

programme of instruction closely followed the Yi Luo 伊洛 School teachings of **Cheng Hao** and **Cheng Yi**. After he had finished a short period of study, Yu suggested that Wang pursue a career in government service. At the age of eighteen in 1135 Wang Yingchen received his *jinshi* degree. The Song emperor Gaozong (r. 1127–1163) is said to have read Wang's exam papers, and to have thought that Wang was an established scholar from his mature style of writing. Therefore, Wang was given the highest official rank for that session of the examinations. When Wang was called before the emperor, Gaozong presented the young candidate with a specially prepared copy of the Confucian classic *Doctrine of the Mean* to mark his academic achievement. Wang's first official appointment was as Proof-reader in the Palace Library (*mishu sheng zhengzi* 秘書省正字).

Wang was actively involved in court debate over Song-Jin tensions along the northern frontier. When the Jurchen Jin forces threatened the border region of Henan in 1141–1142, Wang prepared a military defence. However, Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090–1155) and his pacifist faction presided over the court in this period, and court policy soon dictated that no military response should be arranged. Wang eventually memorialised the court to argue that he opposed the order not to coordinate a strong defence to face the horrible threat from the impending Jurchen invasion. His public opposition was said to have irritated Qin Gui, and Wang was soon demoted to the position of Controller-General (*tongpan* 通判) to Jianzhou 建州 prefecture. Wang eventually took up residence at Mt Chang's 長山 Xiao Buddhist Temple 蕭寺 where he took work as a lecturer.

After Qin had died and his faction had fallen out of imperial favour, Wang Yingchen attempted to return to court. Eventually he worked his way up the official hierarchy to the position of Head of the Ministry of Personnel (*shangshuli*

bulang 尚書吏部郎). Later he took the position of Vice Minister of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu shilang* 戶部侍郎) and Hanlin scholar, among other high positions. Wang Yingchen was honest but unyielding in his official service. When he was not afraid to speak his mind, lesser-minded officials would cast aspersions on his character. Wang became embroiled in further court debate, and he was subsequently demoted in rank. Wang soon retired from official life and lived in solitude until he died at the age of fifty-nine.

Wang drew on a wide range of sources in developing his brand of Confucianism. During his earliest period of exile Wang developed his eclectic philosophical thought. When in his youth Wang married the daughter of Yu Tuanshi, the dowry he received was in the form of books. It was with this gift that Wang learned of the teachings of the Cheng brothers. Through the Cheng brothers Wang took an interest in 'ritual, music, legal codes and government' (*li yue xing zheng* 禮樂刑政), whereby the centrality and harmony within both ritual and music would lead one to the principle of the *Dao*. When he was young, Wang Yingchen often associated with loyalist literary figures **Lü Benzhong** and **Hu Anguo**, and adopted their teachings as well. Wang Yingchen also studied with **Zhang Jiucheng**'s Heng Pu 橫浦 School soon after Wang had received his first official appointment. However, Wang eventually distanced himself from the Heng Pu School and associated himself more closely with Lü Benzhong's Zi Wei 紫微 School, because Zhang was known to be unduly partial to Buddhist practices. Wang was also a student of Yang Shi for a period.

Huang Zongxi quoted Zhu Xi as saying that Wang had mastered many different schools, but that he never became content with one system of learning. Such a statement from Zhu Xi was probably based on Zhu's criticism of Wang's foremost student Lü Zuqian that Lü was overly analytical in his thought and never spent enough time to

determine right from wrong in personal conduct. Wang's writings were later compiled as *Wending Ji* 文定集 (*The Collected Works of Wang Wending*).

References: Song-Yuan *xuean*, 1966: 1451–5; Tillman 1992b: 86.

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Wang Yinglin 王應麟

1223–1296

(zi Bohou 伯厚 or Houzhai 厚齋, hao Shenning 深寧)

Wang Yinglin is an important representative of the so-called 'polymaths' of the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279). His ancestors fled to South China after the end of the Northern Song dynasty and settled eventually in the prefecture Yin 鄞 (today Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang), where Wang Yinglin was born. Under the strict supervision of his father Wang Hui 王撝 (1184–1253, zi Qianfu 謙父) he began his diligent studies of the canonical Confucian works in his early youth. At the age of nineteen *sui* 歲 (eighteen years) he already obtained his *jinshi* degree and in 1256 even passed the hardest of the examinations in Song dynasty – the 'polymath examination' (*boxue hongci* 博學宏詞 or 博學宏辭). Afterwards he had an unsteady career at the court of the Southern Song emperor until he finally retreated from the post of Minister of Rites (*libu shangshu* 禮部尚書) in late 1275, only a few months before Mongol troops stormed the capital Lin'an 臨安 (today Hangzhou 杭州). He spent the last twenty years of his life at his family residence working on his compilations and teaching his students.

While preparing for the 'polymath examination', Wang Yinglin wrote the '*Sea of Jades*' (*Yuhai* 玉海), one of the most important encyclopedias of that time. During seclusion of his later years he compiled many commentaries on the Classics and

other traditional historical works. The most abundant of these is the collection *Recordings of Observances from Arduous Studies* (*Kunxue jiwen* 困學紀聞), which also gives some information about his thoughts during his late years, since it was finished only after 1280. His educational efforts can be felt in his elementary book *Purple Pearls of Elementary Learning* (*Xiao xue ganzhu* 小學紺珠) and his commentaries on the Han-dynasty primer – the *Hastening to Achievement* (*Jijiu pian* 急就篇). The *Sanzi jing* however is most likely not written by Wang Yinglin, although it is often so stated.

Wang Yinglin had studied under several teachers belonging to different schools of Confucianism. Qing dynasty scholars like **Quan Zuwang** make him a successor of **Lü Zuqian**, while in recent times **Qian Mu** tried to prove that he continued the tradition of **Zhu Xi**. Others even write that his thought is based on the school of **Lü Jiuyuan**. As connections to all these schools of thought can be found in Wang's writings, it seems that we must give up this kind of schematic classification when dealing with scholars like Wang Yinglin. He emphasises broad learning as well as a high moral standard to be observed by any serious scholar. Qing dynasty scholars – like **Yan Ruofu**, **Quan Zuwang** and He Zhuo 何焯 (1661–1722, zi Qizhan 恥瞻, hao Chaxian 茶仙 or Yimen 義門) – were mostly impressed by his philological techniques and especially appreciated the collection of notes *Kunxue jiwen*, as well as Wang Yinglin's attempts to reconstruct lost works, e.g. the *Zhou Yi Zheng Kangcheng zhu* 周易鄭康成注 (*Commentaries of Zheng Xuan on the Yi jing*). However, it can be shown that Wang Yinglin's painful feelings concerning the brutal end of the Song dynasty (1276) also had a great impact on his philological work of the latest years.

References: He Zeheng, 1981; Langley, 1986; Qian Mu, 1974.

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