

# MING STUDIES



Number 35

August 1995

Ming Studies  
Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
Geneva, New York 14456

ya 雅

yang 養

yin-chi 隱跡

yin-hsin 隱心

yü 遇

yüan 遠

yün-chi 蘊籍

yung-jen 用人

## HUANG ZUO'S MEETING WITH WANG YANGMING

### AND THE DEBATE OVER THE UNITY OF

### KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

Hung-lam Chu

Huang Zuo (1490-1566, *jìnshì* 1520) of Xiangshan, Guangdong, is no stranger to the student of Ming history. A versatile scholar and a prolific writer, he was the author of more than 260 *juan* of writings,<sup>1</sup> including a 60-*juan* collection of poems and essays and, according to a statement of 1579, a total of twenty-two works.<sup>2</sup> A later account from the Qing period credits him with thirty-nine works.<sup>3</sup> Biographies of Huang can be found in most of the standard biographical collections, including the *DICTIONARY OF MING BIOGRAPHY*.<sup>4</sup> Modern students may consider him to have been an accomplished historian because he wrote several useful works on Ming political and educational institutions, including the *HANLIN JI* and the *NANYONG ZHI*, as well as works on the history of the Lingnan area such as the *GUANGDONG TONGZHI* and the *GUANGZHOU RENWU JUAN*.<sup>5</sup> Earlier writers, however, treated him chiefly as a master of literature or as a Confucian teacher of considerable importance. Thus, the official *MING HISTORY (MINGSHI)* included his biography in the "garden of literati" (*wenyuan*),<sup>6</sup> while Huang Zongxi (1610-1695) gave him an entire chapter

<sup>1</sup>See Huang's biography in Zhang Tingyu, et al, *MINGSHI* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 287:7365-66.

<sup>2</sup>Chen Shaoru, "Preface" to Huang Zuo's literary collection, in Qu Dajun (1630-96), *GUANGDONG WENXUAN* (reprint of 1687 edition, Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1987- ), 9:72a-73b.

<sup>3</sup>Biography of Huang Zuo in Zhu Huai and Huang Peifang, et al, *XIANGSHAN XIANZHI* (1827 ed.), 6:21a-24b.

<sup>4</sup>L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *DICTIONARY OF MING BIOGRAPHY* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 669-72. The biography of Huang is by Kwan-wai So and Chaoying Fang.

<sup>5</sup>For notes on the first three works, see Wolfgang Franke, *AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES OF MING HISTORY* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1968), pp. 182, 197, 247. For the last work, see *DICTIONARY OF MING BIOGRAPHY*, p. 670.

<sup>6</sup>*MINGSHI*, 287:7365-66.

in the MINGRU XUE'AN, classifying him as one of those "independent scholars" who had no affiliation with any of the major schools of Ming thought.<sup>7</sup> Other Late Ming writers viewed Huang Zuo as a major scholar who was inspired by Qiu Jun (1421-1495) and Chen Xianzhang (1428-1500), two of the most eminent scholars from the Lingnan region during the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

As a Confucian scholar, Huang Zuo's orientation and approach to learning came closer to those of Zhu Xi (1130-1200) than to any of the other Confucian masters before him. His independence of thought nonetheless was also revealed in his difference with Zhu Xi in the understanding of the relationship between *li* and *qi*. Contrary to Zhu Xi's dualism, Huang argued that *li* and *qi* formed an inseparable oneness; *qi* eternally brought life to things of all natures, and *li* was but the very pattern of the manifestations of the workings of *qi*. Huang acknowledged that this theory was formulated under the influence of his respected contemporary, Lo Qinshun (1465-1547).<sup>9</sup>

But it is another example of his independence as a thinker that will interest us here, namely his spirited debate with Wang Yangming (1472-1529) over the conception and theory of the unity of knowledge and action. Their celebrated encounter, which earned Huang praise and respect from Wang, is mentioned in most major sources, including the MINGSHI, but the description there is so brief and incomplete that the main points of the argument are not revealed. Inexplicably, the encounter is not mentioned in the MINGRU XUE'AN, and, except for the DICTIONARY OF MING BIOGRAPHY, little attention to it has been given in modern scholarship. However, even the description in the latter work is disappointing. Apparently using the wrong chronology presented in the MINGSHI, the debate is mistakenly dated to 1527<sup>10</sup> and the presentation of Huang's argument is weak and misleading. Only in Huang's biographies in various local gazetteers are his main points presented in any detail.<sup>11</sup>

The debate actually took place in the winter of 1523 when Huang first met with Wang Yangming in the latter's home in Shaoxing. This meeting, together with some background and

<sup>7</sup>MINGRU XUE'AN (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 51:1199. Note that the modern punctuation of this chapter in the Beijing edition is far from satisfactory. For a corrigenda, see Zhu Honglin (Hung-lam Chu), MINGRU XUE'AN DIANJIANG SHIWU (Taipei: Academia Sinca, 1992), pp. 302-08.

<sup>8</sup>See GUANGDONG WENXUAN, 9:72a-73b, for the views of Chen Shaoru. For those of Qian Qianyi and others, see DICTIONARY OF MING BIOGRAPHY, p. 672.

<sup>9</sup>See Huang's essay "Yuanli" ("On Principle") in MINGRU XUE'AN, 51:1216-17.

<sup>10</sup>The MINGSHI, in turn, appears to have relied on an incorrect chronology found in Huang Zuo's "Record of Conduct," which was composed by Huang's disciple Li Minbiao. See Li's "Xingzhuang," which can be found in the frontmatter section of Huang's literary collection, TAIQUAN JI (1682 ed.)

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, XIANGSHAN XIANZHI (1827 ed.), 6:21a-24b.

with the details of the debate, was recounted by Huang in a long entry in his YONGYAN (ORDINARY CONVERSATION),<sup>12</sup> a collection of his sayings for the period 1530-49 when he taught, somewhat intermittently, in Guangzhou (Canton). The 12-juan YONGYAN had been published by Huang's students in 1552 and was reprinted in 1682.<sup>13</sup> However, although it had been recorded in such early Qing catalogues as the QIANQINGTANG SHUMU<sup>14</sup> and the CHUANSHILOU SHUMU,<sup>15</sup> and even had been processed by the editors of the SIKU QUANSHU,<sup>16</sup> it since has become rather rare and cannot be found in the collections of most modern libraries. Two exceptions are the Beijing Library and the Gest Oriental Library at Princeton.

