

Title	Learning as a Human Action : Yamaga-Soko's Interpretation of the "Great Learning"
Sub Title	
Author	阿部, 隆一(Abe, Ryuichi)
Publisher	三田哲學會
Publication year	1953
Jtitle	哲學 No.29 (1953. 3) ,p.A9- A12
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	Abstract
Genre	
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN00150430-00000029-0280

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jener Gruppen und Schichten, zu denen solche Menschen gehörten, in Rücksicht auf die Verschiedenheit der Meinungen über den Begriff der Freiheit und auf die blühende Empfindsamkeit in der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts.

Learning as a Human Action

—Yamaga-Sokô's Interpretation of the "Great Learning"—

Ryuichi Abe

Through a study of the experience of Yamaga-Sokô (1622-85) as a scholar, who was one of the greatest Japanese Confucian philosophers in modern times, I intend in this essay to study the aim, meaning and function of learning, and its methodology, and also to investigate the principles of learning—what the learning is, and how to master the true learning. In other words, I try to reconsider fundamentally the learning as a human action. According to the hitherto accepted classification, such a study may belong to *Wissenschaftslehre* or epistemology. In this connection it may be added that epistemology which is based upon the idealism of German philosophy is apt to be confined only to the study of systematic organization of speculation. The reconsideration of learning as mental science can not be treated as a mere study of the method of thinking. When we consider learning as a human action, the way of one's speculation itself is not a mere problem of one's method of thinking but a combined reflection of one's whole personality. The origin of this thought and action is ascribed to the philosophy of life and the moral character of a scholar who is the originator of the learning. The critique of the study which has life as its object must go beyond the scrutiny of the logic of speculation and become the

critique of the morality and the will of a scholar who is the originator of the study.

In the Oriental tradition of learning, reflections upon learning are centred in seeking the way how to exalt the will. When a man does not learn, he can not know the way, and when he does not follow the way, he can not be a man. Learning, therefore, is the way of cultivating human character. It is the foundation, starting-point and conclusion of the embodiment of morality. Hence, learning in this sense is not so much *Wissenschaftslehre* in general as it is moral philosophy.

Taught by the living example of Sokô who embodied the above mentioned thoughts in himself, I intend to describe what I have learned of him.

He says that the literary meaning of *Gaku-mon* (learning) is "to learn" and "to ask". "To learn" arises from "to ask". Then what do we learn? As we are human beings, if we say, "to learn", we mean we must learn the way of man. That is, we learn the way that is worthy of the name of man. To become a man means, in his opinion, to become a Sage who has attained an ideal personality; we should aim at becoming a Sage.

The learning meant by Sokô is to pursue the way to become a man and should not aim at either higher or lower than that. In either case, the learning would lapse into heterodoxy. The learning of Sokô teaches us that we should learn how to put our daily life in harmony of the righteous way of man. This learning Sokô named "*Nichiyô-no-Gaku*" or "*Jitsu-Gaku*" (practical learning), which must not be confused with vulgar "practical art of living". His learning aims at the elevation of men's daily life to the ideal. Therefore, the practical learning of Sokô may be called "Seigaku" (learning of the Sage, or learning of realizing the ideal, in this sense, of idealism). To do our best to elevate the life of man to the highest excellence by doing our

daily duties in earnest is of great importance. In this lies what makes learning worth its name.

What distinguishes learning from the other fields of culture is, in Sokô's opinion, the pursuit of "*Shidai-Shikô-tei*" (the highest excellence and universality). Ideal and objective attitude must be highly respected in learning. "Wisdom, when carried its utmost extent, will go to change its learner's temperament". And then how can we acquire this learning? According to Sokô, the attitude of mind, or the will is of supreme importance. The loss of the will in its truest sense, that is, the will to realize the ideal in our daily practice, will lead us to the degradation of learning. Therefore, Sokô urged the scholars to have the spirit of a true leader of men and a heroic governor of the country. A true scholar should be a hero and a master spirit. Without the will and spirit of a great man, true learning can not exist. The greatest importance of learning lies in the power of will to live a life of a true man. The key-point in the comprehension of Sokô's learning is to know that he himself was such a great man.

The way of this learning is described in the "Confucian Analects" as follows: "My studies lie low, and my penetration rises high," which means: "I attain to my grasp of eternal heavenly truths by my studies of temporary things of the world." In learning there is no other way than this positivistic study of things: we see, research and think as they really are. This method is mentioned in the "Great Learning" as follows: "Things being investigated, knowledge become complete."

In this theory was shown his criticism on the philosophy of Chû Hsi school which was too much metaphysicized, and there also lay the true merit of Sokô who was a pioneer of positivism in modern Japan. He recommends the "Great Learning" to us as a book in which the principles of learning are described in

the fullest details.

So I have undertaken in this article to describe the problems in Sokô's learning by studying his interpretation of the Great Learning which he read thoroughly.

Contents: 1. Preface 2. Outline of Sokô's Attitude to learning 3. The "Great Learning" 4. Three Principles of the Great Learning.

The Meaning of Democracy to High School Students

(Abstract)

K. Saito, T. Ogawa and M. Yokoyama

Education for democracy has been the chief concern of the Japanese teacher since after the World War II. For the past seven years, teachers in the primary as well as the secondary schools throughout the country have been untiring in their endeavor to teach the principles of democracy to their pupils. The time is ripe, so it seems to us, to see to what extent they have succeeded in democratizing the young generation of Japan.

Essay type answers to a number of questions about democracy were obtained from 328 boys and girls of the Junior and Senior High Schools in Tokyo and Chiba prefecture. On the basis of these data a questionnaire of the multiple-choice type comprising three questions and sixty answers was constructed.

The questions were:

- (1) What are the good points of democracy?
- (2) What are the things you should do to promote democracy around you?
- (3) In order to realize democracy in society, what would you