

PELLOUTIER AND THE AGENCYING OF ORIGINS

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Abstract

This initial aim of this research was to study the process of representation of the Celts in the anti-absolutist historiography of Simon Pelloutier. However, as its sources were approached by the genealogical method, they made way for a new epistemological association. These sources were surrounded by the issue of human origins; or, better yet, each of them produced its own historical knowledge based on a view of human origins. This means that their historical knowledge and socio-political and cultural allegiances were based on the importance ascribed to the origins – as an agencying of origins practice. The agencying of origins concept consists in an epistemological and cultural relation with the theme of human origins in modern historiography. In this study, it is the identification of a religious substance in the deep notion of the meaning of historicity, and its virtually genealogical empowerment by the entire process of erudite rationality

Keywords

Simon Pelloutier; Absolutism; 18th Century; historiography - "Agencying of Origins".

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Resumo

Esta pesquisa se comprometeu inicialmente em discutir o processo de representação dos celtas na historiografia anti-absolutista de Simon Pelloutier. Entretanto, as fontes, abordadas metodologicamente pela genealogia, permitiram uma associação epistemológica. Em todas circundavam o tema das origens, ou melhor, todas produziam seu determinado conhecimento histórico com base nas origens. Os conhecimentos históricos e seus comprometimentos sócio-políticos e culturais eram forjados a partir da importância dada às origens nas fontes modernas - numa prática de agenciamento das origens. Este conceito consiste em uma relação epistemológica cultural com o tema das origens presente na historiografia moderna. Ele é pensado, neste estudo, como a identificação de um substrato religioso na noção profunda do sentido de historicidade, que o investe, de modo quase genealógico, com todo o processo de racionalidade erudita.

Palavras-chave

Simon Pelloutier; Absolutismo; século XVIII; historiografia; "Agenciamento das Origens".

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The agencying of origins concept consists in an epistemological and cultural relation with the theme of human origins in modern historiography. In this study, it is the identification of a religious substance in the deep notion of the meaning of historicity, and its virtually genealogical empowerment by the entire process of erudite rationality (Grell, 1993: 128).

All these accounts of the original and universal past as a memory of the beginning of times and the origin of all values, institutions, languages, political experiences, dominations, conquests, wars and customs were connected to the assumption of Christian salvation, and in particular, to the belief in the workings of divine providence over the course of human history. This theme can be found, for instance, in Thomist (Woortmann, 2005: 259-314) and medieval thought on the relation between providence and freedom.

For Christianity, in general, after a harmonious and benevolent Creation of the world and man, an original Fall takes place through immorality, which means the sinful original disconnection from the origin. Thus, according to the Salvation assumption, Final Restoration is to be attained. The New Jerusalem professed by the Book of Revelation is essentially the full and superior expression of the Garden of Eden, while human history becomes the realm of man in his quest for his aim, under the grace of God.

The notions of creation, fall and restoration make the basic epistemological triad of the theological experience of time. The fall of man is an original departure from the universal source, whereas creation and restoration are immediate events traceable to a common origin. Beginning and end appear as the boundaries of the linear narrative of the Christian God-Truth history, which reveals itself to other cultures and colonizes archaic eternal-recurrence views. The Judeo-Christian History

and its indissociable theology and hermeneutics led to a new way of producing meaning for all things.

If on the one hand, the comprehension of time in the archaic world is set by the solitude or anguish of Heidegger's *Dasein* (Heidegger, 2002: 1) vis-à-vis the cosmos and the rhythm of its phenomena, on the other, the Judeo-Christian comprehension of time is stratified, in its historical formula, into solitude at the sight of history (Forte, 1995: 09-10; Eliade, 1992: 11). If eternal recurrence can be seen as an explanation capable of providing meaning to the changes of nature, the Judeo-Christian history, on its turn, is capable of providing meaning to the relations between man and man, within time, under the auspices of divine providence.

The essential theme of my investigation bears on the image of himself formed by the man of the archaic societies and on the place that he assumes in the Cosmos. The chief difference between the man of the archaic and traditional societies and the man of the modern societies with their strong imprint of Judaeo-Christianity lies in the fact that the former feels himself indissolubly connected with the Cosmos and the cosmic rhythms, whereas the latter insists that he is connected only with History (Eliade, 1958: VI).

The human origin, for the theological experience of Christian history, starts with some actors of history and of historical thought. The actors of history are divine providence and man, bearing time, on his turn, as his cross, in relation with a self-revealing God (Forte 1995, 9-10). The narrative interpretation of the signs of the times and of history is the work of the prophets, who both announce and denounce things. Prophetism is about the moral relation of the people and its theological and teleological consequences. This subject-prophet of History – an omniscient narrator – becomes a metaphor for the role played by the erudition of historians in modern historiography.

The agencying of origins, leading to historical knowledge, was maintained in modernity. Historians generally dealt with the notions of origin, fall and restoration in their distinct fields of historical research. In French 18th century, for instance, monarchical Romanists described the origin, fall and restoration of the Roman Empire via medieval emperors such as Charlemagne (Dubos); or the origin, fall and restoration of Frankish aristocracy (Boulainvilliers); or, yet, the origin, fall and restoration of the Celts (Pelloutier).

