

Introduction to the Chinese Edition of Shushigaku to Yōmeigaku

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My book Shushigaku to Yōmeigaku 朱子学 & 陽明学 (The Philosophy of Zhu Xi and the Philosophy of Wang Yangming), which now (1986) appears in Chinese translation from the press of Shaansi Normal University, was published in Japan by Iwanami Press nearly twenty years ago in 1967. I think that my understanding of Neo-Confucian philosophy of the Song and Ming periods took form in this book. My attention has been drawn to many points in the book over that past two decades, but on the whole my views have not changed. It is a great honor and equally great delight for me that, with Professor Jiang Guobao's 蒋国保 translation, my book will now be made available to the entire Chinese reading public. I wish to express by profound gratitude to Professor Jiang.

There are several points I would like to clarify or add at the outset on the occasion of the publication of the Chinese edition. The first concerns my attitude toward Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> As is made clear in the book, I never meant to deny the influence exerted by Buddhism on the School of Song Learning (Neo-Confucianism). Yet, I simply cannot agree with the view, wildly exaggerated in the past, that argues as if the essential spirit of Song Learning in each and every theoretical point is a rehashing of something in Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> In other words, as I see it, the confluence of these two systems of thought merely points out that ideas of a similar sort demonstrate similar developments. (For example, the Confucian idea of the inherent goodness of human nature and the Buddhist doctrine of tathāgata-garbha or Buddha-nature).

Let me now look in a more limited way here at the influence of Buddhism on Song Neo-Confucianism. The view stressing this influence to excess leads, by contrast, to a lack of consideration or reflection on the issue of whether general human emotions in China form the basis of the philosophical speculative thought of the Chinese people. Take, for example, the most important term in Song Neo-Confucianism, li 理 or principle. Prior to the Song period, li never played the role it would in Song. It would seem undeniable that li entered philosophical terminology as a result of the impetus given it by Buddhism (I am not certain if Daoism may also have played some role). At the same time, it is a fact that this li had been part of the daily vocabulary of Chinese since the Qin and Han dynasties, and it continues in use until today, as for example in the expression used

in arguments: qi you cili 豈有此理 (that's ridiculous; what are you talking about?).

With the influence of Buddhism in this context so exaggerated, attention to li as a term in daily use--how li has been used in quotidian discourse and with what meanings--has scarcely been analyzed at all. This is certainly no reason to expand the quantity of research into the history of Chinese philosophy, but I do have such misgivings.

Second, in an article written over 40 years ago, Yasuda Jirō 安田二郎 pointed out that the manner in which Zhu Xi used li to fit into a three-tiered structure: (a) as meaning, its most inclusive sense; (b) in a more limited legal sense; and (c) in the narrowest individualized sense.<sup>3</sup> For a long time, I did not fully understand what Professor Yasuda was trying to do here, especially the relationship between (a) and (b). Then, several years ago, it occurred to me that in the two qualities of li, as depicted by Zhu Xi, of so yiran zhi gu 所以然之故 (the reason for things being as they are) and so dangran zhi ze 所当然之則 (the norms governing things as they should be), one should see the former as fundamental.<sup>4</sup> If this formulation is incorrect, then there would seem to be no way to comprehend point thirteen in the first juan of the Zhuzi yulei (Classified Conversations of Master Chu).<sup>5</sup>

In this event, Zhu Xi's philosophy is a li-qi 理氣 dualism. In the final analysis, however, the basic motive force of Zhu Xi's philosophy is ethical. When this point is emphasized, the legal aspect of li predominates, and it becomes a li monism. Although Yasuda's thesis that "the teachings of Zhu Xi form an analysis of li from below and the teachings of Wang Yangming form an analysis of li from above" is well known, I was unable to discuss it in my book.<sup>6</sup> It was unfortunate that I could not introduce this three-tiered conception of li at that time.

Third, several years ago Yuasa Yasuo 湯淺泰雄 and Izutsu Toshihiko 井筒俊彦 both noted that Zhu Xi's idea of huoran quantong 豁然貫通 (suddenly seeing the entire thing in a clear light) offered explanations almost identical to theories of depth psychology and depth consciousness.<sup>7</sup> For example, Yuasa wrote of this idea of huoran quantong: "It is not clearly something on the order of mental cognition in a modern sense. It is an expression that points to the experience of awakening and the eruption of a kind of unique, deep psychological energy, like 'enlightenment' in Zen Buddhism."<sup>8</sup> From the opposite direction, Izutsu noted the same thing: "It is a leap of consciousness from the surface to the deepest level, a dimensional transformation of consciousness."<sup>9</sup>

I am of the belief that this idea of huoran quantong can be

understood in two ways. The first follows Yuasa and Izutsu: namely, that we can comprehend it vertically by dividing consciousness between surface and depth. We may also comprehend it horizontally by conceiving of the problem theoretically as an "inductive leap." It has been my impression heretofore that the latter was commonly employed. Thus, such an explanation might in fact be helpful in trying to shed light on the views of the Cheng程 brothers, Zhu Xi, and, in our own time, Feng Youlan 馮友蘭 (1894-1990).<sup>10</sup>

Which of these positions, then, is correct? It is certainly clear that there was a strong attitude among the philosophers of the Song school as a whole to consider any mention of consciousness of depth to be Buddhistic and to try to avoid doing so. Research into depth consciousness in Neo-Confucian philosophy is sorely lacking.

