

# A comparison on Wang Yangming's *xin* [heart-mind] and Husserl's ego



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Both Wang Yangming and Husserl adopted a subjective approach to their studies. Wang used his concept of *xin* [heart-mind] to guide the practice, while Husserl used his concept of ego to discover the truth of objects. A comparison on the descriptions, structures and functions of Wang Yangming's *xin* and Husserl's ego illustrated that *xin* and ego are different terms for the same thing. The distinction between the two scholars is their differences in teleology and study focus. But their studies can be complementary to extend the knowledge of human beings and benefit scientific research.

**Contribution:** The original discovery of the sameness of Wang Yangming's *xin* (a Chinese concept) and Husserl's ego (a Western idea) illustrates that people should adopt a new approach to science, which takes knowledge and morality as a unity, and follow the highest heavenly principles. This is a serious theological and philosophical response to teleology.

**Keywords:** *xin*; ego; *liangzhi*; pure ego; Husserl; Wang Yangming; teleology.

## Introduction

Wang Yangming (1472–1529) is the most influential figure in Neo-Confucianism, as he established a new school of Confucianism called Study of *xin* [heart-mind]. His Study of heart-mind had thousands of followers in his lifetime and countless ones after. However, because of the difficulties in practicing his *zhi xing he yi* [unity of knowing and doing], most of his followers are learning his doctrine as knowing yet are not doing by their *liangzhi* [innate moral conscience]. In this regard, Wang Yangming could be seen as quite isolated.

A similar isolated philosopher is Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), the founder of phenomenology. Since 1901, when Husserl formally inaugurated phenomenology for the first time in his *Logische Untersuchungen*, phenomenology as a philosophical movement has been evolving for more than 100 years. But similar to the case with Wang, Husserl does not have true followers among his countless readers, and he is thus a leader without followers. Almost all his colleagues, disciples and late-comers do not follow his original methodology, but struck their own independent paths (see Moran 2000:1–3).

Although Wang and Husserl are both isolated masters, we will compare them not because of this but rather because of their shared approach of subjectivity in developing their systems. We will discover that these two teachers could find their best friend and supporter in each other across vast temporal, spacial and cultural differences. In this essay, the author compares Wang's *xin* [heart-mind] with Husserl's *ego* and illustrate that the two ideas are essentially the same thing, though with different perspectives. And then the author will analyse their contextual discrepancies in teleology. At the end, the author will propose a unity of the two doctrines to benefit the extension of human knowledge.

Many efforts have been done on the connection of Wang's study and Husserl's phenomenology before my writing. Kern, a Swiss scholar, who is an expert both in phenomenology and traditional Chinese studies, examines *liangzhi*, the core of *xin*, raises three questions to phenomenology concerning 'sympathy, immediate consciousness of one's own intentional acts or lived-experiences, and the intentionality of the meditative, tranquil consciousness' (see Kern 2008:705–732). Kern's intention in asking these questions is to understand the Chinese doctrine through phenomenology, which gives a hint that Wang's study and phenomenology have some connections. In his book, *The Most Important Thing in Life*, Kern discusses the three meanings of *liangzhi* from a phenomenological

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approach. This is deemed by a Chinese Scholar, Yun (2022:173–180), as an intent to modify Wang’s study through phenomenology. Yun does research on Kern’s book and illustrates *liangzhi* as substance and argues the feasibility to transform Wang’s study to phenomenology. Li Youzheng, a Chinese scholar who did the most of the Chinese translations of Husserl’s works, has shed some light on the complementary potential of the two studies too. Li calls Husserl’s studies and Wang Yangming’s studies as ‘*xin* studies’, because he thinks ‘they both directly and indirectly pay attention to the existence, demarcation and application of subjective domains in a completely different way’ (Li 2013:9–24). But Li does not illustrate the details of his reasoning. All the researches have hinted that Wang’s Study of *xin* and Husserl’s phenomenology do have close connections, and there are potentials of enriching each other. But no one has made such a bold discovery that *ego* and *xin* are the same thing as the author intends to do.

