

*небезпечну тварюку, і кожен, хто хоче добре жити,  
намагається обійтись без нього і покладатись лише на самого  
себе (Річард III, I, 4. — Пер. Б. Тена).*

І в цьому розумінні король Річард нічим від них не відрізняється. І, віддаляючись життям від тих часів, Шекспір своєю найсуперечливішою хронікою нагадував, як легко і швидко можна втратити всі важко накопичені заслуги, якщо протиставити їм одну-єдину рису характеру – марнославство, владолюбство, підступність, віроломство. Одне це здатне занести всі переваги і залишити по собі загрозливу пам'ять.

### Література

1. Мамардашвили М. К. Кантианские вариации. – М.: Аграф, 1997. 320 с.
2. Мамардашвили М. К. Очерк современной европейской философии. – М.: Прогресс-Традиция, Фонд Мераба Мамардашвили, 2010. 584 с.
3. Мамардашвили М. К. Эстетика мышления. – М.: «Московская школа политических исследований», 2000. 416 с.
4. Смирнов А. Річард III // Шекспир У. Полное собрание сочинений в восьми томах / Под общей ред. А. Смирнова и А. Аникста. Т. 1. – М.: Гос. Изд-во «Искусство», 1957. С. 607–612.
5. Шведов Ю. Ф. Вильям Шекспир. Исследования / Под ред. Я. Н. Засурского. – М.: Изд-во Моск. ун-та, 1977. 394 с.

**Dezhong Wang** (Jiamusi City, P. R. China)

### **SOLVING MAN'S CRISIS IN MEDIA AGE BY CHINESE ANCIENT WANG YANGMING'S CONSCIENCE THEORY**

**Abstract:** Wang Y. M. is the representative of “mind of science” in China. He integrated the theory of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism to establish his “conscience”, and applied it in education. He insisted that “to conscience” was the way to the ultimate kindness. It aroused huge echo at that time in China. Nowadays it still exists valuable both in academic and practice.

Man push science go forward by expanding rationality, expecting freedom of man. Man has been extended himself by way of technology and broke through the limited by nature. However, it found that man has trapped himself into instrumental rationality and been controlled by technology,

through analyzing the man's crisis in the era of media.

How to salve man is becoming the world topic. Wang's conscience provides an available method among the ways. He advocates that conscience is the basis ontological existence of man. It legislates itself inside through mind, transforms the good of will into the good behavior, and is also the basis judgment of mind to criticize all unreasonable and unfair phenomena. No matter any alienation and malpractice, we can criticize and condemn according to everyone's inherent conscience, launching rescue actions call by conscience, realizing freedom

**Key words:** conscience, ontology, rationality, network education, one-dimension man, new media.

### **Wang Yangming' "conscience" theory and his education concept**

In China, the word "conscience" first came from Mencius, "What people can do without learning is conscience energy; What people know without thinking is conscience" (Wei, Y. X., 2014). After Mencius, no Confucian scholars specialized in conscience, until Wang, Y. M. of the Ming Dynasty re-mentioned conscience.

Lu, J.Y. in China was the first man to propose "mind is reason" , Wang, Y. M. developed it from Lu's viewpoints of "the universe is my mind, and my mind is the universe" and "there is no Tao (Taoist core theory) out of my mind". He believed that "man is the mind of all things in the world, man's mind is the master of all things", "mind is universe, it includes all as mind mentioned", then forming his famous saying "nothing outside the mind, no object outside the mind, no reason outside the mind, no justice outside the mind, no goodness outside the mind". (Liu, Y., 2022)

Wang introduced the ontology of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, including the Confucian theory of conscience, the Buddhist theory of mind-based instinct and the non-prescriptive nature of the Taoism, and believes that the ontology of conscience is: "the ontology of all things, the origin of the universe, the standard of right and wrong and the new realm of Confucianism" (Yang, G. R., 2022). Thus, forming his core doctrine "To Conscience".

First of all, Wang believes that conscience is the Tao, the ontology of the mind, and conscience is not a concrete human mind, but a highly abstract ontological world. Secondly, conscience is the reason of nature, and Manifests as a priori traditional ethics and the ultimate morality. Finally, he regards "conscience as the unification of the subject-object, it recognizes itself as the object of cognition, rather than the object world" (Shao, X. X., 2012), meantime, he believes that conscience is the absolute standard and scale for judging right and wrong, identifying good and evil.

