

The Research of the Relationship Between Yangming's Yixue and His Xinxue

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Yangming's Yixue had been developed several times in his life since originated in Longchang. Yangming's Yixue and his Xinxue are both sides of the same coin. The Yangming's Yixue can be roughly divided into two periods. There were the early and middle period of Yangming's Yixue, which is intended to explain the principles of Yi Zhuan (《易传》) with the theory of Xinxue. The finish of Yangming's Yixue was a second stage in Yangming's later years. From the perspective of form and content, there are differences that cannot be ignored between Yangming's early and middle period and his later years. In the first stage of Yangming's study, the "Virtuousness"(贞) in *Book of Changes* is the principle and nature in university. In the later period, Yangming had not focused on interpreting the "Yi Zhuan", but on the interpretation of ZhouYi's (《周易》) principles to supplement the connotation of the propositions of Xinxue. This article intends to understand the relationship between Yangming's Yixue and his Xinxue by dividing the different stages of Yangming's Yixue firstly. Then by focusing on the influence of Yangming's later years' Yixue on his Xinxue, we can observe the relation between his Yixue and Xinxue.

Keywords: Yangming's Yixue, Conscience is Yi, nothing kind outside the mind, the four-sentence teaching

Research Status and Proposition of Problems

The research on Yangming's Yixue mainly focuses on the following aspects: an overall inspection and evaluation of Yangming's Yixue thoughts focusing on Yangming's statements at Longchang, distinguishing the real author of some essays in Yangming's writings, and the comparison between Yangming's thoughts and his students, etc. The more common research method is to analyze the internal logic of Yangming's Yixue (such as Conscience is Yi, Yin-Yang contented my mind, etc.), and compare it with Yangming's Xinxue. At present, a relatively unanimous consensus has been reached: Yangming's Yixue endows Conscience with a clearer metaphysical meaning and is highly integrated with the Xinxue, body, and application. The following two questions remain to be explored:

The difference between the early times and later period of Yangming's Yixue. There are significant differences in expression and connotation between Yangming's Yixue in Longchang and his Yixue in later years. For example, in Yangming's early period, the purpose of discussion was mainly to interpret the ZhouYi in Longchang, while in his later years, he used scriptures to explain his own ideas, and the content of his statements had become very different. In addition, The book *The Discussion about YiJing* (《易经臆说》) written by him was originally an abandoned manuscript, and its circulation may not be Yangming's original intention. This ideological difference between his early and later years can reflect the evolution of Yangming's Yixue and

Xinxue, which is worthy of attention by researchers. The sorting out of this evolution also helps to understand the relationship between his Yixue and Xinxue.

Is there a system in Yangming's Yixue thought? The main part of Yangming's Yixue is not his early writing *The Discussion about YiJing* (《易经臆说》), but the scattered interpretations in various occasions in Yangming's later years. Although we can confirm that Yangming's Yixue had a non-negligible influence on the construction of its Xinxue, it is still impossible to directly equate this influence with an established mature system. The research method of the inductive system may lead researchers to unconsciously search for the counterparts or analogs in Yangming's Yixue from the ideological categories such as Ontology and Gongfu theory, which would make a misunderstanding of his real thoughts in Yixue. Basing on the current material of his writing, Yangming had lots of statements and assertions of Ontology and Gongfu theory by interpretation of "ZhouYi" (《周易》). We have noticed that most of these assertions came from Yangming's later years, and some of them have not been effectively developed by him. Only if by comparing his Yixue and Xinxue can we more effectively define the connotation and boundary of his Yixue. Then we can get a proper angle to evaluate the influence of his Yixue on Xinxue.

The Coherence of Yangming's Yixue and Its Xinxue

Since Yangming's Xinxue had undergone different stages of changes, was it the same with the closely related Yangming's Yixue? The following materials are his discussions of ZhouYi (《周易》) in different periods, now we listed them in chronological order. By comparative research, it can be easy to see that the content of Yangming's Yixue has changed a lot. Although the main theme of Conscience had not changed, the meanings of interpretation of "ZhouYi" (《周易》) were different in their focus and meaning. This change and difference should not be discerned.