THE HISTORIANS			
agencying of origins	Monarchical Romanists	Aristocratic Germanists	Protestants Germanists
Origin	Gallic Wars 58-50 BC.	Clovis I - Frankish consolidation 481 - 511 AC	Celts until Gallic Wars 58 AC
Fall	Reformed Church of France -1559	Absolute monarchy	Roman Gaul within the Roman Empire at the time of its greatest extent (AD 117)
Restoration	Louis XIV	Restoration of Frankish aristocracy	restoration of the Celts (representation of Protestants)
historian model	Jean-Baptiste Dubos (1670-1742)	Henri de Boulainvilliers (1658-1722)	Simon Pelloutier (1694-1757)
Books	Dubos, J. B. <i>Histoire critique de l'établissement de la Monarchie française dans les Gaules.</i> Paris, Chez Nyon: 1742. 3 T.	Boulainvilliers, H. de. (1727). <i>Histoire De L'Ancien Gouvernement De La France: Avec XIV. Lettres Historiques sur les Parlemens ou Etats-Generaux.</i> Haye & a Amsthdam (1742).	Pelloutier, Simon. <i>Histoire des Celtes, et particulièrement des Gaulois et des Germains, depuis les tems fabuleux, jusqu'à la prise de Rome par les Gaulois.</i> Beauregard (La Haye) 1740.

Erudite historians were the ones generally identified as prophet-narrators. The symbolic strength (Bourdieu, 1989: 134) of their discourse, which was always naturalized into society, exerted its influence

according to the way each author adapted his view to the notions of origin, fall and restoration. The prophet-narrator role was legitimated according to each author's fidelity to the discourse and presence of divine grace. Concurrently, the role of the historian-narrator was legitimized based on his fidelity to the sources that manifested the ancient truth of an origin. The divine grace of ancient prophets seemed to be then substituted by erudition. Erudite authors had the cultural capital of memory, and their strength lied in the natural acceptance of what they affirmed.

On the other hand, the agencying of origins in erudite narratives expressed a discourse about the present. The glory of Augustine's City of God, identified in the absolutist monarchy of Jean-Baptiste Dubos, was a 'restored' version of the fallen Roman Empire, and its heyday was seen as a 'restoration'. The capitulation of French aristocracy's freedom – grasped as the fall of the true foundation of France – was seen by the historian-prophet-narrator Boulainvilliers in the difficulties faced by nobility under absolutism. For Boulainvilliers, the situation of his days was a 'fall'. His aristocratic discourse could be easily linked to Pelloutier's Celticism.

However, despite the existence of antagonistic political positions and even distinct theoretical constructions, these authors produced historical knowledge on the agencying of origins path, with its self-regulating eschatology or teleology that prescribed a direction or a political objective to the narrator-prophet-historian.

The origin contained the entire universal history of man, comprising his fall and the promise of a restoration, which should be considered in relation to its moral and political constraints. The fall was the root of a situation in which man lived under the weight of his misfortunes and of the need for a restoration. History was seen as the interstice between the fall and restoration. Restoration would legitimize both the origin and the fall, while legitimizing the future – which, on its turn, was seen as the fulfillment of the conditions for salvation by means of history.

To illustrate this description, one may point out that not without a reason, the history of the Roman Empire was the imaginary root of the entire French historiography in the 18th century. It was either the model or the reference, or both. A well-known debate at the *Académie de Inscriptions et Belles Letres* dealt with the discussion regarding the origins of Rome.

This debate, for Chantal Grell, was not only a discussion of the theme at hand. It was also related to the capacity of learned history to overcome fables and legends. Between 1722 and 1725, this debate not only raised

new discussions within the erudite milieu, but it may have also directly influenced other authors, such as Simon Pelloutier.

Would, therefore, the *Histoire des Celtes et particulièrement des Gaulois et des Germains, depuis les temps fabuleux jusqu'à la prise de Rome par les Gaulois* (1742) and the *Dissertation sur l'origine des Romains* (1753) be theme titles under the influence of this discussion? In any case, the presence of Romanists was not something new for classicist historiography; quite the contrary, it was the central key of historiographical interpretations.

Beyond it, the selected sources for this study deal with the origins. One way of comprehending them is by assessing their ways of producing knowledge vis-à-vis the discursive forms of their own culture – in other words, “what is determined in a specific context by the state of the class struggle determines what can be said” (Pêcheux, 1996: 160).

It is precisely this relation between the origins and politics that this research examines. It is based on the assumption that the extremely well written historical assertions produced by these erudite authors are always a one-sided product of their socio-political and cultural experience. This theme – which is linked to the discussion on ‘uses of the past’ and to the arch-genealogist method – pervades this entire study via its selected sources under the agencying of origins concept. The present chapter introduces this question by examining Pelloutier’s work.

As a Celt-Germanist, Pelloutier positioned himself against the absolutist experience. By identifying its legal-political and epistemological genesis in the Roman Empire and in the Roman Church, his agencying of origins approach served as a means to depreciate these roots. For Pelloutier, the fall of the Roman Empire was the restoration of the obscure origin he set out to present.

Little can be said about Pelloutier’s life, since biographical information on him is scarce (see Appendix). Some documents, mostly from the 19th century, allow us to consider the influence of his life in his work. Yet, such considerations cannot be seen as necessary driving or causal conditions.

Pelloutier was born in October 27, 1694, under the absolutist reign of Louis XIV. He became an ecclesiastical counselor to Prussian king Frederick II, and was also Pastor of Werder, advisor of the Collège Français in Berlin, and a member and librarian of the Academy of Sciences of Berlin. He died in October 3, 1757.

His father, Jean Pelloutier, was a merchant. And his mother's name was Françoise Chaparède. With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, his parents moved to Leipzig, where he was born. Their flight took place primarily due to the immediate persecution of French Protestants. The Edict of Fontainebleau (1685).

Pelloutier's professional life seems to have been fully devoted to his studies about the Celts and theology. In the 19th century, he was portrayed by French Protestant historians.

As he pursued his aim, however, he found extremely significant problems in 18th century historiography. In Emile Haag's view, such problems were actually overcome; despite the fact that the Celts did not leave monuments, apart from some isolated stones, popular chants with dubious authenticity, and incomplete and vague – sometimes even contradictory – narratives, Pelloutier went beyond these problems with his vast and 'prejudice-free' studies to sort out true, plausible and false elements. He could determine, thereby, the likely authenticity of each expression (Haag, 1783-1882: 113).