A more accessible edition of the work is a late Qing abridgement that was included in a collection of writings by scholars from Guangdong. However, in this edition the text was

<sup>12</sup>The term *yongyan* seems to have been derived from a line in Chapter 13 of the DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN: "In practicing the ordinary virtues and in the exercise of care in ordinary conversation, when there is deficiency, the superior man [gentleman] never fails to make further effort, and when there is excess, never dares to go to the limit." For this translation, see Wing-tsit Chan, A SOURCE BOOK IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 101.

<sup>13</sup>Some details on the publication of the original edition are given in a preface dated of 1552, which was written by Huang Zuo's student, Li Minbiao. However, in the copy of this work held in the Rare Book Collection of the Gest Oriental Library at Princeton University, the first page of Li's preface is missing. Therefore, some facts concerning the publication of the work are not clear. Fortunately, additional facts concerning the publication can be found in a Qing-period abridgement of the work that I will discuss in a subsequent note. In his A CATALOGUE OF THE CHINESE RARE BOOKS IN THE GEST COLLECTION OF THE PRINCETON LIBRARY (Taipei: Yee Wen Publishing Co., 1974), p. 288, Qu Wanli notes that there is a 1551 preface by Huang Zuo himself in the frontmatter of YONGYAN. I could not find it, however. On the 1682 ed., see Huang Yinpu, GUANGDONG WENXIAN SHUMU ZHIJIAN LU (Hong Kong: Chongwen shudian, 1972), p. 92.

<sup>14</sup>In Huang Yuji, QIANQINGTANG SHUMU (SHIYUAN CONGSHU ed.), 10:8b, the title of the book appears as TAIQUAN YONGYAN. The "Bibliographical Treatise" of the MINGSHI also records this work based on the entry in the QIANQINGTANG SHUMU. The longer title may have been taken from the missing portion of Li Minbiao's preface.

<sup>15</sup>Xu Qianxue, CHUANSHILOU SHUMU (in ER XU SHUMU HEKE, 1915 ed.) jibu:7b. Here the title of the book also appears as TAIQUAN YONGYAN.

<sup>16</sup>Yong Rong and Ji Yun, SIKU QUANSHU ZONGMU TIYAO (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931 [WANYU WENKU ed.], vol. 18, p. 104. This entry is in *juan* 96 of the original edition.

edited arbitrarily and in some cases so mistakenly that it cannot be used safely.<sup>17</sup> The Gest Collection's copy of the original edition preserves in its entirety the original text, including the entry that draws our attention in this article.<sup>18</sup> It perhaps should be noted that the lack of general access to the original edition may explain later historians' inattention to, and inadequate description of, the debate between Huang Zuo and Wang Yangming. For example, Huang Zongxi mentions that he had read Huang's literary collection (TAIQUAN) JI but he did not quote any of the YONGYAN in his MINGRU XUE'AN.

The YONGYAN also records a second meeting between Huang Zuo and Wang Yangming which took place in Guangzhou in the winter of 1528, a month or two before Wang's death in Jiangxi. Huang's account of the meeting gives us an important glimpse of Wang and his ideas during the last few weeks of his life. As a whole, this section of the YONGYAN strengthens the documentation of Wang Yangming's life in 1523 and 1528, and helps us both to better understand his ideas and those of Huang Zuo. It is important to note that the information found in the YONGYAN cannot be found in Wang's COMPLETE WORKS (WANG WENCHENG CONG QUANSHU) nor in the CHRONOLOGICAL BIOGRAPHY (NIANPU) found therein. Nor is the account of the 1528 meeting to be found in any of the biographies of Huang Zuo. As will be seen below, although this entry in the YONGYAN speaks from the vantage point of Huang Zuo and therefore may not be free from unintentional exaggeration, it is a highly reliable source, one that is worthy of translation and study in some detail. In what follows, Huang's text will be divided into two parts, corresponding to the two meetings. My annotations and discussions will follow each part of the translation.

#### The Meeting of 1523 (YONGYAN 9:28A-29A)

In the winter of 1523, I passed by Hangzhou on an errand [as a member of the court delegation] for the installation of an imperial prince. There I met my fellow student Liang Rifu. Liang said that Wang Yangming had some admiration for me. I proceeded immediately to see [Wang] in Shaoxing. Mr. Wang was at that time observing mourning obligations. He had opened up the site of an old granary and built [a number of] multi-storied buildings that had [a total of] fifty rooms. That was where he lived. I was invited to stay for seven days, and I dined and rested together with him.

Our conversations began with a discussion of the unity of knowledge and action. Mr. Wang said, "To know is to acquire these [universal virtues] and to act

<sup>17</sup>See YONGYAN YUEXUAN in Lo Xuepeng, comp. and ed., GUANGDONG WENXIAN SANJI (1863 ed.), *juan* 4.

<sup>18</sup>On the copy of this edition held by the Beijing Library, see BEIJING TUSHUGUAN CUJI SHANBEN SHUMU (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1987?), p. 1210. I have not had access to this copy.

is to acquire these [universal virtues]. The DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN twice makes the statement 'It comes to the same thing'.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, it is true [that knowledge and action are united]. Whereupon he continued, pointing at the nuts in the tea drink: "Only after you eat them do you get at the taste; this is the same as 'only after you do it do you know it.' How close that relationship is." I said, "Knowledge is like the eyes and action is like the feet. Now having acquired knowledge of [the location of] your living quarters, one could well arrive at it with his steps and sight at the same time. In fact, though, knowledge comes first and action follows." Mr. Wang said, "You have read [too] much of the Song Confucianist's [Zhu Xi's] books [to see it that way]." I said, "[Take the expression] 'It is not difficult to know but difficult to act'. Does this come from the Song Confucianist?" Mr. Wang said, "The intent of this expression in the BOOK OF DOCUMENTS is [to be found in the statement] 'If your Majesty know this, however, there will not be the difficulty [of not acting]'.<sup>20</sup> So it is obvious that only when you do it do you know it." I said, "[Consider the statement] 'When he knew it, he did not do the thing again'.<sup>21</sup> If knowledge does not precede [action], one fears that what is done may prove to be not good." Mr.

