

## Summary

### **Paul Orosius' conception of history against the background of ancient historiography**

The research hypothesis of the paper is the view that Paul Orosius, in his work *History Against the Pagans*, included a thought of a meta-historical nature, which falls within the framework of historiography, or philosophy of history, in the broadest sense. In order to examine the validity of this thesis, the following research steps had to be taken.

First, a method was determined, which was based on identifying the theoretical premises for the existence of historiographical thought. The following were considered to be such: reflection around time, differentiation of the past and future in terms of their relevance to the overall vision of history, indications of the periodization of historiographical material carried out by the author, specification of the mechanism of history and the subject of history.

Secondly, the subject of the work focused on the analysis of the work of Orosius, in terms of the presence of the above signs of historiography. The problems raised required a broader study in the areas of philosophy, theology, historiography and ancient historiography, and an indication of exactly which concepts may have influenced the formation of the mind, erudition and sensibility of both Orosius and his intended addressees of *History Against the Pagans*.

The entire argument is encapsulated in five chapters.

The first chapter is organizational and introductory in nature. It addresses a problem of a terminological nature. The definition of historiography, or philosophy of history, is presented, and the semantic fields of other related concepts - historiography and theology of history - are defined. In the following section, the research method is presented and its choice is justified. The history of Orosius himself, with particular reference to his intellectual profile, his influence on later authors, and the current state of research on *History Against the Pagans*, also became the subject of discussion in the first chapter.

In the second chapter, the problem of time in ancient reflection is taken up. Two models of temporality were considered, namely cyclic time and linear time. It is shown that Paul Orosius used both of these models, with a clear preference for the latter. Well, history

was ordered by him in a linear fashion; it had a beginning and a radical end. Which means that each event had a unique and special character. Orosius uses circular elements very incidentally; he limits them to the occurrence of disasters and catastrophes in history.

The next chapter presents Orosius' proposed periodization of history. The author in question traces the growth of Christian and humanitarian values throughout history and divides history into epochs based on this. During the analysis of the source material, the occurrence of several different periodization models was noticed. Undoubtedly, the most significant is the division into seven epochs, which coincides with the seven books of *History Against the Pagans*. With the last period beginning in the time of Octavian Augustus and continuing to the present day.

The fourth chapter considers the question of the mechanism of history. By this name is understood a force or a certain rule that intervenes in the course of the historical process, shaping it and chiseling it appropriately so that it moves towards a certain goal. At the same time, the discovery of this mechanism makes it possible to determine the meaning of history. According to Orosius, the force animating the course of history is the Providence of God. It has both an ordering and pedagogical character - it judges human actions on an ongoing basis, creates events, signs and symbols that provide instruction for sinful humanity.

Chapter five focuses on the issue of the subject of history. Already in the first parts of *History Against the Pagans*, Orosius suggests that this subject is humanity. Closer analysis, however, revealed that the author in question concretizes this subject, building a vision of a universalist empire that would encompass the entire world. However, in the face of dramatic events and crises at the dawn of the fifth century, Orosius shifts the burden of the subjectivity in question to the Christian community, and even seems to narrow it down to a group of chosen ones who are destined for salvation.

The conclusion states the truth of the hypothesis stated earlier. It also summarized the conclusions of each chapter.

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