

The Educational Significance and Enlightening Role of the Books Analects and Great Learning

Hengbo Yang

Qijing Normal University, Qijing, China

1184603907@qq.com

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Abstract: The Chinese civilization is so deep and great that it has influenced the development of every field as politics, economy, education and etc. With China entering the new era, the influence of Confucianism shows its great power and greatness that play an important part in making country develop in a harmonious and healthy way. Two books, the Analects and the Great Learning, cover many valuable thoughts which are worth studying for the purpose of educational significance and enlightening role in the path to building up well-off society. The paper aims at analyzing some important values contained in these two books so as to demonstrate the virtues and morality for cultivating students' awareness of how to develop personal abilities to adapt the changing society.

1. Introduction

In the great and long history, Chinese culture as a major part of the world has its leading and prestigious position, which has strongly influenced the development of the world. Four books and five classics are still popular among people who enjoy life, philosophy, interpersonal relationship, family concept, society and so on. The two books, based on the ideology of Confucianism, have been considered as a guideline of governing a nation, handling relations between people and society, cultivating people's morality. The Great learning is an essay on the Confucian thought of self-cultivation, state governance and world peace. It is said that it was written by Zengzi, actually a Confucian work in Qin and Han dynasties. After the Song and Yuan dynasties, the book became a compulsory textbook at school and a required reading for imperial examinations, which had a great impact on ancient Chinese education. The "Three programs" and "Eight items" put forward in the "university" emphasize that self-cultivation is the premise of self-governance, and the purpose of self-cultivation is to run the country and make the country and the world more peaceful, indicating the consistency between running the country and the world and personal moral cultivation. The full text of "Great Learning" is simple in style, profound in connotation and far-reaching in influence. It mainly summarizes the moral cultivation theory of pre-qin Confucianism and the basic principles and methods of moral cultivation. It also systematically discusses the political philosophy of Confucianism and has profound enlightenment on life, affairs and governance. The Great Learning has been handed down for more than two thousand years, and has its unique academic characteristics, academic achievements and social status in each period of Chinese history. The analects of Confucius is a collection of quotations from Confucius and his disciples. It mainly records the words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples, and embodies his political ideas, ethical thoughts, moral concepts and educational principles. This book is one of the classic works of the Confucian school, and it is called the "four books" together with the "Great Learning", "the Doctrine of the Mean", "Mencius", "the Book of Songs" and "the Book of Changes".

2. The Educational Significance and Enlightening Role in the Great Learning

In the first chapter, the Great learning put forward three programs as the principle of this great works. They are important principles: promoting good morality, rejecting the old and welcoming the new, reaching the high level. These three principles connote the core value of a nation, a people and

relation between each other. This idea emphasizes the importance of a nation's development and an individual's growth. Nowadays, on the road to the building up of well-off society, it is in accordance with our reforming idea and innovative concept. This idea endows deep educational significance in college education. When presenting this to the students, teacher should motivate students to comprehend what the Great learning implies and to inspire them what they are going to do for the society. In the second paragraph of the first chapter, the book lists eight items which are logically and philosophically illustrated from the perspectives of relationship between a nation and an individual. It said that a person's moral cultivation is bound to the prosperity of a nation. An individual should cultivate himself in the way of knowledge, understanding, handling problems, performing sincerely and getting along well with each other, then he is viewed as a useful person in society. For example, an individual should cultivate his personality to serve the family well. If family is in a good harmony, the whole society will be in a good order. Then the whole world will be developing harmoniously. As for today's college students, they live in the good times. However, not everyone is aware of the importance of personal cultivation. Some of them lack of right personal value which leads to their failure in their career. Therefore, it is imperative to motivate those students to have a good mastery of ideas in the Great Learning. With these ideas in their minds, they will establish a mechanism of good morality which positively guides their career in the right path.