<sup>19</sup>Wang Yangming's statements, as Huang Zuo recounts them, are so elliptical that an effort must be made to make them intelligible. Here Wang is citing as his authority statements from the DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN (Chapter 20, Section 9), which concern the knowledge and practice of the 'three universal virtues': wisdom, humanity, and courage. The full text reads: "Some are born with the knowledge [of these virtues]. Some learn it through study. Some learn it through hard work. But when the knowledge is acquired, it comes to the same thing. Some practice them naturally and easily. Some practice them for their advantage. Some practice them with effort and difficulty. But when the achievement is made, it comes to the same thing." This translation follows Chan, A SOURCE BOOK, p. 105. James Legge translated the first line as "Some are born with the knowledge of those duties," which makes the "five universal ways" (the five cardinal human relationships) the object of knowledge. Chan's translation is preferable. For Legge's version, see his THE CHINESE CLASSICS (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1960), vol. one, pp. 385-86. Note that the line immediately preceding the above quotation reads "The way by which [the universal virtues] are practiced is one." Quoting the classic in the way he did meant that Wang already was giving more weight to "action" than to "knowledge." That is to say, the knowledge he had in mind was the knowledge to practice.

<sup>20</sup>Both Huang's challenge and Wang's response drew reference from the second part of the chapter "Yue ming" in the BOOK OF DOCUMENTS. For translations of the statements quoted, see Legge, THE CHINESE CLASSICS, vol. 3, p. 258.

<sup>21</sup>This statement comes from the "Xici zhuan" of the BOOK OF CHANGES. For the translation, see James Legge, "Appendix III, 42", THE I CHING (2nd ed.), in F. Max Muller, ed., THE SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST, Vol. 16 (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), p. 393. Note that the preceding line reads, "If anything he did was not good, he was sure to become conscious of that." This explains Huang Zuo's inference after the quotation.

Wang turned silent.

A moment later he said, "Nan Yuanshan presented a piece of rhapsody yesterday in which the word *xi* is used. Now, *xi* is an interjectory expression, how can it be used for the commending of virtues?" I said, "The ode QI'AO, in lauding the virtues [of the worthies], also employed the word *xi*. It seems to be harmless [the Nan used it in the rhapsody]." Mr. Wang again became silent.

Thereafter he talked in great detail about his campaign against the bandits of Litou in which he spared their lives and [about his campaign] against the rebel Zhu Chenhao [the Prince of Ning]. I said, "[The case of] Zhu Chenhao leaving Nanchang is like [that of] Cao Cao leaving Xuchang. If [during Cao's time] there had been a hero like your excellency who drove right into the enemy's vacated base, the Han dynasty would not have been [broken into] the Three Kingdoms." Mr. Wang exclaimed in admiration, "Straight, trustworthy, and well-informed, you are a friend who benefits me."<sup>22</sup>

Finally, he showed me [a copy of] the "old text" of the GREAT LEARNING. I said, "'to manifest the illustrious virtue to the world' is humane. [When one is] 'watchful over himself when alone,' he is 'resting in the highest good.' [When one's] thought is sincere and his will is humane, there will be no evil in him. But having no evil still can render him faulty. When he is open-minded and fair, and his mind has no fault, his mind is then rectified. When the affairs [of the world] come and he responds in accordance [with the will of heaven and the feeling of men], his person has no fault and his person is then cultivated. [Then what is needed] to regulate the family, to put the state in order, and to bring peace to the world can be raised and implemented." Mr. Wang was delighted [at my response] and immediately wrote down my words into the copy as notes to the text.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup>These are qualities also praised by Confucius: "To make friends with the straight, the trustworthy in word and the well-informed is to benefit." For this translation, see D.C. Lau, trans., *CONFUCIUS: THE ANALECTS* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Classics, 1979), p. 139.

<sup>23</sup>The quotations in this paragraph come from the GREAT LEARNING and the translations are modified from those of Legge and Chan. The "copy" of the "old text" that Wang showed Huang, which probably contained Wang's annotations and commentaries, was printed during Ming times in at least two different editions. One, the DAXUE GUBEN PANGSHI, can be found in a collectanea dating from the Longqing period (1567-76) entitled BAILING XUESHAN (reprint of original ed., Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1938). A second edition, the DAXUE GUBEN PANGZHU, appears in the Qing-period collectanea HANHAI (1881-82 ed.). However, one cannot be sure that either of these editions was actually compiled by Wang Yangming.

When I was about to leave, he came [to see me off] in my boat. He said that Wang Yiwei, by pursuing no learning while staying at his [Wang Yangming's] place, was not benefiting himself and so he had entrusted (or wished to entrust) Liang Rifu to take Wang [Yiwei] back to Guangdong. He again talked in detail about [his proposals for] the defense against the northern barbarians and the harnessing of the [Yellow] River before bidding me farewell. Only then did I realize that Mr. Wang did not neglect to 'follow the path of inquiry and study.'<sup>24</sup>

Huang's visit to Wang, as can be verified from other of his writings, took place either in the ninth or tenth month of 1523 during Huang's outward journey to attend the installation of the Prince of Nanwei in Huguang.<sup>25</sup> The credibility of the above account is further strengthened by information found in Wang Yangming's COLLECTED WORKS. In a short piece dating from the same year which was written concerning the return home to Guangdong of Wang Yiwei, Wang Yangming suggests that the former was not a promising student, one who lacked spirit and curiosity. This was essentially what Wang Yangming had told Huang Zuo at his departure from Shaoxing.<sup>26</sup>

Liang Rifu, whom Wang Yangming entrusted to take Wang Yiwei back home, was the *alias* of Liang Zhuo from Nanhai, Guangdong, who passed the *jinsi* examination in 1514.<sup>27</sup> Liang became a devoted disciple of Wang Yangming in 1518, when he was on his way to the capital for an official appointment but stopped to stay with Wang in Jiangxi for about half a year.<sup>28</sup> A modern expert on Wang Yangming's philosophy has remarked that the entry in the CHUANXI LU that contains the conversations between Liang and Wang on the relationship of "dwelling in seriousness and the plumbing of principles" is crucial in the elucidation of

<sup>24</sup>This quotation comes from Chapter 27 of the DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN. This passage being taken as an approach to learning emphasized by Zhu Xi in contradistinction to the approach of "honoring the moral nature" advocated by Lu Jiuyuan is too well-known to need further elaboration.

<sup>25</sup>Huang Zuo, TAIQUAN JI (1682 ed.), 19:4b-6a, and 59:1a-2a.

<sup>26</sup>"Shu Wang Yiwei juan (Inscription on a scroll for Wang Yiwei)," in YANGMING QUANSHU (SIBU BEIYAO ed.), 8:5a-b.

