

## Chapter 3

### Ming Dynasty Confucian and Yangming Studies

#### 1. Introduction

This report is the result of a comprehensive analysis of the research achievements related to Neo-Confucianism (Zhuzixue 朱子學) and Yangmingism (Yangmingxue 陽明學) in the Ming Dynasty in China published in Korea in 2021. The inclusion criteria were research articles published from January to December 2021 in the journals registered in the Korean Citation Index (KCI) hosted by the National Research Foundation (NRF) as well as doctoral theses.

The targeted journals hand-searched for eligible research articles are classified into four categories based on the classification scheme of the NRF: philosophy (n = 26), Confucian studies (n = 4), the humanities (n = 4), and Chinese language and literature (n = 1).

The search results were screened, resulting in the selection of 14 eligible papers covering the subjects related to Neo-Confucianism and Yangmingism in the Ming Dynasty in China. To provide a thematic overview of the papers selected, I will first present them by topic, followed by an analysis and evaluation of the major papers.

#### 2. Classification by Topic

1) Yangmingism (3 papers)

1 Park, Kil-Su: The Characteristic and Significance of Wang Yangming's Embodied Cognitive Study Theory, *Yang-Ming Studies*

2 Park, Kil-Su: The Grounds and Significance of the Four-Sentence Instruction from the Perspective of the Four-Nature Theory, *Yang-Ming Studies*

3 Park, Hyunjung: A Comparative Study on the Ge-wu(格物)in the later Yangming School of Thought, *The Chung Kuk Hak Po*

Yangmingism (陽明學 Yangmyeonghak in Korean and Yangmingxue in Chinese) is a philosophical school that emerged during the Ming Dynasty. Three research papers related to Yangmingism or the later Yangming School were published in

2021 by two researchers (Park Kil-Su and Park Hyun-jung) who earned their PhDs in Song-Ming Confucianism in the Department of Philosophy of Beijing University and have authored Yangmingism-related papers each year.

Park Kil-Su published two papers in 2021: “The Characteristic and Significance of Wang Yangming's Embodied Cognitive Study Theory” and “The Grounds and Significance of the Four-Sentence Instruction from the Perspective of the Four-Nature Theory.”

Wang Yangming was a Song-Ming Confucianist who advocates learning through self-awareness. He presented the theory of xinji (心即理 mind is the principle) as a means of realizing self-awareness and argued that there are neither events nor principles without mind (心外無事, 心外無理). The learning of Wang Yangming (Yangmingism) advocates an accessible and immediate approach (簡易直截) to learning. Wang Yangming refuted all complicated learning methods, insisting that the learning of human nature (xingxue 性學) is an accessible and immediate learning. However, it is not easy for scholars in general to understand the essence of Yangmingism because it abounds with assertions that compete with common-sense understandings.

In his paper “The Characteristic and Significance of Wang Yangming's Embodied Cognitive Study Theory,” Park Kil-Su states: “Based on the original substance (benti 本體) and cohesion (danyixing 單一性) of learning, Wang Yangming criticized scholars for dividing the mind's original substance and learning into dichotomies such as internal/external (neiwai 內外), anterior/posterior (xianhou 先後), and static/dynamic (dongjing 動靜). He also criticized the approach to learning how to realize dao (道) through linguistic understandings and discussions such as recitation (jisong 記誦), poetry and prose (cizhang 辭章), exegetics (xungu 訓詁), and lectures (jiangxue 講學) and presented the learning through self-awareness by witnessing (shijian 實見) the mind's original substance through direct recognition (tiren 體認). Shijian 實見 is learning through the direct perception or awareness of the mind's benti 本體. In this context, Wang Yangming suggested the study of the original mind (bentigongfu 本體工夫) as the archetypal study of embodied cognition by following our heart-mind (xinshang-tiren 心上體認). Bentigongfu 本體工夫 is an integrative study uniting all forms of study. Its quintessence is experience of manifestation (jianzaixing 見在性) self-sufficiency (juzucheng 具足成), and wholeness (quanyixing 全一性). In this context, the agent experiences the presence of benti 本體 as in-depth normativity and unique subjective activity that takes the universal principles as its essence, not as a phenomenon or effect arising from the deceptive brilliancy of mind. Therefore, as learners advance in bentigongfu 本體工夫, they become aware of self-awakening (mingjue 明覺) activities of benti 本體 with growing transparency. These processes and results consequently increase the ability to recognize and control the nature

and characteristics of his mind and body. As a result, they cultivate the ability to perceive and direct their essence and traits. Conclusively, the study of xinshang-tiren 心上體認 is a self-oriented and self-recurrent study method by content and nature, and its ultimate value and significance is the thorough awareness and realization of the mind-body penetrating true self.”

Three key aspects of Wang Yangming's theory are xinjili (心即理, mind is principle), zhixing-heyi (知行合一, unity of knowledge and action), and zhiliangzhi (致良知, attainment of the innate knowledge of goodness). Another aspect added later is sijujiao (四句教, four-sentence instruction), which Wang Yangming taught his principal disciples Quan Dehong 全德洪 and Wang Ji 王畿 in Tianquanqiao 天泉橋 a day before leaving for a military campaign. Later on, sijujiao 四句教 caused Yangming school to divide into two camps: the understanding of Quan Dehong 全德洪 based on siyoulun 四有論 centering on study and the understanding of Wang Ji 王畿 based on siwulun 四無論 centering on benti 本體. In his paper “The Grounds and Significance of the Four-Sentence Instruction from the Perspective of the Four-Nature Theory,” Park Kil-Su states: “Wang Yangming explained that the Four Nature Theory (sixinglung 四性論) constitutes the ideological basis and purport of sijujiao 四句教 by comparing the results of his analysis of the comprehensive views of the traditional theory of human nature (xing-lun 性論) in terms of benti (本體, original substance), fayong (發用 functioning), yuantou (原頭, origin of heaven), and liubi (流弊, widespread vice) with sijujiao 四句教 and analyzing the comparison results. In this process, he clarified that sixinglung 四性論 has a dual logic regarding the xing defined in terms of tiyong (體用, substance and function) and benmo (本末 root and branches), the former referring to the logical link between benti 本體 and action and the latter to the embedding of their value relations. From this, it follows that the application of the content and traits of sixinglung 四性論 to sijujiao 四句教 provide an ideological reference point for understanding the overall composition and characteristics of sijujiao 四句教 and the interrelationships between its contents more systematically and uniformly. In fact, if the viewpoint of sixinglung 四性論 is consistently applied, wu-shan-wu-e (無善無惡, neither good nor evil) and youshan-youe (有善有惡, some are good, some are evil), which are presented in the first and second sentences of sijujiao 四句教, respectively, are explicable from the action of the mind's benti 本體, whereby the latter can be explained as yi (意, will of the mind) being dichotomized into good and evil. 知善知惡(knowing good and evil) and 爲善去惡(doing good and eschewing evil), which are presented in the third and fourth sentences, explain the relationship between the origin (yunyun 淵源) and end (mdun 末端) of moral benti 本體, whereby the latter shows that the gewu-gongfu (格物工夫 investigation of things) of wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡 is necessary in the liubi 流弊, embodied as actual good and evil, and that gewu-gongfu 格物工夫 refers to

