

The Triple Interpretation of German Historicism and its Theoretical Contribution to Historical Materialism

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Abstract : Elucidating the original relationship between historical materialism and German historicism from the internal dimension of intellectual history has important theoretical significance for deep understanding and interpretation of the essential characteristics of historical materialism. German historicism contains the triple deduction of scientific historicism, historical relativism, and vitalism. The historicism of science argues for its historical status as science in the name of objective, systematic, and typical research methods, and procedural principles. Historical relativism places history under the specific historical background to study epistemological and methodological issues about the nature of human beings and the value of history. German historicism walks up to natural and cultural relativism on the basis of romanticism. Vitalism emphasizes intuition, will, and experience of life from individuals and places history on the ontology of organic life and vitality. Historical materialism and German historicism have a theoretical relationship in the genetic field. The former criticizes and surpasses the latter. Meanwhile, in the evolution of German historicism, the differences between historical materialism with it are essential features of historical science.

Keywords : German historicism, scientific historicism, historical relativism, vitalism, historical materialism

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