Applying Syundz’s Philosophical Concepts to Teaching Leadership in Higher Education and Lifelong Learning*

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Abstract Syundz (c. 314-237 BC), born in China during the Warring States Period, was a realist philosopher who contributed to the Hundred Schools of Thought, a period of cultural and philosophical development that flourished from the 6th century to 221 BC. Syundz commented on many ideas, particularly those of Confucius and Mencius, and a collection of influential essays, usually attributed to him, is known by his name, the Syundz. An outstanding thinker in a turbulent time, Syundz’s philosophy covers education, society, culture and music, and one of his principal arguments is that humankind can be improved by education and ritual. In fact, Syundz believed that education was a lifelong process. This study analyzes Syundz’s work with the purpose of applying his ideas to teaching leadership in contemporary higher education. The methods adopted by this study are concept analysis and content analysis, both of which are qualitative research methods. By applying them to Syundz’s work, the study summarizes his ideas about leadership and the role that education plays in its promotion, following his central idea that to live is to learn. How Syundz’s philosophical concepts apply specifically to contemporary higher education and to lifelong learning are comprehensively discussed in the research outcomes. The study’s additional objective is to provide a reference point for teaching specialists, so that they can exchange ideas about Syundz’s philosophy and to deepen their understanding of its relevance to contemporary education, in the belief that Syundz’s ideas are as relevant today as they were over two millennia ago.