The conclusion of this study deals precisely with Pelloutier's thought and historical research in connection with a historiographical dispute between Boulainvilliers and Abbot Dubos, which took place in France in the first half of the 18th century. Despite the fact that these authors were distant from each other and approached distinct objects, I seek to shed some light on their agencying of origins approach, which was the means by which historical thought gained its authority and legal legitimacy vis-à-vis absolutist France. For this reason, I excluded interpretations centered in the social milieu of these authors. This is neither a discussion of the history of ideas, nor of social history – and even less a Marxist discussion. What I seek is a post-structuralist study in connection with Cultural History. My research was particularly focused on four texts of the first two volumes of Pelloutier's *Histoire des Celtes* (1740).

As was mentioned above, for Pelloutier the Celtic world was the origin of Europe. Therefore, he took position against identifying Rome or Greece as the primary and foundational origin of European culture. Before discussing the consequences of this assertion, and keeping the guiding thread of this chapter, the following questions must be considered: Who were Pelloutier's Celts? Why the Celts? And how did he write his histories?

To introduce this discussion, let us take a look at the preface of *Histoire des Celtes*. One cannot consider this work without bearing in mind its

mirroring background, which is the history of Rome. We must also take into account that despite the fact that Pelloutier was a Christian author, divine providence is not mentioned as a theme in his historical writings. History was for him the place of freedom, and for this reason all things could be transformed: culture, the government, and religion. The Celts are seen not only as the people chosen as a divine instrument, but as the very origin of Europe and European civilization. The 3rd volume of *Histoire des Celtes*, which will not be examined in this study, presents this idea more clearly. The freedom of the Celts was a God-blessed freedom, and represents the mystical experience of history for man.

Pour bien connoître les Celtes à tous ces différens égards, il ne faut pas les considerer tels qu'ils étoient lorsque les Phéniciens, les Grecs & les Romains surent entrez dans leur país, & en eurent soûmis une partie. Le Commerce & la Domination des étrangers produisirent, comme je le montrerai, de grands changemens dans leurs Loix, dans leur Religion, & en général dans toute leur manière de vivre. Il faut prendre ces Peuples dans le brut, si j'ose me servir de ce terme, & découvrir, s'il est possible, ce qu'ils étoient avant que d'avoir adopté des idées & des coutumes étrangères (Pelloutier, 1740: XXXVII).

It is not divine providence, but the relation with the other peoples that brings about the necessary cultural changes. For Georges Lefebvre, the historiographical thought of the 18th century was influenced by its own socio-political needs, and not by the heritage of the 17th century. This heritage was seen as rationalism, which, in turn, had the effect of divesting History from its scientific aspect, considering the influences of Newton, Descartes and Espinosa. Such influences affected French historiography, which assumed an aspect of historical novel, i.e., of truths unconcerned with their sources (1971: 172). A severe resistance against such rationalist standing can be identified in Bossuet.

However, there is a difference between the fables and legends of authors who criticize the ancient sources. This was a hallmark of Pelloutier and of 18th century erudite authors:

C'est ce qui m'a déterminé à prendre l'Histoire des Celtes aussi haut, que le peu de Monumens qui nous restent m'ont permis de remonter. Mais comme la première Epoque de cette Histoire, qui commence aux Tems Fabuleux & qui finit à l'année de la Prise de Rome par les Gaulois, n'étoit pas susceptible d'un ordre Chronologique, j'ai pris le parti de suivre l'ordre des Matières, & de représenter au naturel l'ancienne Simplicité, ou si l'on veut l'ancienne Barbarie des Peuples Celtes, dont on les verra sortir successivement, les uns plutôt, les autres plus tard, selon qu'ils étoient plus ou moins voisins de quelque Nation polie (Pelloutier, 1740: XXXVIII).

The quote above not only gives an idea of the need for ancient texts, so that erudition may overcome the demands of rationalism, but also authorizes us to reflect on the hierarchy of the texts of Antiquity. It was not enough to have an ancient citation, since such citations could be either contradictory or illusory. The key point for erudition – influenced as it was by rationalism, particularly starting with Spinoza and Richard Simon – was how to establish truth and legitimacy.

A first hypothesis guided this research: for Pelloutier, authors who had been personally among the Gauls and Germanic peoples were more important than those who had not been among them. The reasoning behind this hypothesis was the presence and influence of empiricism in continental Europe's thought. But this reasoning had a number of problems. The first of them was that it basically took rationalism for empiricism. Rationalism should be understood as the ordering of knowledge according to reason – the order of the world –, thus subjugating the senses to logic. Empiricism, on the other hand, both for John Locke and David Hume, set a premium on the experience of the senses and considered deduction and induction as effects of a psychological dimension.

It is also known that Christianity resisted to empiricism. Christian realism accepts rational logic more easily than sense-based empiricism. The vindication of the influence of empiricism was then left aside.

To provide an explanation for Pelloutier's choices regarding the hierarchy of the sources from Antiquity, I opted for another epistemological reasoning that is nonetheless more linked to the cultural practices of the 18th century.

It is not a good procedure to justify epistemological structures only in a philosophical dimension. The same, on the other hand, must be said about the total exclusion of philosophical models from the structure of historical research. First, because one only rarely finds a scientist who is radically guided by a single model of thinking. And second, because science is inserted in a heterogeneous dynamic that goes beyond rationalism pure and simple. Or better yet, because it composes heterogeneous rational forms, but is linked to non-rational elements.

Without further dwelling on critics of modern rationality such as Jean François Lyotard and his triad 'law, form and event', or Gilles Deleuze and his 'nomad thought', my research about Pelloutier is concerned with justifying the hierarchy of sources in cultural practices, which are also epistemological practices.

