

The New Historical Method

To Sarah, Sophie, Nina and Lilli-Marie

The Science of History of the Third Millennium

The historian's craft in the age of climate change

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Synopsis

Is the science of history at risk of extinction?

Young generations have difficulty understanding what history is and the role of historians in the era of climate change. This is because we ourselves, historians of the generation closest to them, are disorientated.

The rate of change has accelerated: it is no longer generational. Keeping pace with the spirit of the times has become a real challenge.

In an age of major changes, it has become imperative to redefine the role of history and historians because history is anything but a boring list of dates, wars and famous people. It is a living laboratory, an alchemical crucible in which the historian has a determining role in the process of co-creation in the future of the human race on Earth.

The time has come to knowingly take the first steps in the Science History of the Third Millennium.

«Tell me, Mummy. What is the use of history?»

The historian's craft in the age of climate change

Marc and Étienne Bloch would surely not hold it against me if I chose the first sentence of Marc's book, his undisputed masterpiece, *The Historian's Craft* - opportunely corresponding with the feminine - as the title for these my reflections.

I was thirteen years old when I decided to become a historian and exactly ten years later I received my degree. That love – now as then – accompanies my everyday life. It is not a platonic love but a lived and living love, which, to remain such, has always required, as in a couple's relationship, constant reflexion on meaning.

History, the way I learnt it at university, is no longer the same. If I continued to work as a historian according to the criteria received from my teachers, my work would not be up to date. I would be practising an outdated profession, cut loose from the present, one of those professions destined to extinction because it did not know how to adapt to change.

Is the science of history at risk of extinction?

Even if it sounds absurd, from some given facts it can be deduced, that, unfortunately, it is just that. I am thinking, for example, of Horizon 2020, the European Union's framework program for the seven year period 2014-2020.

Europe looks towards the future and identifies key points in Research and Innovation to overcome the challenges of our epoch. Confronting climate change is a priority throughout H2020 and represents 35% of the total budget of the program. It focuses on three main areas, each in turn geared towards specific objectives: Excellent science, Industrial leadership and Societal challenges. In the sector "Societal challenges" the European Union has identified and prioritised seven main challenges in which investment into research and innovation could have a real impact on, and benefit, its citizens. And so, alongside health, food safety, guaranteed energy, and intelligent transport, actions for the climate and safe society have been announced as the challenge of change: "*Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies*".

Societal Challenge 6 (SC6) – as this sector is called – foresees four sections: overcoming the crisis, new ideas, strategies and structures of government (EURO); the new generation in an innovative, inclusive and sustainable Europe (YOUNG); reflective society – cultural heritage and European identity (REFLECTIVE); new forms of innovation (INSO).

Of the approximately 80 billion euro budget as a whole, only 1,310 million¹ is reserved for these objectives. There are nine disciplines or groups involved in this section of the program: anthropology and ethnology; economy, business and marketing; demography and geography; education and communication; history; the humanities and art; political science, public administration and law; psychology; sociology.

The first report published in 2015² highlighted the fact that of the 34 projects presented, the majority proposed came from political science, public administration and law; economy, business and marketing; sociology; education and communication. History bears little weight and is placed in the second half of the classification.

In the period 2014 - 2015, of the 114.4 million euro budget in favour of projects presented for SC6, only one million euro was attributed to the section “reflective society: cultural heritage and European identity”. As if to say that we want to construct a new Europe, but without too much reflection!

History is the metonymy of the science of change: it is the science of human beings in time. Which science is more suitable than history to accompany the present society in a process of reflexion? Even here - as elsewhere - its absence is striking.

History is not the thirteenth fairy, the one not invited to the baptism of the newborn princess. History, as with other sciences, is called upon to contribute towards confronting the challenges of our era. It seems, however, that it is not even able to reply to the invitation.

Young generations have difficulty understanding what history is and the role of the historian in the era of climate change. This is because we ourselves, historians of the generation closest to them, are disorientated.

The rate of change has accelerated: it is no longer generational. Keeping pace with the spirit of the times has become a real challenge.

So if my daughter, the generation after mine and those of the future, the heirs of this planet, asked me about the significance of my work and of history, I would be overwhelmingly grateful for the opportunity. I would consider myself invited to set out on an interesting journey of reflexion and redefinition.

