The Disciplined Historian: "Epistemic Virtue", "Scholarly Persona", and practices of subjectivation. A proposal for the study of Brazilian professional historiography

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This paper discusses theoretical issues raised by studying Brazilian professional historiography through the concepts of "epistemic virtue" and "scholarly persona" as proposed by Herman Paul. Transitioning from 19th century Western Europe to late 20th century Brazil, or to any other historical situation, for that matter, might result in problems if one assumes these concepts are designed to explain only a specific historical situation. I try to solve such problems by situating both working concepts in relation to a broader horizon, that of the practice of subjectivation. In this sense, constellations of epistemic virtues and the whole body of practices related to the scholarly self should be understood as instances of the broader games of power which establish the norms governing a specific field.
Palavras-chave: epistemic virtues; scholarly self; subjectivation; Brazilian historiography.

O Historiador Disciplinado: "Virtude Epistémica", "Persona Académica" e práticas de subjectivação. Uma proposta para o estudo da historiografia profissional brasileira

Este artigo aborda aspectos teóricos levantados pelo estudo da historiografia profissional brasileira através dos conceitos de "virtude epistémica" e "persona académica" propostos por Herman Paul. A transição da Europa Ocidental do séc. XIX para o Brasil de finais do séc. XX, ou para qualquer outra situação histórica, pode revelar-se problemática se se assumir que estes conceitos servem para explicar apenas uma situação histórica específica. Procuro resolver esses problemas situando ambos os conceitos relativamente a um horizonte mais vasto, o da prática de subjectivação. Neste sentido, as constelações de virtudes epistémicas e todo o conjunto de práticas relacionadas com a identidade académica devem ser entendidos como instâncias de jogos de poder mais abrangentes, os quais estabelecem as normas que governam um campo específico.
Keywords: virtudes epistémicas; persona académica; subjectivação; Historiografia Brasileira.

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The publication of important works such as *L'Écriture de l'Histoire*, by Michel de Certeau, *Comment on* Écrit *l'Histoire*, by Paul Veyne, in France, or *Metahistory*, by Hayden White, in the United States, can be considered a point from which it is no longer possible to ignore the fact that the historian's careful, methodical craft is itself a product of historical circumstances.[1] Whether historians are now more conscious of the limits of their work remains an open question. In Brazil, at least, there have been many texts published in recent decades proclaiming "revolutions" in professional historiography and attempting to assess the state of the field based mainly on anecdotal evidence or personal experience.[2] Even what could be the only systematic and almost ex-

1 To the point that these books are still read in most historical theory courses in Brazil. Of the three cited, *Metahistory* was the last one to be translated and published in Brazil. The reception of these books is still to be more thoroughly studied.

2 For only a few examples, see Maria Helena Rolim Capelato, Raquel Glezer, and Vera Lucia Amaral Ferlini, "Escola Uspiana de História," *Estudos Avançados* 8, n. 22 (1994): 349-58; Luzia Margareth Rago, "As Marcas da Pantera: Michel Foucault na Historiografia Brasileira Contemporânea," *Anos 90* 1, n. 1 (1993): 121-43; Luzia Margareth Rago, "O Efeito-Foucault na Historiografia Brasileira," *Tempo Social* 7, n. 1-2 (1995): 67-82; Ronaldo Vainfas, "História Cultural e Historiografia Brasileira," *História: Questões & Debates* 50 (2009) 217-35. In a later article, Rago writes a much more elaborate account of Brazilian professional historiography, even if it is still far from being a systematic study. See Luzia Margareth Rago, "A 'Nova' Historiografia

haustive study of Brazilian professional historiography in the 1980s falls short of delivering more than a shallow census of the profession, presenting simple data tables as "statistics".[3] In this sense, the recent qualitative and quantitative growth of projects and publications on the history of historiography in Brazil is a good sign.[4]

From all of the possible approaches available to those with professional historiography as their research object, I would like to discuss a particular approach based on a proposal made by Herman Paul in 2011.[5] He argues that after having made historical texts the central object of their reflections for at least five decades, those working in historical theory, the philosophy of history, and the history of historiography would do well to turn to the practical dimension of the historian's work. His proposal, then, is to study the "doings" of historians in relation to the exercise of "epistemic virtues" and the cultivation of a "scholarly self" by reference to "scholarly personae".

