

Defining History and Historical Method from Jean Bodin to Arnold Toynbee

¹Dragan Tancic, ²Dalibor Elezovic and ¹Zvezdana Elezovic

¹Institute of Serbian Culture Lepasovic, Lepasovic, Serbia

²Faculty of Philosophy, University of Mitrovica, Mitrovica, Serbia

Abstract: The study deals with the problem of defining historical science and historical method from the time of Jean Bodin to Arnold Toynbee. In the existing scientific-theoretical fund, there are various notions of history as a science as well as of the concepts that deny the existence of a historical method which can be determined by analyzing the scientific-theoretical fund, ranging from Jean Bodin to Arnold Toynbee as well as in other periods of time. Based on the analysis of the scientific question posed, it is indisputable that we can conclude that there is a special historical method as a method of historical sciences and that is as a general scientific method.

Key words: History, historiography, scientific method, historical method, the subject of science, analyzing

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this scientific research is different definitions of history and historical method in social sciences in the mentioned period. In this context, this research primarily has the characteristics of methodological research which are objectively very rare, although, any research can be considered both methodological and theoretical. This study identifies different definitions of history and historical method and its application in social science research, especially, in research of theoretical character with a descriptive scientific goal.

Essentially, the subject of research of this study is the composition, structure and essential properties of the historical method and the way of its application. Unlike, some other general scientific methods, the historical method does not have (according to the current methodology literature) its specific data collection tools and the procedures used in the research are not only his own but are also applied in other methods.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research used historiographic material related to the development of the historical method from the 16th to the 20th century. As well as the results of contemporary historical science related to this issue. The study of the topic implied the application of analysis and synthesis, abstraction, concretization, generalization, logical-cognitive methods and procedures. The nature and content of the source as well as the character of the problem we investigated, determined the use of the

historical method. The historical method implies time and space location of research objects and critical processing of stored materials. Social sciences imply that the general objects of comparison are all social phenomena that is those in which a certain quality can be determined, among which there is a certain degree of possibility of establishing the identity, similarity or diversity. Historical sources and their specificities give us the possibility of comparing not only to determine similarity but also to determine the differences. Social phenomena imply that absolutely different phenomena can be compared to determine differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the period of strengthening of the bourgeoisie as the leading exploitative class in the 16th century, appeared the famous French political theorist, Jean Bodin who was analyzing economic phenomena, predominantly monetary problems. In terms of historical research, his research "Method for the Easy Comprehension of History" is well-known. According to Bodin, history is a science of the progress of mankind. Bodin did not explicitly define the historical method but bearing in mind his evolutionary understanding of history, we could take an attitude that he represents the historical-methodological principle of evolution. Applying analysis, synthesis, historical and comparative method, Bodin specifically considered the theoretical issues of the state where he represented the notion that the basis of the state is the family which foundation is a private property. The origin of the state is viewed through the multiplication of families, not by natural means and

sovereignty is essential for the state. In the foregoing, he considered that the rights and customs of various nations must be investigated in a comparative manner and that it is also necessary to establish the connection between society, geography and in particular, the climate.

In the definition of history and the development of the historical method in the 17 and 18th centuries, there has been significant progress for the following reasons. In the first place, religious-mystical ideas about history were rejected and secondly, new approaches to historical problems from the aspect of science set the first foundation of the historical method. Thus, the French theoretician Condorcet studied historical development from lower degrees to higher. The drivers of progression Condorcet saw in the improvement of the knowledge and abilities of people and thus, diminished the scientific value of his basic thoughts on progressive development by which he interpreted the progress in an idealistic way but also eliminated the darkness of religious feudal relations. In his detailed analysis of the history of mankind from the family community, through the phenomenon of animal husbandry and trade and commerce to highlighting the importance of division of labor and the birth of new classes of workers and traders, Condorcet came to the viewpoint that the political system of society has become more complex and complicated. This methodically linked the trends in the economy, the basis of society with the political system. To his own perceptions in historical research his method contained the depiction of history as a historical method which led to detailed observations on a range of socio-economic elements such as exchange, trade, money, production, classes and more. Condorcet with his historical method, encompassed social and political processes (classes and class struggles). The ideas of Montesquieu and Rousseau were also of approximate significance (Klyuchevsky, 1937).

