIVIDUALES**

**TENSIONS, CHOIX ET EXPECTATIVES : IDÉES POLITIQUES ET CONTEXTE HISTORIQUE
ET SOCIAL À PARTIR DE TRAJECTOIRES INDIVIDUELLES**

弛张，选择和预期：个体轨迹，政治理念，历史和社会背景

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ABSTRACT

In this article we aim to reflect on the contribution of the analysis of individual trajectories to the writing of history. We therefore consider the theoretical and methodological approaches formed based on this perspective and list some of the Brazilian and foreign authors to have adopted it. We also reflect on the conflicts and tensions to emerge from a consideration of individual historical subjects as a form of problematizing the study of certain historical and social contexts. The relationship between experiences and expectations and between past, present and future forecasts also emerges as an important focus when examining how the individual perceives their time and acts upon it.

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We therefore also reflect on the encounter between individuals and the problems of their time.

Key words: individual trajectories; historical and social contexts; experiences and expectations.

RESUMO

Neste artigo objetivamos refletir acerca das contribuições da análise de trajetórias individuais para a escrita da história. Neste sentido, pensamos as possibilidades teóricas e metodológicas construídas por esta perspectiva, bem como listamos alguns autores brasileiros e estrangeiros que a adotaram. Além disto, percebemos os conflitos e tensões que envolvem o pensamento de sujeitos históricos individuais como forma de problematização do estudo de determinados contextos históricos e sociais. A relação entre experiências e expectativas, entre passado, presente e prognósticos de futuro também surge como importante enfoque ao se tratar da maneira como o indivíduo percebe seu tempo e age sobre ele. Realizamos, assim, alguns apontamentos sobre o encontro dos indivíduos com os problemas do seu tempo.

Palavras-chave: trajetórias individuais; contextos históricos e sociais; experiências e expectativas.

RESUMEN

En este artículo objetivamos pensar a cerca de las contribuciones del análisis de trayectorias individuales para la escritura de la historia. En este sentido, pensamos las posibilidades teóricas y metodológicas construidas por esta perspectiva, así como relacionamos algunos autores brasileños y extranjeros que la adoptaron. Además, percibimos los conflictos y tensiones que envuelven el pensamiento de los sujetos históricos individuales como forma de problematización del estudio de determinados contextos históricos y sociales. La relación entre experiencias y expectativas, entre pasado, presente y pronósticos de futuro también surge como importante enfoque cuando se trata de la manera como el individuo percibe su tiempo y actúa sobre él. Realizamos, así, algunos apuntes sobre el encuentro de los individuos con los problemas de su tiempo.

Palabras clave: trayectorias individuales; contextos históricos y sociales; experiencias y expectativas.

RÉSUMÉ

Nous chercherons dans cet article à réfléchir sur les contributions de l'analyse de trajectoires individuelles pour l'écriture de l'histoire. Nous étudierons donc les possibilités théoriques et méthodologiques offertes par cette perspective. Nous répertorierons également certains des auteurs brésiliens et étrangers l'ayant adoptée. En outre, nous envisagerons les conflits et tensions entourant la pensée de sujets historiques individuels dans le but d'enrichir l'analyse de contextes historiques et sociaux donnés. Les relations entre expériences et attentes, entre passé, présent et perspectives d'avenir, constituent également une approche de choix, en ce qu'elles nous montrent la façon dont l'individu perçoit son temps et agit sur lui. Nous élaborerons ainsi quelques propositions quant aux rapports des individus avec les problèmes de leur époque.

Mots-clés: Trajectoires individuelles, Contextes historiques et sociaux, Expériences et attentes.

提要

本论文探讨关于个体人生轨迹分析在历史研究中作用和对历史研究中的影响。探讨个体人生轨迹分析法的理论和方法，解读有关此方面的巴西国内外的历史学家论述。通过研究，发现研究主体的思想，冲突张力，与具体历史和社会背景之间有复杂的关系。主体的阅历，预期，对过去，现在和未来的掌握，都取决于个人对所处时代的感知和由此引发的行为。本论文展示研究主体个体在其时代面临的问题上的选项。

关键词: 个体轨迹，社会历史，阅历和预期。

Many historians in recent years have studied individual trajectories in order to consider political, economic, social, cultural and ideological questions concerning different eras. They have analysed not just choices, thought and political actions, but have also considered how sociability networks and family, political and professional relations contributed to turn more complex the political thought of certain social actors and shaped their responses to the challenges of their time. The decision to work with individual trajectories has also helped unveil the tensions and conflicts present in these individuals'

ideas and choices, seeking to grant them with an active voice in history and to understand their process of social insertion. These choices are not always coherent or predictable, but are often understandable if their relationships with the conjectural problems involved are taken into account. Thus, by means of a two-way communication process, these individuals enter into a dialogue with their present and the multiple possibilities within it, following paths which are rarely ambiguous or unexpected. This allows us to consider their attitudes according to different perspectives, understanding them as survival strategies or even as individual motivations (professional, social, economic...) intertwined with sociability networks.