Early Stage (Around A.D. 1508)

At that time, Yangming, who was relegated to exile, wrote the *Discussions of The Five Classics* (《五经臆说》) in total of 46 volumes in Longchang. Except for the *Discussion of LiJing* (《礼经臆说》), which had only six volumes, the others each contained 10 volumes, which were discarded and unused later. Until Yangming's death, only few remaining volumes were obtained by his disciple Qian Dehong. The common format of those materials was the same. Yangming would firstly cite the texts of *The Five Classics* (《五经》) and interpret them in a Xinxue's way. Here are two examples:

"The 'Yuan' is the Benevolence of living beings in heaven", while in human beings it is the heart... the nexus of Heaven and earth make all things grow up, and practical principles go through the whole world. The sage makes the nexus of human's minds and comfort the world in peace, which means that Sincerity manifest itself. Those manifestation could be called "Virtuousness" (贞). Watching the principles of nexus of heaven and earth, the sage's way of touching people's hearts are contained in the "Virtuousness" (贞). (*the Discussion about Five Classics* 《五经臆说》)

"Virtuousness" (贞) is the way of eternal... The way of heaven and earth is also the "Virtuousness" (贞)... The reason why the world, the sun, the moon, the four seasons and the sage can last for a long time is of the Virtuousness... "Heng (恒)" as a hexagram, the upper hexagram is Zhen (震) which means thunder, and the lower hexagram is Xun (巽) which means wind... and there must be a reason to explain that the wind and thunder can move eternally. The reason is that there is a ultimate immortality in the world. A Junzi (君子) takes wind and thunder as the images of "Permanence", and although the wind and thunder are ever-changing, there is no way to trace them, there must be a ultimate immortality in the movements of wind and thunder. (*the Discussion about Five Classics* 《五经臆说》)

Yangming took the example of the two hexagrams “Xian” (咸卦) and “Heng” (恒卦) to explain that “Virtuousness” (贞) is the supreme virtue in the universe and is perpetual, and the sage would also act following this supreme virtue. “The heaven and the earth are touched and all things are transformed, and the sage touches the heart and the world is at peace” is quoted from *Xian Gua Biography* (《咸卦·彖传》). In Yangming’s view, “Virtuousness” (贞) is the reason why the heaven and the earth inspire all things, and the sage influences the people. The hexagram “Heng” (恒卦) is formed by the images of wind and thunder, which represents the Eternal Way (常道). The sage observes the Way and knows the rules of all things. The so-called “Virtuousness” (贞) refers to that all things in the heaven and earth are in their orders. All things have their orders of birth, growth, maturation, and death. If the orders were lost, everything would wither and decay. The Way of heaven and earth acts like the rising and falling of the sun, and the cycle of Way is endless. A Junzi stands on the Tao of “Virtuousness”, and the sage uses this to influence all people, all things are in their order, and all people can get their own way, so hexagram “Heng” (恒卦) said, “there is a lot of benefits to follow the Virtuousness”. Yangming believed that the two hexagrams of “Xian” and “Heng” are the first of the scriptures in the *Book of Changes* (《周易》), and the sage watched the Tao and understood the eternal value of humanity. The Order of the universe which is “Virtuousness” (贞), and the human being should follow it, because that is the ultimate evidence of necessity of Human Way.

The Longchang was where Yangming realized the Tao, and the Tao that he realized was the Spirit in his heart (神明其心). In Yangming’s view, the principles of heaven and earth revealed by the two hexagrams “Xian” and “Heng” were also presented in the human being. From the point of view of the form of his interpretation, Yangming explained the meaning of “ZhouYi” (周易) by quoting the scriptures, then explained them by starting elaborating from TianTao (天道) to Human Tao (人道) according to his Xinxue. The theory in Longchang was manifested as a value form of the isomorphism of heaven, earth, and human beings. At this time, Yangming’s Yixue is about to value the Principles of Yi (易之理), which began to react his Xinxue as a hidden effect.