That which I am setting about doing together with you.

¹ https://www.bmbf.de/pub/horizont_2020_im_blick.pdf p. 11 - accessed 02.08.2017

² https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/other_pubs/integration_ssh_h2020.pdf - accessed 02.08.2017

«Historians cannot remain seated – mere bureaucrats of history; they must be long-distance runners, faithful to their duty of exploration and adventure»³

On journeys by car or train, long distances travelling alongside cultivated areas, it is easy to deduce the local government's annual subsidy plan. Areas exterminated by the cultivation of maize or destined for some other form of monoculture. The farmers no longer think in terms of “what would be good for the Earth” or “which crops would be most suitable for these fields”. Since the time that agriculture was transformed into an agricultural industry, they have taken on a passive mentality, in which their choices are exclusively conditioned by public subsidies.

The same phenomenon can also be found in history. The areas of research, the study topics proposed by university courses, the teaching posts available are all conditioned by public funding. Historians do not write books inspired by their vocation but they conform to that, “which can be said and that which cannot”, according to the taste of the masses, which in their turn are piloted.

Just as the farmer has lost contact with the Earth, being transformed into a driver of powerful and over-dimensional agricultural machines, so, too, has the historian lost contact with the spirit of the times, becoming a sedentary ‘source-quoting’ bureaucrat. Sometimes they search for funding to finance research, the results of which have already been tacitly decided in advance by the one who makes the money available. Of the historian, who like Bloch's ogre, knows that «wherever he catches the scent of human flesh, there his quarry lies»⁴, there is no trace left. Instinct has given place to a mortifying convenience.

The history of science has ceased to evolve adapting itself to the changes of humans in time. Historians do not research into the past starting from impulses coming from the present and this is because they have become trapped in a past finalized in itself or they have been diverted elsewhere by the guidelines of some funding program.

What is history?

During a trip to Stockholm, just before starting his sightseeing tour of the city, Henri Pirenne⁵ said: «If I were an antiquarian, I would have eyes for nothing but old things. But I am a historian and because of this I love life»⁶.

³ Bloch, preface of Jacques Le Goff p. XVIII

⁴ Bloch, p. 23

⁵ Belgian historian (1862 – 1935) whose final work, the book *Mohammed and Charlemagne*, was published posthumously in 1937

Too often I have heard history summarily defined as the science of the past. In the XIX century, Michelet⁷ and Fustel de Coulanges⁸ rescued us from this ignorance, clarifying that it is man and human society which are the objectives of history; thus it is not the past but human beings in time. And it is due to this that, reflecting on man in his evolutionary progress, history is the science of change: a dynamic science, one in movement, in continuous evolution.

Seen in this light, past and present co-exist in a symmetrical relationship: we understand the present through the past and the past through the present, and it is in this shared field that the seeds of the future are contained.

The Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset wrote: «Man makes history because when facing the future, which does not depend on him, he has only that which he possesses – his past. He can only trust in this: it is a small craft which he boards towards a worrying future».

Thus if it is true that the present is to be understood by its causes inherent in the past, it is also true that history is made *à rebours*, working backwards; so that to reconstruct it we have to start from the present.

The past is, by definition, immutable: it is a fact that cannot be changed. That which, on the other hand, changes constantly is our knowledge of the past. From the present the necessity is born to throw light on one aspect of the past rather than another. The knowledge which is derived from it, transported to our times, will activate consequences able to condition the future.

Henri Poincaré⁹ – French mathematician, physicist and philosopher – maintained that every scientific discovery springs from a preliminary hypothesis. This affirmation from a scientist is in perfect agreement with the following from a historian: the evidence «does not speak unless one knows how to interrogate it. [...] Every historical research presumes that from the first steps on, the inquiry already has a direction. [...] In order for the sources to gush forth, it is necessary for historians to transform themselves into water diviners (dowsers); the facts are not objective phenomena existing without the historian but are the result of work and construction done by the historian. Historical facts do not transform into history except by means of the explanation of the historians who provide them»¹⁰.

It is exactly like that: the one who searches, finds. Historical reconstruction starts from an impulse that has its origins in the present.

