

# History as Progress

Introduction to History

HSS343a

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# The End of History

- History has a beginning and an end
- End is both description (noun) and desire (verb)
- Pre-Modern history too had this sense
- Modern History based on facts
  - Objective, Neutral, Dispassionate
  - Facts devoid of interpretation
- Arranging all the facts will show the END of History
- Teleological Understanding

# Teleological Conception Of The Past

- Teleology: Explaining events based on their purpose; how did something help (or obstruct) the desired-destined end.
- Teleology means that there is a purpose to history
- Teleology means that history is a story, a narrative
- There will come a time when history will end, that is the end (purpose) of all that has happened in the past

# 19<sup>th</sup> Century European Liberalism

- Individual (the human being: Man) at the centre
- All political, economic and social organisation centred on this Man
- Liberty and Equality radical new ideas
- Led to the idea of Rule of Law
  - Limited State
  - Separation of Powers: Checks and Balances
  - Constitutionalism
- Scientific Thinking
  - Breaking down all phenomenon to its constitutive elements (facts)
  - Critical perspective on all facts and theories

# 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe

- Industrial Revolution
  - Technological Progress
  - Creation of Wealth
- Liberalism
  - Democracy: Role of Masses
  - Progressive ideas
- Constitutionalism
  - New Powerful State
  - Legitimacy
- Global Conquest

# European World

## EUROPE AS THE END OF HISTORY

- Highest achievements of human beings
  - Intellectual and Scientific
  - Political
  - Economic
  - Social and Cultural
- ~ Solved all the problems of Man ~
- History is the story of Man's progress to Modernity
- Past events and people evaluated by Modern Standards
- World has to become a copy of Europe: Eurocentricism

# Whig History

- World History leads to the emergence of Europe as the pinnacle of human achievement
- New Scientific History, based on Facts will show this to be true
- Humanism : Enlightenment : Progress
  - Final Destination of Human Beings (End of Man and his Story)
- Herbert Butterfield's Term: Whig Interpretation of History
  - Critique based in the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- History is (not) a march of progress ending in

CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERALISM

# Global Influence

- Template of history written all over the world
- Viewing the past as a march to the present
- End of History is a social, political, economic state similar to post-industrialised Europe
- Jawaharlal Nehru: Discovery of India
- Jadunath Sarkar: History of Aurangzib
- R. C. Dutt: The Economic History of India
- School Textbooks
- National History
- History's common sense