<sup>27</sup>Liang Zhuo's biographer was none other than Huang Zuo. Huang, however, chose to emphasize his conduct rather than his learning. For that biography of Liang, see Jiao Hong's compilation, GUOCHAO XIANZHENG LU (reprint of 1595 edition, Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1965), 41:78a-79a. The short biographical entry in MINGRU XUE'AN, 30:656, is not so informative.

<sup>28</sup>For the details of this event according to Wang Yangming himself, see YANGMING QUANSHU, 7:10b-12a, "Bie Liang Rifu xu," a "preface" presented to Liang on the occasion of his leaving Wang.

Wang's teaching of the mind and heart.<sup>29</sup> Considered a key figure in the promotion of Wang Yangming's teachings in Guangdong,<sup>30</sup> Liang Rifu was much appreciated by Wang. Wang regarded him as the kind of "outstanding scholar" that Mencius had talked about.<sup>31</sup> The potential influence of an enthusiastic disciple with the political and social status of a *jīnshī* was duly recognized. Indeed, in a letter to another of important *jīnshī* students from Guangdong, Xue Kan (*jīnshī* 1517, died 1545), who edited and published the first edition of the CHUANXI LU in 1518, Wang said Liang's love of learning would assuredly inspire other "outstanding scholars."<sup>32</sup> Sure enough, we find in the source under discussion that Huang Zuo came to visit Wang Yangming because of Liang's words about Wang.

Wang Yangming's activities in Shaoxing in the year 1523 were much celebrated despite his being in mourning for his father. It was in this year that his teachings began to draw empire-wide attention, thanks to an implied criticism in a question set for the metropolitan examinations. The mixed blessing of "intensifying slander" against him and the spreading knowledge of his teachings delighted Wang, according to his own account.<sup>33</sup> The attention brought him more than a hundred new students from all places.<sup>34</sup> According to Qian Dehong (1496-1574), one of Wang's earliest leading disciples, these students put themselves up around Wang Yangming's quarters in such places as the Tianfei and

<sup>29</sup>This is the opinion of Dan Hengjin, quoted in Chen Rongjie (Wing-tsit Chan), WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1988, revised edition), p. 138.

<sup>30</sup>See *ibid.*, p. 139, note 1. This is the opinion of Wing-tsit Chan.

<sup>31</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 7:10b-12a, "Bie Liang Rifu xu." The term is *haojie zhi shi* in Chinese, coming from MENCIUS IIIA. A better sense of what Wang Yangming was trying to convey in terms of Liang's achievement and of the significance of their relationship can be grasped by reading the passage in MENCIUS in which the term appears. "I have heard of the Chinese converting barbarians to their ways, but not of their being converted to barbarian ways. Ch'en Liang was a native of Ch'u. Being delighted with the way of the Duke of Chou and Confucius, he came north to study in the Central Kingdoms. Even the scholars in the north could not surpass him in any way. He was what one would call an outstanding scholar." Translation from D. C. Lau, MENCIUS (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Classics, 1970), p. 103.

<sup>32</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 4:17b-18a, "Yu Xue Shangqian" (A letter to Xue Kan), dated 1518.

<sup>33</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 34:3a-4b, *niannu* under second year of the Jiajing reign (1523); Wang at the age of 52 *sui*. For Wang Yangming's response to the examination matter here concerned, see also *ibid.*, 24:12a-13a, "Shu Xu Rupei juan" (Inscription on a scroll for Xu Rupei), dated 1523.

<sup>34</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 5:9b, "Da Lu Bingyang" (A letter in reply to Lu Binyang), dated 1523.

Guangxiang temples, where often dozens of them would dine together in a single room. Hundreds attended lectures delivered by Wang himself; visits were so frequent that not all of their names appeared in the roster, and some of them even stayed over the year.<sup>35</sup> However, it is only Huang Zuo's recollection that mentioned Wang's new quarters of fifty rooms in multi-storied buildings. The way Huang described his brief visit there suggests that these quarters perhaps were used to entertain guests of honor only but not for the students at large. Not counted as a student, Huang's name therefore did not appear in the roster to be explored or exploited by Wang's early biographers.

The core of Huang's recollection of course is the philosophical debate over the logic of the unity of knowledge and action. The classical statements quoted by both men were recounted so tersely as to be appropriate only for masters of Wang's or Huang's order. But the crux of the argument is clear--it is over the priority of knowledge or action, and hence the relative importance of knowledge or action, in a result-oriented process of activities.

Because the issue in which they engaged themselves is definitely philosophical, we need not decide who was right. What can be said, though, is that Wang Yangming seems to think in terms of what may be called an action-knowledge continuum while Huang Zuo seems to think in terms of what may be called a knowledge-action continuum. Huang Zuo's thinking is the easier to grasp. For him, knowledge always initiates action, and the new knowledge gained after the action is completed again informs the next action. The process goes on, theoretically forever. Huang admits the importance of action in the acquisition of knowledge but gives primacy to knowledge even when resulting from action, as the guide to further action.

For Wang Yangming, however, action is what knowledge is all about. What is called knowledge cannot be considered (true) knowledge unless and until it is verified by action. Pushed to the theoretical limit, one can indeed start doing anything without knowing what it is or should be called and then label it as a certain kind of knowledge when it is done. For it is through action that one comes to know what something really is. But the process can only be a one-time experience, and this may be the weakness of his theory, because it implicitly denies eternal truth and intrinsic value. What he actually intended to convey by the term "unity of knowledge and action" can be better grasped if the term is re-phrased as "unity of knowing and acting." This is apparent if we scrutinize all the classical statements he elsewhere quoted and offered as interpretation for the defense of his theory. For "knowing" is itself an action, and it is in this sense that the term "unity of knowing and acting" finds its acting logical validity.

It appears that Wang Yangming and Huang Zuo here, as Wang and his other critics elsewhere, were making two fundamentally different philosophical points, only to be entangled and blurred by the complexity of language. It seems that Wang Yangming was quite aware of this misgiving, for in his defense he often resorted to reminding his discussants not to miss

<sup>35</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 3:21b, the third *juan* of CHUANXI LU; also Chan, WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING, p. 366.

"the basic purpose of my doctrine."<sup>36</sup> But Wang was handicapped by a linguistic convention so traditional and so classically authoritative that he was unaware of or unable to always explain it clearly and convincingly; he was unable to adopt a new premise for his argument by phrasing the term as "unity of action and knowledge," because in all classical expressions where these two words appear it is the word "knowledge" that always comes first.