⁶ Bloch, p. 36

⁷ J. Michelet, course at the École Normale Supérieure, 1829, mentioned by G. Monod, volume I, p. 127

⁸ N.D. Fustel de Coulanges, Opening Lecture, 1862, in *Revue de synthèse historique*, volume II, 1901, p.243

⁹ *La science et l'hypothèse Science and Hypothesis*

¹⁰ Bloch, preface of Jacques Le Goff pp. X-XI e XXVIII

What is the objective of research?

Knowledge

«Each science, taken individually, never represents anything but a fragment of universal motion towards knowledge»¹¹. We are not talking, however, about knowledge as a means to its own ends: history as a human science has the objective of sustaining life.

Starting from a question emerging from the present and proceeding focused on the objective – helping mankind to live better - the historian sets out to search for those sources which resonate with the set objective. By changing the objective, the result will be different.

As quantum physics demonstrates, it is the observer who influences the experiment, and thus it is the historian who conditions the outcome of the research, bringing to light one past rather than another.

History is anything but a boring list of dates, wars and famous people. It is a living laboratory, an alchemical crucible in which the historian has a determining role in the process of co-creation in the future of the human race on Earth.

In this sense being a historian is not a title that one acquires by passing university exams but a lifetime vocation of great responsibility.

The Historical Method of the Third Millennium

Confronted with the current risk of extinction of the human race, areas of knowledge are opening up which were unthinkable and unexplored up to now. The spirit of the times is pressing, making possible a renewal without equal, also there where everything seemed to be fossilized and lifeless.

In history, as in traditional medicine, we have a concurrence between object and subject of the research. Mankind investigates itself. And this makes history not only «the most difficult of the sciences»¹² but also «an inaccurate science at best»¹³.

It is as if history and medicine, more than other sciences, were the clearest mirrors of the evolution of mankind: or rather in them and their methods of research and inquiry, humans mirror themselves and their evolutionary phase.

¹¹ Bloch, p. 17

¹² N.D. Fustel de Coulanges, “De l’analyse des textes historiques”, in *Revue des Questions Historiques*, XXI, vol. 41, 1870, p. 34

¹³ J. Huizinga, “Sobra el stado actual de la ciencia històrica”, in *Biblioteca de Rivista de Occidente*, Madrid, 1934

Alternative medicine, homeopathy and natural therapies are now being taken into serious consideration by an ever growing number of people. In contrast to traditional medicine, human beings are seen not only in their physical form, but also in their other bodies – mortal and immortal – and in their connections with that which is outside the body. They are *ὅλος* (all, whole) connected to the environment in which they live, their experiences, past, present and future, all their habits, their nutrition, their emotional lives and relationships. The fundamental idea is that we are much more than our physical bodies and much more than our rationality. Just as invisible reality is much much bigger than that which is visible.

Similar steps are being demanded of history, the twin science of medicine.

If the object of history is man, he must be taken into consideration in his entirety – of body, rationality and soul. The spiritual aspect and other non rationally measurable powers – here I am thinking of intuition, love, the creative force innate in human thought etc. must be equally integrated in the historical inquiry along with the body and reasoning.

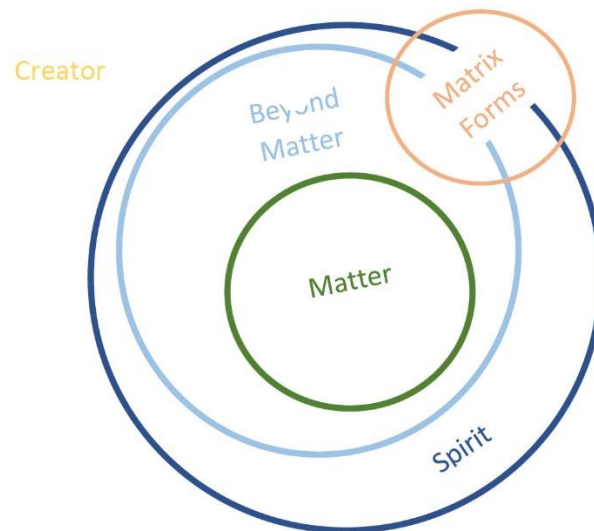
The same applies to the reality in which we live. In an ever more detailed way science is demonstrating that the Universe is constituted of an assembly of dimensions, of which only a tiny part is perceptible to our senses and measurable by traditional science.