Middle Stage of Yangming’s Yixue (Around A.D. 1515)

At that time, A.D. 1515, Yangming lived in Beijing. He was remitted and began to travel to Nanjing, Jiangxi and other places for several years, while discussing the Studying of Zhu&Lu (朱陆之学) with others, and recruiting his disciples to talk about the Xinxue. The gist is that the essays on “ZhouYi” were mostly found in correspondence with fellow practitioners, and there was another important article about “ZhouYi”, which was given by Yangming to the eldest son of an official Bai Jingzhai. Yangming’s article named “the meaning of Baiyue’s style name ‘Zheng’” (《白说字贞夫书》) said:

The Way of the world is just “Virtuousness” (贞); the teaching of the world is also the “Virtuousness”. The change of Qian’s Way (乾道), which should gasp in admiration also is nothing but “Virtuousness” which equals to Supreme Happiness (说), which is the core spirit in heaven. The core spirits of Kun (坤) are of Benevolence and Growing Power. Keeping the Benevolence and Peace, are of the core spirit of human, which also means Supreme Happiness (说). Therefore, Supreme Happiness (说) equals to the “Virtuousness” and the “Virtuousness” is the Principle (理) in the whole universe. The “Virtuousness” means all the principles are revealed in one’s mind, and Supreme Happiness (说) means one’s mind which could obey the principles and lead the life. Therefore, when the Heaven achieves the “Virtuousness”, it can bring the prosperity in YueTao (说道). When the earth obtains achieves the “Virtuousness”, it can bring the maturation in YueTao (说道). When the man who achieves the achieves the “Virtuousness”, he can live as a real man in YueTao (说道). The “Virtuousness”, is of the endlessness existence in the universe yet the Supreme Happiness (说), is of the endlessness effect in the universe... (Wang, 2014, p. 998)

Although this article was written as a gift for Yangming's friend, it can also reflect the changes in Yangming's Yixue. His article developed Longchang's theory of "Virtuousness". In Yang Ming's view, the "Virtuousness" manifests itself in various ways, which means the different values in the QianTao, KunTao, and HumanTao. The "Virtuousness" which equals to Supreme Happiness (说), means that everything could grow themselves in natural ways. Yangming believed that all things have their natural faces, and each of them could grow in proper ways. This is the inexhaustible value of the "Virtuousness" Tao, which originated from the Heaven and went down to human being. Yangming believed that the "Virtuousness" means the common value of human being. Therefore, a Junzi should achieve the "Virtuousness" and extend the value of it. In this situation, the human being would achieve their own value by following the actions of Junzi. As a result, the universe would turn to peace by influence of the "Virtuousness" which was stated in the deep of human's mind.

Compared to Longchang's thoughts, Yangming's Yixue at this time had already reconciled with his Xinxue. In Longchang, Yangming proposed the "Virtuousness" to expound his understanding of "Book of Changes". He stated that the "Virtuousness" is the principle in the universe, and the sage uses it to educate people. In the article "the meaning of Baiyue's style name 'Zhengu'" (《白说字贞夫书》), Yangming had developed the point, he stated that "Virtuousness" is not only the principle in the universe, but also the principle of the human being. Longchang's thoughts had endowed the "Virtuousness" with the endlessness value from the universe, and furthermore, the article established foundation of this value in the nature of human being. We could conclude that the article had made the domain of "Virtuousness" more widely and deeply, which reconciled his Yixue and Xinxue. Since the article was declared, Yangming's Yixue was not only the studying and interpretation of "ZhouYi" (《周易》), but also the important part of his Xinxue. The reason of this convert is that the article has made the internalization of "Virtuousness" to the nature of human being. The "Virtuousness" is the important concept in "ZhouYi" (《周易》), Yangming's interpretation has made it become the foundation of Xinxue in the article written in A.D. 1515. This vital transition was observed in the article mentioned above, and it was not the only evidence, we could also observe this transition in Yangming's poems in his different ages.

For examples:

In A.D. 1506, Yangming wrote 14 poems in prison, one of them is "Reading the *Book of Changes*" (《读易》), it said that: "Sitting and reading Fuxi's *Book of Changes*, clear the mind and see the subtleties." (Wang, 2014, p. 747).

In A.D. 1510, Yangming lived in Beijing and wrote a poem which said, "Please read the Fuxi's paintings of hexagrams in peace. was there any word in the hexagrams...Tao is basically inaction, and it only manifests itself by one's actions. You can live in Tao by your own without any other help." (Wang, 2014, p. 747).