And when it came to classical studies, Wang Yangming had indeed met a strong and respectable debater in Huang Zuo. The statement "When he knew it, he did not do the thing again" that Huang quoted from the BOOK OF CHANGES was so apt and powerful in this context that it was entirely possible that Wang, as Huang reported, was forced to take a long pause for thinking about Huang's comment. It must be pointed out that of the many classical statements about the concepts of knowledge and action that were quoted by Wang Yangming and his many students and critics in their many debates that we can find in Wang's CHUANXI LU and COLLECTED WORKS, this one from the BOOK OF CHANGES quoted by Huang Zuo does not appear a single time.<sup>37</sup> No doubt Huang impressed Wang as a well-versed and solid classicist, and it was best to change the topic of conversation. The recollection of the discussions on Nan Yuanshan's rhapsody and on Wang's military successes seems to have been intended to convey more of Huang's good understanding of classical literature and historical situations than of Wang's accomplishments as a writer and statesman-soldier. Nan Yuanshan was the *alias* of Nan Daji (1487-1541, *jinshi* 1511), then the prefect of Wang Yangming's native prefecture. He formally became a student of Wang in the first month of 1524--soon after Huang left Shaoxing--and edited and paid for the blocks of the second and enlarged edition of the CHUANXI LU in the winter of the same year.<sup>38</sup> Huang's

<sup>36</sup>See, e.g., WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING, pp. 33-34, entry number 5; pp. 302-03, entry number 226; p. 372, entry number 321. For English translations of these entries, see Wing-tsit Chan, INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRACTICAL LIVING AND OTHER NEO-CONFUCIAN WRITINGS BY WANG YANG-MING (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), correspondingly pp. 9-12 (quotation from p. 11), 201, 250-52 (quotation from p. 252). Note that the last entry in the translation is numbered as 322.

<sup>37</sup>The entries in the CHUANXI LU (Chinese and English texts same as those cited in the previous note) in which discussions about the doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action were recorded are as follows (notation: number of entry/of beginning page in Chinese/of beginning page in English): 5/33/9, 26/65/30, 65/95/46, 125/148/82, 132/165/92, 133/166/93, 136/173/99, 137/177/102, 139/181/107, 140/186/110, 165/233/145, 226/302/201, 291/343/229. Note that the next two entries are numbered differently in both texts, viz., in Chinese text 320/372, 321/372, corresponding to English translation 321/250, 322/250. Also, the following two entries appeared only in the Chinese text, in the part of *shixi*, as 19/400, 21/401. Similar discussions can also be found in the following pieces in the YANGMING QUANSHU; 5:7a, "Yu Lu Yuanjing (dated 1522);" 6:5b, "Da yuren wen (dated 1526);" 8:6a, "Shu Zhu Yang juan (dated 1524)."

<sup>38</sup>For Nan Daji and for the publication of the second edition of the CHUANXI LU, see Chan, WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING, pp. 8-10; 159-62, including

defense of Nan Yuanshan's literary use of the expression *xi* bespoke a sense of justice. His relating Wang's success against the rebel Prince of Ning to the failure of the historical Han dynasty (B.C. 206-A.D.220) to defend itself from the usurper prime minister Cao Cao (155-220) revealed Huang's intelligent grasp of military strategy. By recounting the praise and admiration Wang had expressed for him over the conversations thus far, Huang suggested that while Wang Yangming was a broad-minded man, he himself was nothing less than an equal in terms of learning, personal integrity, and general intellectual capacity.

Huang's exegetical interpretation of key notions in the GREAT LEARNING likewise showed his different position from Wang's on the relationship of knowledge and action, although on the surface the argument was concerned with the goal of "Great Learning" as a guide to learning and with its role in that process of learning. The "old text" of the GREAT LEARNING was the text that formed one chapter of the classic BOOK OF RITES (LJI). It was referred to as the "old text" to distinguish it from the "new text" that was edited by Zhu Xi, which in Ming times was officially adopted as the authoritative text. Wang Yangming in his "Preface" to the "old text" of the GREAT LEARNING made the following cogent statement: "The essence of Great Learning is nothing more than sincerity of thought; the effort of sincerity of thought is nothing more than the investigation of things; the ultimate end of sincerity of thought is to rest in the highest good; the rule to rest in the highest good is nothing more than the extension of knowledge."<sup>39</sup> Thus articulated, the claim Wang was underlining was the indispensability of his own theory of the extension of innate knowledge, although the term was only implied, and the refutation of a key role for the investigation of things and the equating of the investigation of things with the plumbing of principles (*li*) as underlined by Zhu Xi.

While accepting the legitimacy of the "old text"<sup>40</sup> and hence not subscribing to Zhu Xi's "supplement" of the presumably missing commentary on the section on the investigation of things, Huang Zuo showed his difference with Wang on the goal of Great Learning by emphasizing the beginning of the text where it states that "the way of Great Learning consists in the manifestation of illustrious virtues." He also brought in the notion of being "watchful over one's self when alone," the method stated in the GREAT LEARNING for the "sincerity of thought." This enlargement of Wang's theme on the goal of Great Learning and sharpening of Wang's interpretation of the process to reach this goal redirected the focus of the argument to the rectification of the mind and the cultivation of the person, two of the other steps in the practice of Great Learning, and hence balanced Wang's exclusive emphasis on the extension

notes 2 and 3.

<sup>39</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 7:12a, "Daxue guben xu" (Preface to the old text of the GREAT LEARNING), dated 1518.

<sup>40</sup>In another entry in the YONGYAN (9:19b-20a), Huang Zuo, analyzing the GREAT LEARNING in his own way, said that Wang Yangming was rather insightful in "restoring" the "old text," i.e., in resorting to the LJI text as the uncorrupted, original text. Huang's interpretation for the term "qinmin", however, differed from that of Wang.

of innate knowledge. Whether Wang had indeed written down Huang's elucidation forthwith, as Huang said he did, as a gesture of agreement with sound argument is hard to ascertain. But in Wang's very important essay, "An Inquiry into the GREAT LEARNING (DAXUE WEN)," which was written late in his life, one does find the emphasis on the "manifestation of illustrious virtues to the world" as a manifestation of humanity (*ren*) of the Great Man (*daren*).<sup>41</sup> What comes out from Huang's report of the conversation is that Huang had shown himself capable of elaborating the classic in a way that also enlightened Wang Yangming.

