

INNOVATING FROM TRADITION. NOTES ON HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PRODUCTION OF JACQUES LE GOFF, FROM THE MENTALITIES TO THE HISTORICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The writing and historiographical production of Jacques Le Goff pursued in the present work focuses on the time period when the *Annales* journal changed course, following the essential contributions of Fernand Braudel. This article discusses the work of Le Goff after the cultural shift of the late sixties, when he departed from the Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and created the Groupe d'Anthropologie historique de l'Occident Medieval. Changes and innovations found in *New History* are a reflection and expression of the place from where Le Goff wrote. Within the search for a medieval humanism that transformed alongside historical anthropology, we hold that the logic of Le Goff's writing was a permanent dialogue between, on the one hand, an innovation stemming from its immediate contingency and, on the other hand, the past, and innovations of tradition.¹

KEYWORDS

Jacques Le Goff, Historiography, Revolt of May 68, Mentalities, Innovation.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Jacques Le Goff, Historiographicalis Productio, Rebellio Maii MCMLXVIII, Habitus Mentis, Innovatio.

1. Approaches to cultural and social trends since 1968: 'the discomfort of history'²

Since the end of the 1960s, Fernand Braudel,³ Immanuel Wallerstein⁴ and Latin American historiographer Carlos Aguirre,⁵ have agreed that '68 was a cultural revolution of planetary dimensions, an opinion also shared by one of the most visible revolutionary of that time: Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who said:

1968 was a planetary revolt. If we consider the late 1960s, we see a revolt in the East and West, as well as the North and South. Almost everywhere there are revolts, occupations of universities or colleges, demonstrations. The proof is that, if we write a book today and we simply put two figures on the cover: 6 and 8 —68— and automatically people (in Turkey, in Latin America, in Prague or Warsaw, in Paris or Berlin, in New York or San Francisco, in Sarajevo or Rio) [...] think about 1968 and the revolt in the late 1960s. We cannot reflect on the significance of this revolt or reduce it to a single country, although we can affirm that France was the place where the revolt was more intense.⁶

This generation, which questioned the prevailing order in France governed by Charles de Gaulle, is an example of the Resistance. This period coincided with the decolonization process of Algeria, in which France was not victorious. Racism continued for a long time within the forced coexistence of French people who had lived in Africa for a long time. De Gaulle's biggest opponent was the communist party, with a backdrop represented by Castro's Cuba and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, processes that removed sociocultural structures. Social movements questioned and also sought to transform the dominant power relationships that had

1. This article is a revised and rethought version of the paper "La noción de la mentalidad de Jacques Le Goff: entre tradición e innovación" presented in the Vº *Jornadas de Historia de las mentalidades y la cultura* organized by the Department of Historical Sciences of the Universidad de Concepción during the 28th, 29th and 30th of October 2015. This meeting had as central discussion the historiographical production of Jacques Le Goff.

2. Paraphrasing Sigmund Freud in his work: Freud, Sigmund. *El Malestar en la cultura*. Madrid: Alianza, 2006.

3. Braudel, Fernand. "Renacimiento, Reforma, 1968: revoluciones culturales de larga duración". *La Jornada Semanal*, 226 (1993): 27-32.

4. Wallerstein, Emmanuel. "1968: revolución en el sistema-mundo. Tesis e interrogantes". *Revista de Estudios Sociológicos*, 20 (1989).

5. Rojas, Carlos. *La historiografía en el siglo XX, historia e historiografía entre 1848 y ¿2025?* Barcelona: Montecinos, 2004: 105-131; Rojas, Carlos. "Tesi sull'itinerario della storiografia del XX secolo. Uno sguardo dalla prospettiva della lunga durata". *Rivista Internazionale di Storia e della Storiografia*, 45 (2004-2005): 50-70. In both historiographical texts, the author holds the idea, according to Wallerstein, that since May 1968, a definite fracture was formed in all kind of cultural reproduction in modern life, and also confirms the hegemony that was established since *Annales*. The counterpoint of the *Annales* project *d'Histoire Economique et Sociales*, proposes a completely interpretative, problematic, comparative and critical practice. This practice concerned the singularity from common and universal elements, reducing the complex dialectic of the particular and the general. It assumes that the historian cannot be absolutely objective. See Rojas, Carlos. "Tesi sull'itinerario della storiografia...": 64-65.

6. Cohn-Bendit, Daniel. *Forget 68*. Paris: Seuil, 2008.



been established in the fields of knowledge, politics and economics. From there, the youth identified rigid, hierarchical and centralized structures. Criticism not only reached the prevailing capitalist system, but also the socialist system that governed the Eastern territories.

Therefore, the issues of youth and education were vital. In the latter, higher education experienced an impressive growth regarding quantity of students, as it increased in France from 150,000 in 1958 to 500,000 in 1968. As a result of this growth, the maladjustment of university structures became noticeable in the face of the massive entry of students. Problems of infrastructure intensified and it became necessary to form master classes to satisfy the overpopulated student audience.⁷

Agitation seemed universal. China's cultural protest movements in 1966, along with the hot autumn of Italian workers in 1969, the student, popular and workers movements of May 1968 in France, the student revolt and tragic massacre in Mexico, spring in Prague silenced by Soviet occupation, student occupations of New York and Berkeley, the Berlin protest movement, the short popular uprising of the 'Cordobazo' in Argentina, and student protests in Chile.

All these events were forming a movement characterized by political heterogeneity, and its least common multiple was the demand for university space, along with protest of the hierarchical power dynamics inherent within families, school and the church. The general position of the movement was accompanied by elements of hedonistic liberation and freedom of speech. Family tended to lose its space as the fundamental nucleus of society as well as its role in the formation of individuals. Feminist movements disrupted the role of women and their social function within the nuclear family, favouring their economic independence along with the freedom of choice regarding their body, motherhood, and general sexual customs.

On all these fronts, there existed a confrontation between generations. Recurring topics called for the liberation of all kinds of bonds in search of a total autonomy of thought. French slogans propagated during that May reflect this notion: "all the power to the imagination", "be realistic, demand the impossible". In addition, the 'hippie' movement developed, and the Woodstock festival in 1969 brought 500,000 youth from all over the world, to gather in upstate New York for three days.

A certain unity can be noted among these manifestations, comprising a counterculture based on the idea of 'generation' —not class— with an ideological basis not strictly Marxist. A classic example is the case of the 'hippie' counterculture and young students who occupied universities and public spaces, demanding 'liberation' and 'revolution'. They referred to the works of Herbert Marcuse, Wilhelm Reich and Erich Fromm.⁸ Young people and their vehement impatience

7. Le Goff, Jean-Pierre. *Mai 68, l'héritage impossible*. Paris: La Découverte, 2006.

8. According to Patrick Barr-Melej, he sustains that the problem is generational and refers to an essential discourse and practices: of sexual liberation, the reconceptualization of gender and the relationships between man and woman (and man and man), consumption (and contribution to) a peculiar material culture, the experimentation with drugs, demand for political and cultural democratization and opposition to all forms of war. Such youths declared their alienation and strongly expressed a revolutionary and anti-hegemonic sensibility based on the desire for liberation, various forms of collectivism and the direct challenge to the "old" system. See: Barr-Melej, Patrick. "Siloismo and the Self in Allende's Chile: Youth,



occupied the floor and various spaces across society. In this way, the generational gap became more evident; in fact, the generational gap that separated children from their parents was more pronounced than it had been since the French Revolution.⁹

From the historical sciences there arose a malaise, coming from at least three scholars who considered history as their matter of reflexion and manifested their discomfort with traditional academicism: Michel Foucault, Paul Veyne and François Furet. These figures influenced many, including Le Goff, Michel Foucault, who praised them at an unconventional conference in Royaumont in 1971: *Nietzsche, Freud, Marx*.¹⁰ The interpretation and traditional views of writing are deeply questioned, making that interpretation goes on itself, at the same time that the word of marginal men and women is taking protagonism.

This point is clarified in another of Foucault's works, *Les mots et les choses*¹¹, which increased his popularity for some, while others have deeply criticized the construction of knowledge established in the XVIII and XIX centuries, known as outstanding periods for the progression of French thought. In this work, Foucault indirectly enabled an approach to the Old Regime and as well as Middle Ages, however from a more positive perspective.

Finally, in his work, *L'archéologie du savoir*,¹² Foucault placed an even deeper relevance on this period of historical discontent, discontinuity, ruptures, and the power of science. He asserts that historians were concerned about *grandes continuidades*, while a more contemporary ideology refers to *detectar la incidencia de las interrupciones*.¹³ Consequently, his archaeology considers discontinuities and incoherencies that can be inferred. Genealogy is not satisfied by the smooth curves of evolution as provided by historians who dispute the sharpness of the purely transcendental, however seeks to repair the edges and bring to light events in all their singularity.¹⁴ These discourses heavily influenced the writing of Jacques Le Goff, as he himself stated in an interview which will be discussed later.

However, not all the contributions of those philosophers were assumed by *Annales*. For example, the reflections of Paul Veyne were criticized by two valued friends of the journal, Raymond Aron and Michel de Certeau.¹⁵ The latter recognized

'Total Revolution', and the Roots of the humanist Movement". *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 86 (2006): 750.

9. Judt, Tony. *Algo va mal*. Madrid: Taurus, 2010: 89, quoted by: López, Vladimir, "Malestar en la historia. Tres respuestas al desafío historiográfico de los setenta". *Historia* 396, 1 (2013): 136.

10. Foucault, Michel. *Nietzsche, Freud, Marx*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1970: 32-41.

11. Foucault, Michel. *Les mots et les choses : une archéologie des sciences humaines*. Paris: Gallimard, 1966.

12. Foucault, Michel. *L'archéologie du savoir*. Paris: Gallimard, 1969.

13. "great continuities"; "detecting the incidence of disruptions". Foucault, Michel. *La arqueología del saber*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, 2007: 3-7.

14. Foucault, Michel. *Dits et écrits I, 1954-1975*. Paris: Gallimard, 2001: 1004-1024, quoted by López, Vladimir. "Malestar en la historia...": 135.

15. Aron, Raymond. "Comment l'historien écrit l'épistémologie: à propos du livre de Paul Veyne". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 26/6 (1971): 1319-1354. De Certeau, Michel. "Une épistémologie de transition: Paul Veyne". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 27/6 (1972): 1317-1327.



that history is a story, however relies on the real and actual, while moving away from the often brutal perspective of Veyne, which contests that *la historia no tiene método [...] los hechos no existen; sólo existen intrigas*.¹⁶ About this, the judgment is very critical by both parts, and should not be confused as a condescending gesture, but more accurately as a criticism of the vision of this recognized Marxist Romanist and archaeologist. However, this does not mean that *Annales* and our author were not upset or discontented by a scientific history and the asepsis installed in university teaching; that is, the writing and historiographical production of our author, although it does not reach the categorical affirmation as that of Veyne, which is in concurrence with many other approaches.

This accumulation of changes in historical knowledge allowed the search of new pedagogical models, for example, the questioning of authority. Special mention is made to the creation of 'anti-psychiatry' and reinterpretation; the "Return to Freud" by Jacques Lacan, who revolutionized his perspective and led a discourse within the Parisian setting and university world over the period of two decades.¹⁷ Lacan was a revolutionary of thought, a position that led to his expulsion from the hegemonic psychoanalytic society founded by Anna Freud in the United Kingdom. He proposed a total reinterpretation of mental reality by focusing on three points: the imaginary,¹⁸ the symbolic, and the real.¹⁹ In fact he influenced Michel de Certeau, especially in regard to the category of imaginary, which Le Goff referred to in some of his works.

The imaginary is an essential component to comprehend the work of Jacques Le Goff, particularly when defining *New History*. This category led to a deeper conception of history, taking the unconscious and fusing the material with mental profundities. At the same time, this influenced the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss, and it is possible to say that history became increasingly ethnographic, and therefore the topics of temporality and permanence were emphasized more and more in the context of a humanity whose compulsions are usually reduced to biological or familiar manifestations of existence: birth, christening, marriage and death.²⁰

16. "history has no method [...] facts do not exist; there are only intrigues". Veyne, Paul. *Cómo se escribe la historia. Ensayo de epistemología*. Madrid: Fragua, 1972: 5.

