

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOSSIER ON *LATE ANTIQUITY*

Margarida Maria de Carvalho¹

Late Antiquity has been researched in Brazil since the mid-1980s. There were few adepts of this concept, as there were still many prejudices about it. Today, it is visible the number of professionals dedicated to the temporal arc that goes from the middle of the 3rd century CE to the 7th/8th century CE. We are few when we compare ourselves with the specialists in the Roman Principate, but it is remarkable that there is an advance in relation to the last century.

The contacts are always very fruitful with colleagues, specialists in this area, from abroad, and it makes us carry out a constant dialogue in search of a greater dynamism of research in this part of the historical knowledge. Several research topics are explored, using textual documentation and material cultures. Thus, such integration is reflected in the dossier presented here, where we can find articles by authors from Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Portugal, Italy and France.

This dossier is a toast to the union of all these late-antique researchers who agreed to participate in this initiative in favor of disseminating knowledge of new topics needed by the public of undergraduate and graduate students and lovers of the History of the Late Roman Empire. There are a total of twelve texts and one more translation with different themes, starting with Renan Frighetto, professor of Ancient History at the *Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR)*, whose contribution reflects an updated interpretation of the very concept of Late Antiquity, also emphasizing, the importance of studying the Roman-Barbarian monarchies, as an example, the Goths.

Next, we have the article by Gilvan Ventura da Silva, professor of Ancient History at the *Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES)*, with the concern of elucidating the link between philosophy and religion that marked the history of the Roman Empire itself. The author focused on works by Roman writers who pointed philosophy at the service of religion, resulting in the conception of *Lamblichus* who defended a mixture between philosophy and religion in the 3rd century CE. This fact would underline new directions for the Empire.

¹ Assistant Professor – São Paulo State University Júlio de Mesquita Filho, Franca, Brazil. E-mail: margarida.carvalho@unesp.br.

Heródoto, Unifesp, Guarulhos, v.6, n.2 - 2021.2. p. 08-11.

DOI: 10.34024/herodoto.2021.v6.13900

The third article in this Dossier is by Sylvain Janniard, professor of Ancient History at the *Université François Rabelais de Tours* (France), which concerns the palatine auxiliaries of the Roman army of Late Antiquity. The theme of Military History in the mentioned period has been intensely debated by the academy, since it deals directly with the functionality of war. Especially on the subject of the French researcher, we have nothing in relation to this topic in Brazil.

Still in the wake of the History of the Roman army in the late-antiquity period, we find the text by Wendryll José Bento Tavares and Ana Teresa Marques Gonçalves, respectively, Doctor in Ancient History at the *Universidade Federal de Goiás* (UFG/Goiânia) and professor of Ancient History at the *Departamento de História* at UFG/Goiânia, whose focus is the election of Jovian as emperor, instantly removed from the Roman military corps. The authors also scrutinize the concept of entropy from the Social Sciences.

Janira Feliciano Pohlmann, postdoctoral student at the Postgraduate Program in History at the *Universidade Federal do Paraná* (UFPR), proposes an analysis of the speech *De Officiis* by Ambrosius of Milan (Saint Ambrose). The guiding thread of her analysis is to understand the motivations of the Milanese bishop to recommend silence and the practice of friendship among Orthodox clerics. We emphasize that he is another author very little explored by our historiography.

Keeping the spectrum of varied themes in this Dossier, we have the text by Viviana Boch, professor of Ancient History at the *Universidad Nacional de Cuyo* (Argentina), which discusses the perception of pagan intellectuals of the 5th century CE about the Sack of Rome in 410. The historian uses, in her article, both documentary and epigraphic testimonies on the subject. The Sack of Rome has always been the subject of many discussions in 20th and early 21st century historiography, a classic theme that could not be missing from this set of national and international productions.

The feminine is treated by Graciela Gómez Aso, professor of Ancient History at the Department of History at the *Universidad Católica Argentina* (Buenos Aires - Argentina) through the documentation of Jerome of Stridon (Saint Jerome). The historian is concerned with analyzing the unequal reality of women in the aristocratic social sphere, emphasizing a group of Roman-Christian women known as “the Aventine circle”. In her text, the author tries to answer what were the motivations that led Jerome to convince this group of women to lead an ascetic life and to cultivate the consolidation of the orthodox Christian religion within the Roman Empire.

The landscape in Late Antiquity is contemplated by Paula Barata Dias, professor of classical studies at the *Universidade de Coimbra* (Portugal). The author analyzes an author never explored in Brazil: Rutilius Namatianus, a remarkable witness of the events of the beginning of the 4th century C.E. regarding the transformations of the physical, human and social landscape of that period. Rutilius' discourse, according to the author, oscillates between the description of spaces and landscapes and their critical evaluation.

Otávio Luiz Vieira Pinto, professor of African History at the *Universidade Federal do Paraná* (UFPR), offers us another very original topic. He interprets multipolar Africa through the symbology of animals, namely giraffes and elephants. His starting point is a study around the 496 C.E. embassy, probably coming from Axum to Constantinople, accompanied by the aforementioned animals. Thus, giraffes and elephants would operate in a diplomatic language, allowing a glimpse of African protagonists in a more global scope.

Continuing politically and geographically in Africa, Júlio Cesar Magalhães de Oliveira, professor of Ancient History at the *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP) and Giovan Nascimento, a doctoral student in the Social History program at the same *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP), discuss the communication conditions of exiled clerics in Vandal Africa in the works of Victor de Vita and Fulgentius of Ruspe. It is necessary to comment that the analysis of these documents is also an unprecedented topic in our country.

This dossier would not be complete without the contribution of Pablo C. Díaz and Luis R. Menéndez-Bueyes, both professors of Ancient History at the *Departamento de História* at the *Universidad de Salamanca* (Spain), whose essay deals with the problem that occurred in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the 4th century CE. These are conflicts between Hispanic peoples and the Roman imperial power, such as the Suevi's attempt to establish themselves in the region and, finally, the occupation of the Visigoths.

When we come across the writing of Manuel Rodríguez Gervás, professor of Ancient History at the *Universidad de Salamanca* (Spain), we will know documents relating to the period of Justinian and Justin II, namely the work of Flavius Cresconius Corippus, the panegyrics *Iohannis* and *In laudem Justinii minoris* that convey to us, through the interpretation of the historian Gervás, not only the propagandistic function of this type of documentation, but also the attempt to connect the glorious Roman past to the Byzantine Empire.

Finally, outside this dossier, we have the translation from Italian to Portuguese of the text by the Italian historian Rita Lizzi Testa, professor of Ancient History in the Department of Humanities, Ancient and Modern Languages, Literature

and Cultures at the *Università Degli Studi di Perugia* (Italy). The article entitled “*Memória de imperadores vivos, orações fúnebres e preces em sufrágio para os príncipes falecidos: Ambrósio de Milão e as suas inovações*” was published in the Italian version in the journal *História/São Paulo*, volume 39, 2020, in the dossier “*Memórias e Mortes de Imperadores Romanos (I a.C. – VI d.C.)*”. It will now be fully accessible to undergraduate and graduate students in History. This way, when investigating funeral prayers and letters of Ambrosius of Milan, the Italian researcher promotes the theme of prestige to the emperors Gratian and Theodosius I, as well as to the latter's two sons.

Readers of this set of works will be surprised by the originality of the subjects addressed by all the authors. Undoubtedly, a material that will enrich the historiography of Late Antiquity in Brazil. Without further ado, we sincerely thank our dear colleagues Glaydson José da Silva and Gilberto da Silva Francisco for inviting us to organize this wonderful set of articles.