

SCHOOL ANCIENT HISTORY WRITING IN THE 1820S UP TO THE 1830S: THE *PRÉCIS DE L'HISTOIRE ANCIENNE* MATTER AND GREEK NARRATIVE BY AUGUSTE POIRSON

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Abstract

History as a school subject has made itself more and more present throughout the schooling process triggered by enlightened debates and The French Revolution, although with some distinct aspects from what is common to us and substantiates our textbooks nowadays. The *Précis de l'Histoire* collection manifests as a special piece for analysis: comprised of five volumes in which its publishing appears complete in the 1830s, being prescribed to the Parisian *collèges* as a History program, in its contemporary concept. The current work proposes to analyze Auguste Poirson's narrative composition concerning the Greek and its origin displayed in *Précis de l'Histoire Ancienne* second and third edition (1828; 1831) to illustrate: the dated unclarity of writing boundaries to an scholar compendium; and also, concerning proficient historiography, the argument between old and modern intelligibility. Simultaneously, it suggests thoughts on writing school ancient history having the time frame scope as a guideline amongst the beginning and the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century.

Keywords

School Ancient History; textbooks; Ancient Greek; eurocentrism.

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Resumo

A História enquanto disciplina escolar tornou-se cada vez mais presente ao longo do processo de escolarização desencadeado pelos debates iluministas e a Revolução Francesa, ainda que com contornos muito distintos daquilo que nos é familiar atualmente e formata nossos livros didáticos. A coleção de *Précis de l'Histoire* se apresenta como um artefato especial para a análise desse processo: composta por cinco volumes e cuja publicação aparece completa em 1830, sendo prescrita desde então para os *collèges* parisienses como um curso de história, na acepção moderna do termo. O artigo objetiva analisar a construção narrativa, feita por Auguste Poirson, acerca dos gregos e sua origem presente nas segunda e terceira edições (1828; 1831) do *Précis de l'Histoire Ancienne* para demonstrar: a datada indefinição de fronteiras para a escrita de um compêndio destinado ao uso escolar; e também, nos termos da nascente historiografia profissionalizada, o debate entre inteligibilidades antigas e modernas. Ao mesmo tempo, propõe reflexões acerca da escrita da história Antiga escolar tendo como horizonte o escopo temporal entre o início e o fim do século XIX e o início do século XX.

Palavras-chave

História antiga Escolar; livro didático; gregos antigos; eurocentrismo.

Introduction

Brazilian ancient history researchers' interest in the History teaching began to appear in the early 2000s (Silva; Gonçalves, 2001; Funari, 2003), and was significantly enhanced in the following decade due to the repercussion of the Base Nacional Curricular Comum (BNCC), but not exclusively because of it. Arising from the uneasiness of researchers that were anyhow linked to basic education, a broad front that brought up from the critical review of textbooks and school curriculum to the articulation of an approach and development of learning material.

However, a systematic assortment that assesses Ancient History writing from the first decades of the 19th-century up to the present textbooks is yet required. Such maneuver upholds given the knowledge that the composition of any historical topic in a contemporary textbook must be analogically comprehended in conjunction with the layers studied by stratigraphy, in other words, veils of historiography that can now indulge, suppress the previous ones or even restrict the ones forthcoming. That is to say, once identified the precise nature of the school discipline and the historicity of social practices on writing in this history category, the mechanisms that operate distinguished ineligibilities (conflicting or complementary) regarding the past become comprehensible.

The elaboration of such assumptions requires a concise reference to the debate concerning the History field of school subjects, particularly of History and a specific part of it: Ancient History- a part in which volume has shifted over time, being nearly predominant early in the 19th century; therefore, this single-handedly justifies the study of School Ancient History writing to verge upon the history of teaching History itself all things considered.

André Chervel (1990) addresses historicity within the disciplines themselves, redefining them as collective productions in the institutes and not as a reduced representation of knowledge derived from another place, besides taking into consideration that the idiosyncrasy of a discipline should not observe only the matter, but also contemplate its goals and purposes. In his thesis, the mere notion of school subject is expanded as an object resulting from the historic process in the long run that consolidates itself on the verge of World War I (Chervel, 1990: 178); in the specific case of History subject, the conclusion of the process verifies by the complete detachment of the humanities discipline when, while completed defeated,

it prompted an extinction process in the french education programs in 1906² (Chervel; Compère, 1999: 163-164).

Annie Bruter (2005), when addressing specifically the History school subject in France, enhances the argument by emphasizing the need to acknowledge not only the moment where the teaching of History as we came to know, but also question what History consisted and its teaching before that period. Regardless, dating the birth of teaching of History does not limit itself to the emerging of scholar schedules and educational programs, giving that it requires “A more comprehensive and thrilling investigation on how its methods and subject matters get developed as well as the social demands to which they answer to” (Bruter, 1997: 9). To the author, considering the long-term and its complexity, thus, precedes the review of the teaching materials and educational practice incorporation found in the Ancient Regime, once History is indisputably present in education, even if it is not about the administrative concept of the school subject as an entity ruled by regulated dispositions to which we are all in familiarized and that got its first outlines in France by the 1810s (Bruter, 2006: 9). It was not until the turn of the 19th century that it would become possible to identify History's emancipation as a thoroughly autonomous school discipline, taught by qualified teachers and reached all french children practically (Bruter, 2010: 16).