The concept of "epistemic virtue" refers to the dispositions, skills, or habits that an individual must possess, cultivate, and/or exercise in order to be able to arrive at what could be loosely defined as knowledge. For example, one should practice intellectual humility in order to be prepared for being wrong, or to consider other arguments without prejudice. For epistemologists this is mostly a matter of finding out what these virtues might be in an abstract, universal way, but such an approach is of little use to historians. Following Paul, I argue that what matters is to analyze how different virtues or sets of virtues are mobilized at different times and by different

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Brasileira," *Anos 90* 7, n. 11 (1999): 73-96.

3 Carlos Fico and Ronald Polito, *A História no Brasil (1980-1989): Elementos para uma Avaliação Historiográfica* (Ouro Preto: Ed. UFOP, 1992).

4 For example, there is now a society for historians interested in the theory and history of historiography (*Sociedade Brasileira de Teoria e História da Historiografia*), and there are at least three specialized journals, one of which, *História da Historiografia*, recently received the highest grade possible in the Brazilian national system of journal rankings, managed by the Ministry of Education. Also, the 2nd Conference of the International Network for Theory of History will be hosted in Ouro Preto in August 2016.

5 Herman Paul, "Performing History: How Historical Scholarship Is Shaped by Epistemic Virtues," *History & Theory* 50, n. 1 (2011): 1-19. Since then, Paul has published further important texts on this subject, one of the most recent being Herman Paul, "What Is a Scholarly Persona? Ten Theses on Virtues, Skills, and Desires," *History & Theory* 53, n. 3 (2014): 348-71.

groups in order to set standards by which one could "produce knowledge".

But while those virtues can be more or less specifically defined by individuals in their particular fields by reference to how practicing individual virtues may lead to better results, the concept of the "scholarly persona" is more difficult to grasp. The scholarly persona is better understood at the level of an ideal type, an abstraction that may not be seen in its purest form in the "real world", but nevertheless has heuristic value by helping to explain certain patterns in historical data. In this sense, even when we deal with a historiographical field in which a certain set of epistemic virtues may be commonly accepted, those virtues may be arranged in such different ways, and combined with such different non-epistemic characteristics, that we may say there are different scholarly personae to which individuals in a field may relate to produce their scholarly selves. For example, in my own research I look at how professional (academic) historians mobilize axiological language not to refer to books and texts, but to the qualities of people, establishing what it would be desirable for a historian to be.

In this paper I would like to discuss these two concepts as part of a broader horizon – that of subjectivation[6] practices. In other words, I would like to consider the cultivation of a scholarly self and the practice of epistemic virtuous behavior as instances of a more general set of practices which aim at constructing a subject which is able to perform a given task – in our case, to "*faire l'histoire*".[7] In the first part of the text I will sketch working definitions for the concepts epistemic virtue and

6 Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg have discussed the terms *assujettissement* and *subjectivation*, which they translate as subjectification and subjectivation, respectively. However, for this paper I would like to conflate these terms under the word "subjectivation", not only for the sake of simplification, but also because I understand *assujettissement* in Foucault to be grasping an inherent tension between disciplinary powers and the possibility of "being conducted otherwise". In other words, the argument I advance in this paper considers both discipline and self-fashioning as instances of production of subjectivity. For Milchman and Rosenberg, see Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, "The Final Foucault: Government of Others and Government of the Self," in *A Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millenium*, ed. Sam Binkley and Jorge Capetillo (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 62-71.

7 In this sense, it is possible to locate our research in relation to the question posed by Michel de Certeau many years ago: "Que fabrique l'historien, lorsqu'il 'fait de l'histoire'?" Michel de Certeau, *L'Écriture de l'Histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 63.

scholarly persona, pointing to the differences between what could be called the historical and philosophical uses of these concepts. Thereafter I will arrive at the core of my argument: that this whole body of prescriptive dispositions, which a field can and effectively does use, is part of a broader machinery to produce subjectivity. In other words, I adopt Michel de Certeau's insight that a work of history is more like a product at the end of a production line than the output of the individual who signs as its author.[8] Studying the formation of scholarly selfhood as an instance of subjectivation should allow one to address historical situations other than that of European professional historiography during the 19th and early 20th centuries, as illustrated by reference to my own research on late 20th century Brazilian professional historiography.

"Epistemic Virtue" and "Scholarly Self"

In a text published in 2011, Herman Paul argued that philosophers of history and historians of historiography should expand their territories to include the practical dimension of the historian's work. From Hempel to White, history was treated like a final product, ready for inspection, and it was the theorist's job to assess it, or describe how it worked, or should work – first with historical explanation, then with historical narrative. Paul's proposal was that we should also study history writing as performance, as a practice.