17. Caruso, Paolo. *Conversaciones con Lévi-Strauss, Foucault y Lacan*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1969: 110.

18. The imaginary, symbolic and real concepts are well explained in the dictionary of the French historian and psychoanalyst: Roudinesco, Élizabéth; Plon, Michel. *Diccionario de Psicoanálisis*. Madrid: Paidós, 2008: 521-523. Since 1953 Lacan defines the imaginary as the place of the self, par excellence with its places of illusion, capture and decoy, linked to the experience of a cleavage between *moi* and *je* (the subject). The imaginary is as the illusion of the self, alienation and fusion with the mother's body. Symbolic as the signifier's place and paternal fusion. Real, as a remnant impossible to be symbolized.

19. See the inaugural conference for 1953 in the Société Française de Psychanalyse (SFP): Lacan, Jacques. "El simbólico, el imaginario y el real (1953)". *Clínica y psicoanálisis*. 25 April 2015. Facultad de Psicología Universidad de Buenos Aires. 26 April 2018 <<https://clinicaypsicoanalisis1.webnode.es/news/el-simbolico-el-imaginario-y-el-real-1953-jacques-lacan/>>.

20. Dosse, Franjaís. "Mayo del 68: los efectos de la historia sobre historia". *Sociológica*, 38 (1998): 172.



According to Fernand Braudel, the changes and triumphs of May 68 were not political, but related to culture.²¹ In fact, these can be understood as a rupture within the *long duration* that comes from the middle of XIX century until the date indicated. It then can be referred to the beginning of a predominant tendency to make history, which came from the French academy, wherein Jacques Le Goff was a prominent leader. Even in this general historiographical context we believe that, at that time, there was no hegemonic predominance of one school of thought over another, however it was decidedly the most productive and multifaceted period of the *Annales* group. The lowest common denominator was the production of a polysemous movement deeply marked by interdisciplinary. From that moment on, the movement was no longer centered only in Europe, but extended beyond with a fluid exchange of ideas and knowledge among the American academy and Eastern Europe.

Regarding the relationship with Eastern Europe, it is important to note that Jacques Le Goff maintained frequent contact with these areas. It is well expressed by the Italian historian Daniela Romagnoli, who was very close to our author,²² and emphasized his presence in Poland, for family and political reasons. In addition, this dialogue involved outstanding Polish historian, Bronislaw Geremek, specialist in marginality and work.

On the contrary, the reception of his work was delayed in Spain due to the Franco dictatorship. It was only in the late 1980s that his texts became the subject of intense translation. And lastly, it is important to emphasize the impact of its production in Eastern countries and distant areas such as Japan, where its presence in 1976 generated, according to Shuichi Ikegami, many adherents and also developed antipathy. This seems to indicate the existence of a before and after in the discussion of some typical topics of the historical discipline, and especially the reinterpretation of social history and the consolidation of anthropological and historical thought, which began to intensify until the 80' in that country.

In short, after the long process of decolonization, the European scientific production field ends its absolute predominance and consolidates a fluid exchange with Latin America, India and Africa. In addition, diverse projects simultaneously arose, in consideration of the mentalities —and the historical anthropology of our author— microhistory, history of gender, the linguistic turn, representations of Roger Chartier, and the conceptual history and history of emotions. The movement opened and questioned, at the same time, the

21. *Che la rivoluzione europea, occidentale, quasi mondiale del 1968 sia fallita politicamente, lo sappiamo tutti, a quasi quindici anni distanza. Ma essa ha trionfato e non retrocederà per ciò che concerne le abitudini, la relazione fra i sessi, la crisi acuta della famiglia* ("That the European, Western, word-wide revolution of 68 is a political failure, we all know, almost fifteen years away. She has triumphed and will not retreat in what concerns the habits, the relations between the sexes, the acute crisis of the family"). Braudel, Fernand. "Domina la parola 'cambiando'". *Corriere della Sera*, 7 May 1982: 53; Carlos, Aguirre, "Tesi sull'itinerario della storiografia del XX secolo. Uno sguardo dalla prospettiva della lunga durata". *Rivista Internazionale di Storia de la Storiografia*, 45 (2004-2005): 50-70.

22. Romagnoli, Daniela. "Il giro del mondo di Jacques Le Goff". *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 8 (2014): 404.



typical forms wherein historiographical production had developed, leading to a greater number of minorities represented in historical discourse: children, witches, heretics, impoverished people, and those generally marginalized. Combining powerful epistemic reflection and acute criticism, the most prominent exponents of this movement were Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau,²³ Paul Ricoeur²⁴ (as critic), Norbert Elias,²⁵ and Roger Chartier.²⁶ This movement raised epistemological questions underlying existing structures of knowledge.²⁷ In this context, social scientists were forced to explain the absence of studies regarding forgotten “minorities”, including indigenous populations, groups with identities or alternative sexual practices. And, for example, the creation of analytical units never before mentioned link world-system were given light.

In this way, the consequences of cultural production were forever changed, and consequently altered the perception of history, through writing and thinking. The speed of communication is accelerated by increasing amounts of available information. Culture is ‘mediatized’, enhancing the possibilities of its circulation and dissemination in a planetary dimension.

From a history of ‘mentalities’, our author was perhaps one of the most well-known members of the third generation of *Annales* (1968-1989).²⁸ Jacques Le Goff was a pioneer and very receptive to the influences of the socio-cultural present that he lived, marked by intellectual changes, theoretical debates of his models and paradigms, and regarding all concepts²⁹ constructed with respect to the historical discipline until that moment.

For this reason, the historiography of our author consciously and unconsciously takes some cultural tendencies created within an agitated and demanding time of new perspectives, especially concerning how to face new problems: the concerns of common women and men are more relevant in history, their sexuality, daily life, mythical beliefs. All this was given a historical moment unlike ever before.

23. Certeau, Michel. *La escritura de la Historia*. Mexico: Iberoamericana, 1998.

24. Ricoeur, Paul. *La memoria, la historia, el olvido*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010: 237-258.

25. Elias, Norbert. *El proceso de civilización, investigación, sociogenéticas y psicogenéticas*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987.

26. Chartier, Roger. *Escribir las prácticas: Foucault, de Certeau, Marin*. Buenos Aires: Manantial, 1996;

Chartier, Roger. *El Mundo como representación, estudios sobre historia cultural*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2002.

27. Wallerstein, Immanuel. *Análisis de Sistemas-Mundo*. Madrid: Siglo XXI Editores, 2006: 35.

28. Burke, Peter. *La revolución historiográfica francesa, la escuela de los Annales: 1929-1989*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2006; Barros, Carlos. “La contribución de los terceros Annales y la historia de las mentalidades 1969-1989”. *Iztapalapa*, 36 (1995): 73-75.

29. Mostrogregori, Masimo. “I problema della storia della storiografia”. *Revista di storia della storiografia moderna*, 8 (1987): 2-3; Mostrogregori, Masimo. “Storiografia e tradizione storica”. *Pasato e presente*, 12 (1994): 32.



2. 'New history' and the role of Jacques Le Goff: his historical anthropology

By the end of the sixties *New History* became independent from the structuralist paradigm of Levi-Strauss. A generational relay was produced in *Annales* journal, when the group of André Burguière, Marc Ferro, Jacques Le Goff, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Jacques Revel became responsible for its publication until the late 1980s. The approach of the journal considered historical anthropology, as promoted by Le Goff from the start.

Annales was not the only protagonist during the era. In 1971, a journal of popular history was created in response to the teachings of the school manuals: *Le Peuple Français* that reached an audience of 7,500 subscribers. A similar case was *Forum-History*,³⁰ a journal which in May 1975 brought together a hundred professors and students at the institute Charles V of the University of Paris VII, and as a result, produced *Cuadernos del Foro-Historia*, with 4,000 copies. These initiatives coincided in part with the assessment of *New History* in criticizing at least three pillars of traditional history: the connection between past and present, study and social practice and, finally, the subjects of history.

Directly linked to Jacques Le Goff's mediatic work and *Annales*, the phenomenon of the diffusion of knowledge arises, that is, the idea of forming history by writing it, thereby 'constructing' a history different from that which had been recognized prior to that moment. It was imperative to involve the media —press, radio and television— and increase circulation. One of the most important features exemplified by this type of production was a *problem-history*, with no chronological limitations, and focused on the urgency and questioning of the present.

The publishing house Plon launched a collection directed by Phillipe Ariès and Robert Mandrou, called *Civilisations et Mentalités*. In Gallimard, Pierre Nora created the collection *Library of Stories* in 1971. The following year, Emmanuel Leroy-Ladurie was in charge of the History section at *Le Monde*. As can be seen, this explosion of production shows that historians were changing their practices, since work on the archives would not suffice, and it became necessary to diffuse discoveries.

Attempting to understand the so-called *New History*, and our author, in the peak of the discussion, the book by Georges Duby³¹ *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*³² is employed. This book emphasizes the close relation between the mental and the material, searching for their harmonization and profiling a history that tends toward globalism and the imaginary. Later, these categories will be

30. Dosse, Franjaís. "Mayo 1968: los efectos de la historia sobre la historia". *Sociológica*, 38 (1998): 165-201.

31. Le Goff, Jacques. "Georges Duby (1919-1996)". *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, 40 (1997): 199-209. Our author has always been more than attentive to the Duby's writing, since he was one of the earliest theorists of mentalities along with Robert Mandrou in *A history of French civilization*. Nevertheless, it is necessary to make an exception in the text *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*. Perhaps Jacques Lacan should not be referred, but Castoriadis, who wrote the book *The imaginary institution of society*.

32. Duby, Georges. *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*. Paris: Gallimard, 1978.



intensively reviewed in the context of several articles and books by Le Goff³³ along with his disciples Jean Claude Schmitt, Jean-Claude Bonne and Jerome Baschet, informing about his knowledge of the psychoanalysis of Lacanian order that was so decisive at that time. Even the *slogans* of the revolts and pretended revolutions prompted a greater preponderance of the imaginary and the imagination in general, at the expense of the concrete, material, and measurable. This emphasis was a claim and exaltation to present an unconscious dimension of the human being.

Le Goff comments about the book by his colleague Georges Duby:

Quel est le rôle des concepts, quel est le rôle de l'idéologie, quel est le rôle de l'imaginaire dans l'histoire? Non pas du tout qu'il l'oppose ou qu'il le sépare du matériel, il montre comment il y a entre l'économie et la société et ces schémas intellectuels un constant dialogue, une imbrication, comment tout ceci se structure au sein de ce qu'il appelle la révolution féodale, mais une histoire, une époque, un système historique est fait autant d'idées et de concepts qu'il est fait de techniques, d'économie, de classes sociales. D'autre part, dans le titre même de l'ouvrage apparaît un de ces nouveaux objets de l'histoire. Car une des caractéristiques de ce qu'on appelle encore une fois —mettons peut-être des guillemets— la Nouvelle Histoire, C'est d'avoir fait entrer dans le champ de l'histoire, et c'est ce que nous avons déjà essayé de montrer, Pierre Nora et moi, quand nous avons suscité ce rassemblement d'historiens autour de "Faire de l'Histoire", qui a fait entrer de nouveaux objets de l'histoire. Que les historiens ne considéraient pas jusqu'alors, soit parce qu'ils les laissaient aux sociologues, aux ethnologues, parce que c'était tout simplement en dehors de leur champ habituel. Et l'un de ces principaux objets c'est l'imaginaire. Il s'agit de donner à l'imaginaire un statut de témoins et de force agissante de l'histoire. Cette histoire aussi, elle se veut mais non pas d'une façon brouillonne, d'une façon structurée, explicative, une histoire totale. Une histoire justement qui ne prenne pas seulement la surface des événements, qui ne prenne pas seulement les grands hommes et chez ces hommes leurs vies officielles, leurs vies extérieures, Mais qui prenne les sociétés et les hommes tout entiers, depuis leurs vies matérielles, la façon dont ils s'habillent, la façon dont ils mangent, la façon dont ils pensent. Et là encore comment, derrière leurs idées et leurs concepts, ils ont ces façons de penser presque automatiques, quotidiennes que l'on appelle des mentalités. Eh !bien, il faut dans cette intégration à l'explication du passé d'hommes, de groupes sociaux, de sociétés toutes entières, intégrer, je dirais presque au premier chef, l'imaginaire.³⁴

33. Berlioz, Jacques; Le Goff, Jacques; Guerreau-Jalabert, Anita. "Anthropologie et histoire", *L'histoire médiévale en France. Bilan et perspectives*, Michel Balard, ed. Paris : Le Seuil, 1991 : 269-304; Le Goff, Jacques. *L'imaginaire medieval*. Paris: Gallimard, 1985.