liangzhi 良知, as suggested in the third sentence. These explications demonstrate that Yangming's mind-heart and learning theories covered by the sijujiao 四句教 are in fact established based on Wang Yangming's four aspects of xing 性. Sijujiao 四句教 is a hard nut to crack, and scholars have not yet reached a consensus in explaining it. I will delve into this topic in the section analysis and review of major papers."

After Wang Yangming's death, Yangmingism rapidly split into several factions. Wang Ji 王畿 and Nie Bao 聶豹 are figures symbolically showing the later Yangming schools' factional feuds. As is well known, Wang Ji's theory of liangzhi 良知 is the theory of xincheng shu (現成, ready innate knowledge of goodness), and Nie Bao's theory of zhiliangzhi (致良知, attainment of innate knowledge of goodness) is the theory of guiji (歸寂, return to the tranquility of the substance). Wang Ji places the emerging liangzhi at the center, and Nie Bao seeks to ensure the flow of liangzhi through guiji 歸寂. In the eyes of Wang Ji, Nie Bao was returning to Neo-Confucianism, and in the eyes of the Nie Bao, Wang Ji misunderstood qingshi (情識, deluded consciousness) as liangzhi. They exchanged in-depth treaties, which are important documents for the study of the division among Wang Yangming's successors.

In her paper entitled "A Comparative Study on the Ge-wu (格物) in the Later Yangming School of Thought," Park Hyun-jung states: "Wang Ji 王畿, the representative scholar of xianchengshuo 現成說, asserts, based on the understanding of xianchengliangzhi, that liangzhi is impeccable in and of itself and that revealing liangzhi in its original state is zhizhi 致知, which is gewu 格物. That is, for Wang Ji 王畿, the manifestation of the original state of liangzhi is through one-minded reflection (yinian-zifan 一念自反) gewu 格物 and zhizhi 致知. In contrast, Nie Bao 聶豹 regards gewu 格物 as not being worth doing and attributes sole importance to the study of zhizhi 致知, that is, returning to the tranquility of the substance. Therefore, for Nie Bao, gewu 格物 has no practical value as a starting point of research. Alongside Wang Ji 王畿, Ou Yangde 歐陽德 also admits that zhizhi 致知 and gewu 格物 are to be understood as organically integrated notions but considers them clearly distinguished areas of study. With the characteristic of liangzhi of "being self-content without self-deception (無自欺恆自慊)" reflected in both zhizhi 致知 and gewu 格物, efforts at gongfu should be performed on the basis of awareness that has already been manifested. These views, expounded by Wang Yangming's successors in interpreting his gewu, clearly show different stances. Such differences in understanding of the core notion of Yangmingism are attributable to varied understandings of substance and function (tiyong 體用), the fundamental perceptual frame, from which their positions to gewu 格物 evolved into completely different forms. Above, this report distinguished between the theoretical colors of the three representative Yangming successors by analyzing their differences in

understanding the notion of gewu 格物. The analysis results led to the conclusion that differences in the perceptions of core notions of Yangmingism were at the heart of the exhibition of distinctive positions among Yangming successors. The analysis of Yangming successors' understanding of gewu 格物 is also the starting point for revealing the nature of the theories of Yangming's successors and analyzing their differences in the usage of Yangming's conceptual terminology as clues to investigation into the developmental process of their theories."

## 2) Yangmingism during the Ming Dynasty (5 papers)

- 1 Lee, Chan: Thought, Philosophy, and Confucianism as an Interdisciplinary Understanding of Idea: How Can Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism Be Understood? *The Society for the Study of Korean History of Thoughts*
- 2 Lee, Jinmyung: Reestablishment of Orthodox Concepts for the Fair Current of History in Early Ming, *Yang-Ming Studies*
- 3 Lim, Hongtae: A Study of Huangdao Zhou's (黄道周) Appreciation of Zhu Xi's and Lu Jiuyuan's Philosophy (II), *Journal of Yulgok Studies*
- 4 An Gwang Ho: An Analysis of Dibao in the Writings of Gu Yanwu, *The Chung Kuk Hak Po*
- 5 Seo Yeon Ju: A Study on Aspects of Eroticism in Folk Songs of the Late Ming Dynasty, *The Chung Kuk Hak Po*

Song-Ming Confucianism is also known as Neo-Confucianism. Here, a question arises about the validity of such terminology dividing the history of ideas or philosophy; researchers of the related fields may wish to reflect upon this. Lee Chan's paper "Thought, Philosophy, and Confucianism as an Interdisciplinary Understanding of Idea: How Can Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism Be Understood?" delves into this question: "For any attempt at providing an overview of the landscape of research into the history of Confucian thought, 'Song-Ming Confucianism' is a term open to discussion as much as it has become an established term, and the problem of 'how to define the term' cannot be eschewed. For instance, we take it for granted that Confucianism has been understood as ideology or philosophy. The point intended to be made here is not that Confucianism may not be ideology but whether it exactly meets the definition of ideology has not been questioned seriously. This attitude also applies to designating Song-Ming Confucianism with the modifier 'philosophical.' Therefore, in describing the history of Song-Ming Confucianism, how Confucianism is related to the terms 'ideology' and 'philosophy' and how these terms are utilized must first be scrutinized to understand Confucianism."

The author goes on to describe the study: “In particular, the terms used to describe ‘Song-Ming Confucianism,’ that is, ‘Xinruxue’ (新儒學, Neo-Confucianism) and ‘Daoxue’ (道學, Learning of the Way), provide an occasion to look into the depth of this problem because the discussion about these terms can influence our future approach to the post-Song-Ming history of Confucianism whether to approach it from the perspective of the history of ideas or interpret it as philosophical inquiry. Therefore, the work of sorting out these terms by endowing them with conceptual clarity will serve as a starting point for defining the boundaries between the history of ideas and the history of philosophy and between philosophy and Confucianism. Thus, this work is expected to critically examine the academic status of Confucianism. In this context, how the characteristics of Song-Ming Confucianism during its North Song period should be defined as ideas should be asked once again to attribute its position in the history of Confucianism.”

