

Who am I?

-- Wang Yangming and Lacan's Answers

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Abstract: The ancient Greek proverb "know yourself" has always led Western scholars to interpret and argue "me", and Lacan is undoubtedly one of the leaders. He followed in the footsteps of Freud's psychoanalysis and pioneered a new approach to interpreting and arguing about the subject through linguistic dimensions of psychoanalysis. He proposed the theory of the order of the subject's spirit at three levels: reality, imagination, and symbolism, and the establishment of these three realms relies on language. The concept of subject is also a topic that many thinkers cannot avoid in the context of the East, especially originating from Mencius and inheriting the mind studies of Lu Jiuyuan and Wang Yangming. Whether it is "irrational beyond the heart" or "the human heart is human nature", it all indicates Wang Yangming's enthusiasm for finding himself. Although the subject is not a familiar word in the Eastern context, upon closer examination, it is not difficult to find that the subject refers to either "self" or "me" in a certain situation. The discussion on "me" in Yangming's psychology implies the path of why I am myself. Both can find one-to-one correspondence in Lacan's three orders, so there are similarities in their theories and they can interpret each other, but at the same time, differences in speculation lead to differences between the two.

Keywords: Spiritual order; Psychology; Subject; self.

1. Introduction

The philosophical speculation has always revolved closely around the question of the subject's self, which is the question of who I am, and is no exception at all times and in all countries. From Socrates to Descartes, from Mencius to Wang Yangming. In the field of psychology, scholars have exhausted their wisdom to try to investigate the question of what the subject is. Among them, Freud's psychoanalytic discipline has become a leader among them. As the greatest psychoanalyst after Freud and an infinitely close to philosophical speculative psychoanalyst, Lacan not only inherited certain conceptual traditions of Freud's psychoanalysis, such as unconsciousness and desire, but also refuted Descartes' classic Western rational philosophical tradition of "I think, therefore I am", thus proposing his own unique concept of subject. Lacan proposed three spiritual orders of the subject based on linguistics - the real world, the imaginary world, and the symbolic world - to replace Freud's theory of the triple structure of the subject's personality, namely the id, ego, and superego. He believed that once a person enters thinking, the subject is torn apart, and the true self no longer exists. At its root, it is not difficult to discover the inherent logical connection between the two, and at the same time, it is not difficult to discover the methodological differences between the two. As Ma Yunlong (2006) believed, Freud analyzed the composition of the subject from the perspective of biology, which had flourished since the 19th century, while Lacan abandoned the foundation of biology and introduced the ideas and analytical methods of modern linguistics and linguistic philosophy that were popular in the mid-20th century into the field of psychoanalysis. The linguistic coloring of psychoanalytic theory has made this discipline a core science in the humanities. Although Lacan was not a philosopher, his approach of integrating philosophical speculation into psychoanalytic theory undoubtedly played a significant role in promoting this theory.

On the other hand, in Chinese philosophy, whether it is the idea of "one desires to stand up and achieve oneself" (Analects 2016:533) created in the Analects of Confucius, or Mencius' concept of human beings, they all pay attention to the issue of individuals. In the Song Dynasty, Lu Jiuyuan, who was a believer in a school of idealism, advocated the ancient saying "I strive to understand the essence of learning, and all the Six Classics are my footnotes" (Lu Jiuyuan 2012:57). However, unlike Western philosophy or psychological concepts, Chinese self-concept is often replaced by words such as heart, reason, or conscience, such as Wang Yangming's concepts of "nothing outside the heart", "irrationality outside the heart", and "conscience". Although there is no mention of "me" in them, self-awareness is vividly on the paper. The so-called Yangming Mind Learning is to start with 'me' and find 'conscience,' unity of knowledge and action, 'cultivate natural principles, until' there is nothing outside the heart, nothing outside the heart, and no reason outside the heart'. (Liang Qichao 2014:99)

Since the self is the core issue of Wang Yangming's psychology, and Lacan has systematically discussed the self subject through linguistics, can we use Lacan's theory, On Wang Yangming's "I" from the Perspective of Lacan's Psychoanalysis Theory Can we use Lacan's three spiritual orders of subject - reality, imagination, and symbol - to analyze and interpret Wang Yangming's subject self-awareness in his mind studies? The answer is yes, and through analysis and interpretation, Wang Yangming's mind studies have many similarities and possibilities for mutual interpretation with Lacan's theory of subject. At the same time, the differences in traditional Chinese and Western speculative paths also determine the differences between the two.