The discovering of the sameness of *ego* and *xin* makes great sense both for Husserl’s phenomenology and Wang’s Study of *xin*. On the one hand, Wang’s approach of enhancing *xin* will provide a way to increase the capability of the *ego* to which Husserl does not give a method. Husserl has illustrated that the *ego* can tell the truth of objects, but because the capability of the *ego* is insufficient, it must be necessary to increase the capability of the *ego*. Wang tells us *xin*’s capability can be increased by *gewu* [rectify deed in line with heavenly principles], thus provides a way to phenomenology to increase the capability of the *ego*. On the other hand, if *xin* and *ego* are the same, *xin* will be able to discover the truth of objects, which Wang has not done very much. The complementary effect of phenomenology and Study of *xin*, one from the West and one from the East, will help to extend human knowledge together.

### Wang Yangming’s *xin* [heart-mind]

As suggested by its name, Study of heart-mind, Wang’s doctrine is centred on the idea of *xin*, which literally means heart, but much more than that. In ancient Chinese, *xin* was taken as an organ constituted by soil, which is one central element of *wuxing* [the five elements or energies that constitute everything] (see Xu 2014:285). And the faculty of heart is to think. Thus, it may denote mind, thinking, intention or consciousness (see Wang & Cen 2016:455).

Wang Yangming seems to be a monist when he constructs his study. In his *Questions and Answers on Great Learning*, a thematic essay of Study of heart-mind, Wang Yangming makes clear that humanity as the core of man has determined the people and heaven, earth and all things are united (see Wang 2012b:70). He takes *xin* and *shen* [body] as a unity as well. In the same book, he describes heart and body in this way: ‘What is body? The body of heart that operates and functions is. What is heart, the intelligent, bright (灵明) ruler of body is’ (Wang 2012b:73). Wang Yangming takes heart as containing everything – the principles of heaven, things, gods and ghosts. He asserts, ‘there are no principles outside *xin*, and there are no things outside *xin*’ (Wang 2012a:89). In

summary, Wang Yangming’s *xin* is a unity that contains everything that is thus inside *xin*.

So far, Wang Yangming’s idea of heart is still quite obscure; we only know it is a unity with body and everything and rules the latter. To learn more about it, we have to explore its structure and how it rules.

*Xin* has substance and functions. *Liangzhi*, the innate knowledge of moral nature or the knowledge of conscience, is its substance. *Liangzhi* is a central concept of Yangming’s Study of heart-mind. He told his student Shouyi in a letter: ‘Recently I realized extending *liangzhi* is the true treasure of sagehood, which is so self-sufficient that with it at hand, you will never get lost’. Wang Yangming believes that *liangzhi* is *a priori*. All are born with *liangzhi*; even a thief or a thug has *liangzhi* (see Wang 2012a:171). ‘*Liangzhi* is just the heart of knowing right or wrong, knowing right or wrong leads to like or dislike’ (Wang 2012a:190).

As to the functions of *xin*, *xin* can be applied in treating father, king, friends and governing the citizens. And it will manifest as filial-piety, loyalty, honesty and benevolence, respectively (see Wang 2012a:76). In fact, *xin* can be applied to everything, including hearing, seeing, talking and action. Here we need to note that everything mainly means doing something rather than things themselves. Wang says, ‘wherever your consciousness is directed toward is a thing’ (Wang 2012a:79).

Now we can try to construct the structure of Wang Yangming’s *xin*: a unity consists of body, heaven, earth, things, deeds, gods, ghosts and everything that one can see, hear, talk, move, think and imaging. Whatever one does, thinks or discusses are all inside *xin*. It is impossible to find any truth or principles external to *xin*. In this approach, Wang turns his eyes from the outside world to the inner world, thus makes his approach subjective. The inner world is not a concrete one, but a world of ideas. The core of the unity is *liangzhi*, or highest good, which is *a priori* and given by birth. *Liangzhi* is capable of telling what is right or wrong, distinguishing between bad and good, through *evidenz*. When *xin* moves or is moved, intention or consciousness will arise. Some of the intentions are right, some are wrong; some are good, some are bad. *Liangzhi* can choose right and good rather than wrong and bad. This establishes moral principles for living ‘a good life’.