In modern times, Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885-1968) has boldly adopted a view of depth consciousness from Consciousness-Only (weishi 唯識) Buddhist philosophy and advanced the stage of Neo-Confucianism reached by the Wang Yangming School (and Wang Fuzhi 王夫之).<sup>11</sup> For this reason, Xiong's efforts deserve our attention. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to the general, contemporary (and particularly Japanese) case in which the depth of East Asian philosophy is frequently to be found relegated to the stance or philosophy of wu 物 (nothingness), Xiong leaves a deep and lasting impression, following the traditions of Neo-Confucianism, in his firm adherence to a position of you 有 (existence, being). Whether, in the final analysis, this "philosophy of you" can rank beside the "philosophy of wu" remains an important scholarly desideratum.

Fourth, recently a view that sees qi simultaneously as matter and as energy seems to have gained a predominant position.<sup>12</sup> I do not oppose such a formulation. Yet, I have on occasion come across writings that ignore the former half of this definition and note only that "qi is energy,"<sup>13</sup> and this makes me very apprehensive. The distinguishing quality of qi lies in the fact that it is simultaneously matter and energy.

Fifth, Hou Wailu 侯外廬 once wrote of the Ming era--particularly the period when the left wing of the Wang Yangming school was most active--that "an age emerged in which a spirited atmosphere for innovative scholarship, comparable in the realm of philosophical thought to the contention among the Hundred Schools of the Warring States, was abundant."<sup>14</sup> To my way of thinking, this view (including the period through the late Ming and early Qing) is irrefutable.

Finally, let me once again offer my heartfelt thanks to the painstaking work of Professor Jiang Guobao who took from his own valuable time to translate my poor Japanese. Let me also ask all readers to offer their advice without hesitation.

## Notes

1. In his "Goroku no rekishi: Zen bunken no seiritsu shiteki kenkyū" 語録の歴史: 禅文献の成立史的研究 [The History of (the genre of) yulu: A Historical Study of the Formation of Zen Documents], Tōhō gakuho (Kyōto) 東方学報京都 (1985), p. 588, n. 16, Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山 notes that, "while Tokiwa Daijō 常盤大定, Takeuchi Yoshio 武内義雄, and others have offered a high evaluation of the relationship between Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism, Shimada Kenji [in this book] 'rates it rather lowly.'" This impression seems to be held by many others as well.

Translator's note. In tracking down the information in this note, I discovered that this "essay" by Yanagida runs well over 400 pages (pp. 211-663) and really is as long or longer than most books.

2. As an example of this in our time, see the chapter on the traces of Huayan 華嚴 Buddhism in Zhu Xi's epistemology, in Qiu Hansheng 邱漢生, Sishu jizhu jianming 四書集註簡論 [Brief Discussions Concerning the Commentaries on the Four Books] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1980). However, I do not believe that Huayan Buddhist philosophy is sufficient for a doctrine of Buddha-nature narrowly conceived.

3. "Shushi kaishaku ni tsuite Tsuda (Sōkichi) hakase no kōkyō o aogu" 朱子解説について津田(左右吉)博士の高教を仰ぐ [With Respect for the Excellent Teachings of Professor Tsuda (Sōkichi) in His Explanation of Zhu Xi], Tōhō gakuho (Kyōto) 11.4 (1940); later included in Yasuda Jirō, Chūgoku kinsei shisō kenkyū 中国近世思想研究 [Studies in Early Modern Chinese Thought] (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1948; new edition, 1976).

4. The two terms come from Zhu Xi's Daxue huowen 大学或問 [Answers to Questions on the Great Learning]. I have recently learned that my close friend, Professor Minamoto Ryōen 源了円, seems to have arrived simultaneously at this same explanation.

5. "As for qi, if congealed it is capable of producing matter (wu 物), but li, by contrast, lacks both emotion and intelligence, and will not produce matter. Only qi coheres or does not [namely, matter exists or it does not], while li exists within it... Li has a pure and empty existence, lacking form. Li cannot produce matter. It only exists solely within matter, and beyond that it seems to serve no function. What, then, is the raison d'être of such a thing

as li?"