In A.D. 1513, Yangming wrote a poem for his old friend, saying that: "There is no word in the Six Classics after enlightenment, and there is nothing but the quiet and lonely moon in my mind." (Wang, 2014, p. 747).

In A.D. 1515, living in Beijing, Yangming wrote a poem which said, "The beauty of poetry comes beyond its words. Who can see the truth before the hexagrams painted?" (Wang, 2014, p. 820).

According to the four poems quoted above, it can be seen that from 1508 to 1515, there a distinct boundary in Yangming's Yixue. Around 1508, Yangming's poems about "ZhouYi" were mostly written in terms of "learning Yi" and "pondering Yi", because he was chasing the sage's mind in scriptures and wanted to learn from them. The transition began around A.D. 1510, Yangming's poem declared that Tao was not in textures of Six Classics, but in everyone's mind, he asserted that someone could get the truth of life by tracing back to his original mind. This point of view was hardly seen in Yangming's early writing around A.D. 1508.

In general, we can find the coherence of Yangming's Yixue from A.D. 1508 to 1515, Yangming proposed that the "Virtuousness" was the principle of the universe. Then, in order to strengthen the connection between Yixue and Xinxue, Yangming made the concept of "Virtuousness" internalization to the foundational value in the nature of human being, which revealed the new a character of his Yixue. This new character was the disenchantment of Six Classics. We could see Yangming's strong favor in Six Classics during his exile in Longchang until 1510, but since Yangming lived in Beijing around 1510, his attitude to Six Classics had changed. He became calm about chasing the sage's mind and tried to disenchant the Authority Worship of Six Classics. Thus, we could find lots of evidences of this disenchant in his poems and what's more, Yangming put the important concept "Virtuousness" into the basic structure of Xinxue because he believed that it was the "Virtuousness" in one's original mind which could lead to the truth of life without any other guidance. Although, we all knew that Yangming didn't give up in researching Six Classics especially "ZhouYi", we must also notice that research was not the ultimate target but getting truth of life for him. After 1510, Yang's Yixue and Xinxue became more like a systematic integration.

Final Stage of Yangming's Yixue (After A.D. 1518)

Since 1515, there have been more and more debates about "Great Study" (大学) between Yangming and Ganquan and other fellow practitioners and disciples. In the later years, Yangming proposed the most famous declaration which is "Achieve your Conscience" (致良知) as a core statement of his Yixue and Xinxue. He wrote the famous paper "the questioning about 'Great Study'" to expound his idea. However, we noticed that Yangming regarded "Conscience" as a core concept in his theory instead of "Virtuousness". Yangming didn't explain why the transformation came out. If analyzing directly, maybe in Yangming's view, the domain of "Conscience" was wider than "Virtuousness", and the former could contain the latter, which was obviously not a satisfying answer of the question. We believe that it is significant to figure out the reason of using "Conscience" instead of "Virtuousness" by Yangming, which could help us to understand the connection between his Yixue and Xinxue.

First of all, we all knew that Yangming's Yixue had a trend of internalization on explaining "Virtuousness", as an intuitive result, "Virtuousness" becomes the foundational value in the nature of human being. There was an inevitable conflict in this theory according to explanation of meaning of "Eight Entries" (八条目) in the "Great Study" (《大学》) which Yangming deeply devoted himself to in his later years. Yangming had his unique understanding of "Eight Entries", he believed that the most important entry is "Correcting the Mind" (正心) (Chen, 2013, p. 121). Yangming pointed out that the Mind was totally completely goodness in its original version, so there was no need to correct when the Mind acted in its original way. Only if the Mind went to wrong ways should the necessary of correcting occur. In conclusion, "Correcting the Mind" meant one should return his mind to the original version. This understanding of "Correcting the Mind" had an inevitable conflict with the concept "Virtuousness" in Yangming's Yixue.

Basically speaking, "Virtuousness" in "ZhouYi" was announced as "Zheng", which meant to correct one's mind in a righteous way. Yangming's interpretation had turned it to a nominalization to fulfil his proposal about the nature of human being, which was discussed above. However, this understanding was not perfect for "ZhouYi" and "Great Study", because in two of them, no matter "Virtuousness" or "Correcting the Mind" both meant the initiative to correct the Mind in righteous ways. That puzzle indicated that "Virtuousness" and "Correcting the Mind" were more closed to Gongfu (修身工夫) but not the "Mind in Original Version" (心之本体).

