
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Presentation and Utilization of WangGen's Conscience

Zhaoqian Sun

Master's Student, Bohai University, Jinzhou, China

Corresponding Author: Zhaoqian Sun, **E-mail:** sunzhaoqian2026@126.com

| ABSTRACT

Since Mencius first created the moral concept of "conscience" and then Wang Yangming established the teaching of "conscience", combining the essence of conscience with the work of knowledge, the connotation and extension of "conscience" have been continuously enriched and developed. WangGen, as a famous "Confucian in Cloth" among the scholars of Wangxue in the middle of Ming Dynasty, reinterpreted 'conscience' with the help of his teacher Wang Yangming and his fellow scholars, and combined with his own special experience of becoming a scholar, and put forward his own "theory of conscience". With the help of his teacher Wang Yangming and his fellow disciples, and with his own special experience, he reinterpreted "conscience" and put forward his own "doctrine of conscience", which was interpreted by WangGen with a new meaning and innovated at both theoretical and practical levels. Under the background of social environment change and personalized ideological liberation in the middle of Ming Dynasty, the presentation and application of "conscience" transformed the Confucianism of the scholars and scholars into the daily study of the common people, transcending the traditional Confucianism of saintly and foolish and noble, and establishing a realistic channel for the common people to become saints and sages, thus contributing significantly to the transformation of Confucianism into a commoner. This is a far-reaching contribution to the turn of Confucianism towards the common people.

| KEYWORDS

WangGen; Heavenly Principle; Daily Conscience; Liangzhizhi

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1. Introduction

The Taizhou School, founded by WangGen, talked about the science of body, mind, and life among the common people, and had a great influence on the social customs at that time. However, most of the studies on Wang Gen's theory of conscience only focus on the proposition of "daily use of conscience" in his thought, concentrating on the perspective of "work to develop use" and ignoring the essence of the proposition of "conscience". This has led to the fragmentation of the study of his thought on conscience. In this paper, we will start from the formation of his conscience and the presentation and use of his conscience, explore the inner rationale and transmutation mechanism of the turn to Confucianism, and present the academic value and contemporary significance of WangGen's thought of conscience in this way.

2. The presentation of WangGen's conscience

WangGen studied under Wang Yangming, that is, in the debate with Wang Yangming on the issue of "conscience", he adhered to his doctrine of "conscience", and in the process of WangGen's study of Yangming, he absorbed and accepted the basic ideas of Yangming's philosophy, but he did not stick to the rules, and still insisted on his own ideas. In the process of learning from Yangming, WangGen absorbed and accepted the basic ideas of Yangming's philosophy, but he did not stick to the rules and still insisted on independent thinking, and put forward his own unique concept of conscience on the basis of Yangming's "doctrine of conscience".

2.1 Heavenly Principle

WangGen was forty-five years old, he made "the reason of conscience to answer the friends of the Ganquan Academy", the beginning of the article said: "or ask the reason of conscience the same as the study of the reason of conscience, but it is natural to have its own reason, so do not think and know, do not learn and can be." (Wang Gen, 2022) Here, WangGen put forward an original concept - "Heavenly Principle". First of all, the concept of "Divine Principle" refers to the ethical and moral order in both Cheng-Zhu and Lu-Wang philosophy, and Zhu Xi said, "What is the so-called Divine Principle? Is not benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom the Divine Principle? Are not the ruler and his subjects, father and son, brothers, husband and wife, and friends the Divine Principle?" (Zhu Xi, 2010) Wang Yangming also inherited the basic connotation of "the Divine Principle" and equated conscience with the Divine Principle: "The essence of the heart is the Divine Principle, and the Divine Principle's clear and spiritual realization is also called conscience." (Wang Yangming, 2018) On the premise that the category of the Divine Principle was generally recognized by Song and Ming philosophers, WangGen also continued this viewpoint: "The Divine Principle is that fathers and sons have kinship, kings and ministers have righteousness, husbands and wives have distinction, elders and children are in order, and friends have faith." He regards ethical and moral order as one of the connotations of his "Divine Principle of Conscience", but in addition to this, WangGen has a new direction of interpretation of "Divine Principle", which is to regard "Divine Principle" as "the reason that naturally exists", and to regard "Divine Principle" as "the reason that is naturally existent". He sees it as "the natural reasoning of nature".

As for the meaning of "naturally own" in the "Divine Principle", WangGen takes Confucius as an example, "Therefore, Confucius said: 'Knowing is knowing, not knowing is not knowing', is conscience is also but his 'into the temple, every thing asked', is 'know is to know, do not know is not know'." Here, WangGen used Confucius' "entering the temple, asking about everything" as a natural, uncontrollable behavior to explain the natural perceptual instinct of "knowing is knowing, not knowing is not knowing," thus introducing the concept of "conscience of heavenly reason". The true meaning of "Divine Principle and Conscience" is that "natural" nature. At the same time, the concept of "human desire" as opposed to "Divine Principle" has also changed, "Divine Principle, natural own reason also, only want to arrange how, is human desire." "Human desire" is no longer the instinctive pursuit of human life, but stems from all artificial and conscious arrangements that hinder the natural prevalence of the body of conscience and nature.