In this sense, studies on individual trajectories and sociability networks offer windows of reflection onto different subjects such as relations with otherness, the construction of identities and present and future individual expectations; as well as problems which are evidently related to social and historical contexts, problematizing macro-political questions by means of a particular focus. These are the main questions which we approach in this article and upon which we develop reflections on the contribution made by studies of individual trajectories to Brazilian historiography. We bring to the debate several referential works with the aim of further investigating the topics which we believe might be developed based on this perspective, especially in terms of the study of the trajectories of Brazilian intellectuals, in the understanding that such an approach allows us to further consider the role of the individual in terms of the debate around the writing of history (history and truth; history and narrative; for example)³.

Employed as a means of legitimising and often heroising historical figures such as leaders, emperors, generals and especially by means of the empiricist-positivist perspective of the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, biographical studies begin to undergo re-readings at the beginning of the 1980s entailing new theoretical and methodological approaches. The so-called micro-history developed by Italian historians Carlo Ginzburg and Giovanni Levi brought to the field of historiography a methodological revision which opened up space for the analysis of details, events and individuals who helped reveal aspects formerly obscured by wider, more structural and

³ Burke, Peter (1992). *A escrita da História: novas perspectivas*, SP: UNESP; Barros, José D'Assunção (2011). *Teoria da História, volume IV. Acordes Historiográficos – uma nova proposta para a Teoria da História*, 1ª Ed. Petrópolis: Editora Vozes.

serial snapshots. Defined by Levi as a “*historiographical practice*”⁴, micro-history came to be categorised primarily by its method involving “*the detailed, real procedures which constitute the historian’s task*”⁵ and not necessarily by the “*micro-dimensions of the object under study*”⁶. So it is therefore “*essentially based on the scale of observation, in a microscopic analysis and an intensive study of documentary material*”⁷. It facilitates a consideration of the meanings assumed by the private and the individual in specific contexts, revealing contradictions which are only noted when the scale of analysis is reduced.

Combined with the focus on details and clues defended by Ginzburg in naming the evidential paradigm⁸, micro-history also formulated the criticism of relativism. It was particularly critical of those who see fiction in everything, wholly eliminating any possibility of arriving at truth in history. In this debate, Ginzburg opposed Hayden White and focused on detailed analyses of sources which served as evidence for the historian’s task⁹. The debate has since been practically overcome but marked the field in the 1980s and had its consequences for historical studies. Here, daily life and so-called common men¹⁰ were highlighted as a means of emphasising that which evades official history and a macro-political perspective. The scale and the paradigm are altered by means of political reflections to a vision of history guided by the working classes and events which were formerly perceived as irrelevant. Although criticised by many, this vision became influential in historiography and was reflected in the work of Brazilian historians, and, most interestingly for us, in studies on individual trajectories. It is also worth mentioning the definition of micro-history presented by Jacques Revel, which does not constitute an

⁴ Levi, Giovanni (1992). “Sobre a micro-história”. In Burke, P. (1992). Op. cit, p. 133.

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 136.

⁸ On the indiciary paradigm, see: Ginzburg, Carlo (1989). “Sinais: Raízes de um paradigma indiciário”. In *Mitos, Emblemas, Sinais. Morfologia e História*, SP: Companhia das Letras, p. 143-179.

⁹ Carlo Ginzburg opposed a skeptical relativism which many historians adhered to in the struggle against positivism. For Ginzburg, facts exist and this may not be discredited, but what is pertinent are the different meanings conferred upon them. On this debate, see: Ginzburg, Carlo (2002). *Relações de Força: História, retórica, prova*, SP: Companhia das Letras, particularly, “Introdução” (p. 13-45).

¹⁰ Within the possibilities opened up by new history – in which microhistory is inserted – is the so-called ‘history from below’ where various social groups became objects of study for historians. Among authors to have produced texts employing this approach are the aforementioned Carlo Ginzburg, Peter Burke, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Edward Thompson. On this approach, see: Sharpe, Jim (1992). “A história vista de baixo”. In Burke, P. (1992). Op. cit, p. 39-62.

immediate counterargument to total history¹¹, but rather opposes a totalising reaction which does not examine important features of social actors, biographies and the micro scale. Changing scale means much more than changing the size of the map: it involves proceeding with a specific analysis which might reveal different nuances, especially because the individual is not incompatible with the social.