In the Ming dynasty, the king comparable to King Sejo of Joseon is Yongle Emperor Chengzu (永樂帝 成祖), who played a decisive role in laying a solid foundation for Ming as a dynasty. As some of his well-known achievements, he led massive fleets and invigorated maritime trade with the West, compiled the Yongle Encyclopedia (Yongle Dada 永樂大典), restored the Grand Canal (Dayunhe 大運河), and moved the capital to Beijing. Chengzu was not originally eligible to become an emperor, but he orchestrated the Turbulence of Jingnan (Jingnanzhibian 靖難之變) to drive out his nephew, Emperor Jianwen (建文帝), and ascended the throne. In this process, both sides were rife with traitors and loyalists, and Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺 was a leading figure among the loyalists. Later generations have looked up to Xiaoru as a symbol of the spirit of Daoxue solidarity and loyalty in the Ming Dynasty.

Lee Jin-myung's paper “Reestablishment of Orthodox Concepts for the Fair Current of History in Early Ming” summarizes Fang Xiaoru's solidarity and loyalty as follows: “I determined that the notion of Futong (附統, semi-fulfilled succession) conceived by Fang Xiaoru (方孝孺, 1357-1402) was in agreement with the views of Tang Zhongyou 唐仲友, who was a mediator between Zhu Xi 朱熹 and Chen Liang 陳亮. The fact that the Jinhua Zhu Xi School (Jinhua Cheng-Zhu School), led by Fang Xiaoru, compromised its position, adopting the strengths of Zhu Xi's 道德性命 and Chen Liang's 事功主義, led me to infer that Fang Xiaoru's Zhengtong (正統, rightful succession) found a common denominator between Zhu Xi and Chen Liang. Fang Xiaoru's theory of legitimate succession (zhengtong 正統) had a great impact on future records and books such as the Legitimate Lineage of World History (世史正綱) by Qiu Jun (丘濬, 1420-1495) and the Succession Legitimacy of Emperors (正帝統) by Xie Bi (謝陛, 1547-1615).

Huang Daozhou 黃道周 lived in the Ming-Qing transition period. He is not well known in Korean academic circles. In the paper A Study of Huang Daozhou's

(黃道周) Appreciation of Zhu Xi's and Lu Jiuyuan's Philosophy (II), Lim Hong-tae explains Huang Daozhou's ideas. The author earned his PhD at Renmin University of China with a thesis covering the scholarly debate among the thinkers in the Ming Dynasty around sijujiao 四句教 (four dicta), Wang Yangming's teaching in his later years, and has consistently published the results of comparative studies of Zhu Xi and Yangming Studies between China and Korea.

Lim Hong-tae evaluates Huang Daozhou's scholarly traits as follows: "Huang Daozhou is a scholar who lived in an era of great transformation during the period of political transition from Ming to Qing and ideological conflicts between Neo-Confucianism (Zhuzixue 朱子學) and Yangmingism (Yangmingxue 陽明學). For this reason, Huang Daozhou's scholarly views showed an eclectic tendency of holding on to Zhuzixue while embracing other schools of thought such as Yangmingxue. Against this background of Zhuzi and Yangming studies, he adopted a hybrid position of huiton-zhuwang (會通朱王), that is, harmonizing Zhuzi and Yangming studies, in the dispute surrounding 朱王同異 or 朱陸同異. His evaluation of Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming is fairly positive and favorable. In contrast, he was very critical of the negative effects of Zhuzi and Yangming studies, mainly toward Song Confucianists' Daotonglun 道統論 and the late Yangming school's theory of wu-shan-wu-e (無善無惡, neither good nor evil). In contrast to the scholarly trends of the time in which most scholars criticized Zhuzixue from the viewpoint of Yangmingxue and vice versa, Huang Daozhou maintained his stance of embracing the strengths and overcoming the drawbacks of both studies by objectively analyzing them. Even in his sharp criticism of Yangming's successors, he maintained an objective stance by not having recourse to the arguments of the Cheng-Zhu. This eclecticism of Huang Daozhou's ideas also reflects the characteristics of the intellectual circles in the early and late Ming/early Qing period."

The remaining two papers, "An Analysis of Dibao in the writings of Gu Yanwu" and "A Study on the aspects of eroticism in folk songs of the late Ming Dynasty," authored by An Gwang-ho and Seo Yeon-ju, respectively, present the historical background of the Ming Dynasty, which is useful for understanding the history of ideas in the Ming Dynasty.

An Gwang-ho examined Qing dynasty official gazettes (Dibao 邸報, chaobao 朝報 in Joseon) presented in the writings of Guyanwu's 顧炎武. An Gwang-ho explains why he chose Guyanwu: "Guyanwu is known as the founder of the bibliographical studies widespread in the Qing Dynasty. He wrote Rizhilu 日知錄, in which he copied the writings of earlier scholars, instead of being engaged in kongli-kongtan 空理空談 (vain reasoning and talking), and published the collected treatises. His disciples posthumously published his writings in an anthology entitled Gutinglinwenji 顧亭林文集. This paper performed a synoptic

historical analysis of the articles released in Dibao 邸報 using Guyanwu's Rizhilu 日知錄 and Gutinglinwenji 顧亭林文集.”

An Gwang-ho describes the contents recorded in Gu Yanwu's Rizhilu 日知錄 as follows: “The first record indicating the emergence of Dibao in the Chinese historical literature is found in Dukaiyuanzabao 讀開元雜報 in the Suqiao's 孫樵 Anthology. It was Gu Yanwu's idea that the 'Zabao' 雜報 of Dukaiyuanzabao 讀開元雜報 constitutes the origin of Dibao. Gu Yanwu chronologically sorted out the contents of Diabo in the Song Dynasty using the articles covered in the stories of Liufengshi, Lucou, and Caofu (劉奉世傳, 呂湊傳, and 曹輔傳). In particular, the Liufengshichuan shows that the Song Dynasty Dibao was managed more systematically than was the Tang Dynasty. Later on, referring to this statement made by Gu Yanwu, Yan Ruoqu 閻若璩 pointed out that the term Dibao was also used in the Tang Dynasty based on the contents of Quantang Shihua 全唐詩話. Additionally, Gu Yanwu advised, in a letter to his nephew Xuyuanwen 徐元文, to make maximum use of Dibao for the publication work for history books. In this letter, he also noted that the Ming Dynasty Dibao began to be printed in the 11th year of Congzhen 崇禎 (1638). In fact, in the Qing Dynasty Annals (Shilu 實錄), there is a record that Dibao was used for the compilation of the History of Ming Dynasty (明史), and the novels such as Jinpingmei 金瓶梅 and Hongloumeng 紅樓夢 have descriptions about Dibao printed in Jingshi 京師 circulating among the general public.”