Voltaire was a representative of the French Enlightenment and critic of the French feudal society. In many of his research, he exposed progressive and revolutionary ideas in the field of history as well as a series of contradictions in his overall view of the world. Thus, on the one hand, the permanent value of his theses is found such as ideas about the necessity of history to be a science of the history of culture that the task of history is the construction of the philosophy of history the idea of history as a science about the study of science, economic phenomena, art that history was narrowed down to Eurocentricism and that history should research the history of China, India, Arab countries and peoples. On the other hand, Voltaire defines history as a science that studies history as a whole as an arena of the

struggle of good and evil, enlightenment, ignorance, etc., Voltaire as a thinker in spiritual creation has many definitions of history but also contradict approaches to the historical phenomena and interpretations of historical phenomena. Such a contradiction could be explained by the uncertainty or lack of a scientific historical methodology. Its significance is reflected in the emphasis on the causality that replaces theological consideration (Pejovic, 1982).

Montesquieu based his works on the idea that the whole history is moving and evolving legally. Particular attention is drawn to the thought of Montesquieu with a strong historical accent, especially, in his research "Reflections on the Causes of the Ascent and Fall of the Romans" and in "Persian Letters" and up to modern times discussed, disputed but not negated, the great work of a predominantly political character "the Spirit of the Law" (Dirkem, 1982). History, based on these ideas is a science of the history of mankind as a lawful process independent of God! the laws of nature and society are necessary and come from the nature of things as objective rules. His historical and comparative method was based on determining differences in the world. Applying the comparison, he emphasized the diversity of both time and country. By emphasizing diversity, he avoided uniformity and with this approach came to the conclusion that "the law is a system of relations" which consists in different relations with different things and different things with the pra-cause, reason. The constitution of each authority, he brought about in the connection with climate, customs, land and region.

According to Herder, historiography had the task of studying society as an extension of the evolution of nature. Thus, Herder argued that evolution takes place, according to natural laws, without some supernatural powers. The development of the nation is a series of links, so that, each has its own binding to the previous link and are directed towards the highest degree of humanity. History is a progressive evolution of humanity. Therefore, at the forefront of the life of society, the culture was emphasized as a stimulus for the development of society. His ideas that space and time are experiential concepts still have some influence on the application of historical and other scientific methods (Dobbek, 1950). According to Herder, evolution is at the core of the whole matter but he also considered that the driving forces of history are the external nature and the properties inspired by transparency such as the idea of the "soul of the people" that tactically without the will of the individual determines all his life forms (Gross, 2001). The characteristic of his historical method refers to the enjoyment of historians in

the spirit of the past society and culture, since, the characteristics of various nations were the driving force of world history.

Kant defined history as a science whose central subject was the state. He was one of the first methodologists of historicism (Gross, 2001). Modern science thinks that the great thinker has positively built the conception of history as a science with the object of studying antagonistic opposites in society but at the same time it is noted that by his content of those opposites-individually against the social in its interpretation-he did not even mention the class struggle as the central dynamics of historical development. His thought was burdened with the difficult feudal yoke of the German State in an effort to build the bourgeois ideal of constitutional order and capitalist socio-economic order in general. The application of the historical method by Kant is significant because he explained the phenomena with their history, the understanding of history was based on the relationship between historical testimonies and the principles of evolution in phenomena.

Hegel defined history as a science that studies the legal process of human development from lower to higher degrees. According to Hegel such a development is progressive, lawful but not chaotic. Hegel resisted or ignored the primacy of historical practice for it would deny his central idealistic idea of the primacy of the idea and the embodiment of the absolute spirit. His idea of the historical process as a closed logical process was not accepted by any of the advocates of idealism in history until new times. It is very characteristic that Hegel in the "History of Philosophy" has set the task of discovering in historical research the essential content of historical events. He considered that when the spirit crosses the boundaries of a given nation, then it enters the ground of world history. Hegel's judgment on the relation of personality and social environment is extremely instructive today because in the final analysis, Hegel in his own theses gives an answer to the very sensitive issue of the so-called "heroic theory" and contemporary attempts to make all social turmoil, social reforms or revolutionary events being tied solely to "great personalities" (Hegel, 1939). Hegel sets the relationship of personality and social environment to the foundations of his famous relationship between the external and the inner. It is in fact, a dialectical relationship of personality and social environment, the relation of personality and historical events. The personality and history of events, the relationship of personality and the social environment are not two separate elements but "inseparable opposing moments which constitute human reality" as Nedeljkovic interprets this Hegel's thought. Further, analysis shows