It seemed an impasse in the systematic integration in his Yixue and Xinxue. If Yangming insisted his theory of original version mind, there should be a new concept to indicate the meaning of "Mind in Original Version" instead of "Virtuousness". At last, Yangming put out the word "Conscience" to reveal the meaning of "Mind in Original Version". On the other hand, Yangming endowed this word a new meaning of verbalization to show the possibility of returning to "Mind in Original Version" by "Gongfu" in case of going wrong ways. In ancient Chinese, the word "Conscience" had two similar but different meanings by Yangming's creative explanations. One of them can be explained as a nature in human being, and the other meant the realizing of "Conscience" naturally. In other words, it meant that anyone could have the ability to realize and accomplish the Supreme Goodness (至善) in his nature because his "Conscience" was born with his birth all the time. The way which could lead someone back to his "Mind in Original Version" was to "Achieve the Conscience" (致良知) regarded as Yangming's most vital "Gongfu".

The Supplement and Deepening on Yangming's Xinxue by His Yixue

Since Yangming had proposed those statements about "Conscience" and the corresponding "Gongfu", there was a huge development for the fusion of his Yixue and Xinxue. From points of Yangming's view, he had already solved the problem of the "Virtuousness" and "Correcting the Mind", which gave him a chance to elaborate the reality of "Conscience" as a theoretical deepening. Therefore, he promoted all his thoughts in one statement when he was old, "Conscience is Yi" (良知即是易) at about 1527. In Yangming's opinion, Yi was not only Yin and Yang, but also the "Conscience" itself, which didn't mean that the Mind is made of Yin and Yang. Kao said, Yangming's Yixue equaled to his theory of "Achieve the Conscience" (Kao, 2007, p. 34). We found that Yangming wrote another statement which could be regarded as a rehearsal promotion of "Conscience is Yi". This statement written in about 1525 in the article named "the Anniversary of Pavilion of Honorable Classics in College of JiShan" (稽山书院尊经阁记), said that, "Zhou Yi, was the book which recorded the traces of My Mind (吾心) by using Yin and Yang" (Wang, 2014, p. 287). In this statement, the word "My Mind" was not referred to Yangming's own mind but to every single person's mind. The whole statement suggested that Yangming believed that "Zhou Yi" (《周易》) was the royal records of human being's mind by using the symbolic signs of Yin and Yang. The annotation in this statement was the movement of Mind which equaled to the movement of Yin and Yang. If we follow this annotation, we could find that "Conscience is Yi" was an upgraded version of this statement.

The basic meaning of "Yi" was not referred to "ZhouYi", but referred to the Qi of Yin and Yang. Yangming's statement didn't mean that "Conscience" was made of Qi of Yin and Yang. He emerged that there were two features of "Conscience" by asserting that "Conscience is Yi". The purpose of the statement was to reveal the existence of transcendence and reality of "Conscience". Actually, Yangming wanted to supplement his Xinxue by his Yixue. We have already discussed the connotation of "Conscience" which means the Supreme Goodness in the foundational nature of human being, so it may not be difficult to understand why Yangming used "Yi" to describe "Conscience". "Yi" is the basic concept in Yixue which means the principle of truth can be revealed in variety and changeable ways in the universe human being, so we can see the commending points between "Conscience" and "Yi".

"Yi" was regarded as an old kind of wisdom by divination in "ZhouYi" by the researchers including Yangming. Because the ancient researchers of "ZhouYi" believed in the existence of Qi (气) of Yin and Yang, many of them considered that the symbolic signs of Yin and Yang can represent the verities in the universe.