As *liangzhi* is *a priori*, and it can choose right and good, why are some people more righteous than others? And why people choose the wrong and bad from time to time? Wang Yangming affirms that in quality, everyone’s *liangzhi* is the same, either for common people or sages. But *liangzhi* has been covered by dust and dirt from birth, and the cover gets even dirtier and thicker along the way of living via misconduct of themselves or influence of others. *Liangzhi* is like a mirror. A sage’s *liangzhi* is clean and clear, ‘whose mirror may reflect everything as it is’ (Wang 2012a:86). By practicing *gewu*, one can restore *liangzhi* to its clarity and

cleanness. *Gewu* means to rectify deed in line with heavenly principles. For example, when we see a kid climbing on to the verge of a well, *liangzhi* will tell us to stop him immediately or he may fall into the well. This is the heavenly principle in a specific deed. So, we follow *liangzhi*'s command, and thus we process this deed with principles of heaven, completing *gewu* over this deed. Whenever we can achieve *gewu* successfully, *liangzhi* will get clearer and cleaner, thus stronger. However, disobeying *liangzhi* will lead to a thicker cover that makes *liangzhi* weaker. Is it possible that *liangzhi* is fully covered to the extent that it cannot function? Wang's answer is 'no'. There will always be some crack on the cover. And *liangzhi* will penetrate the crack at certain time naturally, like when one wakes up at mid-night and finds his *xin* is quite clear. The state is called *yeqi*, the pneuma of night. At the moment, one should grab the opportunity and extend his *liangzhi* immediately. *Gewu* will extend *liangzhi* gradually and continuously. Finally, *liangzhi* will be strong enough to command every action and thought. Heart will reach the state of transparency, *evidenz* and happiness.

### Husserl's *ego*

Husserl uses his concept of '*ego*' to describe the intuitive experience 'I as man'. Husserl defines the *ego* as having transcendent self-consciousness. By 'transcendent' Husserl refers to anything that we experience as having more to it than is given in a finite amount of experience (things that are experienced through perspectives and thoughts) (see Miller 1986:534–549). In Husserl's phenomenological intuition, the *ego* is discovered from inner perception or 'introspection' of the unbroken flux of consciousness, which is a unity of sensations, perceptions, remembering, feelings, affects, et cetera. In the unitary flow, there are further unities that Husserl uses strata to describe, though they are not really in layers but interwoven together. Among these unities are the unity of pure (transcendental) *ego* and empirical *ego* (see Husserl 1993:98). But the pure *ego* and the empirical *ego* are not two *egos*. The *ego* in the process of *cogito* is the empirical *ego*, and the self without *cogito* is the pure *ego*.

By further investigating the direction of the empirical *ego*, the *ego* is discovered and it takes everything as its belongings, including the lived experiences, the phantasies and bodily qualities. The *ego*:

[N]ot only ascribes to itself its lived experiences as its psychic states and likewise ascribes to itself its cognition, its properties of character, and similar permanent qualities manifest in its lived experiences, but which also designates its Bodily qualities as its 'own' and thereby assigns them to the sphere of the *ego*. (Husserl 1993:99)

The *ego* consists of body and soul, but the two are closely entwined. The mind is superior to the body. According to Husserl (1993:99), 'It can therefore be said: I am not my body, but I have my body. I am not a soul, but I have a soul'. 'if there is no soul, the body is dead matter, meaningless matter'. Conversely, the mind needs to be experienced through activation of the body. And consciousness is not simply the

annexes of bodies either. They are all connected together internally.

So far, we can discover the structure of Husserl's *ego*. First of all, the *ego* is a unity, and it is found in the unity of consciousness flow. The whole picture is the *ego* that ascribes everything to itself and that is references 'I as man'. Below the concept *ego*, there are the empirical *ego* and the pure *ego*. The pure *ego* is nothing but 'I myself'. And the empirical *ego* is *cogito*, or 'I think', which consists of all psychic experience. All these are discovered through retrospection, from a subjective point of view. The *ego* is transcendent, but the transcendence comes from the pure *ego* through the empirical *ego*. There are no clear borders between the *egos*, for they are unitary, one *ego*. But the part that can transcend most is the pure *ego*, because it is nothing but itself. This begs the question of the functions of the pure *ego*.

Husserl thinks that the pure *ego* has pure functions. It:

[E]xercises its pure 'functions' in the acts of the multi-formed *cogito*, discrete ones or ones connected by this *cogito*, and to that extent we could call the acts themselves, by transferring over the sense of the word, functions. (Husserl 1993:105)

In another word, the acts of *cogito* are functions of the pure *ego*. But it is clear that *cogito* is not the pure *ego* itself. The pure *ego* functions in *cogito* and connects the objects through it. Husserl (1993:109) says, 'Each and every *cogito*, along with all its constituents, arises or vanishes in the flux of lived experiences. But the pure subject does not arise or vanish'. The transcendent *ego* functions, by transcending itself to both the world and subjectivity. The transcendent *ego* enters the rational space to perform categorical acts and reveal the truth and the identity of the object. The process of disclosure is not limited by the subject of 'I'. It can reveal what 'I' didn't know. At the same time, the pure *ego* is transcendental, independent of any experience, and *a priori*.