The authors rested in french reality and documentation, still, such benchmark makes itself valid considering the current state of Brazilian textbooks are in perspective because the french influence in History teaching in Brazil since the 19th century is irrefutable. The *Précis de l'Histoire Ancienne* (hereinafter PHA) itself had been incorporated to the Imperial Colégio de Pedro II in 1838 and translated by Justiniano José da Rocha.

The summary of two Brazilian pieces from the last Plano Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD) reveals how the Greeks' narrative is currently organized – what the reader already recognizes from memory as a student: “Chapter 7: Greece: the cradle of democracy. The origins of Greece. The Dorians arrive. The birth of the polis. Two Greek Powers. The Greek-Macedonian Empire” (Seriapopi; Seriapopi, 2018: xl);

Chapter 8: The Greek World and Democracy. Ancient Greece: location. Greece Early times. From Oikos to the city-state. The city-state. What prompted the

² Cf. Chervel e Compère (1999: 163): “after the 1820s the undergraduate concept concurs with the concept of secondary education, which means the contestation of classic humanities, while some religious institutions spared no efforts to restrain an evolution that seems undebatable”.

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Greeks to expand? Athens. Athenian democracy. The century of Pericles. Slaves, women and foreigners. Sparta. Politics in Sparta. Spartan Society. The Greek gods and heroes; a civic religion; The Olympic Games (Boulos, 2018: 5).

Regina Bustamante's (2017) compelling analysis of the "Classical Greece" approach in seven Brazilian textbooks collections from the 2011 PNLD invites us to an exercise in interlocution. She points to the existence of a culturally shared "athenocentric" perspective and identifies the naturalization of both the writing tradition of Greek history that makes a direct link between ancients such as Herodotus and Thucydides, passing through Roman historians and modern ones, from Hume and Gibbon to Niebuhr, Guizot, Ranke, Bancroft, and Motley; as of athenocentric utility to nationalist purposes dear to the nineteenth century. These previously mentioned authors were specifically mentioned by Bustamante in a comparative allusion to the 1896 History mosaic by Frederick Dielman (1847-1935), which now resides in the US Library of Congress, indicating the embedding of the athenocentric narrative base in the West. As Guarinello (2013) states, Ancient History starts to compose a social memory as a result of a project of a nation promoted by the Brazilian elite in the 19th century, which is only legitimated when affiliated to the Western civilization model; this process got replicated for the American continent as a whole.

The notion of a shared athenocentric base interesting to us because it reinforces the premise of the permanence of old layers of historiography in more recent textbooks, but at the same time demands an interest in a thorough assessment of the nineteenth century, so that cuts, tensions, or even continuities gets noticed. To deal with textbooks nowadays it is necessary to consider the historiographic field constitution, but above all, the consolidation of the school discipline in terms of Chervel and Bruter, which implies for both cases not to consider the nineteenth century as a monolithic period.

It is also worth including the contributions of Alain Choppin (2009) who, when dealing with the progressive reduction of lexical profusion that reflected the complexity of the status of the textbook in society, states that, throughout the process of European construction of educational systems, the standardization of contents and methods led to the autonomy of the school edition (Choppin, 2009: 25). This resulted in standardizations, and at the same time produced best-selling books, thanks foremost to affiliations with the State or with academic history, strategically announced on the frontage of the pieces. The case of Ernest Lavisse is the greatest advocate (Bruter, 2010: 16).

When it comes to the School Ancient History writing, 19th-century two last decades' textbooks bring an expressive milestone. There is a breach with the Sacred History narrative in some textbooks, giving space to approaches that include prehistory, a tool from modernity speech. It was, obviously, not a consistent advance regarding all publications at the time, being capable of extinguishing the Sacred History narratives. A good example of this is Charles Seignobos. Despite not being an expert in the Ancient History field, his *History of Civilization*, published in the mid-1880s, influenced teachers and authors by the fame or correlation that was made between the author and republican ideals, like in Brazil's case (Bittencourt, 2018: 136). The compendium for school use was translated and edited by Francisco Alves here in Brazil and presents a methodological structure of the chapters, very close to current Brazilian textbooks, even on what concerns athenocentrism, highlighting Thucydides' Spartan antagonism: "The Greeks; The Greek people. The Greek religion. Sparta. Athens. The arts in Greece. Conquest of Asia by the Greeks" (Seignobos, 1914: 319).

As shown below, the writing of the *History of Greece* by Auguste Poirson, undertaken during the 1820s and 1830s, has similarities but evokes other aspects that indicate both the specific tensions of the historiographical debate at that time and non-linearity in the process of sedimentation and standardization of school history contents at the same time. Therefore, the consolidation of the narrative pattern of the Greeks as we know it today must be understood as subsequent, much more likely from the editions published at the end of the 19th century. It seems fitting then to propose guidelines that encourage the constitution of periodization for the history of school (Ancient) History writing. The proposal of the article consists, as a matter of fact, in going back to the beginning of the 19th century, more precisely reaching the *PHA*, by Charles Cayx (1793-1858) and Auguste Poirson (1793-1871), published in 1827, with a second edition in 1828 and third in 1831.

At last, this study proposes to offer a small contribution to the debate by analyzing an artifact located between the years 1820 and 1830. Thus, the *PHA* is positioned in chronological convergence with the thematic periodizations proposed by Kostas Vlassopoulos (2007) in the analysis of the predominance of the concept of polis in the study of Greek history: the period before the French Revolution up to 1860; and by Martin Bernal (1993) about the transition that took place between the late 18th and early 19th centuries involving the Ancient and Aryan Models: 1790-1830, a period called Helenomania I.

