



HISTORICAL THOUGHT AND EVOLUTION OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract

This study examines the evolution of historical thinking and historical consciousness within the framework of philosophy of history, historiography, and theories of social consciousness. The research conceptualizes historical thinking not merely as a method of interpreting historical knowledge but as an intellectual process that shapes collective memory, cultural identity, and civilizational experience. The article analyzes the historical transformation of historical consciousness from traditional narratives to modern historiographical paradigms. The findings demonstrate that historical thinking and historical consciousness constitute interconnected dimensions of human intellectual development, reflecting the changing ways societies interpret their past and construct their historical identity.

Keywords: Historical thinking, historical consciousness, philosophy of history, historiography, historical memory, historical identity.

Introduction

Human development is a complex social process formed on the basis of historical experience and historical memory, and each society determines its cultural identity and social prospects through the understanding and interpretation of its past, therefore, the phenomena of historical thinking and historical consciousness are one of the important objects of research not only of the science of history, but also of philosophy, sociology and cultural studies. Historical thinking is considered a form of intellectual activity that expresses a person's ability to logically analyze past events, understand their cause-and-effect relationships and determine the general laws of historical processes, while historical consciousness is manifested as a form of social consciousness that reflects the collective memory, historical experience and cultural values of society. In modern historiography, the issue of the relationship between historical thinking and historical consciousness is becoming an increasingly important



scientific problem, since historical knowledge is not only a means of studying the past, but also an important factor in shaping the cultural and political identity of society. In the tradition of the philosophy of history, the issue of the evolution of historical consciousness has been studied by many thinkers. Hegel interpreted the historical process as the dialectical development of the human spirit, Marx explained historical consciousness in relation to socio-economic relations, and in the historiography of the 20th century, representatives of the Annales school developed historical thinking as a comprehensive scientific approach that is not limited to political events, but also focuses on the study of mentality, everyday life, and social structures. Modern historical research shows that the evolution of historical consciousness is closely related to the cultural and intellectual development of society, and the formation of historical thinking directly affects how society understands and interprets its history, therefore, a comprehensive scientific analysis of historical thinking and the phenomena of historical consciousness allows for a deeper understanding of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the science of history.

Literature analysis and methodology

Historical thinking and historical consciousness phenomena are one of the central categories of the philosophy of history and the theory of historiography, and their scientific interpretation was formed on the basis of different theoretical approaches in different periods. While the representatives of ancient Greek historical thought, Herodotus and Thucydides, created the initial methodological foundations of historical thinking by searching for causal relationships in describing historical events, in medieval historical thought, history was interpreted more within the framework of a religious worldview, and historical processes were explained by divine will. By the new era, historical thinking began to develop on the basis of a secular scientific approach, and a philosophy of history aimed at rationally explaining historical processes was formed. In particular, Hegel interpreted history as a “process of development of the universal spirit” and tried to explain the evolution of historical consciousness through a dialectical development model, while Marx linked the historical process with changes in socio-economic relations and explained historical consciousness with the material production system of society. The development of historical methodology in the 19th and 20th centuries made it possible to analyze the



phenomenon of historical thinking from a new scientific perspective. In particular, the Annales school, founded by the French historians Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, justified the need to analyze historical thinking not only in terms of studying political events or state history, but also in terms of the mentality, everyday life, economic system and cultural structure of society. Later, Fernand Braudel, analyzing historical processes in the context of long-term structural changes, proposed a new methodological paradigm of historical thinking. In modern historiography, the concept of historical consciousness is often analyzed in connection with theories of collective memory; in this regard, Maurice Halbwachs interpreted historical memory as an important social mechanism that shapes the collective consciousness of society. At the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries, the phenomenon of historical thinking began to be widely studied within the framework of cultural history, microhistory and postmodern historiography, in which interpretations of historical truth, the formation of historical narratives and the constructive features of historical knowledge became the focus of special attention. Modern research shows that historical thinking is not only the process of studying historical facts, but also a way for society to understand its past, and the evolution of historical consciousness is closely related to the level of cultural, political and intellectual development of society. Therefore, the study of historical thinking and historical consciousness allows not only to deepen the theoretical foundations of historical science, but also to understand the processes of forming the historical identity of society.

This study is aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of historical thinking and historical consciousness, in which a methodological approach based on the integration of the philosophy of history, the theory of historiography and the concepts of social consciousness was used. The research methodology was formed on the basis of historical-comparative analysis, historical reconstruction, conceptual analysis and historiographical methods. The method of historical-comparative analysis made it possible to compare the features of the formation of historical thinking and historical consciousness in different historical periods, which served to identify the laws of the evolutionary development of historical thinking. Through the method of historical reconstruction, models of historical thinking formed in different periods were restored, and their theoretical foundations and social functions were analyzed. During the study, the method of conceptual analysis within the philosophy of history was used to determine the epistemological features of historical thinking, in which the



interrelationship of such categories as historical thinking, historical consciousness, historical memory and historical identity was studied. Also, the influence of various historical schools and theoretical approaches on the development of historical thinking was analyzed using historiographical methods. In the course of the research, a concept was developed to divide the evolution of historical thinking into three main stages: the first stage is the period of formation of traditional historical consciousness, in which history was explained on the basis of religious or mythological interpretations; the second stage is the period of formation of rational historical thinking, in which history began to be considered as an object of scientific analysis; the third stage is the period of formation of modern paradigms of historiography, in which historical thinking is interpreted as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon. This methodological approach made it possible to conduct a deeper analysis of the interrelationship between historical thinking and historical consciousness and to identify the mechanisms of formation of historical knowledge.