When performing its functions, the pure *ego* does have its freedom. Whenever I direct to the object, a ray will shoot from the pure *ego* to it, and meanwhile, a back ray will come back to the pure *ego*. I will be influenced by the back ray nevertheless by either following the emotion aroused or oppressing it, which result in active or passive actions of the *ego*.

As to the question of the mutability of the pure *ego*, Husserl's view seems to have changed. At first, Husserl believed that the transcendental *ego* was immutable and remained the same in the process of experience. But finally in his *Cartesian Mediations*, Husserl (1960) writes clearly:

[B]ut it is to be noted that this centering *ego* is not an empty pole of identity, any more than any object is such. Rather, according to a law of 'transcendental generation' with every act emanating from him and having a new objective sense, he acquires a new abiding property. (p. 66)

The transcendental *ego* is not the static and existing centre of all conscious activities, but the generated subjectivity. Pure

self is a continuous totality in my conscious life. In the continuous process, any behaviours and propositions taken by the pure *ego* will be accumulated as 'habits'. A Chinese scholar, Wang Jiatang (Wang 1995:116), discovers that as Husserl introduces the concept of 'generation' into the study of transcendental subjectivity and establishes the phenomenology of occurrence, the transcendental *ego* is subject to the law of universal generation, and the concrete subjective process not only constructs its object but also constitutes the unity of the universal generation of the self. The *ego* constructs itself in a kind of 'historical' unity. With the pure *ego* as an identical pole, along with the multiplicity of its intentional life, objects meant, and that constituted as existent for it, the *monad ego* takes form. Through phenomenological reduction, the pure *ego* may discover the descriptively formulable, intentionally explicatable types, and the *monad* itself. So, in Husserl's model, the *monad ego* contains everything that pertains to the author. The pure *ego* is to discover types through the *monad*.

### Wang Yangming's *xin* and Husserl's *ego*

The author has discussed Wang Yangming's *xin* and Husserl's *ego* in the above sections, the concepts, their structures, and how they manifest in human *Weltanschauung*, emotions, intellect and perceptions of the world. Now the author will make a comparison between them. At first, the author will compare two sets of concepts, Wang's *xin* versus Husserl's *ego*, and Wang's *liangzhi* versus Husserl's pure *ego*, because the author believes there are many similarities (or each pair is the same thing). At the same time, the author will point to the differences in the two sets. Finally, the author will point out the general differences between Wang and Husserl.

#### *Xin* versus the *ego*

Wang takes *xin* and *shen* [body] as a unity. Husserl believes that the *ego* consists of body and soul, but the two are closely entwined. On the unity of *shen* [body] and *xin* [psyche], the two thinkers strike an agreement. They even use similar ways to illustrate the unity. Husserl explains that if there is no soul, the body is dead matter, meaningless matter. Conversely, the mind must be experienced through the activation of the body. While Wang (2012a) points out:

Ears, eyes, mouth and limbs are the body. Without *xin* how could it see, hear, talk and move? But these actions are impossible without ears, eyes, mouth and limbs, too. Thus, without heart there is no body, and without body there is no heart. (p. 168)

Both Wang and Husserl consider the soul has superiority over the body. Wang refers the body as that to fill, and the soul as that to rule. And *mingling(xin)* extends all over the space. 'My *mingling* is the ruler of heaven, earth, gods and ghosts', Wang (2012a:205) denotes. Husserl (1993:100) asserts, 'it is easy to see that the psychic has a priority and that it is what determines the concept of the *ego* essentially'. In other words, the soul determines 'life essence'.

Wang's *xin* contains everything while Husserl's *ego* ascribes everything to itself. Wang Yangming believes that outside

*xin*, there is nothing. In his dialogues with his disciples, he (Wang 2012a:89, 206) reiterates it:

'There is no principles outside *xin*, and there is nothing outside *xin*'. 'There are no principles outside *xin*, and no deeds either'. 'For a dead person, when his *xin* has dissolved, where are his heaven, earth, gods, ghosts and things?'