Wang asks people to conduct behavior naturally obeying the instructions of conscience so as to meet the requirements of traditional ethics and morality. It concludes that “Wang’s category of conscience is a collection paradigm of absolute subjective spirits containing ontology, moral cultivation, epistemology and human nature. It respects the norm of Chinese traditional ethics and morality, such as benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and trust” (Yang, G. R., 1996). He also summarized his philosophical thoughts into four reputed sentences: “No good and no evil is the ontology of the mind, conducting good or evil is the action of spirit, the cognition of good and evil is conscience, the ultimate goal is to realize eliminating evil to good” (Liu, Z. X., 2004)

Wang’s “to conscience” focuses on the construction of the subject’s moral consciousness, which is similar to Kant’s conscience. “Kant advocated that moral laws must be absolutely beyond experience. The more pure and direct rational legislation is, the more solemn and noble the power of morality is. Wang, on the other hand, emphasized the integration of conscience, natural principles, all things.” (Yu, Z. P., 2000)

In his long-term education practice with abundant experience, he has formed a complete set of education ideological systems, including education purposes, contents, principles, methods, etc., which has become one of the most important education concepts in ancient China and has profound influence. Wang introduced his philosophical system of “mind is reason” into his education practice, and proved “mind is reason” in education, which became his education concept. Under such education concept, he required “people to concern the mind of themselves, rather than study for chasing fame and fortune, moreover, learning is not the only way to reach the morality” (Yang, J. C., 2010)

He clarified that the role of education is “to reduce people’s desires day after day”, that is, “the more you reduce desire, the more you learn ‘reason’”, and ultimately through “to conscience”, he wishes to realize that “the study of conscience is well known by the world, so that man would stay peace and harmony through their own conscience” (Liu, L. F. and Huang, L., 2005)

Judging Wang’s lifelong education concept, it summarized that “conscience is the core and goal of his education thought. Ethics and morality education is the basic content. Aspiration and diligence are the basic principles for learning. ‘Knowledge and action are one’ is his basic education methodology” (Ding, W. X., 2017). ‘Edutainment’ is Wang’s children education ideas. ‘Ritual music enlightenment’ and ‘honest customs’ are the ways and purposes of his social education thought.

Moreover, he also proposed that “to conscience” is the process of presenting conscience. In fact, Wang’s entire education concept is to enlighten man to talent. At the same time, he emphasizes the importance of gradual

practice to realize conscience, on the one hand, to practice in “mind”, that is, to practice righteousness and sincerity under the guidance of conscience. He believes that “conscience is available for all, but it is only obscured by desire. It only needs unveil man’s nature mind. On the other hand, it is to practice in everything, making everything obeying the rules of conscience.” (Wang, X. B., 2019)

### **Man’s crisis in the media age and its salving**

Medium is the organizational form of disseminating information, which refers to all the tools, channels, carriers, intermediaries or technical means used by human to deliver or obtain information. In fact, the medium is not just a tool of information delivering, McLuhan pointed out medium is the information, “the medium is man’s extension. Any impact on the individual and society is due to new dimension, any extension of ours (or any new technology) is to introduce a new scale into man’s world. Medium does not or does not primarily refer to the container itself, such as newspapers, radio, television, etc., which are the carrier of connections, but the sum of all the relationships and meanings that are related by it” (Hu, Y., 2019)

In essence, any kind of media technology is a construction of man’s social relations, and man’s any social relationship appears or develops all depending on medium. Man breaks their own limitations realizing freedom through the endlessly upgrading of medium. For instance, “in oral communication, man did not have any communication technology to respect except their bodies, after the innovation of paper allowed communication to cross the limitations of time and space. Printing technique made communication more economical, and also bred the spread of globalization in modern time” (Huang, D., 2022)

“Radio extended the effect of language by its affinity, becoming the emotion bond of listeners. Because radio is not related to the degree of education, then class boundaries was broken. Television had further promoted the popularization of information, knowledge, culture and art. The network directly brought man to the ‘scene era’” (Zhang, H., 2016). Through big data, SNS, IoC, 5G, etc., people had realized unlimited data transmission. By VR, AR, 3D and ‘meta-universe’ application, people had realized the interconnection of reality and virtuality.