> Historians bending over ancient documents carefully removed from gray folders in brown archival boxes, or writing a draft of a journal article, are engaged in performative activities. They read, select, associate, interpret, define, and formulate, not to mention a dozen other activities, which they undertake often simultaneously, often unreflectively, and often, perhaps, in less than full conformity to what

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8 "Comme la voiture sortie par une usine, l'étude historique se rattache au *complexe* d'une fabrication spécifique et collective bien plus qu'elle n'est l'effet d'une philosophie personnelle ou la résurgence d'une 'réalité' passée. C'est le *produit* d'un lieu." Certeau, *L'Écriture de l'Histoire*, 73. Italics in the original.

their methodology textbooks once told them to do.[9]

Analyzing historians' practices would require a different set of concepts, a new framework different from those of the discussions regarding historical texts. Both the concepts of epistemic virtue and scholarly persona aim to address these issues. Although they have different origins, Paul argued they could be articulated in order to provide a framework for questioning the rules by which historians play when doing their work.

The concept of epistemic virtue comes from the discussions of epistemologists regarding the properties of individuals engaged in cognitive activities. Virtue epistemologists argue that in order to know something one needs to possess or exercise certain dispositions or attributes. In this sense, virtue epistemology is the branch of epistemology which aims at discussing what those characteristics would be and how they could be of help in the justification of knowledge.[10] This approach constitutes what I would like to call the *philosophical use* of the concept: its main objective is to discover, describe, and discuss epistemic virtues as universal, abstract entities; its main question is "what dispositions, skills, or faculties can help an individual to know something?"

In contrast, what I call *historical use* has a distinctive historicist flavor. Here, the task is not to come up with an exhaustive list of epistemic virtues and discuss why they should count as virtues, but

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9 Paul, "Performing History," 3.

10 I will not discuss here the main internal debates in virtue epistemology, such as the reliabilist-responsibilist divide. For more on virtue epistemology see Abrol Fairweather and Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, eds. *Virtue Epistemology: Essays on Epistemic Virtue and Responsibility* (Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2001); Michael R. DePaul and Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, eds. *Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology* (Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2003); Robert Campbell Roberts and W. Jay Wood, *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology* (Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2007); Heather D. Battaly, ed. *Virtue and Vice, Moral and Epistemic* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); John Greco, *Achieving Knowledge: A Virtue-Theoretic Account of Epistemic Normativity* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2010); Jason S. Baehr, *The Inquiring Mind: On Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology* (Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2011); Tim Henning and David P. Schweikard, eds. *Knowledge, Virtue, and Action: Essays on Putting Epistemic Virtues to Work* (London: Routledge, 2013); Abrol Fairweather, *Virtue Epistemology Naturalized: Bridges between Virtue Epistemology and Philosophy of Science* (New York: Springer, 2014); Mark Alfano, ed. *Current Controversies in Virtue Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

to describe and analyze how different characteristics are considered virtuous in different contexts.[11] In this sense, the main objective of the historical use of the concept of epistemic virtue is to study how, in different contexts, cognitive tasks were thought to require certain dispositions in order to be executed. So, for those historians or theorists of historiography inclined to accept Paul's proposal and to focus on historians' practices, the concept of epistemic virtue should be of great importance. It allows for the establishment of a framework according to which they can describe how historians assess their peers and their peers' work *as historians*.[12]

Methodology manuals are full of virtue language, describing how historians should or should not behave in this or that situation. As Paul argues, "The idea that a historian's 'doings' can be conceptualized in terms of virtues and vices would hardly have surprised such methodology textbook authors as Charles Victor Langlois, Charles Seignobos, John Martin Vincent, and Marc Bloch."[13] Such axiological language would also appear in obituaries, letters, and book reviews. In assessing their peers, it was (and still is) not uncommon for historians to engage as much in an evaluation of their conduct as in the content of their work.[14]

The concept of the scholarly persona is, in a certain way, an ex-

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11 Paul recognizes this distinction between philosophical and historical use, and specifically discusses some problems entailed by such a relativistic approach in Herman Paul, "Weak Historicism: On Hierarchies of Intellectual Virtues and Goods," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 6, n. 3 (2012): 369-88. Still, his published works all point towards a historical use of the concept, in the sense that he mainly describes how different kinds of historians consider different characteristics to be virtuous or not in different contexts.