34. "What are the role of concepts? What is the role of ideology? What is the role of the imaginary in history? It does not oppose or separate from the material, it shows how there is an interdependence between economy and society and these intellectual schemes create a constant dialogue, showing how all this is structured in what he calls the feudal revolution. However, a history, a period, a historical system is made by ideas and concepts as well as techniques, economics, social classes. Moreover, in the same title of the work appeared one of these new objects of history. One of the characteristics of what we once called —maybe in quotation marks— *New History*, is having integrated new objects into the field of history, and this is what Pierre Nora and I tried to show when we convoked that meeting of historians focused on *Faire de l'Histoire*, that is, to incorporate new objects in history that historians had not considered until now, either because they were left to sociologists, ethnologists or because they were simply out of their usual field. One of these main objects is the imaginary. It is about giving to the imaginary a status of witness and active force of history. This story also pretends to be a complete history, but not in a disorderly way, but in a structured and explanatory way. A history that precisely does not consider only the surface of the facts, which considers not only the great men and their official



In relation to the book by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Le Carnaval de Romans*,³⁵ his appreciation is more suggestive, since, on the one hand, he is more emphatic in equating the historical work with the ethnographic and, on the other hand, exalting an event, such as the carnival, as an event capable of revealing an entire society. From that moment, there were intense central interdisciplinary dialogues in which anthropology prevailed. This not only brought progress, but also a constant criticism of the work of the *New History* in general, based on the argument that it was losing and thereby blurring history itself through its very close connection to the social sciences. Le Goff commented:

*Mais elle voit dans l'événement l'objet non pas dans lequel s'enfermer, non pas dans lequel voir un facteur essentiel de l'histoire, Mais un révélateur de l'histoire profonde. [...] Et alors là, il [d'Emmanuel Le Roy-Ladurie] appartient aussi si je peux le dire à la nouvelle histoire plus spécialement parce qu'il a uni profondément, et c'est une des tendances importantes de la nouvelle histoire aujourd'hui en tout cas, l'ethnologie, l'anthropologie et l'histoire. Il a montré comment la fête, le carnaval —encore des objets qu'on laissait auparavant à l'imaginaire, qu'on laissait à l'ethnologue— en fait, ont leur place dans l'histoire, dans la vraie histoire, dans la grande histoire.*³⁶

It should not be forgotten that the criticism of the movement began in the 70s and still endures today, arising in the most diverse university spaces. We think that this criticism is created as a reason to consider that the interdependence between production and disclosure is flawed; and diversities of history, never before considered within disciplines, were consolidated. In addition, we can say that the *Annales* movement, more than an organic and directed school, was and is a “space of experimentation”, which was produced through methodological innovation and cooperation with social sciences which allowed for the diversity of subjects discussed. Here, a very sharp critic wrote:

...los espectros recorren los campos —critica Hervé Martin—, Satán multiplica sus maleficios, la bruja es la señora del pueblo, la llegada del Anticristo es inminente (...) la historia

lives, their external lives, but fully considers societies and men, from their material lives, the way they dress, the way they eat, the way they think. Behind their ideas and their concepts there are almost automatic, routine forms of thinking that we call mentalities. Within this integration to the explanation of the past of the man, of social groups, of all societies, I would say, the imaginary must be integrated almost in a primordial way”. Translation of an interview performed: “La ‘nouvelle histoire’ présentée par Jacques Le Goff”. *Apostrophes*. 2 February 1979. Jalons version Découverte. 15 November 2016 <<https://fresques.ina.fr/jalons/fiche-media/InaEdu04625/la-nouvelle-histoire-presentee-par-jacques-le-goff.html>> (translation adapted from the version made by Maritza Nieto at the Universidad de Concepción).

35. Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Le carnaval de Romans : de la Chandeleur au mercredi des Cendres*. Paris: Gallimard, 1986.

36. “But this history sees in the event the object in which it cannot be enclosed, in which one does not see the essential factor of history, but an indicator of deep history (...) so now, he [Le Roy Ladurie] also belongs to, if I may say so, ‘New History’, especially because he united, and that is one of the most important trends of the New History today, ethnology, anthropology and history. He showed how celebration, carnival and objects that once we left to the imaginary, which we left to the ethnologist, by positioning them in history, in the true story, in the great history”. “La ‘nouvelle histoire’ présentée...”.



*francesa se ha convertido en un 'show' permanente. A partir de aquí, la historia queda sometida a la ley del mercado y corre en riesgo de ser víctima de una rápida obsolescencia de los protagonistas y de los conceptos. Los herederos de Dom Mabillon a veces dan la impresión de haber optado, no sin peligro, por el "show business".*³⁷

This reference does not invite many interpretations. The allusions are clear, although we believe that it is somewhat distempered, because it does not comprehend that the groups of this era were taking advantage of, as reasonably as possible, all the possibilities at hand. Another less severe criticism is the one that indicates that this kind of history has lost its global and structural intensity, which was spread so thin that it was reduced to crumbs.³⁸ François Dosse, in his book *L'histoire en miettes*,³⁹ criticizes this generation for losing the original objective. In addition to this, it can be said that *Annales*, in the 70s and 80s, disassociated from the economic and social history of Braudelian and Marxist matrix, and were shaping a practice and study object more "individualistic". For detractors of *Annales* it was a history marked by the interests of the market, nevertheless, we can declare it would be better to say that history returns to questions about the present man, giving answers with a historical connotation.

In this context, it is important to remember the success of the book *Montaillou, village occitan, from 1294 to 1324*⁴⁰ by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, with almost 300,000 copies. This work responds to the scrutinization of daily customs and marital relationships, giving the subject value and a place in history. Therefore, the historian was responding to social discussions of the moment in which debates were sparked and changes were made in the formation of the family, the rights of husbands and wives, contraception and abortion. There is an ethnologization of historical discourse, the small stories of children, young people, the humble, the study of material culture is widely covered. So much so, that in *Annales*, cultural history was given greater significance, increasing from 22.4% between 1957-1969 to 32.8% between 1969 and 1976. Examples of this are sexuality (Jean-Louis Flandrin, Jean-Paul Aron), death (Michel Vovelle, Phillipe Aries) and fear (Jean Delumeau). These great works were heavily criticized by detractors of the 'school', as those mentalities could not be subject to the social substratum. The *long duration* relieves social tensions and integrates them into an immutable permanence of human nature; the man reduced to the mental is the object of his own history, more than the subject of history itself.

37. "... spectres traverse the fields —Hervé Martin criticizes—, Satan multiplies his spells, the witch is the lady of the town, the arrival of the Antichrist is imminent (...) French history has become a permanent show. From here, history is subject to the law of the market and runs the risk of being the victim of a rapid obsolescence of the protagonists and concepts. The heirs of Dom Mabillon sometimes give the impression of having opted, not without danger, for the show business". Bourd , Guy; Martin, Herve. *Las Escuelas Hist ricas*. Madrid: Akal, 1992: 185.

38. Barros, Carlos. "El 'tournant critique' de Annales". *Revista de Hist ria Medieval*, 2 (1991): 193-197.

39. Dosse, Fran ois. *L'histoire en miettes: des 'Annales'   la 'nouvelle Histoire'*. Paris: Pocket, 1997.

40. Le Roy Ladurie, Emmanuel. *Montaillou, village occitan : de 1294   1324*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.



He is also blamed for a sort of postmodernism for his disaggregation and concern for the hegemony of history. In any case, it is important to emphasize that *Annales*, when covering the Middle Ages and the Old Regime, was free from the exaggerated attraction of scientism and the concepts of modernization which characterize a large part of social scientific thought.⁴¹

At the end of the 1980s, the school accepted criticism and subsequently was able to strengthen its interdisciplinary character, abandoning definitively the centralization of history. So history became one more element within the interdisciplinary dialogue: no single discipline can pretend to position intellectual or institutional hegemony over social sciences. In the publication of *Annales* from January-February 1990,⁴² André Burguière, made a critical appeal, remembering a vision he had, that the pillars of *New History* had been of its foundation on the preference of the collective, over the individual, the structural over the eventful, the socio-economic over the political, and so on. But he also emphasized that mental conception is not an invention of Lucien Febvre, but of Bloch in *Les Rois thaumaturges* and in *La société féodale*.⁴³ Le Goff at no time succumbed to any kind of scientism, and we could even say his work not only seeks the collective, but the collective or global according to an object: man and his life, the biography.

Such is the case of Le Goff in his biographical articles⁴⁴ and books about saints, wherein he disagrees with the collective vision of *Annales*. Remember the examples of Saint Louis and Saint Francis, notoriously criticized even by their close colleagues, responded indirectly through interviews and conferences, emphasizing the subject of emergence; and furthermore, the historical work of biography is the most faithful representation of a total history and a historical anthropology: *creo que la biografía está en vías de transformarse en uno de los medios de hacer una historia total del hombre y de los hombres, uno de los más importantes dominios de la antropología histórica*.⁴⁵

Following that, Giovanni Levi, one of the greatest exponents of Italian microhistory,⁴⁶ suggested regarding biographical work, this allows us to make

41. Iggers, Georg. *La historiografía del siglo XXI, desde la objetividad científica al desafío posmoderno*. Santiago de Chile: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2012: 107.

42. Burguière André. "De la compréhension en histoire". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 1 (1990): 123-136 <http://www.persee.fr/doc/AsPDF/ahess_0395-2649_1990_num_45_1_278826.pdf> (Consulted 16th November 2016).

43. Bloch, Marc. *Les Rois thaumaturges. Étude sur le caractère surnaturel attribué à la puissance royale particulièrement en France et en Angleterre*. Paris-Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1924; Bloch, Marc. *La société féodale*, Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1968.

44. Le Goff, Jacques. "Mon ami le saint roi: Joinville et Saint Louis (réponse)". *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 2 (2001): 469-477; Le Goff, Jacques. "La sainteté de Saint Louis: sa place dans la typologie et l'évolution chronologique des rois saints". *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (III^e-XIII^e siècle) Actes du colloque de Rome (27-29 octobre 1988)*. Rome: École Française de Rome, 1991: 285-293; Le Goff, Jacques, "Saint Louis". *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, 71/3 (1997): 338-344.

45. "I believe the biography is becoming in one of the means of making a total history of the man and of men, one of the most important domains of historical anthropology". Le Goff, Jacques. "Los retornos de la historiografía francesa actual". *Prohistoria*, 1 (1997): 35-44.

46. Giovanni, Levi. "Les usages de la biographie". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 6 (1989): 1325-1336.



practices that help us to see the closest connections among the interstices of society, assuming their freedom from existing regulatory systems, the magnitude of information sources within a life, the importance of literature, the dimension of the body within social coordinates and, finally, the interpretation assisted by a hermeneutic that comes from historical anthropology.