Researchers of intellectual history often define the late Ming period as the embryonic period of modern China. Researchers of the history of ideas of the Ming Dynasty or Yangmingxue attribute the popularity of Yangmingism to people's emotional and hedonic tendencies, which were characteristic of modernity in the late Ming period.

Seo Yeon-ju's paper A Study on the Aspects of Eroticism in Folk Songs of the Late Ming Dynasty empirically depicts the late Ming state of widespread emotional and hedonic tendencies in the eroticism depicted in folk songs. “Folk songs are, per se, a paragon of honest expression of people's desires. In the late Ming Dynasty, in tandem with the development of the commodity economy, the pursuit of romantic or sexual love prevailed, and some secular literati from the mid-Ming period were also aware of the theory of zhenshi zai mingian 真詩在民間 (real poetry is in the folk). As a result, folk songs were considerably freed from the ethical and moral standards valued in the traditional codes of conduct (禮教) and were hailed by the general public beyond the class divide by boldly embracing obscene themes and expressions.”

The author then provides a more detailed introduction: The late Ming (晚明) period is well-known as a period of openness to love and sexuality. Celibacy was imposed as the Cheng-Zhu School was established as the official ideology in the early Ming Dynasty. From the mid-Ming period onward, however,



indulgence of desire was gradually allowed, creating an atmosphere relaxed enough to discuss eroticism in various aspects of society and culture. In literary circles, uncontrollable enjoyment of desire was regarded as a tasteful leisure, and novels about erotic relationships, erotic drawings, sexual products, and aphrodisiac drugs abounded. Eroticism also found its way into the folk songs, which is the subject matter of this study. About 800 popular folk songs of the late Ming Dynasty were included in *Guazhier* 掛枝兒 (hanging branches) and *Shange* 山歌 (mountain songs) compiled by Feng Menglong (馮夢龍, 1575-1645). Feng Menglong was also rumored to have authored *Jinpingmei* 金瓶梅, a popular novel about erotic love of the time, and edited the print edition of *Toutayeshi* (綉榻野史); the folk song collections compiled by him are also expected to be colorfully imbibed with eroticism. Feng Menglong's later writing, *Sanyan* 三言 (three words), also intensively deals with the issue of sexual love. This proves that the prominent erotic features in folk songs at that time was not only due to the widespread pursuit of sexual love prevailing in society, but it was also important to famous cultural celebrities with publishing activities such as Feng Menglong.

In the case of folk songs, apart from the oppression of traditional codes of conduct that had taken root in society, the events that occurred in life related to "color" and the people's thoughts and reactions to it naturally permeated the culture. Regarding the folk songs of the late Ming Dynasty, 240 out of 787 folk songs in *Guazhier* 掛枝兒 and *Shange* 山歌 contain erotic elements, and they appear even more densely in *Shange* 山歌 (n=180). Folk song collections such as *Guazhier* 掛枝兒 and *Shange* 山歌 are usually short, and one out of seven pieces in *Guazhier* 掛枝兒 (416 in total) and every other piece in *Shange* 山歌 (371 in total) are related to sexual love. This induces the assumption that other genres also abound with elements that stimulated readers' instinctive sexual curiosity. In the preface of *Shange* 山歌, Feng Menglong not only mentioned that the folk songs included in it are popular love songs, but also insisted that they are in the genealogy of *Shijing* 詩經, *Weifeng* 衛風, and *Zhenfeng* 鄭風, whose integrity was recognized by Confucius. From this it can be inferred that folk songs that were popular at the time were basically recognized for their values as "real poetry" (真詩), which allowed the editors/publishers of widely read folk song collections to boldly accept obscene topics and expressions, dismissing the moral yardstick of traditional codes of conduct.

However, the eroticism of folk songs has not attracted much research attention on its own. The sexuality-related elements of folk songs have been either interpreted as resistance to the traditional codes of conduct or dismissed as worthless, mainly as a very small part of love affairs. This may be ascribable to Feng Menglong's statement in the preface of *Shange* 山歌, "If it is revealed that the antidote for the fake medicine of moral teachings is concocted using true

romantic affection, its merit goes to Guazhier 掛枝兒. Thus, Guazhier 掛枝兒 is presented first, and then Shange 山歌 (若夫借男女之真情, 發名教之偽藥, 其功於掛枝兒等, 故錄掛枝詞而次及山歌), and the designation of folk songs was as antifeudal products in the early 1900s: they were presented as a rationale for the reform of culture and ideas.”

### 3) Comparison between Neo-Confucianism and Yangmingism (1 paper)

1 Lee, Chan: The Virtue Ethics and Virtue Epistemology of Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming: Focusing on the Mind of Approval-Disapproval and Innate Knowledge, *Studies in Confucianism*

Lee Chan earned his PhD in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Hawaii under the supervision of Professor Roger Ames. Back in Korea, he has been continuously publishing papers on the subject of Eastern philosophy based on a comparison with Western philosophy or reflections on modern academic trends.

Lee Chan's paper, “The Virtue Ethics and Virtue Epistemology of Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming: Focusing on the Mind of Approval-Disapproval and Innate Knowledge” also brings his academic strengths to the fore. His ideas regarding the topic are as follows: “This essay starts with the question of how to position shifeizhixin 是非之心, the sense of discerning right and wrong) within the siduan (四端, four sprouts) of Mencius. The statement that shifeizhixin is the sprout of intellectual virtue provides room for interpreting it as a 'faculty of rational judgment.' However, this approach is based on the modern way of understanding the human mind in the dichotomy of reason and emotion. The risk carried by 'rational judgment' is that it can often distort situations with obsessive inquiry, considerations, and stratagem, against which Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming tried to be on guard, as did Mencius. In this vein, I will examine whether shifeizhixin can be separated as rational judgment and how it can be interpreted if it must be viewed as part of an organic whole of four sprouts. This discussion also attempts to confirm whether shifeizhixin can lead to a unitary understanding of moral and intellectual virtues.”