In that period, such cultural practices were mostly travel narratives. These chronicles give us a hint in terms of hierarchy of sources. In this regard, traveler chroniclers of Antiquity such as Strabo (1740, XLIV), Julius Caesar, Tacitus, Pliny (1740, LII), Posidonius (1740, LV), or Agathias (1740, LVII) had the same value as modern traveler narrators.

The value of these travel narratives was not only socio-economic, and they were far from being only an outcome of curiosity or an instrument of colonial and missionary enterprises. Their importance, therefore, should not be reduced to knowledge as a means for colonization or religious conversion, or for the mere pleasure of knowing. These narratives printed their own theological, historical and identitarian concerns, as well as their political and economic concerns, onto the epistemological space.

Their theological concern was due to the need to explain that Adam was the father of all humans, including Europeans, Blacks, Asians and Americans. Their historical concern, on the other hand, submitted their own comprehension of time when looking at savage peoples, which represented the remote origins of history in contemporary days. Their identitarian concern stemmed from the Europeans' need to impose themselves on those outside their civilization. Comparison became a means of explanation in dialogue with the European views of morality, when reflecting, for instance, on the evils of civilization and primitive happiness in connection with notions such as the 'noble savage' and 'natural man'. A classic example is that of missionary Joseph-François Lafitau.

For Lafitau, man is a unique being, and human differences are a result of different degrees of civilization, represented by culture and religion. Lafitau's researches were a constant search for parallel human elements, with distinct determinant factors, and highlighted above all cultural symbols, while seeking to identify a meaning for the universal idea of religious man.

Je ne me suis pas contenté de connoître le caractère des Sauvages, & de m'informer de leurs coùtumes &: de leurs pratiques, j'ai cherché dans ces pratiques & dans ces coùtumes des vestiges de l'Antiquité la plus reculée; j'ai lû avec soin ceux des Auteurs les plus anciens qui ont traité des Mœurs, des Loix, & des Usages des Peuples dont ils avoient quelque connoissance; j'ai fait la comparaison de ces Mœurs les unes avec les autres, & j'avouë que si les Auteurs anciens m'ont donné des lumières pour appuyer quelques conjectures heureuses touchant les Sauvages, les Coùtumes des Sauvages m'ont donné des lumieres pour entendre plus fa- cilement, & pour expliquer plusieurs choses qui sont dans les Auteurs anciens (Lafitau, 1724: I, 3).

These assertions confer more credibility to the hypothesis of Pelloutier's preference for ancient authors who personally visited, or, better yet, lived in the countries they depicted. This was not a result of the influence of English empiricism, but of the need for reliable travel narratives capable of justifying the European identity in contrast to the 'savages'. Pelloutier refers several times to American peoples, for instance, when discussing whether ancient Europeans were anthropophagites:

J'avouerais d'abord., qu'il ne faudroit pas s'étonner que les: anciens habitans" de l'Europe eussent été. Anthropophages. Plusieurs peuples de l'Amérique le font encore aujourd'hui (Pelloutier, 1740: 63).

Thus, since the reliability of the narratives was an indispensable cultural condition observed by Pelloutier as he acknowledged the authority of ancient narratives, we may deduce his conclusion regarding empiricism.

Some excerpts in Pelloutier's work shed a clear light in this regard:

Strabon s'en apperçut, il y a bien long-tems, lorsqu'il voulut enrichir sa Géographie d'une exacte description de tous les Païs qui étoient occupez par des peuples Celtes (2) Strabo Lib. II (Pelloutier, LV). (...) Posidonius mérite d'autant plus d'attention, que cet Auteur avoit voyagé dans les Gaules (Pelloutier, 1740: LV).

In a more general way within the scope of this research, this reasoning allows us to grasp the influence of Pelloutier's cultural universe in his work. The hierarchy of his sources depended on the credibility of the narratives of modern travels. As Pelloutier produced his texts, he combined methodology and his own cultural experience.

Yet, such reasoning must not be automatically considered as sufficient. It is also necessary to examine this combination from an even more rigorous epistemological standpoint. If on the one hand, the reliability of travel narratives promoted theological, historical and identitarian discussions in the European intellectual environment, which resulted, on their turn, in political practices such as the legitimization of negro slavery, the partition of colonies, and the catechization of native savages, on the other, the moral reflections they endorsed in regard to European man produced the first steps of an anthropological science (Duchet, 1975: 7-28; Lemay, 1975: 29-40).

The agencying of origins is certainly embedded in the concept of agency. For Gilles Deleuze, agency is a territory of signs. Such territory allows a twofold linkage to a semiotic system (expression) and a pragmatic system

(content). In short, when considering agency, one ought to ask both about what is said and what is done (Deleuze (5) 1997, 218).

What is said' relates to the modern European society. 'What is done', on its turn, relates to the narratives and studies on the origins of Europe. Writing the history of the Celts, for instance, would not be to affirm that the Celts were Europeans, but, instead, that they were the authentic origin of civilization and expressed the 'true meaning' of being civilized. Writing a narrative about the life of savage Americans would allow us to understand the 'advance of European civilization' and the very origin of such civilization.

Another agencying linkage is related to an increase or decrease in the territorial dimension. In a territorialization dynamic, everything would converge to a set of truth-assumptions based on European man, from whom a characterization of other peoples was deduced in order to construct a vision of 'universal man' with differences only in terms of a civilized culture or the absence thereof. And in de-territorialization, one finds an immediate criticism of such 'civilized' man, with his vicious weaknesses (Rousseau), his absolutist system destined to failure (Montesquieu), and his Christian superstitions (Voltaire), which hindered progress. To speak about the origins meant both to assert one's identitarian certainties and to criticize the opposite view.