2. Reality - Pre-Self

Lacan believes that the subject is not generated, but formed. (Ma Yunlong, 2006:49) In the process of the formation of this subject, people are constantly alienated, and the process of

subjectification is a process of alienation. According to Lacan (Ma Yunlong, 2006), from the moment a baby is born until the mirror stage, it is in an unconscious state of existence. It has no thoughts, no self-awareness, and cannot perceive its body as a continuous and consistent complete structure. The existence of a baby is completely initiated by needs, which are met in physical form, such as milk or milk when hungry. At the same time, it has no awareness of the existence of the outside world, no external sense, it only exists, passively accepting all signals given to it by the outside world. This passivity determines that infants' impressions of the world around them (including their own bodies) can only be fragmented or fragmented. (Huang Zuo, 2005; 4). Generally speaking, the baby at this stage is in a state of Wonton, which is always involved in the chaotic vortex of desire unpredictably. Its world is a meaningless piece of Wonton, without order. During this period, people do not have self-awareness and their existence is completely animalistic. They do not distinguish between the outside world and themselves, have no ability to think, and have not yet formed their own selves. Therefore, Lacan referred to the infant existence during this period as the "pre ego" state, which is essentially just a form of existence and nothing else. Therefore, in Lacan's Three Middle School spiritual order, the "pre ego" state is defined as the initial spiritual order of humanity, which is an existence that humans are not aware of their own existence, a "self free" state, that is, the "real world".

The 'real world' that Lacan believes in can be confirmed in Wang Yangming's self-view of the mind, which can be explained by Lacan's theoretical concept. Firstly, Wang Yangming's theory of mind primarily addresses the issue of 'me', which is a theory that arises around 'me'. Psychology, "Where is the heart, where is it? "The heart" is in me. As the saying goes, "A person must have a heart for themselves in order to restrain themselves, to restrain themselves, to become themselves." (Wang Yangming, 2013:101) Secondly, Wang Yangming's heart can be understood as reason - the heart is reason, and the reason here is reason, for sex, for rational thinking. The important task of rational thinking is self-awareness. Wang Yangming said, "There is no reason outside the heart That's the truth. The truth is all hidden in the heart, so is this heart a part of life? The answer is not clear. In Wang Yangming, "heart" is not just "reason" or "sex", it is first and foremost a part of the body, just like the mouth, eyes, ears, and nose. Therefore, Wang Yangming also said "the noumenon of goodness and disgust", which can be understood as the "heart" of a person The physical state of "is not good or evil, nor does it have any value judgment inherent in it. It is not shaped or changed by external objects, and is an inherent existence without language participation, nor does it involve moral and ethical principles." The heart "is only an anatomical part of the body. Such a state is similar to Lacan's "real world", both of which suggest that the existence of people before the emergence of self-awareness, Wonton without knowing itself, is a physical existence without thinking. Therefore, the formation of Wang Yangming's subject must also go through a process of acquisition.

In describing the relationship between humans and the outside world, Xu Ruzong pointed out that Wang Yangming's "nothing outside the heart" expresses a cognition of objective reality, rather than a strategy of denying the existence of the objective world through the heart. On the contrary, what Mr. Yangming wants to explain is; For the 'heart', the 'heart' that

is understood as 'reason' or 'sex' does not exist until it has established a certain bond with all things outside. Therefore, what can exist can only be a heart in the sense of life science. Outside the heart, there is no objective world that can be recognized.

From the above analysis, it is not difficult to see that Mr. Yangming's initial state of existence before the absence of a "rational" heart was a state of disorder but chaos. That was only an individual being, without self-awareness, experiencing a pre ego state, which is what Lacan called the "real" order in the spiritual order of the subject.

3. Mirror Stage - Heart as the "Mirror"

The study of human reactions to mirrors began with British psychologist Kohler, who noticed that chimpanzees were interested in the shadows they projected on smooth surfaces. Subsequently, psychologists in the United States and France also discovered that infants are interested in or respond to themselves in the mirror at around 6-8 months of age. Lacan further conducted in-depth research on this phenomenon, discovering insights into the relationship between self formation and the image of others, and based on this, proposed the famous theory of the "mirror period".