More explicitly, the focus of the proposed analysis will fall upon the presence of the Greek in the narrative composition: taking into account the writing of the beginnings of its history attending the chapters and the introduction to the *PHA*; but also about the role that the Greeks play in shaping the structure of the *précis*, meaning that the analysis of the summary an introduction allows us to understand what nineteenth-century authors expected from the Greeks in terms of intelligibility of the past.

The *PHA* constitution process: comparison between the 2nd and the 3rd edition

Far from any random movement, our choice is justified insofar as it was France's first attempt to consolidate History as a school subject through actions triggered within the State, through the *Commission Royale de l'Instruction* starting from 1815 onwards. It is important to emphasize that the rhythms at which a school subject is constituted are not necessarily determined by the political aspects of a state regime. More than a specific government policy, what can be noticed is the initiative of a group of intellectuals with strong influences from Guizot (both *PHA* authors were his former students) who managed to hold their ground in the institutional space, even in moments of setbacks imposed by the ultra government, impetuous of the echoes of the French Revolution. Measures such as the approval of a program mostly restricted to biblical history and antiquity. Recommending teachers to stick to the facts and avoid any political discussion were some of these actions (Delacroix; Dosse; Garcia, 2012; Bruter, 2005). In addition to being part of the aforementioned commission, the authors were also the first teachers appointed to the first subjects of History and Geography in Parisian *colèges* from 1818 onwards.

The work of these individuals resulted in the prescription of an official program for the secondary level, indistinctly influenced by the chronological and synchronic tables developed at Göttingen University since the 18th century; and a few years later, in a collection of textbooks. The *PHA*, along with the other volumes, produced a narrative goal that, starting from Eden, caught up to the year of the French Revolution: *Précis de l'Histoire de la république romaine*, by Charles Du Rozoir; *l'Histoire des Empereurs Romains et de l'Eglise pendant les quatre premiers siècles*, by Edouard Dumont; *Précis de l'Histoire du moyen âge*, by Chrysanthé-Ovide

Des Michels; and finally, *Précis de l'Histoire moderne*, by Jules Michelet³. As mentioned above, the quantitative predominance of Antiquity in the proposed History course is explicit: three of the five volumes, and such criteria refers to the continuity of a past teaching conception that dates back to the Ancient Regime. Just as importantly, it should be reinforced that, regardless of the historical period, the way in which it was intended to be tackled with began to evoke scientific assumptions of the ongoing professionalized historiography, which sought to separate history from belles-lettres.

Between the two editions of the PHA, being the 2nd in 1828 and the 3rd in 1831, there was a significant formal restructuring (Barnabé, 2019). Essentially, in structural terms of organization, the compendium conciliated the Eusebian tradition of writing a universal history with the perspective of the German Enlightenment, valuing economic and technical developments. The first refers to what Pierre Vidal-Naquet (2002 : 151) calls “the axis of Evangelical Preparation: Diodorus, Eusebius, Dante and Bossuet”, that is, the historiographic formulations of Eusebius of Caesarea (265-339) for a Universal History capable of merging the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman narratives, and that would spread through the subsequent centuries. Indeed, the chapters of the *PHA* in the first two editions were assorted in epochs, six in this case – an explicit terminological allusion to Bossuet.

The second resembled the narrative sequence of Arnold Hermann Ludwig Heeren (1760-1842), Göttingen's would-be teacher between 1820 and 1840, and author of significant works since the last decade of the 18th century. Heeren's (1827) *World History*⁴ perspective ignores the polemics of human history genesis. The narrative, whose core is the succession of empires, begins with the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchies. The Greeks are the subject of nine of the thirty-two chapters: 11. History of the States of Greece, 12. Periods before Troy, 13. From the Trojan War to the war against the Persians; 14. Hellenic states in the heartland of Greece; 15. Greek Inland Hellenic States: Sparta and Athens, 16. Small Peloponnese States: Arcadia, Argos, Corinth, etc., 17. Middle Greece: Megara, Boethia, Phocida, Locrid,

³ Probably by the fame of the collection, and not one or another volume individually, it caught the attention of Brazilian authorities interested in adopting textbooks for the Pedro II Imperial Academy in 1837, viewing to bring what was most modern in Europe. Imported in its entirety, and later having its first two volumes translated by Justiniano José da Rocha, this could also be a good justification for the analysis of the work. Such discussion can best be followed in Barnabé (2019a).

⁴ For a better understanding of the conceptualization of World History [Weltgeschichte] as a master science against ancient Universal History [Universalhistorie] see Koselleck (2006); Fillafer (2017).

Aetolia, etc. 18. Northern Greece: Thessaly and Epirus, 19. Greek Islands: Corcyra, Aegina, Euboea, Cyclades, Crete, Cyprus, 20. Greek colonies: Asia Minor; North Sea; Thrace and Macedonia; Italy. It then advances to Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. It was a modern historians' recurrent practice until the 18th century to follow the account of ancient sources or to try to write about helpless periods or to produce compilations bringing together all possible narratives in a single report (Vlassopoulos, 2007: 17). In this case, there is no conflict between the two traditions in terms of writing, it is the other way around, the dimensional and temporal amplitude of Greek cities (thanks mainly to the fact of Greek sources being read constantly since the Renaissance) granted historical legitimacy for the account of empires as also the constitution of systems, as Heeren states:

(...) the formation of States, the changes in relation to their constitutions, and the direction this gives to world trade, with the contribution of each nation through the establishment of their colonies" (Heeren, Preface to the 1st German edition, 1799, apud 1827: viii).