12 These practices of evaluation should also point us towards a better understanding of the functioning of power in the scholarly environment, as the criteria of evaluation are intrinsically tied to different hierarchies of epistemic virtues and epistemic goals. See Paul, "Weak Historicism".

13 Paul, "Performing History," 5.

14 See for example Kasper Risbjerg Eskildsen, "Inventing the Archive: Testimony and Virtue in Modern Historiography," *History of the Human Sciences* 26, n. 4 (2013): 8-26; Pieter Huistra, "The Trial of Henry of Brederode: Historians, Sources and Location under Discussion in 19th-Century Historiography," *History of the Human Sciences* 26, n. 4 (2013): 50-66; Herman Paul, "The Heroic Study of Records: The Contested Persona of the Archival Historian," *History of the Human Sciences* 26, n. 4 (2013): 67-83; Herman Paul, "Manuals on Historical Method: A Genre of Polemical Reflection on the Aims of Science," in *The Making of the Humanities: The Modern Humanities*, ed. Rens Bod, Jaap Maat, Thijs Weststeijn (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 171-82.

pansion of the former concept. A scholarly persona is a set of epistemic and non-epistemic characteristics in relation to which one cultivates, exercises, or subverts, represses, in order to be recognized as a scholar. In other words, the scholarly persona is an abstraction that allows us to recognize how certain social roles are perceived to have a distinct persona that can be recognized by certain general features. Paul relates his concept to that of the "scientific persona" described by Lorraine Daston and Otto Sibum,[15] and to the reflections on the "persona of the philosopher" by Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter.[16] But there are important distinctions to make in relation to both those projects. For Daston and Sibum, the persona is something much more abstract and less susceptible to historical fluctuations; their interest in the scientific persona is focused on much larger time scales and with much broader generalizations. They are also not interested in non-epistemic factors, taking for granted that one's aim should always be knowledge, without considering any other possible motivations.[17] For Condren et al., on the other hand, each philosophical school would engage in disputing the characteristics of the persona of the philosopher. In this sense, they frame distinctions between schools of thought as disputes between "ways of being a philosopher", rather than between substantive differences in the content of their doctrines, bringing an important political dimension to his inquiry. Personae are, in this approach, much less general, and require a much shorter time frame in order to be studied.

The scholarly persona, as proposed by Paul, seems to deal with

15 Lorraine Daston and H. Otto Sibum, "Introduction: Scientific Personae and Their Histories," *Science in Context* 16, n. 1-2 (2003): 1-8.

16 Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter, eds. *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2006).

17 While such an abstract and general approach might be attributed to the text in question being a thematic issue introduction, I would like to argue that later works by Daston might support my reading of "Scientific Personae and Their Histories". See, for example, Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (Cambridge (US): The MIT Press, 2007) and Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck, *Histories of Scientific Observation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011). Other than that, Condren et al. and Paul are also working with the definition of a research agenda, making these understandings of the concept of persona quite comparable.

a greater level of generalization than Condren et al., but it is still far from that of Daston and Sibum. Not every historiographical current might have its own prescriptive notions the way philosophical schools did, like Condren et al. argue, and not every historiographical dispute entails different "ways of being a historian", although some of them might do. On the other hand, it would not be particularly enlightening to look for the lowest common denominator for all historians over two or three centuries, as in Daston and Sibum's proposal. Being much less formalized than other, harder sciences, history seems to provide historians with much more space for their individual idiosyncrasies than, for example, physics. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that there are no more or less general rules governing different "ways of being a historian" in certain contexts. To describe such rules, to analyze the disputes between what different groups regard as qualification to be a *proper historian* – and also *proper history* – this is the task aimed at by inquiring into the scholarly persona.

As I said earlier, the scholarly persona is not only about epistemic values, but also about non-epistemic ones. As such, it is possible to describe not only epistemic virtues or goals (such as open-mindedness or historical understanding, respectively), but also what have long been considered to be "external factors" to the production of knowledge. From financial incentives to career advancement, the concept of scholarly persona allows the questioning of non-epistemic motivations for doing history – what Paul calls *desires*.[18] Some useful examples include historians strongly connected to religious institutions or to political causes, and the way in which such engagements do not necessarily produce "distorted" historical accounts, but raise questions about "ways of being a historian". These questions revolve around differences in the conduct of historians rather than the content of historical texts. In sum, one constructs his or her own scholarly self by reference to different constellations of epistemic and non-epistemic values available at specific times and places.