Disregarding the hidden dimensions, means not understanding the function of the four that we are aware of, since they are profoundly influenced by those invisible ones.

In other words, the true “organising and decision-making centre” of life in Matter is to be found in a place that has very little to do with the physical and which is hidden from our purely rational sight and from the eyes of traditional science.

That is to say that the visible world is conditioned by a much vaster invisible reality, in other words, that Matter is the place where that which occurs in the Beyond Matter manifests itself.¹⁴

¹⁴ Taken from “The Machine. The Bridge between Science and the Beyond” chapter “Third Millennium Physics”



A New Diagram of Creation ¹⁵

This means that in order to really understand history we have to leave Matter behind and abandon a strictly human point of view. If we get used to seeing human beings as part of a much larger and more extensive whole, it will become normal to accept the possibility that they can receive signals, messages, sensations and intuitions coming from outside themselves.

And having this “Beyond”, a vision much more ample than that of humans, the message which it transmits can complete that coming from the restricted sight of humans.

The profound causes of life in matter and thus of history reside in the Beyond Matter. This is the new horizon in which the Historical Method of the Third Millennium has to move, to which we have been called to take the first steps.

We need not deny the classical approach, neither in medicine nor in history, but instead integrate it with new elements and capabilities, specifically required in this phase of the history of humanity.

In 2011 I presented the Historical-Intuitive Method at the University of Glasgow, in which the use of the traditional historical “objective” method is combined with intuition gained in a state of superconsciousness. With it we reach an interpretation of artefacts and events which is not possible with the classical historical method.

If we are prepared to link “the Sacred and the Profane”, “the Rational and the Intuitive”, “the Scientist and the Artist”, we will be capable not only of adapting the historical method to the humans of this epoch, but we could also discover new information and instruments capable of resolving the climatic and environmental problems, which are putting survival of the human race on Earth at serious risk.

¹⁵ Rio – Alessandrini, p. 81

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The author

Roberta Rio is an Austrian historian and dancer of Italian origin. She is a member of the German Federation of Historians. Co-founder and CEO of the Lighthouse Institute.

As a historian she proposes a radical renewal of the historical method to keep pace with the times and the present evolutionary phase of the human race. It is that which she calls the Historical Method of the Third Millennium. With this in view she has elaborated, among other things, a new way of historical inquiry called “*historical-intuitive method*”, presented at the University of Glasgow in 2011, in which the use of objective traditional historical method is combined with intuition gained in a state of superconsciousness. With this an interpretation of artefacts and events is accomplished, which is out of reach using classical historical methods.

She carries out comparative and interdisciplinary studies, combining science and art, history and dance, theoretical research and practical application, which have allowed her to reach a new level of experiential knowledge, full of rich discoveries and revaluations.

As a dancer she has developed *Sacred Dance by Roberta Rio®*, a method through which the body becomes a symbol in movement able to connect with the “weave” of Creation.

She holds seminars and conferences at various universities (Vienna, Klagenfurt, Linz, Innsbruck, Glasgow, Athens, Oldenburg, Milan, Bologna etc.) and European institutes.

She is the author of numerous articles and books in Italian, German, English and also one in Greek.

Some recent publications

2017: *The Machine. The bridge between science and the Beyond*. Rome: Ilmiolibro

2016: *Sacred Sex. The Path of the Body*. Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee

2015: *Ars Erotica or Scientia Sexualis*. Neuhausen: Bautz

2015: *Ancient Celtic Symbols in new Forms and newly Discovered Meanings*. Neuhausen: Bautz

2012: *The Mysterious Ritual Enclosed in the Phaistos Disc and the Kernos Stone*. London

2011: *New Light on Phaistos Disc*. London / GB

She has two joint websites with the Italian engineer Francesco Alessandrini, one more general in which they collect their experiences and communicate the dates of experiential courses: www.voyageindestiny.org. The other is exclusively dedicated to the *Third Millennium Physics*: www.thirdmillenniumphysics.world

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