Husserl, on the other hand, affirms that the *ego* designates everything experienced to its sphere. As he (Husserl 1993) denotes, the *ego*:

[N]ot only ascribes to itself its lived experiences as its psychic states and likewise ascribes to itself its cognition, its properties of character, and similar permanent qualities manifest in its lived experiences, but which also designates its bodily qualities as its 'own' and thereby assigns them to the sphere of the *ego*. (p. 99)

In his later analysis, when he uses *monad* to describe the *ego*, it is more obvious that the *ego* does contain everything.

Wang's *xin* and Husserl's *ego* have the above similarities. We can draw a bold conclusion that the two concepts refer to the same thing. The author believes there are some discrepancies in the meanings on the subtle level, like in many words from different languages. This the author finds naturally forms concepts from different cultures and backgrounds. But they believe that people have much more similarities than differences in their way of thinking. Thus, the author will assume that Wang's *xin* and Husserl's *ego* are essentially the same 'thing', even though they use different terms.

#### Wang's *liangzhi* and Husserl's pure *ego*

At the core of the two masters' concepts are *liangzhi* and the pure *ego*. The author believes the two concepts also share great similarities, and that they are fundamentally the same thing. However, Wang and Husserl focus on their different functions, which may weaken the author's argument, but it still leaves some room for a potential complementary development of the two studies.

In Wang's and Husserl's studies, both *liangzhi* and the pure *ego* are *a priori*. Wang asserts that everybody is born with *liangzhi*. Wang analogises *liangzhi* to a mirror. When one is born, she or he is born with a clean and clear mirror. After birth, the mirror will get covered in dust because of bad experiences and influences from others along the way of living. Husserl describes the *a priori* from a different facet. He takes the constitution of *ego* itself as *a priori*. Husserl (1960) points out:

There resulted the all-embracing unity of the essential form belonging to the total constitution accomplished in my own *ego* the constitution as whose correlate the objectively existing world, for me and for any *ego* whatever, is continually given before-hand, and goes on being shaped in its sense-strata, with a correlative *a priori* form-style. And this constitution is itself an *a priori*. (p. 137)

As *xin* and the pure *ego* are all *a priori*, they are all transcendent. The transcendent *ego* can transcend itself to both the world and subjectivity. The process of transcendence is not limited by the subject of 'I'. It can reveal what 'I' didn't know. *Liangzhi*

is like a mirror, and although it is empty it can reflect and reveal everything it encounters. Both *liangzhi* and the pure ego have intentionality. Wang affirms that there is no intention that is not about something and Husserl agrees. When performing the intentionality, both *xin* and the pure ego have their freedom. Wang thinks *liangzhi* can disregard any theory or teachings from books or other sages and decide by itself. Husserl asserts that when the back ray comes to the ego-pole, the pure ego may choose to respond, react or neglect it by choice.

But there are quite obvious differences between *liangzhi* and the pure ego, which lie in their functions. Wang's *xin* is to distinguish right from wrong and do the right. And Husserl's pure ego is to reveal the truth of the thing or the *eidōs* of the thing. *Liangzhi*'s focus is on practicing, while the pure ego on cognition. But they are still the same thing. As at the beginning of Confucianism, *gewu* has the meaning of revealing the truth of everything. Another famous Confucian scholar, Zhu Xi espouses this idea. Though Wang Yangming disagrees with this idea and derives from it to his own *xin* study, he examined Zhu's studies in his later life and announced that there are no conflicts between Zhu and himself. Husserl confesses that the pure ego also develops. In the process of interacting with other people and things in the world, one gradually unearths virtue and makes it one's knowledge, even one's trait. Here an important point emerges: *Xin* and the pure ego are basically the same thing but are used on different foci by Wang and Husserl. The potential for complementing the two masters' studies lies in this point, which the author will discuss in the last section of this essay.

### The general differences between Wang Yangming and Husserl

There are many differences between Wang and Husserl, including their nationalities, living times, positions in society and roles. But these differences do not determine their discrepancies in philosophy so much as their teleology. The distinction in their teleology means they take different positions on the meaning of life and philosophical views.