2.2 Daily conscience

"Conscience" does not distinguish between the saint and the fool, as early as in Wang Yangming, "Conscience is in the human heart, and there is no difference between the saint and the fool, which is the same in all the world. However, he did not argue in detail about "conscience" from the perspective of "people's daily use", but shifted the perspective to "saint's use", that is, "to realize conscience". "The reason for this is that "only the sages can realize their conscience, while the fools and fools cannot, and this is what separates the sages from the fools." although "there is a saint in every man's breast", and "all men can be Yao and Shun", here it is only a kind of "ought to be", "originally existed", not "readily existed". Therefore, in Wang Yangming's perspective, there is still a difference between the saints and the people. WangGen, who was influenced by his teacher, inherited and pushed this relationship between the saints and the fools to a more equal realm, and shifted his perspective to the "daily use of the people," further elucidating and arguing the character of the natural prevalence of the conscience from the daily use of the people's daily behavior.

WangGen develops human "Heavenly Principle" into human "daily use of conscience", about which Huang Zongxi recorded in "Ming Confucianism", "In the past years, a friend asked Mr. Xinzhai: 'How is it that there is no thought and there is nothing that does not pass? And no no pass' 'only this servant did not first have a period I call his heart, I call it will be answered, this is no thought no no pass.'" (Huang Zongxi, 2008) As to what is "no thought and no incommensurability," Wang Gen uses the example of a child servant to illustrate that when the servant is called without an expectation of calling his heart (no thought), and when he is called he responds (incommensurability), this is no thought and no incommensurability," which is similar to what the Zhongyong said "No thought, no reluctance". "It was a friend who said: 'In this way the whole world is full of saints.' The gentleman said: 'But it is the daily use without knowing, sometimes lazy and sleepy, or making fraud should not be, then it is not the heart at this time.'" "The world has this kind of heart, just day-to-day use and do not know, and when the flow of laziness and fatigue, or make fraud should not be, there is a subjective active "talent desire" arrangement, will lose this kind of feeling with the response, no thought and no not through the heart.

3. The utilization of WangGen's conscience

Based on the idea of "Da xue" that "things have their origin and end", Wang Gen believed that 'conscience' has a body and is useful, and that "the body of conscience" mainly refers to human physiological instincts and their natural rationality. The "body of conscience" mainly refers to the instincts of human physiological life and its natural reasonableness, which are presented in

the form of "conscience of heavenly reason" and its downward derivation of "conscience of daily use", which are respectively the internal state of "heavenly reason" and its external daily use; and "conscience" has a body and usefulness. The use of "conscience" is the restoration of the internal state of the "Divine Principle" and the fulfillment of its external daily use.

3.1 The return of the divine principle of conscience

In Wang Yangming's view, the popularity of the use of conscience mainly refers to the process of "Zhi Liang Zhi", which he explains with the words "oneness of knowledge and action" ("Zhouyi - Wenyan"). He used "zhizhi" (Zhou Yi - Wen Yan) to explain this character, meaning that "zhizhi" is to know and "zhizhi" is to achieve, so "zhizhi" here has the meaning of invention and application, emphasizing that it is the process of inventing and applying conscience. Therefore, "Zhi" here has the meaning of invention and application, emphasizing the practical work of "zhizhi". In WangGen's understanding, conscience is left to nature without any arrangement of "talent and desire", so WangGen changed his teacher Wang Yangming's "Zhi Liang Zhi" to "Liang zhizhi", which means "to be ready at the moment" and "to abandon the work". This means that the work is ready at the moment, and the work is discarded. In his book *Wang Yangming and the Confucianism of the Late Ming Dynasty*, Okada Takehiko puts forward the viewpoints of the three schools of the Wang Clan, and refers to the school represented by Wang Ji and Wang Gong as the "readymade school", which he describes as "the 'conscience' of Yangming. Yangming's 'conscience' as ready-made conscience takes the natural prevalence of my mind to be the essence and disposition." (Okada Takehiko, 2000) By placing the word "Zhi" after 'Liang zhi', WangGen emphasizes that one should act according to "Liang zhi", without the need for deliberate practical work, and follow the natural course of nature.