that these two moments, two historical elements are not indifferent to each other are not in any lasting balance but in continuous action and reaction. Consequently, what a person really sets becomes a reality when it shows to be socially appropriate it becomes social reality. This thought is not only a dialectical, exceptional value from a methodological point of view but rather as a guiding idea in the research of historical matter-verification in society as a social reality. That is why his words today sound not only visionary but really historical at every moment of history; what a man does, he is and to the lying vanity which is heated by the awareness of some inner exceptional value, must be opposed the gospel saying "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Hegel, 1939).

Leopold Ranke takes a special place in the study of history and the use of the historical method by his definition that history is the science that explores "what is and what was" emphasizing the objectivity of "historical research and the researchers themselves". The main object, the object of historical research for him was the state, the power of the state outwardly. Ranke describes a series of historical facts, events, especially political events, historical-comparative and literary, based on numerous data but only describing them without exploring their historical etiology. His historical-comparative method indicates that he investigated "what happened" without explaining the roots and course of the development of historical facts. The main drivers of historical events for him were great personalities which he placed in the first place in his research. Hegel criticized Ranke that only "ordinary historians" are lost in individual facts and Ranke criticized Hegel and Fichte for their a priori philosophical constructions, regardless of the actual past as well as Nibur due to the narrow determination of only individual events (Gross, 2001). As a researcher of historical events, Ranke has defined norms for application in scientific research, the principles of criticism of archival narrative sources and the problems of the reproductive function of historians.

Drouzen was the founder of the so-called Prussian Little School (which was one of the means of political struggle for the unification of Germany under the leadership of Prussia) whose main goal was the glorification of Prussian militarism. In the "History of Prussian Politics" starting from historical analysis, he pointed to the importance of the Prussian State as a prerequisite for the unification of Germany. Unlike Ranke, he emphasized the importance of investigating documents, facts and the research process in history was first divided into four phases; heuristics,

criticism, interpretation and presentation. He divided four forms of presentation; those that originate from the research and provide knowledge about the research of historians in relation to certain problems, rather than the historical facts themselves, the narrative form a didactic presentation which with the help of the past tries to explain the present and the form of discussion in which the history of certain issues of the present is researched. He investigated Hellenism by using a historical-comparative method and condemned the dissociation of the Greek republic as an expression of moral ruin and at the same time opposed them to a powerful Macedonian State with Alexander the Great, headed by his military leaders and generals.

Fustel de Kulanz who by applying the historical method in his works excluded pragmatism was against the fact that historians in their works on the past introduce the conceptions of their time that historians must not turn historical figures into the models of contemporary events, nor that historical facts be interpreted as an excuse for the ideology. Studying the ancient state, he unlike many historians did not abuse the history of antiquity in order to justify his political views. Most of them considered that the initiators of political life were statesmen or political groups, unlike Kulanz who tried to prove that constitutional changes were the result of social relations, changes in property relations and national beliefs. For him, the driving forces of historical movement are broader layers of society. His focus on historical studies is a small man, not statesmen and great figures (Culanz, 1956).

The negation of history as science began with the research of Comte (1980). He considered history to be a part of sociology and the historical method as part of a sociological method with the task of discovering the laws of society. He believed that history deals with collective forces, the organization of groups and not great personalities. This has influenced the development of the historical method because the social environment, the environment in which the historical personality was moving, began to be explored. He tried to apply the methods of natural sciences in historical research, although, society and the historical development of society do not follow natural laws. The characteristic of his historical method consists in attempting to explain historical phenomena as an expression of natural and historical laws. The moving forces of the historical movement, he has seen in ideas, in the knowledge of the world by scientific means. Comte (1980) was against the meaningless description of historical facts and insisted on establishing universal, eternal laws but he underestimated the concrete historical research which led to the creation

of the gap between history and sociology which is not even overcome in modern conditions (Filipovic, 1962; Kolakovski, 1972).