Yangming was one of the followers who believed such consideration and so that he inferred that “Yi” could also represent the ultimate annotations of verities of “Conscience”. As well as “Yi”, “Conscience” was manifested in diversity of ways in different social relationships and situations. For example, the way in which a man treats his father is different from treating to his daughter. People have complex identities in the diversities of social situations, which demand them to perform their identities in varieties of ways. Yangming pointed out that the proper emotion would occur if one could perform his identities perfectly, which meant the effect of “Conscience” began to manifest in one’s mind. So the first annotation of the statement “Conscience is Yi” showed that “Conscience” was of complexity. In the long history of human’s life, the complex situations were normal and needed to be faced, “Conscience” was the most efficient and proper guidance in one’s mind if he or she aroused it. “Conscience” would guide people to make reasonable choices without complex considerations. In this understanding of “Conscience”, “Conscience is Yi” meant that the “Conscience” was the verity which can be easily known and followed as well as “Yi”. We believe this is the basic understanding of the statement proposed by Yangming.

In addition, “Conscience is Yi” had endowed the meaning of transcendence and reality to “Conscience”. We all know that the verity of “Yi” manifests in the divination which means connection with the universe. It is the experience of transcendence. The one who could arouse “Conscience” in his mind equals to understanding the verity of “Yi”, because his or her mind is open wide to all universe with getting the endless peace at that time. The resonance comes between the man and the universe, and they become an integration which connects the past and future as an eternal live. It seemed a little mysterious because Yangming believed that “Conscience” in the nature of human being could help them to go beyond the boundary of the limited fresh life. He had a strong belief that everyone could become a sage if he or she recalls the “Conscience”, which was the most efficient way to connect with the eternal spirit of the universe. As we mentioned, Yangming wanted to bring the disenchantment of Six Classics to the whole society, so he pointed out that the verity in “ZhouYi” (《周易》) existed in one’s Mind originally. People could recall and experience the “Conscience” without sticking to following the Six Classics. By stating “Conscience is Yi”, Yangming confirmed that “Conscience” was not only a concept but also the existence in reality. “Conscience” which would never be increased or reduced, had lasted since the human being was born. There were more evidences for the above understandings in Yangming’s poems which were written from A.D. 1521 to 1527. For examples:

“Conscience manifests in the daily life, which had been lasted from the beginning of the universe.” (Wang, 2014, p. 872).

“Qian (乾) and Kun (坤) were of Yi originally before they were painted as hexagrams, which equals to that the Mind (心性) was out of shape as well.” (Wang, 2014, p. 870).

“The realization of Conscience happens in the silence without any other’s noticing, which forms the foundation of the whole university.” (Wang, 2014, p. 871).

We can find that Yangming started to combine “Conscience” with “Yi” since 1521 by his poems quoted above. It seemed that he confirmed the similarities between those two things, which made him believe the uniformity of them. It was rather a belief than a researching opinion as our regarding. But to Yangming, it was not a simple belief but the strongest belief after his ups and downs in life. “Conscience” became a general teaching method for Yangming and his students, and in order to help his students to recall and follow the rules of “Conscience”, Yangming was spending most of time establishing the connection between “Conscience” and “Yi”. Peng believed that Yang’s Yixue proposed that “Conscience” related to the meaning of ontology (Peng, 2015, p.

92). Actually, there were little evidences which could prove the statement of Peng. Even Yangming had the idea to relate the ontology with his theory, it seemed that he didn't finish this target completely by offering more details of demonstrations, which was quite a pity. We could only observe that Yangming regarded "Conscience" as the verity in the nature of human being, then he extended the range of this theory to the whole universe from the beginning of lives. It was not said that everything was given "Conscience", but was in the effect caused by "Conscience" since the human being's arising. This effect of "Conscience" equaled to the function of TianTao in Yangming's theory.

Conclusion and Comment

Through the arrangement and discussion of the developments of Yangming's Yixue, we have found the uniformity between his Yixue and Xinxue, which is the annotation of transcendence by the interpretation of "ZhouYi" (《周易》) in his Xinxue.