WangGen's "conscience" is to utilize the natural nature of "conscience" and let it prevail naturally, which is why he is opposed to the practice of solemnity and nurturing. "The Dao is just one. The middle is also, conscience is also, nature is also, one is also. Knowing this reason is now becoming a do not know this reason, Zhuang Jing is not free to focus on. Only then, is the selfishness." "To realize the Dao (conscience) that is "presently becoming, self-possessed" and not to lose this state is "solemnity," and to maintain this state is "holding". If you don't know the freedom of conscience, you are intentionally solemn, and if you are artificial, you will have selfishness in it. WangGen in the "conscience ready" under the premise that the maintenance of conscience is to restore its original original face, does not require complex and cumbersome zhizhi work, "the school records" also recorded, "a friend is too strict to hold the work, Mr. (WangGen) realized that: 'It is the study of the son of exhaustion. '" WangGen thought that doing work too strict, learning will become a stumbling block, "because he pointed to the wood chopper to show it said: 'He but never use the work, but also how to waste things?'" Doing work should be as easy and natural as a woodcutter chopping wood. In this way, WangGen directed the work of "conscience to" to the daily use of the people. Wang Gen emphasized that "Conscience of Heavenly Principle" is inherently possessed and completely readily available and fully equipped in terms of ontology, and stressed that "Conscience in Daily Use" permeates the daily ethical life of ordinary people in terms of function. (Tang Donghui, 2022)

3.2 The daily use of conscience in the practice of

"people daily use" in the Song and Ming schools of thought has long been interpreted, but more with the 'saint' this concept appears in pairs, Zhu Xi has put forward: "the sky only gave birth to many characters, with your Many reasons, but the sky can not do, so born saints, for the cultivation of religion, to teach the people." (Li Jingde, 1986) The sages assumed the responsibility of "cultivating and teaching" for heaven, while the people were only passive recipients, and there seemed to be an insurmountable gap between the sages and the people. The content of the sages' teaching of the people is also far away from the "daily use of the people", "The sages taught the people, probably only saying filial piety, brotherhood, loyalty, and faith in the daily use of the words." This "daily routine" mainly refers to the ethics of filial piety, brotherly love, loyalty and faith, and has nothing to do with the daily activities of the people in terms of food, clothing, housing and transportation. Wang Yangming also said, "What is there in the daily life that is not the prevalence of the Divine Principle?" Wang Yangming also regarded this "daily routine" as a reversion to the ethical and moral "Divine Principle". Therefore, WangGen criticized them for deviating from the principle of "one body and one use" and for "knowing the body but not knowing the use", which would ultimately "lead them to the point where they like quietness and dislike movement, and enter into madness and simplicity".

WangGen's "Daily Conscience" first of all takes the people as the main body, and it equates the saint and the fool from the perspective of "the way of the people's daily use", and extends the relationship between the saint and the fool to a place of greater equality, he believes that "if a foolish man or a foolish woman knows and can act, that is the way! He argues that "if a foolish man or woman can act with knowledge, that is the way", "the way of the sage is no different from the way of the people's daily use", and "the sage's experience of the world is just a common household affair". "specific content, WangGen put forward the" people have been trapped in poverty and frozen and discouraged his body, then also lost its original and not learning." The meaning of lectures first emphasizes filial piety and fraternal duty, and the teaching of filial piety and fraternal duty constitutes an important approach for Taizhou scholars to connect the theory of conscience with social politics. (Gu Jianing, 2022) This is to recognize the people's physiological life instincts, that "those who are trapped in poverty and freeze and discourage their bodies" this kind of disregard for the body as the basis of the behavior is not worthy of emulation. In terms of specific practical actions, the Annals records that "Mr. WangGen said that the people's daily use is the way. When I first heard this, I did not

believe it. Mr. refers to the boys and servants to and from, see and hear, hold the line, pan should be action place, without false arrangements, are all Shun Di's rules, to nothing but there, to close and God."This kind of "no false arrangement" in the daily routine of "going to and fro, seeing and hearing, holding and walking, and generalizing actions" is the development and popularization of the "daily conscience".

4. Conclusion

Since Mencius first created the moral concept of "conscience" and then Wang Yangming's teaching of 'conscience', combining the essence of conscience with the work of knowledge, the connotation and extension of "conscience" have been continuously enriched and developed. The connotation and extension of "conscience" have been continuously enriched and developed. After WangGen's interpretation, "conscience" took on a new meaning. "Ready-made" and "self-existing" affirm the transcendental self-sufficiency of the innate moral conscience as the noumenon.(Li Hailing, 2024)From the presentation of his "conscience theory", the idea of "Heavenly Principle" and its downward derivation of "everyday conscience" breaks the traditional divide between the "saint and the fool", and the "saint and the fool" are not only the same, but also the same, and the "saint and the fool" are not the same. The idea of "conscience of heavenly reason" and its downward derivation of "conscience of daily use" breaks the traditional divide between the "saint and the fool", dissolves the metaphysical transcendence of "Dao", and provides an ontological basis for the common people to become saints and sages. From the point of view of its "conscience", "the way of the people's daily use" canceled the tedious "solemnity and maintenance" work, but in "to and fro, seeing and hearing, Instead, in the daily routine of "movement, seeing, hearing, holding, and responding to actions", the people let nature take its course and developed their popularity. Under the changing social environment of the mid-Ming Dynasty, WangGen transformed the Confucianism of the scholars into the daily use of the common people, shifted the emphasis on the inner nature of the mind to the external practice of the Song and Ming philosophies, and set up a realistic channel for the common people to become saints and sages, which is a far-reaching contribution to the turn of Confucianism to the common people.

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