



Undergraduate assignment feedback form
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Good morning Professor Honey, good evening Miss Chen and good afternoon my classmates. Today I would like to introduce Wang Shouren 王守仁, the greatest philosopher of the Ming Dynasty and a representative of the School of the Mind.

Wang Shouren was born into a scholarly family, and his father was Wang Hua 王華, who was the No. 1 Scholar in the seventeenth year of Chenghua 成華 17 年, Emperor Xianzong of the Ming Dynasty 明憲宗. He used to be an official of the left vice Minister of the Ministry of Rites 禮部左侍郎, and the Minister of the Ministry of Personnel in Nanjing 南京吏部尚書. It is worth mentioning that Wang Hua once faced the temptation of money and beautiful women when he was young, but he still adhered to his principles. When I saw these stories, I was very moved. I think Wang Shouren's achievements must be inseparable from his father, who has both ability and moral integrity.

In 1472, Wang Shouren was born in Yuyao, Zhejiang Province, Yangming is the name of his study. Before his birth, his grandmother dreamed that a god came from the clouds with a baby, so his grandfather named him 'Cloud'. However, he was still unable to speak until he was five years old. Later, his grandfather renamed him 'Shouren' according to the sentence in The Analects of Confucius, '知及之, 仁不能守之, 雖得之, 必失之' Later, he was able to speak.

In 1483, when Wang Shouren was 12 years old, he was discussing with his private tutor what was the most important thing in the world. Unexpectedly, as the son of the No. 1 Scholar, he didn't think it was the most important thing to get an official position through the imperial examination. In his view, becoming a sage is the most important thing. He once said, '志不立, 天下無可成之事。If we do not establish a good ambition first, it will be difficult for us to get things done.'

In 1488, he married Zhushi 諸氏, It is very interesting that on his wedding night, he became so engrossed in a conversation with a Daoist priest that he forgot to return home. Another interesting story about him is that, in order to practice Zhu Xi's theory of 格物致知, he observed bamboo for seven days and nights, but still could not realize *zhizhi* 致知. when he found he was unable to do so, he turned to the teachings

of Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 which he found much more applicable. Lu Jiuyuan is usually regarded as the founder of the School of the Mind, while Wang Shouren was one of the few important adherents of it during the Ming Dynasty. For this reason, it is also known as Lu-Wang xinxue 陸王心學.

In 1492, he received the jinshi 進士 degree, but failed the jinshi exam in both 1493 and 1496. In 1499, he passed the jinshi exam, ranking second among all the examinees. Within a short time he was appointed to positions of considerable responsibility, first in public works, then in justice, examinations, and military affairs.

In 1506, When a number of prominent officials were imprisoned by the palace eunuch Liu Jin 劉瑾, Wang Shouren wrote a memorial protesting the action. He was ordered to receive forty lashes in the presence of the emperor, after which he was exiled to a small town in Guizhou province named Longchang 龍場. Here, He followed the concept of Lu Jiuyuan who defined each man's mind as identical to the universal order. And he realized that 心即理 every mind was identical to the universal principle, which laid the foundation of his theory.

In 1509, he first proposed a doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action. While Zhu Xi emphasized that knowledge comes before action 知先行後, Wang Shouren brings up the concept that knowledge and action are one inseparable unit 知行合一. As he said, ‘知是行之始, 行是知之成。Knowledge is the beginning of the action, and action is the completion of knowledge.’ This is similar to the 解行相應 proposed by Buddhism.

In 1518, he used temper justice with mercy to remarkable success in putting down the local rebellions in Jiangxi province. In 1519, he used his wisdom and courage to quell a local lord's rebellion in only 35 days.

In 1522, due to the death of his father, he returned to his hometown and began to preach his theories in various places. In this process, he developed his doctrine of the extension of innate knowledge 良知. His doctrine was in part derived from Mencius' admonition that ‘the sense of right and wrong is common to all men.’ He believed that the universal principle was endowed in everyone's mind, every person was in

possession of innate knowledge. This is the same meaning as ‘人之初，性本善。Men at their birth are naturally good.’ in the three character classic 三字經. And *zhiliangzhi* 致良知 means that we should make constant efforts to purify our minds of selfish desires and restore our original innate knowledge.

In 1528, he was called back into public service to suppress a rebellion in Guangxi Province, which he did but he died on his way back home. When his disciples asked him if he had any last words, he replied, ‘此心光明，亦復何言’。That is to say, I have been aboveboard my whole life, and I have nothing more to say.

Wang Shouren is a rare philosopher who has made great achievements in both literature and the military field. And Wang Shouren’s thought mainly consists of three parts, his doctrine of the every mind was identical to the universal principle 心即理, his doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action 知行合一, and the extension of innate knowledge 致良知.

Wang Shouren's disciples, in the form of questions and answers, organized his thoughts into a book called Chuanxilu 傳習錄. The word Chuanxi 傳習 in the title of the book originates from what Zengzi said in the Analects of Confucius, 傳不習乎? ‘Whether I may have not mastered and practiced the instructions of my teacher? ’

Although Wang Shouren’s thought inspired controversy by their independence of spirit and particularly by their differences with the orthodox interpretations of Zhu Xi, his thought influence extended to Japan and Korea as well as China.

In my opinion, his thought is still very useful in today's society. For example, his theory of the unity of knowledge and action not only avoids the problem that ‘學而不思則罔。Learning without thought is labor lost’, but also avoids the problem that ‘思而不學則殆。Thought without learning is perilous’. It is not only applicable to academic study, but also can be applied to doing anything else.

This is my report, I know there must be many mistakes in the content, any suggestions and advice would be appreciated, thank you very much.