If the "Oedipus complex" plays a crucial role in Freud's theory of self, and in Lacan's (Huang Zuo, 2005) view, what is crucial is the "mirror period". Lacan pointed out that infants born before the "mirror period" are in a disorderly state of reality, unable to distinguish themselves from the world they are in, then the "mirror period" It can be said that it is an important turning point, after which the baby begins to discover differences and offsets them by identifying with the image of their own body in the mirror, while gaining a sense of unity and wholeness in the body. This feeling is obtained by using the mirror reflected by themselves as a blueprint. As a result, the baby draws a boundary and establishes a connection between itself and the world outside of itself This connection is based and premised on imagination, so babies begin to enter what Lacan calls the "imagined world" or construct a "imagined order". The 'Mirror Age' opens up the subject's imagination dimension and creates a living space of its own. Overall, from the "Mirror Age" onwards, the self begins to form, and the external world is imagined by the subject as its living space. In this space, the self is the center, and everything else revolves around the self. The self is the controller of its kingdom, without the need to follow so-called rules or be bound by laws.

The founder of the theory of mind, Lu Jiuyuan, once said, "The universe has never isolated humans, and humans are limited to the universe." (Chronicles, Lu Jiuyuan Collection, 483) This sentence is intended to express an important proposition of Chinese Confucianism and the great love spirit of Confucianism, which integrates benevolence and love for the people and all things in the universe. But this sentence can also be understood as only the human heart can separate a universe, the separation between the human heart and the world. Only through the human heart can the subject recognize heterogeneity and otherness. From the perspective of Lacan, the human heart here can be understood as the self. At the moment of self generation, the objective existence of the world can be visualized in front of us, and humans are separated from the world while also being integrated with it. Wang Yangming inherited this proposition and believed that

the true nature of the human heart should not be separated from things. Therefore, he said, "Adults are those who are one with all things in heaven and earth." (Da Xue Wen, Complete Works 968) At the same time, this also proves the inevitability of others' separation of things. Only with this self marked human heart can the objective world be possible, and its basic task is to isolate a non self world of others. Cognition of the other is the core task of the self. Only by recognizing the other can the self have its independence, and conversely, only from the moment of self generation can the objective world exist. Therefore, Wang Yangming said, "When you come to see a flower, the color of the flower becomes clear for a moment, and you know that the flower is not outside of your heart." (Wang Yangming, 2013) Here, Wang Yangming and Lacan emphasized the importance of the other in the process of subject formation, as the other determines its own manifestation. In Lacan, the other starts from a mirror, while Wang Yangming's "heart" serves as a mirror, reflecting the world.

4. The Capture of the Symbolic Order - Heart is Reason

On the basis of the Mirror period described earlier, Lacan further proposed the Oedipus complex. In the mirror era, infants are in a binary world with their mothers, which is a world dominated by the order of imagination. In such a world, imagination is dominant, and infants identify with their mothers' images and coexist with them in a self-sufficient manner. If a baby is always in this world dominated by imagination, it will never be able to enter the cultural society controlled by language signifiers, which means it cannot integrate with society. And babies need to break through this binary relationship in order to acquire language and smoothly slide into the world of language control, which means they need the intervention of a third party. This third party is recognized by both Freud and Lacan as the father's role playing, and they also believe that the father's role intervention occurs during the Oedipus complex stage. However, in Freud, the driving force for overcoming the Oedipus complex came from the superego or self ideal, while for Lacan, the role of the father represented the law and was seen as the representative of the creation of human and artificial laws. Regarding this, Lacan said, "The true function of the father... fundamentally unites desire and law. (E, 309) And identifying with the father's role is equivalent to identifying with "self ideal", allowing the intervention of the father's role to indicate that the baby overcomes the Oedipus complex and achieves a transition from imagination to symbolism, that is, from an intuitive binary mirror relationship to a ternary indirect symbolic relationship. From Lacan's perspective, the symbolic dimension of the world implies a world of language, law, and culture. (Ma Yunlong, 2006)