Yangming's Yixue can be roughly divided into two periods: one is the early and middle period, and the other is the late period. In the early times from about 1508-1515, Yangming had been focused on revealing the connection between "ZhouYi" (《周易》) and his Xinxue. He proposed the concept "Virtuousness" in "ZhouYi" to enrich the annotations of his Xinxue. This theory tends to prove that the foundation of the nature in human being was the "Supreme Goodness" (至善). Yet in his later years, he found that this assertion had caused the conflict between "ZhouYi" (《周易》) and "Great Study" (《大学》). In order to solve this problem and make a clearer summary of his Yixue and Xinxue, Yangming proposed a new concept "Conscience" to assimilate all his thoughts in Yixue and Xinxue. After that, Yangming stated that "Conscience is Yi" as a further promotion. The statement was to endow the transcendence to "Conscience" as well as to bring the disenchantment of "ZhouYi" (《周易》) to the whole society.

However, it was hard to admit that the theory was successful at last because the more details of demonstrations were of deficiency with Yangming's death. We just could conclude that Yangming was not intended to establish the system of Yixue but just extracted the core annotation in "ZhouYi" (《周易》) to supplement his Xinxue thoughts. His creative assertion "Conscience is Yi" was rather a description than a definition. According to his poems of "Conscience" and "Yi", what Yangming wanted to express was to rebuild the confidence of one's belief for being a Junzi by his own realization of "Conscience" without being blind to be lost in the Six Classics. Yangming revealed the common points between "Conscience" and "Yi" to remind people that they could recall "Conscience" easily in their Mind, which meant to connect with the spirit of the universe. Yangming and his students believed that was the ultimate valuable method to achieve one's life. From this perspective, Yangming's opinion was valuable because he revealed the consistence between "Conscience" and "Yi". He believed that the original mind was totally kind and equaled to the epidemic of "Yi". He hoped that people could return to their original mind by following the specific methods. Wen highly certain the Yangming's theory, he commented that Yangming's theory had found the instinct of humanbeing, and the theory could guide the people's mind back to kind naturally (Wen, 1998, p. 31).

Yangming's thoughts had a huge influence on the Ming Dynasty even after his death. Benefiting from the clearance and simplicity of Yangming's thoughts, Yangming's student groups become more and more giant and begin to lead the trend of politics in the country. Correspondingly, the defections in the theory also have a larger effect on the research by his students. A crack occurred on the understanding of Yangming's "Four Sentences of Teaching" between his two favorite students Qian Dehong (钱德洪) and Wang Ji (王畿). The main debating of

that was whether “Conscience” could be easily realized in general life without learning Six Classics in long terms. Qian (钱德洪) still insisted on the necessity of learning Six Classics to recall “Conscience”. On the opposite side to Qian, Wang Ji (王畿) had a strong confidence to declare that one could comprehend “Conscience” by his own efforts. Maybe, the two students had overemphasized the different points of Yangming’s teaching. Qian thought highly of the learning of Six Classics for being afraid of the ignorance of the “Gongfu”, but this opinion might weaken the enlighten of “Conscience” and back to the old path on worship of Six Classics, which Yangming never wanted to see. On the other side, Wang was the great follower of Yangming and believed in the teaching of “Conscience” without hesitation, as a result, his theory slid into a kind of Zen without Rules (狂禅) after the division of the students of Yangming.

If we retrace the thinking path arranged by Yangming, we could easily find that the hidden danger was born with the proposal of the statement “Conscience is Yi”. The statement was necessary to supply in details carefully by avoiding the misunderstanding indeed. Regretfully Yangming had no time to finish this work because of his disease and busy official working on the long journey in his later years. Anyway, we could seek the profound annotations on the relationship between Yangming’s Yixue and Xinxue. Yangming had extracted and purified the transcendence from the normal thinking of “Conscience” and “Yi”, and tried to spread the idea out in the whole universe by integrating his Yixue and Xinxue. According to Yangming’s description, “Conscience” acted in the way as “Yi”, so people can get the remarkable guidance from the symbolic signs of Yin and Yang in “ZhouYi” in order to recall “Conscience”. Yangming also pointed out that the learning of “ZhouYi” was not the only way to recall “Conscience”, but just the useful method. He believed that someone can recall “Conscience” if he or she was willing to exercise responsibilities of the social roles he or she played in proper ways. It was a natural result that “Conscience” was manifested in one’s Mind when someone becomes a mature man according to the above convenient method. In other words, “Conscience” would manifest itself no matter whether someone learned Six Classics or not. Although Yangming was a master of Six Classics, his opinion about the learning of Six Classics seemed a little bit radical at his time.

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