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On Lazard Carnot

by Taihei SUZUKI

Lazard Nicholas Marguerite Carnot, one of the military leader of Revolutionary France, is rather an unfamiliar figure. What makes a problem of Carnot may be the role he played in the military administration of Revolution and the ideal of revolution he held. To clarify this point it is considered the most adequate to study the task he achieved as a political commissary of attached to an army corps that he was for a year. From this point of view I have examined Carnot's activity in the Camp of Soisson, Rhin Corps and Nord Corps, and revealed how he contributed to the organization of the military system of Revolutionary France in the transitional period up to the establishment of the Great Revolution Government, how in the light of the ideal of revolution his political ideal was inclined to conservatism and how he lacked adequate understanding of the ideal of socialism. These facts, I think, may explain why Carnot could not become more than a mere military leader instead of becoming a direct promoter of the popular revolution.

On the Uniqueness of Historical Events

by Shirō KōYAMA

There is a classical statement: while natural science has as its objects things that repeat themselves, historical science deals with unique events. This is why the former is said to be a nomothetic science and the latter idiographic science. But such a scheme of division seems to me too rigorous and too formalist. To be sure a historical survey of the philosophy of history in Europe reveals some such metaphysical premise peculiar to Christianity, but this premise is of such a nature that we cannot reasonably prove it. The idealistic philosophers of history have tried to draw out the absolute nature of history from it, and consequently fallen into an exaggerated sort of spiritualism and intuitionism. Is there no way to grasp the uniqueness of history but by telepathy?

Our answer to this question runs as follows :

1. The "uniqueness" of history is not a simple quality which each historical event possesses, but the uniqueness of interest or standpoint which characterizes each historian.
2. So it is something relative.
3. Moreover the historian makes use of universal laws and general terms in his unique individual descriptions.
4. The historical events themselves do not in any way exclude the possibility of being generalized, of being, that is, viewed as repeating themselves.

On the other hand, historical science should not be regarded in the same light as natural and social sciences, nor is it a mere application of the latter. Explanation in historical science does not stand on the same level as explanation in science. In contrast to the latter which always explains in terms of instance and generalization, the former does so in terms of theme and illustration. Thus in this paper we seek to find the true nature of historical explanation between idealism and scientism.