Historiography was questioned and intellectuals participated in this process. Voices responded with innovation from tradition, such as Jacques Le Goff, leader of a generation. These views are in alignment with a study performed in the United States, wherein the work and intellectual practice of Le Goff is qualified as compromised. Therefore Le Goff was a type of historian, or *historien engagé*, as his compatriots would say,⁴⁷ considering his actions were linked to very serious studies, almost strictly academic, along with radio and television broadcasting.

The nuclear intellectual practice was the associated work that materialized among historians, economists, psychoanalysts,⁴⁸ anthropologists, linguists, semiologists⁴⁹ and geographers, shaping what was called *New History*, which intended to open a range of possibilities in relation to method, theories and historical subjects. Also, it is important to remember a dictionary of *New History* was made, to determine all the concepts and ideas related to the project.

Over time, the former led over time to a change in practices and historiographical production, and in fact placing an importance on knowledge from the peripheries of Latin America, Africa and India. The most obvious example was the emergence of subaltern and culturalist studies, in which new centers of knowledge were opened, and consequently Europe stopped being the definitive center. A much closer contact with the Anglo-Saxon world was established and universities of the United States, United Kingdom, and Scandinavia began to welcome historians who were not necessarily linked to *Annales*, including Michel de Certeau, Carlo Ginzburg, Roger Chartier, Giovanni Levi and the direct disciples of Jacques Le Goff, Jean-Claude Schmitt, Jérôme Bachet, and even Daniela Romanogli from Italy.

3. The value of the singular in its historical Anthropology

Since when does Le Goff have this hobby and curiosity about being in permanent communication with the social, the dialogue with other colleagues and his concern

47. Joëlle-Rollo, Koster. "Jacques Le Goff (1924)", *New Historical Whinting in Twentieth- Century France, French Historians 1900-2000*, Philip Daileader, Philip Whalen, eds. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010: 372-373.

48. Although Michel de Certeau, a Jesuit priest, was not a psychoanalyst, he was very close to the figure of Jacques Lacan. He always made that approach between Freud's theory and history. And in this same time he writes: Certeau, Michel de. "Ce que Freud fait de L'histoire, apropos de: 'une névrose démoniaque au XVII^e siècle'". *Annales Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 25/3 (1970): 654-667.

49. Kristeva, Julia. "La mutation sémiotique". *Annales Économies Sociétés Civilisations*, 25/6 (1969): 1497-1522.



for subjects not so typically medieval? We subscribe to the idea of Alain Boureau,⁵⁰ the one who elucidated that Jacques Le Goff, from the beginning, had presented in his first books what he calls a “methodological anachronism”: *Les Intellectuels au Moyen Age, Marchands et banquiers du moyen age* and finally the wonderful book *La civilisation de l'Occident medieval*⁵¹ about historical anthropology, although the concept had not yet been coined. Within the cultural and social context, medievalists and social scientists in general were trying to understand feudal institutions, origins of capitalism and mechanisms of the power of monarchies. Furthermore, Le Goff, in the preface of the 1984 edition, said of the intellectuals, the “interest consist on moving the attention of institutions towards men, of ideas towards social structures, of practices and mentalities”.⁵²

Indeed, the intuition of the fifties redefined it from concepts developed in Jacques Le Goff work from intense dialogue with Social Sciences and especially, as Boureau also mentioned, with an intellectual practice of ‘dis-medievalizing’ the Middle Ages. For him, this was a search maintained by contact with contemporary, modern and antiquated historians. In fact, the concept of intellectuality was taken from the Italian intellectual world and especially from Gramsci, and his idea of organic intellectual:

*en el extremo final de esta evolución profesional, social e institucional hay un objetivo: el poder. Los intelectuales medievales no escapan del esquema de Gramsci, a decir verdad muy general, pero operante (...) los intelectuales de la Edad Media son ante todo intelectuales “orgánicos”, fieles servidores de la Iglesia y el Estado.*⁵³

Perhaps this statement bothers historians who think it is a form of anachronism to use current concepts for such distant processes. Thus, the interest in these intense dialogues and the development of his insatiable historical curiosity led him to accept, from Braudel, the direction of the V Section, he was a chief of work, assistant and head of studies (1960-1962).

The other book referred to, *La civilización del occidente medieval*,⁵⁴ is the result of this intensity and presents a systematic work of images, and life in all its various manifestations. In the introduction he states: *revalorizar toda una civilización (...) esclarecer todas sus estructuras en la disposición de la vida material, de la vida biológica y*

50. Sales, Veronique. *Los historiadores*. Granada: Universidad de Granada-Universidad de Valencia, 2007: 267-281.

51. Le Goff, Jacques. *Les Intellectuels au Moyen Age*. Paris: Seuil, 1957; Le Goff, Jacques. *Marchands et banquiers du moyen age*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1956; Le Goff, Jacques. *La civilisation de l'Occident medieval*. Paris: Arthaud, 1964.

52. Le Goff, Jacques. *Los intelectuales de la Edad Media*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2008: 11.

53. “at the end of this professional, social and institutional evolution there is an objective: the power. The medieval intellectuals do not escape from the scheme of Gramsci and, truthfully and very general, but operant (...) intellectuals of the Middle Ages are primarily ‘organic’ intellectuals, faithful servants of Church and State”. Le Goff, Jacques. *Los intelectuales*...: 14.

54. Le Goff, Jacques. *La civilización del occidente medieval*. Barcelona: Juventud, 1965.



mental.⁵⁵ It is also possible to find here a dialogue with the founders of *Annales*. From that time, there is a distance from the serial and a return to the first generation which had a more productive dialogue with social psychology, anthropology and the growing psychoanalysis; as well as an almost integrative perception prioritizing the unity of the human, that is why, this was, in no way, a view of medieval civilization in fragments and estates (history of art, religious history, history of institutions, etc.).

From that point of view, it is also possible to emphasize of the sources and questions posed. Notably, some sources often taken as peripheral and unreliable, such as *exempla* and hagiographic narratives, were utilized in exemplary works: *La Bourse et la vie*; *San Luis*; *Saint Françoise*.⁵⁶ This influence seems to come from post-structuralist anthropologists, who, with little information, drew conclusions from the structural point of view. As we will see in the subsequent years, using a range of sources previously not valued by many historians, he was able to formulate broad hypotheses; this exercise characterized him over his years as he distanced from fragmentary observations of medieval society.

This influence on anthropology was consolidating and maturing since the mid-sixties in the way of the studies of the VI section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), later in the Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). This allows an understanding of how certain thinking and practices can be consolidated. Historical anthropology helps to study history from the *long duration* and to renew and pose new questions and answers.⁵⁷ Superficially, we can indicate the most important milestones of his trajectory: in 1972, in a miscellany to Braudel, he writes “L’historien et l’homme quotidien”; in 1977, in *Pour un autre Moyen Age*, “Vers une anthropologie historique appears”.⁵⁸ In 1978, André Burguière embodies the study of historical anthropology in *La Nouvelle Histoire*⁵⁹ and later in a dictionary he directed;⁶⁰ his exposition in Spoleto in 1975, regarding the symbols of the vassalage rituals;⁶¹ the remarkable number of *Annales* of 1974, dedicated to *Pour une histoire anthropologique*, in which an outstanding group of historians from

55. “to revalue an entire civilization (...) to clarify all its structures in material life, of the biological and mental life”. Le Goff, Jacques. *La civilización...*: 19.

56. Le Goff, Jacques. *La Bourse et la vie. Economie et religion au Moyen Age*. Paris: Hachette, 1986 ; Le Goff, Jacques. *Saint Louis*. Paris: Gallimard, 1996 ; Le Goff, Jacques. *Saint Françoise d’Assise*. Paris: Gallimard, 1998.

57. Berlioz, Jacques; Le Goff, Jacques; Guerreau-Jalabert, Anita. “Anthropologie et histoire...”: 269.

58. Le Goff, Jacques. “L’historien et l’homme quotidien”, *L’historien entre l’ethnologie et la futurologie*, Paris-The Hague: Mouton, 1972: 238-250; Le Goff, Jacques. “Vers une anthropologie historique”, *Pour un autre moyen âge. Temps, travail et culture en Occident: 18 essais*. Paris: Gallimard, 1977: 335-349.

59. Burguière, André. “L’anthropologie historique”, *La Nouvelle Histoire*, Jacques Le Goff, ed. Paris: Retz-CEPL, 1988: 137-165.

60. Burguière, André, dir. *Dictionnaire des sciences historiques*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1986: 54.

61. Le Goff, Jacques. “Simboli e Simbologia nell’ alto Medioevo”. *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull’alto Medioevo*, 23 (1976): 679-788.



the most diverse areas discussed reciprocity,⁶² and especially to the reflections by Nathan Wachtel in his “Reciprocité et l’État Inca: de Karl Polanyi à John V. Murra”.⁶³ Another remarkable fact is that, in 1978, an issue dedicated to the Andean world was elaborated under the guidance of Jacques Revel, John Murra and Nathan Wachtel.

The historical anthropology of our author was gradually defined by groups of studies formed between 1962-1963 as: “History of religious ideas and social groups (XI-XV centuries)”; from 1963 to 1973 it was “history and sociology of the medieval west” in 1973-1974 the program indicates: “cultural anthropology of the medieval west”, before establishing and consolidating the definitive name: *Groupe d’Anthropologie historique de l’Occident Medieval* (GAHOM) (Historical Anthropology of the Medieval West).

It is clear that the theme of psychology and the distancing from most orthodox Marxist currents led to the creation of a conference on heresies in 1962, called “Heresies and societies”. It was inaugurated by Marie-Dominique Chenu, Dominican theologian, who later became Jacques Le Goff’s friend.⁶⁴ At the conference, Chenu

62. Veyne, Paul; Augé, Marc; Godelier, Maurice; Duby, Georges; Meillassoux, Claude; Murra, John V. “Fioravanti-Moliníe Antoinette. Débat (sur la réciprocité)”. *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 29/6 (1974): 1358-1380.

63. Wachtel, Nathan. “La réciprocité et l’État inca: de Karl Polanyi à John V. Murra”, *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 29/6 (1974): 1346-1357.

64. *Al padre Chenu le conocí en unas condiciones muy particulares. En la Escuela Francesa de Roma inicié un estudio sobre las actitudes ante el trabajo extraídas del contenido de los manuales de los confesores. Me pareció tan esclarecedor un trabajo suyo que pedí entrevistarme con él. Acababa de ser condenado por Roma con una sanción suave que le obligó a exiliarse en un convento de Ruán de donde sólo podía salir la última semana de cada mes. Me respondió con mucho humor, diciéndome que sólo podría recibirme una de esas semanas que el Vaticano había considerado que eran las más apropiadas para proseguir sus estudios... Cuando murió, tuve una gran sorpresa: el prior de los dominicos me telefonó para solicitarme un favor especial. Pues él quería enterrarle modestamente, pero el cardenal había decidido celebrar sus funerales solemnemente en Nôtre Dame de París, siguiendo la estrategia habitual de la Iglesia: la recuperación de alguien condenado varias veces. El prior me dijo que únicamente aceptarían la ceremonia con la condición de que se permitiera tan solo un discurso durante la misa y que fuera yo el orador. La cláusula resultaba hábil, y podría decir que casi perversa, pues era una manera de impedir que hablara el cardenal. Éste aceptó, y me encontré dirigiéndome a un público religioso y desconocido que llenaba la iglesia. Redacté un texto muy medido, de ocho minutos exactos, que resultó ser uno de los más difíciles que haya escrito en mi vida. Todo me hizo pensar en los condicionantes históricos: ¿qué ha ocurrido para que en las exequias solemnes de un teólogo dominico, uno de los grandes teólogos del Concilio, haya intervenido un laico? Yo fui la solución en una situación extraña (“I met priest Chenu under very particular circumstances. In the École française of Rome, I began a study on attitudes towards work drawn from the content of confessors’ manuals. One of his works seemed to me very enlightening, so that I asked to hold a meeting with him. He had just been condemned by Rome with a light sanction that forced him into exile in a convent in Rouen from which he could only leave the last week of each month. He answered me with a lot of humor, telling me that he could only receive me one of those weeks considered by the Vatican to be the most appropriate for continuing his studies... When he passed away, I was shocked: the Dominican prior phoned me to ask me a special favor, because he wanted a modest burial; however, the cardinal had decided to hold his funeral solemnly at Notre-Dame Cathedral, following what the Church habitually did: the recovery of someone condemned many times. The prior told me that he would only accept the ceremony provided that just one speech was permitted at mass and that I was the speaker. The clause was clever, I could say that it was almost evil, since it was a way of preventing the cardinal from talking. He accepted and I found myself talking to the religious and unknown public that crowded the church. I wrote a very measured text, of exactly eight minutes, which turned out to be one of the most difficult texts I have written in my life. Everything made me think of the historical conditionings: What has happened for a layman to have taken action in the solemn funerals*



defined heresy as a choice. Therein, he broadened all the theoretical instrumentation of a concept projected onto upcoming processes. This concept indirectly alluded to conflicts that were beginning to be observed in that bipolar world, typical of the cold war, in which the ideological theme was a priority. Orthodox or non-Orthodox, in relation to the ideological tendency in vogue, was often decisive.