The concluding lines about the first meeting, however, showed Huang's reaching a better understanding of Wang as a result of their conversations. Wang's knowledge of the classics, his philosophy, and his understanding of current issues, not to mention his demonstrated successes in tackling them, convinced Huang of Wang's broad knowledge acquired both through book learning and in the practice of worldly affairs. It at least quieted Huang's doubt that Wang was the sort of philosopher who merely emphasized the importance of the cultivation of moral virtue with a concomitant lack of pursuit of accumulated knowledge.

#### The Meeting of 1528 (YONGYAN 9:29A-B)

By the time he pacified [the aboriginal rebels of] Bazhai and was stationed in Guangzhou [Canton], I was already an assistant surveillance commissioner in Jiangxi. He opened [public] lectures [in Guangzhou], and officials, government school instructors, scholars, and common people gathered together [to be the audience]. Prior to the occasion, he had asked Zhu Gongxu to carry a letter from him to invite me [for a meeting].

I went to see him. He rejoiced greatly, saying to me, "When we discussed 'innate knowledge' in the past, you said that [even] the sage [Confucius] had blamed himself for not being able to live up both to the universal ways and to the universal virtues, but that if we speak of 'illustrious virtue', then 'innate ability' can be incorporated [with 'innate knowledge']. [Using your idea.] I have already composed a couplet for the Fuwen Shuyuan, which reads as follows: 'If one seeks to manifest his lofty virtue, one need only extend his innate knowledge.'" I only thanked him [for the acknowledgement].

He further said, "Now the world is pleased with my doctrine." I said, "Yan Yuan was pleased with every [teaching he was given]; Ran You, however, was reluctant to be so. Not that he was not pleased, but he feared that everyone had a master for himself." Mr. Wang said with a smile, "You are right. If not from you, I

<sup>41</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 26:1b-5b, "Daxue wen." There is a prefatorial note to it by Qian Dehong, according to which we know that the text was written down in 1527, shortly before Wang Yangming's departing Shaoxing for the campaign in Guangxi. For an English translation and discussion of the importance of this treatise, see Chan, INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRACTICAL LIVING, pp. 271-80.

may not have heard such an opinion."

Noticing that he looked sallow and tired, and often had to swallow ginger honey to suppress his phlegm, I advised him to leave [for home]. He agreed on that. Ji Ben and Xue Kan pushed me to enroll as his student, but I hurriedly hid deep into the mountain [i.e., stayed away from Wang and his entourage].

After Mr. Wang departed, he sent me another letter, saying, "Illustrious virtue is nothing but innate knowledge, that is just like saying the lamp is the light. I am sure you will understand this by yourself."

I was friendly with Mr. Wang throughout our relationship and he followed a good opinion of me to such an extent. Could he have been a presumptuous person? Mr. Wang died after passing the Range. The two letters [he wrote me] are now published by Shu Bo in the RECORD OF WANG YANGMING'S STAY IN GUANGDONG (YANGMING YU GUANG LU).

This recollection reveals first of all, though obviously inadvertently insofar as Huang Zuo was concerned, a very important and most telling fact that Wang Yangming was a tireless and enthusiastic statesman-philosopher who was delivering public lectures as late as ten weeks or so before he died. The place of this second meeting between Huang and Wang was undoubtedly Guangzhou, even though the text actually only gives the character "Guang," which might be construed as an abbreviation for the province of Guangdong. The mention of the other place names and the publication of the two letters from Wang by Wang's student Shu Bo also confirm Huang's report of this meeting.<sup>42</sup>

The time of the event, however, needs more information to be determined precisely. Wang wrote in a letter to his son in 1528 that he "departed Nanning (Guangxi) on the twenty-seventh day of the eighth month, and had arrived at the city of Guangzhou on the seventh day of the ninth month. The condition of my illness has now gradually become stable; only the cough is not relieved in any way."<sup>43</sup> In the next letter to the same son, he wrote, "I have been in the city of Guangzhou for more than half a month. Because of the cough and diarrhea, I cannot but take a rest here for another ten days or a month. As soon as my memorial asking for sick leave is approved, I will begin the waterway home."<sup>44</sup> In another letter to a disciple written at about

<sup>42</sup>For a note on Shu Bo and a record of Wang Yangming's answer to his question, see Chan, WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING, pp. 416-17, entry number 48 of *shiyi*, and note 1 to it. The YANGMING YU GUANG LU he published seems no longer extant, but his preface to it is preserved in GUANGDONG TONGZHI, 42:54a-b, where the title of the work appears slightly differently as YANGMING YU GUANG YICAO.

<sup>43</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 26:18a, second letter in the second *juan* of "Ji Zhengxian nan shoumo erjuan" (Autographed letters to his son Zhengxian).

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, third letter in the second *juan* of "Ji Zhengxian nan shoumo erjuan."



the same time, Wang wrote that his diarrhea had so weakened him that he was no longer able to rise from his seat.<sup>45</sup> Then, according to Qian Dehong, Wang's intimate disciple and the compiler of his chronology, Wang's illness turned critical on the first day of the eleventh month and thereupon he submitted a memorial asking to be allowed to return home for his death.<sup>46</sup> Putting all these pieces of information together, it is certain that the location of the meeting and lectures was Guangzhou, and it seems most probable that they took place in the latter half of the ninth month of 1528.

A letter from Huang Zuo to Wang Yangming during the same autumn throws further light on the background of their meeting. This letter recounted that Wang had sent Huang an almanac of the year, presumably sometime during the previous winter. After the return of Zhu Gongxu to Guangdong, Huang received from Wang a biography of Wang's ancestor who had served in Guangdong, as well as Wang's autographed letter to him in which Wang said he would arrive at Huang's native place in the fourth month of the year. Huang waited there for two months before going to his new office in Jiangxi, only to return home very soon because of his own illness. Then he received from Wang a copy of the new edition of the CHUANXI LI, and it was in response to this work that Huang wrote Wang the letter. The letter ended by assuring Wang that, based upon the biography Wang supplied, Wang's ancestor was included in the section of "eminent officials" in the prefectural gazetteer that Huang had compiled.<sup>47</sup> Thus, although Wang Yangming was then the governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi as well as of Jiangxi and Huguang,<sup>48</sup> and hence had the power to summon any official from these provinces to his headquarters, it appears that Huang went to see Wang as a courtesy rather than as a response to an order from a superior. Wang's official power was revealed in the gathering of the large and composite audience of the lectures as Huang noted.