With the legitimacy of history written by professional historians

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18 Paul, "What is a Scholarly Persona?," 362-5 and 367-9.

recently being questioned in Brazil and in other parts of the world, one might at least take into consideration the idea that "what historians do" is not an obvious category anymore – if it ever was.[19] Both this questioning of historians' authority over the past and of their monopoly over what can or should be said about the past should be more than enough evidence to disrupt the supposedly homogeneous and consensual figure of "the historian". Paul's proposal enables us to do that.

Practices of subjectivation

One might legitimately ask how one can justify applying such concepts to 20th century Brazilian historiography. Although such a question would miss the fact that Paul himself mentions 20th century examples in his theoretical papers,[20] I would like to answer this hypothetical question by presenting my central thesis: the phenomena that both concepts of "epistemic virtue" and "scholarly self" allow us to grasp are part of a broader machinery of subjectivation, and as such, it is possible to explore the instances of this machinery in different times and places, thus allowing for a wide variety of historical situations to be investigated.[21]

What I understand to be the "machinery of subjectivation" is a set of discursive formations which are responsible for establishing the rules according to which one may occupy a subject position. These machineries have been studied by Michel Foucault in different books, such as *Surveiller et Punir* and *La Naissance de la Clinique*, where

19 I refer here to the recent *Comissão Nacional da Verdade* (National Commission of Truth), which was responsible for extensive research into and the production of a long report regarding crimes against humanity committed by the Brazilian state during military dictatorship. There was no historian among the Commission's major associates and its aim to "uncover historical truth" was questioned as partisan by many in Brazil. Furthermore, a recent proposal to regulate the profession of "historian" raised concerns from many people, including fellow historians, who see such regulation as unnecessary and even dangerous. The national association of historians in Brazil (ANPUH) supports the proposal.

20 For example, in Paul, "Performing History," 5.

21 I would not like to suggest that Paul shares or agrees with such a view on the relationship of scholarly selfhood and subjectivation. Although he mentions Foucault *en passant* in one paper, I am not sure he would absolutely agree with my own interpretation and appropriation of his proposal.

knowledge and power intertwine to construct the figures of the delin-
quent, the sick, or the doctor.[22] The subject position of the doctor is
of particular interest here: the individual signing the papers does not
matter so much as the position he/she embodies. The doctor is a figure
of knowledge and power, and in order to occupy such a position, to
play such a role, has to adhere to certain discursive rules of conduct;
the doctor must learn the techniques to read the body of another and
embody the "medical gaze". The doctor too is the product of a machin-
ery of subjectivation. In another instance, Foucault studied what he
called "the care of the self": techniques one could perform in order to
know oneself and *become another*.[23] While some saw this last turning to
the self as the return of the modern subject, I would like to argue that
the care of the self is nothing more than another instance of subjec-
tivation. Believing in a simple opposition between "subjectivation" on
the one hand and "freedom" on the other makes the whole Foucauldian
questioning of power void. Freedom is not equal to the absence of sub-
jectivation, but the possibility of "being conducted otherwise", and of
establishing a *critical attitude* towards the world.[24]

By this production of subjectivities the practitioners of certain
academic disciplines are *disciplined*. They learn concepts and read cer-
tain texts considered important by their fields, but they also learn how
to be historians. Like the doctors Foucault studied, historians learn the
art of the "historical gaze". They learn what is considered epistemically
virtuous – should they pursue absolute precision in source criticism
or should the final narrative take precedence over factual accuracy? –
but also what kind of non-epistemic factors should matter – what role

22 Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et Punir. Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Mi-
chel Foucault, *Naissance de la Clinique* (Paris: PUF, 1963).

23 Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds. *Technologies of the Self: A
Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988); Michel Fou-
cault, *L'Herméneutique du Sujet. Cours au Collège de France (1981-1982)* (Paris: Gallimard/
Seuil, 2001); Michel Foucault, *Le Gouvernement de Soi et des Autres. Cours au Collège de
France (1982-1983)* (Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 2008).