The problem of heresy does not only start from ideas in the abstract. Its concern is also focused on the social body to which the character belongs. There is an interest in the group, ideas and their impact on society.⁶⁵ If we pay attention to the questions, we see that he observes the problem influenced by sociology: Is the heretic a class product? What does the heretic maintain in this collective mentality? There are also questions that allude to the psychological theme in vogue in Europe, for example: Does the heretic fall within a certain psychology, even within a certain mental pathology? Is it someone abnormal or neurotic? In short, we think that through the defining connection with Priest Chenu, the 13th century theme and mendicants followed him from that moment, to when he defined the “beautiful 13th century”. He was unveiling it through every social actor, such as merchants, intellectuals, heretics, urban life, technological development,⁶⁶ mendicants and money.⁶⁷

At the time, Michel Foucault⁶⁸ was one of the main thinkers. Le Goff⁶⁹ recognizes his influence, especially regarding questions that arose from reading his work, and conversations they had together.⁷⁰ In the late 60’s, in a well-known interview, the

of a Dominican theologian, one of the greatest historical theologians?” Lasége, Charles. “Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff”. *Salud mental y cultura, Revista de la Asociación Española de Neuropsiquiatría*, 20/74 (2000): 271-282 <<http://docplayer.es/233734-Salud-mental-y-cultura.html>> (Consulted 20th December 2016).

65. Le Goff, Jacques. *Herejías y sociedades en la Europa preindustrial, siglo XI-XVIII*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1987.

66. Le Goff, Jacques. *Héros du Moyen Âge, le Saint et le Roi*. Paris, Gallimard, 2005: 1207-1220.

67. Le Goff, Jacques. *La Edad Media y el dinero: ensayo de antropología histórica*. Madrid: Akal, 2012.

68. Foucault, Michel. *Las palabras y las cosas: una arqueología de las ciencias humanas*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2003; Foucault, Michel. *La arqueología del saber*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2002; Foucault, Michel. *El orden del discurso*. Buenos Aires: Tusques Editores, 1999. These works clarify the relationship between scientific discourse and power. Basically, we think the critique against modern thinking, its practices and methods is the most useful and necessary tool for a historian as Le Goff.

69. Le Goff, Jacques. *L’imaginaire medieval*. Paris: Gallimard, 1985; Patlagean, Evelyne. “L’histoire de l’imaginaire”, *La nouvelle histoire*, Jacques Le Goff, ed. Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1988: 307-334.

70. Although no friendship existed between Le Goff and Michel Foucault, they met in Paris in the library of Dominican friars. He mentioned: *La historia es una forma de poder, y en este aspecto me he valido de ideas de Foucault... Sin poder decir que fuera especialmente un amigo suyo, conocí bien a Foucault y le admiré. El trato con su persona era extremadamente difícil; pero yo hablaba mucho con él, discutimos en emisiones de la radio; y me influyó. Entre los filósofos era el único historiador propiamente dicho, y fue quizá el único que poseía un criterio sobre las ciencias humanas y sociales, que las enjuiciaba en una relativa unidad. Parte de su obra es estrictamente la de un historiador, y no la de un filósofo de la historia. No digo que haya que ser un buen historiador para ser un buen filósofo, aunque con él me sentía en el mismo terreno* (“History is a form of power and, in this regard, I make use of Foucault’s ideas... I cannot say that I was particularly friend of Foucault, but I knew him well and I admired him. Dealing with him was extremely difficult; however, I talked a lot with him, we discussed on radio broadcasts and he influenced me. Among philosophers, he was the only historian *per se*, and maybe the only one that possessed a criterion on human and social sciences. He judged them in a relative unit. Part of his work comes strictly from a historian and not from a historian philosopher. I do not say that it is necessary to be a good historian to be a good philosopher, although with him I felt in the same field”). Lasége, Charles, “Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff...”: 290; Belinsky, Jorge. “Aproximación



philosopher expressed his concern about history, recognizing that Fernand Braudel's contribution had been significant; rejecting the idea of evolutionary history, lineal, with awareness of the actors⁷¹ that coincided with his vision. Additionally, in this interview, his argument went so far as to reject the idea of a relationship between history and causality:

*se han dado cuenta de que la relación causal no se puede establecer, no controlar en términos de racionalidad formal; en el fondo, no existe la causalidad [...] y desde ese momento en que el análisis histórico se introducen relaciones de tipo lógico, tales como la implicación, la exclusión, la transformación, etc. es evidente que la causalidad desaparece.*⁷²

These types of reflections influenced different writings, including those of our author. Therefore, the coherency becomes clear regarding *faire de l'histoire* ("Making history"), 'New problems', 'New approaches' and 'New objects', and the appearance, in 1978, of a new collective work whose name was even more ambitious: *La nouvelle histoire* ('The new history').⁷³ This book was directed by Jacques Le Goff, Roger Chartier and Jacques Revel. These works are influenced by the philosopher, but it is impossible to specify to what extent. Neither can we say that he was the only one, as we must not forget Levi-Strauss and Paul Veyne. Special mention must be made to Foucault's *L'archéologie du savoir* (1969), *Les mots et les choses* (1966), *Naissance de la clinique* (1963).⁷⁴ In these works, he questions the logical tradition of general scientific knowledge and human sciences. In the end, we can say that he emphasizes an archeological view of knowledge which later is critically called scraps of history.

Jacques Lacan's contributions⁷⁵ are in the same vein. He, along with Michel de Certeau and other well-known intellectuals, founded *L'École freudienne de Paris* (1964),⁷⁶ separate from International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA). At the same time, Jacques Le Goff commissioned Michel de Certeau the first article: *The Historiographical Operation*. Many believe that solitary article not improvised, but meant for teaching purposes. In such a masterpiece, it is necessary to underline how to understand historiography among history, psychoanalysis and linguistics.

Consequently, a synthesis emerged called 'historical anthropology' (entrusted to André Burguière). It is at the same level of Jacques Le Goff's 'The new history',

indirecta: Lo imaginario en la perspectiva de Jacques Le Goff". *Intercanvis*, 17 (2000): 23-27. <www.intercanvis.es/pdf/17/17-03.pdf> (Consulted 15th August 2016).

71. Caruso, Paolo. *Conversaciones con Lévi-Strauss, Foucault y Lacan*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1969: 74-75.

72. "have you noticed that the causal relationship cannot be established, nor controlled in terms of formal rationality; basically, causality does not exist [...] and from that time in which logical relationships, such as implication, exclusion, transformation, etc., are introduced into the historical analysis, it is evident that causality disappears". Caruso, Paolo. *Conversaciones...*: 75.

73. Le Goff, Jacques, ed. *La Nouvelle Histoire*, Paris: Retz-CEPL, 1988.

74. Foucault, Michel. *L'archéologie du savoir*. Paris: Gallimard, 1969; Foucault, Michel. *Les mots...*; Foucault, Michel. *Naissance de la clinique*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963.

75. Lacan, Jacques. *Scrifs*, Paris: Seuil, 1966.

76. Roudinesco, Élisabeth; Plon, Michel. *Diccionario de psicoanálisis*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1998.



Michel Vovelle's 'Long term history', Philippe Ariès's 'History of mentalities' and Évelyne Patlagean's 'Imaginary history'. The last title was forced to mention Jacques Lacan and his followers. They had a very dominant position between 1970 and 1980 that influenced general history and particularly medieval history: contributing the 'imaginary', 'symbolic' and 'unconscious'. It is also necessary to remember Michel Certeau's writings, which detail concepts of the unconscious, self-dimension, mysticism and the city. Additionally, Alain Besançon dedicated a collective volume (*Mélanges*) to Georges Duby, perceiving him as psychoanalyst historian.⁷⁷ This does not mean that Jacques Le Goff is a Freudian historian, although he did read him. He expected this relationship to be increasingly fruitful, as he mentioned in an interview.⁷⁸

Our historian was concerned about mass media outreach on behalf of his work and that of his colleagues. He participated in the Cultural Revolution,⁷⁹ the change of customs, and *habitus*, which permanently altered Europe and the world. He really liked radio broadcast and his program was called *Les Lundis de l'histoire*.

In these times, in which French history predominated the third generation of *Annales*, a paradigm shift happened in the way of thinking and writing history. There was no longer an "only original idea" and that caused the formation of heterogeneous groups. Coexistence among differences was permitted, which also seems to explain the successful diffusion outside Europe and the increased consumption of historical reading by common people. In this case, it was a history that reached the general public; a history that learnt how to influence or respond to common people's questions and concerns. It was no longer a reading subscribed to only within the academic field.

Thus, in the late 1980's, methodological and epistemological disagreements appear outside the *Annales* and also from the inside, as noted prior. Giovanni Levi & Carlo Ginzburg's microhistory is consolidated; as their view changed in scale from micro to macro.⁸⁰ In addition, the idea of the "indiciary" paradigm emerges. This

77. Besançon, Alain. "De Gibbon à Freud et retour". *L'Arc*, 72 (1978): 4-8.

78. *Estoy convencido de que el psicoanálisis es una de las grandes invenciones de finales del siglo pasado y del siglo XX. No lo domino, y por ello no lo utilizo entre mis útiles de historiador. Admiro profundamente a Freud, y pienso además que su método desborda ampliamente al psicoanálisis mismo. Me he atrevido a explorar los sueños en la Edad Media, principalmente en mis seminarios, no en mis libros, porque no me sentía muy seguro. Incluso he comenzado alguno de ellos presentando la 'Interpretación de los sueños' de Freud porque me parece un libro fundamental, que no se puede olvidar ni siquiera a la hora de estudiar la evolución de la onorocrítica occidental. Sin embargo, no sé si el psicoanálisis puede aportar mucho a la historia, pero me gustaría mucho que pudiese hacerlo* ("I am convinced that psychoanalysis is one of the greatest inventions of late 19th century and 20th century. I do not master it, and thus I do not use it as historian. I deeply admire Freud and I also think that his method totally overgrows psychoanalysis itself. I have dared to explore medieval dreams, principally at my seminars, not in my books, since I did not feel confident to do so. I have started some of them presenting the Freud's *Interpretation of dreams*, because I considered it is an essential book that cannot be forgotten not even when studying the evolution of Western *oneirocritique*. However, I do not know whether the psychoanalysis can contribute greatly to history, either way I would very much like that it could") Lasége, Charles. "Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff...": 290.

79. Concept used by: Hobsbawn, Eric. *Historia del siglo XX*. Buenos Aires: Crítica, 1998: 323.

80. Levi, Giovanni. *La herencia inmaterial: la historia de un exorcista piamontés del siglo XVI*. Madrid: Nerea, 1991.



paradigm founds knowledge in recollection and interpretation of footprints, and not in statistical data processing.⁸¹ On the other hand, it is the Linguistic “turn” with mostly Anglo-Saxon authors, Hayden White,⁸² Lawrence Stone,⁸³ Hunt Lynn⁸⁴ and Natalie Davis with Martin Guerre.⁸⁵ These movements constitute a sharp and systematic critique of Enlightenment assumptions, so typical in the foundations of our own profession and of modern and rationalism ideals presented by predecessors.

