



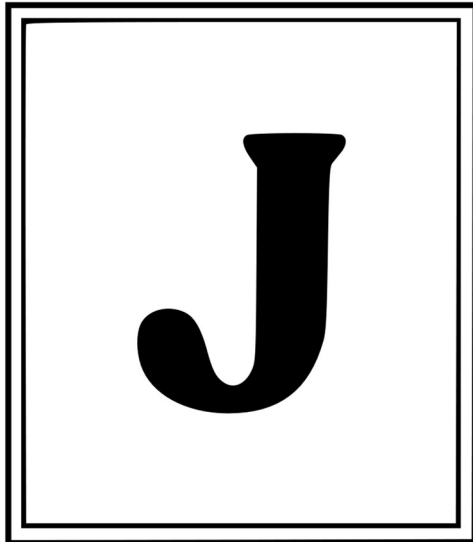
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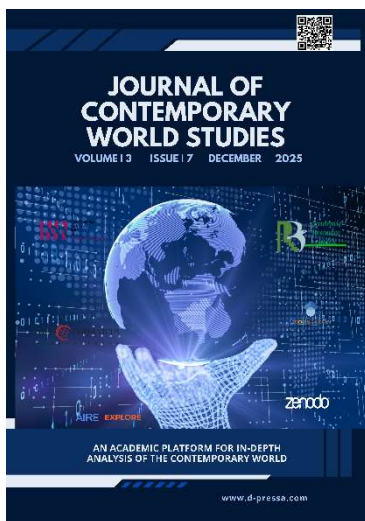
PHILOSOPHICAL MODELS OF EXPLAINING HISTORICAL PROCESSES

¹ *Abduvohidova Laziza Farhod qizi*, ² *Spanov Meirkhan*

¹ Teacher of the Jizzakh branch of the National University of Uzbekistan.

² M. Auezov South Kazakhstan University, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, Associate Professor.

e-mail: abduvohidovalaziza@gmail.com



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ANNOTATION:

Understanding historical processes has always been one of the central problems of philosophy. History is not merely a chronological sequence of events but a complex, multi-layered process shaped by economic, political, cultural, ideological, and spiritual factors. This article provides a comprehensive philosophical analysis of the main models used to explain historical processes. The study examines deterministic, idealistic, materialist (formational), civilizational, cyclical, and postmodern approaches to historical interpretation. Each model is analyzed in terms of its methodological foundations, explanatory power, and limitations. The research argues that no single philosophical model is sufficient to fully explain historical development. Instead, an integrative and pluralistic approach is required to grasp the complexity and multidimensional nature of historical reality. The findings contribute to contemporary debates in the philosophy of history by highlighting the necessity of methodological diversity in historical explanation.

KEYWORDS:

philosophy of history, historical process, philosophical models, determinism, civilization theory, formational approach, cyclical development, postmodernism.

Introduction

The question of how historical processes should be understood and explained has occupied philosophers since antiquity. Human beings have always sought to comprehend the meaning of their past in order to understand their present and anticipate their future. History, therefore, is not simply a collection of facts or events but a meaningful process that requires interpretation. The philosophy of history emerges precisely from this need to interpret historical development beyond mere description.

From early mythological explanations to modern scientific interpretations, thinkers have attempted to identify the driving forces behind historical change. Ancient philosophers often explained history through divine will, fate, or cosmic order. In the medieval period, historical processes were largely interpreted through theological frameworks, where history was seen as the realization of a divine plan. With the emergence of modern philosophy and science, historical explanation gradually shifted toward rational, secular, and systematic models.

The Enlightenment marked a turning point in the philosophy of history. Thinkers such as Voltaire, Kant, and Hegel sought to uncover universal laws and meanings underlying historical development. History began to be viewed as a rational process governed by progress, reason, and freedom. Later, in the nineteenth century, materialist interpretations emphasized economic structures and social relations as the primary forces of historical change. At the same time, alternative approaches emerged that highlighted cultural uniqueness, civilizational diversity, and cyclical patterns of rise and decline.

In the twentieth century, the philosophy of history became increasingly pluralistic. The catastrophic events of world

wars, totalitarian regimes, and global crises challenged linear and optimistic views of progress. As a result, new models emerged that questioned grand historical narratives and emphasized contingency, interpretation, and subjectivity. Postmodern approaches, in particular, rejected the idea of a single, objective historical truth and instead focused on multiple narratives and perspectives.

In the contemporary world, historical processes have become even more complex due to globalization, technological change, and cultural interaction. Economic systems, political institutions, and social identities are increasingly interconnected, making it difficult to explain history through a single causal framework. This complexity necessitates a philosophical reassessment of existing models of historical explanation.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that the way history is explained influences not only academic research but also collective memory, political ideology, and social identity. Different philosophical models shape how societies understand their past and envision their future. Therefore, analyzing these models is essential for developing a critical and reflective historical consciousness.

The main objective of this article is to analyze the major philosophical models used to explain historical processes and to assess their explanatory strengths and limitations. The article seeks to demonstrate that historical reality cannot be adequately understood through a single theoretical lens. Instead, a comprehensive understanding of history requires an integrative approach that combines insights from multiple philosophical perspectives.

Methodology

The methodological framework of this study is grounded in philosophical analysis and theoretical synthesis. Since the subject of research—philosophical models

of historical explanation—is primarily conceptual rather than empirical, qualitative methods are most appropriate. The study employs several interrelated methodological approaches to ensure a comprehensive and balanced analysis.