24 See, for example, Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, Territoire, Population. Cours au Collège de
France (1977-78)* (Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 2004); Michel Foucault, "Qu'est-ce que les Lu-
mières?" in Daniel Defert, François Ewald, ed., *Dits et Écrits, v. IV* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994),
562-78; Michel Foucault, *Qu'est-ce que la critique?* (Paris: Vrin, 2015).

should the nation, or classes, or gender play in history?[25] From then on, not only have they acquired specific cognitive skills, but also non-epistemic references in relation to which they position themselves as historians – politically, ethically, and aesthetically.[26]

In this sense, telling the story of scholarly selfhood in professional historiography is describing different configurations of this machinery responsible for producing a subjectivity which is able to "tell something about the past". What were the different epistemic virtues required of historians to do history of a certain kind? What kind of incentives did they have in order to work in this and not that field? What were the non-epistemic motivations for the rise in this or that kind of history? It is at once a study of the conditions of the possibility of professional historiography (its social place) and of the long process by which one can acquire certain traits which enable one to "be a historian" (the practices). As Certeau put it a long time ago, "Telle est la double fonction du lieu. Il *rend possibles* certaines recherches, par le fait de conjonctures et de problématiques communes. Mais il en *rend* d'autres *impossibles*; il exclut du discours ce qui est sa condition à un moment donné; il joue le rôle d'une censure par rapport aux postulats présents (sociaux, économiques, politiques) de l'analyse."[27] The social place of history is, then, the point at which we may grasp this machinery in action – where one tries to mold his or her scholarly self by reference to a repertoire of scholarly personae available in his or her historical situation.

This conceptual architecture allows us to work with context as diverse as 19th century Europe and 20th century Brazil. The category of "practices of subjectivation" is abstract enough to serve as a reference for our analysis in different contexts, but is also defined by certain rules of procedure so that it does not allow us to "say whatever we want". In other words, it provides us with a problem in the genealogical sense,

25 They might also learn early that those same non-epistemic factors may either open "new and exciting" professional opportunities or make them completely inaccessible.

26 See, for example, Herman Paul, "Manuals on Historical Method" and Herman Paul, "What is a Scholarly Persona?"

27 Certeau, *L'Écriture de l'Histoire*, 78. Italics in the original.

that is, a specific question to be answered by reference to different historical instances.[28]

Methodological issues

In order to be able to engage in such an enterprise, it is necessary to solve some methodological problems. What sources would one need in order to study the subjectivation of historians? And what would one need to look for in such sources? Paul's sources are, as I mentioned earlier, mainly letters, obituaries, and manuals. These materials are common for the period he works with (19th century Europe), but not so common for others, like 20th century Brazil. With the late professionalization of history in Brazil, many of the methodology manuals used were translations from European manuals. Universities only became the main venue for historians by the second half of the 20th century, and most of the letters written by lesser known professors were not archived. Some universities have records of the courses taught in this period, but the archives were not organized or even catalogued. To solve the problem of the lack of sources, I turned to book reviews.

Since the middle of the 20th century onwards, Brazilian professional historiography has mainly been based in universities. The military dictatorship which ruled the country from 1964 to 1985 passed an extensive law reforming Brazilian higher education in 1968, and by the end of the 1980s it was possible to see the first results of the growing number of history departments with post-graduation programs.[29] Up until 1981, only the University of São Paulo (USP) had a PhD program

28 When I say "a problem in the genealogical sense", I would like to refer to the specific instances where Foucault's genealogy was criticized by historians on the basis of what they thought was "lacking in history". The most well-known example is probably Jacques Léonard's criticisms of *Surveiller et Punir*, specially how it ignored the French Revolution in its narrative. The point here is that genealogy pursues specific problems which do not necessarily require an exhaustive search for "more and more context".

29 For a good overview of the higher education system in Brazil during the military dictatorship, see Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta, *As Universidades e o Regime Militar* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2014). For a narrower study of Brazilian higher education during the military dictatorship, much less critical to the military regime, see Luiz Antônio Cunha, *A Universidade Reformada: o Golpe de 1964 e a Modernização do Ensino Superior* (São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2007).

in history; between 1981 and 1986, four new PhD programs were established, but these were still concentrated in the south and southeast regions.[30] Despite this scenario, there were already some journals circulating in the 1980s, and I was able to find useful material from these.

Although book reviews are usually evaluations of books, it is not uncommon for the reviewer to refer to the qualities of people rather than the qualities of books, or to the qualities of a text that can only exist because of the work done before the writing. A simple example is, "This book was based on extensive archival research, and updated bibliography". A book can only be "based on extensive archival research, and updated bibliography" if its writer carried out the necessary research and reading. If the reviewer thought this information was relevant enough for it to be mentioned, even if only for the sake of convention, this says something about the sort of work a historian is supposed to do. This axiological language is important if one aims at describing the epistemic virtues a historian should demonstrate.