The aforementioned movements are inseparable from feminist movements. They have a critical attitude towards State supremacy and all forms of bourgeois societies, while also claiming the subversion of daily life and rethinking the model of “western culture”.⁸⁶ Basically, there is a deep discomfort in history and this intellectual group is a faithful reflection of it. Jacques Le Goff became one of the most genuine representatives; fundamentally, because he was not very orthodox in the group of medieval historians. He sought a version of the Middle Ages that referred to a relationship with the social sciences, and the search for new sources and concepts to define these problems, with the strong purpose of finding a humanism typical of the Middle Ages.

4. A historical anthropology: of space and time

One of the key examples to weigh his historical anthropology is that it is based on fundamental ideas inherent to our human condition: time, space, work and body. The book on the imaginary space of purgatory is remarkable: our author makes a journey from the origin of the word, he reviews the sacred texts of Hebrew culture, until reaching the 12th and 13th centuries. In that moment, the idea of *purgatorium*⁸⁷ was systematized. Le Goff links the social phenomenon of merchants, intellectuals and the reason that we can call ‘metaphysics’. Here, men needed to establish a unity between the living and dead, which refers to a genuine concern of society. Non-Christian groups, or at least Judaism practitioners and often medieval usurers, their children and wives, were required to be converted to save them in this intervening space called purgatory. Efforts are made according to the testaments, including

81. Ginzburg, Carlo. “Spie. Radici di un paradigma indiziario”, *Crisi Della ragione. Nuovi modelli nell rapporto tra spare e attività umane*, Aldo Gargari, ed. Turin: Einaudi, 1979: 56-106.

82. White, Hayden. *La metahistoria, la imaginación histórica en la Europa del siglo XIX*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992.

83. Stone, Lawrence. “The Revival of the Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History”. *Past and Present*, 85 (1979): 74-96.

84. Lynn, Hunt, ed. *The New Cultural History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989: 2; Hunt, Lynn; Bonnell, Victoria, eds. *Beyond the cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*. Berkeley-Los Angeles: University California Press, 1999.

85. White, Hayden. *Metahistoria: la imaginación histórica...*: 13-93.

86. Serna, Justo; Pons, Analet. *La historia cultural. Autores, obras, lugares*. Madrid: Akal, 2005: 72.

87. Le Goff, Jacques. *El nacimiento del purgatorio*. Madrid: Taurus, 1989: 57.



masses for the dead and multiple prayers. Communion is pursued “between society of the living and society of the dead”:⁸⁸ friends of purgatory appear.

In an interview, our historian made a reflection that provides us with a modern dimension of medieval man. Here, the theme of the self appears from the individualization with the creation of purgatory:

el Purgatorio ha contribuido mucho a la afirmación del individuo. El individuo, que hasta entonces estaba relativamente disuelto en las colectividades, en las comunidades, empieza a destacar porque el Purgatorio exigía un primer juicio personal en el momento de la muerte, pues a quien Dios envía al Purgatorio después sólo tendrá una dirección posible: el Paraíso. Podrá llegar a él más o menos deprisa, según la gravedad de los pecados y el celo de los oradores en la tierra, pero nadie podría estar allí después del juicio final. Así que el juicio personal obligaba a los fieles a un examen de conciencia sobre sus intenciones y no a seguir simplemente un catálogo de faltas, les exigía reflexionar sobre su yo hondamente. El Purgatorio, el intentar alcanzarlo a su muerte, les ponía en vida frente a su yo.⁸⁹

Conscience examination took place, wherein the confessor became a sort of psychoanalyst.

We can also insist that within his vast reflection and documentation of purgatory, one of his best-known works is *La bolsa y la vida* (1993).⁹⁰ Through the examples provided by Dante’s poetry and St. Thomas’ theological thought, Le Goff masterfully exposes how society treated medieval usurers. This forced theology to allow for an intermediate place, and not only direct access to the place of torments and Death, hell. Medieval usurer, thief of divine time, began to have a place in purgatory since the 12th century. This could be accessed by suffering the penance in a certain time and, additionally, by giving back the goods obtained through usury.

In short, he relayed how the most varied sources can be read to build a global social picture of the Middle Ages. In this period, the sacred and the profane joined together; a new vision was given to money. We could also add the text *La Edad Media y el dinero: ensayo de antropología histórica* (2012).⁹¹ These works, and perhaps all those included in historical anthropology, contain a dialogue between the doctrine elaborated by theologians and a description of the structures and social practices

88. Le Goff, Jacques. *Lo maravilloso y lo cotidiano en el occidente medieval*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 1999: 44.

89. “Purgatory has contributed much to the affirmation of the individual. The individual, who until then was relatively dissolved in communities, began to stand out. The purgatory demanded a first personal judgment at the moment of death, because whom God sends to Purgatory have only one possible direction afterwards: Paradise. One may come to it more or less quickly, depending on the seriousness of the sins and the enthusiasm of the orators on earth. However, no one could be there after the final judgment. Thus, personal judgment forced the faithful to a conscience examination of their intentions and not simply to follow a catalogue of faults. It required them to deeply reflect on their self. Purgatory and what involves trying to reach it at the death put them in front of their self”. Lasége, Charles, “Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff...”: 278-280.

90. Le Goff, Jacques, *La bolsa y la vida: Economía y religión en la Edad Media*. Barcelona: Gedisa Editorial, 1993.

91. Le Goff, Jacques. *La Edad Media y el dinero: ensayo de antropología histórica*. Madrid: Akal, 2012, originally published with the title: *Le Moyen Âge et l’argent : essai d’anthropologie historique*.



that either affirm or deny them. This prompts the study of historical problems from different perspectives and, at the same time, broadens and departs from the traditional analytical view. When Le Goff studies one group, he does not forget other groups, however links them within a “scriptural fabric” that always tends to show the whole picture of the studied period.

A recurring theme is time, from the point of view always embodied by Le Goff regarding a historical reality. Contrary to the belief of some, Le Goff never identified himself as a theoretical man.⁹² We think, and as he himself stated, all his historical thinking contains almost no historical philosophy, however addresses concrete examples. From his first works, he realizes that time does not pass by for everybody in the same way. In the article, *Au Moyen Age: temps de l'Église et temps du marchand*,⁹³ he distinguishes, in an exemplary manner, times of the Church, cyclical and slow, marked by the liturgy that negotiates with agrarian time of feudal lords in natural state, and finally the quantifiable time of merchants.

Another remarkable topic very typical of the medieval mentality: geographic and symbolic space. The idea of a “dreamlike horizon”, recurrent in the work of Freud,⁹⁴ is also present in that of Le Goff. The author dedicated some academic sessions to explaining the meaning of the Indian Ocean in the context of medieval mentality, namely in *L'Occident médiéval et l'océan Indien: un horizon onirique*. The text was edited for the first volume of his compilation work.⁹⁵ This dreamlike horizon established by our author was synthesized in order to show a medieval mentality and its relationship to the lands currently known as India and Ceylon. Through his systematization of a certain number of themes, medieval men and women mentally formed a world of wealth, fantastic exuberance, a free world without taboos, a place of the unknown and the infinite: *A travers eux, L'occident fuit la réalité médiocre de ses cinglés: il trouve l'imagination creative inépuisable de la nature de Dieu*.⁹⁶ It should be noted that this mental and geographical space is later transferred to the mentality of the first Spanish colonizers in America, who also perceived the wonder or the wonderful. For that reason, their cognitive apparatus has not yet changed: the idea of the noble savage (Bartolome de las Casas); the idea of Golden Age, as described by Luciano de Samosatra, Vasco de Quiroga's Utopia in New Spain, and the description

92. Lasége, Charles. “Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff ...”: 278-280.

93. Le Goff, Jacques. “Au Moyen Age: temps de l'Église et temps du marchand”. *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 15/3 (1960): 417-433; Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un Autre Moyen Âge*. Paris: Gallimard, 1999: 59; See: Le Goff, Jacques. “Le Temps du travail dans la ‘Crise’ du XIV siècle: du temps medieval au temps moderne”. *Le Monye*, 69 (1963): 597-613; Jacques Le Goff, *Tiempo, trabajo y cultura en el Occidente medieval: 18 ensayos*. Madrid: Taurus, 1983.

94. Freud, Sigmund. *La interpretación de los sueños*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu, 1995.

95. Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un autre Moyen Âge. Temps, travail et culture en Occident: 18 essais*. Paris: Gallimard, 1991: 280-298. Work published in Spanish: Le Goff, Jaques. *Tiempo, trabajo en el occidente medieval*. Madrid: Taurus, 1993. Analysis of this topic have been mainly retrieved from an article of José Miguel de Toro, recently published: Toro, José Miguel de. “‘Apud Indos ver est perpetuum’. El extremo Oriente durante la Edad Media: una revisión del horizonte onírico de Jacques Le Goff”. *Revista de Historia*, 23/1 (2016): 73-99.

96. Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un autre...: 291-292*.



of the most varied chroniclers (of the Indies, of the Royalty, *encomenderos* and missionaries) trying to understand this 'New World'.⁹⁷ We can refer to this as the conformation of an imaginary world, and our historian portrayed it well.⁹⁸

Thanks to this type of inquiry that alludes to an imagined space and a stopped time, the Middle Ages that he always proposed can be better thought of. This does not end in century XIV, but extends until the 18th century and perhaps until the 19th, as mentalities travel within the slow time of the long duration (*Longue durée*). Most of the men who left Europe had heard of those places and their classical formation betrayed themselves.⁹⁹ It is also worth mentioning, in relation to these types of curiosities, the interest in imagined ideas regarding time and places, such as *L'utopie médiévale: Le pays de Cocagne*,¹⁰⁰ a story that does not disappear into the Middle Ages, but continues, not only through time, but through space as well.

For our author, it was vital to show us a medieval period that is not evident, that is buried in the unconscious, in what was not said, but rather what was thought or imagined. The theme of the imaginary is seen again and again. For this reason, he continually stressed that human dimensions, which are part of the mentality, are in the substrate that does not only appear in the conscious gestures of chronicles, acts, official documents, *summam*s and comments of Theologians. The aforementioned is also born from the consideration of the long duration and it appeals, as he himself said, to beliefs, behaviors and mentalities, rather than to the history of ideas.¹⁰¹ The 'imaginary', 'utopian', and 'otherness' are the concepts or representations that are intimately related, according to the perception of French medievalism. The reason is that the 'other Middle Ages' are precisely an imagined Middle Ages. There, dreams, fears, impulses, aspirations and more intimate and hidden desires take place. They do not usually appear in a restrained reflection. This does not mean that they lack logic or structure. The dreamlike has an alternative form, because it does not refer to dimensions understood in a traditional way, space and time. In fact, both are presented in a symbolic way.¹⁰²

97. Cantú, Francesca. *Scoperta e conquista di un Nuovo Mondo*. Rome: Viella, 2007.

98. Sabate, Flocel. *El fin del mundo y el nuevo mundo, en encaje ideológico entre la europea medieval y la América Moderna en Nueva España (siglo XVI)*. Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2011; San Fuentes, Olaya. *Develando el Nuevo Mundo Imágenes de un proceso*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica de Chile, 2009; Kohut, Karl; Rose, Sonia V., eds. *Pensamiento Europeo y cultura colonial*. Madrid: Iberoamericana Vervuert, 1997; Le Goff, Jacques. *Lo cotidiano y lo maravilloso en el occidente medieval*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 1998.

99. Maravall, José Antonio. *Antiguos y modernos visión de la historia e idea de progreso hasta el renacimiento*. Madrid: Alianza, 1998.

