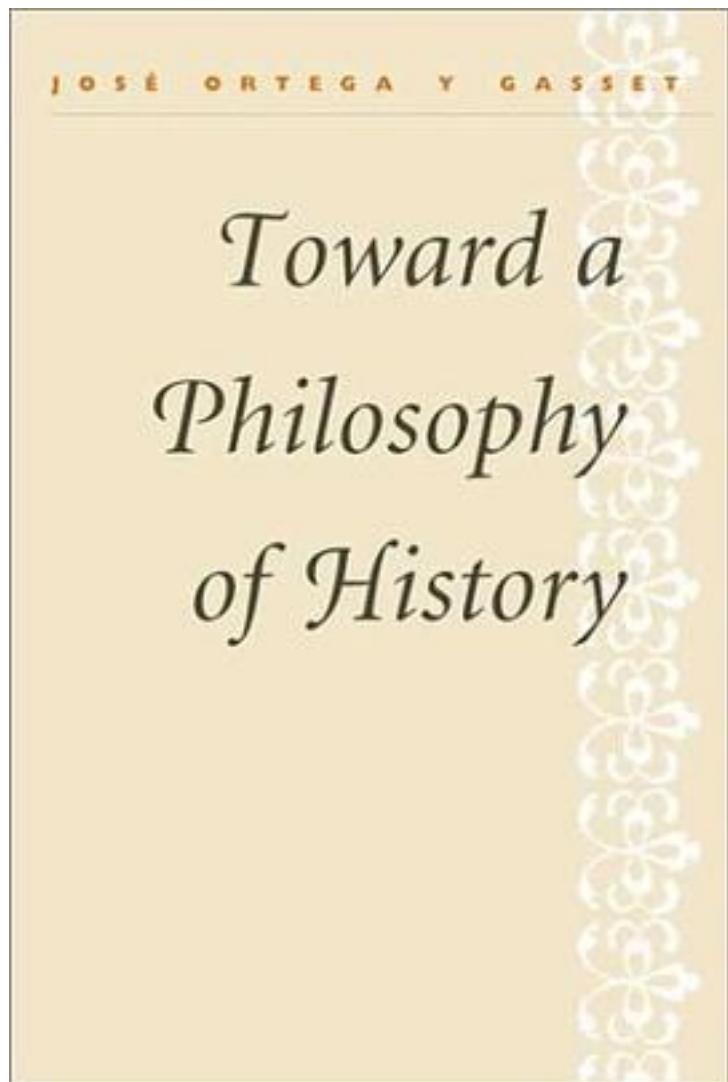


Toward a Philosophy of History



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著者:Jose Ortega y Gasset

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This farsighted, humanizing volume celebrates "the supreme art of living" and the creative potential of exuberance and delight to spur developments in every realm, from biology to technology to politics. Claiming that "we are given no escape from last questions," the esteemed Spanish thinker and teacher Jos Ortega y Gasset identifies two kinds of activity serving human advancement: on the one hand, a vital, creative profligacy that generates multiple possibilities; on the other, a utilitarian mechanization that trims this excess back to everyday use and habit. In this dialectic, Ortega locates the origin of the state as well as of evolution, which he describes as "a consequence of innumerable useless actions which a living being performs out of sheer exuberance." Observing that "living means dealing with the world, turning to it, acting in it," Ortega warns against the dangers of intellectual isolation. "Alertness is what we require," he says. "We are not allowed to confine ourselves within our own professions, but must live in full view of the entire scene of life." Writing in the 1940s, he foresees the unification of the states of Europe, noting that "the unity of Europe as society is not an ideal but an ancient daily fact." He also discusses the advantages, the limitations, and the threat of technology, insisting that its illusory security imperils Western civilization. Measuring true progress by humankind's capacity to retain its humanity, *Toward a Philosophy of History* bears the mark of Ortega's fine intelligence and his abiding faith in the redemptive power of engaged living and original thinking.

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