The lecture delivered while Wang was already rather ill was in tune with his usual dedication to the popularization of his doctrines. Wang's undaunted belief in the importance of the extension of innate knowledge was shown in a letter to his son while he was still on campaign in Guangxi. There he told the son that all the learning he had been talking about all his life was nothing more than the extension of innate knowledge. He urged his son to practice this learning by means of possessing a sincere, loving and commiserating heart, and applying it

<sup>45</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 6:17a, "Da He Tingren" (A replying letter to He Tingren), dated 1528.

<sup>46</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 37:46b, "Yu sang yu Guixi shu aigan" (A note expressing the sad feelings in meeting the funeral procession in Guixi) by Qian Dehong.

<sup>47</sup>Huang Zuo, TAIQUAN JI, 21:10b-12b, "Da Wang Yangming shu" (A replying letter to Wang Yangming). Note that the same piece as appeared in the abridged version of TAIQUAN JI, the TAIQUAN JI WENXUAN (in GUANGDONG WENXIAN SANJI), 3:27b-29a, was so edited that the crucial information for the background of the letter is all but missing.

<sup>48</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 34:17a, nianpu under the sixth month of 1527.

to the management of familial affairs.<sup>49</sup> In a letter to Huang Wan (1480-1554), his important disciple and posthumous in-law, sent when Wang was in Guangzhou, he asked Huang to help secure permission for his sick leave. Wang gave the following as the ultimate reason: "Only when the person is there alive can the Way be broadened. If the skin is no longer preserved, where can the hairs adhere?"<sup>50</sup> Thus, it should come as no surprise that he would take the opportunity, even in serious illness, to openly lecture on his cherished doctrine of the extension of innate knowledge. And equally unsurprising is that he would have engaged Huang Zuo also in discussion of that topic.

The background of Wang Yangming's account of the earlier debate with Huang Zuo over the concept of innate knowledge is also found in Huang's reply to Wang quoted above. The discussion there was about the strength of Wang's theory of innate knowledge. The relevant lines expressing Huang's opinion read as follows: "Confucius was modest about himself. He said in one place, '[There are three things constantly on the lips of the gentleman] none of which I have been able to succeed following.' He said in another place, '[There are four things in the Way of the gentleman] none of which I have been able to do.' Although knowledge [originating from] moral nature finds no inability [in being implemented as action] so that one need only speak of 'illustrious virtue' and 'innate ability' is thus included, one has to know the principle of humanity first before one can practice it."<sup>51</sup> Huang's reservation about Wang's theory of innate knowledge was that the term might not denote an inclusive conception. Speaking only of "knowledge" had the danger of leaving the "ability" to act out of consideration. The subject of their discussion continued to be the conception of the unity of knowledge and action, although the frame of reference was now in the Mencian terms of "innate knowledge" and "innate ability." Huang was maintaining that the "extension of innate knowledge" might not include the "innate ability" to act, whereas in the "manifestation of illustrious virtue," by definition both innate knowledge and innate ability were integrated, even though, as he never failed to insist, knowledge was prior to action. Huang's phrase was based upon the classical expression, "He was able to manifest his lofty virtue," quoted in the GREAT LEARNING itself.

In his interpretation Huang appeared not to be challenging Wang's notion of the unity of knowledge and action but rather perfecting it. It was not unreasonable that, according to Huang, Wang was happy to acknowledge his elucidation, although, in Wang's second letter to Huang, he maintained that Huang's notion of illustrious virtue and his own notion of innate knowledge were just the same in substance. Huang's account seems to be accurate in its reference to the Fuwen Shuyuan. In fact, both the expression of Wang's acceptance of Huang's argument and Wang's couplet for the academy also appeared in the same letter Huang sent Wang. The Fuwen Shuyuan was established in Nanning in the sixth month of 1528, when Wang Yangming was

<sup>49</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 26:16b-17b, third letter in the first juan of "Ji Zhengxian nan shoumo erjuan."

<sup>50</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 21:23a, "Yu Huang Zongxian" ([Fifth] letter to Huang Wan), dated 1528.

<sup>51</sup>See note 47.

campaigning in Guangxi. His well-known student, the former censor Ji Ben (1485-1563) who had been demoted to a post in Guangdong, was summoned to be the instructor of the Fuwen academy.<sup>52</sup> Incidentally, this also gives credence to Huang's statement later in the entry that Ji Ben and Xue Kan had urged him to declare himself as one of Wang's students.

A more revealing point is to be found in Huang's response to Wang's expression of pleasure at the popular reception of his doctrines. There was definitely more to Huang's reminder, which showed his qualities as a "straight, trustworthy and well-informed" friend of Wang Yangming. The extent of Wang's success in the lecture was the issue. Huang's implication that there were dissenters to Wang's teachings becomes clear when a brief account of the lecture recorded in the provincial gazetteer that Huang Zuo compiled is considered. There a certain Wang Dayong was identified as the one brave member of the audience who rebutted the theory of the extension of innate knowledge, equating it to the Buddhist teaching of sudden enlightenment, and consequently compelled the disciples of Wang there to change the topic of the lecture.<sup>53</sup> Interestingly, Wang Dayong also argued that Wang Yangming did not give equal weight to the notion of "innate ability," much the same point Huang Zuo made to Wang Yangming in the letter quoted above. It is instructive to note that Wang's disciples were eagerly enlisting new disciples for Wang Yangming. The case of Wang Dayong just mentioned is telling. Wang, the challenging questioner in Wang's lecture according to Huang Zuo, was then actually the chief administrative commissioner of Guangdong, and he was the person who, aware that Wang Yangming might not survive his homebound journey, provided a coffin of good timber and ordered it be carried by Wang's entourage north. His good deed of providing the coffin for Wang Yangming was noted by Qian Dehong soon after Wang's death and written into Wang's "record of conduct" by Huang Wan, but he was addressed in both places either by the courteous expression using his official title or as Commissioner Wang.<sup>54</sup> But later on, in a record of those who offered help in the funerary activities for Wang and of the condolences compiled by a disciple of Qian Dehong's using the material Qian supplied, Wang Dayong was referred to as a "disciple" of Wang Yangming who rushed to Jiangxi to offer assistance only four days after Wang's death.<sup>55</sup> Whether Wang Dayong became a disciple of Wang Yangming after the debate in Guangzhou or

<sup>52</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 18:10a-11a, "Paixing Nanning fu yanshi shejiao" (A directive to the prefecture of Nanning for the employment of instructors) and "Paixing weiguan Ji Ben shejiao Nanning" (A directive to Ji Ben for being instructor in Nanning), both dated sixth month of 1528 and included in the part of "official documents" in the COLLECTED WORKS.

