

(b) The Earth-Human Relationship of the Simgeup-doyu (心急道儒) and the Dotong-gunja (道通君子)

Earth-Human Relationship of Simgeub-doyu and Dotong-gunja

Research Background and Purpose

This study aims to examine, within Korean traditional philosophy, the thought of the Simgeup-doyu (心急道儒) and the Dotong-gunja (道通君子) and their Earth-Human relationship, and to analyze their significance by period and by school.

- The Simgeup-doyu (心急道儒) denotes a Confucian scholar who devotes himself to the Learning of the Way (道學) and seeks an urgent awakening of the mind
- The Dotong-gunja (道通君子) refers to a noble person who masters, embodies, and realizes the truth — that is, Dotong (道通). Such figures carry on and put into practice the tradition and scholarly lineage of the Learning of the Way.
- Studying their relationship allows us to understand how Confucian learning and the Learning of the Way have interacted and developed in the history of Korean thought.
- By examining the relational network and knowledge-transmission system of traditional Confucianism, this study seeks to re-illuminate the characteristics and contemporary meaning of Korean traditional thought.

"I too, having never met a great master, had no measure to guide my learning and practice. Yet in reading books I discerned where righteousness lay, and much of what I gained I awakened to on my own."

The Meaning of the Dotong-gunja (道統君子)

The Dotong-gunja (道統君子) refers to a noble person who masters, embodies, and realizes the truth — that is, Dotong (道通).

- The Dotong-gunja is one who carries on and puts into practice Dotong (道統) — that is, the tradition and scholarly lineage of the Learning of the Way.
- Unlike the Simgeup-doyu, he aims to embody the Dao and practice it harmoniously rather than with haste.
- He signifies an ideal character who, through the completion of learning and self-cultivation, awakens to and practices the truth.

"Regarding Dotong (道統), the extension of knowledge (致知) and moral nurturing (涵養) cannot be separated from each other. They cannot be separated because in Sacred Learning (聖學) they complement one another like hands and feet."

The difference between the Simgeup-doyu and the Dotong-gunja appears in their mode of cultivation and value orientation, yet essentially they form a mutually complementary relationship. The Dotong-gunja may be called the ideal human image that embodies the core moral and scholarly values of the Confucian school (儒家).

- In the Learning of the Way, the Dotong-gunja's role is regarded as important for the inheritance and transmission of scholarship.
- Historically, the term designated the important figures who carried on the orthodox lineage (道統) of Confucianism.
- He values not only personal self-cultivation but also responsibility toward society and the state.