Specifically, the following critical elements are discussed: “This totality of the mind is confirmed in a context where virtue ethics and virtue epistemology are summoned in contemporary Western philosophical circles. Virtue ethics was summoned in the context of self-criticism in philosophical circles; the dominant ethics of Western modernity only touch on legal contractual norms, oblivious to the discussions about improving human nature. The invocation of virtue ethics triggered by this self-criticism is related to problems such as reflections on the

modern view of individualized human beings and the interpretation of the essence of ethics. Modern epistemology, which seeks to provide a foundation for science by rigorously exploring the world, did not further care about the normativity of cognition after leaving it in the realm of a priori. However, the question of how to justify cognition inevitably touches on the normativity of cognitive activities. Furthermore, when evaluating the legitimacy of the knowledge thus acquired, intellectual actors and communities become major factors that need to be considered. In a nutshell, epistemology and ethics summoned 'virtue' in the context of attaching more importance to the relationship between the perceiving agent's inner world and the outer world perceived and to the issue of becoming better human beings. As such, if 'virtue' was revisited as a reflection of self-criticism regarding the modern tradition of dichotomizing the world and the self, subjectivity and objectivity, and reason and emotion, it stands to reason to reconstruct the understanding of the mind (xin 心) as an integrative and integral whole rather than separating shifeizhixin 是非之理 in the name of reason. In particular, as can be confirmed by Wang Yangming's concept of liangzhi 良知, the four sprouts of the heart-mind (siduanzhixin 四端之心: ceyin 惻隱, xiuwu 羞惡, cirang 辭讓, and shifeizhixin 是非) are aspects that are inevitably expressed differently depending on the situation the mind faces. To be immersed in a pure heart-mind that manifests differently according to the situation can be considered tantamount to the state in which intellectual virtue and moral virtue are unified."

#### 4) Comparison between Ming and Joseon Confucianism (3 papers)

- 1 Lee, Myong-shim: A Comparative study on Nok-mun's (鹿門) and Yang-myeong's (陽明) Mind-Nature Theories (心性論), *Yang-Ming Studies*
- 2 Kim Min-Jae: A Study on the Meaning of the Moral Subject in Dasan's (茶山) Concept of Sim(心), *Pan-Korean Philosophy*
- 3 Lee Cheol Seung: The Issue of the Theory of Human Nature between Wang Fuzhi's and Jeong Yakyong's Philosophies, *Journal of Eastern Philosophy*

After obtaining a PhD with her research on Nok-mun (鹿門) and Lim Sung-joo (任聖周, 1711-1788), Lee Myong-shim has consistently published her research achievements regarding Lim Sung-joo. In her paper "A Comparative study on Nok-mun's (鹿門) and Yang-myeong's (陽明) Mind-Nature Theories (心性論)," Lee Myong-shim provides the following overview of the comparison between Wang Yangming and Lim Sung-joo: "Yangming and Nok-mun have the same problem awareness. Both scholars achieved an argumentative development in which a moral agent goes beyond the innate nature (benxing 本性) to reach the innate

mind (benxin 本心) by paying attention to pure goodness without evil (chun-shan-wu-e 純善無惡). For this reason, the Yangming School is evaluated as an intensification of the Cheng-Zhu School, and in the same vein, Nok-mun's philosophy can be considered a natural consequence of an intensification process of the late Joseon Confucian ideas. However, Yangming is criticized for neglecting the organic connection between li-qi and xin-xing theories by dismissing the li-qi-based theory of benti (本體, original substance). This led to an increasingly arbitrary interpretation (changkuang-zizi 猖狂自恣) of the benti 本體 of heart-mind after Yangming's death. In contrast, Nok-num could assure the metaphysical absoluteness and universality for morality by presenting zhanyi-qingxuzhiqi 湛一清虛之氣 (deep and seemingly empty qi as the origin of existence) and moral haoranzhiqi 浩然之氣 (qi that is accumulated by practicing innate righteousness) as the evidence of existence of benxin 本心 and benxing 本性. However, the deep-rooted awareness of Cheng-Zhu Confucianists that the 'qi has an evil potential as xing-er-xia-zhe 形而下者 [physical entity as opposed to metaphysical entity]' may have worked as an obstacle to the succession of Noknum's philosophy."

Dasan Jeong Yak-yong is a paragon of Joseon Silhak thought and is considered one of the leading scholars of Joseon Confucianism along with Toegye Yi Hwang and Yulgok Yi I. Jeong Yak-yong tends to interpret xing 性 in the light of the Theory of Human Nature as Moral Inclination (Xingshihaoshuo 性嗜好說). According to Neo-Confucian principles, xing 性 is a metaphysical entity (xing-er-shang-zhe 形而上者) as the li 理 of suyiran 所以然, whereas shihao 嗜好 is a term containing the physical nature of qi 氣 and elicits the impression of descriptive contradiction like a square triangle.

Kim Min-jae earned her PhD with a thesis on Hagok Jeong Jedu and has continuously published research achievements regarding Eastern philosophy, including Yangmingism, from the perspective of an Eastern ethics education. In his paper entitled "A Study on the Meaning of the Moral Subject in Dasan's (茶山) Concept of Sim (心)," Kim Min-jae analyzes Jeong Yak-yong's notion of xin 心 by comparing it to Yangming's ideas as follows: The purpose of this study is to reveal with more clarity the meaning of the moral agent that can be derived from the notion of xin 心 interpreted by Dasan (茶山) Jeong Yak-yong (丁若鏞, 1762-1836) with a view to contributing to the establishment of a tradition-based field of 'responsible ethics.' Specifically, Dasan's notion of xin 心 is analyzed in comparison to that of Yangming (陽明) Wang Shouren (王守仁, 1472-1528).