Whether linked or not to micro-history, but almost certainly influenced by the shift in paradigm and by the new methodological possibilities introduced by new history mainly represented by Jacques Le Goff, these Brazilian historians brought to the scene individual politicians to have been formerly ignored or neglected, along re-reading others frequently turned into myths or heroes. Elciene Azevedo¹² published a book using this method in 1999 on the trajectory of Luiz Gama, the son of a free slave and a Portuguese nobleman born in Salvador, Brazil, in 1832. Brought up as a slave and sold by his father at the age of ten, Gama went to live in São Paulo, where, upon gaining his freedom, he became a radical abolitionist and made significant contributions to the defence of slaves and former slaves. Approaching a similar subject, Keila Grinberg¹³ published a book in 2003 on Antonio Pereira Rebouças, who was also born in the Brazilian state of Bahia in 1798. Mixed race and working class, Rebouças became a parliamentary lawyer (specialising in civil law), an activist for the independence of the state and an imperial advisor. This trajectory of social ascension is analysed by Grinberg in order to understand what it meant to be a lawyer in the nineteenth century, with their political connections and involvement in the debates of their time.

Along with these works, we might also cite that of Júnia Furtado¹⁴ on Chica da Silva published in 2003, in which the author analyses the myths constructed around the former slave living with one of the most powerful men in Diamantina, and in turn, interracial relations in eighteenth-century Brazil. We also cite the works of Sidney Chalhoub¹⁵ (2003) who reflected on opposition to the Law of Free Birth (or Rio Branco Law) (1871) based on

¹¹ Revel, Jacques (Org.) (1998). *Jogos de escala – A experiência da micro-história*, RJ: FGV.

¹² Azevedo, Elciene (1999). *Orfeu de Carapinha: a trajetória de Luiz Gama na imperial cidade de São Paulo*, SP: Unicamp.

¹³ Grinberg, Keila (2002). *O Fiador dos Brasileiros: cidadania, escravidão e direito civil no tempo de Antonio Pereira Rebouças*, RJ: Civilização Brasileira.

¹⁴ Furtado, Júnia Ferreira (2003). *Chica da Silva e o contratador de diamantes: o outro lado do mito*, SP: Companhia das Letras.

¹⁵ Chalhoub, Sidney (2003). *Machado de Assis Historiador*, SP: Companhia das Letras.

an analysis of Machado de Assis as a civil servant (head of the Directorate of Agriculture at the Ministry of Agriculture from mid-1870 to the end of the 1880s); Maria Lúcia Pallares-Burke¹⁶ (2005) who suggests the study of the process by which Gilberto Freyre formed his thoughts, with an emphasis on his passage to the United States and absorption of Anglo-American ideas in his understanding of Brazilian society; Joseli Mendonça¹⁷ (2007) on Evaristo de Moraes' republican involvement – who was also studied by Ana Paula Barcelos¹⁸ (2011) with an emphasis on his defence of urban poverty in Rio de Janeiro in the city's transition to modernity; along with the collection organised by Guilherme Pereira das Neves, Ronaldo Vainfas and Georgina Santos¹⁹ (2006) in which individual trajectories are studied in order to reflect on the Portuguese empire between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Teresa Cristina Kirschner (2009) focused on the study of José da Silva Lisboa, demonstrating that, whether as a publicist, constituent deputy or imperial senator, his political and intellectual contributions helped publicise a particular project for Imperial Brazil²⁰. Márcia de Almeida Gonçalves (2009) analysed the trajectory of one of the most renowned Brazilian biographers, Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa, stating that he emphasised his subjects' actions as public men and government officials in order to humanise them through depicting their virtues and flaws²¹. In her willingness to expose the contradictions in the figures of her biographies, Márcia Gonçalves states that Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa bestowed a modern dimension to biography in his time through his rejection of the approach of treating individuals like "*marble statues sculpted by Panegyrics and funeral*

¹⁶ Pallares-Burke, Maria Lúcia Garcia (2005). *Gilberto Freyre: um vitoriano nos trópicos*, SP: HUCITEC.

¹⁷ Mendonça, Joseli Maria Nunes (2007). *Evaristo de Moraes, tribuno da República*, Campinas: Unicamp.

¹⁸ Barcelos, Ana Paula (2011). *Discurso jurídico e (des)qualificação moral e ideológica da pobreza urbana (1871-1939)*, RJ: Multifoco. On the author, see also: Barcelos, Ana Paula ((2010). "Fidelino Figueiredo e Jônatas Serrano. Pensamento Católico e Radicalização Política na Década de 1930. Algumas reflexões", in *Passagens. Revista Internacional de História Política e Cultura Jurídica*, Rio de Janeiro: vol. 2 no.4, maio-agosto 2010, p. 39-66.

¹⁹ Vainfas, Ronaldo; Santos, Georgina Silva dos; Neves, Guilherme Pereira das (Orgs.) (2006). *Retratos do Império: trajetórias individuais no mundo português nos séculos XVI e XIX*, Niterói: Editora da UFF.