6. "Both Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming, in short, rely on the same experience [a consciousness of morality innate to human beings]. However, Zhu Xi constructed a theory in conformity with the process leading to the attainment of this end [that is, starting with an analysis of the facts, with learning]; by contrast, Wang began with that experience itself to construct a theory. One was a theory from below, the other a theory from above." Yasuda Jirō, "Yōmeigaku no seikaku" 陽明学の性格 [The Nature of the Wang Yangming School], in Chūgoku kinsei shisō kenkyū, p. 196. Furthermore, among the stunning achievements of Yasuda's work on Song Neo-Confucianism are: a critique of the usual explanation that the li-qi relationship is one of form and matter; and a description of the "proto-image" (gen imeiji 原イメージ) of qi. These and other contributions can be found in his Chūgoku kinsei shisō kenkyū, though because of his untimely death his work is little known, especially outside Japan. I firmly believe that this is a lamentable situation for the scholarly world.

7. "The Great Learning teaches first and foremost that students need rely on already known principles (li) for all things (wu 物) under heaven to investigate ever more thoroughly [those as-yet-unknown principles]. In this way, they are ultimately directed toward the attainment of the ultimate endpoint of principle [relative to things]," or the acquisition of perfect knowledge. "Thus, if over a long period of time, they repeat their efforts, at some point they will suddenly attain an understanding [of principle] that penetrates [all the myriad] things," in that it transcends the principle of individual items and penetrates all things. "In this eventuality, all things--hidden and apparent, subtle and clear--will become known," inasmuch as the principle of all things will fall completely within the ken of a single, all-penetrating li. Zhu Xi, Daxue zhangzhu 大学章句 [The Great Learning in Chapters and Verses], chapter 5.

Translator's note. This text by Zhu Xi has been translated into English by Daniel K. Gardner, but I have rendered it differently here to take account of Shimada's Japanese translation, his insertions, and his parenthetical notes. For reference, Gardner's translation of this passage reads as follows:

"The first step in the greater learning is to teach the student, whenever he encounters anything at all in the world, to build upon what is already known to him of principle and to probe still further, so that he seeks to reach the limit. After exerting himself in this

way for a long time, he will one day become enlightened and thoroughly understand [principle]; then, the manifest and hidden, the subtle and the obvious qualities of all things will all be known." Gardner, Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986), p. 105.

8. Yuasa Yasuo, "Tōyō no ryōshinron no tokushitsu, hikaku rinrigaku no kokoromi" 東洋の良心論の特質, 比較倫理学の試み [The Distinctive Character of East Asian Views of the Innate Goodness of the Mind-and-Heart: An Attempt at a Comparative Ethics], in Tōyō bunka no shinzō 東洋文化の深層 [The Depth of East Asian Culture] (Tokyo: Meicho kankōkai, 1982), p. 258.

9. Izutsu Toshihiko, Ishiki to honshitsu 意識と本質 [Consciousness and Essence] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1983), p. 93.

10. The late Feng Youlan at one time built his own distinctive philosophy consciously carrying on the philosophy of Zhu Xi. He explained this idea of "suddenly seeing the entire thing in a clear light" on the basis of a Marxist philosophical formula of change in quantity leading to change in quality. See his "Ruxue fazhan de xin duanjie: Daoxue" 儒学发展的新段階: 道学 [The New Stage in the Development of Confucianism: Neo-Confucianism], Wenshi zhishi 文史知识 84 (June 1988), p. 4.

11. Xiong was one of the first among the so-called "new Confucians of the modern era" (xiandai xin Rujia 現代新儒家) and a professor at Beijing University. Among his works are Xin weishi lun 新唯識論 [A New Doctrine of Consciousness-Only] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang shengli tushuguan, 1932; Beijing: Beijing daxue, 1933; as well as 1942 and 1957 reprints), 3 vols., and Yuan Ru 原儒 [An Inquiry into Confucianism] (Shanghai: Longmen lianhe shuju, 1956). 2 vols.

12. Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China, Volumes 2, History of Scientific Thought (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1956).

13. Although I made no special notes on it, I seem to recall this expression several years in the pages of the journal Zhexue yanjiu 哲學研究 and recently I have come across it frequently. While one can readily explain the fact that, in writings concerned with qigong 氣功, this expression often appears, we should recognize that this term is extremely convenient.

14. Hou Wailu, "Shiliu shiji Zhongguo de jinbu de zhexue sichao gaishu" 十六世紀中國的進步哲學思潮概述 [Outlines of the Advanced Philosophical Trends in Sixteenth-Century China], Lishi yanjiu 歷史研究 10 (October 1959), pp. 39-59; included in Hou Wailu shixue lunwen xuanji 侯外廬史學論文選集 [A Collection of Hou Wailu's Historical Essays] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1988).

--Translated by Joshua A. Fogel.