Such evaluative language also allows for solving the tension between what prescriptive manuals say and what historians "actually" do because book reviews evaluate the results of long research. As such, even if the conduct of the author or the reviewer contradicts what is said in methodology manuals, the way this assessment is made should be evidence of what is considered important. Not that these kinds of sources should be taken more seriously than the manuals, rather that they express different instances of the process of subjectivation – prescription and assessment. In other words, these sources are related to different aspects of this machinery, and should provide a foundation for us to understand different parts of the process of subjectivation.[31]

30 Fico and Polito, *A História no Brasil*, 33.

31 Other useful sources for this kind of approach are those used by Paul himself – obituaries, letters, and manuals – but also any public debates or speeches, for they also frequently mobilize evaluative language. With that said, time and budget limitations restricted my own specific research focus to book reviews only.

CONCLUSION

Of course there are other possible approaches to the task of showing how the figure of the historian has been constructed in different contexts. In the Brazilian history of historiography one may find good works which deal with this subject.[32] However, the concepts proposed by Herman Paul, which I have appropriated and tried to situate here in relation to a broader theoretical scheme, provide a promising framework through which to understand how different "ways of being a historian" can emerge or disappear.[33]

A whole body of mystical references is mobilized when historians talk about their own doings: hearing the voices of the past, the ghosts of the past, the archive as a place of contact with those who are no longer with us.[34] The conceptual architecture I have discussed in this paper aims at making those references understandable – not in the sense of unveiling a deeper, hidden truth, but in the sense of establishing the relationships these references had with what historians expected of their peers. This conceptual architecture should enable us to relate assertions like "Le bon historien, lui, ressemble à l'ogre de la légende. Là où il flaire de la chair humaine, il sait que là est son gibier"[35] to a whole body of points of reference according to which such words can function. This is an attempt to write a history of historiography which is more than the chronicle of great names (usually *male*), writing great works, or of the succession of historiographical schools. Of course those

32 See, for example, Angela de Castro Gomes, *História e Historiadores* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 1996); Rodrigo Turin, "Uma Nobre, Difícil e Útil Empresa: o Ethos do Historiador Oitocentista," *História da Historiografia* 2 (2009): 12-28; Maria da Glória de Oliveira, "Fazer História, Escrever a História: Sobre as Figurações do Historiador no Brasil Oitocentista," *Revista Brasileira de História* 30, n. 59 (2010): 37-52.

33 There is one paper from a Brazilian historian which tries to dialogue with Paul's proposal. See Maria da Glória de Oliveira, "O Nobre Sacerdócio da Verdade: Reflexões sobre o Ofício do Historiador no Brasil Oitocentista," *Lusíada. História* 9/10 (2013): 191-207. Other than that, Paul's proposal has resonated mostly with Anglophone audiences.

34 Not only with Ranke, Michelet, or Guizot. See Michel de Certeau, *Histoire et Psychanalyse* (Paris: Folio Gallimard, 2002); Arlette Farge, *Le Goût de l'Archive* (Paris: Seuil, 1989). See also Jo Tollebeek, "'Turn'd to Dust and Tears': Revisiting the Archive," *History & Theory* 43, n. 2 (2004): 237-48; Kasper Risbjerg Eskildsen, "Leopold Ranke's Archival Turn: Location and Evidence in Modern Historiography," *Modern Intellectual History* 5, n. 3 (2008): 425-53.

35 Marc Bloch, *Apologie pour l'Histoire ou le Métier d›Historien* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1974), 35.

works have a place, but they should not be our only way of treating historiography historically.[36]

By studying how Brazilian historians have assessed the performance of their peers, my research aims to show not only the values these historians cherished, or what kind of skills they needed for their work, but also the extent to which we should be mindful of how our own selves are affected by power today. In the spirit of the historical ontology of the present, the central point of this enterprise is not so much to exhibit "our professional forefathers" as relics of an ancient, dead past, but to enable us to think critically about our own "ways of being a historian".

36 Here I would like to echo the concerns of Stefan Collini, "'Discipline History' and 'Intellectual History': Reflections on the Historiography of the Social Sciences in Britain and France," *Revue de Synthèse* 109, n. 3/4 (1988), 387-399.

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