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## Structure of "Explanation" in History

—Theoretical Foundations of Analysis of History Writing—

Masayuki SATŌ

During the past three decades, many philosophers and historians have been occupied with the "Analytical Philosophy of History", concentrating on the problem of historical explanation. The work as it has been carried on has yielded much fruit particularly by helping to elucidate the nature of history and historical writing.

Being a student of history, it has been to my regret that the above has been primarily restricted to the realm of philosophical concern. And those few historians who have recently shown an interest in the philosophical problem as related to history have moved too rapidly in applying philosophical conclusions to the analysis of their own discipline; at the cost of systematic investigation and analysis, to which their own discipline is deserving.

Given the present situation, I would suggest two alternatives in which the current problem could be dealt with. One is through the analysis of "historical imagination" which I believe in the long run is capable of regulating historical writing. The second approach being the "analysis of historiography from a theoretical point of view".

While the two above disciplines have a complementary relationship to approach the multitude of problems surrounding the nature of history, this paper will concentrate on the second alternative, particularly as it is applied to those tasks within the confines of the application of theoretical discussion as it pertains to the analysis of historiography.

Systematic theory of explanation to the analysis of history requires a three stage structure; (1) logical stage of explanation, (2) empirical stage of explanation, and (3) actual stage of explanation.

While the first stage gives itself to the purely logical or syntactical, which is given by the Hempel-Oppenheim's covering-law theory of explanation, It is in the second stage that the concept of "time" enters first, which because of it's nature, as related to the "law-statement", is divided into three different types; (a) law of succession, (b) law of coexistence, and (c) law of precedence.

It is a primary conclusion of this paper that the central problem is within the core of type (c), the law of precedence.

NOTE: The above conclusion has two conditions, given that this law statement is supportable through, (1); the presented works of E. Nagel and R. Rudner; which conclude that this law statement can be reduced to the above (a)'s law statement. (2); That the explanations in this stage are admitted to as a scientific explanation and that these can be reduced to the first syntactical structure.

In the concluding third stage, "the analysis of the actual work of history writing" is in my opinion primarily one of "stage reduction". This conclusion was reached following my examination and analysis of W. Dray's work, "Continuous-Series Explanation", to which various types of historical essays are included within the model. A model when given due consideration, in my opinion, reveals a logical analysis that lends itself creditably to the proposition that the third stage can be reduced to the first and second stage's.

While many problems continue to plague the serious student of Historical Explanation, it is none-the-less the contention of this paper that far more thrust must be given to the endeavour of reaching the realm of "The Analytical Philosophy of History", a realm I might add which when reached however will provide the much needed light with which to explore the current dimly lit field of the "Theoretical Foundations of Analysis of History Writing for the Establishment of Historography".