The research results can be summarized as follows: "(1) Dasan attached great importance to the mental aspect of xin 心 as a bright spiritual mind while holding on to the view of human beings in the context of shenxing-miaohe 神形妙合 (existence as a spirit-body unity). Accordingly, human beings possess characteristics as 'moral agents' in differentiation from other creatures because

they have xin 心 equipped with the power to judge and choose (自主之權, 權衡) and should assume full responsibility for judgment and choices made. (2) Dasan defined the relationship between daoxin 道心 and renxin 人心 as a confrontational and dichotomous relationship and valued the former as the manifestation of a moral inclination unique to human beings as the benxin 本心 of dao 道 and shihao 嗜好 of gnostic intellect. However, since this moral inclination is endowed by shangdi 上帝 (God) and daoxin 道心 cannot be separated from shangdi 上帝 as its houshe 喉舌 (mouthpiece), xin 道 per se does not seem to be trusted. (3) Moral inclination and daoxin are unique to human beings, and humans as moral agents are responsible for providing conditions and environments for other creatures in order for them to realize their benxing 本性 (shihao 嗜好); thus, further responsibility may be requested by practice but not by principle.”

Lee Cheol-seung obtained his PhD with a thesis on modern Chinese thought and has authored a number of papers covering discussions about the modernization of Confucianism and qi-related research. As suggested by the title “The Issue of the Theory of Human Nature between Wang Fuzhi's and Jeong Yakyong's Philosophies,” he compares the views of Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 and Jeong Yak-yong 丁若鏞 in relation to human nature.

Regarding the similarities between Wang Fuzhi and Jeong Yakyong, Lee Cheol-seung states: “Wang Fuzhi and Jeong Yakyong are the successors of Mencius' xingshanshuo 性善說 (innate goodness of the human nature) with their respective views of Qishan-lishan 氣善·理善 and xingshihao-shuo 性嗜好說 of haoshan-e-e 好善惡惡. These views differentiate themselves from the Neo-Confucian xingshanshuo 性善說 based on the qi's you-shan-you-e 有善有惡 and lishan 理善. Wang Fuzhi and Jeong Yakyong consider benxing 本性 not as an immutable metaphysical entity transcending time and space but as human-specific characteristics that should be realized in our daily life. In addition, their understanding of the four sprouts is not limited to the realm of moral emotion as understood by Neo-Confucianists, but attributes the original mind (benxin 本心) tantamount to moral mind (dioxin 道心) in the four sprouts.” As the main difference between Wang Fuzhi and Jeong Yakyong, Lee Cheol-seung points out their views of the origin of evil (bushan 不善): “While Jeong Yakyong considered renxin 人心 (biological mind) is at the origin of evil, Wang Fuzhi did not consider renxin 人心 to be opposed to daoxin 道心 (moral mind) but viewed them as being organically connected and regarded the situation in which the mind is not in the right place (wei 位) as the origin of evil. This shows that Wang Fuzhi considered the relationship between the biological and moral aspects of mind not as being contradictory but as being organically connected, while Jeong Yak-yong differentiated the moral gnostic (靈知) aspect from the instinctive bodily (形軀) aspect and prioritized the shihao 嗜

好 of the former. Put differently, Wang Fuzhi advanced his view of xingshanshuo 性善說 from the perspective of mind-body's organic connection based on Mencius' theory of jianxing 踐形 (development of a physical form), whereas Jeong Yak-yong unfolded his Xingshihaoshuo 性嗜好說 (Theory of Human Nature as Moral Inclination) from the viewpoint of Mencius' dati 大體 (greater parts) and xiaoti 小體 (lesser parts). As such, Wang Fuzhi expanded the scope of benxin 本心 in his understanding of xingshanshuo 性善說 as a unity of biological and moral aspects of mind, and Jeong Yak-yong specified the human identity by attributing only the moral aspect to the realm of benxin 本心.”

## 5) Classics (1 paper)

1 Choi Jeong Mook: A Study about Various Perspectives of Interpretations of Daxue 大學, *Studies in Philosophy East-West*

The divide between Zhuzixue and Yangmingxue occurs in the interpretation of Daxue 大學 (The Great Learning). Zhu Xi wrote a supplementary chapter, gewuzhizhi (格物致知 補亡章), of Daxue 大學 and presented jiwu-qiongli 即物窮理 (exploring the principles of things) as the basic guide for learning Daxue 大學. As is well-known, Zhu Xi's interpretation of jiwu-qiongli 即物窮理 was advanced as a counterargument against the Buddhist introspective learning method (fanguan-neixing 反觀內省). Wang Yangming criticized the learning method of jiwu-qiongli 即物窮理 advocated by Zhu Xi and emphasized the importance of sincerity (chengyi 誠意) in learning Daxue 大學. Later on, this theory of chengyi 誠意 expanded and converged into the theory of zhiliangzhi 致良知 (attainment of the innate knowledge of goodness). On a related note, Yun Hyu 尹鑄 was condemned as anti-Confucianist and killed by Song Si-yeol 宋時烈.

In his paper “A Study about Various Perspectives of Interpretations of Daxue 大學”, Choi Jeong-mook presents the interpretation of Daxue 大學 as advocated by Zhu Xi, Wang Yangming, and Yun Hyu: “Zhu Xi's restructuring of Daxue 大學 was followed by many scholarly disputes. The first point of dispute was whether the Ancient Text Daxue 古本大學 should be accepted in its intact state or if Zhu Xi's Daxue Zhangju 大學章句 should be accepted instead. Scholars such as Wang Yangming, Yun Hyu, and Jeong Yak-yong dismissed Zhu Xi's work as being worthless because the Ancient Text Daxue 古本大學 is not flawed.

The second point of dispute was the number of doctrines. Zhu Xi claimed that mingmingde 明明德 (manifesting the brightness of virtue), qinmin 親民 (loving the people), and zhiyu-zhushan 止於至善 (abiding in the utmost goodness) are the three doctrines (大學之道在明明德在新民在止於至善). However, some views suggest that only two doctrines are valid. For example, Park Se-dang did not recognize

止於至善 as a doctrine, arguing that there is no connection between Zhu Xi's interpretation of 止於至善 and the corresponding article in Daxue 大學. The biggest controversy surrounding the understanding of Daxue 大學 lies in the interpretation of gewuzhizhi 格物致知 (investigation of things and extension of knowledge). Zhu Xi's understanding lies in the jiwu-qiongli 即物窮理 (exploring the principles of things). According to this interpretation, two objectives are pursued: (i) perceiving the laws of existence of all things and (ii) gaining an awareness of the laws of ethics and acting accordingly. Wang Yangming criticizes Zhu Xi's methodology presented through gewuzhizhi 格物致知 based on his understanding of gewuzhizhi 格物致知 from the viewpoint of self-cultivation, not from an epistemological viewpoint. Wang Yangming repudiates Zhu Xi's prioritization of gewuzhizhi 格物致知 because he attaches the highest priority to chengyi 誠意 (sincerity). Yun Hyu understands gewu 格物 under two methodological aspects: (i) understanding things through the intrinsic brightness of the mind by gathering a scattered mind and maintaining the sincere, serene, and one-track state of mind and (ii) reaching the state of enlightenment by searching, inquiring, and scrutinizing. The first method concerns practicing the self-cultivation of the mind, and the second method concerns reaching self-realization through investigations.