²⁰ Kirschner, Teresa Cristina (2009). *José da Silva Lisboa, Visconde de Cairu. Itinerários de um Ilustrado Luso-brasileiro*, SP: Alameda.

²¹ Gonçalves, Márcia de Almeida (2009). *Em terreno movediço. Biografia e história na obra de Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa*, RJ: EDUERJ.

*elegies*²². It is also worth mentioning that, conscious of the revival of biographical studies, the publishing market began to invest in collections, mainly in this decade, which aimed to re-read and analyse the political and social insertion of different actors as men of their time under a new historiographical prism. This is the case, for example, of the collection entitled "Pensadores do Brasil" [Brazilian Thinkers], organised by various authors and which discusses the individual trajectories of men such as Hipólito José da Costa, José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, Frei Caneca, Marquês de São Vicente and Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos, among others.

In this debate, mulattoes, urban workers, women, labourers, peasants and members of the working class in general are perceived - among many other groups - to be social actors and historical subjects whose actions facilitate important political and ideological analyses of their time. The trajectories of members of the dominant class itself such as those of politicians, diplomats, intellectuals and the instituted authorities were reconsidered so that they might become windows of reflection for the codes, rites, myths and symbols of a certain society. Details thus facilitate an understanding of the most varied of historical questions; values, ideas and habits are more easily identified when the scale of analysis is reduced. In considering the trajectory of King Louis IX of France (also known as Saint Louis), Jacques Le Goff²³ emphasises that his primary objective is to trace the history of the king. However, in order to study Louis IX and the construction of his memory, the historian runs through the values inherent to the feudal imaginary which facilitate an understanding of the king and saint's actions and the contemporary view of him. A rich panorama of the eighteenth century emerges including ideas on marriage, religion, cavalry, family, children, women, death and the relationship between the king and his subjects. By means of this approach, the biography unveils a series of political, historical and social problems.

It is worth remembering the need to perceive the associated tensions and conflicts (political, ideological and personal) in individual trajectories. After all, when individuals are confronted with choices and decisions demanded of them, they often follow paths which are unpredictable and unexpected; paths which are apparently incompatible with

²² Ibidem, p. 204.

²³ Le Goff, Jacques (1999). *São Luís: biografia*, RJ: Record.

previously assumed positions. Giovanni Levi²⁴ draws attention to the worrying construction of an internal coherence which is incompatible with individual trajectories, by means of a process which would omit their ambiguities and areas of doubt. For Levi, it is important to consider the gaps constructed by historical subjects in normative systems in order to perceive their very contradictions. According to Levi, “*social change cannot be studied without previous recognition of the undeniable existence of a certain liberty in light of the rigid forms and the origins of the reproduction of domination structures*”²⁵.

These gaps pave the way for social ascension and the conquest of recognition and legitimacy by mixed-race and poor individuals in excluding societies such as Brazil’s, as exemplified by Luiz Gama, Antonio Pereira Rebouças, Evaristo de Moraes and Machado de Assis – all to have been mentioned in this article. It is in this sense that Levi considers biography as of great use due to the relationship between normative systems and freedom of action and individual choices and social and historical contexts, as long as historians evade the coherence, the stability and the certainties which tend to seduce them. This is the line of thought he seeks to trace in his book *Inheriting Power: The Story of an Exorcist*²⁶ in which he analyses the trajectory of priest and exorcist Giovan Chiesa as a window of reflection for centre/periphery relations, the hierarchical organisation of the Old Regime and the social and economic norms in eighteenth-century Piedmont. It is also important to mention that, in perceiving the validity of an analysis of these ambiguities present in the biography, we avoid allowing it to become an “illusion”, according to Pierre Bourdieu’s suggestion in an article published in Brazil in the 1990s. This way, the historian avoids being “deceived” by a report or a sequence of coherent or well-directed events. After all, there is practically no consistency in an individual’s trajectory and thought. In Bourdieu’s words:

Attempting to understand a life as a unique series which is sufficient in itself in successive events, without any link other than the association with a ‘subject’ whose consistency is certainly nothing but that with its own name, is almost as absurd as trying to explain the reason for a journey on the underground without taking into account the network structure, or in other words, the matrix of objective

²⁴ Levi, Giovanni (1998). “Usos da biografia”. In Amado, Janaína; Ferreira, Marieta de Moraes. (Org.) (1998). *Usos e abusos da história oral*, RJ: FGV, p. 167-182.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 180.

²⁶ Levi, Giovanni (2000). *A herança imaterial: trajetória de um exorcista no Piemonte do século XVII*, RJ: Civilização Brasileira.

relations between different stations. (...) It is the same as saying that we cannot understand a trajectory (that is to say, social ageing, which, although it accompanies us in an unavoidable fashion, is separate from biological ageing) without previously constructing the successive states of the field in which it was developed, and then, the set of objective relations which united the agent considered – at least in a particular number of relevant states – with the set of other agents involved in the same field and confronted with the same space of those possible²⁷.