The adjustment in the *PHA* of these two intelligibilities, in terms of form, produces a piece with the following disposition in its 2nd edition: the first epoch details Eden, the second recount Hebrew people's path as far as Persian domination, which, by the way, ignites the narrative of others: Egyptians, Greeks from the "wild state", Babylonians and Assyrians, Syrians, Trojans, and Lydians. If the third epoch introduces the Persians, the fourth narrates the entire situation of the expansion of that empire through Greek territory up to Alexander's death in the fifth epoch, and it is up for the sixth to recite each of Alexander's successors' kingdoms and glimpse upon a new chronological center in the Romans (Cayx; Poirson, 1828). Nothing so different from the narrative of Heeren (1827) when comparing summaries.

In the 3rd edition (Cayx; Poirson, 1831), the concept of eras is left aside, which does not mean a sudden reorganization in the ordering and writing of chapters, nor in leaving the assumptions and arguments of sacred history behind, as it can be seen in the first chapter rewriting, which maintains the biblical account and adds a discussion of theological nature inspired by a Frayssinous' text, Bishop of Hermopolis, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction from 1822 to 1828 (cf. Barnabé, 2019: 89-95). There is, however, a significant change in the stance of Greeks and Hebrews in the narrative.

The loss of advantage suffered by the Hebrews – now relocated to after Egypt and Mesopotamia (which would, decades later, result in works in acclimation with Phoenicians and Persians in a single chapter) – indicates

another stage of crisis in the intelligibility of Sacred History, already jeopardized since the eighteenth century, or earlier (Fillafer, 2017). The narrative of the chapters dealing with the Hebrews (6 and 7; but also those relating to the Assyrians and Babylonians) are guided by the biblical portrayal, and it could not have been any other way at that time, without consistent results of archaeological excavations and expansion of the documentary framework of decades to come. Inquiries on intelligibility leveling contrasted with “the mythical image of the Ancient Orient” (Liverani, 2016).

But specifically, concerning the Greek case, the narrative present in the chapters undergoes alterations, and, above all, its repositioning in the thread of intelligibility delineates the re-signification of Greece as a frontier between East and West. In the 2nd edition, the eight chapters dedicated to the Greeks appeared right after the chapters on the Egyptians: 7. From the wild stage, 8. To the end of the first civilization, 9. Heroic times (1350-1190), 10. From the 12th century to the 6th century, 11. Athens to the Persian wars, 12. Sparta, 13. Greek colonies in Asia Minor, north of Pontus and Mediterranean, a Colony in Sicily. The other hand, the 3rd edition, between Egyptians and Greeks, are Assyrians and Babylonians; Hebrews; Syrians, Troy, and Lydia; Persians; and Phoenicians. Two new chapters, in which Poirson seeks insertion in the debate concerning the origin of the Greeks, open the Greek series: 12. Exposition of the different systems on the origin of the Greeks, and 13. Enlightening on the certainties of heroic times. And then: 14. The primitive state of Greece, 15. Sparta until the medical war, 16. Athens until the medical war, 17. Greek colonies of Asia Minor north of Pontus, 18. Greek colonies: Cyprus, Crete, and the Mediterranean.

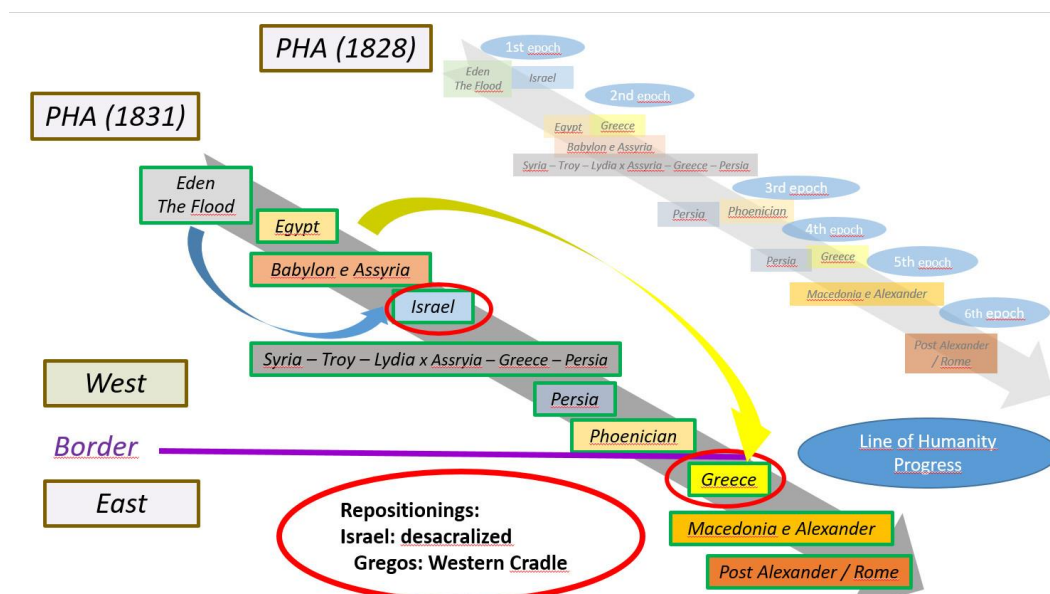


Image 01: Comparative between *PHA*'s the 2nd (1828) e a 3rd edition (1831). Source: From the author (2021).