A more rigorous research would be important in this regard, to compare the origin of Europe and the origin of other peoples. However, this specific research is based on the general hypothesis that there was one and the same process in these narrative constructions, and that they stemmed from one single symbolic space to find their expression in the identity of the peoples newly submitted to a civilizational process. This intricate game of signs took place within the agencying of origins idea.

Similarly to Lafitau's concern with the origins, the first chapter of *Histoire des Celtes* approaches the origin of the Celts. Its first book is entitled "The origin of the Celts", and includes "the countries occupied by its peoples anciently"; "the different names they had"; and "the language they spoke in their early days".

Chapter 10 of the first volume defines the Celtic origins, after Pelloutier studied countless documents from Greco-Roman antiquity to define the customs of each Celtic people, namely Sauromatians, Celto-Scythians, Iberians, Gauls, Germanic peoples, and the Getae, in his attempt to prove that they were one and the same people.

Je ne m'engagerois pas à examiner les divers noms que les peuples Celtes portoient autrefois, si cette recherche, quelque peu interessante qu'elle soit elle-même, ne pouvoit être de quelque utilité, pour découvrir certaines coutumes des nations Celtiques par les noms mêmes qui leur étoit affectez (Pelloutier, 1740: 137).

Culture-environment and environment-society adaptations would explain differences all over the world; nomadism and sedentism were the forms by which societies sought the best environments for their needs, above all in conformity with the will of God. This explanation would not exempt the physical factor, but it could not be developed merely on natural grounds. The object of differentiation was not only and necessarily the human body, but also the weather (climate) and the society (cultural and biophysical aspects).

These determinant factors allow Pelloutier to affirm that:

Il est certain, que la plûpart des peuples Celtes étoient anciennement Nomades, c'est-à-dire qu'ils n'avoient point de demeure fixe. Ne batissant, ni maisons, ni cabanes, ils passoient toute leur vie sur des chariots, & ne s'arretoient dans une contrée qu'aussi longtems que leurs troupeaux y trouvoient de quoi subsister. II) Lorsque les peuples Celtes commencerent à se fixer dans un païs, ils ne jugèrent cependant pas, à propos de bâtir des Villes ni de s'y renfermer. Chaque particulier s'établissoit dans une forêt, au pied d'une colline, le long d'un ruisseau, au milieu d'une campagne, selon qu'il aimoit, ou la chasse, ou la pêche, ou l'agriculture (Pelloutier, 1740: 138).

The geographical and theologico-historical origin of these nomads is established in a narrative in which miracles account for the diversity of peoples and locations:

A Dieu ne plaise, cependant, que je révoque en doute; ce que l'Ecriture Sainte nous dit de l'Origine du genre humain d'un seul homme. Mais, comme la Création de l'Homme, la longue vie des Patriarches, la conservation de l'Homme, des Plantes, & des animaux, au milieu d'un Déluge universel y sont des miracles de la puissance divine, il n'est pas hors de vrai semblance, que Dieu ait mis, par un semblable miracle, une difference si sensible, entre les divers déçendants d'Adam ou de Noé, que l'on pourra distinguer, jusqu'à la fin du monde, les Germains des Lappons, les peuples blancs des noirs, ceux qui ont les cheveux crépez, de ceux qui les ont longs & flottans (Pelloutier, 1740: 201).

Still in 1770, the re-publisher of *Histoire des Celtes*, Pierre de Chiniac, wrote a commentary as a note to this paragraph. De Chiniac's position perhaps was quite close the views of Enlightenment, when he preferred to interpret the existing differences in a more rational fashion. For him, the physical differences among peoples were certainly not the product of

a post-deluge miracle, but of a physical adaptation to the climate in the course of the centuries.

Pelloutier's thesis is that the Celts were created in order to meet at the land prepared to them by the Creator. The association between land and people was a well-known agencying device for ascribing legitimacy to the possession of lands. Applied examples are found in the war against Holland, in the annexation of Alsace under Louis XIV, and in the destruction of the Rhine bridge in 1672, justified by a *Bello Galico* (Gallic War) perception. Therefore, it was the ancient text that determined the Gaul regions: from the standpoint of absolutist history, Germania stood beyond the Rhine. And also the Gauls were presented in geographical terms and enveloped by the association between land and people. Finally, for Pelloutier, the Celts originated from the miracle of the differentiation of peoples that took place after the deluge, to establish themselves in the land created from them, namely Europe.

For Pelloutier, the Celts were primarily known by the name of Scythians, which was used by the Greeks in reference to all peoples who inhabited along the Danube. But Pelloutier would constantly question his historical sources.

In his enterprise, he sought to establish the antiquity of the Celts in order to define their geographical identity, which corresponded, in legal terms, to the right to the possession of the land. But he faced real difficulties in his attempt to define such identity via ancient texts. Pelloutier proceeded then in the following way, resorting to Strabo in order to state his problem:

Strabon nous apprend, que les Auteurs (...), de la première Antiquité distinguoient les Scythes établis au dessus du Pont-Euxin, du Danube, & de la Mer Adriatique, en Hyperboréens, Sauromates, & Arimaspes; & ceux qui sont au delà de la Mer Caspienne, en Saces & Massagetes. Les premiers étoient donc établis en Europe, & les seconds avoient leurs demeures en Asie (Pelloutier, 1740: 2).

Next, Pelloutier locates the peoples who were close to his Celts, explains their ancient names and identifies them in the modern world:

Les Sauromates ou Sarmates sont connus encore aujourd'hui sous le même nom, qui sert à désigner en commun tous les peuples •qui parlent la langue Esclavonne; les Moscovites, les Polonois, les Bohémiens, les Venedes, & plusieurs autres (Pelloutier, 1740: 2).