In his research, Durkheim emphasized the importance of history in the processes of knowledge about man and society. In the study on Croce and Sorel Durkheim pointed out that sociology and history are necessary to each other with history explaining individual events and sociology traces of types and laws and individual events only interest them as examples of general laws. The relationship between the past, the present and the future for Durkheim was purely chronological and in his opinion, the prediction of social development was not possible. The application of Durkheim's comparative-historical method is manifested in his research of society, the society of mechanical and organic solidarity in the analysis of consciousness, social coercion. He emphasizes the importance of social facts, connects the description and fact-finding and detection of causal relationships and laws, emphasizes the importance of theoretical attitudes to research, emphasizes that the comparative method can be applied in one or more societies of the same type and for the research of all societies on which there are data. A powerful comparative-historical method was Durkheim's basic methodological tool until his age-old years (Dirkem, 1972).

Wilhelm Dilthey, a German historian and founder of the axiological and methodological theoretical approach in political science has determined the historical method as contemporary. His main research in which he displayed his theoretical attitudes is "Building a Historical World in Spiritual Science" (Diltaj, 1980). The basic theses of Dilthey are that spiritual sciences are an empirical science, that the basic method of all the sciences is hermeneutics, that social sciences are independent and contradictory to natural science that it is necessary to understand the inner life and human activities. The subject of history, the historical method are not social structures nor the regularity of development but certain individuals and their consciousness activities. The basic task of social sciences and historical methods would be to absorb historical personality experiences with the goal of understanding and re-experiencing their motivations without the need for general notions or generalizations. Historians with intuition and direct experiences can understand other people's psychic life because they are above all, historical beings and only then observers of history.

Max Weber is also a representative of the axiological and methodological theoretical approach in political science who formed the theory of the method of

understanding and tried to apply the method in the investigation of social and political processes and behavior. He operationalized the method of understanding and the method of ideal types. According to him, social phenomena are unique and unrepeatable because they are cultural and historical. The causes of the movement are basically individual personal motives and goals. His contribution to the construction and application of the historical method in political science can be identified from several points of view. First of all, it is his view of the action that brings certain target effects the following refers to human social behavior that is directed "by the expectation of others and expectations of the behavior of others in which social experience has enormous significance". The third contribution relates to the classification of social behavior and the fourth is the construction and implementation of an ideal-type method (Veber, 1976).

Gaetano Mosca "built his point of view on the method of political science as a historical method". In the theorem preface to *Theoric*, Mosca talks about the significance of history for his studies (Indjic, 1977).

Marx (1956) points out that the roots of history, historical activity are not only found in the sphere of conceptual motives but he emphasizes the interdependence between the motive of historical activity and the degree of development of material production which he gave in the foreword to the part "An annex to criticism of political economy" by the following statement: in the social production of their lives, people enter into certain necessary, from their will independent relations-production relations which correspond to a certain degree to a development of their material productive forces. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of the society, the real basis on which legal and political upgrading raises and which corresponds to certain forms of social consciousness. The way of material life production conditions the social, political and spiritual process of life in general. The consciousness of people is not determined by their being but vice versa, their social being determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with existing production relations or-which is merely a legal expression of it-with the property relations in which they have developed, so far. From the form of the development of the productive forces, these relations turn into their irons. Then the epoch of the social revolution emerges. With a change in the economic base, a quicker or slower downturn takes place in the whole huge upgrade. When considering such overturns, one must always distinguish between material

overturns in economic conditions of production which is to be noted with the accuracy of natural sciences and legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical in short: ideological forms in which people become aware of that conflict and solve it by fightings" (Marx, 1956). The starting point of the scientific research of history is the materialistic understanding of history that is the application of the historical method to the field of social phenomena which removes the basic shortcomings of earlier historical theories. Early historical theories did not encompass mass actions and historical materialism emphasized the necessity of exploring the social conditions of the masses and changing these conditions. By using the historical method as a general scientific method using the basic methods of scientific research and thinking, analytical and synthetic methods, Marx has comprehensively investigated the processes of formation, development, ascent and decay of socio-economic formations. The collected empirical, original material was critically analyzed and interpreted, according to the whole of the historical phenomena which were the subject of scientific research. By this approach, Marx also pointed to a new method of scientific research of history as phenomena, processes, systems and structures.