Martin Bernal's thesis proposes that, in the period between 1790 and 1830, the movement that took place in favor of Philhellenism redirects the perception of the relationship between Greeks and Egyptians, so that, throughout the 1820s, backings of the Ancient Model were increasingly rarer among "serious" specialists (Bernal, 1993, p. 264), to the point of being disqualified as a whole in the following decade. Bernal qualifies four authors as transitional figures between the two models: Hegel and Marx, Heeren and Niebuhr. The strong influence of Heeren in the structure and several excerpts of the *PHA* gives evidence of how the work reverberates the tensions of that specific moment of Greek construction throughout the 19th century.

To resolve based only on the *PHA* changes made in the positioning of the chapters where has been some positioning in favor of helenomania, and the radical disruption between East and West seems enticing, but hasty. It seems more reasonable to analyze the *PHA* authors concept on the Greeks from another two elements of the work, in addition to the Greek rearrangement in the narrative: the fact that the introduction to the textbook does not comprehensively address Ancient History, but only with the Greeks – *Introduction a l'histoire de la Grèce*; and also the partial rewriting of the content about the Greeks, as verified by the insertion of chapters 12 and 13 in the 3rd edition.

Kostas Vlassopoulos (2007) points to the emergence, at that time, of Greek history as an independent field tailored by several different developments, inserted in the complex and diffuse context built between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, when Europeans began to, with time, reformulate the notions of meaning for the experiences, the so-called *Sattel-Zeit*, under the impacts of political clashes inflamed both by the French Revolution and the reactive movements to it, as well as by the industrial revolution, with growing technological primacy.

The sheer fact that the introductory text of *PHA* exclusively addresses questions concerning Greek civilization may cause us less strangeness when we observe Humboldt's interest in *Über das Studium des Altertums und Griechischen* (On the Study of Antiquity and Greek in Particular), drafted in 1793. Both reflect the European tendency to build a progressive civilizational line, mistaken with Universal History, since the second half of the 18th century, in which Greece acquired the childhood status of

European civilization, and which replaced the ancient point of view that the Greeks were children compared to the Egyptians. Resignified, the deprecatory sense of immature gives way to a new binary pair between old and new, and which, in this way, rejected the Greeks to the vitality of youth in the face of Egyptian slowness and even weakness. Hegel, in the first phase of his life, recognized that Pythagoras had learned from the Egyptians, like so many other cultural borrowings, but he claimed that the Greeks had known how to transform such knowledge qualitatively (Bernal, 1993: 275).

The notion of staged progress is taken for granted in Auguste Poirson. The Greeks passed through the wild, nomadic, sedentary, and agricultural states (when they knew and practiced the arts), and even the testimony of Thucydides served as an assurance of this premise (Poirson, 1831a: ii). Interestingly, there are two settled conceptions of progress here. One that Greek civilization went through each stage until it developed; and another, which places the Greeks, like their Eastern predecessors, each as a stage of humanity in its entirety. Based on excerpts taken from the first and last paragraph of the *Introduction of La Histoire de La Grèce*, it is possible to estimate the issue. In the first of them, Auguste Poirson acknowledges that, in their cradle, the Greeks received numerous loans from the arts, sciences, politics, law, and war; in the second, he concludes that Greece's interest is not indifferent to Europe, as it recognizes it as the mother of its civilization (Poirson, 1831a: i; xix).

However, the systems model used by Heeren loses ground, becoming an alternative trend that throughout the nineteenth century got discontinued. Not surprisingly, he is a little-known author these days. The reason for this lies in the new historical language, based on advances in philological documentary criticism and the redirection to the singular at the expense of the universal and the respective nationalist implications (Vlassopoulos, 2007). From this new perspective surfacing, the case of Karl Otfried Müller (1797-1840) and the possible repercussion of his ideas in the *PHA* is worthy of attention.

Auguste Poirson and the debate referring to the development of Greek civilization

Member of the first generation formed by Humboldt's educational system, Müller stood out for his mastery of philology and the relationship he established in his research in this particular field alongside with art and archeology studies. If the *Altertumswissenschaft* was understood by

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Humboldt as the cornerstone of *Bildung*, Müller's work *Geschichten hellenischen Stämme und Städte: Orchomenos und die Minyer* (Stories on the Tribes and Cities of Greece, Orcomene and the Minians), published between the years of 1820 and 1824, and *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie* (Prolegomena on a Scientific Mythology), from 1825, a few years before the publication of the *PHA*, became the pillars of the *Altertumswissenschaft* (Bernal, 1993: 287). Müller incorporated most of the features of the formative period of Greek history between the French Revolution and the 1860s; and his method initially sought to analyze the regional particularities of the Greek *Stämme* and *Städte* and then compose a synthetic Greek history, seeking to identify an organic and coherent unit, an unfinished task due to his death (Vlassopoulos, 2007).

The method of isolating the myth to be studied to its respective location stood against syncretism, as it defended principles of romantic particularism before Enlightenment universalism. Thus, myths were reduced to the category of mere local specificities, and, in the Greeks' case, if there was a connection between Greek priests and barbarians that previous authors had established, it was, if not late, being possible to trace it back to cultural and mythological models of the conquering peoples. Such an argument forged credibility through the ruse of claiming proof "in an area where the best one can hope for is the competition of factors in the sphere of the minimally plausible" and, simultaneously, "imposing the burden of proof not on those contesting the massive old testimony, but about those who accepted it" (Bernal, 2005: 21).