We emphasise that this feature is particularly pertinent in Brazilian society due to the encounter and tensions between ideological perspectives which are apparently opposing but in harmony with the expectations of the dominant class. These conflicts become particularly evident in the second half of the nineteenth century, when a marked rise in immigration produces a profusion of foreign ideas which mix with paternalism and clientelism. Gradually liberalism prevails as the ideological orientation of the bourgeois state by means of a process which comes to a climax with the installation of a republican government in 1889. Liberal and patriarchal ideas thus turn reality complex and individual choices made in the face of it. In his renowned text, “Misplaced Ideas”²⁸, Roberto Schwarz argues that this encounter between liberal modernisation and paternalism confers to Brazilian society an apparent trans-positioning of ideas around the European reality which are socially and historically very differentiated and consequently as though “misplaced”. For Gisálio Cerqueira Filho, who seeks to dialectically analyse the question, these ideas were “(un)adjusted to the social reality”²⁹, but many of their features remain relevant. There was thus a constant tension between characteristics which fit Brazilian society in its transition to modernity and those which did not.

The encounters and missed encounters between liberalism and paternalism are not the only ones to characterise Brazilian society, but those between liberalism and conservatism, tradition and modernity, religion and secular thinking also served (and continue to serve) as a challenge for those who attempt to understand them. Many politicians and intellectuals found themselves involved in the associated dilemmas. One of

²⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre (1998). “A ilusão biográfica”. In Amado, J.; Ferreira, M. de M. (Org.) (1998). Op. cit, p. 189-190.

²⁸ Schwarz, Roberto (1977). “As idéias fora do lugar”. In *Ao Vencedor as Batatas – Forma literária e processo social nos inícios do romance brasileiro*, Livraria Duas Cidades.

²⁹ Filho, Gisálio Cerqueira (1988). *Análise Social da Ideologia*, EPU, p. 45.

them, Joaquim Nabuco, was studied by Gizlene Neder in her reflection on how conservative liberalism was in Brazil, in the midst of the tensions and contradictions already highlighted. Invoked by the dominant class in moments of crisis, it assumes a relatively modern facet. According to Neder, abolitionism itself was inspired by a moderate strand of liberalism, which would encompass Nabuco's actions. After abolition – or, in other words, the crisis - *“liberalism recoiled due to its lack of strength, opening up a space for a reinforcement of authoritarianism, which republican decentralisation was unable to discard”*³⁰. The tensions which we strive to highlight and the example of Joaquim Nabuco studied by Gizlene Neder illustrate the caution required by the historian when analysing the trajectories of individuals inserted in the Brazilian social reality. Just like Nabuco, other important historical Brazilian figures, among them Manoel Bomfim³¹, Euclides da Cunha, Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda, Gilberto Freyre and Rui Barbosa³², exemplify the ambiguities surrounding their political and ideological decisions and which obviously helped shape their thoughts on Brazil.

The thematic, theoretical and methodological possibilities which open up based on an analysis of individual trajectories are thus clear. As we have sought to highlight here, studying an individual allows us to examine the encounter of questions on the conquest of recognition and legitimacy, the construction of identities, the relations between memory and history, the conflicts and social movements, the political disputes and countless other

³⁰ Neder, Gizlene (1979). *Os compromissos conservadores do liberalismo no Brasil*, RJ: Achiamé, p. 56. About the theme, see also: Neder, Gizlene; Barcelos, Ana Paula. “Intelectuais, Circulação de Ideias e Apropriação Cultural. Anotações para uma discussão metodológica”, In *Passagens*. Revista Internacional de História Política e Cultura Jurídica, Rio de Janeiro: vol. 1. no.1, janeiro/julho 2009, p. 29-54 - <http://www.historia.uff.br/revistapassagens/>

³¹ On Manoel Bomfim, we highlight the work of Flora Sussekind and Roberto Ventura in which the complexity of his thought is highlighted based on an analysis of his critical thinking on evolutionism which is also capable of appropriating it in the formation of a counterargument. This process would become evident in the development of the theory of parasitism as an explanation for the decadence in Latin America, historically exploited by the former metropolises, Portugal and Spain. The analysis of Bomfim's thoughts here is fundamental to the demonstration of the contradictions and ambiguities inherent to Brazilian society between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. See Sussekind, Flora; Ventura, Roberto (1984). *História e Dependência – Cultura e Sociedade em Manoel Bomfim*, SP: Moderna.