100. Le Goff, Jacques. "L'utopie médiévale: Le pays de Cocagne". *Revue européenne des sciences sociales*, 85 (1989): 271-286. See: Goldhammer, Arthur. "Reviewed Work: 'The Medieval Imagination' by Jacques Le Goff". *American Ethnologist*, 3 (1990): 603.

101. Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un autre...: 291-292*. See also : de Toro, José Miguel de. "'Apud Indos...": 73-99.

102. Pastoureau, Michel. *Una historia simbólica de la Edad Media Occidental*. Buenos Aires-Madrid: Katz, 2006.



Dream is the clear representation of an absence of time: *elle n'annonce pas un événement à venir, elle révèle et libère une énergie qui tend à créer l'événement*.¹⁰³ However, in the Western Middle Ages, a past time can be attributed to it, in which God's great historical interventions took place: Paradise, Tower of Babel, the evil city of Babylon, among other milestones of great significance for the Christian world. However, at the same time, a place of evasion, as our author points out, the medieval man finds the opposite, contrary to his rude and rough life on the European continent. Thus, the Indian Ocean *est comme un anti-méditerranéen, lieu opposé à la civilisation et à la rationalisation*.¹⁰⁴

Finally, we must not yet understand his intellectual itinerary in relation to the anthropology as concluded, since his disciples continued his ideas.¹⁰⁵ However, it is pleasing to recall one of his works in regard to the body, another basic dimension of any anthropology, book written with one of his youngest colleagues.¹⁰⁶ It is important to stress that he is a pioneer in this type of subject. I think it is a faithful reflection of an 'incarnate' history and, at the same time, it assumes the subjectivity of the subjects and of the social, in the sense of proving that body can become a metaphor of the social and a 'recipient' of all desires, impulses, fears, repressions, that not only an individual has, but a whole society. The body, he says, is elusive, a place where paradoxes and tensions are lodged. The body, in short, drives us to think of the social as a metaphor for the body, and to think of the body through the social.

That is why we insist on the need to explain, in regard to this last point, how our author never fails to look at the initiators of the movement. He even reminds us of what Marc Bloch proposes in *Feudal Society*, about the journey of the body. Therefore, he was always making a round trip from tradition to innovation.

5. Jacques Le Goff's mentalities, key to interpretation: Innovation from Tradition

The concept of *mentality* was never completely dismissed by Le Goff. Therefore, it cannot be said that he replaced it with the term *representation*, because he demonstrated it from the foundation of the *Groupe d'Anthropologie historique de l'Occident Médiéval*.

From Roger Chartier's *El mundo como representación*,¹⁰⁷ a discussion was opened up. There, it is established that the mentality has lost its validity, because the concept is not well distinguished between social groups or classes. There is a return to a more 'objectivist' social history. It assumes and prioritizes the cultural, not allowing

103. Chevalier, Jean; Gheerbrant, Alain. *Dictionnaire des symboles. Mythes, rêves, coutumes, gestes, formes, figures, couleurs, nombres*. Paris: Robert Laffont–Jupiter, 1982: 814.

104. Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un autre...*: 295-296.

105. Le Goff, Jacques. *Pour un autre...*: 291-292. See also: de Toro, José Miguel. "'Apud Indos...": 86-87.

106. Le Goff, Jacques; Troung, Nicolás. *Una historia del cuerpo*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2003: 25.

107. Chartier, Roger. *El mundo como representación, Estudios de historia cultural*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 1989.



space for contexts and socio-cultural background. The world is representation, but performed under structural coercions and parameters. Hence, individuals tend to meet according to their social group. From a theoretical point of view, we can say that there is a degree of correspondence with reality itself. A balance is proposed in this new sociocultural history, a balance between structure and subjectivism, between ideas and reality, accepting that subjective ideas surpass the social base from which they were emitted.¹⁰⁸

Chartier's work, as he himself mentioned, aims to see other forms of articulating works, practices and the social world: "sensitive both to plurality of divergences that a society experiences and diversity of occupations and materials or codes shared".¹⁰⁹ In short, it means to write practices,¹¹⁰ wherein the social world can be understood as a less elusive object than mentalities, more "objective". It is attached to cultural products, to the social vision of circulation of ideas with even more defined chronological parameters.

On the other hand, Jacques Le Goff, from the first moment, in that memorable article written more the 40 years ago,¹¹¹ warns us that the concept is ambiguous. However, the latter can simultaneously become its strength. In the interview already quoted in 2000, he says:

Fue un concepto perturbador, en el buen sentido, e inspirador, si se usa sin exageraciones. Pero lo que constituye su fuerza es también su debilidad: se trata de un concepto vago, puesto que se trataba de suplir la imposibilidad de dar términos precisos.¹¹²

Without mentioning it, Le Goff decided to always consider the unconscious in history. For this reason, he does not often employ the category of representation. We believe this refers to something much more conscious and, therefore, linked to a practice and discourse with more targeted intentions. Likewise, we consider that our author totally rejected the predominance of one approach over another. In other words, mentalities cannot be considered a "panacea" or a casual connotation. As expressed in a 1991 interview:

ha habido un uso pervertido de la historia de las mentalidades, pero esto no se haya en las concepciones de los Annales o la Nouvelle Histoire: es hacer de la mentalidades el motor de la historia. En este caso, es la reacción contra un "economicismo", un marxismo vulgar, que hacía de la economía el motor de la historia [...] pero la relación se ha hecho a la inversa, un

108. Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution*. Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984. We make reference to this because it also belongs to Chartier's ideas and it is in concordance with them.

109. Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture and Class...*: 50.

110. Chartier, Roger. *La historia o la lectura del tiempo*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 2007: 27.

111. Le Goff, Jacques. "Las mentalidades. Una historia ambigua". *Hacer la Historia*, Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Nora, eds. Barcelona: Laia, 1974: 81.

112. "It was a disturbing concept, in a good sense, and inspiring, if used without exaggeration. But what constitutes its strength is also its weakness: it is a vague concept, since it was an attempt to make up for the impossibility of giving precise terms". Lasége, Charles. "Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff...": 277.



*determinismo de las mentalidades, lo cual es igualmente inaceptable. Las mentalidades son uno de los elementos muy importantes de lo que yo llamaría el paisaje histórico, y del análisis de dicho paisaje, pero no tiene ninguna connotación de causalidad.*¹¹³

However, if we think only about the significance of mentalities, considering from the beginning of its practice in the late 1960s until the end of the 1980s, it was the overcoming of economic and political guidelines, and a history replication closed, in relation to social affairs, to the ideas of philosophers and by the majority of science historians. In this way, the history of mentalities widely separates history from the un-historicized history of ideas.¹¹⁴

There is another critique, from the eminent philosopher Paul Ricœur, in relation to the history of mentalities that also alludes to Jacques Le Goff and his historiographical practice. Ricœur constructs his ideas through the works of two distinguished scholars of the human sciences.¹¹⁵ They led him to believe the history of mentalities is deficient from its understanding and explanatory point of view.

First, he does so with the concept of Lévy-Bruhl and his *primitive mentality*. The latter was very useful for historians of that time (the times of Le Goff), who used the concept to describe and explain everything that was dissonant of beliefs. Today, observers do not recognize this concept of the world; it is an observer's perspective that considers everything pre-logical and pre-scientific within the concept. However, it is also an observer's description projected on the social actors' vision, and therefore highly prejudiced.

It can also be inferred that it is a concept that, when treated both as a descriptive feature and as an explanatory principle, does not definitively move away from the concept of primitive mentality. This comes from the sociological idea, at the beginning 20th century, to refer to the primitive beliefs regarding logical scientific rationality. According to the philosopher, the original sin continues being a function of mentality. Later, he says that it is better to relinquish this idea, and shows preference for the concept of representation.¹¹⁶

The second specialist is Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, a scholar of classical Greece who carried out comparative works with China. In his book, *Demystifying Mentalities*,

113. "there was an abuse of history of mentalities, but this cannot be found in the conceptions of the Annales or in the New History: this means to make mentalities the motor of history. In this case, it is the reaction against an 'economism', a vulgar Marxism that made economics the engine of history [...] but the relationship has been made the other way around, a determinism of mentalities, which is also unacceptable. Mentalities are one of the most important elements of what I call the historical landscape and the analysis of that landscape, but it has no casual connotation". Pérez, Sílvia. "Entrevista a Jacques Le Goff, historiador medievalista francés especializado en los siglos XII y XIII, y docente en la École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales". *Boletín de Historia Social Europea*, 3 (1991): 57-68.

114. Burguière, André. "Histoire d' una histoire: naissance de Annales". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 34/6 (1979): 1347-1369 ; Revel, Jacques. "Histoire et science sociale, les paradigmes des Annales". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 34/6 (1979): 1360-1376.

115. Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien. *Mentalidad primitiva*. Buenos Aires: Leviatán, 1922; Lloyd, Geoffrey E. *Las mentalidades y su desenmascaramiento*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1996; Ricœur, Paul. *La memoria...*: 254-258.

116. Ricœur, Paul. *La memoria...*: 258.



he claims that the concept of mentality is useless and harmful: useless at level of descriptions, harmful at level of explanation. Instead, Le Goff himself alluded to the problem when asked for the author and his book:

Mantuve un debate público con Lloyd en el Beaubourg. Sin duda es un gran historiador de la ciencia antigua; en cambio, me parece que Las mentalidades y su desenmascaramiento no es un buen libro. No se puede tratar al mismo nivel, como él lo hace, la ciencia y la mentalidad. Las ciencias no son puramente racionales sino que están parcialmente influidas por las mentalidades; las nociones científicas no se oponen sino que están incluidas en éstas, y esto es algo que deberían tener en cuenta los científicos y los historiadores de las ciencias. La teoría de la relatividad, por ejemplo, no es una noción científica pura... Me interesan varias cosas en la idea de mentalidad. Mis maestros lejanos, Lucien Febvre y especialmente Marc Bloch, se plantearon la importancia de la psicología en el conjunto de las ciencias humanas y sociales.¹¹⁷

That is to say, he emphasizes there is no absolute purity in “scientific paradigms” and for this reason they can be influenced by a certain type of mentality, and vice versa.

In fact, Le Goff’s mentality idea does not have the features that are directly and indirectly attributed to it, which is inevitable. It even differs, in some cases, from historians close to him, such as Michel Vovelle. This historian aims to clarify the different levels of the development of mentality. Less conscious collective attitudes that emerge from sensation studies are located within this context. Biological domains and individuality that also allude to sociability are next (sociability is subscribed to family with attitudes towards life and dead). There are collective sociabilities, social pathologies and normality definitions until reaching the outcast world.¹¹⁸

In a conference carried out in the Department of Historical Sciences at University of Chile in memory of Georges Duby, Michel Vovelle pointed out that these levels of mentality are modalities according to which men imagine and manage, at the same time, the relationship between their objective conditions of existence and the ideas they formulate from these. He confirmed the aforementioned with an assertion that alludes to a crucial moment after 1989, when the world questioned and was almost at the end of history:

En esta carga colectiva en la historiografía de los países liberales, y singularmente en Francia, parece que la noción de mentalidad, más complaciente, despojada de toda connotación

117. “I held a public debate with Lloyd at the Beaubourg. He is undoubtedly a great historian of ancient science; on the other hand, it seems to me that Demystifying Mentalities is not a good book. Science and mentality cannot be treated at the same level, as he does. Sciences are not purely rational, but are partly influenced by mentalities; scientific notions are not opposed, but are included in them. This should be taken into account by scientists and historians of science. The Theory of relativity, for example, is not a pure scientific notion ... I am interested in several things about the idea of mentality. My distant teachers, Lucien Febvre and especially Marc Bloch, posed the importance of psychology in the whole of human and social sciences”. Lasége, Charles. “Entrevista con Jacques Le Goff...”: 278-280.

118. Vovelle, Michel. “Historia de las mentalidades”. *Monografía de cuadernos de historia*, 1 (2000): 17; Vovelle, Michel. *Ideología y Mentalidad*. Barcelona: Ariel, 1985: 12-14.



