

# Review of: "Foucault 40 years later – an intimate history"

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I think this is a beautiful and lucid article. It is drawn, moreover, from an original perspective, the intersection between the author's life and intellectual trajectories and the reader, which, as Christophe Premat points out in his commentary, underscores the role of reception. In this regard, I found interesting Pietro Barbetta's reflection on his discomfort when reading Foucault for the first time, since we tend to establish an almost automatic connection between the understanding of texts and the reader's education, and we often forget that the reader approaches books on the basis of their own wealth of experiences and personal expectations.

I think the article has many virtues, including a commitment to nomadism to combat narrow-mindedness, an emphasis on the genealogical method or a vindication of what could be a fruitful dialogue between Foucault's work and contemporary psychology.

I would like to point out, or express a small disagreement: at the beginning of the article, the author alludes to the advent of public opinion following the invention of the press at the end of the 15th century. Although we already find printed news at that time, if we are rigorous we must say that public opinion was born in the 18th century. The works of authors such as Jürgen Habermas, Arlette Farge, Roger Chartier and Robert Darnton support this hypothesis. Since I have had the opportunity to study this subject - specifically public opinion in 18th century France - I can provide a rather significant piece of data, taken from Jean Sgard's *Dictionnaire des journaux*: before 1789, there are records of more than 1200 French-language newspapers, of which more than 1000 were born in the 18th century.

I have also been able to study the Damiens case, that cruel ordeal with which *Surveiller et punir* begins. If it is of interest, I suggest some bibliographical references: Pierre Rétat (dir.), *L'attentat de Damiens. Discours sur l'événement au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris/Lyon: CNRS/Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1979 [<https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pul.551>]; Dale Kenneth Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750-1770* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984 [<https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400857289>]; Víctor Cases Martínez, "El caso Damiens y la desacralización de la monarquía francesa", *Studia Historica: Historia Moderna*, vol. 43, n. 2, 2021, pp. 339-368 [<https://doi.org/10.14201/shhmo2021432339368>].

Like Marcelo Pakman, I hope that Pietro Barbetta's article will eventually become a book that I would be delighted to read.