³² Gilberto Freyre and Rui Barbosa were two of the historical subjects which provided us with windows of reflection on questions analysed in a collection we organised and which was recently published by Fluminense Federal University (UFF). The relevant articles are entitled “Clóvis Bevilacqua e Rui Barbosa: biografias e ideias políticas no Brasil na passagem à modernidade” (p. 123-146) and “Nos rastros de ‘Ordem, liberdade e mineiridade’: trajetórias intelectuais, desqualificação social e suas tensões com a cultura religiosa neotomista no Brasil” (p. 147-167) by Fabiana Cardoso Malha Rodrigues and Jefferson de Almeida Pinto, respectively. See: Pereira, Aline Pinto; Barcelos, Ana Paula (2012). *Trajetórias individuais e experiências sociais – Sociabilidades e ideias políticas no Brasil (1820-1940)*, Niterói: Editora da UFF.

political, economic, ideological and social problems relevant to different historical contexts. This perspective also opens up space for a relatively current debate on the relationship between experiences and horizons of expectations, or, in other words, between what the individual experiences in their time and what they forecast for the future based on this.

At this point we would like to highlight the work of Reinhart Koselleck on the subject. In proposing an analysis of historical times as key to the historian's task, Koselleck³³ points to the existence of a particular time, different to the natural, situated between the past and the future, or, in anthropological terms, between experience and expectation, which allowed man to perceive the future as unprecedented and ever more challenging. Thus, as well as studying the past, it is also the historian's job to perceive the horizons of expectations and the future forecasts brought to light by these individuals in their historical contexts. In this sense, with such a developed reading of the past, the perception of the present lived and the expectations and projects developed for the future become to be linked and produce a tension which is key to the construction of historical knowledge and the way in which each of us conceives ourselves and our actions. For Koselleck, the idea of progress which was fruit of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution unveiled a future able to exceed the space for the traditional, predictable and natural. New forecasts were thus made possible, as well as the acceleration of time, which, as of the eighteenth century, attracted new attention to historical and social experiences. Whether realised or not, these forecasts largely reveal the political and ideological standpoints of individuals in their present and facilitate an understanding of their individual and/or collective actions. And herein lies the concept of the "future past" used by Koselleck to refer to that which does not necessarily come to be realised, but which guided or contributed to political actions in certain historical contexts. Here, there is a reciprocal relationship between present, past and future; between experiences and expectations which coincide with the choices individuals make in their time.

A consideration of these complex temporal intertwining is an interesting means of approaching the relations between individual trajectories, political ideas and historical and social contexts. This analytical option offers theoretical and methodological contributions to

³³ Koselleck, Reinhart (2006). *Futuro passado: contribuição à semântica dos tempos históricos*, RJ: Contraponto: Ed. PUC-Rio.

the writing of history because, as well as relativizing the idea of a single, natural time, it allows us to reflect on the different developments undergone by the past in light of present experiences and future expectations. This directly influences the way in which individuals perceive their time and act upon it. Whether consciously or unconsciously, individually or collectively, it is with visions of constructing a future that individuals act on the present. In outlining the goals of his book *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, Koselleck, in his focus on the study of language, reveals the possibility of reaching this debate based on the experiences of politicians, philosophers and theologians, among other individual historical subjects. In his words, all of the witnesses studied in the book “attest to the way in which the experience of the past was developed in a concrete situation, just as how expectations, hopes and forecasts were brought to the surface of language”³⁴. Here, what is highlighted is not the individual’s trajectory or their biography, but rather their discourse and witnessing of their time. In any case, the possibility for studying history by means of an individual’s thought, ideological orientation and political standpoint is opened up, as these are manifested in their discourse and are directly influenced by the way in which they experience their present and produce expectations on the future.

In this sense, the debate on historical times and experiences and expectations proposed by Koselleck facilitates a problematization of the individual choices which have been so heavily stressed so far in this article. These are choices which involve forecasts related to political actions, and this is because, as of the turn of the eighteenth century, forecasts come to substitute prophecies in terms of the political situation. In Koselleck’s words,

*This association was so intimate, that making a forecast automatically meant altering a given situation. Forecasts are moments which are conscious of political action. They are related to events whose unprecedented quality they themselves liberate. Time comes to be derived, therefore, from the forecast itself, in a continual and unpredictably predictable fashion.*³⁵

These forecasts carried out by individuals or groups of individuals heavily influence how they act in the present and in the future they will come to construct. According to

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 15.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 32.

Koselleck, no history exists without having been “*constructed through the experiences and expectations of people who act or suffer*”³⁶. Experience has a strong link with the past, and it is where “*both emotional development and unconscious types of behaviour originate, which are no longer or no longer need to be present in knowledge*”³⁷. It is therefore not about erasing the past, but making it concrete in the present, remembering that experiences are not learnt the same way and with the same intensity by everyone and are not immune from undergoing transformations over time. (Accumulated) experiences are susceptible to transformation, just like expectations (the present which is projected in the future), as the latter is related to coming anxieties, although these do not always take the form imagined, due to the fact that history is dynamic. Koselleck states that “*expectations do not exist without experiences, and there are no experiences without expectations*”³⁸, in order to show how the two interpenetrate. By linking the two concepts, he also explains how they are directly related to the notion of historical time and to the conception of history itself³⁹.