So what does the symbolic order of Lacan's subject spirit mean to Wang Yangming? The core idea of Wang Yangming's theory of mind is to cultivate conscience, and regarding what conscience is, he said: conscience is only a matter of right and wrong, right and wrong are just likes and dislikes. It is easy to see from it that Wang Yangming believes that conscience is the distinction between right and wrong and the heart of good and evil. Which is right and which is wrong is the conscience that exists in the human heart. In response to Qian Dehong's question "How is the Tao teaching?" (2013271), Wang

Yangming replied, "The Tao is the conscience... This conscience is still your master (271) Here, Wang Yangming further elucidates that the Tao is conscience, and conscience is his guiding principle in life. The heart of right and wrong is to judge the right and wrong of an event, and it is the understanding of rules; At the same time, the Heavenly Way is a principle that people need to follow. Regardless of the specific content of Wang Yangming's Tao or conscience, there is no doubt that, This "conscience" cleverly coincides with the legal rules proposed by Lacan, which imply the endorsement of the father. Similarly, in Lacan's view, people have successfully overcome the "Oedipus complex" and "smoothly entered" the symbolic order Talent becomes a normal and complete person, becoming a social person. Although Wang Yangming did not propose the concept of social person, in the context of Chinese culture, people need to have a sense of right and wrong, but both right and wrong belong to the category of social culture. For Mr. Yangming, people live in "reason" and "knowledge", and "reason" and "knowledge" to Lacan are symbolic worlds, Old people live in the symbolic realm of language rule. The symbolic realm is an important psychological dimension of oneself.

5. Conclusion

Lacan's subjective self is a gradually formed self, rather than a natural one. This subject self does not come into being from the moment it is thrown into the universe. It needs to undergo the baptism of time, and on this track of time, the self must go through two important stages. The successful transition of these two stages means that the self transforms into a butterfly. The first stage - the mirror stage means that a person enters the realm of imagination, which means the formation of self-awareness, the formation of the "me" and the non self world. In the second stage, the "Oedipus" stage, the self successfully overcomes the "Oedipus complex" and enters the "symbolic world" dominated by language and other symbol systems. What cannot be forgotten is the 'real world' of the pre ego stage, which is a disorderly and chaotic world where the pre ego relies on the fulfillment of its needs for self-sufficiency. The world is just a patchwork of fragments, existing in a fractured form. Although these three worlds meet with the individual in the dimension of time, Lacan believes that these three worlds are permanently intertwined with the subject in the form of the three dimensions, and the spirit of the subject is composed of these three dimensions.

On the contrary, Wang Yangming's theory of mind does not necessarily mean that "mind study" is a theory about individuals and a knowledge about self-awareness. Although there has been no systematic scientific research and analysis of "mind science" like Lacan or other Western scholars, it is not difficult to see that Wang Yangming also believes that "I" is not innate, "I" is a product of continuous development and shaping. It is a process from scratch, and mind learning is a theory about 'zhi'. Of course, Wang Yangming did not articulate the three-layer structure of human spirit. But from his conversations with fellow scholars and his students, it is not difficult to come to the conclusion that the ontology of goodness and disgust is Lacan's real world. "There is nothing outside the heart" highlights the decisive significance of "self-awareness" for existence, and only my existence world has the possibility of existence. My imagination and consciousness determine the color of the world, and vice versa. Finally, "to conscience" reveals the possibility of the "symbolic world", As Lacan said, the signifier constructs the

symbolic realm, replacing "presence" with linguistic symbols, and the addition of the signifier makes law meaningful for talent. Although the two scholars are in different eras and come from completely different cultures, But they all answered the question of 'who am I', and although the ways of approaching the answer were different, the conclusion had to be drawn with admiration. However, more than 400 years before Lacan proposed his three orders of subject, Mr. Yangming had already made clear the truth about the subject's self in a few words. In addition, Wang Yangming's' to conscience 'explanation did propose that the self is not a fixed and unchanging self, It is the self in the dynamic process of spiritual development, and the self is constantly changing. Lacan also elaborated on this point, stating that the self passes through the mirror stage, crosses the Oedipus plot, and reaches the shore of the subject. Undoubtedly, for Lacan, neither the self nor the subject can be achieved overnight, requiring the participation of time, and the subject evolves accordingly, that is, the subject is a changing subject.

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