*ideológica, comienza como ganadora, más operatoria, más apta por la misma imprecisión que la rodea para responder a las necesidades de una investigación sin condiciones previas.*¹¹⁹

Another aspect in this discussion is the implementation of the concept of ideology, as taken from Louis Althusser, and later Georges Duby and Michel Vovelle. For them, it was a more convenient concept than mentality in the 1980's. Ideology is understood as *la relación imaginaria de los individuos con sus condiciones reales de existencia*.¹²⁰ In his concept of ideology, he refers to Karl Marx's German ideology: *eter particular que definía todas las formas de existencia*.¹²¹ Vovelle tries to make this 'mentality' concept more empirical, standardizing it at the level of clear thinking.

From Vovelle's assumptions, Georges Duby had used, in 1978, the concept of ideology to explain the tripartite system. There, medieval society was organized according to a discourse made by the Church. In *The Three Orders*, a work Duby considered his most important production, he dismisses the concept of mentality and replaces it with 'imaginary'. That allowed him to study and better comprehend an object as real as immaterial.¹²²

Jacques Le Goff did not follow that path, however defended his definition that transformed into a confusing problem. Then, is it not in this vagueness in which fruitfulness and success lie, but also risks?

*la historia de las mentalidades [...] se sitúa en el punto de conjunción de lo individual con lo colectivo, del tiempo largo y de lo cotidiano, de lo inconsciente y lo intencional, de lo estructural y lo coyuntural, de lo marginal y lo general. El nivel de la historia de las mentalidades es de lo cotidiano y de lo automático, lo que escapa a los sujetos individuales de la historia porque es revelador del contenido impersonal de su pensamiento.*¹²³

Nevertheless, logic and specificity of Jacques Le Goff's conception and his idea of mentality materialized in his historical anthropology. First, he based that on an insatiable search for the Middle Ages to serve *a la construcción histórica de un humanismo medieval, buscando siempre al hombre, a los hombres, dentro de un marco*

119. "In this collective burden in historiography of liberal countries. Particularly in France, it seems that mentality notion, more indulgent and deprived of ideological connotation, begins as a winner, more operative and more competent due to the same imprecision that surrounds it to respond to the needs of an investigation without preconditions". Vovelle, Michel. "Historia de las mentalidades...": 19.

120. Althusser, Louis; Balibar, Étienne. *Para leer el Capital*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1976: 119; Burke, Peter. *La revolución historiográfica francesa*. Barcelona, Gedisa, 2006: 76.

121. Burke, Peter. *La revolución historiográfica...: 76*.

122. About these methodological and conceptual reflexions made by Duby: Duby, Georges. *La historia continua*. Madrid: Debate, 1992: 179; Ruiz-Domènec, José. "Georges Duby la mirada del artista", *Rostros de la historia. Veintiún historiadores para el siglo XXI*. Barcelona: Península, 2000: 378. Sales, Veronique. *Los historiadores*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008: 349.

123. "History of mentalities [...] is located at the meeting point of the individual with the collective, the long time and the everyday, the unconscious and the intentional, the structural and the conjunctural, the marginal and the general. The history level of mentalities is part of the everyday and the automatic. It escapes individual subjects of history, because it is sign of the impersonal content of their thought". Le Goff, Jacques. *Hacer la Historia. III: nuevos enfoques*. Barcelona: Laia, 1978: 81-98.



de una antropología histórica del Occidente medieval.¹²⁴ Following the main authors of *Annales* and the approach of Georges Duby's, Le Goff refers to the years of the resistance against Germans evoked in the first book by Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch*:

*Cuando a los cincuenta y seis años, en las últimas líneas que escribió [...] afirma una vez más que las condiciones sociales son de la más profunda naturaleza mentales, ¿Acaso no nos hace un llamado [...] a releer su primer libro 'Los reyes taumaturgos' y a continuar esa historia de las mentalidades?*¹²⁵

In fact, for him, mentalities move between psycho-history and history of culture. It could not be otherwise, while every human action involves a direct relationship between the individual and society, there is a relationship *entre un mundo interior y su mundo cultural*.¹²⁶

Our historian always maintained the view that 'mentalities' are necessary to study some phenomena. It is certainly not the only way. He believes that studying mentalities for a long time (given the slowness of their change) can explain the relationships among the mentalities of different groups. For this task, it is necessary to keep track both of the moment and the place to which a given mentality belongs, and not to set aside production places, such as images, speeches, sermons, etc.

In conclusion, these criticisms, some from the very heart of *Annales*, cannot only be alluded to his person, due to the reasons explained above. We consider that these digressions were a good historiographical exercise in order to defend the medievalist against criticisms about his lack of rigor on this subject.¹²⁷ Although, some of his

124. "the historical construction of a medieval humanism, always looking for man, men, within a framework of a historical anthropology of medieval West". Le Goff, Jacques. *La Edad Media en imágenes*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2009: 11.

125. "When at the age of 56 years, in the last lines that wrote [...] affirms once again that social conditions are of the deepest mental nature, does he not call on us to reread his first book, *The Royal Touch*, and to continue this mentality history?". Le Goff, Jacques. *Los Reyes Taumaturgos*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006: 12.

126. "between an inner world and its cultural world". Cavieres, Eduardo, ed. *Historia en controversia. Reflexiones, análisis, propuestas*. Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, 2009: 95.

127. We refer to the critiques made by Paul Ricœur, when our author defines mentalities: *por parte de Jacques Le Goff, de 'este nuevo objeto', el de las mentalidades, es más desalentadora para el deseo de rigor que los anteriores balances-inventario de Duby y Mandrou. En cuanto a sus modos de actuar, las mentalidades funcionan automáticamente, a espaldas de los mensajeros; no son tanto pensamientos formados o preferidos, como lugares comunes herencias más o menos agitadas, visiones en el mundo inscritas como inconsciente colectivo. Si, durante cierto tiempo, pudo merecer un lugar entre los 'nuevos objetos', se debió a la ampliación de la esfera documental [...] la desaprobación infringida no se reduce a la objeción de la impresión de tipo semántica; se debe a una confusión más grave, a saber, al tratamiento incierto de la noción a la vez como un objeto de estudio, como una dimensión del vínculo social distinto del vínculo económico, y como un modo explicativo* ("Jacques Le Goff's 'new objective', the one of the mentalities' is more discouraging for the desire of rigor than that posed by Duby and Mandrou. In relation to their way of acting, mentalities work automatically, behind their messengers; they are not formed or preferred thoughts, nor common places, legacies more or less hectic, vision of the world registered in the collective unconscious. Indeed, during a certain period of time, it could deserve a place between the 'new objects', because of the application of documental sphere [...] infringed disapproval is not reduced to objection of semantic impression; it is due to a more grave confusion, knowledge, due to



works or definitions were thought to be a bit systematic, and we believe that by always pursuing the humanization of a discipline, his reflections were never so final and rigid.

Therefore, in his historical anthropology, the concept or notion of mentality can be inserted, in which the conscious and the unconscious have equal value, and harmony is pursued. To reinforce the aforementioned, it is time to bring up a theoretical and methodological work written without high expectations; however, it is very substantial and resourceful in this respect. It points out the concern of historians who deal with mentalities: *considerar los elementos de la cultura consciente [...] con aquellos elementos inconscientes o subconscientes para dar con las estructuras mentales de un individuo o de un grupo, al fin y al cabo, de una sociedad*.¹²⁸ In another section, he refers to the fact that historians must be perceptive of atavistic attitudes and to archaeo-psychological phenomena. In other words, the perception of all permanence allows us to visualize deep substrates of a collective psychism. In any case, the explanation in the historiographical work was not as his critics expected. This does not prevent us from considering him as an exceptional historian and a magnificent humanist. In the end, by persecuting man, he always took risks. His work was not based on reassuring and comfortable certainties. This departure resulted in a historiographical production full of nuances, creativity and intellectual freedom.

6. Conclusions

At least we can reach to three clear conclusions:

1. Trying to construct a summary of Jacques Le Goff's work from the *New History* until the practice of his historical anthropology, we think a very productive journey was made, also through the influence of the 1968 protests. That is, we think that this revolt and its socio-cultural consequences are a way of reading the historiographical production of our author. In his work, this spirit of experimentation is demonstrated. It moves away from all scientific dogmatism. His search for new objects, new problems and new perspectives of the whole panorama of history is explained therein. Thus, his most fruitful works clung to that "revolt" and the historical discomfort so typical of those times. However, his work was not thought of in a banal or reactive way. It corresponds to what Julia Kristeva points out when explaining the origin of the word "revolt":

tiene origen sánscrito, y quiere decir pasar hacia atrás y volver hacia el futuro. Una memoria fuerte de la transformación, pero que no es nunca una negación del tipo 'estoy en contra

the uncertainty treatment of notion both as study object and as a dimension of the social link different from economic link and as explanatory material"). Ricoeur, Paul. *La memoria...*: 254.

128. "considering the elements of conscious culture [...] with those unconscious or subconscious elements to find the mental structures of an individual or a group, that is to say, of a society". Rojas Donat, Luis. "Notas sobre el concepto de mentalidad en la medievística europea". *Intus Legere Historia*, 2 (2009): 98.



*y mato eso'. El sentido profundo de la revuelta tiene que ver con revalorizar los antiguos valores para que surjan otros, nuevos.*¹²⁹

That formed the work of Jacques Le Goff, and that is the teaching that we thought to highlight in this article.

2. He never withheld on thinking and practicing history. He rescued the arguments and work of the founders, especially the humanism of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. They were historians looking for man in all his entirety. Bloch said:

*luego el homo religiosus, el homo oeconomicus, el homo politicus, toda esa retahíla de hombres en us, de lo que se podría alargar la lista al infinito, son cómodos fantasmas, y el peligro sería grave si lo tomáramos por otra cosa. El único ser de carne y hueso es el hombre, sin más, que lo reúne todo a la vez.*¹³⁰

This concept can be noticed throughout all the work of our historian, who, influenced by the experiments of his time, did not lose that view of the founders and, for that reason, it was: a true innovation from tradition.

3. Jacques Le Goff's inexhaustible curiosity becomes a search for the medieval man; the humanist man, an image of the microcosm found in countless manuscripts and codices, from Hildegard von Bingen to Bernardo Silvestre.¹³¹ A humanism consolidated in the 20th century that presents two levels: an assessment of man as God's creature and the assessment of culture and ancient civilization.¹³² We conclude that in his historiographical work, Le Goff always considered a humanization of the Middle Ages from a totalizing perspective. He never skimmed on efforts to create and occupy all the theoretical and methodological resources within his reach, in order to project problems and questions for future generations. A work full of creativity and fruitfulness.

129. "has a Sanskrit origin, and it means to go back and return to the future. Although a strong memory of transformation, it is never a denial of the perception 'I am against that and I kill that'. The deep meaning of the revolt has to do with revaluing old values, in order for new ones to emerge". Libertella, Mauro. "Julia Kristeva: 'Psicoanálisis y literatura son la misma cosa'". *Semanario Universidad*. 30 November 2011. Universidad de Costa Rica. 20 November 2016 <<http://semanariouniversidad.ucr.cr/suplementos/forja/julia-kristeva-psicoanálisis-y-literatura-son-la-misma-cosa/>>

130. "then 'homo religiosus, homo economicus, homo politicus', and all that rigmarole string of men in *us*, the list that we could string out indefinitely, are convenient phantoms, and there is a grave danger if we mistake them for something else. The man of flesh and bone, reuniting them all simultaneously is the only real being". Bloch, Marc. *Introducción a la Historia*, Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001: 117-118.

131. Le Goff, Jacques. *Faut-il vraiment découper L'histoire en tranches?* Paris: Seuil, 2014: 116-119.

132. Le Goff, Jacques. *El Dios de la Edad Media, conversaciones con Jean-luc Pouthier*. Madrid: Trotta, 2004.