The third point of dispute is the conceptual definition of mingde 明德 (bright virtue) and the necessity of mingmingde 明明德 (manifesting the brightness of virtue). While Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming share similar views, Yun Hyu and Jeong Yak-yong understand mingde 明德 as the mind of filial piety and brotherly love (xiao-di 孝弟) or xiao-di 孝弟 per se, which widely differ from Zhu-Xi's abstract definition of mingde 明德 as responding to all things with the knowledge of their natural law.”

Lastly, the fourth point of dispute is the interpretation of qinmin 親民 (loving the people). Zhu Xi embraces Cheng Yi's view and asserts the importance of xinminshuo 新民說 (renewing the people), whereas Wang Yangming insists on reading it as qinmin 親民, focusing on the heart of the ruler and the practice of his love for the people. Although previous research claimed that Yun Hyu denied xinmin 新民 and advocated qinmin 親民, a closer look does not confirm this claim. Jeong Yak-yong supports qinmin 親民 and does not agree to the xinminshuo 新民說 in principle but tolerates both interpretations for the morphological and semantic similarities of the characters (親/新).

### **3. Analysis and Review of Major Papers**

In his paper “The Grounds and Significance of the Four-Sentence Instruction from the Perspective of the Four-Nature Theory,” Park Kil-Su advances a bold

and interesting argument. He undertakes an attempt to connect sijujiao 四句教 (four-sentence instruction), which is known as Wang Yangming's last teaching, and sixinglung 四性論 (four-nature theory) from the questions and answers recorded by Huang Shengceng 黃省曾 in Wang Yangmin's Chuanxilu 傳習錄 II (biography). By consistently applying the views expressed in sixinglung 四性論, wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡 (neither good nor evil) and youshan-youe 有善有惡 (some are good, some are evil), which are presented in the first and second sentences of the sijujiao 四句教, respectively, are explicable from the action of the mind's benti 本體 (original substance) conducive to dichotomizing yi 意 (will of the mind) into good and evil. Zhshn-zh 知善知惡 (knowing good and evil) and wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡 (doing good and eschewing evil), which are presented in the third and fourth sentences of the sijujiao 四句教, respectively, explain that there is a relationship between yunyun 淵源 (origin) and mdun 末端 (end) of moral benti 本體, whereby the latter shows that gewu-gongfu (格物工夫 investigation of things) of wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡 is necessary in the liubi 流弊 embodied as actual good and evil and that gw-gngf 格物工夫 refers to liangzhi 良知, as suggested in the third sentence. Taking the foregoing into account, these explications demonstrate that Yangming's mind-heart and learning theories covered by the sijujiao 四句教 were in fact established based on Wang Yangming's four aspects of xing 性.

Sijujiao 四句教 consists of four propositions: (1) 無善無惡是心之體: Wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡 (neither good nor evil) is the mind's benti 本體 (original substance); (2) 有善有惡是意之動: Youshan-youe 有善有惡 (some are good, some are evil) is the operation of yi 意 (will of the mind); (3) 知善知惡是良知: Zhi-shan-zhi-e 知善知惡 (knowing good and evil) is liangzhi 良知 (attainment of the innate knowledge of goodness); and (4) 爲善去惡是格物: Wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡 (doing good and eschewing evil) is gewu 格物 (investigation of things). Sixinglung 四性論 is divided into four aspects of xing 性: (1) xing 性 is associated with original substance (自本體上說者) = 無善無惡的; (2) xing 性 is associated with functioning (有自發用上說者) = 可以爲善可以爲不善的; (3) xing 性 is associated with the origin of heaven (有自源頭上說者) = Mencius' innate goodness (孟子說性); and (4) xing 性 is associated with liubi 流弊 (end) (有自流弊處說) = some are good, some are evil (一定善一定惡的) = Xunzi's innate evil (荀子性惡).

When juxtaposed, Sentence 1 and Nature 1 and Sentence 2 and Nature 2 match well, but the third and fourth sentences and natures do not, which Park Kil-Su admits.

Park Kil-Su explains his view of the third sentence/nature: "The third nature and sentence in sixinglung (四性論) and sijujiao 四句教 read '性之源頭是性善' and '知善知惡是良知,' respectively. They seemingly have different expressions but in fact have the same meaning. Additionally, Wang Yangming agrees to Lu Cheng's 陸澄 definition of liangzhi 良知 and the mind's benti 本體 (original substance)



and its interpretation as xingshan 性善 and answers: 'As xing 性 is not without goodness, so zhi 知 is not without goodness.' Furthermore, in other occasions, he explains the process by which xingshan 性善 is transformed to liangzhi 良知 as the process by which benti 本體 is endowed with human disposition. These views demonstrate that xingshan 性善 is the origin of liangzhi 良知."

It is not impossible to connect liangzhi 良知 and xingshan 性善. As quoted by Park Kil-Su, "As xing 性 is not without goodness, so zhi 知 is not without goodness." To briefly explain what is meant by this, Wang Yangming defines liangzhi 良知 as tianli-mingjue 天理明覺, a portmanteau connecting the tianli 天理 of benti 本體 and the operation of mingjue 明覺, which defines liangzhi 良知 of henzhao 恒照. From this it follows that "as xing 性 is not without goodness, so zhi 知 is not without goodness." However, it is not easy to agree to Park Kil-Su's argument that Mencius' xingshan 性善 mentioned in relation to yuantou 原頭 is a sufficient guarantee for the purport of liangzhi 良知 in the third sentence.

Park Kil-Su then explains his view of the fourth sentence/nature: "While the fourth nature and sentence in sixinglung 四性論 and sijujiao 四句教 also use different expressions, they are like two sides of the same coin in that they present the basis and methods for learning, respectively. Yiding-shan-e 一定善惡 in sixinglung 四性論 is the form of xing 性 manifested in the liubi 流弊 dimension, and wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡 in sijujiao 四句教 is gewu-gongfu 格物工夫 (learning how to investigate things) implemented at the practical level of good and evil. In particular, yiding-shan-e 一定善惡 in sixinglung 四性論 explains the rationale and necessity of gewu-gongfu 格物工夫 of wei-shan-qu-e 爲善去惡." As indicated in a footnote, Park Kil-Su's attempt at connecting sijujiao 四句教 and sixinglung 四性論 seems to be drawn from a previous study (任文利, 心學的形上學問題探本, 鄭州: 中州古籍出版社, 2005) that is currently under a critical review. However, analysis of the original text of Wang Yangmin's Chuanxilu 傳習錄 in relation to sixinglung 四性論 reveals that it discusses the combinations of benti 本體 and fayong 發用 and yuantou 原頭 and liubi 流弊, but it did not intend to establish four different aspects of xing 性.