In this transition of perceptions about the Greeks, the recognition of the "foreign" influence in the formation of Greek civilization is gradually made itself relative, and assumptions that substantiate racism and romanticism - such as race and language - became tools with scientific legitimacy. Such foundations served to bond the spread of the cult of Apollo to the Dorian conquests. Likewise, he stated that vitality moved along the north-south axis and not the other way around (Bernal, 1993: 288).

Müller's other front was against the indophilia of Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) and Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771-1858). The consolidation of indophilia foresees a process between 1740 and 1880, with the 1830s being the time for the establishment of "a general idea that an Indo-European linguistic family existed. Given the racist environment of the time, it allowed a quick diffusion and consolidation of the Indo-European concept of the "Aryan race" (Bernal, 1993: 215). In the 1830s, despite efforts such as those of Champollion, Egyptology of the Egyptian-Masonic tradition and

the scientific spirit of the French Revolution began to decline, as the reaction of the Church (concerned with the question of the Egyptian dating contradicting the current biblical chronology) and the action of romanticism and racism, which sought to detach the Greeks, whether through new studies on linguistics, mythology or race (Bernal, 1993: 216). Willian Jones' Indo-European comparative philology found in 1786 that there were affinities between Sanskrit and Greek and Latin (but also Gothic and Celtic) in verbal roots and forms of grammar, which indicated a common ancestry. Other philological studies were initiated by Friedrich Schlegel, who, by connecting language and race, was one of the first to defend the polygenesis of language, with its respective implication in the idea of human polygenesis. There were thus two kinds of tongues, the noble inflected one, and the less perfect tongues, and only the former, that were based on the Indo, could give a clear and penetrating intellect, and high and universal thought. Therefore, Schlegel had a "crucial role in transforming philology from the mere history of languages into the interpretation of language as an additional force that contributes to conceive the [progress] of History" (Bernal, 1993: 221).

A systematically established racial taxonomy was then structured, in which European origins stemmed from the Caucasus, a common point from which the Brahmins also emerged, a circumstance that pretentiously granted the Germans the status of purest representatives, as they were the last to abandon the original land – *Urheimat*, and consequently the greatest antiquity and purity of the Germanic language. In Germany, the discovery was named *Indogermanisch*, "Indo-Germanic", a term created in 1823 by H. J. Klaproth. However, the term Indo-European, forged in 1816 by Thomas Young, prevailed and was adopted by Franz Bopp, who, along with Christian Rask, had cataloged the phonetic and morphological relationship between European languages. It remains to point out that, between French and English linguists, there was a reaction against this German chauvinism that associated their language directly with Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit, and which thus strengthened arguments that only German was suited to exercise philosophy and religion (Bernal, 1993: 217-224).

In the Preface to the 1st edition, Cayx and Poirson state that one of the *PHA*'s objectives is "to clarify the issues already addressed by the knowledge that is due to the work of three nations [France, England, and Germany]". Clarifying it means that there are still controversial points. Auguste Poirson reaffirms in the introduction: "instead of a prefabricated opinion, I wanted to construct my own", and then explains the procedure adopted for the research and writing of the *PHA*, which lasted ten years (that is to say, started around 1817): "in order not to limit my vision and

not have my judgment influenced by foreign ideas, I studied the ancient historians as if they had previously provided no subject to any work". He then looked at the systems developed by modern "scholars" (Poirson, 1831a: i). In addition to the Enlightenment systems, evoked in the PHA in the figure of Heeren, Poirson demonstrates knowledge of recent advances in historical research for hypotheses formulation: "language analogies, comparisons between religions, governments, and arts from different countries", capable of analyzing a vast range of documents: "formal texts by historians, geographers, grammarians, and ancient mythographers" (Poirson, 1831: 110b). When appraising the main characters related to the origin of the Greeks, Poirson points out three conclusions and shows the authors with whom he dialogues and which historical interpretations he tends to agree:

1. Traditions relating to Ogiges, Cecrops, Eblessie, and other early Greek characters are divided; some make them native, others foreign, and the importance of testimonies is balanced.
2. It seems impossible to us to deny Danaos, Cadmus, Lelex of Megara, Pelops, and their descendants the position of aliens.
3. It also seems impossible to ignore the Eastern influence on some of the institutions and arts of Greece. We do not refute, we remind, in a solid way, the countless passages and reasonings alleged by Freret, Barthelemy, Clavier, M. Raoul-Rochette. Giles, M. M. Creuzer and Thiersch (Cayx; Poirson, 1831^a: ii) (Our translation).

And in the opening of chapter 12, whose main objective "is to know whether the Greek civilization is or not indigenous", he claims that some identify primitive populations of Greece originating "from the heights of Tibet", receiving the name of pelasgians (as in the theories provided by Lévesque and Herbert Marsh⁵, but that, according to Niebuhr, the subsequent "revolutions" left few scattered traces⁶); while others reject the idea that the entire human race descends from a single pair and therefore present autochthonous "corporeal forms, essence, and language", according to Larcher and Raoul Rochette⁷ (Poirson, 1831b: 110). The debate surrounds the discussion between the (newly created) premise of Greek purity or the influence suffered by other cultures, between polygeny and monogeny, being crucial for the defense of superior races (cf. Bethencourt, 2018).

Soon, it became aligned with the Ancient Model in Bernal's explanatory key, which presupposed constant cultural contacts, while assuming, based on linguistic inductions, that the Greek origin was "Indo-Germanic, and

⁵ Referring to Lévesque, *Étude de l'Histoire ancienne*; Herbert Marsh, *Horoe Pelasgica*.