First, **systematic philosophical analysis** is used to examine each historical model as a coherent theoretical system. This involves identifying the core assumptions, key concepts, and explanatory mechanisms that define each model. By analyzing these elements systematically, the study reveals how different philosophical approaches conceptualize history, causality, and human agency.

Second, the **comparative method** plays a central role in the research. Different models of historical explanation are compared in terms of their ontological assumptions, epistemological foundations, and methodological implications. This comparison makes it possible to highlight both similarities and differences among the models, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses. For example, deterministic and materialist models are contrasted with idealistic and cultural approaches, while linear theories of progress are compared with cyclical and postmodern perspectives.

Third, the study applies the **principle of historicity**, which emphasizes the historical context in which each philosophical model emerged. Philosophical theories do not arise in a vacuum; they reflect the social, political, and intellectual conditions of their time. By situating each model within its historical context, the research avoids treating philosophical ideas as timeless truths and instead interprets them as responses to specific historical challenges.

Fourth, **logical analysis and abstraction** are used to derive general conclusions from the examined theories. This method allows the study to move

beyond the description of individual models and identify broader patterns and tendencies in the philosophy of history. Through abstraction, the research highlights common themes such as causality, progress, agency, and meaning.

Finally, the study adopts an **integrative methodological orientation**. Rather than privileging one model over others, the research seeks to synthesize insights from different approaches. This integrative perspective reflects the complexity of historical reality and acknowledges that no single model can fully capture the dynamics of historical processes.

The sources used in this study include classical philosophical texts, modern works in the philosophy of history, and contemporary theoretical studies. The combination of these methodological approaches ensures a comprehensive and balanced analysis, providing a solid foundation for the interpretation and discussion of results.

Results

The analysis reveals that philosophical models of historical explanation can be broadly categorized into several major types, each offering a distinct perspective on the nature and dynamics of historical processes.

The **deterministic model** explains history through causal laws and objective conditions. According to this approach, historical events are the result of identifiable causes such as economic structures, geographical factors, or technological developments. Determinism provides a sense of order and predictability, allowing historians to identify patterns and regularities. However, this model often underestimates the role of human agency, creativity, and contingency in history.

The **idealistic model** emphasizes ideas, values, and consciousness as the

driving forces of historical change. History, from this perspective, is shaped by the evolution of human thought, moral ideals, and spiritual aspirations. This approach highlights the importance of culture, ideology, and meaning in historical development. Its limitation lies in its tendency to downplay material and structural factors.

The **materialist or formational model** focuses on economic relations and modes of production as the foundation of historical change. Society is understood to evolve through distinct stages characterized by specific economic structures. This model offers a powerful tool for analyzing social inequality and class conflict. Nevertheless, it has been criticized for its economic reductionism and rigid periodization.

The **civilizational model** views history as the interaction and development of distinct civilizations, each with its own cultural identity and historical trajectory. This approach emphasizes diversity and rejects the idea of a single universal path of development. While it enriches historical understanding by acknowledging cultural specificity, it sometimes lacks explanatory coherence at the global level.

The **cyclical model** interprets history as a recurring process of rise, flourishing, decline, and collapse. This model challenges linear notions of progress and draws attention to patterns of repetition. However, it can lead to historical pessimism and may underestimate the possibility of innovation and transformation.

The **postmodern model** rejects grand historical narratives and emphasizes plurality, interpretation, and subjectivity. History is seen as a constructed narrative rather than an objective reality. This approach promotes critical reflection and inclusivity but risks relativism and the erosion of historical truth.

The results demonstrate that each model captures important aspects of historical reality while also exhibiting significant limitations.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the complexity of historical processes and the challenges involved in explaining them philosophically. The diversity of models reflects the multifaceted nature of history itself. Rather than viewing these models as mutually exclusive, it is more productive to see them as complementary perspectives.

One of the key issues in the philosophy of history is the tension between structure and agency. Deterministic and materialist models emphasize structural forces, while idealistic and cultural approaches focus on human consciousness and values. An integrative approach recognizes that historical processes emerge from the interaction between structural conditions and human action.

Another important issue is the debate between linear and non-linear interpretations of history. While linear models emphasize progress and continuity, cyclical and postmodern approaches highlight rupture, decline, and discontinuity. Contemporary historical reality suggests that both continuity and disruption play important roles in social change.

The postmodern critique has been particularly influential in challenging traditional models. By questioning universal narratives, postmodernism encourages greater sensitivity to marginalized voices and alternative perspectives. However, completely abandoning the search for historical patterns and explanations may undermine the explanatory purpose of history.

The discussion suggests that modern philosophy of history should move toward methodological pluralism. Integrating

economic, cultural, political, and symbolic dimensions allows for a more nuanced understanding of historical processes.

Conclusion

This study has examined the major philosophical models used to explain historical processes and has demonstrated that no single model can adequately capture the complexity of historical reality. Each model provides valuable insights while also exhibiting inherent limitations.

Deterministic and materialist approaches offer strong explanatory frameworks for understanding structural forces, while idealistic and civilizational models highlight the importance of culture and meaning. Cyclical theories draw attention to patterns of rise and decline, and postmodern perspectives challenge dogmatic interpretations of history.

The main conclusion of this research is that an **integrative and pluralistic approach** is essential for contemporary philosophy of history. By combining different models, scholars can develop a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of historical processes.

Such an approach not only enhances academic research but also contributes to the formation of critical historical consciousness in society. Understanding history through multiple philosophical lenses enables individuals and communities to reflect more deeply on their past and engage more responsibly with their future.

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