

# An Introduction of History

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*The origin of the word 'History' is the Greek word 'Historic', which means careful enquiry or investigation. The word 'Historic' was the title of the book written by the famous Greek historian Herodotus. That's why, he is called 'The Father of History'. Actually he tries to inspire the future generation of Greek by his writing, therefore the content of his 'History' has emerged from the famous Marathon war (probably 490 BC). Where the Prashiyans are severely defeated by the Greeks. According to Herodotus humans are a logical creature. He also believed that, accuracy of fact is an important thing for a historians. He has gained a unique achievement by highlighting the relationship between man and his surroundings.*

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There are some definition of history by famous scholars :

**E.H. Carr:** it establishes a coherent relation between past and future.<sup>1</sup>

**R.G. Collingwood:** History is a kind of research or inquiry. Since, science is finding things out and in that sense history is a science

**John Tosh:** History is collective memory, the storehouse of experience through which people develop a sense of their social identity and their future prospects.

**G.J. Reiner:** History is a story of experiences of men living in civilized societies as well as the societies before the process of civilization, as we know it started.

**Robert V. Daniels;** History is a source of inspiration as it holds up to us the tradition and glory, the clashing passions and heroic exploits of past generations. In it, we find the 'drama of real life'

**Burckhardt:** History is the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another.

**Henry Johnson:** History, in its broadest sense, is everything that ever happened.

**Smith,V.S:** The value and interest of history depend largely on the degree in which the present is illuminated by the past.

**Rapson:** History is a connected account of the course of events or progress of ideas.

**J. Bury:** History has also been referred to as a science.

**Jawaharlal Nehru:** History is the story of Man's struggle through the ages against Nature and the elements; against wild beasts and the jungle and some of his own kind who have tried to keep him down and to exploit him for their own benefit.

In a paper, Pallavi Talekau, Dr. Jyotrimayee Nayak , Dr.S.Harichandan try to discussed about History, which is very impressive. They said, "History is the basis of all subjects of study which fall under the category of Humanities and Social Sciences. It is often said to be the "queen" or "mother" of the social sciences. History is considered an indispensable subject in the complete education of man and it has been defined differently by different scholars. According to modern concept, history does not only contain the history of kings and queens, battles and generals, but also the communities and the societies are the subject of study of history as well. There must be some reason or reasons behind every incident in history. History is a unique subject possessing the potentialities of both science and art. As an enquiry after truth, history is a science and as a narrative account of the past, it is an art or a piece of literature. History is a study of man. It is concerned with man in time and space. It explains the present in the light of the past. Continuity and coherence are the necessary requisites of history. The scope of history is vast; it is the story of man in relation to totality of his behavior. It starts with the past; makes present its sheet-anchor and points to the future."

History is the story of the past and it is a story of human society. It is the study of man in time an enquiry in the past based on evidence. History is one kind of deep knowledge which helped us to understand human society and its evolution. It records the activities and thoughts of man, at the same time, history inspired the new generation by describing the past activities which had been enacted by man. So it can be said that it is a notebook of all human beings and their activities. Maintaining consistency is one of the important features of history.

But it is not that, all past can be included in history. It's means, all history can be called as past but all past cannot be called as history. The things that have happened in the past were beyond our observation. In many cases, we can't get any information or evidence from them. That's why, history can be called 'subset of the past'. So history is a discussion of the past but it only discuss a part of the past as impartial as possible. The person who did this work, we called them 'Historian'. Every historian need to have the knowledge of sharp judgement, proper self-realization, ability to write neutral objective history. To make an objective history, historian must be impartial in his/her mind, otherwise history can't get its objectivity. Carr said, "The historian, as I said at the end of my last lecture, continuously asks the question 'Why ?'; and so long as he hopes for an answer, he cannot rest. The great historian - or perhaps I should say more broadly, the great thinker - is the man who asks the question ' Why ?' about new things or in new contexts." Collingwood says, "the historian must re-enact in thought what has gone on in the mind of his dramatis personae, so the reader in his turn must re-enact what goes on in the mind of the historian. Study the historian before you begin to study the facts."

History is a kind of knowledge based on information. It is not possible to write a perfect history without information. So information is the main instrument for historians to build up a perfect history. But we can't give equal acceptance for all information. The information or fact that is objective, universal, which is equally acceptable to almost all historians are the subject of chosen. In his book 'What is History' E. H. Carr said about historical fact elaborately. He said, " This is a crucial question into which we must look a little more closely. According to the common-sense view, there are certain basic facts which are the same for all historians and which form, so to speak, the backbone of history - the fact, for example, that the Battle of Hastings was fought in 1066. But this view calls for two observations. In the first place, it is not with facts like these that the historian is primarily concerned. It is no doubt important to know that the great battle was fought in 1066 and not in 1065 or 1067, and that it was fought at Hastings and not at Eastbourne or Brighton. The historian must not get these things wrong. But when points of this kind are raised, I am reminded of Housman's remark that 'accuracy is a duty, not a virtue'. To praise a historian for his 'reality'. It might perhaps have been put more simply. But history is, among other things, that. The historian is necessarily selective. The belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy, but one which it is very hard to eradicate."

Carr also said, "In the first place, the facts of history never come to us' pure',since they do not and cannot exist in a pure form: they are always refracted through the mind of the recorder. It follows that when we take up a work of history, our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it."

To collected historical data, we have to depend on sources. There are mainly two kinds of sources in history, original sources or primary sources and secondary sources. Some primary sources are scripts, coins, debris etc. and books (recently published), journals, newspapers, those are the example for secondary sources. History can be called as an experience of historians. There is very close relation between history and historian. If any of one between them lost its way, the other can't to be exist. This relation is similar to the relation between the tree and its root. Except one, the other should be dead. Historical truth can be changed in history. In his book 'Ancient India' R. C. Majumdar said, "The discovery of this civilization is almost revolutionized our concept of Indian history. At a single stroke ancient civilization of Indian civilization back to 3000 BC, if not earlier still, and India is now almost rank with Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, Egypt, and Assyrian as a pioneer of human civilization."

