



Life”, of his 1916 book, Democracy and Education: an introduction to the philosophy of education: “What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life. This education consists primarily in transmission through communication. Communication is a process of sharing experience till it becomes a common possession.”

Dewey was an educational reformer, who emphasized that the traditional

teaching’s concern with delivering knowledge needed to be balanced with a much greater concern with the students’ actual experiences and active learning.

Dewey’s theories influenced many Chinese scholars including Hu Shih (胡适), Zhang Boling (张伯苓) and Tao Xingzhi (陶行知) while they studied under him in Columbia University. (326 单词)

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陶行知

□本刊资料室



Tao Xingzhi (1891-1946), a prominent educator, studied at Columbia School of Education and returned to China to champion progressive education, such as kindergartens. His career in China as a

liberal educator was not derivative of John Dewey, as some have alleged, but creative and adaptive. He returned to China at a time when the American influence was zesty and self-confident, and his very name at that time (zhixing) meant “knowledge-action,” reflecting the catch-phrase of Wang Yangming’s philosophy, and implying directly that once knowledge had been obtained, then action would be easy.

Returning from study in the United States at University of Illinois and Columbia University in 1917, he turned to “life education.” He then also returned to his humble roots. “Originally,” he wrote to his below -



ed younger sister, "I was a common Chinese, but gradually through ten years of life as a student, I developed a foreign, aristocratic tendency." Shanghai, the center of modern China, he now found "vulgar, rushed, and crowded." Then "suddenly, like the Yellow River breaking its dikes..., I woke up to the fact that I was being robbed of my Chineseness." He took to wearing a traditional scholar's gown, and turned to mass education. He then reversed his name to the more well-known form, xingzhi, that is, "action-knowledge," directly implying that action will produce knowledge.

In August 1923, Tao and Y. C. James Yen (晏阳初) organized a National Association of Mass Education Movements (MEM). At the height of its literacy campaign in the 1920s, Yen estimated that the MEM had five million students and more than 100,000 volunteer teachers. Tao went on to become the nation's leading promoter of rural teacher's education. At his village-based normal school at Xiaozhuang (晓庄师范) outside Nanjing, he produced a number of innovative techniques such as the "little teacher", who taught his or her family what had just been learned in school, and the "each one teach one" technique of organized teaching networks.

In the 1930s Tao wrote children's literature, started the Life Education Association, and started a Work Study

Movement. He was in the United States when war with Japan broke out in 1937, but returned to China, where he was made a member of the People's Political Council. In 1939, he moved to Beibei, just outside Chongqing, to found the Yucai Middle School. (育才中学)

In 1946, he moved back to Shanghai, and worked frantically, leading to exhaustion and death. (395 单词)

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