⁶ Referring to Niebuhr, *Römische Geschichte* (1811-1832).

⁷ Referring to Larcher, *Essai de chronologie sur Hérodote*; Raoul Rochette, *Histoire critique de rétablissement des colonies grecques*.

Heródoto, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.6, n.1 - 2021.1. p. 128-150.

DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13776

that it had come from the North” (Poirson, 1831b: 114). To justify the cultural borrowings made by the Greeks, Auguste Poirson resorts (ironically perhaps) to the nationalist appeal: like Herodotus who had lived at the time when “the national pride of the Greeks imposed on historians he evokes the obligation to proclaim the autochthonous aspect of their religion and civilization” after the victories against the “Asians” should inspire scornfulness for the cults and institutions of the East (Poirson, 1831b: 111-112).

Next, Auguste Poirson, upon analyzing the facts that occurred between the 16th and 12th centuries, when the state of civilization principles were forged, seeks to color this period as peaceful and harmonious (POIRSON, 1831a, p. ii). Some elements suggest the concept of the spirit of Enlightenment commerce. The Hellenic or Eastern settlers established themselves by negotiating with the local population. The pugnacious nature of conquest is not advocated: “No foreigner, no native, founded a great power by arms, united its numerous tribes under the same law”, for where force was employed, at a later time, the conquerors saw themselves outnumbered by the common people, fearing being crushed, were more reasonable to make concessions from the beginning. In this peaceful fusion of peoples, there were also no traits that differentiated the new population from the old one, not even a trace of mass slavery or servitude. The royalty had no traces of “absolute power”, with restricted prerogatives to military command, supreme priesthood, and judiciary, and the “the king cannot make any determination that interests the community without the help of the great and the people”.

Aware of “some objections” made to such an interpretation, Auguste Poirson seeks to refute them. One of them said that the formation of Greek civilization took place at the expense of the restriction of freedom, despite the implemented Asian forms of government: “the invasion of Dorians, Arneios and Thessalians was necessary to bring back the Hellenic spirit to Greece, the spirit of freedom, banned by the eastern”. Poirson refutes: the “spirit of freedom”, put into question, was already present two centuries before the arrival of the invaders: between the 1480s and around 1370, the numerous establishments founded by the Hellenes, Aeolian, Ionian, and Achaeans in the Peloponnese, in Central Greece and Thessaly “they developed the principles, habits, the Hellenic laws, they offered freedom the strongest and most extensive guarantees”.

Poirson substantiates this argument with several examples, from which we have selected three: Aristotle's assertion that Greek royalty was not absolute like that of the barbarians; in the passage from Plutarch in which

Theseus maintains the Egyptian division of the people into three distinct classes, the late author “satisfied the Ionic and Hellenic element that had been inserted into the composition of the nation, establishing a popular government” (Poirson, 1831a: iv); Pausanias testifies that since the beginning the Argives were passionate about equality and freedom. Finally, Auguste Poirson emphasizes that these values lasted until the arrival of the Dorians, reaffirming as a fundamental argument that freedom and political rights for the masses did not wait for the arrival of these peoples (the Dorians).

The period of stability provided an increase in population, depleting the land and stimulating the multiplication of cities, the development of agriculture and navigation, and commerce. Walls, temples, palaces, and other buildings of Cyclopean and Hellenic architecture “match Egyptian constructions in solidity and boldness”, demonstrate the ruins visited by Pausanias or by modern travelers such as Wheler (*A Journey into Greece*). In addition to the development of knowledge such as astronomy, which would be applied to navigation, described in the Arts industrials section in the first part of chapter XIV (Poirson, 1831c: 191-193).

All of this leads Auguste Poirson to remain convinced (in a paragraph that had been added in the 1831 version, for emphasis) that “Greece had ways of combining its designs, uniting its forces, safer and more extensive than during the Medial War, Alexander's Expedition and the war against the Romans” (Poirson, 1831a: vi). Since the heroic eras, Greece had traveled the necessary route for a people to reach the status of civilization. The delimiting element between Greeks and barbarians appeared in the following allegation: “If there is anything more ridiculous than comparing one of the kings of the fifty-one Greek states with a king of one of our modern monarchies, it is to level these princes and their subjects with the chiefs and members of the barbarian hordes” (Poirson, 1831a: viii).

Greek civilization's progress during the heroic ages had been opposed with support from Homer's accounts that defined Achilles and Ulysses as brute barbarians: the former makes his food, and the latter uses carpentry skills to make his bed. In his rebuttal, Poirson pleads: about Achilles, “which of our generals, in a devastated country [...] has not gone through the same situation?” and immediately describes the luxury of Menelaus' palace witnessed by Telemachus; such as Ulysses' manual skills, as opposed to those of Archduke John of Austria: such information is incapable of proving anything against, or in favor of, Greek or Austrian civilization.

The attack on the Dorians, as they were constructed by Müller, is carried out in the sequence, when comparing the Dorians to the Germans
Heródoto, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.6, n.1 - 2021.1. p. 128-150.
DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13776

described by Tacitus: “men who cannot read or write or count, and who boast in their ignorance”, they did not have a fleet, buildings, monuments and treasures like the Greeks. Enemies of cities, they ruin about seventy of them in the space of three hundred years. Commerce and navy are destroyed, “the noble life consisted, sometimes, in consuming time in idleness, sometimes using it for war, hunting, meals.” In contrast to the previous period, the natives were left with servitude to the soil and the loss of political rights. Designated as the Middle Ages, the next six centuries portray power struggles through civil wars, the strengthening of an aristocracy that differentiated itself through the use of horses, the constitution of a legal regime, the actions of usurpers.