Let's see the scope of history now. Remember one thing, this short article is not enough to discuss the whole scope of history, but in short, I would like to say, all kind of works by the people is the subject of history. History is an incremental process, which always has its own pace. History try to illustrate the contribution of people in different fields, viz. social, political, cultural, economical, religious, scientific etc. Various events such as war, revolutionary changes, Rise and fall of Empire, those are the common contents of history. There are many category in history, for example, History of Literature, History of Culture, History of Science, History of Religion etc. Actually history become a matter of almost unlimited boundaries for such a variety of diversified circuits.

Now let's take a look on the relation between history and Science. In history, there are some methods of data collection like observation, analyse, classification, making a conclusion; those methods are also used in science at the time of data collection. From this viewpoint, history can be considered as equivalent to science. But at the same time, I would like to say, it is not fully equivalent with science. there are some reasons below-

- 1) The main subject of discussion in history is the human thoughts and actions which are constantly changing. but the subject matter of the discussion of science is the object.
- 2) The facts of history are very complicated and seldom repeat in the real sense of the term.
- 3) Historical data or information are not available for observation, and they are also not available for experimentation.
- 4) Things like religion, morality can be included in the discussion of history but Science does not prioritize them.
- 5) The scope of history is much more diverse than science.

For the above reasons we cannot say, history is completely equivalent with science. we can call history as half of science.

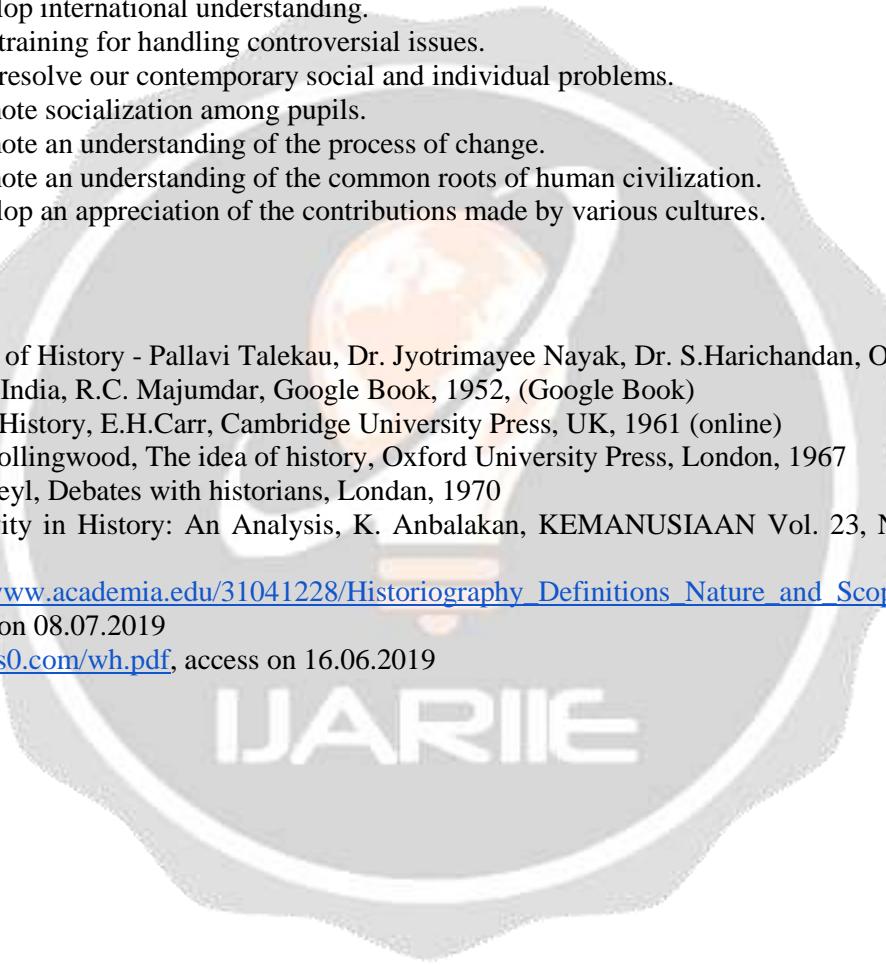
According to E.H. Carr, "History cannot be written unless the historian can achieve some kind of contact with the mind of those about whom he is writing. The third point is that we can view the past, and achieve our understanding of the past, only through the eyes of the present. The historian is of his own age, and is bound to it by the conditions of human existence. The very words which he uses should prefer the one about freeing oneself from 'the dead hand of the past'. The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to the understanding of the present."

Now we the aim of teaching history. Pallavi Talekau, Dr. Jyotrimayee Nayak , Dr.S.Harichandan, this three persons nicely rectify the aim of history in their paper. In my article I am going to pick some of them to discuss. So here is some aim for teaching history :-

- 1) To promote self-understanding.
- 2) To give proper conception of time, space and society.
- 3) To enable the pupils to assess the values and achievements of their own age.
- 4) To teach tolerance.
- 5) To develop right attitudes.
- 6) To foster national feelings.
- 7) To develop international understanding.
- 8) To give training for handling controversial issues.
- 9) To help resolve our contemporary social and individual problems.
- 10) To promote socialization among pupils.
- 11) To promote an understanding of the process of change.
- 12) To promote an understanding of the common roots of human civilization.
- 13) To develop an appreciation of the contributions made by various cultures.

**Reference:**

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