In the Chinese traditional philosophy, the heavenly principle is the highest theme, and becoming a sage is the ultimate pursuit of being a person. Wang adopts the theme and creates the Study of *xin*. A sage means a perfect person who possesses the supreme good and moral compass. The only way to become a sage is to extend *liangzhi* to every deed through *gewu*. It is impossible to achieve by being a hermit away from the world. Thus, Wang's study is primarily about doing the right thing and becoming a sage.

For Husserl, the goal of his life was to become a true philosopher. Being a philosopher is a path to discover the truth. In 1911, in a letter to his student Arnold Metzger about his early years, Husserl wrote:

Indeed the powerful effect of the New Testament on a 23-year old gave rise to an impetus to discover the way to God and to a true life through a rigorous philosophical inquiry. (Moran 2000:68)

Husserl wanted to discover the way to God and a true life, and his approach was rigorous philosophical inquiry. In his most works, Husserl devotes himself in discovering truth. He explores the mystery of subjectivity to reveal the truth and *eidōs* of the object. In his *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, one of the later works in his life, Husserl reiterates the mission of a true philosopher as the universal science of the world, the ultimate knowledge and the totality of truth itself (see Husserl 2001:330).

Because of the discrepancy in their teleology, Wang and Husserl formed their general differences. Based on the same discovery of *xin* and *ego*, they developed distinguishable studies. One is on epistemology and another on practice. But may the two studies develop towards each other or overlap in some important ways? Can they be reconciled and be complementary? If they can, what sense does it make?

### The complementary potential of Husserl's phenomenology and Wang's Study of *xin*

Husserl and Wang discovered the same mysteries of subjectivity, though in different ways, with Husserl exploring the truths of the world, and Wang becoming a sage. What they found are the *ego*, *xin*, the pure *ego* and *liangzhi*. The core is the pure *ego* and *liangzhi*. The pure *ego* may transcend itself to acquire the truths of the object. And *liangzhi* may tell and direct the subject what to do or not to do. Each does these through intuition and *evidenz*. It is so obvious that the pure *ego* and *xin* may extend the other way. The pure *ego* may extend the sphere of doing things, while *liangzhi* may extend to that of knowing things.

As noted above, some scholars have suggested the complementary potential of the two studies. For example, Li compared the reductionism of the two studies, aiming to draw ethical connections between them. This is one way of extending from Wang to Husserl. Yun proposed to modify Wang's Study of *xin* according to phenomenology.

To most people, Husserl's study is philosophy of rigorous science. This is true as most of works of Husserl are about discovering truth through phenomenology. But many manuscripts after *Idea II* have revealed that Husserl does extensive research on practice and value (see Zeng 2016:74–83), though these research efforts are not comprehensive and systemic. In a manuscript in the mid-1920s, Husserl claims that each person has an individual ethical idea. The person's value accepts the meaning of the person's personality from the deep and individual love, there is no choice, no difference in 'quantity', no difference in importance. These individual values are absolute 'commands' – 'they bind me as I am' (see Mailer & Fang 2002:42–51). From this statement, an accord with Wang Yangming can be inferred, that is, as the personal values are absolute commands, are they something relative to *liangzhi*?

How about Wang Yangming's *xin*, or *liangzhi*? Can it be applied to discover truth in and/or of objects? The answer is also yes. As discussed above, Wang Yangming's *gewu* is quite

different from that of Zhu Xi. Wang also applies *liangzhi* on discovering the truth of the object. Once he discussed using a pipe with ashes inside to sense the season change recorded in a famous ancient book. He told his disciple Tang Xu, it is not the pipe that can tell the accurate time change, but the heart. It is clear Wang uses *liangzhi* to discover truth too.

## Conclusion

As a conclusion, both Wang and Husserl, and some other scholars, support the idea of using *liangzhi* or the pure *ego* another way. Studies on the object and practice can all be based on *liangzhi* or the pure *ego*. Though studies are divided into different disciplines, the primary discoveries can all come from intuition. All knowledge can be traced back to *liangzhi* or the pure *ego*. Making Wang's Study of *xin* and Husserl's phenomenology mutual complementary will bring about a new approach to science, which will result in the unity of knowledge and morality. In this approach, a researcher will do the right research and discover the truth at the same time. As stated by Li (2013:9–24), 'scientific studies cannot necessarily guarantee virtue, on the contrary, virtue may improve scientific studies'.

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The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author.

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