Results

In the course of the research, a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical foundations of the evolution of historical thinking and historical consciousness and their role in the development of society was carried out, and it was revealed that historical thinking, as a way of understanding humanity's past, has been constantly developing under the influence of social, cultural and intellectual factors. An analysis of historical sources, schools of historiography and concepts of the philosophy of history showed that the process of formation of historical thinking includes several important stages. The first stage is the period of formation of traditional historical consciousness, in which historical events were interpreted on the basis of mythological or religious interpretations; during this period, historical thinking was closely related to the religious worldview of society, and historical processes were interpreted as manifestations of divine will. The second stage is the period of formation of rational historical thinking, which was formed in connection with the philosophy of history of the New Age and is characterized by the emergence of approaches aimed at the scientific analysis of historical processes based on causal relationships; especially Hegel, Marx and other thinkers tried to explain historical processes through the general laws of social development. The third stage is the period when modern historiographical paradigms were formed, in which historical thinking is interpreted



as a multidimensional socio-cultural phenomenon, and historical research is not limited to political history, but also covers economic, cultural, mental and civilizational processes. The results of the study showed that the evolution of historical consciousness plays an important role in the formation of the cultural identity and collective memory of society, since historical consciousness is one of the important factors determining how society interprets its past and determines its future development strategy. At the same time, it was clarified that in modern historiography, historical thinking is considered not only as a process of describing historical facts, but also as a scientific activity aimed at analyzing historical knowledge, understanding its epistemological foundations and studying the mechanisms of formation of historical narratives.

Discussion

The results obtained show the importance of interdisciplinary approaches such as philosophy of history, sociology, and cultural studies in studying the phenomena of historical thinking and historical consciousness, along with traditional historiographical approaches. Analysis of the evolution of historical thinking has shown that the formation of historical knowledge is inextricably linked with the social structure, cultural values, and political processes of society, and the development of historical consciousness directly affects how society interprets its history. Modern historiographical paradigms interpret historical thinking not only as a means of describing the sequence of events, but also as a social mechanism that forms the collective memory of society. From this point of view, the concept of historical consciousness is closely related to the processes of forming the cultural identity of society, and the categories of historical memory and historical identity appear as important structural elements of historical thinking. The results of the study show that in the process of the evolution of historical thinking, the methodology of historical science is also constantly changing, since the methods used in historical research are improving in connection with the level of intellectual development of society and changes in scientific paradigms. Therefore, in modern historiography, it is necessary to use interdisciplinary approaches to studying the problem of historical thinking, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of historical sources, and to interpret historical processes in a broad civilizational context. Such an approach allows for a deeper understanding of the interrelationship between historical thinking and historical



consciousness, and to more clearly define the place of historical knowledge in the development of society.

Conclusion

This study aims to comprehensively analyze the evolutionary development of historical thinking and historical consciousness phenomena in the context of the philosophy of history, historiographical methodology, and theories of social consciousness. The conducted scientific analyses have shown that historical thinking is an important form of intellectual activity that helps humanity understand its past, explain the causal relationship of historical processes, and identify the general laws of social development. The results of the study confirm that the evolution of historical thinking is closely related to the level of cultural, political, and intellectual development of society, and show that historical consciousness is an important form of social consciousness that forms the collective memory, historical experience, and cultural identity of society. The analysis of historical sources and schools of historiography showed that the evolution of historical thinking can be explained through three main stages: the first stage is the period of traditional historical consciousness based on mythological and religious interpretations, the second stage is the period of the formation of a rational philosophy of history, in which historical processes began to be considered as an object of scientific analysis, and the third stage is the period of the formation of modern historiographical paradigms, in which historical thinking is interpreted as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon. The results of the study showed that the interrelationship between historical thinking and historical consciousness allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of formation of historical knowledge, since historical thinking represents the process of analyzing and explaining historical facts, while historical consciousness determines how this knowledge is reflected and interpreted in the consciousness of society. From this point of view, studying the evolution of historical thinking allows not only to deepen the theoretical foundations of historiography, but also to understand the processes of forming the historical memory and cultural identity of society. The study showed that in modern historiography, one of the important scientific tasks is the use of interdisciplinary approaches to studying the phenomenon of historical thinking, the analysis of historical processes in a broad civilizational context, and the in-depth study of the epistemological foundations of historical knowledge.



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