3. The Educational Significance and Enlightening Role in the Book of Analects

Confucius as a sage advocated many educational ideas that are still popular in modern China. He trained and educated so many disciples who inherited his ideology that has influenced the development of both ancient times and modern times. His great book Analects completely expressed his thought on philosophy, politics, education, and family, interpersonal relations, which has positive influence upon society. First his idea on governance is still highly valued in society. For example, in the Political Affairs of Analects, Confucius stated that governing a country by moral education is like the North Star, in which it is placed, and all the stars are orbiting around it. This indicates that leadership plays a very important part in governing a country with his people unified. If it is like this, the country will develop smoothly and harmously. Another statement said "People will obey and support if the upright and selfless talents are appointed. This idea is true of the government in managing the country. Nowadays, on the road to building well-off society, appointing those qualified and talented people are very important. So college students should work hard to develop their comprehensive ability so that they can become upright and selfless builders of socialism. Secondly, his idea on education is highly valued both in the past and present. He advocated that education should be in accordance with the politics, economy and morality. He did a complete reform in education that all people can get opportunity to study regardless of status, background, richness or poverty. He also pioneered the private school in the history to cultivate many talented students who later became great educators, philosophers and thinkers. The major contributions he did in the educational history are so great that modern society still follows some good values in his book Analects. For instance, the saying goes like this: In the company of three one can always find a teacher. This saying reveals the importance of learning from each other. Another saying: He who is a teacher for a day is the father for a lifetime, strongly reflects the importance of learning. In sum, He has been praised to this day for his tireless teaching spirit, teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, putting equal emphasis on learning and thinking, drawing inferences from one example, inspiring and inducing teaching principles and his learning attitude of "asking questions without being ashamed". As for family relation, he advocated the concept of filial piety, which has been a valuable treasure in China. There are a lot of famous sayings on filial piety. For example, Be careful to help parents when they go out or come in; To be considerate to parents without any complaint. Young disciples return home to honor their parents and go out to love their elder brothers. In the time of family poverty, we can find the true filial son, in the time of national crisis, we can identify the true loyal minister. All these words can clearly tell us that filial piety is the foundation of all virtues. As for personal cultivation, words in the Analects

are full of personal development and pursuit. One saying said that an individual should always think of his behavior every day to ask himself if he has tried his best to help others or not, if loyal to his friend or not, if review knowledge or not. Another saying stated that blame yourself more and blame others less, and resentment will not come. Confucius spent his life time in educating his students with his diligence and wisdom. He is regarded as one of the world's greatest educators in the world. In the *Analects*, it is easy to find his document about how to teach, how to learn and how to put learning into real situations. His ideas on education have laid a solid ground for the birth of the ancient Chinese education which is an important part of modern Chinese educational system. In today's China, curriculums designed for students are containing the traditional culture. In particular, the contemporary undergraduate students should be encouraged to read more about those statements on education so that they are able to handle problems in the real situations. The following are some famous sayings from the *Analects*. For example, anyone can be educated to become the useful person regardless of the noble or humble, clever or foolish. This statement reveals the importance of education. On one hand, it highly values the importance of learning; on the other hand, it shows the equality of education. In his time, he observed education as an important factor in promoting the ability of each individual, which is valuable to the modern society. This requires our teachers and educators should be aware of the educational equality by devoting ourselves to educating all for the development of society. This also strongly shows that no one is born genius only through his hard work. Learning should be among each other. It is important to learn from those able and noble people and to find out one's mistakes and errors when meeting with those bad guys. There are so many educational words that are valuable to the development of personal cultivation. It is beneficial to the college students in their life career.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it is obvious to sense that educational significance in these two books has been logically expounded. Nowadays, traditional culture as an important element is playing a major role in governing the nation and cultivating personal morality. Every type of school is required to design a curriculum for students to have an appreciation of those famous Chinese classics in order to strengthen their deep understanding. Teachers are asked to present such Chinese classics so that students are able to put them into practice. At present, our country is launching a unprecedented reform on politics, economy, education. The realization of Chinese dream relies on all people's efforts and struggles. That is to say, the Chinese dream is deeply rooted in the soil of national rejuvenation that is linked to the thought of our great thinkers and philosophers. With this Chinese heritage, our college students are confident to carry forward the historical mission to actively involve ourselves in the construction of well-off society.

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