

Yasuo IWATA, *Socrates*, Tokyo 1995, Keiso-shobo.

Abstract

1 Method of Socratic *Dialegethai*

The Logical Structure of Elenctic Argument: a Person (A) asserts a certain Thought (Proposition P) concerning a Subject (e.g. Justice). Then Socrates says, "Do you acknowledge Q?" A acknowledges it. Because Q is something so self-evident so that nobody can deny it. Then from Q follows not-P necessarily. That means A is asserting P and not-P at the same time. So he is refuted.

This structure is very clearly explained by G. Vlastos and his explanation is right. This logical structure is the prototype of dialectic argument and hypothetical method of philosophical thinking.

2 Ignorance.

Elenctic argument can never reach an absolute truth. Because the starting point of a dialogue is a *doxa* (opinion) of an interlocutor which is something temporary and relative. Even if in the process of argument interlocutors reach higher grade of validity by contributions from both sides, *doxa* is never able to reach *episteme*. As a thought which human being embraces is always *doxa*, human being can not help necessarily to be in ignorance.

3 Irony.

The structure of irony consists in the paradoxical way of transmission. That is to say, by saying A, an Ironiker wants to say not-A. It is a mediate (*mittelbare*) way of communication. Socrates uses frequently this way of communication. Because a truth of life can be probably only in this way transmissible, not directly.

4 Justification by *Logos*.

Socrates lived his whole life by justifying his way of living through argument by *logos*. For example, one must live always a just life. That is what justice demands. Then, even if one were persecuted unjustly, one must be just so that one should not revenge.

Prohibition of revenge is deduced from this argument. Accordingly Socrates died consistently following his principle of life.

5 *Daimonion*.

Socrates was perfectly a religious man. In important points of his life, he was frequently visited (assaulted) by *daimonion*. *Daimonion* is a super-natural being which is unseen and can not be identified with some god. When it comes, it always denies Socrates' intention of doing something and never encourages positively to do something. So, Socrates has to search for the meaning of its denial. That is to say, the transcendental power appears only negatively by checking Socrates' thought, and never shows itself in concrete figure nor in human words. In this sense, Socrates was an interpreter of mystery.

6 Happiness (*Eudaimonia*)

Socrates searched for happiness. His thought might be as follows. The nucleus of happiness is virtue. Virtue is sovereign. If there is no virtue, there cannot be happiness. Then, with virtue, the other goods (e.g. health, wealth, social status, honour, children, etc.) can contribute to happiness as supplements or splendor to it. In truth, this is Aristotle's thought. But the origin lies in Socrates' thought.