

Bicentennial of Independence

THIS ISSUE is largely dedicated to the Bicentennial of Independence in Brazil. It includes 12 contributions that address various thematic scopes of the national independent society's social and political life in its contemporaneity. Although reviewing the historiography of Independence or filling gaps often pointed out by historians and other social scientists is outside the purpose of this dossier, questions of this nature appeared in the contributions. The essays gathered here are driven by at least to questions: What singularizes the ideas of sovereignty and modernity in Brazilian society? How did the dialectics between modernity and tradition materialize in actions, government plans, public policies, social thought, science, culture, and education, and what are its consequences?

The dossier explores challenges and impasses, especially in contributions that focus on paradoxes and antinomies of social thought in Brazil. From this perspective, the essays address the tensions between memory, politics, and the writing of history by highlighting different narratives about Independence as a historical fact and process. Along these lines, three decisive moments are discussed in which the relations between State and society were problematized, highlighting themes such as political centralization and decentralization, the adaptation of political institutions to societal characteristics, and the confrontation of the democratic issue. It is not strange that one can allude to time conflicts in contemporary Brazil, marked by the loss of the future horizon as a social synchronizer, a theme discussed by one of the essays.

Similarly, the dossier also examines the role of science over the last 200 years in constructing Brazil as a nation, as well as the role of the arts – literature, theater, cinema, visual arts, and folk song – in informing the so-called “late Modernisms”. Within this set, we highlight the interview given to the curators of the dossier by renowned historian Carlos Guilherme Mota (Mota, 2018),¹ which constitutes a stimulating overview on reference works to understand post-Independence historiography.

The dossier also includes an examination of social facts and processes relevant to understanding the Bicentennial of Independence, among which: the construction of the public sphere since 1822 and its current crises; racist and xenophobic practices, which violate human rights, obscure differences, inequalities and ignore the collective existence of their bearers; the social dynamics that create armed groups with hegemonic ambitions over territories, populations and illegal markets; the destruction and degradation of national biomes beckoning an environmental catastrophe; and the patterns of accumulation and socio-spatial segregation in São Paulo, leveraged by large-scale real estate operations.

This issue also contains a dossier on the different diagnoses of the issues and dilemmas of contemporary education, seen from a specific angle: that of books and authors who, by becoming “classics” in this field, have guided strategic topics for understanding the relationships between actors, as well as the school routine, changing values, challenges in singular contexts such as pandemics, and especially the elaboration of educational public policies.

Note

1 See the historian's statement on *História do Brasil. Uma interpretação*, in Mota (2018).

Reference

MOTA, C. G. Como e por quê escrevemos *História do Brasil. Uma interpretação*, v.32, n.94, 2018. Available from: <<https://www.scielo.br/j/ea/a/gXLdHKnNKgcNCPkNnxcty5f/?lang=pt>>.

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