In fact, sijujiao 四句教 is closely associated with Daxue 大學 articles, as demonstrated by many previous studies. The theory of xinjili (心即理 mind is the principle) is a critical commentary to Zhu Xi's interpretation of jiwu-qiongli 即物窮理. The citation of Ancient Text Daxue 古本大學 is a work establishing the basis for the evidence of chengyi-shuo 誠意說 from the classics. The theory of zhiliangzhi 致良知 (attainment of the innate knowledge of goodness) shows the theoretical achievement that complements chengyi-shuo 誠意說 through the zhizhi 致知 article. Furthermore, sijujiao 四句教 is Wang Yangming's final teaching that explains four Daxue 大學 articles: 物 (格物), 知 (致知), 意 (誠意), and 心 (正心). A comparison of Park Kil-Su's viewpoints with those of previous

studies would inevitably result in a finding that, despite many interesting views brought forth in Park Kil-Su's papers, there are views contradictory to the facts.

Speaking of shortcomings, I will take an example of insufficient investigation of the context related to Wang Yangmin's Chuanxilu 傳習錄, probably due to his zeal to make his point: "First, Wang Yangming evaluated that sheng-zhi-wei-xing 生之謂性 expresses well the characteristics of wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡. This demonstrates that the notion of wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡 was primarily presented from the viewpoint of life rather than morality. However, Gaozi's problem arose from his failure to consistently apply sheng-zhi-wei-xing 生之謂性 to the interaction between the innate nature and things. That is, Gaozi had an obsessive idea that the essence of xing 性 transcends good and evil to the extent of committing an error of fully attributing the origin of good and evil to external things. Wang Yangming's viewpoint, however, has the effect of dichotomizing xing 性 into internal and external aspects based on whether it interacts with other things. In fact, limiting the origin of good and evil to the realm of external things has the effect of making xing 性 irrespective of good and evil and the ensuing moral responsibilities. For this reason, Wang Yangming consistently emphasized that the benti 本體 of xing 性 is unitary, but its operations penetrate both subjects and objects. Briefly put, in Wang Yangming's theory of xing 性, the emergence of good and evil is actually the consequence of the activity of xing 性."

The contents of this passage are not directly associated with the purport of the original text of Gaozi's budong-xin 不動心 mentioned by Wang Yangming. Here, too, the author's zeal to make his point resulted in a rough original text analysis.

Among the viewpoints from which the developmental process of Song-Ming Confucianism were described, Feng Youlan 馮友蘭 sees its divide in the brothers Cheng (程明道 and 程伊川). The lineage of Cheng Yichuan 程伊川 follows to Zhu Xi and that of Cheng Mingdao 程明道 to Wang Yangming. In her paper "A Comparative Study on Nok-mun's (鹿門) and Yang-myeong's (陽明) Mind-Nature Theory (心性論)," Lee Myong-shim divides Song-Ming Confucianism into two lineages: The ultimate goal of Eastern philosophy, which encompasses Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, is to realize the unity of God and man or the unity of all things. However, the history of Confucian ideas can be summarized as follows: 'The methodology by which the ideas of humans and all creatures on heaven and earth becoming one is realized unfolds in two stems of the philosophy of destiny determined by human nature (性命) and the philosophy of destiny determined by life (生命).' In other words, the Cheng-Zhu School belongs to the xingming 性命 philosophy and the Yangming School to the shengming 生命 philosophy (...) That is, both Yangming and Nok-mun define

innate human nature as 'life.' Accordingly, their emphasis on shengyi 生意 (will to life) differentiate their view from that of the Cheng-Zhu School, which defines innate human nature as 'morality.'

Thus, the Cheng-Zhu and Yangming schools are attributed to 性命 and 生命 strands of philosophy, respectively, in conformity with the schema produced by Feng Youlan 馮友蘭. The schematic depiction of 性命 philosophy and 生命 philosophy appears plausible at first glance. A closer look, however, reveals its theoretical limitations. A question promptly elicited is “If so, is 性命 philosophy not 生命 philosophy?” That is, the question remains as to whether Zhu-Xi's philosophy is not the 生命 philosophy.

This criticism can be posed in the same context with regard to the following position presented by Park Kil-Su. “Behind this view of his is a unique awareness and affirmation of life. Unlike the Zhuzixue, he defines the essence and characteristics of xing 性 from the angle of the totality of life. For this reason, the author comments on Gaozi's sheng-zhi-wei-xing 生之謂性 as follows: (...) First, Wang Yangming evaluated sheng-zhi-wei-xing 生之謂性 as well expressing the characteristics of wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡. This demonstrates the fact that the notion of wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡 was primarily presented from the viewpoint of life rather than morality.” Given that the purport of Yangmingxue lies in 存天理去人欲, the statement “This demonstrates that the notion of wu-shan-wu-e 無善無惡 was primarily presented from the viewpoint of life rather than morality” sounds rather far-fetched.

#### **4. Evaluation and Outlook**

In 2021, Yangmingism (including a comparison with the Yangming School of Mind) was most frequently covered in the 14 research papers published on Neo-Confucian and Yangming Studies in the Ming Dynasty. Research on Wang Yangming has been overwhelmingly predominant for seven consecutive years since 2015 (papers published in 2014), clearly showing the Ming-period scholar most studied in the Confucian academic circles in Korea.

Over the past five years, on the topic of Ming/Qing Confucianism, 26 papers were written in 2017, 17 in 2018, 24 in 2019, 18 in 2020, and 14 in 2021. Among the 14 papers published in 2021 on Ming-period Confucian in the fields of Neo-Confucianism (Zhuzixue) and Yangmingism (Yangmingxue), Yangmingism or the Yangming School of Mind prevailed. This suggests that the group of scholars of Eastern philosophy currently studied in Korean has not been diversified. From this it can be inferred that not only is the scope of research in Korea rather narrow, but the researcher base is not large.