Every upgrading of the media relies on the power of technology, and the progress of technology depends on the promotion of “rationality”. Man thinks that “they can finally reach freedom by technological progress promoting by man’s “rationality”, but the truth is quite contrary. On the one hand, man develop rationality, feeling the power of rational externalization, on the other hand, they are also enslavement by it, and become a ‘reason binding man’” (Li, M., 2008). Both the eastern and western Scholars have been beginning to study the crisis of man in the media age.

Marcuse, H. believed that advanced industrial society is the “one-dimension” society controlled by technology. When the network becomes a new medium in lives, it helps individual to understand the world from a brand-new perspective. However, man’s “one-dimension” has not been reduced in the network environment, but strengthened. In public view, the network is a territory where people could speak and play freely, and netizen could freely express their opinions on platforms. But this is not the case in fact. “If an individual expresses a view that most people do not agree with, the majority will attack him by verbal attacks, even “cyber manhunt”, that seriously affects individual’s life in real. Therefore, the individual gradually adapt himself to the mass opinion under pressure, then criticism disappeared” (Ma, Z. L., 2001)

In the media era, algorithms, as the core of network technology, play a key role in constructing data entrance and capturing users. “In a society where media and code are ubiquitous, power increasingly exists in algorithms” (Lash, S., 2007). The information release of traditional media has been mostly supervised by authorities, commonly known as “door-keeper”. With the development of grassroots media such as Wikipedia, YouTube, Facebook, WeChat, TikTok, etc., society has entered an era where “everyone is a microphone”. “To face the network requirements of convenience, sharing and fragmentation, the ‘door-keeper’ who used to be the source of information had to surrender to data and algorithms” (Cheng, H., 2003)

Traditionally, the media has been playing a role in maintaining social stability, constructing social identity and mainstream ideology. However, today’s network, such as Toutiao, WeChat, and Micro-blog, can easily identify your preferences and recommend the content you are possibly interested in by algorithms. Then, “it has gradually possessed the power of speaking. The personal acceptance of information has gradually become ‘narrow’ and ‘cocoon room’, our thoughts are unconsciously ruled by the network media” (Liu, H. D., 2017). The network always serves a few oligarchs or companies for commercial benefits. “It gives us massive information in a specific way regardless truth or not, so as to we thought the same, finally forming a directional thinking, and towards a one-dimension” (Liang, F., 2013)

Meanwhile, “technology also regulates man’s perception of the world and its freedom to a considerable extent, that is, it frames our vision, profoundly affects our understanding and presentation of ourselves” (Li, M., 2008). Nowadays, the media is no longer a tool for man to acquire information, but restricts man in a specific technical structure by “Ge-Stell”, shaping and controlling man’s cognition and lifestyle.

Today’s network culture is a comprehensive pan-entertainment. Entering the network era, the abundant new media terminals such as laptop computer, mobile phones, iPad, on the one hand, has extended TV’s screen, on the other hand, network has filled in the experience of poor interactivity of TV media.

The popularity of short videos at present, it caters to the requirement of networked survival. People is quite keen on surf a few minutes of TikTok and Kuaishou. WeChat, Instagram and Facebook Messenger can meet people's social connect at anytime and anywhere.

Spying on private affairs, hunting for novelty, and eye-catching are the "magic tricks" to attract netizen, "Internet spoof" conform to the law of attention economy and can attract users at the lowest cost. However, such "network culture, which only focuses on the exploration of entertainment, will not hesitate to give up the pursuit of artistic taste and social responsibility for the sake of benefit, and will eventually fall into the situation of "entertainment to death" (Chen, H. L., 2009)

The majority of the network "indigenous population" are post-90s and post-00s, who are the mainstream consumers of network culture. Supposed TV magnifies people's sensibility, network will further move forward people's immersive enjoyment of senses. With constantly fragmented information, the audio-visual pleasure, "man sink into the 'illusion' created by network gradually losing the ability of independent thinking, and man go further away from rationality, finally become 'appendages of entertainment'" (Lv, M. Z., 2020)

The virtuality of network wears netizen a "new mask". In virtual, there are no restrictions on the identity, class, geography as it in the real world. netizen have a relaxed sense of freedom without depression, it is easy to fully release and display the "real" himself deep in the heart, disregarding for the supervision of social opinion, traditional ethics or habits, etc.