He then asserts that there were no Hyperboreans. Their accounts, in his view, were actually a mistake by those who had not seen Europe beyond the Danube:

Les Hyperboréens sont les Celtes établis autour des Alpes, & du Danube, comme je le prouverai après quelques Réflexions préliminaires, que je dois faire sur leur sujet. On les plaçoit au delà des monts² Riphéens; cela est bien jusques là, les monts Riphéens des plus anciens Auteurs sont les Alpes; mais on vouloit encore, qu'ils fussent situés sous le Pôle Arctique, & par conséquent dans un climat extrêmement froid, où l'air étoit toujours emplumé, c'est à dire plein de neige, & où le Soleil ne paroissoit point, pendant six mois entiers de l'année. Comme l'opinion commune étoit, que le Vent du Nord (Boreas) sortoit" des monts Riphéens, on conclut delà,, qu'il ne souffloit point chés les peuples qui avoient leurs demeures au delà de cette chaîne de montagnes: & c'est delà qu'il reçurent le nom d'Hyperboréens, ou de gens qui demeurent au delà du vent du Nord (Pelloutier, 1740: 3).

For Pelloutier, the ancients' mistake was only noticed with the presence of authors in Gallic territories and Germania:

Cette fausse position, que l'on avoit donnée dans le commencement au païs des Hyperboréens, fut unis source d'erreur, pour les Géographes & pour les Historiens, qui écrivirent dans les siècles suivans. Comme on s'apperçut, lorsque les Gaules & la Germanie eurent été découvertes, que le vent du Nord y souffloit comme par - tout ailleurs; comme on n'y trouva, ni cette terre voisine du Pôle, & toujours couverte de neige, ni ce, jour & cette nuit de six mois, dont les anciens avoient parlé, on fut obligé de reculer toujours vers le Nord, tant les monts .Riphéens,, que les peuples qui étoient assis au pied de ces, montagnes, ou de les placer au moins dans quelque païs inconnu, où personne n'avoit encore pénétré (Pelloutier, 1740: 3-4).

Pelloutier also presented this problem in the documents of Antiquity that mentioned the Hyperboreans with the aid of the writings of Etienne de Byfance, a modern author whose reference could not be found, but who made the following description: for Stephan de Urb (7,27), the Hyperboreans lived along the Danube. Subsequent authors such as Pliny (*Natural History*, book IV, chapter XII, 464-471), Virgil (*Georgics*, book III, 381; book XIII, 517), Pomponius Mela (book III, chapter V, p. 77), Solinus (chapter XXXVI), Lucanus (book III, v. 272) and Strabo (I p. 62) located the Hyperboreans in the northern extremities of Europe. Other authors, such as Diodorus of Sicily (book II p. 130), located them on an ocean

² Solin, cap. XXVI; Plin. Hist. Nat. L. IV. c. XII. p.471; Strabo L. I. p. 62; Pomp. Mela. Melà L. III. cap. V. p. 77. Clemens Alexandr. Stroni. L.I. c. XV. p. 3 59, Stephanus de Urb. in Riphéens & Hyberborrit, p. 654-727.

island. Finally, Valerius Flaccus (book II, v. 519), Martial (book VII, p. 91; IX, 127, 36) and other authors simply located them to the north.

The fact that these authors had never been with the Hyperboreans implied the impossibility of justifying their location. Thus, the diversity of places where they could have lived was a result of travels and of Roman colonization, both of which did not find them. Those travels only located the Celts, and so it was necessary to point at their region. Therefore, the value or right of the narratives considered to be true stemmed from their authors' experience of being personally with the peoples they portrayed. It was only in the 16th century, with Philipp Cluver's *Germania Antiqua*, that the ancients' mistakes became definitively established for Pelloutier:

c'est que les véritables Hyperboréens, les peuples qui ne voyent point le Soleil, pendant six mois de l'année doivent être placés du côté de la Groenlandc, & de la nouvelle Zemble, c'est-à-dire dans un país que les Anciens n'ont assurément point connu (Pelloutier, 1740: 5).

Thus, the experience of an effective personal contact with a population was the actual source of historical legitimacy in ancient narratives. Referring to Posidonius of Apameia, who, according to Cluvier, understood that the Riphean Mountains were actually the Alps, Pelloutier wrote: "His authority must be very significant, since he did travel through Gallic territories" (Pelloutier, 1740: 8). Once again, one notices the domain of the visible.

Conversely, in regard to the narrative about in book IV of Herodotus' *History*, where the land of the Arimaspi is described in the first known reference to the Hyperboreans, Pelloutier calls Aristeas of Preconnesus a charlatan and an impostor:

d'Aristée de Proconnese, qui mérite bien le nom de Charlatan & d'Imposteur qu'on lui a donné, puisqu'il vouloit faire passer son Ouvrage pour une Histoire véritable, & qu'il se vantoit d'avoir parcouru le país des Arimaspes d'un bout à l'autre (Pelloutier, 1740: 10).

Thus, Pelloutier solved the problem of ancient citations as he affirmed that the Hyperboreans and Arimaspi were fantasy references. The researches that refer to these fables were confusing peoples such as the Celts, who dwelled around the Alps, with the Hyperboreans, for instance in the case of Posidonius of Apameia; or the Euergetes with the Arimaspi.

After indicating confused references - thus proving to be an iconoclast of fables -, Pelloutier sought to identify the Celts by resorting to the

Sarmatians. The Sarmatians were not Celts in their culture, and lived in the East as Huns.

Dès la première antiquité, on voit; une difference Sensible & une espèce dsopposition, entre les, coutumes &. toute la maniere .de vivre des uns & des autres. Les Sarmates, à l'exemple des autres Scythes, alloient tous, à la guerre; mais, is n'avoient point d'autres troupes que de la Cavalerie; ou plutôt ils étoient toute jours à cheval, jusques là qu'on les voyoit, vendre, acheter,tenir leurs Assemblées expédier leurs affaires, faire leurs visites, (...). On trouve dans Ammien Marcellin, & dans Zosime,; (...) je ne doute point du tout; que ce ne soit ici la véritable origine de la fable des Centaures (Pelloutier, 1740: 114).