The approach the author employs to demonstrate how the term *horizon of expectation* came to be associated with the concept of progress is also interesting. According to Koselleck, the relationship between expectations and progress may only be understood if we take into consideration the differences between “*the experience transmitted and the new expectation manifested*”⁴⁰ in light of new inventions and the new possibilities opened up by modern advances. The cultural and scientific Renaissance and the Reformation produced a heightened awareness that new expectations needed to be created, which did not need to be linked to the management of the church, which, for

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 335.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 313.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 307.

³⁹ The author's concern is to associate collective human experiences with history, breaking with the understanding that the historian's “job” is circumscribed merely to the time which has past and to narrative. History is a dynamic process which necessarily runs through the understanding of the existing tensions and connections between historical times. For a discussion on the concept of history and historical time, see the chapter entitled “*Historia magistra vitae – Sobre a dissolução do topos da história moderna em movimento*” (p. 41-60) of the aforementioned book, *Futuro Passado: contribuição à semântica dos tempos históricos*. By the same author, also see Koselleck, Reinhart (2001). *Los estratos del tiempo; estudios sobre la historia*, Barcelona: Paidós; Montoya, José Edgardo Cal. “*Hacia una comprensión provisional del concepto moderno de Historia en Reinhart Koselleck. Perspectivas desde la Historia Conceptual*”. Available from: <http://www.uca.edu.sv/facultad/chn/c1170/cal3.pdf>

⁴⁰ Koselleck, R. (2006). Op. cit, p. 315.

Koselleck, would prevent the future being imagined by means of a form disassociated from a biblical and Manichaeistic past⁴¹. The heightened expectations were produced by the moment at which mundane progress was imposed as a condition necessary to improving men's lives, which each generation reproduces in the constant search for a more promising future, when the *"effects predicted in the plan or in the forecast are transformed into elements legitimising political action"*⁴².

According to Koselleck, the concept of progress (whether socio-political or technical-scientific) was effectively created at the end of the eighteenth century⁴³. It was therefore based on the collective and individual experiences accumulated over the previous three centuries, as an element key to mundane transformation, rather than that which is spiritual or religious⁴⁴. Often used by Kant, the concept meant that expectations and experiences were conceived as two intertwined categories, but mainly guaranteed that men were more daring in terms of their future anxieties, as the new was in part required to be different to the old. Koselleck claims that the French Revolution was an event which wholly interfered with men's perceptions of their experiences and expectations by generating a collision between the old and the new. The events of 1789 produced a new milestone, interfering with the way in which men came to view their present and future projections.

Inspired by Koselleck's analysis of historical times and the history of concepts by Koselleck himself and Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht⁴⁵, the work of Valdei Lopes Araújo on the context in which Brazilian independence is situated is a good example of this debate. Valdei sought to consider independence as a modern experience, as it represents a rupture with a cyclical and predictable past. Based on the assumption that the experience of time is historically multiple and variable, Valdei proposes producing an *"inventory of ways of dealing with time produced by intellectuals in the Luso-Brazilian world of the first*

⁴¹ Ibidem.

⁴² Ibidem, p. 317.

⁴³ For a discussion on the history of concepts, see: Koselleck, Reinhart (1992). "Uma história dos conceitos: problemas teóricos e práticos". *Estudos Históricos*, Rio de Janeiro, Vol. 5, n. 10, p. 134-146.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 318.

⁴⁵ On the author, see, for example: Gumbrecht, Hans (1998). *Modernização dos sentidos*, SP: Ed. 34; _____ (1999). *Em 1926, vivendo no limite do tempo*, SP/RJ: Record.

*half of the nineteenth century*⁴⁶. In the first part of the book, he therefore describes the political and intellectual trajectory of José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva in order to consider the dialectic between time as repetition and time as a problem. It was through the attempt to overcome decadence that a modern project for a country would emerge. According to Valdei, José Bonifácio provided a prime object of analysis due to his sensitivity to *“the social and political transformations occurring on the two sides of the Atlantic”*⁴⁷ and the timeframe in which his intellectual production is located. Studying his trajectory therefore *“facilitated an accompaniment of the constitution and exhaustion of the conceptual models which permitted the consideration of successive projects of restoration and regeneration in Portugal”*⁴⁸. In the second part, Valdei analyses the challenges faced by intellectuals in the context prior to independence in order to affirm the singularity of the national case, which includes actions such as the founding of the Brazilian Institute of History and Geography in 1838. Here, the past becomes a field of experiences, which, in light of the present, facilitates the construction of a national identity. Therefore, as a singular experience, independence *“becomes the hallmark of an epistemological opening”*⁴⁹ and opens up space for the perception of the finite and the construction of the modern. This experience permitted the construction of expectations and forecasts on the future, uniting present, past and future in a project involving the preservation of memory itself and the construction of the idea of a nation. Choices, experiences and expectations blend with the analysis of individual trajectories in a two-way communication process marked by dialectical relations, tensions, conflicts and ambiguities.