The network is a huge open information transmission system with multiple values, and it is full of values, religious beliefs, lifestyles, cultures, and ideas of various countries and nations, cultural conflicts occur at any time. By facing multiculturalism and pluralistic morality, younger feel nothing but bewilderment and confusion. The traditional interpersonal relationship in the network has been broken too. In real, interpersonal relationships usually start from closed family members to friends, neighbors, etc., and are relatively stable. In virtual, the establishment of interpersonal relationship has the characteristics of openness, randomness and arbitrariness, people have low sense of trust and responsibility with each other. The above reasons have led to a large number of network moral anomie.

The crisis occurs on man's education as well. The education assessment based on big data has dominated the modern education, which shows a digital or data "education landscape". administrator monitors the quality of education and detect learning behavior through data. MOOC, SPOC, flipped classroom, live class, etc., those popular education modes have been widely provided analysis tools to track learning behavior, process and effect, moreover, the digital illustration of a person by education assessment has become a way to

judge a man's value and quality, becoming talent choosing criteria. But the question is, does the big data-based assessment meet the purpose of education? Does the assessment of growth respects man?

Big data simplifies man's spiritual growth into data, "educated people are represented by a group of numbers and treated as a computable object. The richness, complexity and profound internality of man is eliminated" (Biesta, G., 2016). In practice, digital assessment also causes unfair competition and arises learning anxiety, which directly harms students' experience in education and school life. In essence, education assessment by big data is the control of modern industrial society and technological society on education.

The arrival of the media era is undoubtedly the victory of rationality, but it has not brought the expected freedom of man. Man have fallen into a strange circle set by rationality. "Man is not only being controlled by bureaucratic social organizations, but also being bullied by increasingly 'instrumental rationality'" (Zhao, J. J., 2006). Both eastern and western scholars have been looking for answers, how to save man.

Marcuse once pointed out that losing freedom is a high price for the development of a high degree of civilization. He advocated turning desires into love, turning one-dimension man into well-rounded man, and returning to human nature. But if we only criticize the theory with rationality, man still cannot save themselves. It does not realize that the key of such problem is because that man's conscience is covered.

Why conscience can save man, because "conscience is the basis ontological existence of man and the fundamental source of the value of man's existence. It legislates itself inside through mind, transforms the good of will into the good behavior, and is also the basis judgment of mind to criticize all unreasonable and unfair phenomena. No matter any alienation and malpractice, we can criticize and condemn according to everyone's inherent conscience, launching rescue actions call by conscience, realizing freedom" (Shao, X. L., Liu, G. Q., 2005). Wang's conscience is the inheritance of Chinese Confucianism, which is based on the ontology of human nature. His view is just the manifestation of the Confucian critical spirit in present, calling for the return of inherent conscience to seek the way to save man. Through "to conscience" and humanistic spiritual regulate and guide the flooding of instrumental rationality. He believed that "we must recognize morality first, then will treat others as we expect to be treated, and finally should first be clear about morality, then push ourselves to others, and finally arrive at supreme goodness" (Xiao, J. P., 2010)

## **Conclusion**

Nowadays rationality replaced the status of God controlling the world through science. As people's feelings, communication, etc., and others of the life are dominated by benefit, man's lives are colonized, and finally rationality

left only instrumental rationality. Superficially man control technology, but actually it is quite opposite. Technology creates false consciousness and punishes human spirit. In network, man is just a symbol or a data stream that can be deleted at any time. Moreover, “junk culture” hides and is flooding in network. People communicate in a virtual world, gradually trapped in the cell of instrumental rationality, and it hard to return the real life.

