

On Political-Social Thought of Richard Rorty

An Inquiry into the Logical Structure and Overcoming Attempt

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In this paper I try to make two points about the political-social thought of Richard Rorty; First, I clarify the complex and involved logical structure through a consistent interpretation of his thought. Second, I inquiry into the difficulties achieving "avoiding cruelty" regarded as Rorty's Justice. This paper is composed of five chapters.

In chapter 1, I clarify the details of Rorty's political-social thought turn. I achieve it through examining his critique of "Philosophy."

In chapter 2, I inquiry into Rorty's view on human rights. His view on human rights has two characteristics, namely, "anti-essentialism" and emphasis on sympathy. The former is a premise and the latter is a conclusion in his view. Rorty thinks we need to cultivate the capacity to sympathize with others in order to extend "human rights culture."

In chapter 3, I inquiry into Rorty's liberalism in details. Especially, I clarify the internal connection between his concept of "irony" and "avoiding cruelty." Rorty thinks irony is linked with the concept of "the recognition of contingency." He says "the recognition of contingency" is the chief virtue of member of a liberal society. Because, by recognizing language and self as contingent, one will have a relative view of oneself and one's own beliefs, and not eliminate others and their beliefs.

In chapter 4, I examine Rorty's definition of "cruelty." He thinks "cruelty" composed of physical pain and mental pain-his word "humiliation." But avoiding "humiliation" is very difficult in actuality. Nevertheless, We must include it in our public aim through hearing narrative told by the injured person.

In chapter 5, I attempt to examine Rorty's theory of solidarity in the larger context, namely, in theory of social solidarity. I point out "solidarity based on others" has many difficulties, and criticize his strategy named "sympathy for closed others."