All this so that, finally, the march of civilization and freedom was resumed (Poirson, 1831a: x), a freedom that feared nothing but its excesses, says the author a few pages later; and “everything was ready then for the centuries of Pericles and Alexander, during which human nature reached all kinds, its full development, at the highest point of greatness and perfection” (Poirson, 1831a: xii).

The reverberations of German production seen under the horizon of the structuring Greeks' History in the *PHA* outlined the feeling of belonging to a shared European civilization, but, at the same time, triggered the production of an interpretative variation that reacts to the use of the romantic assumptions that tried make the Germans more Greek than the other European nations, through the valorization of the Dorians.

Auguste Poirson's before recent German interpretations of Greek origin tends to recognize the Greek origin in migratory waves from the north, although without refuting the eastern contribution to the Greek formation, because such claim implied the abandonment of the recognition of the authority of a traditional set of sources that the expenses of a historiography that, despite being more rigorous in dealing with documentation, praised intelligibility rivaling the Enlightenment universal project. This may also be an indication of the rivalry between the French and Germans, continuously fueled throughout the 19th century after Napoleonic expansion. In this sense, to refute the doric contribution is to refute Müller. Vidal-Naquet (2002), when dealing with the mobility of Athens and Sparta on the political spectrum between the 18th and 20th century, demonstrates that, closer to Rousseau and Robespierre, through virtue and equality, Sparta slowly migrated to the right and even to the extreme right, at the same time that Müller's doric myth made it cross the Rhine river, which resulted in a countermyth in France, so that, from Duruy to Glotz, the model of a liberal Athens was imposed in France. The

precaution against the influence, or strength, of foreign ideas, already indicated that writing Greek civilization's History in the 1820s was not limited to writing universal History, or human progress, but, above all, what national aspects and their implications were put.

Final Considerations

As demonstrated in the first part of the analysis, the narrative construction of Greece in French school textbooks from the early decades of the 19th century was influenced by a documental *corpus* traditionally used over several centuries. It characterized the Greek world in a broad spatial, temporal, and thematically. It conceived the Greeks beyond mainland Greece, included the post-decline periods of the so-called classical Athens, as well as narrating other events involving many other regions with a Greek presence in the context of Persian domination.

The *PHA* provides a good indication of the beginning of the process of building a split between East and West, exemplified in a Greece, separated from the Egyptians in the narrative sequence, and the acceptance of a “racially” alien origin to the integrated Mediterranean system. The Enlightenment perspective on World History, strongly inspired by the tradition of professors from Göttingen such as Johann Christoph Gatterer (1727-1799) and Heeren, who most likely was present in the formation of the authors of the *PHA*, and at the time of writing the compendium, was already showing signs of wear and tear in the face of another intelligibility, that of historicism.

The definitive contours of the Greek “function” of this new intelligibility would occur in the following decades, despite the submersion of other intelligibility: Greece as the western cradle, with beginning and end, and capable of transmitting the rod of civilization received from the east to the Romans (Vlassopoulos, 2007). As Fillafer (2017) highlights, nineteenth-century historicists dispensed with the *nexus rerum universalis*, the ancient Enlightenment effort to promote the unity of history through elaborate multi-sector tables and graphs that organized the world's time and space. Among the consequences, there is a clear separation between European and extra-European history, which promotes a re-enchantment and re-exocitization of the latter. It is worth mentioning the existence, since the 1830s, of the Modern Greek state, bordering the Turkish-Ottoman Empire. All this implied the current narrative restructuring, the one observed by the plurality of chapters relating to the Greeks and the relationship with the Persians present in the *PHA*.

Heródoto, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.6, n.1 - 2021.1. p. 128-150.

DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13776

Consequently, the Persians and their empire are toned down in historical importance. Not by chance, the proportionality of pages verified through the summary of an important work of the end of the 19th century, that of Seignobos (1910). In one hundred and ten pages of Ancient History, there is a chapter named “East”, with seventeen pages, three for Persian, followed by “chapter 2. The Greeks”, composed of twenty-seven pages, and “chapter 3. The Republic Romana”, and “chapter 4, The Roman Empire”, totaling sixty-six pages. The new pattern for the composition of the Greek and Persian narrative crystallizes, remaining with very few variations to this day.

Therefore, both the sacred Universal History and Heeren's Universal History would be doomed to discredit during the nineteenth century, in the debate on Academic History, as Bernal (1993) and Vlassopoulos (2007), dealing specifically with the Greeks, attest, but also Fillafer (2017)), Koselleck (2006) and Hartog (2014) in broader perspectives, or even Foucault, by another analytical path. Itamar Freitas (2006: 135-138) advocates that with no space in academic history, the Universal History model was kept alive in encyclopedias and school textbooks, including citing works adopted by national and foreign authors adopted in Brazil. Even at the beginning of the 20th century, textbooks with the perspective of Universal History of Bossuet can be found, evoking creationism and the Hebrew people as a precursor of the history of humanity. Differently, the universal perspective of the Enlightenment was overcome, as it was incompatible with the established Eurocentrism, in the writing of Ancient History at school. Resistant Eurocentric trait, despite the general renewal of Ancient History (Morales; Silva, 2020), and *leitmotif*, in the official version of the BNCC, which has as its basic procedure the “identification of events considered important in Western history” (Brasil, 2017: 416).

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