However, conscience inside one’s mind become a way to save man. Conscience is the first essence of human existence, and represents a higher rational realm of human spiritual achievements. From the observing of Chinese culture, no matter Confucius’ benevolence, Mencius’ righteousness, Dong, Z. S.’s natural law, and Wang, Y. M.’s conscience, it illustrates that kindness is universal, inevitable, and practical, and always maintains optimism and confidence in kindness. The correct display of conscience will be proud of the modern civilization that benefits man. Similarly, it will urge man to alert and criticize the degenerate social culture, so as to defending humanity and respecting personality.

### **Literature**

- Wei, Y. X. (2014). Mencius’ Mind Theory and Song Ming Confucianism. *Journal of Yantai University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* (01), P.P. 25-31.
- Liu, Y. (2022). Wang Yangming’s View of Saint from the Perspective of Conscience. *Tangdu Academic Journal* (04), P.P. 32-38.
- Yang G. R. (2022). Wang Yangming’s Theory of Mind in Chinese Philosophy. *Kong Xuetang* (02), P.P. 4-13+107-121.
- Shao, X. X. (2012). Wang Yangming’s New Theory of Mind. *Philosophical Research* (12), 30-37+123.
- Yang, G. R. (1996). Wang Yangming’s Philosophy Course. *Journal of East China Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* (04), 1-9.
- Liu, Z. X. (2004). The Philosophical Implication of Wang Yangming’s Mind Study from the Perspective of “Four Sentences”. *Dongyue Essays* (06), 155-160.
- Yu, Z. P. (2000). Transcendence and Internality: A Comparison of Kant’s Practical Rationality and Wang Yangming’s Theory of Conscience. *Zhejiang Academic Journal* (05).
- Yang, J. C. (2010). Wang Yangming’s Education Thought and Its Contemporary Influence. *Education and Culture Forum* (01), P.P. 107-114.
- Liu, L. F., Huang, L. (2005). On Wang Yangming’s Thought of Mind Education. *Modern University Education* (06), 45-48.

- Ding, W. X. (2017). Wang Yangming's Educational Thoughts. Guizhou Literature and History Series (04), 1-11.
- Wang, X. B. (2019). Wang Yangming's Educational Thoughts and Contemporary Values. Journal of Hebei Normal University (Education Science Edition) (05), 28-34.
- Hu, Y. (2019). Understanding McLuhan. International Press (01), 81-98.
- Huang, D. (2022). Extension: McLuhan's "Body" - Re understanding the Media. Journalist (02), 3-13.
- Zhang, H. (2016). Analysis of McLuhan's Understanding the Media -- On the Extension of Man. News Window (04), 43-44.
- Li, M. (2008). Criticism on "instrumental rationality" of educational technology. Educational Research (05), 56-61.
- Ma, Z. L. (2001). Marcuse's "one-dimension" theory and its practical significance. Social Sciences (06), 21-25.
- Lash, S. (2007). "Power after Hegemony: Cultural Studies in Mutation?". Theory, Culture & Society 24(3), P.P. 55-78.
- Cheng, H. (2003). Being the "door-keeper" of good information. Political Work Guide (10), 49.
- Liu, H. D. (2017). The worries and countermeasures of social media "information cocoon room". China Radio and Television Journal (04), 54-57
- Liang, F. (2013). Information Cocoon Room. News Outpost (01), 87.
- Li, M. (2008). Criticism on "instrumental rationality" of educational technology. Educational Research (05), 56-61.
- Chen, H. L. (2009). The era of pan-entertainment industry-and a concurrent reading of Postman's Entertainment to Death. Popular Literature and Art (Theory) (01), 46-47
- Lv, M. Z. (2020). "Entertainment to Death" in the Internet Era. Audio Visual (01), 25-26.
- Biesta, G. (2016). Good Education in the Age of Measurement—Ethics, Politics, Democracy. London: Routledge, P. 26.
- Zhao, J. J. (2006). Transcending "Critique of Technological Rationality". Philosophical Research (05), 107-113.
- Shao, X. L., Liu, G. Q. (2005). Wang Yangming's theory of "unity of knowledge and practice" and its modern value. Journal of Binzhou University (04), 31-34.
- Xiao, J. P. (2010). Ontological Interpretation of Wang Yangming's "Unity of Knowledge and Practice". Qiu Suo (04), 120-121+155.