

PREFACE

The range of topics this thesis seeks to cover is the subject of its introductory chapter. All that need be added, here, is that it is an attempt to understand very briefly the two main problems belonging to Philosophy of history, I have discussed in this work that Philosophy of history is the name of a double group of philosophical problems : it has both a speculative and an analytical part. The first includes all those metaphysical problems. The fundamental point with which these speculative philosophers were concerned can be put if we say that they sought to discover the meaning and the purpose of the whole historical process. History as presented by ordinary historians seemed to them to consist of little more than a succession of disconnected events, utterly without rhyme or reason. There was no attempt to reveal the underlying Plot of history in 'empirical' history. That is why it is easy enough to criticise such a project and in fact, the programme was condemned both by working historians and anti-metaphysical Philosophers. I have discussed critically the main doctrines of three well-known authors of speculative systems : Hegel, Toynbee and Niebuhr. In the concluding chapter I have analysed critically 'the meaning of history'. A survey of history shows that mankind has not regarded history as simply instrumental to any such goal. Any who maintain that there is something beyond it as it were time-transcendent,

should make clear what it is. There is nothing like the meaning of life or history. Another fact is that we do not know history as a whole and we have no justification for applying the idea of one meaning to it. The later exposition should justify the use of the Plural. Therefore, I write not of 'the meaning of history' but of 'the meanings in history'. The meanings in history are made possible by the nature of the physical world and the constitution of human beings.

To me the subject matter of history is the life of mankind in time. The historical world is made up of individual human beings, their actions and productions. These individuals have intrinsic value and experience things as valuable. All meaning, all value, all purpose, in the historical world is rooted in the experience of individual human beings. Thus history should be understood from within. At every point of history there is life. And history consists of life of every kind in the most varied circumstances. History is merely life viewed in terms of the continuity of mankind as a whole.

Besides this I have discussed critically the problems belonging to the critical Philosophy of history. This critical Philosophy of history is very closely bound up with the question whether historical inquiry is, or is not, "scientific" in a sense in which physical sciences are. I have discussed critically this question in this work clearly. Let me speak something about the task of critical philosophy of

history here. The chief task of critical philosophy of history is to clarify and analyse the 'idea of history' as explained by idealist philosophers like Dilthey, Croce and especially Collingwood who claim that history is important ways a discipline with its aims, concepts and methods. In addition to this my own belief in connection with science and history is that there, in fact, quite central features of historical inquiry which make it profoundly misleading to call history, without qualification, a science.

There are moments in human life when inner thoughts of gratitude find their spontaneous way to the conscious level of man's existence. Man, then realizes what it means to be the receiver or giver.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Dr. G.N.Joshi, who inspired me first time to undertake this study of the Philosophy of History.

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