<sup>53</sup>Huang Zuo, GUANGDONG TONGZHI (ca. 1561 edition), 50:78a-79b, Huang's notes to the "Biographies of eminent officials of the Ming dynasty."

<sup>54</sup>See YANGMING QUANSHU, 37:46b, "Yu sang yu Guixi shi aigan" (q.v.) by Qian Dehong; also 37:34b, relevant part of "Yangming xiansheng xingzhuan" (Wang Yangming's "record of conduct").

<sup>55</sup>YANGMING QUANSHU, 37:50b, "Sangji" (Record of the funeral) by Cheng Hui. In Wang Yangming's nianpu, which was compiled long after his death, Wang Dayong also appeared as a "disciple."

was counted as one because of the valuable and sincere services he offered before and after Wang's death is open to speculation. But there was no mention in his own biography that he was ever a disciple of Wang, although he had come to Wang's cause during the latter's campaign against the rebellious Prince of Ning in Jiangxi.<sup>56</sup> As for Huang Zuo, he had chosen to remain Wang's "friend."

What emerged from Huang's recollection of the encounters is enlightening. In the debate over the unity of knowledge and action, Wang Yangming had met a respectable opponent in the intelligent and well-versed classicist Huang Zuo, whom he apparently wished to attract to his school. Wang's attempt to defend his doctrine compelled him to readjust the premises of his argument. He did not convince Huang in the end, but did gain Huang's respect for him as a man of solid learning with an open mind willing and ready to heed sound argument and good advice. This fact of mutual appreciation was perhaps what Huang intended to convey to the readers of this hitherto unexplored document, which was an edited version of a speech delivered to his own disciples. For the modern student of Wang Yangming, Huang's account is further evidence of Wang's life as a committed philosopher-teacher and of the complexity in the formulation and elucidation of his key philosophical doctrines.

<sup>56</sup>See GUOCHAO XIANZHENG LU, 49:26a, for Wang Dayong's "record of conduct" by a Wang Fengling; and 60:29a, his "biography" by a Xu Guanlan.

BAILING XUESHAN 百陵學山  
 BEIJING TUSHUGUAN GUJI SHANBEN SHUMU 北京圖書館古籍善本書目  
 Cao Cao 曹操  
 Chen Shaoru 陳紹儒  
 Chen Rongjie 陳榮捷  
 Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章  
 CHUANSHILOU SHUMU 傅是樓書目  
 CHUANXI LU 傅習錄  
 Dan Hengjin 但衡今  
daren 大人  
 DAXUE GUBEN PANGSHI 大學古本傍釋  
 DAXUE GUBEN PANGZHU 大學古本旁註  
 "Daxuwen" 大學問  
 ER XU SHUMU HEKE 二徐書目合刻  
 Fuwen shuyuan 敷文書院  
 GUANGDONG TONGZHI 廣東通志  
 GUANGDONG WENXIAN SANJI 廣東文獻三集  
 GUANGDONG WENXIAN SHUMU ZHIJIAN LU 廣東文獻書目知見錄  
 GUANGDONG WENXUAN 廣東文選  
 Guangxiang 光相  
 GUANGZHOU RENWU ZHUAN 廣州人物傳  
 GUOCHAO XIANZHENG LU 國朝獻徵錄  
 HANHAI 函海  
 HANLIN JI 翰林記

haojie zhi shi 豪傑之士  
 Huang Wan 黃綰  
 Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲  
 Huang Zuo 黃佐  
 Huguang 湖廣  
 Ji Ben 季本  
 Jiao Hong 焦竑  
li 理  
 Li Minbiao 黎民表  
 Liang Rifu 梁日孚  
 Liang Zhuo 梁焯  
 Litou 剡頭  
 Lo Qinshun 羅欽順  
 Lo Xuepeng 羅學鵬  
 Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵  
 MINGRU XUE'AN 明儒學案  
 MINGRU XUE'AN DIANJIAO SHIWU 明儒學案點校釋誤  
 MINGSHI 明史  
 Nan Daji 南大吉  
 Nan Yuanshan 南元善  
 Nanchang 南昌  
 Nanhai 南海  
 Nanning 南寧  
 Nanwei 南渭  
 NANYONG ZHI 南雍志

nianpu 年譜  
qi 氣  
 "Qi'ao" 淇澳  
 Qian Dehong 錢德洪  
 Qian Qianyi 錢謙益  
 QIANQINGTANG SHUMU 千頃堂書目  
 QIU JUN 丘濬  
 Qu Dajun 屈大均  
 Qu Wanli 屈萬里  
 Ran You 冉有  
ren 仁  
 Shaoxing 紹興  
shiyi 拾遺  
 Shu Bo 舒柏  
 SIKU QUANSHU ZONGMU TIYAO 四庫全書總目提要  
 TAIQUAN JI 泰泉集  
 TAIQUAN YONGYAN 泰泉庸言  
 Tianfei 天妃  
 Wang Dayong 王大用  
 Wang Fengling 王鳳靈  
 WANG WENCHENG GONG QUANSHU 王文成公全書  
 Wang Yangming 王陽明  
 WANG YANGMING CHUANXI LU XIANGZHU JIPING 王陽明傳習錄  
 詳註集評  
 Wang Yiwei 王一為

wenyuan 文苑  
xi 兮  
 Xiangshan 香山  
 XIANGSHAN XIANZHI 香山縣志  
 "xici zhuan" 繫辭傳  
 Xuchang 許昌  
 Xu Guanlan 徐觀瀾  
 Xue Kan 薛侃  
 Yan Yuan 顏淵  
 YANGMING QUANSHU 陽明全書  
 YANGMING YU GUANG LU 陽明寓廣錄  
 YANGMING YU GUANG YIGAO 陽明寓廣遺稿  
 YONGYAN 庸言  
 YONGYAN YUEXUAN 庸言約選  
 "Yuanli" 原理  
 "Yue ming" 說命  
 Zhu Chenhao 朱宸濠  
 Zhu Gongxu 朱公敘  
 Zhu Honglin 朱鴻林  
 Zhu Xi 朱熹