If trajectories should be reconstructed based on the relations men establish with society in light of a particular political and economic context and considering their experiences and expectations over time, we must not forget another fact: the relationship between the writing of history and the preservation of memory. The emergence of memory is one of Western societies' cultural and political concerns. According to Andréas Huyssen's interpretation, remembering constitutes one of our links with the past and is

⁴⁶ Araújo, Valdei Lopes (2008). *A experiência do tempo: conceitos e narrativas na formação nacional brasileira (1813-1845)*, SP: Hucitec, p. 19.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, p. 155.

able to define our understanding of present time⁵⁰. It is an important object of mediation between past, present and future. As individuals inserted in a society, we need the past to construct and anchor our identities and feed a certain expectation of what is to come. According to Jacques Le Goff, history, just like science in time, is an indispensable component of all temporal activities⁵¹. We might understand it as an intellectual construction indicating a selective representation of the past (time), which is never just that of the individual, but rather that of an individual (subject) planted in a family, social and national context. In Henry Rousso's words:

(...) its most immediate asset is to guarantee the continuity of time and facilitate a resistance to otherness, to 'changing time', the ruptures which are the destiny of all human lives; in sum, it constitutes – and banally so – an element essential to identity, to the perception of self and others⁵².

Memory is the most basic of elements to thought, a struggle against death and forgetting. It strives towards the continual conservation of collective history. Strictly speaking, memory has an individual feature found in personal experiences and another feature which is intrinsically linked to an individual's memory of the social group in which they were socialised. There is a division however, a cultural exchange, or in other terms, an experience shared by some men which constitutes *social or collective memory* – or that which is formed by the facts and features judged as relevant which are stored as the official memory of a community or wider society⁵³. Generally it is expressed in what are known as *places of memory*, such as monuments, official anthems, paintings and literary and artistic works which express the consolidated version of a particular society's collective past⁵⁴. According to Jacques Le Goff, memory should be understood as "*what remains of the past in group experiences, or what groups do with the past*"⁵⁵. It is in this sense that social groups are constructed, as soon as they determine what is "memorable"

⁵⁰ Huyssen, Andréas (2000). *Seduzidos pela Memória: arquiteturas, monumentos, mídias*. RJ: Aeroplano.

⁵¹ Le Goff, Jacques (1996). *História e Memória*, SP: Unicamp.

⁵² Rousso, Henry (1998). "A memória não é mais o que era". In Amado, J.; Ferreira, M. de M. (Org.) (1998). *Op. cit*, p. 94-95.

⁵³ See: Pollak, Michael (1992). "Memória e Identidade Social". *Estudos Históricos*, Rio de Janeiro, Vol. 5, n. 10, p. 200-212.

⁵⁴ See: Nora, Pierre (1993). "Entre a memória e a história: a problemática dos lugares". In *Projeto História*, nº 10, p. 7-28.

⁵⁵ Le Goff, J. (1996). *Op.cit*, p. 426.

and the forms by which a determined fact shall be remembered. It is related to individual remembering, as individual memory is constituted by the weaving of different groups' memories with which we come into contact. It is impregnated in the references and relations surrounding us, in the way in which we perceive and see what involves us in the great fabric of life experiences. The process of constructing memory therefore comes into strong contact with that which may be named the "other". The "other" plays an important role in both the processes for producing memory and remembering, as it makes a pertinent contribution to the construction of an identity, a feeling of belonging to a shared past, to a group which shares memories⁵⁶.

Based on these premises, we believe it is important to reaffirm, before concluding, that the study of individual trajectories constitutes a relevant field of historical approach, particularly when we recall the reciprocal relationship between context and biography, between the social conjuncture in which the individual to be analysed is inserted and the sociability network they belong to. Recent studies in the field have facilitated a revision of historical subjects from wider perspectives. New approaches have broken with old paradigms – circumscribed to Ecclesiastical history, the canons of traditional political history, the preservation of memory and the exaltation of the great figures and personalities of a certain era – breathing life into analyses of individual trajectories based on sensitivities and anxieties which shift from the micro to the macro, connecting the individual and their experience of time and unveiling undeniable human contradictions.

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⁵⁶ On the questions of otherness and the construction of an identity related to the "other" which assesses us, see: Todorov, Tzvetan (1989). *Nous et les autres: La réflexion française sur la diversité humaine*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

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