To provide evidence of the existence of the Celts as a unique culture, Pelloutier used his erudition and made countless citations to compare cultures - a common thing in travel narratives. But he also made comparisons in other fields. One of his most frequent procedures was the philological approach.

Yet, it is necessary to point at Pelloutier's difficulties to define the Celtic Identity. As a matter of fact, the existing mosaic of authors from Antiquity and of cultural references to the different peoples of Europe prevented him from using one single term to denote his Celts. In order to prove that the Celts were one single people with slight regional distinctions, who ended up with different names due to the confusions of ancient authors, it was necessary to compare them with other peoples who were even more different. Resorting to the differences vis-à-vis foreign peoples was a strategic means to ascribe an identity to the Celts.

By using the Sarmatians as the 'other' of the Celts, while dealing with the absence of homogeneous information from the ancient texts, Pelloutier needed to make comparisons between the Celts and non-Celts. He did not consider the Celts in a general way, but, instead, as a number of scattered populations whom he denominated the Celts.

His only documents were heterogeneous and the criterion of coexistence could not foreclose the existing contradictions. How could one consider the Gauls and the Germanic peoples as one single people? The ancient documents pointed at several differences among them. Pelloutier's solution was to compare his Celts with peoples who were much more different than them, such as the Sarmatians and the Romans. This is what he did in his philological analyses. By comparing the language of the Sarmatians to the language of the Getae, he could lead his readers into thinking that the Celts had one single language (Pelloutier, 1740: 26). All Celtic peoples mentioned in his book (Pliny) had originally the same

language, but were subsequently set apart. Thus, he concluded that the German language was a remnant from the ancient language of the Celts.

The Celts were a people created by God to inhabit Europe, whose original culture and institutions righteously expressed true freedom. That is what Pelloutier's three-volume work attempted to show. Its title – in translation, 'History of the Celts and, particularly, of the Gauls and Germanic peoples, from legendary times to the capture of Rome by the Gauls' – provides a glimpse of it. His idea consisted, basically, in contrasting Rome to the Celtic world.

For him, such Celtic world comprised the kingdoms of the Germanic Empire and France, whereas the Roman world was the presence of Roman Catholicism and of its institutions. Pelloutier's aim was to liberate the Celts and restore their original condition. His first task was to legitimize historically the Protestant religion and link it to the origins of Europe, in order to justify the practice of electing rulers.

One cannot affirm that his text is a defense of aristocracy; however, it is clearly an anti-absolutist text. Its political project becomes explicit, for instance, in the following excerpts:

Les peuples Celtes., qui avoient une demeure fixe, étoient ordinairement partagez., en Cantons en Peuples, & en Nations., Le (pagus) Canton étoit un district occupé par, un certain nombre, de familles, qui avoient leur juge; particulier., & un Mallus, c'est-à-dire un tribunal où la justice s'administroit pour tout le Canton. Un peuple étoit un (civitas) état indépendant (Pelloutier, 1740: 139).

The Celts would disqualify Rome. The capture of Rome was an attack against the institutions that were legitimized through its images. The origins of Rome were obscure, as well as the empires,

Il ne faut pas être surpris que l'Origine des plus grands Empires soit ordinairement obscure, & incertaine. Les premiers commencemens en ont été petits, & presque imperceptibles. La valeur, la prudence, l'équité, la tempérance, tirent les Peuples de la poussière, & les rendent dignes & capables de commander aux autres. Mais elles ne le font que par des progrès insensibles, au lieu que le luxe, la mollesse, la violence, sont capables de renverser, dans le terme de quelques années, ce que la Vertu n'avoit produit que dans une longue suite de siècles. Ce que je viens de dire se remarque particulièrement dans l'Histoire de l'Empire Romain. La ruine de cet Empire, & les causes qui l'ont attirée, ne sont ignorées de personne. Son origine, sans remonter aux tems fabuleux, ne laisse pas d'être des plus incertaines (Pelloutier, 1771: 204).

Value, prudence, equity and temperance were pertinent characteristics of the world of the 'barbarians', and, particularly, of the Celts. The value of

freedom, the prudence of the warrior aristocracy, the equity of rights among warriors and the moderation of selecting the best men of one's tribe were the features of the Celts in: *Histoire des Celtes*. Such features were presented as the great origin of all European peoples.

For Pelloutier, the imperial institutions belonged neither to the universe of Barbarian culture, nor to the universe of Greek culture. The virtues that nourished a people, in his reading, could be lost in the misadventures of luxury and courts, in the laziness of civilization and in gratuitous violence spectacles. The origin of the Roman Empire was not the same of the Barbarian peoples and Greeks. The empire was seen as a 'fall' from the original culture, from its obscure beginning to its ruinous end. However, the origin of the Barbarian peoples would be restored in the fall of the empires: hence the theme of the invasions. Each historian would repeatedly use the same agencying of origins mindset to produce small narratives within a large narrative, thus creating a mosaic of events.

On the one hand, Pelloutier assumed that the Celts were predecessors of the Trojans, and that the ancient Trojans were Scythians who went from Europe to Asia Minor, where they founded the kingdom of Troy (1772, 195). On the other, the Greeks and Romans did not have a well-defined origin, and were only considered to be enemies of the Celts,

Ennemis des nations étrangères, se défiant surtout des Grecs & des Romains qui en vouloient à leur liberté, ils les, regardoient rarement de bon oeil. Depuis qu'ils sont sortis de la barbarie, ils ont perdu, ce regard fier & terrible, auquel on les reconnoissoit autrefois (Pelloutier, 1771: 118).