Lenin (1958) used a historical method in analyzing Russian history, analyzing the features of feudalism and capitalism in Russia. In studying the Russian past, he used various sources, quantitative methods, to build his theory and classification of imperialism which is still an integral part of scientific research of the historical period after 1870 (Mavrodin, 1970). His demand is that when analyzing any social issue it is placed in historical frameworks, then when it comes to one country, for example, on a national program for a given country, to take into account the specific peculiarities in which that country differs from others within the boundaries of the same historical epoch" (Lenin, 1958).

Oswald Schpengler analyzes the morphology of cultures, homology and analogy as a subject of historical research. He also defined morphological periodization, which rejected all chronology, so, according to these principles, the contemporaries became Pythagoras and Dekart and so on. In interpreting history, applying the historical method, he introduces concepts of discontinuity, "exalted unconditionality", simultaneity, organic walk, cyclicity, morphology. He denied the possibility of exploring history on a scientific basis as well as any causality in the historical development (Spengler, 1936). According to him, people are not carriers of culture but only helpless dolls, driven by unknown "primal souls". In a well-known manual of traditional history, Burnham pointed out that historical science is a

science that explores and presents the temporally and spatially determined facts of the development of people in their (single, typical and collective) activity as social beings in connection with psychophysical causation.

Toynbee (1946) considered that only comparative research of various cultures could turn history into science which in a plurality of individual phenomena will reveal certain laws what is repeated. He has seen the purpose of historical development in the creation of higher, monotheistic religions and societies that suit them. So, the meaning of cultures is that in their environment religions are developed from primitive to the highest. The drivers of history are the chosen elites or “creative minorities” who respond to the law of challenges with their creations and thus, achieve the progress of a particular culture. In contrast to Schpengler’s perception of the collapse of the West, Toynbee (1946) believed that the West, Western culture could move forward which some authors as Lucien Favre criticized.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above definitions of history and historical method, it is undisputed that historical science has and had a specific subject and method of scientific research which was in different ways at different times defined. The science of history, historical science is a part of special sciences within the social sciences. Research on the subject of history implies the application of social science methods, methods of political science, legal, economic, sociological and other sciences, depending on the subject of research. The subject of the science of history is a multidimensional complex subject that includes historical phenomena, processes, structure, system, relationships and relations in various spheres and times of human history. The statements such as the “science of history”, “historical science” point to the multiple complexities of the subject of the science of the history and complexity of that science, made up of a multitude of scientific disciplines (and not auxiliary historical science the common term in the science of history, historiography). The term historiography as well as “auxiliary historical sciences” is very often inadequately used, since, historical science cannot be reduced to descriptors, describing historical events without their scientific interpretation and explanation and the like which explore various segments of history as a social reality and as a subject of science. This statement confirms the general scientific requirement that every science including the science of history has its subject of scientific research. Another general scientific requirement for the constitution of science is that each science should have its own method of acquiring scientific knowledge or

scientific research. History science fulfills this requirement also, namely, it is undisputed that scientific research of historical and other phenomena uses methods of social sciences, politics, economics, law, social sciences and other sciences but there is also the undeniable existence of a special historical method as a general scientific method, applied in all social and natural, science. In practice, both in the past and in contemporary conditions, on the basis of insights into the existing scientific-theoretical fund, there are researcher who deny the existence of a historical method as a scientific method, a general-purpose method or determine it as a comparative-historical method or as part of a sociological method. However, based on the above, it is indisputable that the existence of a special historical method as a method of historical sciences can be established as a general method in all social and natural sciences.

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