At the sight of the Celts, the Romans would lament their loss of the virtues displayed by the Barbarians. . Pelloutier contrasted the Greco-Roman civilization to the Celtic-Barbarian culture. The Celts' opposition to the Roman civilization – which, for Pelloutier, had taken place over the entire Europe, with the exception of Greece and Rome – was part of a single trend. The European origins were virtuous, whereas the origins of the Roman Empire were obscure and prone to vices. The rise of the empire was the fall from the Barbarian origins. The fall of the empire meant the restoration of the Celtic-Barbarian world. Those were non-dialectical, but heterogeneous cycles of origin, fall and restoration.

This study introduced the agencying of origins idea. This moment, on its turn, discusses the intimate relations within the political realm, the origins and the development of knowledge.

The assumption behind this analysis is the idea of belongingness, which guides human consciousness to a sociological aspect that is realized through the recognition of a social identity in the *habitus* that embeds itself in the human field and produces symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989). This belongingness idea also acts in a territorial sense, and expresses itself as a search for the original, pristine community which loss is involved in memory (Bauman, 2003). Since the notion of belongingness is quite broad, its outcomes also reach the fields of linguistics and epistemological identity (Baronas, 2005) as something already experienced in a common geographical space.

As Zigmunt Bauman studied the mythic aspects of the lost paradise both in the Greco-Roman and biblical imagery, he drew closer to the reflections of Chantal Grell and corroborated the analyses of Antiquity in the modern world. These two authors particularly conceived memory as a nostalgic longing for the lost paradise, thus making way for the agencying of origins idea. If the subjects of knowledge unconsciously seek a lost paradise, then creating a lost paradise with the existing documents would enable a political project for the subjective dimension of readers.

In Pelloutier, belongingness pointed to an original community with a warrior aristocracy, which led, in his erudite discourse, to an estrangement and a different political way. Such estrangement appears as the other side of belongingness, and was only contrary to it in its 'edges'. Belongingness to a field that guided freedom meant to alienate the obligation of a cult. And belongingness to Celtic freedom meant to alienate France under absolutism.

Bossuet's thought transpires the yearning of belongingness to a Christian theocracy. What is behind a people's legitimacy? What makes a nation legitimate? For him, the answer is: God in the figure of His king. In his universal chronology, happiness appears as the result of obedience to a wise and inspired ruler, and also of the monarch's fulfillment of his obligation. The happiness of the subjects was a duty of the king. Therefore, a historic continuity appears between Moses (as a prophet-king), the changes of the great empires and the permanence of faith in the Christian God.

It is important to point at an epistemic difference in the ways of producing belongingness, which mean, in this case, the political achievement of the agencying of origins. The fundamental distinction is the election of the subject of History. Bossuet's subjects of history are

religion and the political realm, which heir is the monarch. On the other hand, Pelloutier's subject of history is the Celtic people, whose heirs were the Europeans deprived of their freedom by the ruling monarch. The election of a subject would produce not only a different narrative, but also a fundamental distinction in the reading and in the selection of sources. The empirical space of each source would depend on how it was handled by its reader. The subject-reader and his source would be the dyad of erudition. The final chapter of this study will discuss this point. For now, let us take a closer look at the results of the agencying of origins.

The theme of the origins at a macro-level founds the agencying of origins prompted by the Christian view of the origin of the universe. Such macro situation is what this study calls European culture. In empirical terms, the symbol of this origin defines the territorial dimension of such culture. In the writing of history, this theme's objectivity increases with its ideal beginning and end. In the relations with other peoples, especially with non-Christians and non-Europeans, it produces analytic categories of civilization based on the universal man – the son of Adam. Even in Lafitau, for instance, the native Americans did belong to the Christian universe, since they shared the same symbols of the ancients. They were religious and, for this reason, they had universal feelings. By recognizing in the Americans the same universal feelings of his own (European) people, he recognized the superiority of one over the other. If there was such thing as a universal man, then the European man was a more mature brother.

These changes gained strength and critical mass as they were questioning the European sense of epistemological belongingness. But the anthropological constitution of the universal man's identity did resist on account of other normative foundations, such as the agencying of origins regime, which expressed itself via the obligation of making a history of the origins.

Conclusion

This study, in sum, looked for the importance of Antiquity in the emergence of modern thought and modern institutions. It is not only a phenomenological analysis of the uses of the past, but a genealogical analysis of the incorporation of conditions of truth and power within a cultural system.

These two anti-absolutist authors, on their turn, reverse these elements and keep their focus on the writing of history, the Germanic origin in opposition to the Roman Empire, the notion of a historical rupture, and the critique of Catholicism.

Such discursive order and the inversion of its elements brought me to the agencying of origins concept as an analytic tool that helps understand the emergence of formal knowledge in the modern culture of the 18th century.

The elements linked to the agencying of origins effort are the theology of Christian history and scientific taxonomy. For Christian theology, history started with a benevolent and perfect origin, but was followed by a fall and the subsequent need for a restoration of the previous origin. Thus, as these authors wrote history, they were always looking for the origin of what they intended to analyze, both in the Roman and Germanic worlds, according to their political position. It was with these lenses that they approached, for instance, the barbarian invasions and Roman imperial colonization. Finally, they outlined the description of an expected restoration, which would effectively be the desired political action.

Simon Pelloutier is the author of *Histoire des Celtes, et particulièrement des Gaulois et des Germains, depuis les temps fabuleux, jusqu'à la prise de Rome par les Gaulois* (1740). For him, the origin of France, as well as of the entire Europe, is Celtic-Germanic, in opposition to the Roman world. In his discourse, he produced an image that represents the Protestant culture in the Celtic world and expresses a political opposition between the Celtic milieu, which in his view was aristocratic and free, against the Roman world with its absolutism and enslaved populations.

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